

**THE CONFLICT OF MAIN CHARACTERS IN WILLIAMS'
*THE GLASS MENAGERIE***



THESIS

*Submitted to the Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Hasanuddin University
In Partial Fulfillment of Requirement to Thesis
In English*

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**ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
FACULTY OF CULTURAL SCIENCES
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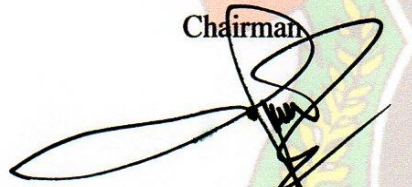
THESIS
THE CONFLICT OF MAIN CHARACTERS IN WILLIAMS'
THE GLASS MENAGERIE

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It has been examined before the Board of the Thesis Examination
on Thursday, 28th April 2022
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**THE CONFLICT OF MAIN CHARACTERS IN WILLIAMS'
*THE GLASS MENAGERIE***

Submitted in fulfillment of one of the requirements of undergraduate thesis examination to obtain Sarjana Sastra (S.S) Degree at the English Department, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Hasanuddin University.

Makassar, 28 April 2022

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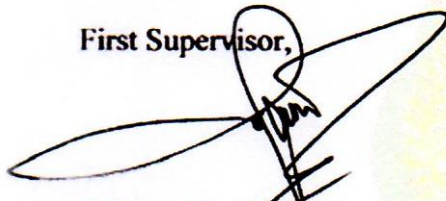
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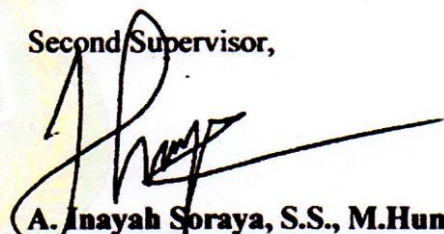
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Hereby, the writer declares that this thesis is written by herself. This thesis does not contain any materials which have been published by other people, and it does not cite other people's ideas except the quotations and references.

Makassar, May 17th 2022



Suci Ayu Lestari Akbar

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In conclusion, the writer points out that this work still has many weaknesses and hopes that it will be useful to students at the English Department. The writer recognizes that this work is far from perfect, so suggestions and criticisms to improve it are welcome. Thank you.

Makassar, March 2022
The writer,

Suci Ayu Lestari Akbar

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ABSTRAK

Suci Ayu Lestari Akbar. 2022. *The Conflict of Main Characters in Williams' The Glass Menagerie*. (Dibimbing oleh **Abbas** dan **A. Inayah Soraya**)

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengeksplorasi konflik yang terjadi dalam drama *The Glass Menagerie* karya Tennessee Williams. Dalam penelitian ini, penulis menganalisis dampak konflik dan menjelaskan penyebab kegagalan dalam menghadapi konflik yang terjadi pada karakter utama, yaitu Amanda Wingfield, Laura Wingfield, dan Tom Wingfield.

Dalam mengumpulkan data, peneliti menggunakan studi kepustakaan, yaitu dengan membaca buku-buku yang relevan dan mencari di internet untuk mendukung topik tersebut. Peneliti menggunakan pendekatan strukturalisme yang menitikberatkan pada unsur intrinsik untuk mengkaji dampak konflik yang terjadi pada tokoh utama dan kemudian dijabarkan secara deskriptif.

Berdasarkan hasil penelitian ini, penulis menemukan dampak konflik yang terjadi pada karakter Amanda, Laura, dan Tom yaitu depresi yang berlebihan, melarikan diri, dan terisolasi secara sosial. Kemudian, penulis menyimpulkan bahwa setiap anggota keluarga Wingfield tidak mampu untuk menyelesaikan konflik rumah tangga yang dihadapinya. Selain itu, tekanan yang dialami oleh masing-masing karakter memunculkan rasa tidak percaya diri, kebohongan, dan narsisme. Konflik yang terjadi pada keluarga Wingfield membuat keluarga menjadi tidak harmonis.

Kata Kunci: *Konflik, Pendekatan Strukturalisme, Drama The Glass Menagerie*

ABSTRACT

Suci Ayu Lestari Akbar. 2022. *The Conflict of Main Characters in Williams' The Glass Menagerie.* (Supervised by **Abbas** dan **A. Inayah Soraya**)

The purpose of this study is to explore the conflict that occurs in the drama *The Glass Menagerie* by Tennessee Williams. In this study, the writer analyze the impact of conflict and explains the causes of failure in dealing with the conflicts that occur in the main characters, Amanda Wingfield, Laura Wingfield, and Tom Wingfield.

In collecting data, the writer used literature study, by reading relevant books and searching the internet to support the topic. The writer uses a structuralism approach that focuses on intrinsic elements to examine the impact of the conflict that occurs on the main character and then describes it descriptively.

Based on the results of this study, the authors found the impact of conflicts that occurred on the characters of Amanda, Laura, and Tom, excessive depression, running away, and being socially isolated. Then, the writer concludes that every member of the Wingfield family is cannot deal with the conflicts they face. In addition, the pressure experienced by each character gives rise to strange traits, namely insecurity, lies, and narcissism. Conflicts that occurred in the Wingfield family made the family disharmonious.

Keywords: *Conflict, Structuralism Approach, Drama The Glass Menagerie*

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of five elements, background, identification of problem, the research questions, objective of study, and the last is the sequence of chapter. The explanation of those sub chapters are explained as follows.

1.1 Background

Conflict is a social event or phenomenon in which there is conflict or dispute motivated by differences in characteristics brought about by individuals in an interaction. These differences include physical characteristics, knowledge, customs, beliefs, ideas, etc. With the inclusion of individual characteristics in social interactions, conflict is normal in all societies, and there is not a single society that has not experienced conflict among its members or with community groups. Conflict will only disappear along with the loss of the community itself according to Coser's explanation below as:

Conflict is an assertion of value, status, power, or limited resources, in which the enemy's goal is to neutralize, harm, or incapacitate the other side. Conflict is a process that plays an important role in the formation, unification, and maintenance of social structures. The emergence of conflicts between one group and another can strengthen and protect the group's identity from merging with the surrounding social world. The absence of intragroup conflict indicates a weak integration of the group and society. Conflict cannot be viewed in a negative light because differences are normal and actually contribute to strengthening social structures (2001:111).

Literature is the imaginative work that describes human life in a society that can also be enjoyed, understood and used by society. The forms of these literary works are dramas, poems, short stories and also novels. The author expresses the result of this image in the form of literary works. In this thesis, the writer chose drama as the research topic. Wellek and Warren (1963: 22) argue that the term

literature appears to be preferable if we limit it to the art of literature, that is, to imaginative literature.

One of the themes that began to be raised in some drama is conflict of the characters. Conflict is a problem that is not wanted by all people like quarrels, quarrels or conflicts. Conflicts that people experience in real life often inspire writers to cast them in a literary work, so it is quite natural that conflicts become an object often raised by writers, as described in the form of literary works in the form of drama. The conflict presented by an author cannot escape the fact that his existence is part of human life. Conflict in drama is interesting to study because conflict is primarily one of the constitutive elements of a literary work regarding the characters, plot and setting that make up the intrinsic elements of literary works. Secondly, every literary work must have a conflict because without conflict the literary work will seem dull and conflict is the most dominant problem present in literary works. Third, in literary works the conflict is always presented because without conflict a literary work cannot be known.

Conflicts occur when two or more disagree and argue about something. Oddly enough, there is a conflict with the character itself, as well as with more than one person (a character with another character). This kind of conflict is related to the character's personality and is difficult to solve. Conflicts can occur not only between individuals, but also between countries, political parties, and states. Small conflicts that are not managed in a timely manner can lead to large-scale wars and divisions between countries, leading to great anxiety and discord.

As the research object, the writer chooses Tennessee Williams' one of most popular drama *The Glass Menagerie*. It is a memory play, and its action is drawn

from the memories of the narrator, Tom Wingfield. Tom is a character in the play, which is set in St. Louis in 1937. He is an aspiring poet who toils in a shoe warehouse to support his mother, Amanda, and sister, Laura. This drama tells a mother who is very obsessed with her children's life and has high hopes also high expectations for her child.

Amanda often entertains children with stories of her idyllic youth and many suitors who once haunted her. She is disappointed that Laura, who is painfully shy with a bandage on her leg, fails to attract visitors any gentlemen callers. She enrolls Laura into business school, hoping to build wealth for herself and her family through her business career. However, weeks later, Amanda learns that Laura's excessive shyness has left her secretly leaving the classroom and spending the day alone wandering the city. Amanda then decides that Laura's last hope is marriage, and starts selling magazine subscriptions to earn extra money, which she thinks will help attract Laura's suitors. Meanwhile, reluctant to work in a warehouse, Tom found salvation in alcoholic beverages, movies, and literature, but his mother's pity was even greater. While his mother and son often quarrel, Tom accidentally breaks several of Laura's most treasured possessions, several glass animal statues as in the following as:

Tom “...*Oh, I could tell you things to make you sleepless! My enemies plan to dynamite this place. They're going to blow us all sky-high some night! I'll be glad, very happy, and so will you! You'll go up, up on a broomstick, over Blue Mountain with seventeen gentlemen callers! You ugly - babbling old - witch...*”

Laura [*shrilly*] “*My glass! - menagerie. . . .*”(Williams, 1970:42).

Except for that analysis of this work is rarely found, the writer also finds the interesting things from this work to be investigated further. The writer finds that this

drama is closely reflected through the unhappy family background of the Tennessee Williams. From the explanation above, the writer is interested in studying this work entitled *The Conflict of Main Characters in Williams' The Glass Menagerie*.

1.2 Identification of Problem

After reading drama *The Glass Menagerie* by Tennessee Williams, the writer finds and identifies some problems as follows:

1. There is a mother that has high hopes also high expectations for her children.
2. The selfishness of each characters that makes the family disharmonious.
3. Conflict is experienced by the family, such as insecurities, being emotionally fragile, and selfishness.
4. The family shows offensive behavior to each other, but they care deeply and show it in different ways.

1.3 The Research Questions

After the previous description, the writer has formulated several problems, such as:

1. What is the impact of the conflicts toward the main characters in *The Glass Menagerie* drama by Tennessee Williams?
2. Why do the main characters fail in dealing with the conflicts in Williams' *The Glass Menagerie*?

1.4 Objective of Study

Based on the research questions, the writer find out the purposes of this analysis as follows:

1. To describe the impact of the conflicts toward the main characters in *The Glass Menagerie* drama by Tennessee Williams.
2. To elaborate the reason of the main characters fail in dealing with the conflicts in Williams' *The Glass Menagerie*.

1.5 Sequence of Writing

This writing is divided into five chapters. Chapter one is introduction that covers the study background. It explains the study background, identification of the problem, scope of the problem, statement of the problem, objective of the writing, and sequence of the writing. Then, Chapter two is literary review. This chapter explains the previous studies and more detailed explanation about the approach that used by the writer, also the intrinsic elements and extrinsic elements. After that, Chapter three is the research methodology. This chapter explains methods of data collection, methods of data analysis, and the writing procedure. Moreover, Chapter four is finding and discussion that contains intrinsic elements, what conflicts that finds in the drama, and the solutions of the conflicts. Finally, Chapter five contains conclusion and suggestion.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter describes about review of related especially some fundamental element of drama. In order to make the discussion of this study clearly, the writer would like to explain about previous study, structural approach, and the concept of conflict.

2.1 Previous Study

Based on observation in library of letter faculty and another sources, the writer had found some thesis that have similarities with this research and give contribution to complete this thesis. Those researches are D. Brent Barnard in 2007, Onward Fellix in 2007, and Fitriyaningsih in 2008.

The first writer was D. Brent Barnard from Louisiana State University entitled *The Symbolism of Tennessee Williams' The Glass Menagerie*. The writer focuses in the Symbolism found in *The Glass Menagerie* drama by using inductive approach. The difference between the previous study and this research is from the problem statement and the approach used in the analysis. The first previous study in *The Symbolism of Tennessee Williams' The Glass Menagerie*, analyzes each character in turn to explain the symbolism that represents Tennessee Williams. Then he shows how these symbols interact as the play draws to a close. Meanwhile, in this study, the writer raised the conflict through a structuralism approach by analyzed each character in the drama.

The second research was conducted by Onward Fellix from University of Sumatera Utara entitled *Structuralism Code in Tennessee Williams' The Glass Menagerie*. The writer focuses on the role of betrayal in the main character. The

writer analyzes the drama using a structuralism approach. This thesis is rich in Roland Barthes' probiotics, hermeneutics, culture and, semi-codes, but the most dominant code found in this work is the semi-code. Although these similarly use a structural approach, the issues raised are different where the writer raises issues that occur in the drama.

The last is Fitriainingsih from Sanata Dharma University entitled *A Study of The Meaning of Laura Wingfield's Actions in Tennessee Williams' The Glass Menagerie*. The writer focuses on the meaning of Laura Wingfield's actions from the psychological point of view by using psychological approach and post-colonial approach. It aims to find out the meaning of Laura's actions using a psychological approach. The postcolonial approach was also used to investigate Laura's behavior more deeply. Meanwhile, in this study, the writer uses the structuralism approach to analyzed the impact of the conflict in each character in drama.

2.2 Structural Approach

The structural approach is a technique in which the learner masters the pattern of sentence. Structures are the different arrangements of words in one accepted style or the other. It includes various modes in which clauses, phrases or word might be used. It is based on the assumptions that language can be best learnt through a scientific selection and grading of the structures or patterns of sentences and vocabulary. Structuralism begins with Saussure's linguistic approach, and scholars, as Tyson (2006: 220) explains as in the following as:

The narrative provides a fertile basis for the critique of structuralism because, in spite of its various forms, the narrative has certain structural features. Because of this, I realize that it can be applied to literature as well. Plot, setting, character, etc.

The structural approach tries to describe the relationship and function of each element of a literary work as a structural unit that together produces a holistic meaning. Semi (1993: 70) said that analysis of literary works with the structuralism approach has various advantages, including (1) the structural approach provides an opportunity to conduct a more detailed and in-depth study of literature, (2) this approach tries to see literature as a literary work by only questioning what is in the literature in itself, (3) providing feedback to the author so as to encourage the writer to write more carefully and thoroughly.

The structural approach is the most important approach because any approach taken basically rests on the literary work itself according to Ratna's idea (2004: 73) states as:

Pendekatan struktural merupakan pendekatan yang terpenting sebab pendekatan apa pun yang dilakukan pada dasarnya bertumpu atas karya sastra itu sendiri. Pendekatan struktural dengan demikian memusatkan perhatian semata-mata pada unsur-unsur yang dikenal dengan analisis intrinsik.

Susanto (2012: 88) argues that the structural approach focuses on the subjective, part of logical thinking that reveals the deepest structure of looking at real events in a literary work. The structural approach analyzes the elements that exist in the literary work itself, obtains results and meanings, and identifies the goals and objectives that the author wants to convey to the reader.

On the other hand, theatrical analysis is the same as fiction. Johnson and Arp (2006:1027) stated that attention should be paid to the nature of the drama, the realistic and unrealistic of the drama, and its category of tragedy or comedy. In addition, the writer focuses only on how the drama or play is set by using the intrinsic elements and facts of story analysis. The facts of story analysis are part of

Stanton's (2012:24) structuralism approach, where the essential elements of the story are the three general elements of fact (plot, personality, and setting), literary medium, and subject matter. Classify into points. These elements consist of interconnected elements that integrate and build the story.

Based on the description above, the writer concludes that literary works in structural approach should be viewed as independent creations, have their own space and form in addition to providing an evaluation of the interrelationship of all aspects. Therefore, the structural approach pays a lot of attention only to the intrinsic aspects. The structural approach attempts to analyze the literary work objectively. Structuralism focuses on intrinsic elements of literary works, such as characters and characterization, setting, plot, and theme.

2.2.1. Character

A character is a person, animal, existence, creature, or thing in a story. The author uses the character to perform actions, tell a conversation, and move the story along the plot. Regardless of the genre or media used by the story, characterization is one of the main components of today's fiction. Everything the audience teaches about your character is characteristic, but the most common ways are specific actions, dialogues, explanations, and other character actions, thoughts, and words related to the character.

Character is a way of thinking and behavior that characterizes each individual to live and work within the family, the community, the nation, and the state. A person of good character is one who can make decisions and is willing to be responsible for all the consequences of his decisions. Saunders (in Maemonah, 2015: 43) states that characters are real and distinct features exhibited by individuals, a

series of attributes that can be observed in individuals. The other idea is Kennedy and Gioia (2005: 91) argue that the characters are imaginative people who drive the story. This means that the character does not exist in the real world. It exists only in the fantasy of those who read this story. This definition is supported by other definitions of similar meaning, such as Diyanni (2000: 55). This definition asserts that the characters are imaginary people created by the author, sometimes identifying with them, and sometimes judging them.

According to Koesnosoebroto in (1988:23), characters can be divided into two categories such as major character and minor character.

1. Major Character

The major character can be at the center of the story. He / she is the most important character in history. Storylines usually focus on the character from start to finish. Therefore, the study emphasizes the character's experience.

2. Minor Character

The Minor characters will appear in certain areas that are only needed as the background for the main character. Those roles are less important than the protagonist's role, but cannot be ignored

The writer believes that in most literary works, the major or main character always appears in each part from beginning to end. This type of character can be said to be a character that reacts to other characters and any events that occur. Small characters appear occasionally or appear and disappear in various places. But without the minor character, the major character cannot do anything. Sometimes, classification according to the characteristics of the character is also used, acting as

the protagonist and antagonist. The main character is usually the main character who initiates the action. And the antagonist is the person who opposes the protagonist.

2.2.2. Plot

In a narrative or creative writing, a plot is the sequence of events that make up a story, whether it's told, written, filmed, or sung. The plot is the story, and more specifically, how the story develops, unfolds, and moves in time.

The plot is how the author arranges the events to develop his basic ideas. It is the sequence of events in in short stories and plays. A plot is a planned set of logical events with start, middle, and end. The plot has a strong connection with the character. Birkert (1993: 37) said that plot occurs the moment a piece or character begins to move, that piece is a piece on the chess board, and the plot is the strategic movement of those pieces.

Stanton (2012: 26) states that a plot is a series of events that occur in a story. The plot focuses on causal events. Stanton believes that one event causes another. We couldnot ignore one event because it affects the whole story. Causal events can be something about the character's testimony or storyline, but also how the character's attitude changes, or the decision to change the storyline.Plots are typically made up of five main elements:

1. Exposition

The part of the story in which the characters are introduced, the background is explained, and the setting is described.

2. Rising Action

The main character is in crisis and the events leading up to the conflict were revealed. The story gets complicated

3. Climax

At the peak of the story, a major event occurs in which the main character faces a major enemy, fear, challenge, or other source of conflict. The most action, drama, change, and excitement occurs here.

4. Falling Action

The story begins to slow down and work towards its end, tying up loose ends.

5. Resolution

Also known as the denouement, the resolution is like a concluding paragraph that resolves any remaining issues and ends the story.

From the explanation above, the author concludes that the events that make up the story are called plots. It includes the main event of the story and how the character and its problems change over time. All events that occur are organized in chronological order from one event to another.

2.2.3. Setting

Setting is the time and place of the story. It's a literary element of literature used in novels, short stories, dramas, films, etc., and usually introduced during the exposition (beginning) of the story, along with the characters. The setting may also include the environment of the story, which can be made up of the physical location, climate, weather, or social and cultural surroundings. Drama settings can be seen as story backgrounds and settings, including time and place. Wellek and Warren (2016: 268) explain that setting is referring to the specific place of condition such as physical and social which has function as metonymy, metaphor, expression by characters.

In Birkerts (1993: 5354), the setting is related to both the physical location of the event and the time the event occurs. A setting is an environment that surrounds a character and influences the character and its actions. There are several ways the time and place indicate the setting. Time can cover many areas, such as a character's life time, season, past, present, future, and so on. The location also covers many areas, such as a particular building, a room in a room, and so on. Transportation modes such as buildings, countries, cities, beaches, cars, buses, boats, indoors or outdoors. As the action progresses, the story settings may change. The environment includes geographical locations such as beaches and mountains, climate and weather, and social or cultural aspects such as schools, theaters, conferences and clubs. There are two types of setting, each having its own purpose.

1. Integral setting

Integral setting is a specific place and time that dramas an important role in the story. An integral setting dictates other societal elements in a story like language, dress, and transportation. Integral setting is an essential setting for the storyline or script. This means that the story cannot take place in a different setting or that the part of the setting described will become an important part of the plot. Integral settings are usually described in great detail, are often referred to throughout the story, or are used to advance the story, set the mood or tone of a scene, or are used to express a theme. Integral settings are used to alert the reader when they are significant. When used effectively, readers will see key aspects of the setting as described in great detail or repeated throughout the story.

2. Backdrop setting

A backdrop setting is generic—for example, a story that takes place in an unnamed small town that is not time-specific. The background is a visually imaginative and attractive setting for the audience, but not meaningful for the storyline. You know you're reading a setting description in the background if the setting isn't described in detail or developed and the story plot can happen anywhere. This type of setting is often non-specific: it can be any city or country, nor does it indicate a specific period. Background settings are typically used in stories that are very character-centered. Setting is only needed so that the scene can be revealed and understood by the audience, but the real focus is on events, character thoughts or relationships between characters.

Wellek and Warren (1956: 131) are interested in the location of the plot said that the setting refers to the geographical location of the story, the time period, the daily life of the characters, and the climate of the story. When reading a novel, the reader effectively confronts the world complete with the characters and events in the novel. But of course, these are less perfect as they require the same living space, place, and time as people living in the real world.

2.2.4. Theme

The theme of a drama refers to its central idea. It can either be clearly stated through dialog or action, or can be inferred after watching the entire performance. Stanton (2012: 36) argues that the theme becomes the main idea and is an aspect of the story that is similar to the human experience. The theme is described as a human experience because it becomes more important when the experience is

memorable and unforgettable. The same goes for the subject. The first thing to remember is the subject, because the theme is the main idea of the story that should not be forgotten and should be remembered when referring to a document.

Following Stanton's explanation, the writer concludes that the theme is the main idea or focus of a literary work that can tell the whole story. A subject may also indirectly represent the moral value or message of a literary work. This will be the most important thing to include in your literary work, as it tells the whole story from start to finish.

2.3 Concept of Conflict

Conflict is one of the social processes that have occurred in our lives and in which some people or groups of people are involved, challenging each other, which has an impact on inviolability. Conflict must occur in human life. Conflicts do not always have negative effects. With conflict, people can find the best solution to any problem that occurs in human life. Conflict is a situation in which two or more people disagree on a fundamental organizational issue and/or experience an emotional antagonism to each other.

Conflict can be defined as a social process between two people that can lead to violence. It cannot be denied that conflict is part of everyday life. Conflicts generally result from differences between individuals and groups. Be disagreements, appearances, races, ideologies, cultures, and other differences. The following is information about the kinds of conflict from the perspective of Jones (in Ahsom: 2016) who divides conflicts into three categories such as physical or elemental conflict, social conflict, and internal or psychological conflict.

1. Physical Conflict

The physical or elemental conflict between characters against another character.

The characters have conflict in their life in their relationship with another character. The conflict occurs when the actor has a problem with others. It is the fight of man against another. That led to contractions like: Fighting. Physical conflict is part of an intrinsic element in a literary work that contains some of the problems of physical conflict in the environment, as well as the author's own experiences.

2. Social Conflict

Social conflict is a conflict that occurs within the main character between humans and nature. Social conflict is a type of external conflict that occurs in the story when individual characters fight against other external forces

3. Psychological Conflicts

Psychological conflicts arise when a character experiences two opposite emotions or desires, generally virtue and vice or good and evil, in them. This disagreement causes the character to suffer mental agony and develops a unique tension in a plot that is marked by a lack of action.

From the above explanation, the writer can conclude that although the types of conflicts experienced by different characters are different, someone may experience more than one that kinds of conflict. Physical conflicts can manifest themselves as shelters and safety issues, and can also be reflected in fights between friends, family and, lovers. Social conflict is part of an essential element of a literary work, including some of the problems of social conflict in the environment and the author's own experience. Psychological conflict occurs when a character experiences

internal confusion and discord and essentially fights themselves. Characters can fight themselves in a variety of ways, including fighting good and evil ideas, fighting weaknesses, and fighting decisions.

The conflict is actually quite an important event, it is an essential element in the development of the plot. The conflict is so dramatic, it relates to the struggle between two forces, it is balanced, and it involves action and retribution. Based on the whole explanation, there are two types of conflict in a story; internal and external conflicts. Internal conflict is a struggle between character and external forces; characters can face many kinds of external forces. On the other hand, external conflict is a struggle conflict that occurs in the mind of a character.

Based on the concept of conflict that has been described, the writer finds that there are problems related to the drama *The Glass Menagerie* by Williams such as the difficult economic conditions experienced by the characters and selfishness also the differences of opinion in each character so that it triggers other conflicts to emerge.