The Conflicts of the Main Character in the Novel *Still Alice* by Lisa Genova

Written by:

Ayu Venty Pratami
11611336
Sastra Inggris

Advisor 1: Dr. Rita Sutjiati Johan, M.Pd
Advisor 2: Dra. Endang Purwaningsih, M.Si
Human life in this world will not always stable because every person will face many conflicts in their life. Conflict occurs in most relationships because people have their own values, skills, personalities and opinions, people rarely agree on all aspect of their relationship. According to the social psychologist Kurt Lewin, there are four basic ways to categorize conflict situation: The approach-approach conflict, The avoidance-avoidance conflict, The approach-avoidance conflict, and The double approach-avoidance conflict (Bruno, 2002, p.114-115).
The writer chooses a topic about the conflicts of the main character in the novel Still Alice. The main character in the novel Still Alice is Alice Howland. Alice Howland faces many conflicts with herself, her family, and friends in the novel Still Alice.

The writer is interested in undertaking a research on Alice Howland. The writer wants to analyze the conflicts of the main character in the novel Still Alice through psychological approach. The writer uses the theory of conflict in psychological approach, so the writer or the readers can find out about the types of conflict that occur on the main character in the novel Still Alice and to find out the type of conflict occurs dominantly in the novel Still Alice.
Chapter I
Introduction

Problem of the Research

1. What are types of conflict that occur on the main character in the novel Still Alice?

2. Which type of conflict does occur dominantly in the novel Still Alice?

Objective of the Research

1. To find out the types of conflict that occur on the main character in the novel Still Alice.

2. To find out the type of conflict occurs dominantly in the novel Still Alice.
Chapter I: Introduction

Scope of the Research

In this research, the writer uses a qualitative descriptive method. The main source of data is a novel and some reference books that are found in the library and other material, such as internet, which is related to the topic. There are many ways to find out or examine a character in the novel. When talking about analyze character, the first thing that appear in thought is psychological approach. The writer has decided to use psychological approach to analyze types of conflict that occur in Alice Howland in this research. The conflicts of the main character named Alice Howland, will be taken as set of problems in this research. The writer tries to find out the types of conflict that occur on the main character in the novel Still Alice and to find out the type of conflict occurs dominantly in the novel Still Alice.
Psychology approach: is used to analyze the character in novel. Usually it is related not only with behavior, but also personality of the character. Psychology approach related to literature it is used in literary analysis to discuss about every human being events or incidents. It discusses the problems of human beings and how they handle it and also discusses the effects that are brought by certain problems or events to human beings personality.

According to (Marcus, 2000, p.366), in his book, The Handbook of conflict Resolution: Theory and Practice, he explained that conflict is incompatibility of ideas, believes, behavior, roles, needs, desire, values and so on.
Chapter II: Theoretical Review

Conflict Situation according to Kurt Lewin

- Approach – Approach Conflict
- Avoidance – Avoidance Conflict
- Approach – Avoidance Conflict
- Double Approach – Avoidance
Chapter III
Research Method

Source of Data

- The data for this research is novel Still Alice by Lisa Genova which consists of 336 pages. It was published by Simon & Schuster in 2009.

Research Design

- In this study, the writer used a qualitative descriptive method to find out the types of conflict that occur on the main character in the novel Still Alice and to find out the type of conflict occurs dominantly in the novel Still Alice.
Chapter IV
Result of the Research

The types of conflict that occurs on the main character in the novel Still Alice.

1. Approach - Approach Conflict

“How are you, Mom?”
“Not so good. This semester was hard, without my work, without Harvard, and this disease progressing, and your dad hardly ever home. It’s been almost too hard.”
“I’m sorry. I wish I could be here more. Next fall, I’ll be closer. I thought about moving back now, but I just got cast in this great play. It’s a small part, but----”
“It’s okay. I wish I could see you more, too, but I’d never let you stop living your life for me.”

(Still Alice. p. 267)
2. The Avoidance-Avoidance Conflict

“Mom, what are you doing?”

Her hand stung, she was too tired to endure the humiliating answer to Anna’s question, and an overpowering peanut smell coming from the bag disgusted her.

“Leave me alone!”

“Mom, It’s okay. Let’s go in the kitchen and have dinner.”

Anna put the mail down and reached for her mother’s hand, the hand that stung. Alice Flung it away from her and screamed.

“Leave me alone! Get out of my house! I hate you! I don’t want to see you here!”

Her words hit Anna’s face harder than if she’d slapped her. Through the tears that streamed down it, Anna’s expression clenched into calm resolve.

(Still Alice, p. 244)
Chapter IV
Result of the Research

3. The Approach-Avoidance Conflict

“Will you be here when I get home on Saturday?” she asked his back as she followed him down the hallway.
“I don’t know, I’ve got a huge day in lab on Saturday.”

He collected his briefcase, phone, and keys from the hall table.

“He collected his briefcase, phone, and keys from the hall table.

“Have a good trip, give Lydia a hug and kiss for me. And try not to battle with her,” said John.

She caught their reflection in the hallway mirror a distinguished-looking, tall man with white flecked brown hair and glasses; a petite, curly-haired woman, her arms crossed over her chest, each readying to leap into that same, bottomless argument. She gritted her teeth and swallowed, choosing not to jump.

“We haven’t seen each other in a while. Please try to be home?” she asked.

“I know, I’ll try.”

(Still Alice. p.7-8)
Chapter IV
Result of the Research

4. The double approach-avoidance conflict

“I think you probably shouldn’t be teaching anymore, but I’d like to respect your time line. Do you have a plan?”

“I’d hoped to stay on for the year and then take my sabbatical, but I hadn’t appreciated the extent to which my symptoms were showing and disrupting my lectures. I don’t want to be a bad teacher, Eric. That’s not who I am.”

“I know it’s not. How about a medical leave that would take you into your sabbatical year?”

He wanted her out now. She had an exemplary body of work and performance history, and most important, she had tenure. Legally, they couldn’t fire her. But that was not how she wanted to handle this. As much as she didn’t want to give up her career at Harvard, her fight was with Alzheimer’s disease, not with Eric or Harvard University.
Chapter IV
Result of the Research

“I’m not ready to leave, but I agree with you, as much as it breaks my heart, I think I should stop teaching. I’d like to stay on Dan’s adviser, though, and I’d like to continue to attend seminars and meetings.”

I am no longer a teacher.

“I think we can work that out. I’d like you to have a talk with Dan, explain to him what’s going on and leave the decision up to him. I’d be happy to coadvise with you if that makes either of you more comfortable. Also, obviously, you shouldn’t take on any new graduate students. Dan will be the last.”

I am no longer a research scientist.

“You probably shouldn’t accepting invitation to speak at other universities or conferences. It probably wouldn’t be a good idea for you to be representing Harvard in that kind of capacity. I have noticed that you’ve stopped travelling for the most part, so maybe you’ve already recognized this.”
Chapter IV
Result of the Research

“Yes, I agree.”

“How do you want to handle telling the administrative faculty and people in the department? Again, I’ll respect your time line here, whatever you want to do.”

*She was going to stop teaching, researching, travelling, and lecturing.*

*(Still Alice, p. 211)*
Chapter V
Conclusion

After reading, understanding and analyzing the novel Still Alice, the writer concluded, namely:

1. Alice Howland as the main character in the Novel Still Alice has four types of conflict based on the theories of conflict, according to Kurt Lewin, as follows:
   - The approach - approach conflict.
   - The avoidance - avoidance conflict.
   - The approach - avoidance conflict.
   - The double approach - avoidance conflict.
2. There are so many conflicts that occur in the Novel Still Alice. There are four types of conflict in the Novel Still Alice according to the types of conflict in Kurt Lewin’s theory. The type of conflict occurs dominantly in the novel Still Alice is the approach - avoidance conflict.
THANK YOU