



Conversation Analysis and Politeness Theory are used to investigate the lack of communication in Tennessee Williams' The Glass Menagerie

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Abstract

The goal of this study is to perform a study on Communication Breakdown in Tennessee William's famous play "The Glass Menagerie" with reference to Conversation Analysis and Politeness theory. The main purpose is to explore what is hidden behind failures in language interactions of various characters in the play. This research proposal will aim at analyzing the communication breakdown and its consequences in Tennessee Williams' play The Glass Menagerie. From our results, it can be seen that there are some crucial patterns that help explain many other features of dialogue and interactions. First of all, there is an evident tendency to avoid dialogues, hesitate, and convey information indirectly, which resulted in the actual impossibility of interaction. The causes of a lack of directness include great social pressure, personal insecurity, and psychological barriers. Furthermore, the interpretation of the play brings a view of power conflict within the process of the communication into perspective. Power relationships between characters such as dominance and submission result in silence allowing some characters limited voice. Such a scenario only amplifies existing misconceptions and eliminates the chance of reconciliation that could be started by different parties involved in the conflict. Also, Politeness Theory shows how different tactics are used by characters in the attempt to avoid FTA so that the social relationships among them are not damaged; however, such efforts negatively interfere with actual communication creating confusion and interpersonal conflict among people. The findings of the study reveal that there are real-life communication issues in literary texts and effective communication strategies include the use of open-ended questions and the practice of effective communication in interpersonal relationships. As such, the study seeks to contribute to the understanding of communication breakdowns in literary texts by employing conversation analysis and politeness theory.

Keywords: Face work, FTA (face threatening act), dramatic speech, Turn Taking, negative face, positive face

1. Statement of the Problem

The author's challenge is explaining how a lack of communication among characters in a narrative might occur. Opposition and destructive outcomes follow this non-dialogue, which culminates in a tense atmosphere among Laura, Tom, and Amanda, who are lonely people. Isolation propels their escape from reality in different ways. While Laura escapes by living with her glass animals, Tom flees by drinking alcohol and going to see movies, whereas Amanda tries to revive her youth through her children.

Conversely, their inability to communicate effectively leads to significant problems. Instead of negotiating their conflicting opinions, they resort to hasty actions. The Wingfields' desperation has driven them to form false assumptions, which then become deceptive. Amanda, Tom, and Laura



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find themselves trapped in a cycle of despair, denial, and lies, hindering their ability to communicate (Presley 1990).

It will seek to unearth the relevance of communication breakdown as a major thematic concern in “The Glass Menagerie” vis-à-vis the characters’ psychic states, interpersonal conflicts, and overall ambience surrounding the play. The research question instead focuses on linguistics and sociocultural issues that shape communication behavior within the scope of narrative fiction.

2. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate and examine the language construction of non-communication in Tennessee Williams’ drama *The Glass Menagerie*. This paper will also analyze it from the point of view of dramatic discourse, courtesy theory, and talk-in-interaction. By conducting a conversation analysis and utilizing the politeness theory, the research seeks to expose some linguistic, social, and psychological causes of the characters’ inability to connect or understand one another.

3. Research questions

For that reason, this study sought answers to:

RQ1: What discursive strategies are employed by major characters to portray a lack of communication in *The Glass Menagerie*?

RQ2: How does the lack of communication in *The Glass Menagerie* manifest itself in the characters’ conversational strategies?

4. Research Methodology and Approach

Tennessee William’s play ‘*The Glass Menagerie*’ is a profound illustration of communication and failure within its context. The individuals in this drama are ensnared inside their own solitudes since they have not been able to effectively communicate with others on account of personal demons, norms and power relations existing among them. This investigation has the objective of analyzing acts of communicative strategies used by the characters in *The Glass Menagerie*, along with exploring their coping mechanisms towards incapability to communicate and social isolation.

“Qualitative descriptive approaches are well-suited for research that seek to provide extensive and rich descriptions of a phenomenon, especially when little is known about the subject” (Sandelowski, 2000, p. 124). Through conversation analysis, this study will explore how conversations are structured within the play, such as through turn-taking, adjacency pairs, and repair sequences. Furthermore, politeness theory would be used by this study to investigate how politeness was used by characters in *The Glass Menagerie* so as either not to make face-threatening acts more threatening or less malevolent or harmful ones more hurtful or not to make a disorderly state out of an orderly one.

4.1. The Study's Procedures

The play’s characters will be analyzed through text analysis to determine the communicative acts and strategies they use. Conversation analysis would be employed to collect data. The procedure entails looking at conversation structures and flow, turn-taking practices, and adjacency pairs to analyze communication patterns in a given play. “Conversation analysis is a method that seeks to uncover the underlying structure and orderliness of naturally occurring talk in interaction” (Hutchby & Wooffitt). This study also drew on politeness theory as an analytical device for examining politeness phenomena in *The Glass Menagerie*. Politeness theory postulates that people manage face-threatening actions when communicating with others to maintain relationships



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(Brown & Levinson, 1987). It was able to enlighten me on how polite one can get or how much rudeness they can let out without being seen as rude among the characters involved in this drama. To grasp some aspects of nonverbal communication and social settings, I decided to watch most plays. Some clarity questions were asked during debriefing sessions after the performance or rehearsal of the researcher's actors and actresses. Firstly, according to the principles of politeness theory, conversation analysis. Secondly, identifying how different conversational activities like requests may be expressed. Lastly, it would involve examining how politeness was used by each actor during conversations. The implications stemming from these results for communication theories and practice, as well as literature and drama, are discussed. A way to make sure that the results are reliable is triangulation. Hence, by employing the methods of conversation analysis and politeness theory, I will be able to explore the function and meaning of silence in Tennessee Williams' work in the play 'The Glass Menagerie.'

4.2 Data Collection and Analysis

The data for this study will be collected from the Tennessee Williams' play, The Glass Menagerie. The analysis of the data is going to take place in two steps. First, conversation analysis would be applied to reveal the patterns of talking and interaction of the characters. This analysis would concern both the arrangement of dialogue, temporal organization of the conversation, and the manners in which one puts together her turn at talk. Secondly, politeness theory would be used to try and identify manners in which the characters depicted in the two texts were polite in their interaction.

Certain scenes together with any dialogues and monologues related to the play would be carefully and systematically selected. These excerpts would be used for a detailed examination of the communication process and language behavior and context. To add some secondary sources into the equation in order to pursue a critique, scholarly articles, books and critical essays would be sampled to get an understanding of the current perceived interpretations of communication breakdown of the Glass Menagerie. These sources would serve as a source for making comparison and for validating emerging findings. While conducting the research and analyzing the data both from primary and secondary sources, strict ethical standards when it comes to citing and referencing, and copyright issues would be followed.

Textual data that will be analyzed is derived from The Glass Menagerie and a number of literal patterns of communication breakdowns will be identified. There would be tapes to show how interruptions, silences, misunderstandings and other aspects of poor communication occurred. The text would be monitored in terms of the specifics of the language employed by the characters during their interactions. The concept of politeness, and its related strategies, indirect speech acts, and linguistic aberrations identified and categorized. The data would be used to understand the ways in which the psychological states of different characters are causative of their communication failures. In analyzing the linguistic aspects of the show, repressed desires, emotional conflicts, and personal restrictions will be assessed.

5. Results and Discussion

The findings and discussion are presented in this work in the form of a research article with the title, 'The Lack of Communication in Tennessee Williams's The Glass Menagerie: Conversation



Analysis and Politeness Theory'. This section is intended to present the conclusion of the research and is aimed at providing a better understanding of the problem of communication as described in the play. Regarding the method applied, the investigators and researchers applied conversation analysis and politeness theory to examine the patterns of the character interactions in Williams' play "The Glass Menagerie." Based on these findings, this paper can give insights into various problems that result in communication breakdowns as depicted in this play. Some of the examples are social norms power relations and individual characters that lead into lack of communication between characters. By using the Conversation Analysis, it would be possible to note some episodes, for example, mishearing, hesitations, interruption etc which hindered their communication. Therefore marked, the applicatory use of Politeness Theory which pointed those characters mainly relied on the indirect and avoidance strategies to save face and sometimes shifted off confrontation when addressing each other. In this section, scholars examine more deeply what is found in results in relation to the glass menagerie's lack of communicative skills, hence making it more significant within a wider societal context.

5.1 Analysis of conversations

Conversational analysis can be used to examine how characters in The Glass Menagerie engage with one another, the language and social strategies they employ to negotiate meaning and power, and the implications of these exchanges for the play's themes and messages. "The entire play is dialogue, with intricate character interactions, especially within the Wingfield family" (Zanganeh 56). Such kind of analysis reveals how language is used by the characters to deal with their own positive faces, establish their identities amongst others and negotiate their relationships. For instance, there are many instances where indirectness and politeness strategies are used in this play. Amanda frequently uses positive politeness strategies when she tries to win over her son Tom so he can find a suitable partner for his sister Laura. On his part, however, Tom resorts to negative politeness strategies in order not to confront his mother directly while keeping his independent opinions intact.

LAURA [faintly]: Why did you do that, Mother? Why are you??

AMANDA: Why? Why? How old are you, Laura?

LAURA: Mother, you know my age.

AMANDA: I thought that you were an adult; it seems that I was mistaken." (Williams, 1944, p. 8).

Laura's uncertain remark, "Why did you do that, Mother?," opens the conversation. How come you are? This tone, which is rising, conveys hesitation and a need for explanation. Amanda, though, queries: "Why? Why? How old are you, Laura?" when Laura's speech crosses over into it, raising the possibility of a breakdown in the sharing of turns. Amanda's repeated use of the word "why?" could be an indication of irritation or perplexity, which may have resulted from Laura's query not being understood correctly. The conversation is disrupted by this interruption and repetition, which implies that the mother and daughter don't get along well. Her forceful declaration, "Mother, you know my age!" however, clears up any confusion that might have existed. Her firm tone demonstrates her attempt to make things clear and reestablish the common ground. Furthermore, Amanda uses prolonged language in her subsequent remark, "I thought that you were an adult; it seems that I was mistaken," which changes the tone of the exchange.

5.1.1 Adjacency Pairs



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This analysis uses conversational analysis to look at sequences of utterances and responses between characters in *The Glass Menagerie*. This technique dissects talks into their component elements so that they may be thoroughly investigated to identify recurring themes, trends, and underlying social dynamics.. .

One approach to this research is to look at adjacency pairs, which are two connected turns in conversation that occur one after the other. "Some common adjacency pairs in "The Glass Menagerie" include requests and compliance, questions and answers, compliments and acknowledgments, disagreements and repairs" (Beaurline 76).

For instance, in Act One Scene One there exist sequential adjacency pairs involving Amanda and Tom which reveal tension as well as conflict within their relationship. Amanda repeatedly tries to persuade Tom into finding a suitable suitor for Laura however Tom resists leading to series of disagreement followed by repairs.

TOM: No. You say there's so much in your heart that you can't describe to me. That's true of me, too. There's so much in my heart that I can't describe to you! So let's respect each other's (Offer)

AMANDA: She has an idea that you're not happy here (Disagreement)

TOM [gently]: What is it, Mother, that you want to discuss? (Compliance)

AMANDA: What gives her any idea? However, you do act strangely! I'm not criticizing; I understand that! (Repair), (Williams, 1944, p. 12).

The principle of Adjacency Pairs is exemplified in this scene from Tennessee Williams's "The Glass Menagerie," which highlights the subtleties of conversation between the characters Tom and Amanda. Adjacency pairs help us understand how one utterance provokes a particular response, thus making conversations coherent. This interaction starts with Tom saying, "No. You say there's so much in your heart that you can't describe to me. That's true of me, too. There's so much in my heart that I can't describe to you! So let's respect each other's..." categorizable as an "Offer" adjacency pair where he offers his feelings basically in return for Amanda telling him her own.

Amanda responds by saying, "She has an idea that you're not happy here," which disrupts the expected "Agreement" adjacency pair following Tom's "Offer." This change of conversational dynamics introduces an 'Offer' followed by a 'Disagreement' adjacency pair. Then Tom asks his mother: "What is it, Mother, that you want to discuss?" which is said in order to comply with her request (a type of compliance adjacency pair). The question posed by Tom relates back to what Amanda had previously said about herself. Consequently, the statement she makes afterwards: "What gives her any idea? However, you do act strangely! - I'm not criticizing, understand that!" also forms an "Offer" adjacency pair followed by "Repair." Although common responses to such an offer include accepting it or giving a counteroffer directly, this case tends to be different because there is no clear-cut acceptance or refusal. This response from Amanda contains elements of recognition, contradiction, and clarification, hence giving rise to intricate interactions within the conversation.

Another scene in the play shows the usage of adjacency pairs in dialog, which is quite expressive and conveys a lot of meaning to the audience. Here are several examples: Request/Compliance Pair: In Act One, Scene One, Amanda tries to persuade Tom to bring Laura a gentlemen caller. She employs a variety of methods, including flattery, guilt trips, and threats. Here is an example of a request-compliance combination from their conversation: Amanda: "Do you know what's so fantastic about tigers? They're excellent climbers...I just want you to be attracted to a great, dependable young man...that is all I want, sweetie." (Request)



Tom: "I haven't met any nice, steady young men, mother." (Refusal)

Amanda: "Well, you just have to try harder." (Repair), (Williams 1944 p. 15).

"You know the wonderful thing about tigers? They're wonderful climbers... I want you to be attracted to some nice steady young man... that's all I'm asking dear," starts the conversation by Amanda creating an offer adjacency pair. By giving her own views and desires, she sets the stage for what type of response is likely going to follow. Tom later replies with a resounding "I haven't met any nice steady young men mother?" which is a refusal adjacency pair; this directly contradicts his mother's suggestion expressing his unwillingness or incapability to do so. This also forms a repair adjacency pair, which was exemplified by Amanda's statement next as she tried to address Tom's rejection and offer him advice or encouragement on how he could deal with the problem he had raised himself. By doing so, it also emphasizes that there is more behind such responses, such as refusal followed by agreement patterns, which would depict, in this case, when they interacted together rather than mere words exchanged between two individuals.

Question-Answer Pair: In Act II, Scene 2, Tom avoids answering questions about his experiences at Rubicam Business College. He feels self-conscious and embarrassed about having to leave the college, so he tries to divert the conversation in another direction. An example question-answer pair in her talk with Jim could be:

JIM: [grinning]: What was the matter?

TOM: Oh - with Laura? Laura is - terribly shy.

JIM: Shy, huh? It's unusual to meet a shy girl nowadays. I don't believe you ever mentioned you had a sister.

TOM: Well, now you know. I have one. Here is the Post-Dispatch. Do you want a piece of it? (Williams, 1944, p. 62).

The utterance commences with Jim's query, "What was it?" creating a question-answer pair. This inquiry raises an expectation for a certain kind of response to his question. For example, Tom responds, "Oh - with Laura? Laura is - terribly shy". This is the answer part in that pair that Tom provides. The answer to what Jim asked and requested fills in. Jim asks again, "Shy huh? It's rare to meet a shy girl nowadays. You never said anything about having a sister," which forms another Question-Answer Pair between him and Tom (19). Jim's question seeks clarification and allows Tom to provide more details about his sister, Laura.

Consequently, "Well, now you know I have one." He gave me the Post-Dispatch. Do you want some of it?" is an example of "Answer" in this case (19). However, there is also a non-sequitur because he offers a newspaper, thereby disrupting the usual structure of the Request-Response Pair. These interactions reflect exchanges between Jim and Tom, such as querying Laura and expressing curiosity levels through his questioning styles (22). In short responses, Tom revealed less information about his family because he was not willing to talk much about them (Williams, 1944, p. 87). Furthermore, introducing the newspaper seems like an attempt to divert attention from personal matters, creating uneasiness in discussing his own life issues.

5.1.2 Patterns of Turn Management

Turn management patterns are techniques people employ to control the flow of a conversation and the customs they follow in order to avoid interruptions and overlaps. Tom (narrating): "Man is by instinct a lover, a hunter, a fighter; but none of those instincts are given much play at the warehouse." (Page 87 of Williams, 1944).



In this passage from "The Glass Menagerie," we consider how Turn Management Patterns come into effect when we read Tom's narrative. "Tom, (Narrating) 'Man is by instinct a lover, a hunter, a fighter; but none of those instincts are given much play at the warehouse'" is an instance where dialogue is being managed in terms of the play. The monologic turn management pattern runs through Tom's narration without any interruption or overlap from other characters. This then allows him to say his thoughts without external influence. This pattern serves multiple purposes in the narrative. Firstly, we get to understand Tom more as a person and his own philosophies and introspections. The monologue acts like a window into his thoughts since he is able to express them without interruptions. Second, it broadens the narrative past direct character-to-character interactions. Tom's narration adds depth to the storytelling by offering a broader perspective on the themes and events of the play. Moreover, it highlights Tom's role as both character and narrator at once so that what he says bridges us with what happens in the unfolding story, thereby making him a channel through which all these take place in the drama. Lastly, this turn management pattern permits Tom to express himself more openly and emotionally as well.

Without interruptions or overlaps due to others talking alongside him, directly expressing his frustrations and feelings connected with his work-life experiences with a warehouse to the audience depicts frustration and emotions related to his workplace experiences at the warehouse (Williams 1944, p. 87).

5.1.3 Positive Politeness

In *The Glass Menagerie*, maintaining face is a concern for the characters; however, they use different strategies to manage this. For instance, Amanda usually uses positive politeness, which includes compliments and flattery, among other things, with the aim of saving her own face as well as not ruining others' faces. In fact, when she asks Tom about his appearance in Scene 1, she says, "What a lovely little box! Did you bring that box out here or did you buy it out here?" (Williams, 1944, p.88). Here, she softens her question, making it non-threatening by using a compliment (lovely). On the other hand, at times, Tom uses negative politeness, e.g., hedging words and indirectness, to avoid intruding on people's privacy. In Scene I, for example, when Amanda enquires from him about his occupation, he answers back thus; "I work at a shoe warehouse. I sorta stumble into it." (Williams, 1944, p.78). Therefore, he makes use of such hedge words like "sorta," in order to soften his response and not boast about his job, which may threaten Amanda's face. Laura, who is shy and introverted, often employs avoidance strategies that allow her to manage their face without threatening others' faces. For example, when Jim talks to her about her glass collection in scene seven, she responds by saying, "I just have a few old things in my room." "She does not give Jim an answer directly while at the same time downplaying what seems like a strong bond with these items since this might offend Jim.

According to Brown and Levinson's politeness theory, positive politeness refers to strategies used by speakers to emphasize their similarities with addressees as well as show admiration and respect towards them. Positive politeness entails offering compliments expressing solidarity, giving assistance and agreeing. Thus, there are examples of positive politeness in *The Glass Menagerie*. For example, Tom asks Laura if he can smoke in her apartment in the opening scene. He uses positive politeness by saying, "Mind if I smoke?" The word "mind" acknowledges that it is Laura's house and shows he respects her space and feelings.



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While trying to make Tom invite Jim, a coworker, for dinner, Amanda employs positive politeness to appeal to his sense of responsibility. She says, "It would be so nice for your mother and sister to meet someone who's not connected with the warehouse!" In other words, she acknowledges that Tom is a son as well as a brother therefore; it implies that he must bring new friends into their lives. On the occasion of coming over for dinner, Jim employs positive politeness, showing respect to both Amanda and Laura. He comments on how hospitable Amanda has been while saying "You have a very lovely home, Mrs. Wingfield." By doing this it shows that Amanda had put some effort into creating an ambiance that was welcoming thereby setting the right mood for the dinner party.

With Jim alone with her, it is here that he uses positive politeness on Laura. He speaks about his shyness by stating "You know what I judge people by? Their potential." This suggests that she has something valuable, and it also indicates Jim's willingness to facilitate her development of such ambition.

5. Tom, when he is about to leave forever, uses positive politeness to ease the blow of his going away. This statement is technically true, but it says politely that he will be leaving home forever. Tom doesn't want Amanda and Laura to feel too bad when he leaves, so he employs positive politeness. Generally, "The Glass Menagerie" has many examples where positive politeness is used by characters in order to maintain social relationships, show respect and admiration, and manipulate and control the behavior of others.

5.1.4 Negative Politeness

Negative politeness, on the other hand, avoids threatening another person's negative face or desire not to be imposed upon or constrained by others' actions (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Negative politeness is meant to minimize imposition or threat to the hearer's negative face and can be achieved through the use of indirect language, hedging techniques, apologies, and deference, among others. The Glass Menagerie shows several instances where characters employ this form of politeness towards each other. For instance, after Tom decides to leave the dinner table, his mother insists that he stay with them. Tom replies, 'I don't believe I will, Mother. Thank you.' (Williams 1944: p79) Here, Tom does not refuse her request directly, making him appear respectful while refusing her request.

Amanda also apologizes for irritating Tom in one instance, which also represents negative politeness in this book play. In Scene 4, she all cs stakes states, "I know I talk too much, but it's my anxiety that encourages me." (Williams 1944: p91) It is notable here that Amanda recognizes that what she was doing might have constituted an imposition on his negative face; thus, she tries mitigating it by apologizing for such behaviour while providing reasons behind it. Furthermore, we observe more instances of negative politeness during Jim's conversation with Laura in The Glass Menagerie. When Jim first enters the Wingfield house, he greets Laura by saying, "Excuse me, I'm Jim." Here, Jim is polite because he knows that Laura does not like people infringing on her privacy, so to avoid this imposition, he does not assume she knows his identity. Other examples are important in applying the theory in the play, and some of these include:

1. Tom: "I didn't mean to speak sharply..." (Scene 1) Tom employs negative politeness as he apologizes for having spoken sharply to his mom, Amanda. In this case, he admits that his tone might have been insolent and tries to reduce its impact on her face.



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2. Amanda: "If you don't like your seat, why don't you ask your sister to exchange with you?" (Scene 2) This time around, Amanda uses negative politeness to suggest an alternative to Tom's uneasiness without imposing it on him. She hints at a solution but leaves it up to Tom whether or not he wants to go through with that.

3. Tom: "I beg your pardon mother. I didn't intend to—" (Scene 3) At this moment, again, Tom resorts to negative politeness when apologizing for having interrupted Amanda during their argument. He accepts that his action was wrong and restores Amanda's face with this action, tending towards the restoration of her dignity.

4. Laura: "I-- thought maybe if you told him about my glass collection, that would--" (Scene 7). In this example, Laura uses negative politeness to suggest a way for Amanda to approach Jim and ask him to come over for dinner. She does not directly ask Amanda to do this but instead hints at a possible solution that might preserve Jim's face.

5. Tom: "I'm sorry, I can't go out with you tonight. I have some writing to do." (Scene 5) In this example, Tom uses negative politeness to decline an invitation from his coworker Jim. He does not want to offend Jim, but he also has other priorities that prevent him from accepting the invitation. By using negative politeness, he tries to soften the blow of his rejection. Overall, negative politeness is used by the characters in *The Glass Menagerie* to maintain social harmony and avoid causing offence or threatening each other's negative face needs.

5.1.5 Off Record Strategies

To bypass the addressee's face, off-record strategies are covert and allusive ways of conveying meaning that express neither impositions nor threats (Watts, 2003, p. 126). This type of strategy often relies on implicature, where the meaning is conveyed through implication rather than direct expression. Off-record strategies can be used for both positive and negative politeness. For instance, "off the record" could be a way to show friendship or solidarity with the addressee in case of positive politeness, while in case of negative politeness, it would help to avoid threatening their negative face. Hinting is an off-record strategy used in politeness theory to convey a message indirectly without being explicit. "Thus, it allows the speaker to communicate their intentions without imposing them on the listener, thus preserving the listener's face" (Watts, 2003, p. 134). In other words, hinting enables the speaker to communicate in a politer way without making demands or requests that could be perceived as impolite. To begin with, there was no shortage of examples of indirect requests within *The Glass Menagerie*, especially when Amanda was trying to convince Tom to find a suitable suitor for Laura, using hints instead of other options like direct persuasions. For instance, she says, "a nice young man...a boy who seems to be paying a little attention" (Williams, 1944), to imply that he is looking for someone for Laura whom he would bring home as her matchmaker forever for noble calling objective but unconsciously she wants him really do this and take charge of his sister's life which he has been avoiding since childhood/endnote]. Thus, she does not impose her will on Tom but at least reveals her intention while still preserving his face/his face.

Tom also uses indirect language such as "I'm like my father. The bastard son of a bastard" (Williams) when speaking about why he prefers spending his every evening watching movies instead of looking for a decent job where he could earn money. This strategy prevents Tom from confronting Amanda head-on to keep his reputation intact, and yet he passes on the message indirectly. In both examples, this strategy enables the speakers to hint at their intentions in a roundabout manner without directly saying so.



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Indirect requests are a type of off-record strategy used to make a request without directly asking for it (Watts, 2003). In the context of the play *The Glass Menagerie*, characters use indirect requests to maintain a positive face and avoid being too direct or impolite.

For example, when Tom wants to go to the movies, he does not directly ask his mother, Amanda, if he can go. Instead, he hints at it indirectly:

TOM: I'm going to the movies.

AMANDA: Yes, that's right. After we made fools of ourselves, you did not stop. I run and go to the movies!

TOM: Okay then! The more you shout about my selfishness to me, the quicker I'll leave, and I won't go for the movie (Williams, 1944, p. 114).

The dialogue starts with Amanda asking Tom, "Where are you going?" While this may seem like an ordinary question regarding Tom's place of destination, it could be taken as a disguised plea for him to reconsider his plans or put their family needs ahead of his own gratification. In reply, Tom states, "I'm going to the movies", which denotes his intention to follow his personal interests and desires. After that, there follows Amanda's statement: "That's right, now that you've had us make such fools of ourselves", which is indirect criticism or disapproval. Through this utterance, she implies her dissatisfaction indirectly by expressing embarrassment or negative outcomes from actions that he undertook while suggesting that he should have thought twice before taking those steps because she expected him to care about their feelings in such moments. Moreover, further on, Amanda adds: "Don't let anything interfere with your selfish pleasure I just go, go, go - to the movies!" In this case, she expresses her disappointment and anger non-verbally towards Tom, whom she believes is very self-centred.

She suggests that they are a burden beneath him when she says, "Nothing must interfere with your selfish pleasure. I just want to go to the pictures." She shows her frustration at what she assumes are Tom's priorities ahead of their welfare as one unit.

Tom responds, saying; "All right; i will!" He has a rebellious attitude towards Amanda because he wants to defy her indirect request.

He tries sarcasm, flipping back at her criticisms, suggesting that rather than discourage him from going out seeing a film as per what she wants him to do, it will only make him more determined to go to the movies. There is another case in which Amanda tells Tom that he should find a gentleman caller for his sister Laura.

Rather than saying it directly, she uses an indirect request:

LAURA: I'm not expecting any gentleman callers.

AMANDA [crossing out to kitchenette. Airily]: Sometimes they come when they are least expected! Why, I remember one Sunday afternoon in Blue Mountain -[Enters kitchenette.]

TOM: I know what's coming

LAURA: Yes. But let her tell it.

TOM: Again?

LAURA: She loves to tell it. (Williams, 1944, p. 137).

Laura opens the conversation by saying, "I'm not expecting any gentleman callers." Her statement can be taken to mean that she doesn't wait for or want any romantic guests to come. It can also be inferred that she does not like hanging out or dating boys and girls. Amanda crosses out to the kitchenette and says, "Sometimes they come when they are least expected! Why, I remember one



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Sunday afternoon in Blue Mountain?" In her own example, Amanda is indirectly pointing out that even when Laura thinks it is impossible for guys to look for her, experience has shown otherwise. This implies that she wants Laura to maintain an open mind on matters of love or perhaps believe in miracles themselves. Tom interjects into Amanda's words by saying at the end of them, "I know what's coming." This comment signals Tom's familiarity with what his mother will say next. His remark suggests a certain pattern in their conversations, thus indicating that this information comes up regularly in their talks. Laura recognizes this anticipation of Tom's and replies, "Yes. But let her tell it." Laura lets us know that she is aware of how much her mother enjoys sharing this story.

All in all, "indirect requests are used to maintain positive face and avoid direct confrontation or impoliteness in the conversation" (Watts 150). In *The Glass Menagerie*, the characters use this strategy to relate with one another without offending anyone. Sarcasm is one kind of off-record strategy where individuals express something different from or contrary to what they really meant through their words.

The Glass Menagerie provides various instances where irony is used by characters in order to reveal true emotions towards someone else indirectly through indirectly criticizing them. Like when he tells Amanda that he has asked Jim over for dinner, he says, "I've asked a friend over for dinner. I hope you don't mind" (Scene 6). By pretending indifference, he is being ironic as he knows that his mother would love to have a potential suitor for Laura come over for dinner.

5.1.6 Face-Threatening Acts

According to the politeness theory, face-threatening activities are deeds or words that potentially do harm to a person's positive or negative face. A person's need for validation and affirmation is represented by their positive face, but their yearning for autonomy and freedom from authority is represented by their negative face (Levinson, 1983). Common instances of FTAs in talks are disagreements and criticisms, which can be handled by using tactful techniques to reduce the danger of confrontation. Positive politeness methods such as praise, agreement, and shows of solidarity can help with weight management. Such strategies are utilized to avoid threats presented in a favorable light; they also demonstrate that the speaker respects the addressee's beliefs. For example, when Tom disagrees with his mother's plan for Laura, he uses a positive politeness method to acknowledge her concern over their family: "I know it's important to you, and I'll do my best" (Williams 176).

5. Conclusion

Disputes and criticism as some of the face-threatening acts can be mitigated by using positive politeness strategies. These strategies affirm and respect the positive face needs of the interlocutor, such as their desire to be liked, appreciated, and approved of.

In Tennessee Williams's *The Glass Menagerie*, a theme of lack of communication runs through it, leading to a sense of isolation and a dysfunctional Wingfield family. By employing conversation analysis (CA) and politeness theory, this study has provided an extensive examination of the failures in communication between these characters, which reveal what affects their connection and understanding. It is important to note that conversation analysis has played an important role in breaking down how conversations are structured and organized among characters, thereby identifying patterns that hinder successful communication. For example, the turn-taking approach in dialogues made it possible to identify deficiencies or breaks within conversations where



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overlaps would have improved understanding between characters. “Tom’s frequent interruptions and Amanda’s dominating discourse have exemplified the struggles to establish a fair and balanced conversational environment” Not only do these disruptions cause tensions, but they also stop the speakers from expressing their mind freely rather than being themselves.

Moreover, Laura does not understand what she wants from Tom, even though he tries his best to take care of her. This is because her timid nature hinders her from articulating herself efficiently or explaining her sentiments due to social phobia. Nevertheless, when they attempt to reconcile after such breakdowns, there is no suggestion of solutions, issues remain unsolved, but it increases the emotional estrangement between them. In an attempt to manage face-threatening situations in social communication, different people have employed politeness theory. This could be considered as the characters’ attempt at rapport establishment without negativity through negative politeness. However, all their efforts most of the time fails because they are occupied by insecurities and this makes them tense and leads to emotional pull away. So, it can be stated that there were structural issues in the Wingfield family in particular, and these politeness strategies did not work.

Thus, the absence of communication in *The Glass Menagerie* speaks volumes about the characters’ interactions as well as personal development. They live in complete isolation and they are unable to communicate coherently, which makes them crave for someone who would listen and comprehend them. From this play, it becomes clear how families can fail to communicate such that they begin to disintegrate leaving behind the dreams that could have been realized if only they had remained united. From the above analysis of CA and Politeness Theory that has been applied to this study, the following factors are evident in the communication breakdown in the *Glass Menagerie*. Thus, by following the framework laid down by Tennessee Williams in *The Glass Menagerie*, one can see a lack of communication as a major theme in a apparently ‘normal’ family. In this paper, the discursive nature of the play has been discussed by comparing it to the Conversation Analysis (CA) and Politeness Theory approaches, in order to reveal the interactional asymmetry that hampers genuine communication and increases characters’ emotional isolation within the play. This research sheds light into how dire consequences stem from poor communication but at the same time and as it was initially described, it serves as a reminder on the significance of embracing open dialogue in order to establish a true and genuine connection that would enhance our understanding of ourselves.

6.1. Suggestions for Further Research

This research has succeeded in giving an understanding of non-communication in *The Glass Menagerie* by Tennessee Williams. However, there is a need to have other investigations done as they explore several other features of the play in order to improve the understanding of the dimension that it has. If dealing with gender inequalities, body language, cultural or historical reference or perceived or real effects of technology on communication for instance, Dong is must more intense on these specific facets so as to accumulate even more information from prevailing status in communication networks.



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The Role of Gender in Communication: In what way does gender factor to the relational communication in the play *The Glass Menagerie*? How does the distribution of roles between the characters along the gender divide interfere with their interaction allowing developing power relations within the family unit?

Nonverbal Communication in "The Glass Menagerie": Find relevance of other forms of gestures other than spoken words such as, communication through body language and physical movements, and via facial gestures. Decide on whether nonverbal cues facilitate or hinder conversation between characters. **Interplay between Language and Memory:** He saw how language must affect memory by analyzing how memories determine a character's language use while language is a tool that can either preserve, or lie about past events in "The glass menagerie."

Communication and Mental Health: What is a relationship between mental health and portrayal of communication evidenced by "The Glass Menagerie"? How much does it contribute emotional stability and the manifestation of chronic mental disorders if they cannot communicate properly? It is necessary to consider such reasons why they act like that. **Cultural and Historical Context:** How are culture and history linked with the manner in which people communicate with one another? Could there have been cultural beliefs during some of the time periods that may have prohibited interpersonal communication to occur optimally?

6.2 Implications of the Study

Consequents are such meanings other than result or outcome. Here are some implications based on study titled *A Freudian Study of the Concepts of Guilt and Desire in Ian McEwan's Atonement*:

Literary Interpretation Enhancement: In light of the Freudian interpretation of guilt and desire, this paper enriches knowledge of the motives and behavior of the characters of *Atonement*. Thus, literature students and the aficionados can use it as a similar model for the consideration of other literary pieces, which will enhance their psychological understanding of novels.

Psychological Depth in Literature: The study enriches the understanding of such psychology in the literary production applied by ideas of Freud introducing the approaches that allow discerning inner struggles of characters. This helps the readers to realize the way human emotions and lusts are depicted in fiction, and thereby enhances their understanding of human nature and depiction in written works of art.

Interdisciplinary Insights: The gaps between literature and psychology pointing at the importance of the inter-disciplinary in analyzing granted and further research opportunities. By so doing, it will motivate other scholars from both the literary field to seek partnerships that seek to understand points of interface of literature and psychological theories in order to enhance knowledge base of each field.

Cultural and Societal Reflections: Psychosocial determinants that result in guilt or desire in cultural Freudian values. The revealed findings of the paper could be useful in explaining how societal expectations shape one's internal thoughts leading them into internal conflicts/dialogue about self and society as a whole.

Personal Reflection and Empathy In particular, the analysis of characters' psychological states in this study is aimed at encouraging readers to be sympathetic towards others and themselves. This



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can be done by understanding the misgivings that they have and how this can help them to connect literature with what they are feeling.

To sum it up, your study has greater implications of guilt and desire in “Atonement.” They include better literary interpretations, interdisciplinary studies, more insights about authorial intent, societal implications, pedagogical applications, personal feelings, and future research areas within literature and psychology.

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