



**ILLOCUTIONARY FORCES IN EXPRESSIVE SPEECH ACTS AS
REFLECTION OF DEPRESSION BY THE MAIN CHARACTER OF
SYLVIA PLATH'S *THE BELL JAR***

A THESIS

**In Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements
for S-1 Degree Majoring in Linguistics in the English Department,
Faculty of Humanities, Diponegoro University**

Submitted by:

Zahrani Febriana Adha

13020122130055

**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
DIPONEGORO UNIVERSITY
SEMARANG**

2026



**ILLOCUTIONARY FORCES IN EXPRESSIVE SPEECH ACTS
AS REFLECTION OF DEPRESSION BY THE MAIN
CHARACTER OF SYLVIA PLATH'S *THE BELL JAR***

A THESIS

**In Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements
for S-1 Degree Majoring in Linguistics in the English Department,
Faculty of Humanities, Diponegoro University**

Submitted by:

Zahrani Febriana Adha

13020122130055

**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
DIPONEGORO UNIVERSITY
SEMARANG**

2026

PRONOUNCEMENT

I honestly declare that this thesis is entirely written by myself without taking any works from other researchers in any university, in diploma degree, S-1, S-2, and S-3 degrees. I also confirm that I do not take any material from other works except from the references mentioned.

Semarang, 12 June 2026



Zahrani Febriana Adha



MOTTO AND DEDICATION

I was supposed to be having the time of my life.

— **Sylvia Plath, *The Bell Jar***

I took a deep breath and listened to the old brag of my heart. I am, I am, I am.

— **Sylvia Plath, *The Bell Jar***



This thesis is dedicated
to my beloved mother, father, brother
and those whom I respect and honor.

APPROVAL

**ILLOCUTIONARY FORCES IN EXPRESSIVE SPEECH ACTS AS
REFLECTION OF DEPRESSION BY THE MAIN CHARACTER OF
SYLVIA PLATH'S *THE BELL JAR***

Written by:

Zahrani Febriana Adha

13020122130055

Is approved by thesis advisor

On 30th April 2026

Thesis Advisor



Prihantoro, S.S., M.A., Ph.D.

NIP. 198306292006041002

The Head of English Department



Dr. Drs. Oktiva Herry Candra, M.Hum

NIP. 196710041993031003

VALIDATION

ILLOCUTIONARY FORCES IN EXPRESSIVE SPEECH ACTS AS REFLECTION OF DEPRESSION BY THE MAIN CHARACTER OF SYLVIA PLATH'S *THE BELL JAR*

Submitted by:

Zahrani Febriana Adha

13020122130055

Approved by

Strata-1 Thesis Examination Committee
Faculty of Humanities, Diponegoro University
On 12 June 2026

Chairman

Drs. Oktiva Herry Chandra, M.Hum.

NIP. 196710041993031003

Member

Dini Sri Istiningdias, S.S., M.Hum.

NIP. 199006272024062001

Member

Prihantoro, S.S., M.A., Ph.D.

NIP. 198306292006041002

Accepted and declared in Semarang on 12 June 2026

The Dean of Faculty of Humanities



Prof. Dr. Alamsyah, S.S., M.Hum.

NIP. 197211191998021002

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

All praises belong to Allah SWT who has given the writer His great blessings and mercies until this thesis comes to completion. This acknowledgement is dedicated for the writer to express sincere appreciation to all people who have offered their support in the writing process. Words cannot express the writer's gratitude for all the invaluable assistance and encouragement she received.

The deepest appreciation and gratitude are extended to Mr. Prihantoro, S.S., M.A., Ph.D., as the thesis advisor, who has generously dedicated his time and expertise to provide constructive suggestions and continuous guidance. His unwavering support and perceptive suggestions have been essential in completing this thesis.

Furthermore, this thesis would not have been complete without the support and encouragement from others. Therefore, the writer would like to express her gratitude to the following:

1. Prof. Dr. Alamsyah, S.S., M.Hum., as the Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, Diponegoro University.
2. Dr. Drs. Oktiva Herry Chandra, M.Hum., as the Head of the English Department of the Faculty of Humanities, Diponegoro University.
3. All lectures of English Department of Diponegoro University, who have shared their precious knowledge to the writer.
4. The writer's beloved mother, father, and brother who always love and support the writer to finish her education.

5. The writer's precious friends, Josephira and Gesit who give happiness and joy throughout her college life and always support and motivate the writer to complete her thesis.
6. All of English Department class of 2022 who have accompanied the writer throughout the college life.
7. Indonesian citizens whose tax contributions have made it possible for the writer to complete her education through Bidikmisi KIP-Kuliah scholarship program.

The writer acknowledge that this thesis is far from being perfect and could be improved. The writer would greatly appreciate any recommendation and constructive suggestions to improve this thesis. The writer hopes that this thesis will be useful to those who wish to learn from it.

Semarang, 12 June 2026



Zahrani Febriana Adha

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TITLE.....	i
PRONOUNCEMENT	ii
MOTTO AND DEDICATION	iii
APPROVAL.....	iv
VALIDATION	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS	viii
ABSTRACT	xi
CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background of the study	1
1.2 Research Questions	2
1.3 Objectives of the Study	3
1.4 Previous Studies	3
1.5 Scope of the Study	7
CHAPTER II THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK & METHODOLOGY	8
2.1 Theoretical Framework	8
2.1.1 Speech Acts	8
2.1.2 Expressive speech acts	8
2.1.3 Illocutionary Forces in Expressive speech acts	9
2.1.3.1 Thanking	9
2.1.3.2 Apologizing	9
2.1.3.3 Greet and Welcome	9
2.1.3.4 Complaint	10
2.1.3.5 Condolence	10
2.1.3.6 Lament	10
2.1.3.7 Protest	11
2.1.3.8 Deplore	11
2.1.3.9 Praise	11
2.1.3.10 Boast	11
2.1.3.11 Compliment	12
2.1.3.12 Congratulate	12

2.1.4 Felicity Condition	12
2.1.4.1 Propositional Content.....	13
2.1.4.2 Preparatory Condition	13
2.1.4.3 Sincerity Condition	13
2.1.4.4 Essential Condition	13
2.1.5 Felicity Condition of Expressive speech acts	14
2.1.6 Negative Cognitive Bias	14
2.1.6.1 Arbitrary Inference.....	14
2.1.6.2 Selective Abstraction	15
2.1.6.3 Overgeneralization	15
2.1.6.4 Maximization and Minimization.....	15
2.1.6.5 Personalization	15
2.1.6.6 Dichotomous Thinking	15
2.2 Methodology	15
2.2.1 Type of Research.....	16
2.2.2 Data, Population, and Sampling.....	16
2.2.3 Method of Data Collection.....	17
2.2.4 Method of Data Analysis	17
CHAPTER III RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS.....	19
3.1. Results.....	19
3.1.1. Classification of Illocutionary Forces in Expressive Speech Acts.....	19
3.1.2. Classification of Negative Cognitive Bias	22
3.2. Discussions.....	24
3.2.1. Expressive Speech Acts	24
3.2.1.1. Complaint.....	24
3.2.1.2. Protest.....	30
3.2.1.3. Lament.....	34
3.2.2. Negative Cognitive Bias Reflected in Esther’s Expressive Speech Acts	36
3.2.2.1. Arbitrary Inference.....	37
3.2.2.2. Selective Abstraction	40
3.2.2.3. Overgeneralization	43

3.2.2.4. Minimization.....	44
CHAPTER IV CONCLUSION.....	45
REFERENCES.....	47
APPENDIX.....	50



ABSTRACT

The Bell Jar is a novel written by Sylvia Plath in 1963 that explores feminism and psychological themes. This study is aimed at analyzing the expressive speech acts used by the novel's main character, Esther Greenwood, during her depression and how they reflect her depression. The method of this study is descriptive qualitative and the data are expressive speech acts produced by Esther Greenwood that related to depression during her depression. Using theory of expressive speech acts and theory of negative cognitive bias, this study will find how illocutionary forces in expressive speech acts reflect Esther's depression. The findings show that Esther used expressive speech acts in 23 utterances during her depression in the novel. The illocutionary forces that appeared are complaint, protest, and lament, while other illocutionary forces did not appear. These expressive speech acts reflect some negative cognitive biases such as arbitrary inference, selective abstraction, generalization, and minimization. These negative cognitive biases indicate that Esther tended to think and respond negatively which is reflected in expressive speech acts.

Keywords: *Illocutionary forces, Expressive speech acts, Depression, Negative cognitive bias*

