

ANXIETY AND EXISTENCE IN SYLVIA PLATH'S

***THE BELL JAR* (1966) NOVEL:**

AN EXISTENTIALIST APPROACH.

PUBLICATION ARTICLES



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APPROVAL

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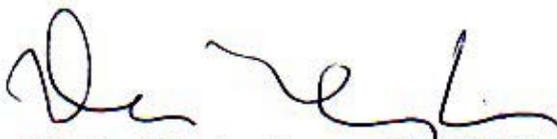
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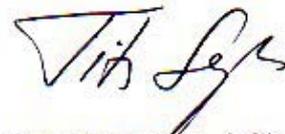
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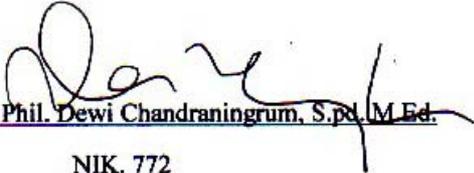
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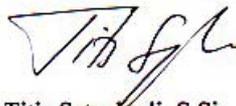
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**ANXIETY AND EXISTENCE IN SYLVIA PLATH'S *THE BELL JAR* (1966) NOVEL:
AN EXISTENTIALIST APPROACH.**

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ABSTRACT

RIYAN HARYANI. A320 090 105. ANXIETY AND EXISTENCE IN SYLVIA PLATH'S (1966) NOVEL: AN EXISTENTIALIST APPROACH. RESEARCH PAPER. SCHOOL OF TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION. MUHAMMADIYAH UNIVERSITY OF SURAKARTA. 2013.

The object of this study is The Bell Jar novel that is written by Sylvia Plath. This study about how anxiety and existence of the major character are reflected in The Bell Jar novel written by Sylvia Plath published in 1966. These objectives of the study are, firstly to analyze the novel based on structural elements, secondly to analyze the novel based on the structural and the existentialist approach. This study is a qualitative study. The data sources are divided into two, namely primary data source and secondary data source. In collecting data, the writer reads the novel comprehensively and reads some related books to find out theory, data, and information required. For technique of the data analysis, the writer uses descriptive technique. The result of the study comes to the three following conclusions. First, based on structural element in The Bell Jar, it shows that character and characterization, setting, plot, point of view, and theme. Second, based on existentialist theory by Sartre, the writer focuses on analyzing the structure of personality, which consists of the Being, Existence before Essence, Consciousness (Cogito), Freedom to Choose, Anxiety, Transcendence of Ego, and Nothingness. Three, based on the existentialist analysis human have different anxiety and existence, their existence are based on different being, choice, and act. The human's existence is meaningful if he starts his being which has a good action to show his life purpose.

.Key Words: Anxiety and Existence, *The Bell Jar*, Existentialist Approach.

1. INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study: Anxiety is a normal human experience. Anxiety "is characterized by a diffuse, unpleasant, vague sense of apprehension, often accompanied by autonomic symptoms, such as headache, perspiration, palpitations, tightness in the chest, and mild stomach discomfort". In psychology, a feeling of dread, fear, or apprehension, often with no clear justification. Anxiety differs from true fear in that it is typically the product of subjective, internal emotional states rather than a response to a clear and actual danger.

To exist in reality is demonstrated in experience. Existence is a conditional notion, therefore existence is not self-subsisting. However, if god exists, and he is infinitely eternal, and we exist before being transmigrated into bodily vessels, thus prior being in a state of "forms" as Plato has it, it follows to reason alas we always existed as well with god.

The Bell Jar was first published in London, England, in January 1963, less than one month before its author, Sylvia Plath, committed suicide by asphyxiation. Published under the pseudonym of Victoria Lucas, the novel opened to some positive reviews, although Plath was distressed by its reception. In 1966, *The Bell Jar* was published in England under Plath's real name. The novel is written using a series of flashbacks that show up parts of Esther's past. The flashbacks primarily deal with Esther's relationship with Buddy Willard. The reader also learns more about her early college years.

There are four points that make the writer be interested in analyzing this novel. The first point is about the characteristics and the characterizations in that novel. The second point is *The Bell Jar* novel is not only well made, but also inspirational. For education, the novel gives a message that we have to brave to choose of what we are going to be. It gives inspirations to the readers that bad girl can be a good girl, even more so human beings. The third point is that novel can take some messages and something to learn about the influence of enemy, friendship and love on someone personality. Finally, the last reason is to supply theoretical framework in the research of literature in the English Department, it can be useful for other students, particularly students of English Department in Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta (UMS) or another universities in Surakarta as a reference for the research needs that have the same theory with the theory used in this research is Psychological Approach. So it can be used to be the previous study in their research.

Problem Statement is how is Esther's anxiety and existence in *The Bell Jar* Novel by Sylvia Plath's?"

Limitation of the Study is the researcher focuses on the analysis of the anxiety and existence occurred on the major character in *The Bell Jar* novel, Sylvia Plath, especially viewed by Existentialist Approach.

Objective of the Study is to analyze the novel based on the structural elements by finding characters and characterizations, setting, point of view, plot, and theme. To analyze

Esther's anxiety and existence in *The Bell Jar* novel (1966) based on Sartre's principles of existentialist.

Literature Review In this research, the writer is not the first person who analysis about *The Bell Jar* by Sylvia Plath, but it does mean that the writer only plagiarizer the other research. The novel of *The Bell Jar* by Sylvia Plath is an interesting. As for as the writer concerns, the research on the novel of *The Bell Jar* has been conducted by ten students.

The research that relates to the writers study has been done by Caroline J. Smith (College Literature, 2010) entitled "*The Feeding of Young Women: Sylvia Plath's The Bell Jar, Mademoiselle Magazine, and the Domestic Ideal*" on her research. In this research is focusing on 1953 issues of *Mademoiselle* magazine, the year in which Plath's novel takes place. "The Feeding of Young Women" considers the way in which Plath uses significant moments of eating throughout her novel to underscore the intense hold that *Mademoiselle's* domestic, behavioral models have on Esther's sense of self.

Darby Dyer (College of Art and Science, 2007) entitled "*Mental Illness in Literature: Case Studies of Sylvia Plath and Charlotte Perkins Gilman*". This study examines mental illness in literature, with a focus on Charlotte Perkins Gilman's "The Yellow Wallpaper" and Sylvia Plath's *The Bell Jar*, the primary texts of the research, and develops similarities and personal connections between the authors and their mentally unstable main characters.

Mohd.Yasin Sharif (IIU STUDIES, 2006) entitled "*Ambivalence: The Divided Self in Sylvia Plath's Poetry*". Ambivalence, mixed good and bad feelings about particular entity, individual or circumstance, became a ruling passion in Sylvia Plath's life. These ambivalence and breakdown are closely dealt with in her poems.

Rosi Smith (America, 2008) entitled "*Seeing Through the Bell Jar: Distorted Female Identity in Cold War America*". Through the character of Esther in Sylvia Plath's *The Bell Jar*, this essay investigates the struggle of middle-class white women coming of age in 1950s America to achieve personalized identities.

Different from that previous study, this research focuses on an existentialist approach about how anxiety and existence represented in *The Bell Jar* Novel. The researcher is interested in ANALYZING ANXIETY AND EXISTENCE IN SYLVIA PLATH'S *THE BELL JAR* (1966) NOVEL: AN EXISTENTIALIST APPROACH.

II. Research Method

In this research, the writer applies qualitative research. The data sources are library and literary data. Its purpose is to analyze the novel using existentialist approach. The steps to conduct the research are as follow: (1) determining the type of the study, (2) determining the object of the study, (3) determining data and data source, (4) determining technique of data collection, and finally, (5) determining technique of data analysis.

There are two types of data, namely primary and secondary data. The primary data source is *The Bell Jar* novel by Sylvia Plath. The secondary data sources are books or any information related to the practice of anxiety and existence that support the existentialist approach.

The technique of data collecting are : Reading the novel comprehensively, identifying the topic of the novel, determining the major character that will be analyzed, reading some related books to find out theory, data, and information required, taking notes of information in both primary data and secondary data source, arranging the data into several parts based on classification, analyzing the data of research on Sartre theory of Existentialist *Being Nothingness*, and drawing conclusion based on the analyzed data.

In analyzing the data, the writer uses anexistentialist approach and applies it by using the descriptive approach. The steps taken by the writer in analyzing the data are as follows: the first is analyzing the data based on it is structural elements. Focus will be paid on the structural analysis of the novel. The second step is analyzing the data based on existentialist approach. Focus will be paid on the meaning of anxiety and existence.

III. Research Finding

In the research finding, the writer takes some points to analyze *The Bell Jar* (1966).

A. Structural Analysis of *The Bell Jar* (1966) Novel

1. Characters and Characterization

In *The Bell Jar*, there are major characters and minor characters. The major characters are Esther Greenwood, Buddy Willard, and Mrs. Greenwood.

a. Major Character

1). Esther Greenwood

She is a girl, 19th years old. She is smart and she gets the scholarship of Philomena Guinea, a wealthy novelist who went in her college in the early nineteen

hundreds. *Physically*, she has 178cm of the body, brown eyes, and brown hair. *Morally*, long time ago she was happy with her boyfriend. When she knows that her boyfriend lied to her, she is a sensitive girl, she always has a negative thinking for every man. Sometime when she likes something she will try to get it. Sometime she is lying herself. *Socially*, sometime she does not care with her friend, but she always cares with her family.

"I still have the make-up kit they gave me, fitted out for a person with brown eyes and brown hair: an oblong of brown mascara with a tiny brush, and a round basin of blue eyes shadow just big enough to dab the tip of your finger in, and three lipsticks ranging from red to pink, all cased in the same little gilt box with a mirror on one side" (The Bell Jar:4).

2). Buddy Willard

He is Esther's boyfriend. He is a son of Mrs. Greenwood's friend. *Physically*, he has blond hair, blue eyes, and white teeth. He is a student University of Yale. He wants to be a doctor. *Morally*, he is a good person, handsome, cares with his parents or another people. People always praise him, because he comes from good family. *Socially*, he loves Esther very much. He always cares with his girlfriend. But, he always tries to find the other girlfriend.

"No, what?" I said.
"A piece of dust." And he looked so proud of having thought of this that I just stared at his blond hair and his blue eyes and his white teeth -- he had very long, strong teeth -- and said, "I guess so."
(The Bell Jar: 30).

3. Mrs. Greenwood

She is Esther's mother. Mrs. Greenwood teaches shorthand in the college. *Physically*, she is sweet woman and simple person. *Morally*, she cares with her daughter. She works hardly and expects her children to be success, but there is no much display of warmth or emotion from her. *Socially*, when she knows if Esther is sick, she is always beside her. She always delivers and picks her daughter everywhere and every time. She loves her daughter very much, and always supports her in everything.

"At seven I had heard my mother get up, slip into her clothes and tiptoe out of the room. Then the buzz of the orange squeezer sounded from downstairs, and the smell of coffee and bacon filtered under my door". (The Bell Jar: 60).

b. Minor Character

1. Mr. Willard

He is Buddy's father. He is handsome. His hair is silver, with the blue eyes, the pink cheek, and papery lip. He cares with his son or Esther. He is a calm person, modest, serious, and mousy person. He is a charitable person, especially with Esther. He loves her, and he wants the best for Esther.

But one glance at Mr. Willard's face -- the silver hair in its boyish crew cut, the clear blue eyes, the pink cheeks, all frosted like a sweet wedding cake with the innocent, trusting expression -- and I knew I couldn't do it. I'd have to see the visit through to the end. (The Bell Jar: 46).

2. Doreen

She is Esther's friend in New York. She is a student University. She is a smart girl, friendly with everyone. However, sometime she often insults her friend, but she is funny girl. She cares with Esther. She can change the situation to be better.

3. Betsy

She is Esther's friend in New York. She comes from Kansas. She is friendly and kind person. She cares with Esther. She wants to be a model for the magazine and visible as being healthy and cheerful. Betsy is protected by her society. She is not too smart like Esther. She has psychological blindfolds on.

4. Lenny Shepherd

He is disc jockey, and Esther's friend. They meet in the club. He is very easy to be falling in love. He is friendly with other friends. But, he makes his friends have bad mood sometime.

"I better go now," Frankie said, standing up.

"Hey, Lenny, you owe me something. Remember, Lenny, you owe me something, don't you, Lenny?"

"Shut up and scram." (The Bell Jar: 9)

6. Constantin

He is a simultaneous interpreter for the University. He is Mrs. Willard's partner. He is multi talent, good people, and he is energetic. He is a smart, because usually he has brilliant idea. He is different with another man in the University because he looks adult mature in everything.

7. Dr. Gordon

He is a psychiatrist, he can handle Esther's problem. He is cool. He always bends his head when somebody is talking with him.

8. Dr. Nolan

She is a psychiatrist, she is slim, young psychiatrist, and always uses glasses. She works at private hospital where Esther is given insulin and electro-shock treatments. Dr. Nolan is a kind person. She always helps therapist of Esther. She tries to be warm and supportive, but she is not an intellectual as Esther.

"My name is Doctor Nolan. I am to be Esther's doctor."

I was surprised to have a woman. I didn't think they had woman psychiatrists. This woman was a cross between Myrna Loy and my mother. She wore a white blouse and a full skirt gathered at the waist by a wide leather belt, and stylish, crescent-shaped spectacles. (The Bell Jar: 98).

2. Setting

There are two major categories of setting, those are: setting of time and setting place.

a. Setting of Time

In *The Bell Jar*, the beginning of story takes in the summer of 1957.

Setting Esther comes to the Constantin's apartment. She stays there and woke up at 3 a.m.

. "What time is it?"

"Three," I said in a flat voice.

"I better go home. I have to be at work first thing in the morning."

"I'll drive you."

Her mother gets up on seven a clock. She cooks in the kitchen.

At seven I had heard my mother get up, slip into her clothes and tiptoe out of the room. Then the buzz of the orange squeezer sounded from downstairs, and the smell of coffee and bacon filtered under my door. Then the sink water ran from the tap and dishes clinked as my mother dried them and put them back in the cupboard. (The Bell Jar: 58).

Esther writes novels in her room until her mother came to her at three a clock.

"Why, honey, don't you want to get dressed?"

"It's almost three in the afternoon."

"I'm writing a novel," I said. "I haven't got time to change out of this and change into that." (The Bell Jar: 60)

b. Setting of Place

Generally, setting of place takes only in France. The settings of place in *The Bell Jar* are New York, Hotel Amazon, Arrayed on the Ladies Day, Mount Pisgah, Country Club, Esther's Home, Dr. Gordon room, Deer Island Prison, The Beach, Graveyard, The Cellar, Caplan Room, Belsize, and Electrotherapy Room.

3. Plot

The Bell Jar uses traditional plot structure, which consists of exposition, complication, climax, resolution, causality, and plausibility.

a. Exposition

Esther's time in New York heralds the start of a slow mental breakdown; she slowly loses interest in all the hopes and dreams.

b. Complication

She lives at the hospital while she waits for the beginning of the semester, having been discouraged from living with her mother.

c. Climax

Esther is found and taken to the hospital. Here, she breaks a mirror on purpose and is sent to a psychiatric ward at another hospital. At the second hospital, she continues her violent behaviour and slips further into depression. She is finally transferred to a private institution where she slowly begins to improve at the hands of Dr. Nolan.

d. Resolution

Esther observes a gap between what society says she should experience and what she does experience, and this gap intensifies her madness. Society expects women of Esther's age and station to act cheerful, flexible, and confident, and Esther feels she must repress her natural gloom, cynicism, and dark humour.

e. Causality

She is working in New York City as a writing intern at a fashion magazine. Esther lives at the Amazon hotel for women with other magazine interns, including Doreen. Her sarcastic remarks on the other women's primness echo Esther's own feelings.

Though successful and intelligent, Esther begins to doubt her own abilities to continue performing at such a high level. Her depression deepens as the summer progresses.

f. **Plausibility**

The story in this novel makes drastic change on the major. Character so that the story shows plausibility. This story represents concept for success, simple through stories and symbols that represent a journey. Even as motivation this book more often considered self-development book than a novel. The main idea in the book is when you wants something you should pursue and everything in life has its then universe conspires to your favour.

4. Point of view

Told in first-person, Esther Greenwood narrates the entire novel *The Bell Jar*. From this perspective, the reader sees guest editor Esther in the miserable summer of 1953, her selective childhood and college memories, her romantic history, her breakdown and subsequent period of institutionalization, and her road to recovery.

5. Theme

Theme is a central idea or central purpose. So, theme is an opinion or central an idea in literary work. The theme of *The Bell Jar* (1966) is “Everyone has a chance to rise from adversity”.

6. Style

a. **Grammatical Structure**

In narrating the story, the author uses standard grammatical structure.

b. **Sentence Construction**

The sentence construction, *Sylvia Plath* used by combination between long and short sentences. She usually uses long sentences in writing narration to describe some detailed information.

c. **Diction**

Diction is the selecting words used by the author to tell his idea in a story. In *The Bell Jar*, *Sylvia Plath* chooses the some unfamiliar term to understand.

B. Existentialist Analysis

1. Existentialist Aspect of Esther Greenwood

a. Being

Being is divided into two: being-in-itself which concerns in thing's existence and being-for-itself which discuss the human's existence. Being for itself is the being for human that is expressed by action; the action is the sign of human who has the being. Being in itself in The Bell Jar novel is reflected in the major character Esther Greenwood.

Being in itself is shown in the being of "scholarship". Being in itself can be seen the meaning "scholarship" based on the central character. She got scholarship to New York. She did not expect to receive the scholarship because she thought only rich people who got it. Esther knew that was not easy to get "scholarship".

A girl lives in some out-of-the way town for nineteen years, so poor she can't afford a magazine, and then she gets a scholarship to college and wins a prize here and a prize there and ends up steering New York like her own private car. (The Bell Jar:3)

Through this narrator her being is wonderful. She can get "scholarship" from the hundred students. She comes from a poor family and at a young age she gets a "scholarship". She is really lucky. Esther will never come to New York if she does not get that scholarship. She also will not eat in the elite restaurant with famous writers and artist there. Actually, she gets bored with dorm life, but she should be able to survive for the "scholarship". She does not want to disappoint her mother.

b. Existence before Essence

Everyone has an existence, the existence is the sigh of her goal, the goal is what she wants to become. People have freedom to define themselves as what they want, as the idea to make a knife which has purpose to cut something, a person has own idea to build herself as he or she wants.

Being before essence is Esther has an idol. Her idol is Jay Chee. Jay Chee is a woman, writer, editor, and translator. Jay Chee is a perfect woman for Esther. Jay Chee is a smart, friendly, and assertive. Esther always hopes that she can be like her

idol. She learns a lot about the world of writing from Jay Chee. She is the additional spirit for her to pursue the world and to write it. Esther also writes a novel in her spare time.

I felt very low. I had been unmasked only that morning by Jay Cee herself, and I felt now that all the uncomfortable suspicions I had about myself were coming true, and I couldn't hide the truth much longer. (The Bell Jar:16)

I sat quietly in my swivel chair for a few minutes and thought about Jay Cee. I tried to imagine what it would be like if I were Ee Gee, the famous editor, in an office full of potted rubber plants and African violets my secretary had to water each morning. I wished I had a mother like Jay Cee. Then I'd know what to do. (The Bell Jar: 21).

Essence from the major character is shown whom Esther feels her self is nothing if there is no Jay Chee. It is because of her, Jay Chee has already provided more motivation for her. She tries to be herself, but it is very difficult because she is confused with her life. Esther wants to be like Jay Chee, as a writer and editor. She liked the motherly nature of Jay Chee sometimes. Jay Chee makes a lot of changes in her life and she knows what to do.

c. Consciousness (Cogito)

Consciousness is an aspect of an existentialist that as a point to analyze and to show the meaning of life from the main character. Consciousness on the major character occurred when Esther is conscious if she has mentally ill. She buys some books special for it. Esther wants to know more information about that. She wants to be addressed early, but not with shock therapy. She thinks that she can get a lot of information by reading the book.

Only my case was incurable.

I had bought a few paperbacks on abnormal psychology at the drugstore and compared my symptoms with the symptoms in the books, and sure enough, my symptoms tallied with the most hopeless cases.

The only thing I could read, besides the scandal sheets, was those abnormal psychology books. It was as if some slim opening had been left, so I could learn all I needed to know about my case to end it in the proper way. I wondered, after the hanging fiasco, if I shouldn't just give it up and turn myself over to the doctors, and then I remembered Doctor Gordon and his private shock machine. Once I was locked up they could use that on me all the time. (The Bell Jar: 84)

Esther feels her case is incurable after she reads the book. She is shocked when she knows her case is seriously. She wants to heal in other ways, but not by shock therapy. She is traumatized by shock therapy because she thought that therapy is the worst way to her case. She does not want to jail like in the Dr.

Gordon's hospital. She remembered that the shock therapy makes her body aches and she does not want to do it again.

d. Freedom to Choose

Freedom to choose is the condition of man in making choices. Humans have an absolute and unlimited freedom. Humans also determine her choice without any influence from others.

Freedom to choose on the major character is shown when Esther's boyfriend will be married with her. Esther feels confused with that. She knows that her boyfriend has lied to her. She wants to break from their relationship. Esther has decision "never to get married" because she thinks marriage is not to make somebody happy.

Buddy sat down beside me. He put his arm around my waist and brushed the hair from my ear. I didn't move. Then I heard him whisper, "How would you like to be Mrs. Buddy Willard?"

I had an awful impulse to laugh. I thought how that question would have bowled me over at any time in my five or six-year period of adoring Buddy Willard from a distance. Buddy saw me hesitate.

"Oh, I'm in no shape now, I know," he said quickly. "I'm still on P.A.S. and I may yet lose a rib or two, but I'll be back at med school by next fall. A year from this spring at the latest. . ."

"I think I should tell you something, Buddy."

"I know," Buddy said stiffly. "You've met someone."

"No, it's not that."

"What is it, then?"

"I'm never going to get married."

"You're crazy," Buddy brightened. "You'll change your mind."

"No. My mind's made up." (The Bell Jar:49).

According to the above conversation it shows that freedom to choose on the major character is amazing. Not everyone can make such a decision "never to get married". The decision to make her boyfriend surprised, he does not believe Esther will give a response like that. "Never to get married" means that she will live single forever and it is weird. The decision will not be changed because she believes it is true.

e. Anxiety

When human must choose, then her choice will appear a responsibility and the consequences of her choice. As the central, Esther begins feel anxiety when she knows that her boyfriend has lied to her. Her boyfriend has new girlfriend. They

often sleep together, it makes Esther very shocked. She feels disappointed with him.

Suddenly I said, "Have you ever had an affair with anyone, Buddy?"
Buddy didn't say anything, he just turned pink.
"Well, have you?"
"What do you mean an affair?" Buddy asked then in a hollow voice.
"You know, have you ever gone to bed with anyone?"
"Well, yes, I have," Buddy said finally.
I almost fell over. From the first night Buddy Willard kissed me and said I must go out with a lot of boys, he made me feel I was much more sexy and experienced than he was and that everything he did like hugging and kissing and petting was simply what I made him feel like doing out of the blue, he couldn't help it and didn't know how it came about.
Now I saw he had only been pretending all this time to be so innocent.(The Bell Jar:37).

Based on conversation, Esther has anxiety when she knows her boyfriend keep many lies. The relationship will not be maintained if there is no honesty. Buddy looks perfect and honest in front of Esther, but the fact a lot of lies that are stored. She hates cheating. She thinks hard and looks for answer as to why her boyfriend will do it.

f. Transcendence of Ego

Human has a big power of Ego to help each other in the society. As the part of society, human has transcendence of Ego. The analysis of transcendence of ego will be analyzed through Esther as the central character who has reach of the transcendence of ego. Transcendence of ego on Esther is when her legs are broken. She always blames her boyfriend. Her legs are broken because of him.

An hour later I lay in my hotel bed, listening to the rain. It didn't even sound like rain, it sounded like a tap running. The ache in the middle of my left shin bone came to life, and I abandoned any hope of sleep before seven, when my radio-alarm clock would rouse me with its hearty renderings of Sousa.
Every time it rained the old leg-break seemed to remember itself, and what it remembered was a dull hurt.
Then I thought, "Buddy Willard made me break that leg." (The Bell Jar:45).

Based on the narrator it looks that Esther feels her legs are broken because her boyfriend. She never thinks her boyfriend is very worried with her condition. Buddy invites Esther to play ice skating. So, when she falls than she blames her boyfriend. She does not her boyfriend.

g. Nothingness

Human life, absolutely they can do anything and other human else can receive their existence but when the people die, they will be nothingness. Nothingness will be analyzed through another major character, Esther tried to kill herself. She thought that if she was dying the entire problem will be finished. She drank some pills.

Cobwebs touched my face with the softness of moths. Wrapping my black coat round me like my own sweet shadow, I unscrewed the bottle of pills and started taking them swiftly, between gulps of water, one by one by one. At first nothing happened, but as I approached the bottom of the bottle, red and blue lights began to flash before my eyes. The bottle slid from my fingers and I lay down. The silence drew off, baring the pebbles and shells and all the tatty wreckage of my life. Then, at the rim of vision, it gathered itself, and in one sweeping tide, rushed me to sleep. (The Bell Jar:89).

Based on condition and the narrator above indicated the nothingness ends the life of Esther. So, it can be concluded that Esther is in nothingness because she cannot show their existence again. She tries to kill herself by drinking poison. Everyone will die and death surely coming.

IV. Conclusion

Based on existentialist theory by Sartre, the writer focuses on analyzing the structure of personality, which consists of the Being, Existence Precedes Essence, Consciousness (cogito), Freedom to Choose, Anxiety, Transcendence of Ego, and Nothingness. By knowing the personality structure of the character, the writer tries to explore anxiety and existence in the major character, namely Esther Greenwood. The investigation of personality could be done through action of the character and then the writer describes it as well as classifies it. Finally the researcher makes relationship between the structures of personality with the kind of anxiety and existence that occurs in the major character.

Thus, from explanation above it can be concluded that *The Bell Jar* novel is the sadness story that has many kinds expression in Esther's life. Besides that, it has correlation between *The Bell Jar* (1966) novels with the existentialist theory.

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