

Expressive Speech Acts of Sadness in The Diary of a CEO Podcast: Integrating Speech Act Theory and Cognitive Appraisal

Dwi Zahara Nuraisyah^{1)*}, Dadan Rusmana²⁾, and Andang Saehu³⁾

^{1,2,3} Department of English Literature, Faculty of Adab and Humanities, UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, West Java, Indonesia

✉ dwizaharaaaa@gmail.com

Received: May 15, 2026

Revised: July 20, 2026

Accepted: August 5, 2026

Citation APA Style: Nuraisyah, D. Z., Rusmana, D., & Saehu, A. (2026). Expressive speech acts of sadness in *The Diary of a CEO* podcast: Integrating Speech Act Theory and Cognitive Appraisal Theory. *English Language in Focus (ELIF)*, 9(1), 15–26. <https://doi.org/10.24853/elif.9.1.15-26>

ABSTRACT

Expressive speech acts are commonly used to communicate speakers' emotions in everyday interaction, including podcast conversations that encourage personal storytelling. However, little attention has been paid to how sadness is expressed through speech acts and how these expressions relate to speakers' cognitive appraisal of loss. This study examines expressive speech acts of sadness in selected episodes of *The Diary of a CEO Podcast*. Specifically, it identifies expressions of sadness, classifies the underlying forms of harm and loss based on Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) Cognitive Appraisal Theory, and analyses how sadness is realized through direct and indirect speech acts. This study employed a qualitative content analysis design. The data consisted of 38 utterances expressing sadness produced by three podcast guests: Simon Cowell, Mo Gawdat, and Liam Payne. The utterances were analysed using Searle's Speech Act Theory and Lazarus and Folkman's Cognitive Appraisal Theory. The findings identified six appraisal categories of sadness: Loss of a Loved One, Loss of Identity, Loss of Self-esteem or Social Esteem, Loss of Something Personally Valued, Loss of a Meaningful Relationship, and Loss of a Valuable Goal or Commitment. Loss of a Loved One was the most frequent category, indicating that bereavement was the primary source of sadness in the selected podcast episodes. In terms of speech act realization, 35 utterances (92.1%) were expressed through direct speech acts, whereas only 3 utterances (7.9%) were expressed indirectly. These findings contribute to pragmatic research by showing that expressive speech acts of sadness are shaped by both speakers' cognitive appraisal of harm and loss and their linguistic choices. By integrating Speech Act Theory with Cognitive Appraisal Theory, this study provides a broader understanding of emotional communication in naturally occurring podcast discourse.

Keywords: expressive speech acts of sadness; Cognitive Appraisal Theory; podcast discourse; pragmatics; emotional communication

ABSTRAK

Tindak tutur ekspresif umumnya digunakan untuk mengungkapkan emosi penutur dalam interaksi sehari-hari, termasuk dalam percakapan podcast yang mendorong penyampaian pengalaman pribadi. Namun, masih sedikit penelitian yang mengkaji bagaimana kesedihan diekspresikan melalui tindak tutur serta bagaimana ekspresi tersebut berkaitan dengan penilaian kognitif penutur terhadap kehilangan. Penelitian ini mengkaji tindak tutur ekspresif kesedihan dalam beberapa episode terpilih *The Diary of a CEO Podcast*. Secara khusus, penelitian ini mengidentifikasi ekspresi kesedihan, mengklasifikasikan bentuk-bentuk harm dan loss yang mendasarinya berdasarkan *Cognitive Appraisal Theory* dari Lazarus dan Folkman (1984), serta menganalisis bagaimana kesedihan diwujudkan melalui tindak tutur langsung dan tidak langsung.

Penelitian ini menggunakan desain analisis isi kualitatif. Data penelitian terdiri atas 38 ujaran yang mengekspresikan kesedihan dan dihasilkan oleh tiga tamu podcast, yaitu Simon Cowell, Mo Gawdat, dan Liam Payne. Data dianalisis menggunakan Teori Tindak Tutur Searle dan *Cognitive Appraisal Theory* dari Lazarus dan Folkman. Hasil penelitian mengidentifikasi enam kategori appraisal kesedihan, yaitu Loss of a Loved One, Loss of Identity, Loss of Self-esteem or Social Esteem, Loss of Something Personally Valued, Loss of a Meaningful Relationship, dan Loss of a Valuable Goal or Commitment. Loss of a Loved One merupakan kategori yang paling dominan, yang menunjukkan bahwa kehilangan orang yang dicintai menjadi sumber utama kesedihan dalam episode podcast yang dianalisis. Dari segi realisasi tindak tutur, sebanyak 35 ujaran (92,1%) diungkapkan melalui tindak tutur langsung, sedangkan hanya 3 ujaran (7,9%) diungkapkan melalui tindak tutur tidak langsung. Temuan ini memberikan kontribusi pada kajian pragmatik dengan menunjukkan bahwa tindak tutur ekspresif kesedihan dipengaruhi oleh penilaian kognitif penutur terhadap harm dan loss serta pilihan linguistik yang digunakan untuk mengungkapkannya. Dengan mengintegrasikan Teori Tindak Tutur dan *Cognitive Appraisal Theory*, penelitian ini memberikan pemahaman yang lebih komprehensif tentang komunikasi emosional dalam wacana podcast yang berlangsung secara alami.

Kata kunci: *tindak tutur ekspresif kesedihan; Cognitive Appraisal Theory; wacana podcast; pragmatik; komunikasi emosional*

Author Biography

Dwi Zahara Nuraisyah is an undergraduate student in the Department of English Literature, Faculty of Adab and Humanities, Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, Indonesia. Her research interests include pragmatics, speech acts, discourse analysis, and psychopragmatics. Her current research examines expressive speech acts of sadness in podcast discourse by combining Searle's Speech Act Theory with Lazarus and Folkman's Cognitive Appraisal Theory.

Dadan Rusmana is a Professor at the Faculty of Adab and Humanities, Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, Indonesia, where he also serves as Vice Rector for Academic Affairs. He received his Bachelor's and Doctoral degrees from Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung and his Master's degree from Universitas Islam Negeri Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta. His research interests include Islamic studies, education, language, and the humanities. He has contributed extensively to higher education development, academic leadership, and research in Indonesia.

Google Scholar: <https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=T3BqGbYAAAAJ&hl=id>

SINTA ID: 6040974

Andang Saehu is a tenured lecturer and Head of the English Literature Study Program at the Faculty of Adab and Humanities, Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, Indonesia. His research interests include language assessment, language education, translation, and interpreting. He also serves as Chair of the AUN-QA assessment for the English Literature Study Program and as an assessor for the National Professional Certification Board (BNSP). He received certification in Humanities Studies from the International Board of Standards in 2021. His publications focus on language teaching, assessment, translation, and interpreting, including a book chapter on AI-generated translation published by IGI Global and two books: *Interpreting: Teori dan Praktik* (2019) and *Penerjemahan Karya Sastra: Teori dan Praktik* (2022).

Google Scholar: <https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=Ngp4N2cAAAAJ&hl=en>

ORCID ID: orcid.org/0000-0002-9264-9645

SINTA ID: 6107675

Copyright Statement

Copyright © 2026 by the Author(s). This article is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY 4.0). Use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium are permitted, provided the original work is properly cited.

Acknowledgement

The authors sincerely thank the Department of English Literature, Faculty of Adab and Humanities, **Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung**, for its support throughout this research. The authors would also like to express their sincere gratitude to **Dadan Rusmana** and **Andang Saehu** for their valuable guidance, constructive feedback, and continuous encouragement throughout the research process. Their support and expertise were invaluable to the completion of this study.

INTRODUCTION

Pragmatics examines how meaning is constructed and interpreted in context rather than through linguistic forms alone (Searle, 1979; Yule, 1996). Within this perspective, Speech Act Theory explains that language is used not only to convey information but also to perform social actions. One important category is expressive speech acts, which reveal the speaker's psychological state or emotional attitude (Searle, 1979). This perspective continues to inform contemporary research on expressive speech acts and interpersonal communication (Ogiermann, 2021; Witek, 2021). In this study, *The Diary of a CEO Podcast* was selected because it features guests from diverse professional and personal backgrounds who openly discuss grief, trauma, identity struggles, failure, and other significant life experiences. These authentic emotional narratives provide an appropriate context for examining expressive speech acts of sadness.

The meanings conveyed in podcast conversations are closely related to context, speaker intention, and communicative situations. Speech Act Theory provides an appropriate framework for explaining how these meanings are realized through language. According to Searle (1979), speech acts include communicative actions such as making statements, giving orders, making promises, expressing gratitude, and expressing emotions. This framework continues to underpin contemporary pragmatic research (Sbisà, 2023). Among these categories, expressive speech acts are particularly relevant because they communicate the speaker's emotional and psychological state (Ogiermann, 2021; Searle, 1979; Witek, 2021). In podcast conversations, speakers frequently describe experiences of grief, disappointment, failure, trauma, and loss. These emotionally rich utterances provide valuable data for examining how sadness is expressed in authentic spoken interaction.

Expressions of sadness, however, are not always communicated explicitly. Direct speech acts occur when the grammatical form of an utterance corresponds to its communicative function, such as the statement "*I was devastated*" (Searle, 1979). In contrast, indirect speech acts occur when the intended meaning differs from the literal form of the utterance, as in "*Nothing felt the same anymore,*" where sadness is implied rather than directly stated (Searle, 1979). Examining both direct and indirect expressive speech acts is therefore important for understanding how speakers communicate sadness in naturally occurring conversations. In this study, sadness is understood as an emotional response that arises when individuals appraise a situation as involving harm or loss, following the Cognitive Appraisal Theory proposed by Lazarus and Folkman (1984). This perspective remains consistent with recent appraisal research on emotional responses (Yeo, 2024).

Although Speech Act Theory explains how sadness is expressed through language, it does not explain the psychological evaluation that underlies those expressions. To address this limitation, this study also adopts Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) Cognitive Appraisal Theory to identify the forms of harm and loss reflected in speakers' expressions of sadness. Contemporary appraisal research continues to support the relevance of this framework for understanding emotional experiences (Yeo, 2024). Integrating Speech Act Theory with Cognitive Appraisal Theory enables this study to examine both the linguistic realization of sadness and the cognitive appraisal underlying those expressions, providing a more comprehensive framework for understanding emotional communication in podcast discourse.

Previous studies have examined expressive speech acts across a wide range of communicative contexts, including political

speeches (Ariska & Yanti, 2022), podcast conversations (Putri & Ariyaningsih, 2023), talk show interactions (Malasari & Rosdiana, 2024), YouTube comments (Makhsunah et al., 2024), and social media discourse (Zulfa et al., 2025). Collectively, these studies demonstrate that expressive speech acts serve as an important linguistic resource for conveying speakers' emotions, attitudes, and psychological states in different forms of communication. Other studies have investigated direct and indirect speech acts as well as appraisal theory in various communicative settings (Gulbinskienė et al., 2021; Maqsood et al., 2024). In addition, recent pragmatic research has highlighted the interpersonal functions of expressive speech acts and their role in shaping social interaction (Ogiermann, 2021; Witek, 2021).

Despite these contributions, two important gaps remain. First, previous studies have primarily focused on identifying expressive speech acts across different discourse contexts without specifically examining how sadness is realized through both direct and indirect expressive speech acts in naturally occurring podcast conversations. Second, although Speech Act Theory and Cognitive Appraisal Theory have each been widely applied in previous research, they have rarely been integrated to explain both the linguistic realization of sadness and the cognitive evaluations underlying its expression. Consequently, the relationship between speakers' emotional experiences and the linguistic forms used to express sadness remains underexplored in podcast discourse.

To address these gaps, this study investigates expressive speech acts of sadness in selected episodes of *The Diary of a CEO Podcast*. Specifically, the study aims to identify expressions of sadness, classify the underlying forms of harm and loss based on Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) Cognitive Appraisal Theory,

and analyse how these expressions are realized through direct and indirect speech acts. By integrating Speech Act Theory with Cognitive Appraisal Theory, this study provides a more comprehensive explanation of how sadness is linguistically expressed and cognitively interpreted in authentic podcast conversations.

Based on these objectives, this study addresses the following research questions:

1. How is sadness expressed through expressive speech acts in selected episodes of *The Diary of a CEO Podcast*?
2. What forms of harm and loss underlie these expressions of sadness based on Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) Cognitive Appraisal Theory?
3. How are expressions of sadness realized through direct and indirect expressive speech acts?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative pragmatic content analysis design to examine how expressive speech acts of sadness are linguistically realized and psychologically interpreted in podcast discourse. This design was appropriate because the study aimed to interpret utterances within their communicative contexts, with particular attention to the emotional meanings conveyed through expressive speech acts. Qualitative content analysis enables the systematic classification of textual data while supporting the interpretation of both explicit and implicit meanings (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Consistent with this approach, qualitative research emphasizes understanding meaning through naturalistic data, inductive analysis, and contextual interpretation (Creswell, 2009).

Data Source

The data consisted of utterances drawn from three episodes of *The Diary of a CEO Podcast* available on the official Spotify account. The episodes were selected through purposive criterion sampling, which enables researchers to identify information-rich cases that best address the research objectives (Patton, 2015). The inclusion criteria were episodes that (1) featured guests discussing personal experiences of loss, grief, trauma, identity crises, or emotional suffering; (2) contained utterances representing expressive speech acts of sadness; and (3) provided sufficient data for qualitative analysis. Episodes that focused primarily on business, entrepreneurship, or general motivational topics without substantial expressions of sadness were excluded. Based on these criteria, three episodes were selected for analysis. Their characteristics are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Characteristics of the Selected Podcast Episodes

Episode	Guest	Year	Main Theme
<i>Simon Cowell Opens Up About His Heartbreaking Loss: "Losing Them Was the Hardest Thing That Happened to Me!"</i>	Simon Cowell	2021	Grief and bereavement
<i>The Happiness Expert That Made 51 Million People Happier</i>	Mo Gawdat	2022	Loss and emotional recovery
<i>Liam Payne Opens Up About His Darkest Moment, Failed Relationship and Entrepreneurship</i>	Liam Payne	2024	Trauma, identity, and relationships

Published between 2021 and 2024, these episodes contain diverse expressions of sadness related to personal loss, grief, trauma, identity disruption, and emotional suffering, making them information-rich data sources for this study (Patton, 2015).

Data Collection

The data were collected by accessing the official Spotify account of *The Diary of a CEO Podcast* and reviewing each selected episode in its entirety. During this process, the researcher used the English subtitles available on Spotify as a transcription aid to improve the accuracy of identifying and recording relevant utterances. To preserve the broader conversational context, each episode was examined before relevant utterances were selected. Rather than transcribing the complete episodes, only utterances that met the criteria for expressive speech acts of sadness were manually transcribed into a Microsoft Word document. These utterances constituted the dataset for subsequent analysis.

The analytical procedure applied to the collected data is summarized in Figure 1.

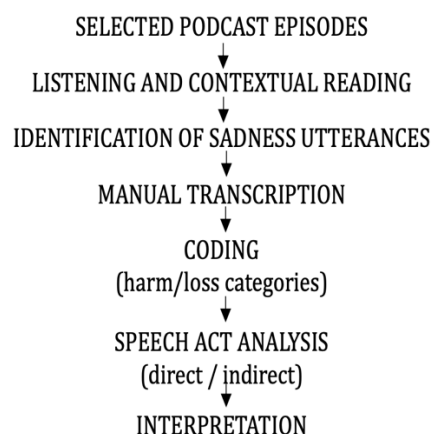


Figure 1. Analytical Procedure

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using qualitative content analysis in four stages. First, utterances representing expressive speech acts of sadness were identified. Second, the utterances were classified according to the forms of harm and loss adapted from Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) Cognitive Appraisal Theory. Third, each utterance was analyzed to determine whether it was realized through direct or indirect speech acts based on Searle's Speech Act

Theory. Finally, the findings were interpreted by considering the linguistic features of each utterance and its implied meaning within the communicative context.

The coding framework was developed from Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) concept of harm and loss. The six categories do not represent a formal taxonomy proposed by Lazarus. Instead, they were analytically derived from the forms of loss described in Cognitive Appraisal Theory and operationalized for the purposes of this study. Loss of Identity refers to the loss of self-concept, purpose, or personal direction. Loss of a Loved One refers to sadness resulting from the death of a significant other. Loss of Something Personally Valued refers to the loss of meaningful aspects of life, such as happiness or emotional security. Loss of Self-esteem or Social Esteem refers to sadness arising from rejection, humiliation, or diminished self-worth. Loss of a Meaningful Relationship refers to the breakdown or loss of an important interpersonal relationship. Loss of a Valuable Goal or Commitment refers to sadness resulting from the failure to achieve an important personal goal or commitment.

The coding categories used throughout the analysis are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Operational Coding Framework Based on Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) Cognitive Appraisal Theory

Category	Operational Definition	Example Indicator
Loss of Identity	Loss of self-concept	Feeling lost
Loss of a Loved One	Death of significant others	Bereavement
Loss of Something Personally Valued	Loss of meaningful life aspects	Happiness, security
Loss of Self-esteem	Reduced self-worth	Shame

Category	Operational Definition	Example Indicator
Loss of Meaningful Relationship	Relationship breakdown	Divorce
Loss of Valuable Goal	Failure to achieve goals	Career failure

To enhance the credibility of the analysis, the researcher repeatedly reviewed and recoded the utterances using the established coding criteria to ensure consistency throughout the analysis (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Each utterance was assigned to a single coding category based on the dominant appraisal of loss reflected in its communicative context. Although an utterance could contain multiple emotional expressions, only the dominant expression associated with perceived harm or loss was coded as sadness in accordance with Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) Cognitive Appraisal Theory.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Distribution of Sadness Expressions

The analysis identified 38 utterances expressing sadness across three selected episodes of *The Diary of a CEO Podcast*. Using Searle's Speech Act Theory and Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) Cognitive Appraisal Theory, the utterances were analysed to identify expressions of sadness, classify the underlying forms of harm and loss, and determine whether they were realized through direct or indirect speech acts. The following sections present the findings on the distribution of the data, the categories of sadness, and the realization of expressive speech acts.

Table 1. Distribution of Expressive Speech Acts of Sadness.

Podcast Episode	Duration	Frequency
Simon Cowell – <i>Opens Up About His Heartbreaking Loss</i>	2 h 12 min	16
Mo Gawdat – <i>The Happiness Expert That Made 51 Million People Happier</i>	1 h 56 min	10

Liam Payne – <i>Opens Up About His Darkest Moment, Failed Relationship and Entrepreneurship</i>	1 h 36 min	12
Total	-	38

As shown in Table 1, 38 utterances expressing sadness were identified across the three podcast episodes. Simon Cowell's episode contained the largest number of utterances (n = 16), followed by Liam Payne (n = 12) and Mo Gawdat (n = 10). Because the episodes vary in length, these frequencies describe the composition of the dataset rather than the relative intensity of sadness across episodes.

The distribution suggests that expressions of sadness in the selected podcast episodes are closely associated with personal experiences of bereavement, identity disruption, and emotional struggle. Simon Cowell's episode contained the largest number of sadness-related utterances because much of the conversation focused on the loss of his parents. In contrast, Liam Payne's and Mo Gawdat's episodes show that sadness also arises from identity-related challenges, personal setbacks, and long-term emotional difficulties. These patterns suggest that sadness in podcast discourse extends beyond bereavement and reflects a wider range of personally significant experiences.

These findings support previous studies showing that expressive speech acts serve as linguistic resources for communicating emotional and psychological experiences across different communicative contexts (Maini & Hermawan, 2025; Makhsunah et al., 2024). However, the present study further shows that naturally occurring podcast conversations capture a wider range of sadness-related experiences, including bereavement, identity disruption, and emotional struggle, rather than focusing solely on the loss of loved ones. This finding also supports recent research suggesting that

conversational media provide opportunities for speakers to share emotionally meaningful experiences while constructing personal narratives of loss and recovery (Levi-Belz, 2023; Li, 2024).

Appraisal Categories of Sadness

To better understand the sources of sadness expressed in the selected podcast episodes, each utterance was classified according to the forms of harm and loss proposed in Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) Cognitive Appraisal Theory. This classification identifies the types of appraisals underlying speakers' expressions of sadness and reveals which forms of perceived loss occur most frequently in the dataset. The distribution of the appraisal categories is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Appraisal Categories of Sadness Based on Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) Cognitive Appraisal Theory

Types Of Sadness	Frequency	Percentage
Loss of a Loved one	15	39.5%
Loss of Identity	12	31.6%
Loss of Self-esteem/Social Esteem	4	10.5%
Loss of Something Personally Valued	3	7.9%
Loss of a Meaningful Relationship	3	7.9%
Loss of a Valuable Goal or Commitment	1	2.6%
Total	38	100%

As shown in Table 2, Loss of a Loved One was the most frequent appraisal category (39.5%), followed by Loss of Identity (31.6%). The remaining categories occurred less frequently, including Loss of Self-esteem or Social Esteem (10.5%), Loss of Something Personally Valued

(7.9%), Loss of a Meaningful Relationship (7.9%), and Loss of a Valuable Goal or Commitment (2.6%).

The predominance of Loss of a Loved One indicates that bereavement was the primary source of sadness in the selected podcast episodes. Simon Cowell and Mo Gawdat both described the deaths of close family members as experiences that continued to influence their emotional well-being long after the loss occurred. From the perspective of Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) Cognitive Appraisal Theory, these utterances reflect primary appraisals in which the loss of a significant person is evaluated as personally meaningful, harmful, and irreversible. The prominence of this category also suggests that podcast conversations provide opportunities for speakers to reflect openly on experiences of bereavement, allowing grief to be expressed through naturally occurring interaction.

These findings support recent studies on grief communication while extending them to the context of podcast discourse. Li (2024) argues that bereaved individuals do not always disclose grief openly because emotional expression is shaped by interpersonal and cultural factors. Likewise, Levi-Belz (2023) emphasizes that emotional disclosure plays an important role in coping with profound loss. Unlike these studies, which mainly examine grief in interpersonal or therapeutic settings, the present study shows that podcast conversations provide a natural setting where bereavement is expressed through authentic expressive speech acts.

Loss of Identity was the second most frequent appraisal category, indicating that sadness was associated not only with bereavement but also with disruptions to self-concept and personal direction. Liam Payne's reflections illustrate how identity-related loss can become a source of prolonged emotional distress when

individuals perceive themselves as disconnected from their previous roles or sense of purpose. This finding supports Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) argument that emotional responses are shaped by individuals' appraisal of personally significant losses. It also aligns with recent research showing that rebuilding identity after major life disruptions is closely related to emotional recovery and self-understanding (McAdams, 2023; Wehrman, 2023).

The remaining appraisal categories: Loss of Self-esteem or Social Esteem, Loss of Something Personally Valued, Loss of a Meaningful Relationship, and Loss of a Valuable Goal or Commitment, occurred less frequently but demonstrate that sadness arises from a wide range of perceived losses. Although these categories reflect different life experiences, they share a common appraisal process in which speakers evaluate the loss of personally significant relationships, values, or aspirations as harmful. Together, these findings reinforce Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) view that sadness results from multiple forms of perceived harm and loss rather than bereavement alone.

Linguistic Realization of Sadness

To examine how sadness was expressed in the selected podcast episodes, each utterance was classified as either a direct or an indirect speech act based on Searle's (1979) Speech Act Theory. This analysis shows how speakers expressed sadness through language and whether they communicated their feelings explicitly or implicitly. Table 3 presents the distribution of direct and indirect speech acts.

Table 3. Direct and Indirect Realization of Sadness

Realization	Frequency	Percentage
Direct	35	92.1%
Indirect	3	7.9%

As shown in Table 3, most expressions of sadness were realized through direct speech acts. Of the 38 identified utterances, 35 (92.1%) were direct, whereas only 3 (7.9%) were indirect. This result shows that the speakers usually expressed sadness openly rather than indirectly.

The high number of direct speech acts suggests that the speakers were willing to talk openly about difficult personal experiences. The conversations focused on topics such as bereavement, trauma, identity struggles, and relationship problems, encouraging speakers to describe their feelings clearly instead of implying them. As a result, sadness was usually expressed through direct statements that clearly reflected the speakers' emotional experiences.

These findings support Searle's (1979) view that expressive speech acts communicate the speaker's psychological state. In this study, statements about grief, disappointment, and emotional suffering show how speakers directly expressed their feelings through language. The findings also support recent studies suggesting that expressive speech acts help speakers communicate emotions and build understanding with listeners (Ogiermann, 2021). In podcast conversations, openly sharing emotional experiences also helps speakers tell authentic personal stories (Witek, 2021).

Overall, the findings show that sadness was expressed through both direct and indirect speech acts, although direct expressions were much more common. This finding extends previous research by showing that podcast conversations provide a natural setting where speakers openly express sadness, while indirect speech acts are used less often to express more reflective emotions.

Discussion

The findings show that expressions of sadness in podcast discourse are shaped by both speakers' emotional experiences and the way those experiences are expressed through language. Most utterances were realized through direct speech acts, while the underlying sources of sadness reflected different forms of perceived harm and loss. Together, these findings suggest that understanding sadness requires attention not only to what speakers say but also to how they evaluate the experiences that give rise to those expressions.

From the perspective of Speech Act Theory, the predominance of direct speech acts indicates that speakers openly communicated their emotional experiences. This finding supports Searle's (1979) view that expressive speech acts function to reveal the speaker's psychological state. In the context of podcast conversations, direct expressions of sadness also support recent pragmatic research showing that expressive speech acts help speakers communicate emotions and build interpersonal understanding (Ogiermann, 2021; Sbisà, 2023). The conversational format of podcasts gives speakers time to explain personal experiences in their own words, making direct emotional expression more common than indirect expression.

Viewed through Cognitive Appraisal Theory, the findings suggest that different forms of perceived harm and loss influence how sadness is experienced and expressed. Bereavement emerged as the most common appraisal category, followed by loss of identity, showing that sadness was closely related to experiences that speakers considered personally significant. This finding supports Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) view that emotions arise from individuals' appraisal of meaningful events. It also supports recent research

showing that emotional meaning develops through the interaction between language, context, and cognitive evaluation (Alba-Juez, 2021).

By combining Speech Act Theory with Cognitive Appraisal Theory, this study provides a more complete explanation of expressive speech acts of sadness in podcast discourse. Speech Act Theory explains how sadness is expressed through language, whereas Cognitive Appraisal Theory explains why those expressions arise from different forms of perceived harm and loss. Together, these perspectives show that emotional communication cannot be understood from linguistic forms alone but also requires attention to speakers' cognitive evaluations of their experiences. This integrated approach contributes to pragmatic research by offering a framework for examining emotional communication in naturally occurring conversations and may be applied to future studies of other forms of digital discourse.

CONCLUSION

This study examined expressive speech acts of sadness in selected episodes of *The Diary of a CEO Podcast*. The findings show that sadness was expressed through different forms of perceived harm and loss and was most often realized through direct speech acts. Among the six appraisal categories adapted from Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) Cognitive Appraisal Theory, Loss of a Loved One was the most frequent, followed by Loss of Identity. These findings suggest that sadness in podcast discourse is closely related to experiences of bereavement while also reflecting identity disruption, relationship loss, reduced self-esteem, loss of personal values, and unfulfilled life goals.

This study contributes to pragmatic research by combining Searle's Speech Act Theory with Lazarus and Folkman's Cognitive Appraisal Theory to explain both how sadness is expressed through language and why it arises from different forms of perceived harm and loss. Bringing these two perspectives together provides a broader understanding of emotional communication in naturally occurring podcast conversations and demonstrates the value of integrating pragmatic and psychological approaches.

This study has several limitations. The analysis was limited to three episodes of *The Diary of a CEO Podcast* and focused only on expressive speech acts of sadness. Therefore, the findings cannot be generalized to other podcast genres, speakers, or emotional expressions. Future research may examine other expressive emotions, compare emotional communication across different podcast genres or digital platforms, or apply additional pragmatic and psychological frameworks to further explore emotional communication in naturally occurring interaction.

REFERENCES

- Alba-Juez, L. (2021). Affect and emotion. In M. Haugh, D. Z. Kádár, & M. Terkourafi (Eds.), *The Cambridge handbook of sociopragmatics* (2nd ed., pp. 340–362). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108954105.019>
- Ana, M. (2022). Tindak tutur ekspresif dalam podcast Close The Door Deddy Corbuzier pada episode “Coba Ibu Jawab JHT Gimana.” *ESTETIK: Jurnal Bahasa Indonesia*, 5(2), 113–124. <https://doi.org/10.29240/estetik.v5i2.5080>
- Ariska, E., & Yanti, Y. (2022). The expressive speech acts in Kamala Harris victory speech: A study of multicultural values. *Journal of Cultura and Lingua*, 3(1), 31–

38.
<https://doi.org/10.37301/culingua.v3i1.105>
- Carrotte, E. R., Blanchard, M., Groot, C., Hopgood, F., & Phillips, L. (2023). Podcasts, mental health, and stigma: Exploring motivations, behaviors, and attitudes among listeners. *Communication Studies*, 74(3), 200–216. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10510974.2023.2196433>
- Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Gulbinskienė, D., Dubovičienė, T., & Lasauskienė, R. (2021). Direct and indirect speech acts in politicians' posts on social networks. *Šiuolaikinės Visuomenės Ugdymo Veiksniai*, 6(1), 285–302. <https://doi.org/10.47459/svuv.2021.6.14>
- Hsieh, H.-F., & Shannon, S. E. (2005). Three approaches to qualitative content analysis. *Qualitative Health Research*, 15(9), 1277–1288. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732305276687>
- Lazarus, R. S., & Folkman, S. (1984). *Stress, appraisal, and coping*. Springer Publishing Company.
- Levi-Belz, Y. (2023). Shame, depression, and complicated grief among suicide loss survivors: The moderating role of self-disclosure. *European Journal of Psychotraumatology*, 14(1), e2182820. <https://doi.org/10.1080/20008066.2023.2182820>
- Li, Y. (2024). "I never told my family I was grieving for my mom": The not-disclosing-grief experiences of parentally bereaved adolescents and young adults in Chinese families. *Family Process*, 63(1), 379–391. <https://doi.org/10.1111/famp.12865>
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. SAGE Publications.
- Maini, T., & Hermawan. (2025). Expressive illocution speech on Denny Sumargo's podcast. *Global Education Journal*, 3(2), 163–178. <https://doi.org/10.59525/gej.v3i2.700>
- Makhsunah, U., Pratama, H., & Syafri, F. (2024). The realization of expressive speech acts in the comment section on Nessie Judge's YouTube channel. *English Education Journal*, 14(2), 293–304. <https://doi.org/10.15294/eb7agp50>
- Malasari, S. N., & Rosdiana, A. (2024). Expressive speech acts in Ellen's talk show "Ellen Taught This Fan How to Speak English." *Jurnal Basis*, 11(1), 11–22. <https://doi.org/10.33884/basisupb.v11i1.8289>
- Maqsood, A., Gul, S., Noureen, N., & Yaswi, A. (2024). Dynamics of perceived stress, stress appraisal, and coping strategies in an evolving educational landscape. *Behavioral Sciences*, 14(7), Article 532. <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs14070532>
- McAdams, D. P. (2023). The comforter-in-chief: How two traumatic experiences shaped President Joe Biden's first 100 days. *Journal of Personality*, 91(1), 247–261. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jopy.12738>
- Ogiermann, E. (2021). On the dual role of expressive speech acts: Relational work on signs announcing closures during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 184, 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2021.07.020>
- Pasquali, F. (2022). "You're just playing the victim": Online grieving and the non-use of social media in Italy. *Social Media + Society*, 8(4). <https://doi.org/10.1177/20563051221138757>
- Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Putri, J. O. M., & Ariyaningsih, N. N. D. (2023). Expressive speech acts found in Eric Nam and Jessi's utterance in the Dive Studios Podcast. *Journal of Humanities, Social Science, Public Administration and Management (HUSOCPUMENT)*, 3(1), 8–14. <https://doi.org/10.51715/husocpumen.t.v3i1.258>

- Sbisà, M. (2023). *Essays on speech acts and other topics in pragmatics*. Oxford University Press.
<https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780192844125.001.0001>
- Searle, J. R. (1979). *Expression and meaning: Studies in the Theory of Speech Acts*. Cambridge University Press.
- Wehrman, E. C. (2023). “I don't even know who I am”: Identity reconstruction after the loss of a spouse. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 40(4), 1250–1276.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/02654075221127399>
- Witek, M. (2021). Self-expression in speech acts. *Organon F*, 28(2), 326–359.
- <https://doi.org/10.31577/orgf.2021.28204>
- Yeo, G. C. (2024). Associations between cognitive appraisals and emotions: A meta-analytic review. *Psychological Bulletin*, 150(12), 1440–1471.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/bul0000452>
- Yule, G. (1996). *Pragmatics*. Oxford University Press.
- Zulfa, H. A., Agustina, S. P., Sholihah, D. P., & Wakhidah, I. N. (2025). Analysis of netizens' expressive illocutionary acts in the comment section and video content of Denny Sumargo's Curhat Bang podcast episode “Arra”: A multimodal pragmatic study. *Langsfera*, 1(1), 21–29.