

Narrating Trauma and Resistance: A Comparative Transitivity Analysis of *My Story* and *When I Hit You*

 ¹ Aardra A. Chandran,  ² Shahila Zafar

<https://doi.org/10.69760/aghel.026002015>

Abstract

This article explores how trauma and existential crises are articulated in *My Story* (1976) by Kamala Das and *When I Hit You* (2017) by Meena Kandasamy through distinct narrative and stylistic choices. Drawing on Halliday's transitivity framework (1985), we examine how each author's use of language reveals their psychological landscapes. The transitivity analysis of selected autobiographies showed that in *My Story*, mental processes were used more to narrate the experiences of trauma and existential crises, whereas in *When I Hit You*, the material process is used more, which points to the intensity of domestic violence inflicted upon the protagonist. Thus, the authors' differing narrative approaches and introspective recollection versus confrontational exposure highlight how autobiographical writing becomes a space for both survival and resistance. The emotional depth of both texts aligns with clinical descriptions of PTSD outlined in the *DSM-5*, demonstrating a convergence between literary and psychological expressions of trauma. Together, these works exemplify how women's autobiographies can transform personal suffering into powerful critiques of patriarchal violence.

Keywords: *autobiography, Halliday, patriarchy, stylistics, transitivity, trauma*

1. Introduction

The present study conducts a Hallidayan stylistic analysis of *My Story* (1976) by Kamala Das and *When I Hit You* (2017) by Meena Kandasamy, autobiographies written by acclaimed Indian women writers from the 1970's and the 2010s, respectively. Both these life stories focus on the conflict between the protagonists' ambitions and the patriarchal setup that they are part of. Traditionally, critical approaches to autobiographies written by women have focused on themes such as gender, identity, race, and the formation of the self. Simone de Beauvoir's

¹ Chandran, A. A. Don Bosco Institute of Higher Education, Angadikadavu, Kerala, India. Email: aardrakunju9494@gmail.com. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0002-5921-2633>.

² Zafar, S. Central University of Punjab, Bathinda, Punjab, India. Email: shahila.zafar@cup.edu.in. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4034-9613>.



This is an open access article published under the
Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY 4.0).
<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

Acta Globalis Humanitatis et Linguarum
ISSN 3030-1718

autobiographical writings, for example, are often explored from feminist perspectives (Curthoys, 2000). At the same time, the life narrative of Harriet Jacobs has been analysed in terms of race, the American self, and resistance to oppression (Drake, 1997). As Adelman (2004, p. 116) notes, women's life writing is often marked by a tension between the difficulty of defining the self and the challenge of representing others. While thematic interpretations remain vital, expanding the analytical lens to include linguistic and stylistic frameworks provides additional insight into how autobiographical meaning is constructed. This move toward language-focused inquiry enables an exploration not only of what is told but also of how experience is shaped and rendered through stylistic choice.

In this context, the application of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), particularly the transitivity system developed by M.A.K. Halliday (1985), opens a new dimension for analysing autobiographical writing. SFL posits that language is a resource for making meaning and views grammar as a system of choices linked to the expression of experience, interpersonal relations, and textual organisation. Writers and speakers choose particular structures to reflect their social reality. The transitivity system, part of Halliday's notion of ideational metafunction of language, provides a framework for examining how processes, participants, and circumstances are structured in clauses to reflect the author's perception of reality. When applied to autobiography, this framework may enable a closer reading of how authors grammatically encode experiences of trauma, struggle, and resistance, allowing for a nuanced understanding of the relationship between language and lived experience, especially when those experiences defy easy articulation. Schulkind et al. (2012, p. 963) observe that women's autobiographical narratives often prioritise evaluative over factual information, emphasising inner emotional landscapes rather than external chronology.

The transitivity system, a framework for examining how language represents processes, participants, and circumstances within a clause, identifies six primary types of processes through which experiences are linguistically expressed: material, mental, relational, verbal, behavioural, and existential. Each process type offers a different window into how writers construct meaning, and each involves specific participant roles and associated circumstances. For example, material processes represent actions or events, i.e., processes of "doing" or "happening." A material clause, such as "I eat mango," involves an *Actor* ("I") and a *Goal* ("mango"). In contrast, a clause like "I stand here" features no Goal and simply captures an action without an affected entity, marking it as a "happening" clause (Rehman, 2020, p. 25). These subtle distinctions influence how agency and impact are distributed across narrative voices. Mental processes, by contrast, open a window into the inner world. These processes, divided into perception, cognition, and reaction, capture thoughts, feelings, and desires. In "She disliked the idea," "she" functions as the *Sensor*, and "the idea" is the *Phenomenon* (Simpson, 2004, 23). Perception-based clauses might involve sensory verbs like "see," "hear," or "feel," while cognitive ones deal with internal acts such as "think" or



"know." Reaction processes are evaluative, capturing emotional responses like "love" or "hate." These clauses have a special significance in trauma narratives, as they reflect psychological states that may not be outwardly expressed. Relational processes convey states of being, identification, or possession. Paul Simpson (2004, p.24) identifies three types: intensive ("Joyce is the best Irish writer"), possessive ("Peter has a piano"), and circumstantial ("The guest was in the lobby"). These are further categorised into *attributive* and *identifying* relational clauses. In attributive clauses, an attribute is assigned to a subject (*Carrier*), whereas identifying clauses assign a specific identity and are reversible (Rehman, 2020, p. 28). These forms often serve to locate the subject socially, morally, or emotionally, an essential function in autobiographical writing that seeks to make sense of the self.

The verbal process, or process of saying, is central to storytelling, dialogue, and quotation. It involves a *Sayer* (the speaker), a *Receiver* (the listener), and *Verbiage* (what is said). A sentence like "She told him a story" exemplifies this: "she" is the Sayer, "him" is the Receiver, and "a story" is the Verbiage (Rehman, 2020, p. 30). In autobiographical texts, these clauses often mark moments of testimony, confrontation, or disclosure and help shape the writer's position in relation to others. Behavioural processes reflect outward expressions of internal states. This includes actions such as "frowning," "laughing," or "crying" that straddle the material and mental domains. The participant here is known as the *Behaver*, as in "She frowned at me," where "she" performs an action that is both physical and emotionally suggestive (Simpson, 2004, p. 24). These processes are subtle yet powerful tools for revealing affect in autobiographical prose. The final type, the existential process, asserts the presence of something or someone. It is typically marked by the use of "there," as in "There is a house." The *Existent* ("house") is the only necessary participant. This form often appears in descriptive passages or expressions of detachment or inevitability, allowing the narrator to shift focus from agency to mere occurrence. Together, these six process types create a grammar of experience. The choices an author makes, whether to highlight a mental state or material act, whether to obscure agency through existential forms or assert it through active clauses, reflect deep stylistic and ideological positions. As Simpson (2004, p. 25) notes, transitivity plays a central role in revealing "style as a choice". In autobiographical writing, especially when addressing themes of trauma, resistance, or self-discovery, the grammar of transitivity becomes a powerful tool for interpreting not just what is said but how it is made meaningful.

The current study also incorporates the concept of the medicalisation of trauma as outlined by the American Psychiatric Association (APA). The most recent edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5)* (2013) defines trauma, which is a concept associated with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), as exposure to actual or threatened death, serious injury, or sexual violence. Under *DSM-5*, PTSD is diagnosed through five criteria that reflect distinct dimensions of traumatic response. Criterion A (Stressor) involves four forms of



exposure: direct personal experience, witnessing trauma to others, learning of traumatic events experienced by close family or friends, or repeated/extreme exposure to traumatic details. Criterion B (Intrusion) refers to the re-experiencing of the traumatic event through unwanted memories, nightmares, flashbacks, or emotional and physical distress triggered by reminders. Criterion C (Avoidance) addresses the tendency to avoid trauma-related thoughts or external stimuli. Criterion D (Negative alterations in cognition and mood) includes symptoms such as memory gaps, persistent negative beliefs, and excessive self-blame or blame of others. Finally, Criterion E (Alterations in arousal and reactivity) encompasses physiological and behavioural responses, such as irritability, risk-taking, hypervigilance, and the startle response ("DSM-5 Diagnostic Criteria for PTSD"). In categorising trauma, APA recognises three distinct types: acute, chronic, and complex trauma. Acute trauma results from exposure to a single traumatic event. Chronic trauma stems from prolonged or repeated exposure, as seen in domestic violence or childhood abuse. Complex trauma arises from multiple, often layered experiences of trauma that are typically interpersonal in nature (Leonard, "What is trauma? What to know", 2020).

Positioning this psychiatric framework alongside linguistic and literary analysis offers a robust lens for exploring how trauma is not only experienced but also narrated and framed in women's autobiographical writing. As trauma disturbs linear narrative and self-coherence, the clause-level representation of actions, thoughts, and states of being can reflect deeper psychological and existential patterns. Through this framework, autobiographical narratives can be read not only for thematic content but also for the linguistic encoding of trauma and existential crises. The patterned use of processes, participants, and circumstances offers insight into how authors attempt to articulate the unspeakable through structured yet subjective expression.

As part of the current exploration, an extensive thematic content analysis of both selected autobiographies was conducted using Taguette software. This open-source qualitative research tool enables tagging and exporting of text data. From the broader thematic coding, a specific focus was placed on themes of trauma and existential crisis, as both autobiographies centre on the traumatic experiences of women writers.

Transitivity Analysis of *My Story* (1976)

My Story by Kamala Das is an autobiography, originally published in Malayalam, titled *Ente Katha* (1973). When first published, it caused a sensation among Malayali readers for its frank exposition of the traditional Malayali patriarchal system in an otherwise matrilineal society. *My Story* is a testimony of how such a system tries all means, especially through the institution of marriage, to quash the creative ambitions and sexual desires of a woman too bold to be tied down to its mores.



The transitivity analysis of *My Story* by Kamala Das, as shown in Table 1 below, reports eighteen instances of trauma linked to existential crises. These were examined not only through a literary lens but also through the scientific framework of PTSD, integrating the medicalisation of trauma defined by the American Psychological Association. Table 1 presents the frequency of each transitivity process related to the themes of trauma and existential crisis in the autobiography *My Story*. A general observation of the table indicates that 43 processes were identified, out of which the most frequently used process is mental processes (41.86%). This may refer to the writer's mental recollections about the traumas and existential crises she experienced throughout her life.

Table 1: Transitivity processes with reference to themes found in *My Story*

Transitivity Processes	Occurrences	Total No. of Processes	Percentage
Material	12	43	27
Mental	18	43	41
Verbal	1	43	2.
Behavioural	12	43	27
Relational	0	43	0
Existential	0	43	0

As shown in Table 1, the material and behavioural processes are used equally (27%) to explore traumatic experiences. This hints at specific physical actions as well as behaviours that gave the author-protagonist bad experiences. The verbal process is not often used to describe the themes, and out of the six processes described in the transitivity system, relational and existential processes are not used at all for exploring the key themes in this autobiography.

In *My Story*, the author employs mental processes to explain the traumas and existential crises she experiences. The expressions "I felt humiliated" (p. 40) and "I felt hurt and humiliated" (p. 78) indicate the instances of trauma Kamla Das faced in life. The first expression refers to an instance of insult that Das experienced at a young age when her uncle took her to a shop to purchase material for stitching frocks. The intensity of pain she felt is metaphorically expressed in the narrative. The second instance happened when her cousin, who would soon be her husband, physically abused her before marriage. This led to dissatisfaction in the marriage, as evident from expressions such as "hoped for a more tranquil relationship" (p. 80) and "made up mind to be unfaithful to him" (p. 90). Thus, the physical abuse, as well as dissatisfaction with married life, affected her mental health, which later paved the way for experiencing an existential crisis or a feeling of escape from married life. This is notable from the sentences "I want to escape" (p. 81), "I wished to escape from my home and walk on" (p. 103), and "get out of this trap" (p. 93). Then,



the phrase "wanted to find rest in the sea" (p. 210) suggests her yearning for eternal peace, which allows her to escape the bitter realities and traumas she faces in life.

The next most commonly used process is the material process, which involves examining the nature of trauma through action. The very first expression, "she was asked to read the poem I composed" (p. 10), points to the painful realisation of shadeism and its effects on Das's life. Das's talent was attributed to another girl only because of her dark skin tone. Another phrase, "posted an appeal to my father to rescue me" (48), refers to the strict institutions like convent schools, which enforced religion upon children. Kamala, as a young girl, witnessed the brutal side of the Calcutta riots, which is evident in the sentence, "his body was cut by Muslims" (p. 65). All the experiences gave her bitter lessons, and when she entered her teenage years, her cousin physically and sexually abused her. This resulted in a dissatisfactory marriage. This is evident from expressions like "pushed me into a dark corner behind the doors and kissed" (p. 78), "crushed my breast" (p. 78), "his hands bruised my body" (p. 79), "he hurt me" (p. 85), "let him take my body every night." The last two expressions point to an image of a wife who is reduced to a sex object for her husband and projects a marital relationship devoid of love and emotional affection.

The third most used process to represent her traumas and existential crisis is a behavioural process. The first expression, "pleads to bare my breast," indicates Das's cousin's bad treatment and physical abuse. The two clauses, "surprising me by the extreme brutality of attack" (p. 84) and "sobbing and trying hard to believe in destiny" (p. 97), show the sexual abuse or marital rape by the husband, which led to mental trauma. Being dissatisfied with married life, Das becomes depressed. The two expressions "threw himself down on my body with two strange groans" (p. 101) and "rolled off my body and lay inert at the foot of the bed" (p. 101) refer to the traumatic mental illusion experienced by the writer. The other depressing acts of aggression she faced were from her father's friends, who "gave me lecherous hugs" (p. 151), and from old acquaintances who "tried to touch me and made indiscreet suggestions" (p. 186). Thus, certain acts left her with bad experiences and memories. The verbal process is not that much used to explore the themes of trauma and existential crisis. Being born as a child of dark skin, Das faced discrimination at her European school. These events led to a decrease in confidence about one's beauty, as evident from the expression, "asking him secretly if I were ugly" (p. 36), and pointing to the colour-based discrimination prevalent at large. Similarly, the sentence "my husband told me that I am going mad" (p. 98) hints at her change in mental attitude. Her dissatisfaction with her married life may have prompted this change.

Thus, Das employed mental, material, behavioural, and verbal processes to explore the themes of trauma and existential crises experienced. The repeated usage of words like "hurt" and "humiliated" shows the linguistic choice made by the author to express negative emotions attached to memories of the trauma she comes across in life. Additionally, the repeated expression "I was going mad" highlights the change in mental stability that the author experienced. The



recurrent usage of the expression "wish/want to escape" hints towards the existential crises she felt in life.

Transitivity Analysis of *When I Hit You* (2017)

Like *My Story*, *When I Hit You: Or, A Portrait of the Writer as a Young Wife* (2017), an autobiography by Meena Kandasamy, a Tamil-origin author, is about a young woman aspiring to be a writer. Here, as well, like Kamala Das, Kandasamy faces cultural and societal pressure to give up and settle into the matrimonial routine of a traditional Indian wife. However, here, as described by the author, the oppression is much more vicious, not just mental but primarily involving physical violence.

As a part of the exploration of the representations of these oppressions in Kandasamy's *When I Hit You*, Table 2 presents the frequency of each transitivity process related to the themes of trauma and existential crisis that they lead to. The first observation in the table suggests that the total number of processes identified was 79, out of which the most frequently used are material processes (37%), which explore the themes of trauma and existential crises. This may be associated with the domestic violence experienced by the writer.

Table 2: Transitivity Processes with reference to themes found in *When I Hit You*

Transitivity Processes	Occurrences	Total No. of Processes	Percentage
Material	34	79	43
Mental	20	79	25
Verbal	12	79	15
Behavioural	12	79	15
Relational	0	79	0
Existential	1	79	1

Further, the second most used process is mental (25 %), which may point to the mental recollections of traumatic experiences Kandasamy faced in her life. Thirdly, there is an equal use of both behavioural processes and verbal processes (15%). Additionally, unlike *My Story*, a small number of existential processes are also observed, whereas the relational process is not used by the writer at all.

The material process, also known as the action process, is evident in expressions such as "I must learn that walking to the grocery store without a tunic makes people frown" (p. 34), which



exposes patriarchal control over dress. This expression strengthens Kandasamy's marking of marriage as a "re-education camp" (p. 32). Expressions associated with the actions of her husband, like "deactivate my Facebook account" (p. 52), "write down passwords" (p. 54), "deletes 25,600 odd emails" (p. 139), "changes password" (p. 139), "erases everything on my hard disk" (p. 139) show the extreme level of controlling behaviour exhibited by her husband, leading to her experience a mental shock. The expression, "putting his fingers in my vagina" (p. 60), points to the childhood sexual abuse she experienced. The brutal physical abuse Kandasamy suffered in her marital life is evident from the phrases "can catalogue weapons of abuse" (p. 69), "slaps me" (p. 199), "forces his way through the door and kicks me" (p. 202), "drags me" (p. 163), "hoists me against the wall" (p. 211), and "holding face under his toes" (p. 212). These acts of domestic violence bring fear of being killed by her husband. This leads to her being hypervigilant in her everyday life with him, evident from expressions such as "I light the matchstick in the empty air before I open the valve of the gas cylinder" (p. 188). Thus, this material process helps us understand the brutal treatment she had in married life.

Expressions such as "must consider in my role as a perfect wife" (p. 15), "I must remember that the responsibility of the female body belongs to me" (p. 34), and "I hear for 'your own good'", using the mental process (p. 60), show how Kandasamy was forced to come to terms with societal expectations of women. The unavailability of mental peace in married life is revealed through the sentence, "I resolutely buy myself an uneasy peace" (p. 54). The existential crisis felt by the author is evident in the statement, "I feel robbed of my identity" (p. 55). She felt nauseous when she realised her husband was replying to all her personal messages and emails. This gave her a mental shock. The total disappointment in married life can be identified through the statement, "I did not know that this was the exemplary life awaiting a newly married woman" (p. 69). The dissatisfaction in marriage takes her back to the memory of her true love and the pain of realising that he was a womaniser. This is expressed in phrases like "I watch love transform" (p. 121) and "he crushes me" (p. 121). Thus, the exploration of mental processes exposes the mental traumas experienced by the protagonist. The third process used to describe traumas and existential crises is the Behavioural process. Expressions, such as "she continues to enumerate her list with a note of requisite humility until a look of satisfaction flashes across his face" (p. 19), show how women are expected to please their husbands by speaking politely. The statements made by the author, such as "he allows me three hours a week" (p. 59) and "he is not going to let me go to a workplace unsupervised" (p. 79), reveal her husband's ruthless behaviour and mistrust of her. The expressions like "he continues smashing things" (p. 31), "he flies into rage tearing my bag from shoulders" (p. 132), and "he shouts and screams at me" (p. 212) point to her husband's violent behaviour towards her. His controlling behaviour does not allow her even to moan during sex. The expression "he stops the act itself" (p. 152) shows his punishment for putting her pleasure in front of him. Thus, this process helps in understanding the cruel behaviours of her husband directed toward her.



The verbal process, the process of reporting, is evident in expressions like "She asks him how his day at college was" (p. 19), a cliché talk expected from a perfect wife. Initially, Kandasamy responds strongly to the mistreatment, evident in the sentence, "I am not going to do anything if you blackmail me" (p. 50). However, towards the end, after enduring continual physical abuse, she finds herself too weak to argue and respond to her husband's entreaties, "This is the last time. Forgive me. Give me this last chance. This will never happen again" (p. 156). His well-defined patriarchal control over her is evident from the utterance, "I am forced to tell you what's good for you and what is not" (p. 51). The verbal abuse she suffered in married life is also expressed in her husband's utterances, "I have been asked to write on sexuality because I have the wide range experience of fucking up so many men" (p. 75), "he tells me to shut the fuck up" (p. 75) and "you are a whore" (p. 164). The sentence "It is the rain that tells me to run away" conveys the existential crisis the author feels while she searches for an escape. Thus, this verbal process demonstrates how a strong woman transforms into a weak, apologising one because of the bad treatment she receives in her married life, which directed humiliation not only to her identity as a wife but also to her identity as a writer, highlighting the functioning of well-defined patriarchal control within the institution of marriage. The existential process in the expression "this plainness that will prevent arguments" (p. 16) highlights how Kandasamy employs "plainness" as a strategy to promote peace in married life and how this same strategy is a sign of surrender from her side. This strategy of plainness can be successful only when it silences everything that constitutes an identity, leading to a loss of identity, which in turn can lead to existential crises. The recurrent use of phrases like "kicks me" and "hits me" shows the intensity of domestic violence inflicted upon her in the domestic space. Additionally, the recurrent use of the expression "your own good" exposes the patriarchal strategy to normalise the abuse of women within the institution of marriage. Phrases like "walk out" and "runaway" also hint at Kandasamy's longing to leave her marriage and the associated existential crisis she undergoes.

Features of Linguistic Choices and their Alignment with Symptoms of PTSD as per DSM-5

A general observation of the different transitivity processes identified in selected autobiographies hints at widespread symptoms of trauma that the protagonists experience. In *My Story*, expressions like "I felt humiliated" (p. 40) and "I felt hurt and humiliated" (p. 78) illustrate the negative emotions associated with these experiences. Additionally, expressions like "my husband told me I was going mad" and "they thought I am mad" show the change in mood and cognition. These symptoms, including nightmares that recollect the marital rape, associating events with negative emotions, and changes in mood and cognition, point and point to symptoms of PTSD. Additionally, as per DSM, Das may be undergoing chronic trauma because the symptoms she shows seem to emerge from her dissatisfaction with her loveless married life. In *When I Hit You*, expressions like "I feel robbed of my identity" (p. 55), "I resolutely buy myself an uneasy peace" (p. 54), and "I did not know that this was the exemplary life awaiting a newly



married woman" (p.70), show the association of negative emotions with Kandasamy's experiences. The expressions like "I nod in agreement" (58) and "this is the last time. Forgive me. Give me this last chance. This will never happen again" (p. 156) indicate Kandasamy's fear of her husband's figure and her fear of death at her husband's hands. This fear later gives rise to hypervigilance, as evident in lines such as "I leave the window open before I switch on the gas" (p. 188) and "I light the matchstick in empty air before I open the valve of the gas cylinder" (p. 188). Additionally, there are instances of recapping, one about the lost love when she realises the true nature of her husband, and another about childhood sexual abuse. Thus, these symptoms, i.e., associating the experiences with negative emotions, fear, hypervigilance, and flashbacks, point to a lingering PTSD. Furthermore, Kandasamy may be undergoing complex trauma because she is traumatised not only by her abusive husband but also by the loss of her true love and her experience of childhood sexual abuse.

Thus, in *My Story*, Kamala Das uses verbs of perception, emotion, and cognition to narrate trauma and existential crisis as deeply internalised experiences. The emphasis on inward states and psychological fragmentation suggests a form of trauma that is not always visible but is profoundly felt, layered within the recesses of an unsatisfying, loveless marriage. Her narrative is less concerned with external agents of harm than with the aftershocks of emotional rupture, presenting trauma as a quiet implosion rather than an overt confrontation. In contrast, Meena Kandasamy's *When I Hit You* adopts a language of material processes, privileging verbs that enact rather than reflect. Her narrative aligns memory with bodily harm and foregrounds physical suffering within the domestic sphere. Through the direct naming of the abuser and the visibility of the violence, her prose performs resistance. The language does not seek refuge in introspection; instead, it fights back, insists on presence, and refuses to be erased. In doing so, Kandasamy positions her autobiography as both testimony and protest.

Conclusion

By applying Halliday's transitivity system, the selected autobiographies were not only stylistically analysed in the current article but were also systematically understood as narrative responses to trauma. The divergent linguistic strategies of the two writers reflect not only their individual sensibilities but also the specific contours of the traumas they carry. Kamala Das's introspective recollections align with features of chronic trauma shaped by prolonged emotional deprivation. Meena Kandasamy's assertive, action-oriented narration corresponds to complex trauma, which spans physical abuse, the loss of a romantic relationship, and childhood sexual violation. Both sets of experiences, though different in form and intensity, exhibit patterns that correspond with the DSM-5's diagnostic criteria for PTSD, including intrusive recollection, emotional dysregulation, avoidance, and hyperarousal. Thus, the grammatical choices each writer makes, whether to internalise or confront, do more than organise language; they reveal the



psychological architecture of pain, resistance, and survival. In this way, transitivity functions as a bridge between literary form and clinical reality, illuminating how trauma is shaped, spoken, and ultimately made legible through narrative. Thus, the transitivity system helps identify and study expressions of trauma and existential crises experienced by women within the institution of marriage and society at large. In addition to engaging with literary trauma studies, pioneered by Cathy Caruth (1996), who integrated Freudian concepts to argue that trauma disrupts both the psyche and language, thereby manifesting in fragmented narratives, abrupt beginnings, and ruptured dialogue, trauma studies can also seek to incorporate insights from psychology and linguistics by examining the linguistic features employed by writers to narrate traumatic experiences.

References

- Adelman, T. H. (2004). Self, other, and community: Jewish women's autobiography. *Nashim: A Journal of Jewish Women's Studies & Gender Issues*, 7, 116–127. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1353/nsh.2004.0037>
- American Psychiatric Association. (2013). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders* (5th ed.). <https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.books>
- Caruth, C. (1996). *Unclaimed experience: Trauma, narrative, and history*. Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Curthoys, A. (2000). Adventures of feminism: Simone de Beauvoir's autobiographies, women's liberation, and self-fashioning. *Feminist Review*, 64, 3–18. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1395698>
- Das, K. (1977). *My story*. Harper Collins.
- Drake, K. (1997). Rewriting the American self: Race, gender, and identity in the autobiographies of Frederick Douglass and Harriet Jacobs. *MELUS*, 22(4), 91–108. <https://doi.org/10.2307/46799>
- DSM-5 criteria for PTSD | BrainLine. (2023, March 22). BrainLine. <https://www.brainline.org/article/dsm-5-criteria-ptsd>
- Halliday, M. A. K. (1985). *Introduction to functional grammar*. Routledge.
- Kandasamy, M. (2017). *When I hit you: Or, a portrait of the writer as a young wife*. Atlantic Books.
- Leonard, J. (2025, August 20). *What is trauma? What to know*. <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/trauma>



- Rehman, M. H. U. (2020). *A transitivity analysis of Imran Khan and Mahatir Muhammad's selected political speeches: A comparative study* [Master's thesis, The University of Lahore, Sargodha Campus].
- Schulkind, M., Schoppel, K., & Scheiderer, E. (2012). Gender differences in autobiographical narratives: He shoots and scores; she evaluates and interprets. *Memory & Cognition*, 40(6), 958–965. <https://doi.org/10.3758/s13421-012-0197-1>
- Simpson, P. (2004). *Stylistics*. Taylor and Francis e-Library.
- Taguette | Georgetown University Library. (n.d.).
<https://library.georgetown.edu/software/taguette>

Received: 04.17.2026

Revised: 04.19.2026

Accepted: 06.06.2026

Published: 06.07.2026



This is an open access article published under the
 Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY 4.0).
<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

Acta Globalis Humanitatis et Linguarum
 ISSN 3030-1718