

## LANGUAGE ANALYSIS OF NARRATIVE WRITING BY VICTIMS USING 'WRITING THERAPY'

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### **Introduction**

This paper is a record of the study about the way in which words when strung into sentences help a traumatised individual to express herself better. The writing therapy which researcher applied over six weeks helped the victims of trauma. It assisted them to relax and to come to terms with their grief, painful memories and seek a closure of the unpleasant experiences which they had faced.

### **Effects of Writing Therapy**

Writing is a potentially effective method to deal with trauma. Writing about traumatic experience for at least twenty minutes a day can produce measurable changes in people's physical and mental health. It positively affects sleeping habits, work efficiency, and their connection to others. When an individual put traumatic experiences into words, in a written form, they would feel relaxed from emotional factor which weighing them down. Keeping the traumatic events is extremely not good. Especially people who kept that traumatic experience secret were worse. (Pennebaker, Evans.2014.P.9)

### **Psychological Effects**

According to the author, feeling bad immediately after writing is normal. During the first session of writing people who wrote about their traumatic experience often felt worse, sad. These effects are generally short term. After two or three hours they positively feel relaxed and that is long term. (Pennebaker, Evans.2014.P.11)

### **Behavioural Changes**

Usually traumatised people feel worse, they feel alienated, irregularity to school/collage or working place, they may not talk to others; lack of sleep, mood swings are major factors. After writing what had made them to behave like this, they will feel better. Author rightly says "Write about what keeps you awake at night". After writing

people started to socialise with others, they will be regular to school/ collage or working place, they will sleep peacefully. (Pennebaker, Evans.2014.P.11)

### About the Subjects

Researcher took three subjects in which two were rape victims and the other one was emotionally and physically abused in the name of child marriage. Researcher selected the victims as subject to be tested for the study because the victims are not victims, in actual sense, but the survivors. The woman who has been raped undergoes anger, depression, fear, guilt and suicidal actions. It is very difficult for an ordinary woman to overcome the trauma because they undergone pain before the incident, during the incident, and after the incident. When compared to the pain victims undergoes by the society after rape, seems far lesser than the pain they undergoes during rape. Still victims are ready to face the society. That is why she must be called as ‘survivor’ and not the ‘victim’.

The most ridiculous argument is blaming the rape victim for getting raped. This is totally out of sense. Though the reason is rapist, the loss is for the victims. Women should take precautions when she is forced to go to unknown areas. Territoriality is most important. She should see the vulnerability in the society. Awareness about the places they visit is totally lacking now. They are oblivious to the situation and environment. If women go alone, they should take precautions.

The researcher had adopted the writing techniques from “Expressive writing- words that heal” by James W Pennebaker and John F.Evans. The book gives detailed account of how and when expressive writing can improve health. It prepares the reader for their writing experience when dealing with trauma. It includes 20 minutes of daily writing session program. The six week programme includes,

Four days of writing to express the deepest thought.

- Transactional writing assignment
- Poetic writing
- Story telling
- Affirmation writing exercise
- Legacy writing

(Pennebaker, Evans.2014.P.106)

### Language Analysis

The researcher analysed the subjects’ thought process through the usage of language in their written text and the vocabulary which they have used in their writing. This has helped the researcher to map the subjects’ socio psychological position. The Researcher proved through the analysis, al the three subjects were able to overcome

their negative thought. The Language analysis of the subjects' thought process and the vocabulary they used in the writing sessions were reflected a change in attitude from being depressed, angry and violent. Subjects were able to negotiate a solution in relation to their emotions. This helped them attain peace within themselves.

The subjects who had attended the writing therapy sessions wrote about their experiences. These written texts when analysed came up with the following insights. Diction at the initial days of the therapy. In the first week, in the case of subject one, researcher observed that the words which she used were completely negative full of pain and anguish hopelessness and defeat. Words are

- Insane
- suffering
- depression
- sorrows
- hesitated
- hurt
- Suicide
- Tragedy

In the case of subject two, researcher observed that the words which she used were completely negative full of pain and anguish hopelessness and defeat. Words are

- Torture
- Betrayed
- Alienated
- Missing
- Longing

For the case of subject three, researcher observed that the words which she used were completely negative full of pain and anguish hopelessness and defeat. Words are

- Pain
- Ignored
- Avoided
- Separation
- scared
- insult

Change in diction after the first week

For subject one, Complete move over of diction after the writing therapy. At the end of the first week of writing therapy, researcher found a slow shift in the mindset and the words which reflects the change in her mindset are

- Peaceful
- Happy
- relaxed,

For subject two, complete move over of diction after the writing therapy. At the end of the first week of writing therapy researcher found a slow shift in the mindset and the words which reflects the change in her mindset are

- Relaxed
- Happy
- Recovered
- meaningful life

For subject three, complete move over of diction after the writing therapy. At the end of the first week of writing therapy researcher found a slow shift in the mindset and the words which reflects the change in her mindset are

- Happy
- Reunion
- relaxed

### **Summation**

After the intervention programme researcher has analysed the language of the victims from what they had written. Researcher found transition of the subject's thoughts through their language. After the sixweeks intervention, subject's usage of language has entirely changed. Especially their 'diction' has changed positively. With the evidence of these changes researcher assure that subjects were recovered from their trauma and emotional upheavals.

### **Bibliography**

#### **Primary source**

1. Pennebaker, James W., and Evans, John F, *Expressive writing: Words that heal*. Idyll Arbor, Inc. 2014. print