EXPLORING SHELL NOUNS IN ANGELOU AND BHUTTO'S AUTOBIOGRAPHIES: A COMPARATIVE CORPUS-BASED STUDY

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore shell nouns in two autobiographies of Benazir Bhutto (1988), and of Maya Angelou (1969). The purpose of this research is to conduct analysis of each type of shell nouns with reference to their lexico-grammatical patterns and functions in both autobiographies. Quantitative analysis, to determine frequency of each shell noun and its lexico-grammatical patterns, is utilized by using the Antconc software (3.4.4.). Qualitative analysis, to examine their functions in both texts, is performed manually. The corpus for data was selected from 150 pages from each text. Schmid's (2000) principles of shell nouns and their lexico-grammatical patterns, along with their functions, is used as a theoretical tool for this study. The findings and results revealed that the linguistic and circumstantial shell nouns are frequent in selected corpus of Bhutto's autobiography (1988) while factual and circumstantial shell nouns are frequent in selected corpus of Angelou's autobiography (1969). N+cl lexico-grammatical pattern is frequent in both autobiographies. N+be+cl pattern is more frequent in Angelou's autobiography (1969) than in Bhutto's autobiography (1988). Conclusively, shell nouns are genre specific and context dependent, it is shown that writers and other popular entities use shell nouns in their autobiographies to portray complex concepts in simple terms as Angelou (1969) portrayed her complex traumas of childhood in simple terms, like situation, etc. While Bhutto (1988) portrayed her ideas and perspectives in people's mind through complex viewpoints in simpler terms.

Keywords: *Shell nouns, autobiography, Schmid, Corpus-based study, Maya Angelou, Benazir Bhutto.*

INTRODUCTION

Autobiography is the written nonfiction genre, is seen as the art of self-definition (Birch, 1993), in which an author shares every chunk of information about his life. Daughter of East: An Autobiography (1988) is a memoir of 11th prime minister of Pakistan, Benazir Bhutto. In this autobiography Benazir described every bit of information from her personal life to her life of politics. This autobiography is frequent with usage of nouns to convey information, to make concepts in reader's mind.

I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings (1969) is the autobiography of portraying teen and early days of American writer and poet, Maya Angelou. This autobiography is a coming of the age story in which the complex traumas of early life of Angelou are encapsulated in simpler information towards the description of strength in adulthood. Most of the information is portrayed through the incorporation of nouns.

Nouns play a vital role in conveying information in written registers (Biber, 1991). According to Schmid (2000), shell nouns convey complex

information to be packed into simpler words. He claimed that it is too difficult to define shell nouns because they are defined according to their functional properties.

That's why, several definitions of shell noun are given in his book, as "Shell nouns make up an open-ended functionally-defined class of abstract nouns that have, to varying degrees, the potential for being used as conceptual shells for complex, proposition-like pieces of information" (Schmid, 2000). Further he elaborated that shell nouns serve the semantic function of categorizing and perspectivation of complex bits of information which are described in clauses or even longer sentences of text (Schmid, 2000). Moreover, transitory formation of concepts is conveyed through cognitive functions of shell nouns. This shows that they let writers to compress these complex pieces of information in transitory nominal concepts with seemingly rigid and definite conceptual boundaries.

There are some functional properties that distinguish shell nouns:

At cognitive level, shell nouns contribute to the formation of temporary thing like concepts, may be abstract or solid in reader's minds. The distinctive feature of shell nouns, in contrast to other nouns, is their dynamic nature as shell nouns are context-specific, do not have permanent meaning. For instance, use of problem, aim and challenge is different in all contexts (Schmid, 2018).

At meaning level, "shell nouns serve the semantic function of characterizing the propositional content encoded in the linguistic context." For instance, the use of problem with description that 'only limited number of people can deal with it' in an introductory paragraph can indicate an obstacle or something negative and the use of challenge with description that 'important to take these' can indicate the hard task. It is lexical rather than contextual. Some are broad as fact, problem, thing, case, etc. while some are specific like disadvantage (Schmid, 2018).

At discoursal level, shell nouns serve the function of linking and referring the text, by adding more information. This is not only done by using, this must be pursued or that must be pursued but it is used as this idea must be pursued through anaphoric references, by referring back to specific word. This makes the referenced idea more definite and the transitory concept is made within discourse space (Schmid, 2018).

Schmid (2000) also mentioned 4 main lexico-grammatical patterns of shell nouns, into two categories, anaphoric and cataphoric, that are further elaborated in theoretical framework section.

1.1. Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study is to explore the usage of shell nouns in written texts, autobiographies. As previously, Aktas and Cortes (2008) analyzed shell nouns, their lexico grammatical features and their cohesive functions in published articles and student research papers. Rubab, Mahmood and Arshad (2019) investigated the use of shell nouns in academic texts and analyzed variation across different disciplines. Overall, literary analysis has done on Benazir's and Angelou's autobiography, their texts are not much discussed linguistically. The purpose of the present research is to explore shell nouns, their lexico-grammatical patterns along with their functions in Benazir's and Angelou's autobiography.

1.2. Significance of the study

This research is significant for both speakers and writers as they will get to know how large concepts with complex information can be made in simpler terms through usage of shell nouns. It can also help students to create connections and cohesiveness in their academic writings. This will also help students of literature and political science in identification of attitudes of writer that how political leaders and writers make concepts in readers' mind through usage of shell noun.

1.3. Limitations of the study

The present research is limited to the following grounds:

• The present research is performed to analyze 150 pages from both autobiographies, this is clear gap for future researchers to work on remaining pages or upon whole texts.

• The present research analyzed functions of lexico-grammatical patterns of dominant shell nouns, ignoring less frequent shell nouns.

1.4. Research Objectives

The objectives of the present study are to:

• determine the frequencies of each type of shell nouns in both selected text?

- explore the lexico-grammatical patterns of selected shell nouns?
- examine the functions of shell nouns and their lexico-grammatical patterns in both selected texts.

1.5. Research questions

The current research answers the following questions:

1. What are the frequencies of each type of shell nouns in both selected text?
2. What are the lexico-grammatical patterns of chosen shell nouns?
3. What are the functions of shell nouns and their lexico-grammatical patterns in both selected texts?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section of the study comprises of two parts. Firstly, historical background and discussion of key terms of the study, secondly the discussion of previous studies or researches relevant to the present research are described. The concept of 'shell noun' was first proposed by the German linguist Hans-Jörg Schmid in 1997, and is exemplified comprehensively in his monograph(Schmid, 2000).

Schmid considered shell nouns as open-ended, functionally described category of abstract nouns that have the potential for being used as conceptual shells for complex and as pieces of information (ibid. p.4). From the earliest publications in which he used the term shell noun (Schmid 1998, 1999, 2000) onwards, the concept of shell nouns is defined in functional terms because it is not their innate characteristic that specify whether a given noun is a shell noun or not, but a number of functions that noun performs when they are used in definite discourse(Schmid, 2018). "They frequently carry a specific meaning within their context in addition to their dictionary meaning" (Ivanic 1991)

Schmid (2000) examined the feature of shell nounhood as a functional feature and wrote the following functional definition: "a noun is turned into a shell noun when a speaker decides to use it in a shell-content complex in the regard of certain aims." Schmid (2000) also presented the classification of shell nouns, that are further discussed in theoretical framework.

Schmid (2000) claimed that these nouns can be found in four lexico-grammatical patterns in which they are examined together with their information to perform a specific function in anaphoric and cataphoric referential positions. Several past researchers conducted researches to identify the existence of shell nouns and their specific functions in different texts.

Aktas and Cortes (2008) performed study to analyze shell nouns, their lexico grammatical features and their cohesive functions in published articles from journals and student research papers from international graduate students, to compare both texts. They used tools for pinpointing the shell nouns and their lexico-grammatical functions, as MonoConc Pro software, chi-square test and manual verification of noun usage. The findings of the study revealed that students use more shell nouns than published authors but with different functions and patterns. Conclusively, they evaluated that that the students need practice to use shell nouns as cohesive devices properly, to improve their academic writing.

One of the previous studies was performed to investigate the use of shell nouns as grammatical metaphors across science and engineering discourse through grammatical metaphor theory in Systemic Functional Linguistics. COPAL corpus (physics, aeronautics), AntConc concordance software were used to identify the shell nouns in two-million-word corpus. The researchers concluded their research as shell nouns serve as grammatical metaphors that highlight disciplinary variations in knowledge interpretation between science and engineering.(Dong et al., 2020).

Mousavi and Moini (2014) examined shell nouns, their lexico-grammatical patterns and their functions in published 239 research articles in education from 2002-2010 through Schmid's (2000) framework on shell nouns, which is also followed in the present research. They used ant conc software to locate the use of shell noun and to identify their lexico-grammatical patterns through concordance. The findings of the research revealed that particular shell nouns like "change," "process," and "form" were identified as the most frequent, with specific lexico-grammatical patterns observed in the corpus. The research concluded that shell nouns uniquely combine characterization, concept formation,

and linking functions, which help in cohesive writing.

Rubab, Mahmood and Arshad (2019) examined the use of shell nouns and their lexico-grammatical patterns in academic texts and analyze variation across different disciplines. The lexico-grammatical patterns of shell nouns were identified through ant conc software. The researchers found that articles of social sciences had more frequent shell nouns and cohesive usage than articles of natural sciences, this study is limited to two academic fields within Pakistani research.

Gomez (2024) conducted research to analyze the discourse behavior and constructional profiles of the Spanish shell nouns "hecho" (fact) and "caso" (case) by collecting corpus of examples of Spanish. The results of the study showed that "Caso" preferred the constructions that create Condition and Background relations, while "hecho" showed preference towards Evaluation and Interpretation in the text. The researcher concluded that shell nouns with similar semantic features have distinctive constructional profiles and discourse roles in a specific context.

Castro (2013) performed analysis on British National Corpus (BNC) on different genres, to identify shell noun syntactic and semantic features across genres. The researcher identified Caso formal and functional patterns of shell nouns across genres, highlighting genre-specific and general features and concluded that shell nouns vary across different genres in terms of their formal and functional attributes, they depend on genre and discourse context.

Schanding and Pae (2018) examined shell noun patterns in English argumentative essays of Japanese, Turkish, and English speakers in their study, to identify the selection of patterns in essays of native and non-native speakers and to locate differences among them. The findings of this research revealed that similar shell nouns were found in three corpora but with different lexico-grammatical patterns, based on their language background.

Dong and Fang (2019) performed a comparative study to explore the differences in the usage of shell nouns in British English and Chinese English, particularly in media texts. The researchers analyzed construal of experience through shell nouns as grammatical metaphors and transitivity patterns in both English varieties by implementing Systemic Functional Linguistics and Metaphor Theory. The results of the study found that British writers prefer verbal processes while Chinese writers favor identifying processes with shell nouns in neutral discourse.

Angel and Castro (2021) investigated use of shell nouns in third-year undergraduate student writing by analyzing Problem and Way in Writings across three Disciplines. They analyzed differences in usage of shell noun across Sociology, Business, and Engineering disciplines. Antconc software was used to determine the frequency in corpus of all disciplines, while syntactic and lexical usage were analyzed manually. The results of the research found significant differences across disciplines, as sociology favors more evaluative language while engineering prefer factual styles. Conclusively, shell nouns meanings and syntax vary across different disciplines, every discipline has unique conventions regarding usage of shell nouns.

Tahara (2017) investigated how American and Japanese students use shell nouns in English argumentative essays, to analyze the differences and similarities between two corpora their essays. Schmid's (2000) shell noun concept was implemented as research framework. The similarities and differences were located through frequency analysis, syntactic pattern analysis, and lexical pattern analysis. The results revealed that Japanese students use frequent shell nouns, often for anaphoric reference, with differences in lexicalization patterns.

As the present study is concerned with the exploration of shell nouns in two autobiographies, Bhutto's Daughter of East (2014) and Angelou's I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings (1969). Several qualitative researches have been conducted on both autobiographies. As Isma Tariq investigated the evidences of Electra Complex in Bhutto's Daughter of East (2014), which was purely qualitative research. She concluded that the Benazir's autobiography demonstrated that her father couched her as the leader of the new generations. Benazir was a progressive woman who acknowledged her father's ideologies(Tariq, 2019).

Niveditha (2019) also conducted qualitative research to examine how Benazir highlighted prison's narratives in protest literature in Daughter of East (2014), to raise her perception of democratic principles and values. Khan, Mir

and Ramzan (2021) analyzed strategic role of pronominal choices in Political Discourse through Critical Analysis of Benazir Bhutto's Daughter of the East. They evaluated that pronominal choices like "we," "I," and "they" serve to obscure responsibility, create solidarity, and rationalize Bhutto's political stance. Conclusively, they unveil that Bhutto's use of pronouns helps to justify her political actions and gain sympathy, strategically positioning herself as a democratic leader.

Walker (1995) analyzed literary techniques that portray Angelou's protest themes and examined how the narrative forms frame identity and resistance in the text of autobiography, through qualitative research. This study is limited with linguistic techniques, solely focused on literary forms in I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings.

Saeed, Imran, Ahmad & Akbar (2020) critically analyzed Angelou's autobiography to reveal how female writers conceptualize their voices through their autobiographies. Nancy Hartsock's Feminist perspective was taken as standpoint of conceptual framework. The study concluded that Angelou's autobiography comprises of all struggles and traumas in the life of Angelou to overcome traumatic memories. It was revealed that to show her identity as a Black Negro Woman, Angelou raises her voice in her autobiography.

As previous researches examined the existence and functions of shell nouns with their lexico-grammatical patterns in different genres like research articles, argumentative essays, media texts and writings of different disciplines like sociology, business and engineering (Castro, 2013; Mousavi & Moini, 2014; Tahara, 2017; Schanding & Pae 2018; Rubab, Mahmood & Arshad, 2019; Angel & Castro, 2021). The domain of autobiographies is yet to be explored, in terms of shell nounhood. To fulfill this gap the current research is based on a different sub-discipline or genre, autobiographies, to determine the frequencies, lexico-grammatical patterns of shell nouns in two autobiographies. Mixed method approach, comparative analysis, exploring shell nouns in a different genre and examining both works with linguistics lens showcase the uniqueness of the present study.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The present research follows the Schmid's shell noun theory, in which he described the explication of shell nouns, their lexico-grammatical patterns in the text and also their functions. According to Schmid (2000) "shell nouns build up dynamic and functionally-defined category under abstract nouns…., that are used as a conceptual shell for complex, preposition- like pieces of information".

Shell nouns are difficult to define. Because they cannot be defined by the properties that are associated with these nouns but make up a functional linguistic class (Mousavi, 2014). As Schmid (2000) said whether a noun in a text is a shell noun or not does not depend on indivisible features that are essential to the noun but it depends on its usage. Schmid, wrote a comparison between three types of nouns in his book (Schmid, 2000). According to Schmid (2000) the idea for this comparison emerged from Ivanic (1991) as follow:

"**Full content** nouns are used for comprehensive characterizations about what the speakers want to talk about. The reason is that nouns like student, dog and school have stable and rich definition. Because they carry particular meanings, full content nouns and other open-class classes like adjectives and verbs are the significant medium to describe persons and situations, objects, plants and animals, activities and events and ….

Pronoun is the other class to perform anaphoric functions, this class has a very finite scope for characterization. The personal pronouns I, you, he, for instance, are used to characterize their correspondent only in regard to a very small number of semantic dimensions: speaker vs. addressee vs. other roles, human vs. non-human….

Shell nouns carry a middle position between these classes. To a certain extent, speakers can indeed use them to characterize a piece of experience and they derive their potential for characterization from their denotations. Yet, nouns that can be used as shell nouns typically have abstract and unspecific meanings. Shell nouns create variable concepts. They create temporary concepts because they are situation-specific and context-specific".

Schmid (2000) introduced six type of shell nouns, Factual, Linguistic, Mental, Modal, Eventive and Circumstantial shell nouns, in his book "English

abstract nouns as conceptual shells: From corpus to cognition". He claimed that every shell noun has a specific function in a specific context.

Schmid (2000) describes that these nouns are placed in four lexico-grammatical patterns in **3.1.**

which they are examined together with their context in anaphoric and cataphoric references, are described in table.

Function	Pattern	Abbreviation	Example
Cataphoric	Shell noun (N)+postnominal clause (cl) -that-clause, to infinitive clause, wh-clause	N+cl	"Mr. Bush said Iraq's leaders had to face the fact that the rest of the world was against them."
	Shell noun phrase (NP)+be+complementing clause (cl) -that-clause, to infinitive clause, wh-clause	N+be+cl	"The advantage is that there is a huge audience that can hear other things you may have to say"
Anaphoric	Demonstrative adjective (this, that) + (premodifier) + shell noun (N)	th +N	Mr. Ash was in the clearest possible terms labeling my clients as antisemitic. I hope it is unnecessary to say that this accusation is also completely unjustified.
	Demonstrative pronoun as subject (this, that,) + be +shell noun (N)	th +be+N	I won the freshmen's cross-country. That was a great achievement, wasn't it?

Table 3.1; Adapted from Schmid (2000)

Schmid (2000) claimed that shell nouns have three functions of characterization, concept formation and linking. Three basic functions of shell nouns that are described by Schmid (2000) are explained below:

To characterize the complicated information is one of the main functions of shell nouns. Two components of shell noun phrase, shell head nouns and pre modifiers can perform this function (Schmid, 2000). Aktas and Cortes (2008) described writers also use shell nouns to describe them semantically in their text and characterize a segment of experience in broad or nonspecific way and for comprehension of the details of the information placed in the context is essential. The lexico- grammatical patterns related with this function are N+cl and N+be+cl both with a cataphoric reference. Another pattern according to Aktas and Corter (2008) is a/an/the+N+of pattern.

Concepts can be portrayed by all classes of open-class words, but particularly concepts are made by nouns. There is a parallel relationship between full content nouns and the experience they want to show as concepts while concepts cannot be expressed by deictics, so shell nouns stand between the two opposite poles which are full content nouns and deictics. "Like full content nouns, they exhibit a constant conceptual relationship to a specific recurrent type of experience, to problems and opportunities and this function of concept formation is created by

the repeated use of a word to refer to a certain experience" (Schmid, 2000). and to allow readers to relate comprehensive information to a single nominal phrase. The pattern associated with this function is a/an/the+N+of.

As far as linking is concerned, shell nouns are similar to pronouns. For interpretation of shell nouns, researcher must consider shell content that is expressed in the context or it can be inferred from the context. This function is created by "linking the nominal shell with related text that gives the detailed information" (Gray, 2010). The pattern related with this function is th-+N which is anaphoric reference.

The present research aims to determine the types, lexico grammatical patterns of shell nouns and their function by using Schmid's shell noun theory as theoretical framework.

1. METHODOLOGY

The research design of this study is based on mixed method approach (qualitative and quantitative research). Quantitative research helped in finding frequencies and tabulating the data while qualitative research helped in interpreting the results of quantitative research. A corpus of two autobiographies "Daughter of East" and "I know why the caged bird sings" was made for the identification of shell nouns and their lexico-grammatical patterns.

Angelou's autobiography is written in 206 pages containing approximately 86000 words and

Benazir's autobiography is written in 326 pages consist of almost 140000 words. The corpus for this study contained 150 pages from both autobiographies was made to synchronize the results of frequency of types of shell noun. Both the books were in pdf format, researcher converted both files into word documents and later into plaintexts by using Ant converter. After that numerical marks or any other non-textual production and non-essential information were erased.

In the next step, the plain texts of both files were analyzed by corpus software called Antconc (3.4.4), the frequencies of types of shell nouns were counted by writing most occurring examples of each type given by Schmid (2000), in word list one by one. Firstly, the frequencies of those words were noted down as nouns and some of the words like thought, act, point, report, need, move serve function of noun and verb also, their existence as verbs was removed manually, later on the nouns were analyzed carefully, in the light of Schmid's concept of shell nouns, to identify the shell nouns. The frequency of all selected shell nouns was noted and categorized them into six

types. The lexico-grammatical patterns of most frequent shell nouns were extracted through concordance in Antconc.

The identification of lexico-grammatical pattern was explored manually by researcher, in the light of provided information of lexico-grammatical patterns in Schmid's book. Finally, functions of some selected of shell nouns with their lexico-grammatical patterns were analyzed, by taking assistance from provided functions of shell nouns in Schmid's book (2000). Shell nouns used in this study were taken from Schmid's list of shell nouns with a cohesive function.

2. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

This section comprises frequency of each shell noun of all types along with the frequency of lexico-grammatical patterns of selected shell nouns, to answer the first two research questions. Firstly, shell nouns under factual type are described, factual shell nouns are used to form conceptual shells for 'abstract' states of affairs and facts (Schmid, 2000). The frequency of factual shell nouns in both texts are mentioned in table 5.1.

Table 5.1	Bhutto's Autobiography		Angelou's Autobiography	
Factual Shell nouns	As Noun	As Shell noun	As Noun	As Shell noun
Problem	7	5	1	1
Thing	6	4	38	20
Point	13	9	5	2
Fact	11	10	26	14
Reason	15	14	7	6

Second type of shell nouns, introduced by Schmid (2000), is 'linguistic type'. Uses of linguistic shell nouns permit writers to describe linguistic 'activities and their contents and

products in a number of different ways.' The frequency of linguistic shell nouns in both texts are described in table 5.2.

Table 5.2	Bhutto's Autobiography		Angelou's Autobiography	
Linguistic Shell nouns	As Noun	As Shell noun	As Noun	As Shell noun
News	33	17	7	3
Message	23	12	3	1
Report	16	11	0	0
Question	11	9	19	15
Argument	4	4	1	1

Third type of shell noun is named as mental type, which encapsulate cognitive concepts or perspectives. Linguistic and mental shell noun have many common attributes. The distinguishing part is linguistic shell nouns are

used 'to report utterances', and mental shell nouns can be used 'to report ideas' (Schmid, 2000). The frequency of mental shell nouns in both texts are described in table 5.3.

Table 5.3	Bhutto's Autobiography		Angelou's Autobiography	
Mental Shell nouns	As Noun	As Shell noun	As Noun	As Shell noun
Idea	4	4	8	8
Notion	0	0	0	0
Belief	1	1	1	1
Aim	1	1	0	0
Thought	6	5	7	4

Fourth type of shell nouns is categorized as modal type, that are the conceptual containers or shells to describe modal meanings in compact form, these are related to modal verbs semantically (Schmid, 2000). The frequency of modal shell nouns in both texts are described in table 5.4.

Table 5.4	Bhutto's Autobiography		Angelou's Autobiography	
Modal Shell nouns	As Noun	As Shell noun	As Noun	As Shell noun
Truth	6	6	20	14
Possibility	6	6	3	3
Need	4	4	14	5
Ability	1	1	1	1
Necessity	2	0	1	1

Fifth type of shell nouns is named as eventive type that are generally used to encapsulate events in condensed form (Schmid, 2000). The frequency of eventive shell nouns in both texts are described in table 5.5.

Table 5.5	Bhutto's Autobiography		Angelou's Autobiography	
Eventive Shell nouns	As Noun	As Shell noun	As Noun	As Shell noun
Act	7	4	3	3
Move	4	1	4	0
Measure	0	0	3	1
Reaction	5	4	1	0
Attempt	6	4	0	0

Schmid (2000) introduced the final type of shell nouns as, circumstantial type. This type of shell nouns refers to times, locations, situations, conditions to do things and manners of doing things. The frequency of circumstantial shell nouns in both texts is mentioned in table 5.6.

Table 5.6	Bhutto's Autobiography		Angelou's Autobiography	
Circumstantial Shell nouns	As Noun	As Shell noun	As Noun	As Shell noun
Situation	8	5	5	5
Context	2	1	0	0
Place	31	17	30	26
Area	6	5	10	4
Time	119	87	123	87

The entire findings of frequency of occurrences of shell nouns of each type show that the linguistic and circumstantial shell nouns are frequent in selected corpus of Bhutto's autobiography (1988) while factual and circumstantial shell nouns are frequent in selected corpus of Angelou's autobiography (1969). Figure 5.1 and 5.2 determine the percentages of each type of shell noun in Bhutto's and Angelou's autobiography respectively.
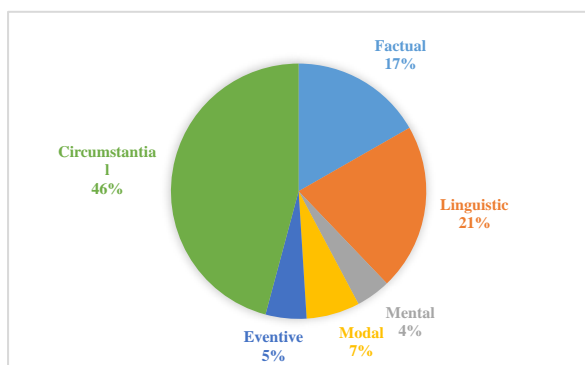
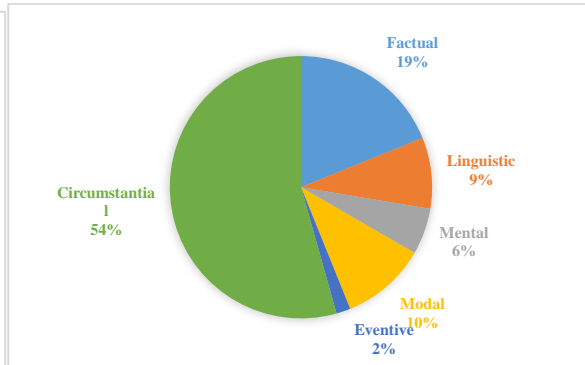**Figure 5.1.** Shell nouns in Bhutto's autobiography

Figure 5.2. Shell nouns in Angelou's autobiography

Table 5.7					
Benazir's Autobiography		Cataphoric		Anaphoric	
Selected Shell Noun	Frequency	N+ cl	N+be+cl	th+N	Th+be+N
Reason	14	14			
News	28	17	3	3	5
Idea	4	4	3	1	1
Truth	6	3		1	2
Act	4	1	1	2	
Time	87	48	8	21	10
Percentage		54.72%	9.43%	17.61%	11.32%

Moreover, the researcher selected some frequent shell nouns from both texts to examine their lexico-grammatical patterns. In the following, the frequency of each lexico-grammatical patterns, of each selected shell nouns of Bhutto's autobiography corpus, is mentioned, as shown in table 5.7.

Table 5.8					
Angelou's Autobiography		Cataphoric		Anaphoric	
Selected Shell Noun	Frequency	N+ cl	N+be+cl	th+N	Th+be+N
Thing	25	15	7	2	1
Question	15	9	4	2	
Thought	4	4			
Truth	14	9	3	1	1
Need	5	3	1	1	
Time	87	30	19	23	15
Percentage		43.2%	20.99%	17.90%	10.49%

The frequency of each lexico-grammatical patterns, of each selected shell nouns of Angelou's autobiography corpus, is mentioned, as shown in table 5.8.

The above findings reveal that cataphoric patterns, particularly 'N+cl' pattern, are frequent in both texts, while Maya Angelou (1969) used more N+be+cl patterns than Benazir Bhutto (1988) and 'Th+be+N' pattern is less frequent in both texts.

4. Discussion

> **"*I saw clearly for the first time why the people of Pakistan saw no <u>reason</u> to obey the regimes, no <u>reason</u> to stop*."** (Bhutto, 1988)

Factual shell noun
- N+cl
- N-to- clause pattern

this section of the study discusses the functions of some selected shell nouns, with highest frequency, to analyze their function through their lexico-grammatical patterns in the light of schmid's concept in which he showcased functions of each lexico-grammatical function of shell nouns. Firstly, the example of shell noun 'reason' is extracted from bhutto's autobiography corpus to analyze its function is given below:

> **"*Through toasts, the speeches, the banquet — how we all got the pleasantries, I will never know. This <u>time</u> I was the one to keep glancing at Mrs. Gandhi, but could read nothing from her face.*"** (Bhutto, 1988)

Circumstantial shell noun
- th+N
- Demonstrative pronoun as subject (this, that,) + be +shell noun (N)

The word **'reason'** in the above phrase behaves as a factual shell that encloses the complex motivations (or be in deficient in) behind the people's resistance. Overall **lack of motivation** in people of Pakistan, is shown in only one word. This demonstrates the idea by Schmid of **characterization** function of shell nouns in a text, to describe complex information in a simpler word (Schmid, 2000). This instance also serves the function of **concept formation**, as it makes the perspective in reader's mind by describing disobedience of people of Pakistan towards state or government. The occurrence of these N-to- clause patterns in this function can be described with the mobility of the postposition phrase structure because it is possible to give any kind of content with the purpose of characterization of a piece of information in a postposition phrase (Aktas, 2005). The repetition of reason showcases the cohesive function, by describing not obeying and not stopping parallelly, which creates a flow

between ideas. In both instances, cataphoric reference is associated, by performing the function of characterization.

The above provided phrase is extracted from Benazir Bhutto's autobiography, in which 'time' serves the function of circumstantial shell noun. As Schmid described that circumstantial shell nouns are to portray events, situations, or manner of doing things (Schmid, 2000). In this sentence, time refers to the specific event or situation (of glancing at Mrs. Gandhi), in a specific context (in a formal meeting with Mrs. Gandhi). Time also plays the function of cohesiveness, as it acts as a bridge between events of formal meeting and personal action. The pattern th-N refers the particularity of the time, by giving reference anaphorically. The demonstrative pronouns pinpoint specifically to a person, entity or any situation, to highlight a specific event in a particular context. Moreover, anaphoric references perform the function of cohesion in the text (Miguel & Castro, 2024).
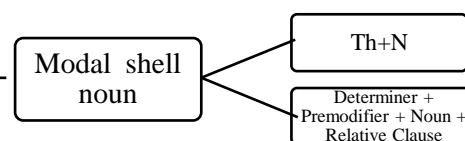
> **"*My first <u>act</u> as prime minister was to commute the death sentences of the condemned,*"** he says. **"*My last <u>act</u> will be the same. I always hated reading appeals for life.*"** (Bhutto, 1988)

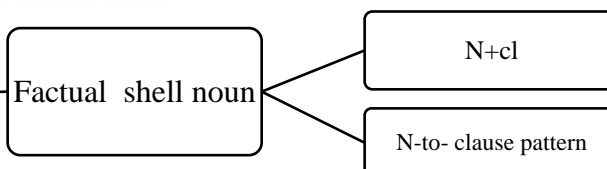Eventive shell noun
- N+be+cl
- NP+be+ complementing clause (cl)

*"There was a stunned silence. But my point was historically correct. This sadder truth, which I was refusing to face, lay in the disillusionment that had followed the creation of East Pakistan. How many times since have I asked God to forgive me for my ignorance."***(Bhutto, 1988)**

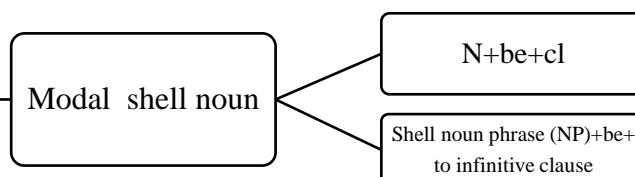Modal shell noun — Th+N / Determiner + Premodifier + Noun + Relative Clause

Schmid (2000) suggested that eventive shell nouns capsulize events, actions or processes serves the function of conceptual shells in which complex actions or processes are portrayed in compact form. Both existences of the word 'act' capsulize the complex information of a particular event or process, rather to elaborate the specific actions. The word 'act' in the first instance serves the function to convey prime minister's impactful decision, it characterizes the empathetic behavior of her entire era in one phrase in both instances, as 'my first act' and 'my last act'. It shows that Benazir Bhutto tried to portray her action of sympathy for her nation her in entire tenure. Both the instances are placed through lexico-grammatical of NP+be+ complementing clause that performs the function of characterization and the further description of noun phrase through complementing clause.

The above phrase from Bhutto's autobiography portrays the whole perspective of Benazir Bhutto, which is encapsulated in one noun phrase, 'the sadder truth'. In this phrase, truth acts as epistemic modal shell noun. According to Schmid (2000), Shell nouns like truth conveys epistemic modality in the sentences, these nouns show certainty, possibility or obligation in a text. The word 'truth' with modifier 'sadder' encapsulate a subjective perspective of disappointment towards a historical event. This conveys the entire viewpoint of Benazir Bhutto to the nation of Pakistan. This lexico-grammatical pattern also performs the function of sort of cohesion. As Aktas and Cortes (2008) Students mostly used this pattern in an attempt to convey inter-sentential cohesion. The lexico-grammatical patterns like Th-N-relative clause are usually associated with modal shell nouns.

"He said, 'Twasn't no interest. I said, 'T is now. I'll take ten dollars as payment in full. You know, Willie, it wasn't no right thing to do, 'cause I lent that money without thinking about it."
(Angelou, 1969)

Factual shell noun — N+cl / N-to- clause pattern

"Momma spied me in the shadows. 'Sister, the Lord don't like little jugs with big ears. You ain't got something to do, I'll find something for you.' The truth had to float to me through the kitchen door." (Angelou, 1969)

Modal shell noun — N+be+cl / Shell noun phrase (NP)+be+ to infinitive clause
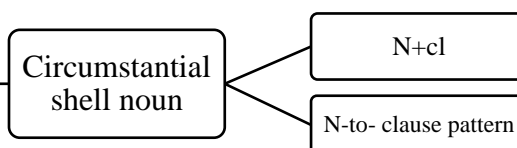
The above sentence is taken from I know why caged bird sings by Maya Angelou (1969). Schmid (2000) described in his book that shell nouns like thing incorporate abstract or complex concepts, synopsizing them into a simpler term. In this phrase, thing encapsulates the ethically "wrong deed" or "not right action" related to take benefit of the lent money. Rather to specify details what particularly made the action wrong,

the word thing represents the general idea of a morally unacceptable act. The word thing frames the whole concept that can make a temporary concept in reader's mind that, author sees it as a wrong deed. Thus, it shows factual shell nouns are used to form conceptual shells for 'abstract' states of affairs and facts. The lexico-grammatical pattern N-cl performs the function of linking in this phrase.

The above instance is taken from Angelou's autobiography (1969). In this sentence 'truth' serves the function of modal shell noun. According to Schmid (2000), modal shell nouns are used to refer certainty or to showcase information with a level of authority, he also described that modal shell nouns sometimes serve the function of something inherently believed or felt. In this instance, writer tries to get information through hints, here it clues at a realization the speaker gets indirectly through observation. Shell noun phrases usually encapsulate or make a package of textual
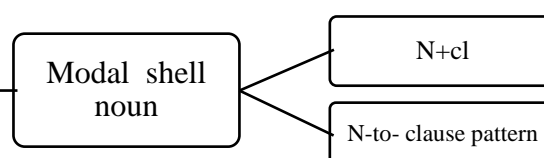
segments that make a bridge between the boundaries of single referring expressions, the truth serves as an unspecific shell whose semantic gaps are filled by conveying the previous sentences (Miguel & Castro, 2024). The pattern Shell noun phrase (NP)+be+to infinitive clause performs the function of characterization by describing 'truth' semantically and characterize a part of experience in general way, the details of information is placed in the context for comprehension.

"This was placed neatly on top of the purse, then she leaned on the bench in front and pushed herself to a standing position, and then she opened her mouth and the song jumped out as if it had only been waiting for the right time to make an appearance." (**Angelou, 1969**)

Circumstantial shell noun — N+cl / N-to- clause pattern

The above provided instance is taken from Angelou's autobiography (1969). In this phrase, time performs the function of circumstantial shell noun, showcasing the specific situation in a specific context. Circumstantial shell nouns encapsulate the whole situation or event in a conceptual shell (Schmid,2000). As 'the right time' describes the whole complex concept of what was the situation in the past, and the

present right time to make an appearance, in simpler terms. It frames the whole situation of song's appearance that was pending for a long time. The pattern N-to- clause pattern serves the function of characterization by describing 'time' semantically and characterize a part of specific situation in general way, the details of information is placed in the context for understanding.

"He finished, and since there was no need to give any more than the most perfunctory thank-yous, he nodded to the men on the stage, and the tall white man who was never introduced joined him at the door." (**Angelou, 1969**)

Modal shell noun — N+cl / N-to- clause pattern

Modal shell nouns are those abstract nouns that include possibility, necessity or obligation which make the reader to interpret the condition and requirement in a particular context of the sentence (Schmid, 2000). The word 'need' fits into the definition of modal shell nouns, by Schmid (2000), as it shows the necessity through which reader can predict whether there is requirement of something or not. In the context of the above phrase the word 'need' depict the absence of the obligation and requirement. It makes a conceptual shell that signifies that only required acknowledgement is appropriate, that also add some social expectations in the context. The clause "no need to give any more than the most perfunctory thank-yous," represents the

lexico-grammatical 'need+ to-infinitive'. Schmid (2000) noted that 'N-to- clause pattern' plays its role to encapsulate the bigger information in a concise and pointed form. The pattern 'need+ to-infinitive' performs the function to encapsulate the concepts of necessities and requirements in a thrifty way that makes a narrative of character's liberate behavior from formalities swiftly, in reader's mind.

The discussion of the study unveils that shell nouns are genre specific, as they perform different functions in each genre (Schmid, 2000). In both selected autobiographies, shell nouns are used for making concepts and perception in reader's mind, but the intentions of both writers to embed the shell nouns are different. It reveals

that shell nouns perform different functions in specific contexts (Schmid, 2018). Benazir Bhutto as political entity of the country, tried to incorporate her viewpoints in reader's mind through concept formation, characterizing in shell noun, while Maya Angelou as female poet and writer, tried to showcase her troubles and struggles to make her name as writer in male dominant society to encapsulate women's childhood traumas and struggles in conceptual shells, characterizing complex experiences in a general way.

5. CONCLUSION

Conclusively, this study explores the shell nouns in two autobiographies of Benazir Bhutto (the former prime minister of Pakistan) and Maya Angelou (the American writer and poet). This study shows that writers or other personalities use shell nouns in their autobiographies to encapsulate the bigger ideas in simple words. As Angelou used shell nouns, in her autobiography, to showcase her childhood traumas and adulthood strength. Bhutto as political entity, used shell nouns to encapsulate bigger ideas through simplification of words, to make a perspective in people's mind.

Shell nouns are categorized under six types, according to Schmid. Each type has distinctive function, for instance linguistic shell nouns often perform metacommunication functions in the texts. Each shell noun falls under a specific lexico-grammatical pattern. These lexico-grammatical patterns of shell nouns also serve a significant role or function to make texts cohesive and perform a function of linking (Schmid, 2000). The most significant feature of shell nouns is to characterize the specific part of experience in a general way and to form transitory concepts in reader's mind.

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