

Language Analysis Project
Subject: Malala Yousafzai
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Malala Yousafzai

On July 12, 1997, in Mingora, Pakistan, parents Tor Pekai Yousafzai and Ziauddin Yousafzai gave birth to their eldest child, Malala Yousafzai. Mingora is a large city placed in a district called Swat District. For the first few years of Malala's life, Mingora was a tourist city known for its summer festivals that would be held there. In 2007, however, the Taliban started to take over the large city. The Taliban is a group of terrorists who are against the Pakistan Constitution and want to overthrow the Pakistani government. Something that the Taliban was against was the education of females in Swat District, because they claimed that the education given to their girls was too Westernized for them. They claimed that their girls were not being taught what they were supposed to be taught, which was the ways in which how to be a Pakistani woman. Therefore, In 2009, the group banned girls from not only being able to receive an education, but activities such as shopping and not being able to walk outside by themselves without the presence of a man were also taken from them. One father of four girls described the Taliban as "savages" and that they were "helpless herds."

Malala's father was very much into education and ran and taught a school near his house. Malala was very much into education herself and even after the banning of education for girls, she and some of her friends continued to go to school secretly. This young individual started a blog for the BBC in which she changed her name so that the Taliban would not suspect her. In her blog, she wrote about the fears of her school being attacked, because when she was ten, more than 400 schools had been destroyed by the Taliban. She also wrote about the increasing number of the Taliban military. Soon after, the Taliban became aware that she was the author of the blog.

The more aware and known Malala's name was, the more danger she was putting herself in. There were death threats that were placed in the newspaper and slipped in her door. She became active on Facebook and more death threats began to be posted there. On 9 October 2012, a Taliban gunman shot Malala as she went home on the bus after taking an exam in Pakistan's Swat Valley. The masked gunman shouted, "Which one of you is Malala? Speak up, otherwise I will shoot you all". When she was identified they shot at her. She was hit with one bullet, which went through her head, neck, and ended in her shoulder. Two other girls were also wounded in the shooting and provided information to the press about what happened.

She was airlifted into a military hospital and was operated on for 5 hours. The doctors had successfully removed the bullet that was in her shoulder near her spinal cord. The day after, the doctors performed a surgery that took out part of her skull in order for the brain to swell. There were many offers to treat Malala all over the world. As soon as she was stable, she went to the UK. 3 months later, she was discharged from the hospital and went to recover in her temporary home with her family.

Since the attack, Malala has continued spread her activism and speak at a number of private events. She spoke at Harvard University and has met with President Barack Obama. On her 16th birthday, she spoke to the United Nations and made a call for worldwide education. This day was dubbed as "Malala Day". On 10 October 2014, Malala was announced as the co-recipient of the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize for her struggle against the overpowering of children and young people and for the right of all children to education. Malala is the the youngest Nobel laureate. On July 12th, 2015 Malala opened a school in the Bekaa Valley, Lebanon, near the

Syrian border, for Syrian refugees. The school, funded by the Malala Fund, offers education and training to girls aged 14 to 18 years.

Malala co-wrote her memoir "*I am Malala: The Story of the Girl Who Stood Up for Education and was Shot by the Taliban*," and it was published in October 2013. It was positively accepted and received high reviews from a number of different sources. Most recently, there was a documentary released called "He named me Malala" by an American filmmaker Davis Guggenheim in October of this year.

Sources: <https://www.malala.org/malalas-story>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MOqIotJrFVM>

Transcription: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MOqIotJrFVM>

1. In the name of God, the most merciful, the most beneficent, your majesties, your royal highnesses, distinguished members of the Norwegian Nobel committee, dear sisters and brothers.
[e]
2. Today is the day of great happiness for me.
[p^H]
3. I am humbled that the Nobel committee has selected me for this precious award.
[e] [d]
4. Thank you to everyone for your continued support and love.
[a]
5. Thank you for the letters and cards that I still receive from all around the world.
[?]
6. Your kind and encouraging words strengthens and inspires me.
[d]
7. I would like to thank my parents for their unconditional love.
[t]
8. Thank you to my father for not clipping my wings and for letting me fly.
[d] [?]
9. Thank you to my mother for inspiring me, to be patient, and to always speak the truth,
[d]
which we strongly believe is the true message of Islam.
10. And also, thank you to all my wonderful teachers who inspired me to believe in myself and be brave.
11. I am proud, well in fact, I am very proud to be the first Pashtun, the first Pakistani, and the youngest person to receive this award.
12. Along with that, along with that, I am pretty certain that I am also the first recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize who still fights with her younger brothers.
[?]
[d]
13. I want there to be peace everywhere, but my brothers and I are still working on that.
[d]
14. I am also honored to receive this award together with Kailash Satyarthi, who has been a champion for children's rights for a long time.
[d]
15. Twice as long, in fact, than I have been alive.
16. I am proud that we can work together, we can work together and show the world that an
[d] [d]

Indian and a Pakistani, they can work together and achieve their goals of children's rights.

[d]

17. Dear brothers and sisters, I was named after the inspirational Malalai of Maiwand who is the Pashtun Joan of Arc.

18. The word Malala means "grief stricken", sad", but in order to lend some happiness to it, my grandfather would always call me Malala – The happiest girl in the world" and today I am very

[p^H]

[p^H]

happy that we are together fighting for an important cause.

[p^H]

[d]

19. This award is not just for me.

20. It is for those forgotten children who want education.

[?]

21. It is for those frightened children who want peace.

22. It is for those voiceless children who want change.

23. I am here to stand up for their rights, to raise their voice... it is not time to pity them.

24. It is not time to pity them.

25. It is time to take action so it becomes the last time, the last time, so it becomes the last time that we see a child deprived of education.

[Ø]

26. I have found that people describe me in many different ways.

27. Some people call me the girl who was shot by the Taliban.

28. And some, the girl who fought for her rights.

29. Some people, call me a "Nobel Laureate" now.

30. However, my brothers still call me that annoying bossy sister.

31. As far as I know, I am just a committed and even stubborn person who wants to see every

[?]

child getting quality education, who wants to see women having equal rights and who wants

[?]

[t]

peace in every corner of the world.

32. Education is one of the blessings of life—and one of its necessities.

[t] - pronounces the “t” sound

33. That has been my experience during the 17 years of my life.

34. In my paradise home, Swat, I always loved learning and discovering new things.

- puts emphasis on [th] sound

35. I remember when my friends and I would decorate our hands with henna on special occasions.

36. And instead of drawing flowers and patterns we would paint our hands with mathematical formulas and equations. [re] [t]

37. We had a thirst for education, we had a thirst for education because our future was right there in that classroom.

38. We would sit and learn and read together.

[t]

[d]

39. We loved to wear neat and tidy school uniforms and we would sit there with big dreams in our eyes. does not say “t” sound here

40. We wanted to make our parents proud and prove that we could also excel in our studies and achieve those goals, which some people think only boys can.

41. But things did not remain the same.

42. When I was in Swat, which was a place of tourism and beauty, suddenly changed into a place of terrorism. [t] [change]

43. I was just ten that more than 400 schools were destroyed.

44. Women were flogged.

45. People were killed.

46. And our beautiful dreams turned into nightmares.

[t]

47. Education went from being a right to being a crime.

[t]

[t]

48. Girls were stopped from going to school.

49. When my world suddenly changed, my priorities changed too.

[change]

50. I had two options.

51. One was to remain silent and wait to be killed.

52. And the second was to speak up and then be killed.

53. I chose the second one.

54. I decided to speak up.

55. We could not just stand by and see those injustices of the terrorists, denying our rights, ruthlessly killing people, and misusing the name of Islam.

[an]

56. We decided to raise our voice and tell them, “Have you not learned, have you not learned

[an]

[t]

[t]

that in the Holy Quran, Allah says, ‘If you kill one person, it is as if you killed the whole humanity.’

[t]

57. Do you not know that Muhammad, peace be upon him, the Prophet of Mercy, he says, “Do not harm yourself or others.”

58. And do you not know that the very first word of the Holy Quran is the word “Icra,” which means read?

59. The terrorists tried to stop us and attacked me and my friends, who are here today, on our school bus, in 2012.

[ei]

Analysis

Malala speaks very good English, but there were some differentiations in her phonology that would be considered different for us with Standard English. She had a repeated pattern, for example, of saying the [t] sound in words that in Standard English, we would normally not say even though the letter is in the actual spelling of the word. For instance in the word “quality” in sentence #31, Malala pronounces the “t”, where we would usually blend it with the other letters in the word, making it sound as if the “t” would disappear. Again, she does this with the word “beauty,” explicitly saying the [t] sound in sentence #42. She has this recurring pattern in sentences 32, 36, 38, 42, 46, 47, and 56.

Although, it is interesting to note that in sentence #39, she mentions the word “sit” again as she does in sentence #38, but she does not say the [t] sound explicitly as she does in sentence #38. A conclusion I came to was the way she emphasized on certain words and delivered them in her speech. She would pause a lot to let the words sink in with the audience. In sentence #38, she did these pauses, whereas in sentence #39, she did not and talked at her normal pace. Therefore, I think this could be a reason as to why she did not say the [t] sound in “sit” in sentence #39.

Malala pronounces words that are written with two p’s such as the word “happiness” in sentence #3 with an aspirated p. In standard English we would say [hapines] and Malala pronounces it as [hap^hines]. After some research, I came to the conclusion that she says a lot of words that have a p in it with an aspiration. In Standard English, /p/ is a bilabial stop but in Urdu, which is Malala’s second language, the /p/ is a bilabial but unlike Standard English it is an voiceless affricate. This occurs in sentence 3 and 18.

Something else she does differently was the glottal stop, which was only in sentence #31 with the words “committee” and “getting.” The glottal stop means that you pronounce both the double consonants, instead of one as you do in Standard English. Knowing that the British speak with the glottal stop, I researched and found out that Malala and her family have been living in England ever since the shooting happened three years ago. Therefore, I made the connection. It also occurs in sentences #5, 8, 12, 20. Something else that the British do is that they often pronounce the [d] sound as the [t] sound. Malala does this with the word “learned” found in sentence #56. She pronounces it with the voiceless sound of the [t] making it “learnt.

Other different phonology sounds that Malala says in her speech include in sentence #36, where she says the word “patterns” as [patrens]. She reverses the “er” sound to “re, which I found interesting. She also, in sentence #59, says the word “attacked” differently than how we would say it in Standard English. She pronounces it as the following, [attɛked] making the vowel turn into the sound you would make when you say the words “bed” or “letter.” In sentences 55 and 56, she leaves out the final consonant [d] in the word “and” in both sentences.

Malala pronounces the /th/ sound differently. When it is in the beginning of the word, like in sentence #2, she says it as if it was in standard English. However when it is in a word after the first syllable, such as “father” in sentence #8, she pronounces it as a [d]. I found many inconsistencies when it came to the /th/ sound in the beginning of the word. Sometimes she would pronounce it correctly but other times she would pronounce it with a [d]. I think this was due to her putting emphasis on some words since it is a speech and it could’ve made an impact on how she pronounces things. This occurs frequently in her speech, such as in sentences #3,6, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, and 16.

In terms of morphology, I was able to find a few errors altogether in sentences #31 - #59. For example, in sentences 42 and 49, she changes the part of speech from past to present. In both sentences, it is the word “changed.” But interestingly enough, she does not do this all the time throughout her speech, but I only found it in these specific areas. I even replayed it over and over on these particular spots and heard the tense change in these two sentences only.

In terms of semantics, I could not find any errors or observations in Malala’s speech. She uses the words in a manner that shows that she knows the meaning and how to use them effectively. In regards to syntax, Malala constructed her sentences well and due to it being a speech that she had prepared for accepting the Nobel Peace Prize, this could also play a factor, because she had time to think out her sentences and probably also had others edit the speech for her, before she began speaking that day. However, we did look into other videos that are on the internet where Malala does not have anything prepared and she also follows the rules of syntax.

We believe that Malala has a very good grasp on the English semantics and syntax because her father taught her English. Her father is an educator and is an advocate for women’s education so it was very important for him to teach Malala to stand up for her right for education. Malala wanted to become a doctor and she knew that in the medical world, she needed to really understand and become fluent in English. Already being fluent in Pashto and Urdu, she began to tackle being fluent in English. I believe that some of this is due to second (or in this case third) language acquisition. Since Malala was a bit older when she started learning English and have a very solid base on the lexicon in Pashto and Urdu, I think she used some sort of monitor model from Krashen’s theories. The monitor model was based on self autocorrecting when the person already knows the grammar and rules on how to form sentences. This might have been difficult

to comprehend in the beginning because Pashto is based on a “subject-object-verb” model as well as in Urdu. In English it is “subject-verb-object”. It was probably difficult to get used to the new structure. I believe that the vocabulary was not that difficult because she already had an extensive word bank in Pashto and Urdu to compare the words in English. Malala also lived in England after the shooting which also contributed to speaking in BICS such like what James Cummins described. BICS is more geared towards regular day lexicon which is something that you can acquire much faster when you are surrounded by the language everyday and are required to use it on a day to day basis.