

Rhetorical Analysis of *I am Malala*; Malala's Ideal of Muslim Girls



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Abstract: *Rhetorical style is not an ornament in the language; it is the use of language in persuasion. The purpose of this research is to highlight the style Malala employs to persuade readers of her ideal of modernity of Muslim girls. This research contributes to demonstrating Malala's voice, which seems to resonate with Western ideology, that misrepresents traditional Pakistani Muslim girls. The present study aims to analyze the rhetorical style of the text *I am Malala* by Malala Yousafzai in the light of Toulmin's model of argumentation. The researcher uses Chaim Perelman's theory of argumentation to analyze the rhetorical style of Malala's voice, which may persuade readers to consider her modern from other Pakistani Muslim girls who are represented as restricted, backward, and unfamiliar with modernity. The study concludes that various features of voice style, like tone, diction, and contractions, are used by Malala Yousafzai that may influence readers about her ideal of modernity of Muslim girls.*

Keywords: Muslim girl, rhetorical style, voice, modernity

Introduction

Modernization is usually regarded as a rebellion against traditional values and morals to achieve contemporary conventions, a transition from being backward to becoming a modern nation. In literature, the Western notion of modernization involves abandoning traditional and religious values and promoting individual freedom and Western ideals. Shah refers to Lerner's theory of modernization, any nation can become modern by imitating the values of Western nations, if a nation clings to its traditions, it does not mean it is genetically incapable of modernization; rather, it reflects an inability to free itself from the backwardness of its traditional and cultural practices (Shah, 2011). In this paper, the term *modernity* refers to Malala's rejection of traditional and religious values and her prioritization of Western values and lifestyle for girls. Malala's ideal of modernity appears to undermine the innocence

of Pakistani Muslim girls and promote Western ideology and culture as a model for them.

Malala convinces readers of her ideology of modernism in *I am Malala* through her rhetorical style of language. Rhetorical style refers to the strategic use of language in text or speech to persuade an audience. Fahnestock (2011) defines rhetorical stylistics as a strategy used to recognize the distinctive qualities of both literary and non-literary texts. It is an umbrella term encompassing various strategies used in language like figure of word choices, schemes of words, figures of sounds, voice, sentence architecture, figure of arguments, series and prosody, and punctuation. Selzer (2004) further explains rhetoric stylistics as both a productive and interpretive discipline that demonstrates how language can be used effectively and how it can be critically analyzed.

Rhetoric and stylistics are closely related. Early

in the fifteenth century, before the full development of stylistics, the study of style began as one of the canons of rhetoric, primarily focusing on a few figures or tropes. Stockwell & Whiteley (2014) illustrate rhetoric for many years, five canons of rhetoric were studied, which are invention, arrangement, memory, delivery, and style. Over time, the emphasis on these canons evolved, and today, invention and style are considered the most significant. Of the five rhetorical canons, style remains the most prominent. Although its scope expanded and contracted during the sixteenth and twentieth centuries, it was never missed.

Rhetorical analysis is the study of language style that involves breaking down language to examine how words and sentences are constructed to produce a persuasive effect on readers (Stockwell & Whiteley, 2014). It aims to understand the language choices people make in specific social contexts to influence others. A fundamental concept in rhetoric is the audience, which refers to three dimensions: the actual recipients of the rhetoric, the imagined audience constructed in the speaker's mind, and the presence of readers within the text itself (Selzer, 2004). In *I Am Malala*, the author demonstrates an awareness of her audience as she constructs arguments to promote her ideal of modernity of Muslim girls.

One of the main advantages of rhetorical stylistics is its close connection to the analysis of argument and persuasion. Camper (2018) explains that it offers a variety of methods to examine and understand rhetorical strategies within a text. According to Camper, an essential consideration in rhetorical analysis is its overall effectiveness, particularly how terms at varying levels of generality function within the argument (Camper, 2018).

Voice is a key element of rhetorical style, especially in autobiographical writing, where it reflects the author's personal stance. For readers, voice of the author is recognized through the author's mood and credibility of the narrative, allowing readers to connect with the speaker on a deeper level (Kolln & Gray, 2012).

When analyzing rhetorical style, several key

features help reveal the author's voice in a text. The most important of these is tone, which is shaped by the rhetorical situation, the topic, the purpose, and the intended audience. Another critical element is the author's word choice and sentence structure, which reflect their attitude toward the subject and contribute to their distinctive voice. Additionally, the use of metaphors, verbs, and the level of formality further shape how the author's voice is perceived. Contractions, for instance, influence sentence rhythm and reduce the distance between narrator and reader, making the voice appear more conversational and less formal. Metadiscourse also plays an essential role, as it includes textual signals that guide the reader, such as the word "however," which cues a contrast or shift in argument. Finally, the way an author presents their point of view supports the reader's understanding of their voice (Kolln & Gray, 2012). In *I Am Malala*, Malala's voice is characterized by varying tones, carefully chosen diction, the use of contractions, and other persuasive linguistic features that work together to promote her vision of the modernity of Muslim girls.

This study claims that the rhetorical style of Malala's voice persuades readers of her ideal of modernity which seems to present a reductive image of traditional Pakistani Muslim girls. Muslim girls have been portrayed as backward and shy, whereas Malala is represented as a modern, educated, and courageous girl. This paper aims to analyze Malala's voice in *I am Malala* that persuade readers of her ideal of modernity of Muslim girls by examining her arguments in the light of Toulmin's model of argumentation.

Literature Review

Mushtaq (2014) claimed that in the text *I am Malala*, other voices are louder than Malala's voice, and some interdiscursive events represent just one side of the facts. Certain events represented in the text are challenged by the author in his research. For example, she said that British India was divided because "there was a feud between two brothers and they agreed to live in different houses" (Yousafzai & Lamb, 2013). According to the author, Malala

represented an interdiscursive event—the creation of Pakistan—and instead of a feud between two brothers, it was created on the basis of the Two-Nation Theory. Furthermore, when she talked about Osama bin Laden, in a book passage, “These clerics said 9/11 was revenge on the Americans for what they had been doing to other people around the world...” (Yousafzai & Lamb, 2013), According to Mushtaq, she represented the 9/11 interdiscursive event through various explicit and implicit voices rather than her own. Her voice here is sympathetic toward those killed in the attack, but in another part of the book, when she discusses drone attacks, there is not enough information about innocent civilians. From different extracts of the book, Mushtaq analyzes voices and interdiscursive events and concludes that, rather than education and peace, other discourses—such as politics, terrorism, poverty, inequality, and child labor—are represented through explicit and implicit voices and historical events.

Sormo (2016) claimed that Malala Yousafzai has used different rhetorical strategies in her speeches to influence the audience and persuade them of her arguments and struggle. He analyzed various speeches of Malala, like her speech at the Youth Takeover of the United Nations, Tipperary International Peace Prize speech, speech at the inauguration of the Library of Birmingham, and Humanitarian of the Year speech at Harvard University. Malala used the abundance of pronouns, like first-person pronouns, which act as an agent of personal involvement and create a sense of harmony with the audience. Her shift of pronouns influenced the audience toward her arguments. She used various modal auxiliaries, like *can*, *could*, *may*, *might*, *shall*, etc., to make her speeches effective.

On July 12, 2013, Malala gave a speech at the UN, where more than 100 leaders from different countries were present. She spoke for the rights of children and education for girls in Pakistan. She challenged the authority of terrorism. Haider (2014) claimed that it is because of her style of speech and selection of words that influenced the audience emotionally. She constantly used ethos in her speech; as she spoke not about her bravery but about other girls’

rights, education, and wanted peace, not fear. By using a variety of figures of speech, synonyms, and metaphors, she provoked emotions in the audience and persuaded them that she is the rescuer of girls and children. To gain practical support from the audience, Malala gave her arguments by using the strategy of logos, like antithesis. She built strong arguments with logic to convince the audience to join her in eradicating poverty, terrorism, and illiteracy, and to develop harmony and peace.

Phelan (2014) identified voice, tone, and value in narrative communication and their function by analyzing extracts from well-known narratives. The voice has been defined as a synthesis of style, value, and tone. Furthermore, in a narrative communication, it analyzes the role of voice, particularly the role of tone, in particular. It states that an author can modify voice by merely changing one or two of the three above-mentioned elements. For example, in the novel *The Friends of Eddie Coyle*, Higgins refers to Eddie’s tone of voice to express Eddie’s anxiety about the hearing. With the play of voices, Higgins wanted to persuade readers about the important position of Eddie. Sometimes, style and tone work together to persuade readers about a particular idea, so it varies in narrative communication. A change in voice can be made without making a significant change in style. Despite many of these notable works, narrative theory could not yet produce a concise argument about the actual functioning of the voice in a narrative, in part, since it did not consider the notion of tone, which is actually a primary component of voice.

According to Parker (1970), the author might use his voice to evaluate a situation for the readers to recognize the implied meaning in the text. Sometimes the author makes use of his voice to create dramatic irony, when readers are more aware of a situation than the character in the narrative. The author may use his voice to comment on life by relating situations in the text to aspects of daily life. It is the voice of the author that helps the reader gain insight into the narrative (Parker, 1970).

Oluremi (2013) claimed that Obafemi Awolowo’s speeches reflect his great

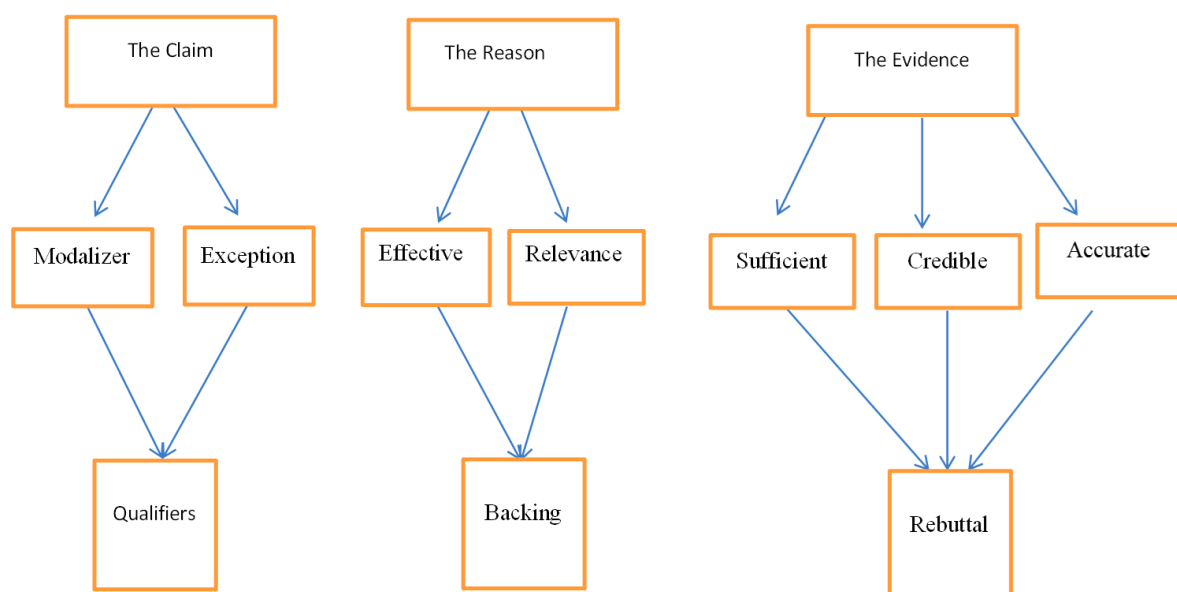
personality and thoughts because of the selection of language he used. His speech, “It Is Not Life That Matters” (1963), rhetorical style is reflected. Obafemi Awolowo was employed at a very standard post in Nigerian politics. He considered those speeches delivered to the public very significant because through these, he won the hearts of the public. His choice of words, like nouns preceded by adjectives, and his choice of the noun phrases like “incalculable injuries” represented his determined personality. His use of adverbs in his speech, like “naturally and similarly,” is a technique to arouse feelings of self-justification from the audience. He mingled simple, complex, and compound sentences in his speech. Awolowo used various emotional strategies and motivational appeals. He used different parts of speech and allusions in his speech, like he compared himself with Peter, the hero of one of Walpole’s novels. So, all the tactics he constructed in his speech were just because, being a politician, he wanted to remain alive in the hearts of his public.

Nelson Mandela, an African political leader, was against poverty, corruption, and the unjust system constructed by the white government. Being a political figure, through his speeches, he fought to eradicate the exploitative system of racial discrimination against Black people.

Dwivedi (2015) claimed that it is because of his selection of rhetorical style in his speeches, “Our march to freedom is irreversible. We must not allow fear to stand in our way,” a pervasive metaphor, “march” is reflecting his personality as a fighter for independence. He used analogies and repeated many words and phrases. His speeches contained many repeated words like “hate, government, population, and racial,” as he was not fighting for just Black people, but for racial discrimination that exists all over the world. He used various linguistic strategies, compare and contrast, which motivated people and provoked them to fight against injustice.

Stephen Toulmin's Model of Argumentation

British philosopher Stephen Toulmin, in his book *The Uses of Argument* (2003), explains the method of rhetorical analysis. This method of analysis breaks the argument into three parts to examine its various elements. By classifying the argument, it provides avenues for the reader to distinguish between the covert and overt ideas presented by the author, to comprehend the argument fully, to summarize with accuracy, and to discuss more logically the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the argument. This model of argumentation is used by the researcher to analyze the selected arguments from *I Am Malala*.



The Claim

The claim is the assertion the arguer is advocating in an argument. The other constituents of the argument fall under the category of the claim. Then, to find out the aims of author behind that claim, qualifiers like *some*, *all*, *many*, etc., or exceptions are analyzed. Exceptions and qualifiers serve to limit the claim. The force of the claim is enhanced by the qualifier or modelizer, statement, or phrase.

The Reason

The reason creates a bridge between the claim and the evidence. It is the implicit knowledge that joins the claim and evidence. Reasons contain the second part of an argument, which is essential to balance the claim. To determine the strength of an argument, its relevance and effectiveness are analyzed. The source of the reason can be common sense observation, historical reports, personal experience, and precise statements of legal precedent, etc., upon which the author and readers can agree. Backing is information that measures the effectiveness and relevance of the reason, but backing can also be assumptions underlying the statement.

The Evidence

The evidence is the data that supports the claim. If proper evidence is not given in the argument, then both the claim and the reason become ineffective. To convince a reasonable reader, evidence must be effective. The effectiveness of evidence is examined by checking its credibility, sufficiency, and accuracy. It depends on the source the author uses to provide evidence in the argument; the source can be official, observational, or based on the personal experience of the narrator (Toulmin, 2003). Malala makes certain arguments in *I Am Malala* by giving claims with evidence and reasons to persuade Western readers about her uniqueness and modernity while degrading traditional Pakistani Muslim girls.

Theory of Argumentation

The researcher uses the theory of argumentation given by Chaim Perelman, in cooperation with L. Olbrechts-Tyteca, in his book *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation* (1971).

Perelman defines his argumentation theory as "the discursive techniques allowing us to induce or to increase the mind's adherence to the theses presented for its assent" (p. 4). His theory of argumentation designates rhetorical processes as a form of psychological phenomena seized with linguistic coordination. Perelman considers that a rhetor, through linguistic choice, generates a presence that must be observed by the audience; it seals the audience's consciousness. To create this sort of presence, the rhetor first analyzes how the audience thinks and acts. Then, stylistically, the rhetor gives the information and, by argumentative techniques, communicates with the audience.

Argumentation is significant when the readers or audience register it in the consciousness of the rhetor. According to Perelman's conviction, all argumentation development depends on the function of the audience the speaker wants to influence. Perelman divides the audience into two main kinds: one is universal, and the other, the most important, is the particular audience. Perelman separates the universal audience from the particular based on conviction and persuasion. In Perelman's argumentation theory, the subject is to persuade the particular audience. The universal audience is never fixed. It depends on the content, the speaker, the purpose of the arguments, and to whom they are addressed.

According to Perelman (1971), the vital thing in argumentation is not to know what the speaker considers true, but to know the view of those he addresses. According to Perelman's theory, an argument's effectiveness also depends on the willingness of the audience to listen. To achieve that situation, a rhetor creates a presence by selecting components from the beliefs and commitments of the audience and then intensifying certain components stylistically.

Perelman (1971) listed various stylistic techniques that are used by the rhetor to create an impression on the minds of the audience to persuade them. The element of presence acts as a psychological component that controls how the audience or readers apprehend the ideas, opinions, and convictions of the rhetor presented in the arguments. The use of singulars instead of plurals, repetition, and the uncommon use of the

demonstrative convey the feeling of presence. The rhetor may employ techniques like the use of figures; the speaker can shift pronouns (I, he, and you) and identify the audience with the subject or speaker. These techniques promote empathy and reduce opposition between the speaker and his addressees.

A rhetor uses a variety of objects of agreement to strengthen the obedience of the audience to a presence. The rhetor may make use of facts and truths, preferences, values, and beliefs of the people whom he addresses in arguments. The communion between the rhetor and the audience is created with the style of language used by the rhetor; he makes use of all the means available for the amplification of arguments to persuade (Ede, 1981). Malala, as a rhetor, uses various such techniques of argumentation in certain arguments in *I Am Malala* to persuade readers about her ideal of modernity and to inspire Westerners that she is different from the rest of the Pakistani girls. She writes by using various stylistic techniques to create such an impression that inspires Western readers.

Rhetorical Analysis of Malala's Arguments in *I am Malala*

Malala, in *I Am Malala*, discusses the information shared by her father about the life of women in Afghanistan when she was born. While discussing the restrictions brought by the Taliban in Afghanistan and on girls in Swat, Malala says, "Wearing a burqa is like walking inside a big fabric shuttlecock with only a grille to see through, and on hot days it's like an oven. At least I did not have to wear one" (Yousafzai & Lamb, 2013, p. 55). Malala claims in this argument that to walk while wearing a burqa is like walking inside a big fabric shuttlecock. Her claim is unqualified; she does not use any qualifier to limit her claim, and it is a generalization that for all Muslim girls, wearing a burqa is quite tough. To persuade readers, she uses a simile in her claim: wearing a burqa is like walking inside a big fabric shuttlecock, to explain the difficulty of walking while wearing a burqa. She creates stress in her claim by using ineffective diction, a pretentious word like "a big fabric shuttlecock," which is an exaggeration meant to inspire readers about her claim. The

tone of Malala's voice is flippant, as she is disrespectfully discussing the burqa. This tone persuades particular readers that walking in a burqa is tough for Muslim girls.

To support her claim, she gives the reasons that walking in a burqa is difficult. Because to see the world while wearing a burqa is like seeing through a grille, which creates an ambiguous vision. It also shows the restrictions that the burqa creates for girls; it stops girls from seeing the world with a broad vision. Her reason is not effective and relevant because the reason she gives to persuade readers about the difficulty that the burqa creates is not valid for every Muslim girl. The reason is not from any authentic source; it is just her assumption or observation. Without wearing a burqa, Malala is claiming that 'wearing' and 'to walk' in a burqa is as hard as bearing the heat of an oven. She uses ineffective diction as she compares it to the hotness of an oven. That creates discomfort for readers regarding the burqa. Further, the use of the contraction "it's" creates closeness between the readers and the author, as Perelman (1971) says that a rhetor displays presence to readers with such techniques.

Further, to support her claim and reasons, she gives the evidence that she did not wear a burqa. But her evidence is not sufficient and credible, as the burqa is not her preference, and it does not mean that walking while wearing a burqa is difficult for all Muslim girls. She uses the first-person pronoun 'I' to show her authorial voice and make herself different and unique to inspire Western readers. As Perelman (1971) says in his theory of argumentation, the speaker uses such strategies to convince the audience of his ideals. She is excluding herself from Islamic traditions to stimulate her Western audience about her ideal of modernity. As her tone is degrading the burqa, an Islamic moral, she feels proud to show herself away from it. Her style of voice illustrates that she is inclined toward her ideal of modernity.

Malala remembers Parents' Day and the prize-giving ceremony at her school and discusses her achievements in speeches and Naat stage performances. She says, "People in the audience seemed surprised and I wondered whether they

thought I was showing off or whether they were asking themselves why I wasn't wearing a veil" (Yousafzai & Lamb, 2013, p. 153). Here, Malala makes a qualified claim that when she was giving a speech in her school, the audience was surprised. Malala's authorial voice makes readers conscious of the subjectivity of the author. Her voice is convincing readers about the claim that when people in Pakistan see young girls unveiled, their behavior makes girls feel shocked. Her tone is flippant, as it is a degradation of the Pakistani Muslim people who prefer the veil for girls, since Malala's ideal of modernity follows Western ideology rather than the veil. She seems to degrade the Islamic tradition of the veil for Muslim girls.

She gives reasons for wondering about the attitude of the audience during her speech. The reasons she provides are ineffective and irrelevant, as she assumes that the audience thought Malala's style was just showing off. The source of this reason is simply her assumption, which makes it ineffective. Here, Malala uses a skeptical tone because she seems doubtful about the actual reason behind the audience's attitude. The use of the personal pronoun 'I' makes Malala's voice authoritative and dominant.

The evidence she provides for the audience's surprise is that she was not wearing a veil. However, her evidence is not valid, credible, or accurate enough to support her claim and reasoning. Simply having an uncovered face in front of the audience cannot be the sole reason for their surprise, nor does it invoke value for all Muslim girls. Malala's flippant tone suggests that she feels proud to uncover her face and views the veil as something backward and restrictive. By using the self-presentation 'I', she is persuading Western readers of her uniqueness, which she attributes to her unveiled face and bold attitude. Furthermore, the use of the contraction 'wasn't' makes Malala's voice more conversational and informal, affecting the rhythm of the sentence.

In Birmingham, Malala recalls her school bus and the Haji Baba Road that led to the school. While discussing her school in the village of Mingora and her schoolmates, she says, "For us girls, that doorway was like a magical entrance

to our special world. As we skipped through, we cast off our headscarves like winds puffing away clouds to make way for the sun, then ran helter-skelter up the steps" (Yousafzai & Lamb, 2013, p. 2). In this argument, Malala makes an unqualified claim that the school's "doorway was like a magical entrance" (p. 2) for them. She presents her point of view by using "us" and generalizes it to all Muslim girls. To persuade readers about her claim, Malala's voice employs a simile, comparing the school doorway to a magical entrance to a special world. Her enthusiastic tone is evident as she expresses happiness and energy upon entering the place, free from the restrictions of covering her head. This tone highlights her attachment to what she calls 'our own special world', which is an exaggeration of her ideal modern world.

By giving a reason for her claim, Malala persuades the readers that in the area of the school, she and her fellow students felt free because they were able to uncover their heads, and uncovering their heads made way for fresh sunlight to reach the ground. This suggests that she considers headscarves to be a restriction that prevents girls from progressing. Malala's voice is attempting to persuade readers about her ideal of educated Muslim girls. However, her reason is neither effective nor relevant for all Muslim girls, as the given reason does not establish a clear connection with her claim. She argues that she became active and happy after entering her 'own special world', but this reason does not apply to all Muslim girls. The source of her reasoning is based solely on her personal experience, which may not resonate with all Muslim girls.

To further persuade the readers, Malala uses similes in the evidence, such as comparing uncovering her head to winds puffing away clouds to make way for sunlight. She refers to the place as magical, where she feels free to uncover her head, which reflects her idealization of the modernity of Muslim girls. However, her evidence is neither sufficient, credible, nor accurate because headscarves do not block the path to progress for every Muslim girl. Her choice of diction, using pretentious words and phrases like 'magical entrance,' 'special world,'

‘way for the sun,’ and ‘ran helter-skelter,’ is designed to inspire Western readers about her ideal of modernity for Muslim girls. These words exaggerate Malala’s voice to emphasize modernity and freedom. By denying the Islamic value of headscarves, she is giving preference to uncovering the head. Malala conveys her view in the argument using first-person pronouns like ‘us’, ‘our’, and ‘we’, to align herself with girls who share similar feelings about headscarves.

In *I Am Malala*, Malala discusses her stay in her mother’s village, Karshat, during the time when Swat was occupied by the Taliban. While remembering and discussing her playmates and cousins, she says, “I was different to the other girls as I did not cover my face and I used to talk to every teacher and ask questions. But I tried to be obedient and polite, always saying yes sir” (Yousafzai & Lamb, 2013, p. 152). In this argument, Malala makes an unqualified claim that she was different from the rest of the girls in her class. Her use of self-mention makes readers aware of the subjectivity of the argument. The first-person pronoun is closely associated with authorial voice, and Malala uses it in her claim to maintain the readers’ interest. Her voice creates curiosity in the readers, encouraging them to learn more about her. She presents herself as modern in contrast to other traditional Pakistani Muslim girls.

In *I Am Malala*, Malala discusses her stay in her mother’s village, Karshat, when Swat was occupied by the Taliban. While recalling her playmates and cousins, she says, “I was different to the other girls as I did not cover my face and I used to talk to every teacher and ask questions. But I tried to be obedient and polite, always saying yes sir” (Yousafzai & Lamb, 2013, p. 152). In this statement, Malala makes an unqualified claim by asserting that she was different from the rest of the girls in her class. Her use of self-mention through the first-person pronoun ‘I’ draws attention to the subjectivity of the argument and highlights her authorial voice. This technique keeps readers engaged and curious to learn more about her personal experiences. Malala presents herself as a modern individual in contrast to the traditional image of

Pakistani Muslim girls, thereby emphasizing her unique position and perspective.

The reasons Malala gives to support her claim—that her unveiled face and active class participation made her unique—are neither effective nor relevant. Any Muslim girl who asks questions in class or does not cover her face cannot automatically be considered unique. Simply unveiling one’s face is not sufficient to distinguish someone from others; genuine uniqueness requires meaningful achievements or contributions. Therefore, the reasons Malala presents do not form a strong or logical connection with her claim. Moreover, her flippant tone appears to diminish the real qualities that define truly unique Muslim girls. Instead, she seems to persuade readers toward her ideal of modernity for Muslim girls, equating modernity with visibility and vocal expression.

The evidence she gives to support her claim and reasons is that she behaved well in her class and was a polite and obedient student; that is why she was matchless. But this evidence is not sufficient, credible, or accurate. Just saying ‘yes sir’ and stating that she was polite to teachers are not sufficient pieces of evidence in this argument to support her reason for being active in class. These behaviors are not accurate indicators for every Muslim girl to be considered different. It is Malala’s style of voice to persuade readers about her self-created ideal of modernism. Her choice of diction, using sophisticated vocabulary like ‘polite’ and ‘obedient’, is intended to create an impact on the minds of readers about Malala’s unique character.

Malala explains the village of her father and remembers her childhood memories of living in that village. She discusses the village women as “Women in the village hid their faces whenever they left their purdah quarters and could not meet or speak to men who were not their close relatives” (Yousafzai & Lamb, 2013, p. 54). In this argument, Malala makes an unqualified claim that “women in the village hid their faces” (p. 54), without limiting her claim. Here, the tone of Malala’s voice is flippant, as she is showing a conservative attitude toward Muslim women. The choice of diction, by using the

negative connotation of the word ‘hid’, exaggerates the restriction on Muslim women, suggesting they keep their faces out of sight, and mocks the concept of purdah. This exaggeration appears to be an attempt to persuade readers about the restrictions that purdah creates for Muslim women. She aims to convince readers of her inclination toward the ideal of modernization, which considers face covering as backward—an implication that can be seen as an insult to Pakistani Muslim girls.

The reason she gives to support her claim is that women are not allowed to “meet or speak to men who were not their close relatives” (p. 54). She provides a relevant reason that is connected to the claim, and the source of this reason is her personal experience. However, the reason is not entirely effective, as not every Muslim girl covers her face for this reason. Through her voice, she attempts to convince readers of the supposed backwardness and restrictions faced by Muslim girls. She portrays purdah as a hindrance to modernity. Her choice of phrases, such as ‘they could not meet or speak to men’, exaggerates the restrictions placed on Pakistani Muslim women.

The evidence she gives to support her claim is that whenever women left their purdah quarters, they hid their faces. This evidence is not sufficient, credible, or accurate enough to convince readers, because not all Muslim girls are restricted to living in purdah quarters—it is merely her observation. Malala creates a very restricted image of Muslim girls, portraying them as uncivilized and unaware of modernity. In this argument, her voice gives her point of view while excluding herself by using third-person pronouns ‘they’ and ‘their’, as she considers herself modern and different from all other girls by denying cultural and religious values.

Malala also discusses the gossip of people about her face covering in her surroundings when she was young. She says, “I wore more fashionable clothes and did not cover my face even when I became a teenager” (Yousafzai & Lamb, 2013, p. 54). In this argument, Malala claims that she

wore fashionable clothes. Her point of view is expressed through the first-person pronoun ‘I’ to make her voice more authorial and to inspire readers with her ideal of modernity. Her choice of diction includes pretentious words like ‘more fashionable’, which exaggerates the claim. She creates a distinction based solely on uncovering her face, which is a denial of the Islamic value for Muslim girls.

To support her claim, she gives the reason that she ‘did not cover [her] face’, implying that this makes her moderate. The reason she provides is neither effective nor relevant, as wearing fashionable clothes and uncovering one’s face does not define modernity for a Muslim girl. Her reason fails to connect meaningfully with her claim and cannot be generalized to all Muslim girls. Nonetheless, she tries to persuade readers through the use of ‘I’ in her voice, promoting her ideal of modernity by excluding herself from purdah and aligning herself with Western culture.

To support the claim in this argument, she gives evidence that in her teens, she did not cover her face. The flippant tone of her voice reveals that she feels proud of it. The evidence she gives is not sufficient and credible; the source of the evidence is her own idea. It is not accurate evidence to support her claim and reason that when she was a teenager, she did not cover her face. It is her voice of fascination with Western modernism for Muslim girls, not for every girl. She is portraying herself as unique and different from other girls by denying Islamic moral values and preferring modernity, using her authorial voice. The tone of Malala’s voice is flippant, as she shows disrespect for the Islamic values of face covering and shows off her beauty.

Malala explains the condition of the school van in the village of Mingora and her schoolmates with whom she traveled from school to home. She discusses her fellows in that van and says, “The other girls all covered their faces before emerging from the door and climbed into the back of the bus. I wore my scarf over my head but never over my face” (Yousafzai & Lamb, 2013, p. 5). In this argument, Malala makes a

qualified claim that “all other girls covered their faces” (p. 5). She excludes herself from those girls who cover their faces by giving her point of view in the third-person pronoun. As her ideal of modernity degrades face covering for girls, her tone is ironic as she later excludes herself from those girls to create her unique impression for the audience. Through her tone, she is creating a very restricted image of Muslim girls who are bound by the veil, convincing readers of the claim.

The reason she gives for girls’ face covering is that when they (girls) go out of the school door, and have to travel on the bus. She gives relevant reasons to support her claim; it creates a connection with the claim that when girls go out from school, they cover their faces. But the reasons are not very effective because not all Muslim girls are supposed to cover their faces when they go out or when they travel on a bus.

The evidence she gives to support the claim and the reason is that she also wore a scarf on her head, but never covered her face. The evidence is not accurate and sufficient because it does not create a link with the claim; it is just her experience. But to some extent, the evidence is credible that she also covers her head like other girls, though not her face, when she goes out, which links with the claim. In her evidence, she is using her authorial voice by the first-person pronouns ‘I’ and ‘my’ to persuade readers about her ideal of modernity. The tone of Malala’s voice is flippant, as she is not showing respect for face covering, an Islamic moral.

Malala discusses the condition of people when they were supposed to live in the IDPs because at that time Swat was occupied by the Taliban, and then while discussing the hospitality of Pashtuns in the IDPs, she says, “In our culture, women are expected not to mix with men they are not related to. In order to protect women’s purdah, men in families hosting the refugees even slept away from their own homes” (Yousafzai & Lamb, 2013, p. 150). Malala makes, in this argument, a qualified claim that the women in her culture “are expected not to mix with men they are not related to” (p. 150).

Through the use of an ironic tone, she is persuading the reader with a stereotypical representation of Pakistani culture, where women are restricted and avoid facing men who are not related to them. The way she portrays Muslim women depicts a very conservative lifestyle for Pakistani Muslim girls.

The reason she gives is that to protect the purdah of women, men do not mix with them. The reason she gives is relevant as it matches the claim. But the reason is not effective enough because not all girls in Malala’s culture are supposed to stay away from men. Her tone depicts the restricted and conservative culture of Pakistan for girls. The source of the reason is her observation, but it does not apply to all Muslim girls. The use of metadiscourse with transitional phrases like ‘in order to’ creates a sense of cohesion and keeps the readers informed of the writer’s intentions.

The evidence she gives to support the claim and reason is that male members of their families, on particular occasions, sleep away from their houses. The evidence she provides is credible enough as she gives examples from her culture, where, to protect their purdah, men even sacrifice their comfort. However, this evidence is not sufficient or accurate to believe that all men in Malala’s culture are so conservative and conscious about the purdah of women. Again, when she talks about purdah, she excludes herself by using the third-person pronoun ‘their’. This shifting of voice persuades readers about the uniqueness of Malala. It creates an impression that she is modern, quite distant from the restrictions. Her tone keeps readers interested by providing details in the evidence. Pretentious phrases like ‘slept away from homes’ exaggerate the conservative Pakistani culture to inspire readers who are interested in her ideal of modernity.

In *I Am Malala*, Malala, while discussing the movement of Islamization and the changes brought by General Zia’s government in Pakistan, says, “As a nation, we have always been good at hockey, but Zia made our female hockey players wear baggy trousers instead of

shorts and stopped women from playing some sports altogether” (Yousafzai & Lamb, 2013, p. 24). The qualified claim Malala makes in this argument is that General Zia stopped women from playing certain sports altogether, though “as a nation, we have always been good at hockey” (p. 24). Malala uses the first-person pronoun when praising the nation, including herself. She uses a playful tone by repeating words like ‘players’, ‘playing’, and ‘hockey’, which affect the rhythm of the sentence and keep readers interested. Her voice suggests that Zia took the wrong step. Her choice of diction, such as the sophisticated vocabulary ‘stopped women’, is used to persuade readers about her ideal vision of Muslim girls that promotes modernism.

The reason she gives for Zia stopping women from playing sports is because of the dress style of the players, who wore short trousers. Her flippant tone is evident as she gives preference to shorts over baggy trousers; she does not show respect for the Islamic limits on girls. This depicts Malala’s inspiration for Western culture and values, as well as her ideal of modernity. The reason is effective and relevant because it links with the claim about why Zia stopped women from playing certain sports altogether.

The evidence she gives to support her claim and reason is that Zia made the hockey players wear baggy trousers. The evidence is quite sufficient, credible, and accurate; it is connected with both the claim and the reason. Her flippant tone suggests that Malala’s voice is degrading the Islamization Zia brought to her nation. Her tone indicates that she does not respect the Islamic changes he implemented, considering them a sort of restriction because her ideal of modernity is opposite to it, following Western ideology. Malala’s claim, supported by relevant reasons and sufficient evidence, strongly persuades readers that Zia made a mistake by stopping women from playing sports.

Malala discusses her birth and the people’s reaction to it. She writes about her birth celebration, which was not celebrated by her family because of her sex; being a girl, she says:

“I popped out kicking and screaming. I was a girl in a land where rifles are fired in celebration of a son, while daughters are hidden away behind a curtain, their role in life simply to prepare food and give birth to children” (p. 9).

In this argument, Malala makes a qualified claim that in her “land, rifles are fired in celebration of a son, while daughters are hidden away behind a curtain” (p. 9) upon their birth. The tone of Malala’s voice shifts here from enthusiastic to bitter while comparing the reaction of people to the birth of a son and a daughter. When she talks about the birth of a boy, her choice of words and phrases conveys excitement, such as ‘rifles are fired’ and ‘celebration’. But when she talks about the birth of daughters, her tone becomes bitter, with phrases like ‘hidden away’ and ‘behind a curtain’ representing a restricted land where people are too uncivilized to accept the birth of girls. The use of the singular ‘a son’ and the plural ‘daughters’ also degrades girls, as they are portrayed as a burden on the family because of their larger number.

Her reason to support the claim is that “daughters are hidden” because “their role in life is simply to prepare food and give birth to children” (p. 9). Malala’s flippant tone here degrades the household tasks that girls usually perform. She also degrades the ability of girls to give birth to children. In her ideal of modernity, these tasks are simple and not very important. Her choice of the word ‘simple’ persuades readers that Muslim girls are bound to perform domestic tasks that are trivial and have no significance. The reason she gives to support the claim is neither effective nor relevant because the source of her reasoning is not authentic. It is just her observation, which does not apply to all Muslim girls in her land (Pakistan). In giving the reason, she uses the third-person pronoun to exclude herself from a culture that does not fit into her ideal of modernism.

The evidence she gives to support the claim is that she was a girl born, kicking and screaming. The evidence she provides does not connect the claim and the reasons. Moreover, the evidence that her birth was not celebrated does not mean

that all girls in her land are hidden behind curtains at birth. The source of the claim is her personal experience, which is not sufficient or accurate enough to persuade readers. Malala uses a personal pronoun here as she talks about herself to create an authorial voice that convinces readers of her uniqueness. Her tone is enthusiastic when she talks about her birth, and she uses the phrasal verb “popped out” to inspire readers about her ideality.

Malala remembers her school days when she was taught by her teachers and father to speak out against the Taliban in the media. She recalls her teenage interviews with friends on different TV channels and says, “I was not the only one to be interviewed. When we were eleven and twelve, we did them together, but as we turned thirteen or fourteen, my friends’ brothers and fathers did not allow them because they had entered puberty and should observe purdah, and also they were afraid” (p. 117).

Malala claims in this argument that the brothers and fathers of her friends did not allow them to give interviews on TV. The tone of Malala’s voice is flippant here, and her outlook on the brothers and fathers of her friends is not respectful. She excludes herself from the restrictions her friends face by using the personal pronoun ‘my’ because, in her perception, she was different from other girls from the start, even when she was so young. Her choice of phrases like “did not allow them” reveals that her voice is portraying an oppressed image of Muslim girls.

The reasons she gives to support the claim are that her friends had entered puberty, as they were thirteen or fourteen and were supposed to observe purdah, and secondly, they were afraid to go out. Through shifting pronouns, she distinguishes herself from various situations. When she talks about the restricted image of Muslim girls, she excludes herself, but when she compares herself to other girls, she uses personal pronouns like ‘I’ or ‘we’ to keep her authorial voice and persuade readers that she is different. She makes herself dominant by saying that they

should observe purdah, but she excludes herself, as purdah is not for Malala. Her flippant tone is degrading purdah and persuades readers about her ideal of modernity. Her choice of pretentious words like ‘afraid’ exaggerates how Muslim girls in Pakistan live a fearful life. Although the reason is relevant because it is based on her observation, it is not effective in convincing readers that all Muslim girls in Pakistan face such oppression.

The evidence she gives to support the claim and reason is that when she and the other girls were eleven and twelve, they gave interviews on TV together, and she was not alone. Later, they were not allowed to, which distinguishes her from other Pakistani Muslim girls. In her ideal, giving interviews on TV makes her modern, while other girls were not allowed to. The evidence is linked to her claim, and the source of the evidence is her personal experience, making it credible. However, this is not sufficient or accurate enough to believe because it is her personal experience, and it does not mean that all Muslim girls in Pakistan face such restrictions. While giving evidence, she keeps her authorial voice to persuade readers of her ideality and uniqueness.

Malala remembers her childhood memories with Moniba, her school friend who lived nearby. She discusses how she was blunt and bold, not scared of anything, and always shared her secrets with Moniba. She says, “Her (Malala’s friend) dream was to be a fashion designer, although she knew her family would never agree to it. It’s hard for girls in our society to be anything other than teachers or doctors if they can work at all. I was different – I never hid my desire when I changed from wanting to be a doctor to wanting to be an inventor or a politician” (p. 4).

Malala claims in this argument that it’s hard for girls in her society to be anything other than teachers or doctors if they can work at all. The flippant tone of her voice denounces the working abilities of Pakistani women. The word ‘hard’ is used to persuade readers that Pakistani Muslim girls are suppressed and cannot work in fields other than being doctors or teachers. In her

claim, she uses ‘our’ to represent society, but when talking about Muslim girls’ occupations, she excludes herself by shifting pronouns and using ‘they’.

The reason she gives to connect the claim and evidence is that her friend’s family would never agree for her to become a fashion designer. By using the connector ‘although’, Malala defines two contrasting views on the reason. Firstly, she talks about her friend’s dream and then connects it with the ‘although’ to the family’s prohibition of those dreams. Her tone invites sympathy for Pakistani Muslim girls. As Malala’s ideal for a Muslim girl is to become a fashion designer, which seems quite moderate, she tries to persuade readers that her ideal of modernity is opposed to these so-called restrictions on women. The reason is not relevant because the source of her reasoning is her observation, which is not valid for every Muslim girl. Just because her friend’s dream was not fulfilled by her family does not mean all girls in her society are limited to being doctors and teachers.

The evidence she gives to support the claim and reason is that she was different and never hid her desires of what she wanted, such as, “to be an inventor or a politician” (p. 4). The tone of Malala’s voice depicts that she feels proud of her boldness. The evidence is not sufficient, accurate, or credible enough, as it does not create a direct link with the claim she makes. This is not proper evidence to believe that her society does not allow girls to work in different fields. It is merely her comparison with her friend’s life, showing how bound she was, whereas Malala was open and free in her expressions. By using her authorial voice, she persuades readers of her uniqueness, and in her ideal of modernity, becoming an inventor or politician seems more fascinating.

Conclusion

To conclude, Malala’s arguments of modernity in *I Am Malala* (2013) reveal that, in order to persuade readers about her ideal of modernity and the backwardness of Pakistani traditional Muslim girls, Malala adopted a rhetorical style.

She used various argumentative strategies to convince readers of her ideal of modernity for Muslim girls. Malala made her voice authoritative through the shifting of inclusive pronouns ‘our’ and ‘I’ while talking about Pakistani society. However, while representing Muslim girls and purdah, she excluded herself by shifting the pronoun from ‘I’ to ‘they’, thereby denying cultural and religious values. Malala’s choice of diction, like ‘hard’, ‘purdah quarters’, ‘hidden away’, ‘cover’, and ‘hid their faces’ presents a reductive image of Pakistani Muslim girls. Meanwhile, her choice of words like ‘fashionable’, ‘different’, ‘obedient’, and ‘polite’ denotes Malala as a modern and educated young girl. Flippant and ironic tones in Malala’s arguments dishonored Muslim girls’ face covering and purdah. She also used contractions like ‘it’s’ and ‘wasn’t’ to lessen the gap with readers to persuade them of her ideology of modernism, which resonates with Western ideology. The rhetorical style of her voice degraded Muslim girls, their environment, and their position in Pakistani society, with ineffective reasons and insufficient evidence, which depicts that she is more inclined toward a Western lifestyle. The lack of effective evidence and reasons revealed that her claims regarding Muslim girls are neither authentic nor forceful for all Pakistani Muslim girls, as they are based on her assumptions, personal experiences, and observations.

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