

# Figurative Language Analysis in Malala Yousafzai's Quotes from I Am Malala: The Story of the Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban

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## Abstract

The study aims to analyze the types of figurative language and investigate the frequency of figurative language which is used in quotes from 'I Am Malala: The Story of the Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban'. The samples are 20 quotes from Malala Yousafzai's famous book which are gathered by purposive sampling. The finding indicates that figurative language is used in every type except paradox, allusion and alliteration. Moreover, the most frequent used is symbolism.

**Keywords:** Figurative Language, Malala, Quotes

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## Introduction

When you were born in the country which education is compulsory, you would not realize how struggle Malala Yousafzai was? Malala Yousafzai is a Pakistan activist who stood up to the Taliban and fought for the right for all girls to receive an education. When she was just fifteen years old, the Taliban attempted to kill Malala, but even this did not stop her activism. At the age eighteen Malala became the youngest person to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for her work to ensure the education of all children around the world (Frier, 2017). Apparently, her famous book “I am Malala: The Story of the Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban” was published on 8th October 2013. According to the book, the story relies more on her experiences as a narrative description to depict trauma. Interestingly, the language in the book is not contained only literal languages, but also a plethora of figurative languages which she takes for granted to describe her real story.

Figurative language is used to embellish a sentence both oral and written to create an imaginative impression to reader. Figurative language can be an immensely powerful device used by an author. It has definitely connected the reader to the emotion or importance of what is being talked about. Figurative language is employed in both literature and poetry to create layers of meaning which the reader can access through the senses, symbol, and sound devices. Figurative language drags the reader deep into the theme of the story, without the author having to explicitly lay out the theme for the reader. It allows the reader to understand the words with his or her minds and emotions, rather than simply comprehending a story. Figurative language enhances the reader to connect with the characters, the plot, and the deeper message of story which creates a more memorable experience when reading. To support, the descriptive words of figurative language have a meaning that beyond the

literal meaning figurative is language that used symbol to describe other things, or event metaphor which means using a word to identify other words, so it cannot interpret based on literary view and also the reader cannot find those meaning in dictionary (Hayani, 2016). Figurative language is a way of saying something other than the literal meaning of the word. Figurative language refers to language which uses words regarding bend the rules from the literal language to achieve a more complex or powerful effect in language.

By the way, many things in this world bring about the inspiration. For examples, seeing the beauty of nature which reminds us how lucky we are alive, seeing other people accomplish, achieve great things or overcome obstacles, and also hearing inspirational quotes from famous people. Malala is one of those famous people. There is a bunch of her quote which brings about the inspiration to many readers. Inspiration is an outside stimulus, such as quotes that encourages motivation or desire for previously overlooked outcomes from within (Bowman, 2011). Besides, I Am Malala, is an autobiographical book co-written by Malala Yousafzai and British journalist Christina Lamb. The story of I Am Malala recounts the events before and after the attack (Bryan, 2017). For honoring Malala and her famous book, I take her inspiring quotes on girls' education and the importance of speaking up for human rights and women for granted to analyze and investigate the figurative language in quotes from 'I Am Malala: The Story of the Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban'

### Objectives

1. To analyze the types of figurative language found in quotes from 'I Am Malala: The Story of the Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban'.

2. To investigate the frequency of figurative language which is used in quotes from ‘I Am Malala: The Story of the Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban’.

### Limitation of the study

This study focuses on analyzing the types and investigating the frequency of figurative language such as metaphor, simile, hyperbole and others used in quotes from ‘I Am Malala: The Story of the Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban’. Then, it limits to explore the words, sentences and phrases which used in the quotes. Last, the figurative language is analyzed in relation to the definition of terms.

### Definition of terms

1. *Quotes*: the repetition of someone else's statement or thoughts to write (a passage) from another usually with credit acknowledgment by employing quotes from ‘I Am Malala: The Story of the Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban’
2. *Figurative language*: is the way to make the comparison by linking the senses and the concrete to abstract ideas. Words or phrases are used in a non-literal way for particular effect.

In this study includes metaphor, simile, personification, hyperbole, paradox, allusion, alliteration, symbolism, metonymy, and synecdoche.

3. *Metaphor*: a metaphor makes a resemblance between one thing and another declared by suggesting that one thing is another.
4. *Simile*: a figure of speech that compares two usually dissimilar things. The comparison uses like, as or as if.

5. *Personification*: A figure of speech which attributes human characteristics to abstractions such as love or things
6. *Hyperbole*: when you use language to exaggerate what you mean or emphasize a point.
7. *Paradox*: a figure of speech in which the statement appears to contradict itself.
8. *Allusion*: a brief reference to a person, place, or event which will be known by the reader. It allows the writer a compression of ideas.
9. *Alliteration*: a sound device. It is the repetition of the first consonant sounds in several words.
10. *Symbolism*: a person, place, thing, or event that has a meaning larger than itself.
11. *Metonymy*: the use of a name of one thing to stand for the name of a closely related idea.
12. *Synecdoche*: is a figure of speech in which a term for a part of something refers to the whole.

### Literature reviews

1. The concept of figurative language:

Figurative language is non-literal language. It is a way of adding a complex dimension to language, which can draw the reader's attentiveness. First, figurative language used to beautify a sentence structure that primary purpose is to obtain a certain effect in order to create an imaginative impression to listeners or audience, both orally and in writing (Wijayanti, Ari, Sutopo, M.Hum, Phil, & Chandraningrum, 2014). Second, figurative language is a cover term for linguistic expressions whose interpretation is nonliteral, where the meaning of the expression as a whole cannot be computed directly from the meaning of its constituents. Figurative language can vary

in types, degrees of extension from the literal and degrees of transparency, and structure (Vulchanova, Saldaña, Chahboun, & Vulchanov, 2015). Third, a figurative language or called a figure of speech is a change from the ordinary manner of expression, using words in other than their literal sense to enhance the way a thought is expressed (Faruk, 2017). In sum, when the author uses figurative language to describe the story, he usually tricks the language because he wants to create the implied meaning that will make the readers think deeply about the meaning. In interpreting the expression of figurative language, the reader will use the power of imagination to imagine this expression and think what the meaning behind it (Lonanda, 2013).

2. Relates studies:

This first study concerns with the descriptive analysis of figurative language in The Song Lyric by Taylor Swift's "Speak Now" Album. The objective of the study is to find out the types of figurative languages that is used in The Song Lyric by Taylor Swift's "Speak Now" Album. The researcher uses a descriptive qualitative method to classify and analyze the sentences. After investigating the sentence in the song lyric, the writer found several findings of figurative language on it. There are seven kinds of figurative languages that are used in the song lyric; they are simile, metaphor, hyperbole, personification, synecdoche, symbol, and oxymoron. The last is the dominant of figurative languages that used is hyperbole (Listiani, 2015).

Next, Lonada and Martin (2016) suggest how figurative language is related to the description of characterization in children literature. To ensure that the indirectness of the figurative language actually helps describing characterizations further, the study focuses on the description of the simile, metaphor, personification, hyperbole, and irony of the main characters of Wilde's *The Nightingale and the Rose*. The analysis on the figurative language uses is used as the base for interpreting the story's

characterization. It reveals that figurative language describes characterization relating to the information on the characters' mental and physical attributes. Each of the figurative language categories describes the characterization in certain way in order to make the particular abstract concepts for characterization detailed and concrete. In that case, with the help of figurative language, the story may be comprehended better by young readers.

However, figurative language exists to depict a beauty of words and give a vivid description of implicit messages. It is used in many literary works since a long time ago, including in children literature. The aims of the research are to describe about kinds of figurative language often used in Cinderella, Rumpelstiltskin, The Fisherman and His Wife and The Sleeping Beauty in the Woods By Charles Perrault and the Brothers Grimm and also give a description the conceptual meaning of figurative language used in Cinderella, Rumpelstiltskin, The Fisherman and His Wife and The Sleeping Beauty in the Woods By Charles Perrault and the Brothers Grimm. The writer uses a descriptive qualitative method in this research (Afrina, Setiarin, & Anita, 2016).

Finally, Wibowo & Akbar (2017) find out the usage of figurative language appear in The Room of My Life's poem by Anne Sexton and Still I Rise's poem by Maya Angelou. The study focused on kinds of figurative language that appeared in the poems. A descriptive qualitative method was used in this study. Data were gathered from each line of the poetry then figurative language was grounded. The results showed that the poems mostly used three kinds of figurative language: personification, simile, and metaphor. Personifications were more dominant than similes and metaphors in The Room of My Life and similes were more dominant than personifications and metaphors in Still I Rise.

According to the literature reviews, they show the significances of the figurative language toward song, children literature, fable, and poem. In terms of this particular study, this research will investigate the differences from those literature reviews by focusing on the types of figurative language found in quotes from 'I Am Malala: The Story of the Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban' and also investigate the frequency of figurative language which is used in quotes from 'I Am Malala: The Story of the Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban'.

### **Methodology**

*Data:* this study attempts to seek the types of figurative language and the frequency of them. The researcher seeks the quotes from the book 'I Am Malala: The Story of the Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban'

*Samples:* the samples are selected from the purposive sampling which is collected 20 quotes from the book 'I Am Malala: The Story of the Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban. Purposive sampling enables the researcher to 'handpick the cases to be included in the sample on the basis of their judgment of their typically or possession of the characteristics being sought' (Cohen, 2004). Thus, the quotes are collected in order to analyze the frequency type of figurative language.

*Research procedures:* The researcher starts reading the quotes. Next, find the word, phrase, and sentence which contain of figurative language and grasping the meaning of each figurative language use in the quotes. Then, do some notes which type figurative language is.



*Data analysis:* Do the analysis in terms of the types of figurative language such as: metaphor, simile, hyperbole, personification, symbolism, and synecdoche etc. and categorize the frequency of each type.

### Finding and Discussion

**Table 1:** Analyze the Type of Figurative Language

No.	Quotes	Figurative Language
1	"Mullahs from the TNSM preached that the earthquake was a warning from God.	metaphor / hyperbole
2	"The Taliban could take our pens and books, but they could not stop our minds from thinking."	symbolism
3	"Life isn't just about taking in oxygen and giving out carbon dioxide."	metaphor
4	"Our men think earning money and ordering around others is where power lies. They don't think power is in the hands of the woman who takes care of everyone all day long and gives birth to their children."	symbolism
5	"We liked to be known as the clever girls. When we decorated our hands with henna for holidays and weddings, we drew calculus and chemical formulae instead of flowers and butterflies."	simile/ symbolism
6	"When the whole world is silent, even one voice becomes powerful."	synecdoche

No.	Quotes	Figurative Language
7	"There are two powers in the world; one is the sword and the other is the pen. There is a third power stronger than both, that of women."	metaphor/ metonymy
8	"Education had been a great gift for [my father]. He believed that lack of education was the root of all of Pakistan's problems.	metaphor
9	"If people volunteered in the same way to construct schools or roads or even clear the river of plastic wrappers, by God, Pakistan would become a paradise within a year."	hyperbole
10	"‘Let us pick up our books and our pens,’ I said. ‘They are our most powerful weapons. One child, one teacher, one book and one pen can change the world.’"	symbolism
11	"We human beings don't realize how great God is. He has given us an extraordinary brain and a sensitive loving heart. He has blessed us with two lips to talk and express our feelings, two eyes which see a world of colors and beauty, two feet which walk on the road of life, two hands to work for us, a nose which smells the beauty of fragrance, and two ears to hear the words of love."	hyperbole
12	"Then they told me about the call from home and that they were taking the threats seriously. I don't know why, but hearing I was being targeted did not worry me. It seemed to me that everyone	symbolism

No.	Quotes	Figurative Language
	knows they will die one day. My feeling was nobody can stop death; it doesn't matter if it comes from a Taliban or cancer. So I should do whatever I want to do."	
13	"We felt like the Taliban saw us as little dolls to control, telling us what to do and how to dress. I thought if God wanted us to be like that, he wouldn't have made us all different."	Simile/ hyperbole/ personification
14	"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."	symbolism
15	"Education is education. We should learn everything and then choose which path to follow." Education is neither Eastern nor Western, it is human."	metaphor
16	"Once I had asked God for one or two extra inches in height, but instead he made me as tall as the sky, so high that I could not measure myself."	hyperbole
17	"We were scared, but our fear was not as strong as our courage."	simile
18	"With guns you can kill terrorists; with education you can kill terrorism."	symbolism

No.	Quotes	Figurative Language
19	Who is Malala? He demanded. No one said anything, but several of the girls looked at me. I was the only girl with my face not covered."	symbolism
20	"My father always said, Malala will be free as a bird.' I dreamed of going to the top of Mount Elum like Alexander the Great to touch Jupiter and even beyond the valley. But, as I watched my brothers running across the roof, flying their kites and skillfully flicking the strings back and forth to cut each other's down, I wondered how free a daughter could be."	simile

Table 2: The Frequency of Figurative Language

Figurative language	Frequency	Percentage
1. Metaphor	5	20
2. Simile	4	16
3. Personification	1	4
4. Hyperbole	5	20
5. Paradox	-	-
6. Allusion	-	-
7. Alliteration	-	-
8. Symbolism	8	32
9. Metonymy	1	4

10. Synecdoche	1	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>

In order to find the answers which are set in the objective no.1: this study analyzes the type of figurative language which is found in every type of errors except paradox, allusion and alliteration. Moreover, in the light of objective no.2: this study reveals that the most frequent used is symbolism while the least frequent used is personification, metonymy, and synecdoche. This study finds out that figurative language is used in all of 20 quotes. Apparently, Malala applies the figurative language in her writing to create the imaginary meaning, represent feeling and express the messages for her readers.

According to further findings, Malala takes symbolism mostly for granted to shed the light of her writing and influence the readers and elicit the emotions. The readers can find figurative language from this story which Malala writes to express her unique voice, thoughts, and ideas in an engaging and imaginative manner and visualize what is going on in the story. In the same way, figurative language plays a vital role in her compelling literary works. Malala can force her readers to imagine the picture from what she writes with an expression or statement. From the results, it illustrates that Malala uses figurative language to draw the reader into her story and also create depth and layers of meaning. Besides, figurative language serves as an excellent tool and helps providing both the author and the writer convey complex descriptions or emotions quickly and effectively. Without figurative language in her writing, Malala could not be well-established the mood, clarify the concept and symbol to readers smoothly.

## Conclusion

After analyzing and discussing the finding clearly, it concludes that there are many types of figurative language found in this research. Symbolism is the most dominant type of figurative language. Symbolism occurs when a noun which has meaning in it which is used to represent something entirely different. Symbolism is the practical when using to represent an object, image. It is a word for creating an abstract idea. Symbolism has not merely employed in the language, but also in art, theater, dance and other forms of cultural expression. Interestingly, Malala takes symbolism as the sign which are widely or even universally accepted to represent something in her book.

Finally, to the students who learn languages, the teacher can take an analysis from inspirational quotes for granted in terms of making the activity in class more interesting in order to improve the ability in both literal and figurative language for the learners.

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