



URDUNIZATION AND CULTURAL LEXICALIZATION IN PAKISTANI ENGLISH: A
WORLD ENGLISHES ANALYSIS OF *I AM MALALA*

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Abstract

This study explores Urdunization and cultural lexicalization in Pakistani English through a World Englishes reading of Malala Yousafzai and Christina Lamb's I Am Malala. The study adopted Kachru's (1985) framework of Outer Circle Englishes, that treats Pakistani English as a norm-developing variety shaped by multilingual contact, Islamic discourse, postcolonial history, and regional cultural practices. The study fills in a gap in the existing scholarship on Pakistani English by theorizing the functional role of Urdu-mediated, Arabic-Islamic, Pashto and culturally embedded lexical items in globally circulated autobiographical writing. Using qualitative textual analysis and a functional lexical matrix, the study reads selected lexical items across four categories: religious and Islamicate terms, socio-cultural and Pashtun terms, context-specific semantic items, and affective/everyday local terms with apparent English equivalents. The analysis shows that terms such as Allah, Rasool, shariat, purdah, jirga, hujra, Pashtunwali, aba, bhabhi, and shaheed are not decorative borrowings or deviations from Standard English. Instead, they serve semantic, religious, emotional and identity-creating roles, sustaining the Muslim identity, embodying the social institutions of the Pashtuns, establishing kinship relations and avoiding cultural leveling in translation. The paper further argues that Urdunization in I Am Malala should be understood as part of a broader process of Pakistani multilingual lexicalization, because Urdu-mediated English also carries Arabic-Islamic, Persian, Pashto, and regional cultural resources. The study contributes to World Englishes scholarship by showing how Pakistani English extends the expressive range of global English while retaining local epistemologies and identity markers.

Keywords: Pakistani English, Urdunization, cultural lexicalization, World Englishes, lexical borrowing, *I Am Malala*, Islamic discourse.

Introduction

English in Pakistan is embedded in a multilingual and postcolonial ecology in which English, Urdu, and regional languages perform distinct but overlapping social functions. English is the language of education, law, administration, bureaucracy, media, technology, literature and elite communication while Urdu is the national language and languages like Punjabi, Pashto, Sindhi, Balochi, Saraiki and Hindko are central to the daily social life (Rahman, 1990, 2020; Shakir & Deuber). This contact situation has led to the development of a localized variety of English, which captures the historical, cultural, religious and multilingual realities of Pakistan (Baumgardner, 1993, 1995; Haidar, 2025). Pakistani English should not be reduced to a learner variety or a deficient form of British English. It is a variety of English that has developed as a result of long-term interaction between English and the local language, and because of the need to communicate



local cultural experience in English which is the language of the world (Kachru, 1985; Crystal, 2003). It can be seen at the level of pronunciation, grammar, discourse patterns, idioms, collocations and vocabulary. Among these features, lexical borrowing is especially visible, as Pakistani speakers and writers often retain words from Urdu, Arabic-Islamic, Persian, Pashto, Punjabi, and other local languages when Standard English does not provide culturally adequate equivalents (Baumgardner et al., 1993; Khan, 2020).

This paper explores this lexical dimension in Malala Yousafzai and Christina Lamb's *I Am Malala*. The text is important because it is written in English for an international audience but is very much a product of the Pakistani, Islamic and Pashtun experience. It tells the story of family life, girls' education, Talibanisation, Swat, religion, gender, politics and social identity. In such domains, culturally embedded vocabulary is necessary because many concepts cannot be fully expressed through ordinary English equivalents. Terms such as Allah, Rasool, mullah, maulana, madrasa, shariat, burqa, purdah, jirga, hujra, Pashtunwali, aba, bhabhi, and shaheed carry linguistic, cultural, religious, and affective meanings simultaneously (Yousafzai & Lamb, 2013). The lexical items that are introduced into English discourse from Urdu are described here as Urdunization. It is used in a general and qualified sense, however. There are many words that have been borrowed from Arabic and Persian languages and have been used in Urdu, and some words are also Pashto or local. In *I Am Malala*, the process is not just Urdu to English, but a broader Pakistani multilingual process in which Urdu/Arabic-Islamic vocabulary, Pashto, and local cultural knowledge are all in play with English. For this reason, the paper also employs the term cultural lexicalization to explain the process of the culturally specific meanings of words in Pakistani English.

The research gap addressed here is not the absence of another lexical list from a Pakistani English text. The more significant gap is analytical, as existing scholarship has focused on the identification of local words in Pakistani English, but not so much on how these words operate as identity-claiming discourse choices in globally edited autobiographical writing. In *I Am Malala*, local lexical items need to be translated, co-authored, read internationally, and made legible without eradicating the unique experience of the Pakistani Muslim and Pashtun communities. The study, therefore, interprets the role of selected Urdu-mediated, Arabic-Islamic, Pashto and culturally specific lexical items in the localization of English and the formation of Pakistani English as a norm-developing variety. This framing also precludes the text from being a transparent list of borrowed words. A local term may be included in an English-language autobiography for a variety of reasons: it is culturally indispensable; it has already been introduced into the Pakistani English lexicon; it is strategically omitted from translation; or it is necessary for the story to be perceived as authentic to the local community for the international community. The study therefore considers not only which words occur, but how they occur and how they shape religious affiliation, social stratification, kinship intimacy, political memory, and Pashtun cultural identity in an English text. This functional focus is what differentiates this analysis from a descriptive glossary.

Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

The World Englishes paradigm challenges the assumption that English belongs only to native-speaker contexts. Kachru's (1985) three-circle model distinguishes between the Inner Circle, where English has historically functioned as a first language; the Outer Circle, where English has postcolonial institutional roles; and the Expanding Circle, where English is primarily learned as a

foreign language. Pakistan is part of the Outer Circle since English has a colonial past and it remains in use in the government, higher education, courts, policy, media and elite schooling. In these situations, the English language does not stay the same. It is localized and tailored to local cultures, languages and communication needs. The term Outer Circle Englishes as norm-developing is critical in this study as it enables the study of Pakistani English as a legitimate variety of English and not as a deviation from native speaker norms.

Pakistani English has been widely discussed as a distinct South Asian variety shaped by contact with Urdu and regional languages (Baumgardner, 1993; Rahman, 1990). Rahman (1990) and Baumgardner (1993, 1995) paved the way for the recognition of Pakistani English as a distinct variety of English with local lexical and structural characteristics. Additional research investigated Islamic vocabulary, discourse patterns, Islamic grammar, collocations, Islamic education and language policy (Mahboob, 2009; Manan et al., 2017; Rahman, 2020; Shakir & Deuber). The results of these studies reveal that Pakistani English is not a random or chance language but has regular patterns and is influenced by social realities peculiar to Pakistan.

Lexical borrowing is one of the most obvious aspects of this localization. In the field of religion, kinship, food, dress, politics, education, law, caste, tribe and social customs, Pakistani English incorporates local words. The English equivalents are not used because the speakers are not familiar with them, but because of the following reasons: they are too general, too secular, too culturally distant or too emotionally weak (Baumgardner et al., 1993; Ahmad & Ali, 2014; Khan, 2020). For instance, Khan (2020) demonstrates how Urdu loan words can be morphologically integrated into Pakistani English, and Afzal et al. (2026) demonstrate how Pakistani English has distinctive collocational patterns. These developments have been a confirmation of the theory that Pakistani English is not an independent set of deviations, but a variety with discernible internal patterns. This is a process that is very similar to Urdunization but it is not a mere transliteration of Urdu words in English. Urdu has its Arabic, Persian, Turkish and Indic elements and Pakistani English has its Pashto, Punjabi, Sindhi and other regional elements. *Purdah*, *shaheed*, *maulana*, *madrassa*, *jirga* and *hujra* are not only the names of objects or institutions but also have religious, social, historical and emotional connotations. They are utilized in English and transform it from within by making it responsive to the Pakistani realities (Mahboob, 2009; Khan, 2020). The notion of cultural lexicalization is thus relevant as it highlights the local knowledge, cultural memory and social meaning of lexical items in English discourse.

It is a significant process in literary and autobiographical texts. Local words, translated proverbs, culturally specific idioms and discourse patterns that are not easily translatable into metropolitan English (Ahmad & Ali, 2014; Canagarajah, 2013) are common in Pakistani English fiction and life writing. The use of local vocabulary in postcolonial writing serves to create setting, sustain cultural concepts and highlight identity and challenge native-speaker norms. *I Am Malala* is particularly relevant because it circulates globally while carrying Pakistani, Islamic, and Pashtun terms into global English. The text is thus an appropriate case for analysis of the retention, glossing or contextualisation of local lexis for international readers. The Islamic aspect of Pakistani English should be given special consideration as the religious lexicon does not simply convey the meaning of religion but situates the speaker in discourses surrounding Muslim identity, authority, sectarian differences, and collective belonging. In this regard, Mahboob's (2009) argument about Pakistani English being a language of Islam is helpful. Razzaq et al. (2026), in their critical discourse



analysis of contemporary Islamic scholars' Instagram Reels, show that religious discourse in Pakistan is frequently negotiated between sectarian labels and a broader Ummah identity. While their study is not on literary autobiography, it is relevant here because it exemplifies the use of Islamic terms and references to the Qur'an/Sunnah as discourse resources to shape religious belonging and authority. This paper takes the concern further to autobiographical English, looking at the preservation of religious specificity of Islamic and Islamicate lexical items in *I Am Malala* and how they mediate identity for readers around the world.

Although this work has been accomplished, three points remain pertinent to the present article. First, many studies lack an adequate explanation of local lexical items in terms of their discourse functions. Second, Urdu influence is sometimes highlighted in a manner that can mask the multilingual pathways that Arabic-Islamic, Persian, Pashto and regional terms have taken to enter into Pakistani English. Third, there is a need for extra caution in the case of autobiographical writing that is circulated globally, as the local lexicon is influenced by co-authorship, markets of publication and the need to make local experience intelligible to readers outside Pakistan. This restriction makes it worthwhile to conduct a functional analysis of *I Am Malala* instead of a descriptive survey of lexical borrowing. The theoretical stance of this paper is a blend of World Englishes, indigenization, cultural lexicalization and light translanguaging. Indigenization refers to the adaptation of English to local contexts through local vocabulary, meanings, rhetorical styles, social values, and communicative practices (Kachru, 1983, 1985). Cultural lexicalization is the process by which words gain and retain culturally specific meanings which cannot be fully translated. A translanguaging approach also acknowledges that multilingual Pakistani speakers and writers do not store English, Urdu, Pashto and Arabic-Islamic vocabulary in distinct compartments, but rather access a common linguistic repertoire to create meaning (García & Li Wei, 2014; Cenoz & Gorter, 2020). These ideas create the context for the local lexical items in *I Am Malala* to be read not as embellishments, but as significant elements of the language of Pakistan.

Methodology

The study uses qualitative textual analysis to interpret Urdu-mediated, Arabic-Islamic, Pashto, and culturally specific lexical items in *I Am Malala*. As an interpretive qualitative study, it does not seek to count all local lexical items in the text. Instead, it is based on the selected words which have functions of significance in the narrative, both cultural, religious, semantic, affective and identity-based. The primary text is Malala Yousafzai and Christina Lamb's *I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban* (2013). The text is treated as a literary-autobiographical site in which Pakistani English becomes visible in global circulation. The study also acknowledges the book is co-authored and edited internationally. Hence, the analysis does not consider the choices of words as spontaneous Pakistani English speech, but as a published version of Pakistani English in transnational circulation. This is a methodological distinction. The paper does not claim that the lexical items selected are representative of all Pakistani English users, nor does it claim that all the terms are representative of Malala Yousafzai's personal speech without mediation. It is considered as a literary-autobiographical site in which Pakistani English is made visible in the global circulation. This is particularly helpful for the study of the retention, glossing, translation or omission of local words in the study of Pakistani experience when read to an international audience. Purposive sampling was used for the selection of lexical items. Lexical

items were selected when they represented Urdu-mediated, Arabic-Islamic, Pashto, or broader Pakistani cultural usage and when ordinary English equivalents could not adequately convey their meanings. The selected items were then grouped by function and not just by the language they originated in. There were four broad categories: religious and Islamicate terms, socio-cultural and Pashtun terms, context-specific semantic items and affective or everyday local terms with apparent English equivalents. The analysis followed a close-reading procedure. Each item was read in relation to its narrative context, possible English equivalent, cultural or religious connotations, and role in the construction of Pakistani English. Examples, equivalents, discourse functions and interpretations were organized in a functional lexical matrix. This procedure strengthens interpretive reliability by making the analytical basis explicit while remaining appropriate for a qualitative literary-linguistic study. Since the study is based on a published text, it does not involve human participants or private data. The matrix is not a statistical tool, but rather an organizing tool. It provides the connection between selected examples and possible equivalents in English and the interpretation of functions, but the argument is still qualitative. Examples are therefore treated as selected textual instances rather than as claims about the total frequency of local lexis across the whole text. The study does not include lengthy quotations and only short references to the text to facilitate critical analysis.

Analysis and Discussion

Table 1

Functional Categories of Local Lexical Items in I Am Malala

Lexical category	Selected examples	Possible English equivalents	Function in discourse
Religious and Islamicate terms	Allah, Rasool, Quran, surah, jihad, shariat, mullah, maulana, mufti, madrassa, haram, Hajj	God, Prophet, chapter, struggle/holy war, Islamic law, religious leader, religious school, forbidden, pilgrimage	Preserve Islamic identity and religious meaning
Socio-cultural and Pashtun terms	Pashtunwali, jirga, hujra, badal, nang, tarbur, tor patki, takra jenai	Pashtun code, council, guest room, revenge, honor, cousin, black turban, brave girl	Represent Pashtun social structure and cultural values
Context-specific semantic items	Taliban, mujahideen, mohajir, malik, qari, sahib, wali, qaumi, deeniyat, mohallah, Lal Masjid	students, fighters, migrant, owner, reciter, sir, guardian, national, religious studies, neighborhood, Red Mosque	Mark political, social, and historical specificity
Affective and everyday local terms	aba, baba, bhai jan, bhabi, shaheed, purdah, shalwar kameez, naan, sherbet, gully	father, brother, sister-in-law, martyr, veil, dress, bread, cold drink, street	Express intimacy, respect, material culture, and local atmosphere

Religious and Islamicate Lexical Items

Religious vocabulary forms one of the most significant lexical categories in *I Am Malala*. The text includes terms such as Allah, Rasool, Quran, surah, jihad, shariat, mullah, maulana, mufti, imam, muezzin, madrassa, haram, Hajj, Sunni, Shia, Barelvi, Deobandi, and Ahl-e-Hadith (Yousafzai & Lamb, 2013). These are part of Islamic discourse and are commonly used in Urdu and Pakistani English. They referred Mahboob's (2009) claim that Pakistani English may have Islamic connotations and should be interpreted within the context of local religious identity. This religious terminology is not just referential. It places the narrative within a Muslim moral framework in which education, family, gender, and authority are understood through religious and social meanings. The use of these terms in place of more generic English translations would make the story easier to read for some readers, but less culturally rich. The retained terms are thus indicators of local epistemology, demonstrating the ways in which religious knowledge and social life are intertwined in the Pakistani English discourse. Many of these terms have obvious English translations, but the translations are not culturally adequate. In the Pakistani Muslim community, the word Allah has a devotional and theological meaning, which is not exactly the same as God. Rasool can be translated as Prophet, but the Arabic-Urdu word is reverent in Islamic context and is ingrained in the Muslim religious practice. Likewise, surah is not just a chapter, rather it is a reference to a chapter of the Holy Quran. The English word chapter is too general as it takes the word out of its devotional context. There are also boundaries to translation in terms of religious authority terms. The terms mullah, maulana and mufti are all different ways of saying religious leader, but they are not synonymous. The term maulana usually refers to religious learning, the term mufti is related to religious opinions and the term mullah can have a neutral, respectful or critical meaning depending on context. Words like priest, cleric or scholar may carry Christian or western institutional connotations which may not be appropriate to the context of Pakistan Muslim society. The term jihad, shariat and madrassa also highlight the ideological connotations of Islamic lexicon. Jihad is often rendered in English as "holy war," but this is reductive because Islamic discourse may also associate it with struggle, striving, moral effort, or armed struggle under specific conditions. Shariat is not just the law, it is a religious and moral system that is attached to Islamic principles. The term 'madrassa' does not refer to just any school but to an Islamic school. Keeping these terms will help to maintain the complexity of religious authority, moral order and public debate in Pakistani society. It is important to read the discourses in a sectarian context, e.g., Sunni, Shia, Barelvi, Deobandi, Ahl-e-Hadith. They are used as identity markers of religious orientation, institutional authority and social difference. Razzaq et al. (2026) demonstrate that the current Islamic discourse in Pakistan frequently operates within the tension between sectarian terms and a Muslim identity that is rooted in the Ummah. Similarly, the use of general terms like Allah, Rasool, Quran alongside more specific terms like Barelvi or Deobandi, in the book *I Am Malala*, reveals a similar tension between a shared sense of Muslim identity and an internally differentiated sense of religious authority. Thus, Islamic lexis does not only serve a referential function of naming but also does an ideological and identity function.

Socio-Cultural and Pashtun Lexical Items

The second category consists of socio-cultural and Pashtun lexical items. *I Am Malala* is closely linked with the Swat and Pashtun identity and, as such, the text contains words like Pashtun, Pashto, Pashtunwali, jirga, hujra, tarbur, badal, nang, tor patki, takra jenai, and paka jenai

(Yousafzai & Lamb, 2013). These are the social institutions, morals and cultural values of Pashtun life. Their presence also makes it difficult to narrow down the definition of Pakistani English to Urdu-influenced English. The narrative foregrounds a regional identity which is Pakistani, Muslim, and Pashtun. The importance of this layering is that the language of Pashtun life is not just a source of local color, but also a source of understanding social obligations, gender expectations, hospitality, conflict resolution, and ideas of honor that help to illuminate the world of the text. Pashtunwali is particularly significant because it refers to a traditional Pashtun code of conduct associated with honor, hospitality, revenge, courage, loyalty, and social obligation. It is impossible to translate it as Pashtun culture or tribal code because it does not convey the authority of the concept as a moral worldview. The text preserves Pashtunwali to give the reader a chance to experience the word as a cultural system, not as a translation of English. The word *jirga* is also too broad for the English word council. A *jirga* is not just a meeting, it is a traditional mechanism for solving conflicts and making decisions in Pashtun society. *Hujra* also cannot be confined to the role of guest room or drawing room. It is a male domain for receiving guests, holding meetings and maintaining communal relationships. In either, translation would reduce an institution to a thing or an administrative substitute. Local languages encode moral systems, as in the case of the words *badal* and *nang*. In the Pashtun context, *badal* is associated with honor, justice, and social obligation rather than merely personal revenge. While both honor and dignity are related to *nang*, neither is quite adequate for the connection to reputation and collective responsibility. The examples illustrate that Urdu is not the sole influence on Pakistani English. In *I Am Malala*, English is localized through Urdu-mediated, Pashto-Pashtun, and Islamic cultural vocabulary, confirming that Pakistani English develops through broader multilingual lexicalization rather than Urdu influence alone.

Context-Specific Semantic Items

The third category includes words that appear to have English equivalents but carry context-specific meanings that direct translation may distort. These include Taliban, mujahideen, mohajir, malik, qari, sahib, wali, qaumi, mohallah, Lal Masjid and Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan. The meanings are influenced by the political history, social hierarchy, Islamic discourse and South Asian cultural usage. This category is significant because it demonstrates that there are words that are borrowed that are not necessarily culturally pleasant or nostalgic. Some local lexical items carry the weight of conflict, migration, militancy, authority, and political memory. The meanings they carry have been generated in a particular history in Pakistan and the region. Therefore, literal translation can result in distortion of meaning instead of clarity. Taliban is an example of semantic specificity. In modern Pakistani and international parlance, the term is used for a militant-political movement, which is literally associated with students or those who are interested in religious knowledge. Translating it simply as “students” would be misleading because the term has acquired historical, ideological, and political connotations. Similarly, mujahideen cannot be reduced to “fighters.” The word is used in South Asian and Afghan-Pakistani contexts to refer to anti-Soviet resistance and militancy, Islamic struggle and political memory. Other items illustrate how local social meaning can be lost through the use of other ordinary English equivalents. In Urdu, Malik means owner, but in certain Pakistani usage, it is a title of social status, tribal authority or caste identity. Sahib is a term that can be translated as sir, but it also has South Asian connotations of respect, hierarchy, colonial history and politeness. Qari is a person who recites the Quran, not a general reader or

reciter. Islamic religious education is called *deeniyat* and *qaumi* may have emotional and political connotations of collective identity. *Mohallah* suggests a South Asian residential and social unit that is more intimate and socially embedded than the English term “neighbourhood.” These reveal that lexical meaning is influenced by usage, historical context and social context.

Affective and Everyday Local Terms

The fourth category consists of local terms that appear to have English equivalents but are retained because of their emotional, relational, and cultural force. This can be seen in *aba*, *baba*, *bhai jan*, *bhabi*, *shaheed*, *purdah*, *shalwar kameez*, *naan*, *sherbet*, and *gully* (Yousafzai & Lamb, 2013). The words suggest that translation is more than just about dictionary definitions; it's about emotion, memory, family, ethics, and material culture. This is a special category because of its affective aspect of Pakistani English. Words that are common in everyday language can seem like simple words, but they are also the most challenging to translate because they have intimacy, respect, and social positioning. They are acquired through family interaction and community practice and not by dictionary equivalence. The use of the kinship terms is particularly significant. In the context of Pakistani family life, both *aba* and *baba* can be translated as “father”, but the English word lacks the emotional resonance. These words convey intimacy, affection, respect and cultural belonging. The term *bhai jan* can be translated as dear brother or respected brother, but this doesn't sound natural in English. *Bhabi* can mean ‘sister-in-law’, but in Pakistan it is used as a respectful and affectionate relational term as well. Keeping these words in place would enable English to express Pakistani family relations without formal equivalents. *Shaheed* is a word that can be translated as martyr, but the Urdu-Arabic word has religious and national connotations. In Pakistani discourse, the word *shaheed* is not merely a description but an evaluation and an honorific term as it implies death as sacrifice and it gives spiritual, national or moral significance to death. The term *purdah* is also a complex term. It is frequently translated as “veil,” but it also denotes clothing, modesty, gendered space, social behavior, family honor, and moral regulation. Thus, *purdah* is not just a physical object, but also a cultural practice and moral concept. The terminology of *shalwar kameez*, *naan*, *sherbet* and *gully* are also part of material culture. *Shalwar kameez* is not just “trousers and shirt”, it is a known South Asian style of clothing. *Naan* is not just bread, *sherbet* is not just a cold beverage, and *gully* implies a narrow South Asian street, a local ambiance. These are cultural texture and show that Pakistani English can make English more representative of the lives of Pakistanis.

Translated Proverbs and Local Thought Patterns

In addition to lexical borrowing, *I Am Malala* contains translated expressions and proverb-like structures, which reflect local thought patterns. The Urdu proverb *Nim hakeem khatra-e-jan*, *nim mullah khatra-e-iman* is incorporated in the text, which brings local wisdom, rhythm and moral structure to the global English. Similarly, the phrase “Education is neither eastern nor western, it is human” is grammatically English but the rhetorical balance is a style that is characteristic of South Asian discourse, a moral and philosophical style. The examples demonstrate that the localization of Pakistani English is not limited to the individual word but also extends to the idioms, proverbs, parallelism and culturally familiar lines of reasoning. English is not just a substitute for Urdu or Pashto in *I Am Malala*. It is a medium in which local meanings, values and rhetorical forms are transported into the global circulation. This extends the analysis beyond



lexical borrowing and demonstrates that there is a parallel process of cultural lexicalization that can occur with translated thought patterns. The outcome is an English narrative that is accessible to readers around the world, yet retains some aspects of the multilingual reasoning of Pakistan.

Conclusion

This study has explored Urdunization and cultural lexicalization in Pakistani English through a World Englishes reading of *I Am Malala*. The analysis reveals that Urdu-mediated, Arabic-Islamic, Pashto, and Pakistani cultural lexical elements are used to convey religious identity, Pashtun culture, kinship, political realities, material culture, and local social life. These items are not unnecessary foreign words or deviations from Standard English. Instead, they serve semantic, cultural, emotional, pragmatic and ideological roles. The article thus makes a contribution to the study of World Englishes, moving away from the emphasis on lexical presence to lexical function. It demonstrates that local words in Pakistani English are not merely isolated borrowings, but rather choices of discourse that structure the meaning in terms of religion, region, family, politics and affect. This is especially significant in a transnational text where local words and phrases need to bridge between specificity and globality. The analysis also provides an explanation for the reasons why lexical selection should be interpreted as a component of cultural mediation and not as a reflection of bilingual interference. The analysis suggests that many local terms have apparent English equivalents, but these equivalents are often inadequate. Veil is not a full purdah, council is not a full jirga, guest room is not a full hujra, religious leader is not a full maulana or mufti, and father is not a full aba or baba. These cases highlight the significance of lexical borrowing in the precision of meaning and cultural authenticity of Pakistani English. This conclusion also helps to understand the need for a World Englishes perspective. These lexical forms would be seen as interruptions in the Standard English in a deficit model, but as evidence that English is being adapted to local communicative needs in a World Englishes model. The localized word is not a translation failure; it is often the most precise available form of cultural translation. The analysis also shows that Urdunization in *I Am Malala* is not a one-way process. It is a multi-lingual Pakistani process that includes Urdu, Arabic-Islamic words, Pashto, Persian influenced words, and local cultural knowledge. It is thus helpful to think of cultural lexicalization as a useful concept in the understanding of the process of Pakistani English's absorption and normalization of words from various local sources. This is in line with the recognition of Pakistani English as a localized and norm-developing variety in the framework of World Englishes. The study is limited to one autobiographical text and selected lexical items. It is not meant to be a representative sample of the English spoken in Pakistan, nor does it give a complete description of the phonology, syntax or corpus. Another constraint is that of textual mediation, as *I Am Malala* is a co-authored book written for an international audience and prepared for an international market, meaning that lexical decisions can be influenced by local Pakistani resources as well as editorial decisions to ensure global readability. Future research may compare *I Am Malala* with locally published Pakistani autobiographies, speeches, interviews, newspapers, textbooks, and social media discourse to consider how genre, audience, and platform shape Urdunization and cultural lexicalization.

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