

HOSPITALITY SPEECH ACTS AND CULTURAL SCRIPTS: A CONVERSATIONAL ANALYSIS OF HOST-GUEST INTERACTIONS

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Abstract:

This research has studied the host-guest interactions through the pattern of food and gift offering in Pakistani cultural context, particularly in relation to hospitality related cultural scripts. The aim of this study is to analyze how the level of formality and informality in different relations creates differences in these speech acts. To achieve this aim, insights are taken from Brown and Levinson's Theory of Politeness (1978). Two sources were used to collect the data: (i) a dictionary of Punjabi Proverbs Akhan Lok Seyane (Sayings of Wise People) (Ahsan, 2009) to collect linguistic evidence about the traditional norms of hospitality in Pakistani society (ii) 45 instances of speech acts of food and gift offering were recorded through a specially designed observation sheet. Both qualitative and quantitative research methods have been used to analyze the data. The findings of the study through conversational analysis reveal that the level of formality is higher between members from opposite genders than those between the same genders. This level of formality expresses politeness of the one who offers food or gift. Moreover, the differences in the patterns of food and gift offering and accepting are based on the socio-cultural context and relationship of the interlocutors. However, the proverbs related to hospitality are full of the pieces of advice for both the guests and hosts, but they are more focused on guests than the hosts. The analysis revealed that the patterns of the offering and accepting food and gift are different in eastern cultures from the western ones, particularly in Pakistani society where it is considered a very crucial speech act as far as the phenomenon of politeness is concerned.

Key words: Hospitality, Cultural script, Politeness, Conversational analysis, Eastern Culture

Introduction

Speech act is considered to be one of the current and significant areas in pragmatics and sociolinguistics. Many studies have been carried out on different speech acts, as communicative speech acts are conceptually and verbally different from culture to culture and language to language having different norms (Green, 1975 & Wierzbicka, 1985). Wierzbicka describes these differences as 'cultural scripts', which is not the repetition of stereotypes of national characters but is full of linguistics evidence such as, sayings, proverbs, anecdotes, and formulaic expressions about daily conversations. (2002). Therefore, it is essential to examine the speech acts with reference to their languages and cultures. Hospitality speech act is used to explore the cultural norms and values, as it is done in various cultures such as American (Damai, 2012), African (Gathogo, 2008), and Chinese (Hua, 2000). The present study intends to analyze the patterns of hospitality speech act in Punjabi and Urdu languages particularly in Pakistani perspectives.

The reasons for selecting hospitality speech acts are both academic and personal. Hospitality is considered as a symbol of generosity and healthy relationships, so it is necessary to know the patterns of hospitality to know the culture and norms of a particular society. The aims of this research are to understand the patterns of hospitality and to know the point of view of

those people who are bearers of postulated norms and values of culture through hospitality related cultural script. This study tries to answer the following research questions:

What is the linguistic evidence found in Punjabi proverbs about hospitality?

What are the linguistic patterns of food offering and acceptance in Pakistani society?

What are the linguistic patterns of gift offering and acceptance in Pakistani society?

What are the linguistic patterns of thanking and complimenting after receiving a gift?

Literature review:

1.1-Cultural script:

Cultural script is an approach to describe the norms, cultural values, and practices which are widely used in a given society through the medium of natural semantic meta-language and linguistic evidence (Wierzbicka, 1997). The cultural script technique is meant to understand the term “ethno-pragmatic” (Goddard 2004), i.e. the quest to understand speech practices from the perspective of cultural insiders. In this scenario, it is essential to understand the culturally important words, i.e. words for local values, social strategies, speech acts and so on. These important phrases and keywords reflect the cultural norms (Wierzbicka 1997). Speech acts are a major source to explore the cultural themes, but these themes are based on the cultural context (Goddard, 2004).

Sutanovac (2014), focusing on the inter-cultural and ethno-pragmatic analysis of speech acts, speculates an epistemological overview of culture through speech acts that affect through absence or presence of context, to understand the cross-cultural communications and values. Wierzbicka (2002), by analyzing Russian cultural scripts, postulates that a script is more explicated and always supported by linguistic evidence and theories. Furthermore, the author shows the Russian culture through the concept of truth as a cultural script by its application, to compare this script with Anglo-culture and proposed that any cultural script is the true representative of the culture that provides a way to outsiders for understanding a particular culture.

Jelena (2013), while describing the function of cultural scripts, states that they act as a “meditating factor between languages and culture”. She endorses the concept of Wierzbicka about the cultural script that, emotions are a part of the cultural script in the Anglo-culture and they act as a “building block” of that culture (p. 87).

1.2 Speech acts:

According to Austin (1969), speech acts are the utterance or words that perform some actions. The speech acts are an important part of effective communication. Additionally, cross-cultural pragmatics has studied a great number of speech acts such as apologies in Jordan Arabic (Banikalef et al., 2015); invitation in Jordanian society (Al-Khatib, 2006); greetings in Russia (Shleykina, 1998); request in Australian English and Iraqi Arabic (Aldhulaee, 2011); compliment in Chinese (Duan, 2011); gratitude in Persian and English Speakers (Yoosefvand & Rasekh, 2011); hospitality in Africa (Gathogo, 2008) and so on.

Gathogo (2008) studied the hospitableness related ideology in African society to analyze the Socio-religious expressions of that society in a theological way. He analyzed that the ritual of hospitality still exists in Africa despite the high effects of their being colonized. He demonstrated the concept of *Ubuntu* (personhood and humanness) as a way of life and an aspect of African hospitality. African hospitality considers the arrival of guests as a source of giving happiness to their ancestors and a way to eradicate loneliness. Likewise, hospitality is also considered as a crucial aspect of American society for the strangers as expressed in their

literature and culture, where it is mentioned that food offering and gift exchanges are the crucial components of hospitality (Damai, 2002). Lashley (2015) has manifested various perspectives of hospitality from both the religious and universal perspectives to demonstrate the need to serve and welcome guests. He has proposed that from religious parables and philosophers' point of view, man is rewarded or punished according to his acts of hospitality. Moreover, through the action of hospitality, the strangers become friends and it leads to enhancing the social bonding.

About the function and meanings of gift, Burgess (1982) contends in "Perspectives on gift exchange and hospitable behavior" that gift offering and receiving as well as hospitality act as a symbol of the building blocks in the social attraction and relationship. Hospitality, through the metaphor of gift exchange, changes its meaning and items of a gift from the perspective of the Eastern and Western culture. Belk (1979) in his review of 'gift-giving behavior has attributed four functions to the gift exchange: communication, social exchange, economic exchange, and socialization. Gathogo (2008) has studied the ideology related to hospitality in African society both in proverbs and daily conversation to analyze the socio-religious expressions in a theological way.

Rheede & Dekker (2016) explored the responsibility of host during hospitality through both service skills and "genuine hospitableness". He argues about the current paradigm of the concept of host-guest relationship in which the guest is considered as "god" and the responsibility of host is changing from "host as a servant" to "host as a shepherd". He uses the metaphor of shepherd to emphasize the extensive responsibilities of guests not only of actual guests but also of future guests in a more extended way.

Moreover, D'Souza (2013), describing the meaning of gift as an act of hospitality, analyses that gift in the form of cash or non-monetary items is a token of appreciation or affection. However, the meanings and interpretation of 'gift' are different in the Western and Eastern cultures. The ritual of gift-giving occurs in most societies, and it is significantly influenced by values that each culture carries (Carrier, 1991; Otnes, Lowrey, & Kim, 1993). According to D'Souza (2003), "Gift-giving is a distinct cultural and interpersonal act in the East that carries specific moral characteristics" (p. 28), while in the Western culture, gift is considered as an act of responsibility for future action. In Asia, the act of gift-giving is considered as a way of continuing the relationship, while in the West it is often taken as a source of bribery and reciprocity.

The meaning of gift-giving varies from culture to culture. In Asian culture, it is termed "Guanxi style relationships". *Guanxi* is used to symbolize gift-giving as to strengthen the relationship and in the process of developing *guanxi*, the gift is usually used (Brunner, Chen, Sun & Zhou, 1989). Peng (1997) has defined the term *guanxi* as being "a relationship between two people or organizations containing implicit mutual obligation, assurances and understanding governing Chinese attitudes towards long-term social and business relationships" (p. 449). So, *guanxi* is considered to be an essential asset in strengthening the relationship.

The researches done on hospitality in African and American cultures have almost similar findings as those carried out in the Chinese culture have. Despite the difference between societies and methodologies, common findings of the function and meanings of gift exchange are observed. In the Chinese context, the gift is considered as a politeness marker that works as a genuine gesture in the form of appreciation and praise to enhance social networking (Zhu, Li, & Qian, 2000). On the contrary, other social factors like power, social distance and ranking of imposition between a gift giver and a gift recipient affect the value and pattern of gift giving and

gift receiving when the strategies are studied in Chinese context (Joy, 2001; Zhu et al., 1998; Hairong, Hui & Richard, 2010).

The concept of “cultural script” is more explicit when it is validated through linguistic evidence i.e. speech acts, daily conversation, common sayings, and proverbs, etc. (Adams & Markus, 2001; Wierzbicka, 2002). Along with speech acts, proverbs are also considered as a linguistic evidence such as Solzhenitsyn (1972) has argued about the proverbs as the cultural script that “the Russian language loves proverbs about truth” and that these proverbs express “the heavy experience of the Russian people”.

Similarly, Punjabi proverbs are full of different aspects of life that describe cultural norms, values, traditions, and experiences of people. In his book “*Akhan Lok Sayane*”, Bajwa (2009, p. 30) has analysed Punjabi proverbs dealing with a variety of manners of hospitality and guest-hood relationships e.g.: *Ghar aye mehman Rubb samaan* (The arrival of a guest at home is just like the arrival of God); *Ghar aye mehman aan haas ke balao* (Always greet guests with a smiling face). Moreover, Ahmad (2014, p. 53) in his book “*Urdu Zarb-ul-Imsaal or Kahawatain*” gives a description about hospitality in Urdu proverbs: *Awaal ta’am baad kalaam*, (First serve food, then talk). The goal of this research is to fill the gap in the previous researches by analyzing the ways of hospitality of Pakistani society, particularly among Punjabi speaking and Urdu speaking communities, which are based on sequential communication between the hosts and guests.

Framework:

‘Face’ is a notion used by Brown & Levinson (1987) to elaborate ‘politeness theory’. Two types of face are maintained during interactions, ‘positive face’ and ‘negative face’. ‘Positive face’ is referring to have consistent and approved social image. ‘Negative face’ can be defined as “the basic claim to territories, personal preserves, and rights to non-distraction” (p. 61). Politeness theory has four distinguishing features that are used to save ‘face’ notion. In “Off record” the interaction is less directive and more polite. The hearer gets confused by the speaker’s intentions. Applying the ‘face’ notion, ‘politeness’ has dual nature, ‘positive politeness’ and ‘negative politeness’. ‘Positive politeness’ is meant to maintain the positive face by showing similarities in interactions and treating the listener as an in-group member. On the other hand, ‘negative politeness’ is to minimize the face-threatening acts (FTAs) and also respect the addressee’s desire to have their own independence. “On record” is a state in which speaker is more direct and less polite.

Therefore, the author uses Brown & Levinson’s politeness theory to analyze data based on casual conversations. The analysis describes the examples of ‘politeness’ that follow the definition of politeness by Brown & Levinson, to minimize FTA.

Method:

To collect data, triangulation was used. Qualitative method (the nature of data) was used for thematic categorization of proverbs about hospitality and of host-guest interactions. Quantitative method was used to determine the percentage of conversations and proverbs regarding different themes. An observation sheet was used to collect data (see Appendix), in which informants were given the observation sheet for noting down the data. The informants were advised to note down the sequences of the exchange as faithfully as possible. Additionally, observers were instructed to write down the age, the relationship of participants, gender, the location of exchange, formal and informal setting, and the observer’s perception about the intention of food and gift offered. One hundred copies of observation sheets were given to ten

people and they were asked to note down all instances of food and gift exchange through purposive sampling. Sixty observation sheets were returned out of which only forty-five sheets were appropriate for data analysis as others were incomplete. These forty-five sheets consisted of different instances of interactions between people having different ages, genders, status differences and educational levels.

Moreover, a dictionary of Punjabi proverbs *Akhan Lok Sayane* (Sayings of wise people, 2009, ed 2nd) containing 22, 000 proverbs on various themes by Ahsaan Bajwaa was selected to get proverbs about hospitality. Initially, 119 proverbs were selected regarding hospitality through purposive sampling. The selected proverbs were then categorized, transcribed and translated into English with the help of research participants having proficiency in both English and Punjabi languages. Interviews with both the offerers and receivers were conducted to know the intentions behind certain conversational patterns involved in offering, accepting and declining.

1- Data analysis:-

1.1-Qualitative data analysis and discussion:

Various themes regarding hospitality and generosity in proverbs:

Punjabi proverbs provide authentic linguistic evidence regarding the cultural norms and traditions related to hospitableness. The analysis of Punjabi proverbs reveals the following recurrent norms for both the host and guest as expected in Punjabi culture:

i- Welcome of guests: It is the cultural norm that the arrival of a guest is considered desirable and pleasing and he/she is warmly welcomed: *Aeh chan kidron charh paya ae* (p.16) (From where did this moon rise?). *Tahada aaon sir mathey tey* (p.19) (Your arrival is at our head and forehead, you are most welcome). These phrases are commonly used to welcome an unexpected guest and to show congeniality. The guests are welcomed, attended to and served with special attention. As the new moon comes after a month and it is considered as a source of pleasure, likewise the guests are welcomed and treated warm-heartedly.

ii- Respect of guests: The respect of guests is the responsibility of the host at any cost: *Aaye di kr aadar, bhanwein ja wech* (p.13) (Respect the guests, even if you have to sell your property). When they come to your home, the attitude of the host should be cheerful: *Ghar aay mehmaan aan, has ke bulao* (p.25) (Treat the guest at your home favorably/politely/in a pleasant way). The respect of guests is considered as the action to please God. Meehan (2003) states that only Muslims can understand the need of hospitality and quotes a saying of Muhammad "Let the believer in Allah and the Day of Judgment honor his guests". Even the respect of enemy is necessary in Islam and other religions such as Hinduism when he comes as a guest at your house. Lashley (2015) quotes Mahabharata "Even an enemy must be offered appropriate hospitality if he comes to your home. A tree does not deny shading even to the one who has come to cut it down" (p. 372).

iii- Do not go uninvited: It is considered as the part of ethics that always go with the permission of host, otherwise, the guests will not be treated well: *Dakhe da parohna, man na bhaona* (p.22) (A forced guest is never liked). *Sadhe binan jaeeye nah, khade utte khaeeye nah* (p.24) (Do not go uninvited, and never eat to your full).

iv- The arrival of uninvited guest: When the guests come to the house of someone, an uninvited guest always come along them, which is described through a proverb as : *Aate naal plethan lag ee janda ay* (p.13) (A small portion most often gets attached to the larger one). Moreover, when uninvited guests come, they are not considered as respectable as the invited ones are: *Bin bulay prohne da koi aadar nai karda* (p.17) (Uninvited guests are never honored).

iv- **The Sincerity of hosts:** The hosts are considered as the protector of guest's belongings and save them with utmost effort: *Wande di muri, jitthe rakkhi otthayee puri* (p.29) (The guests find their things where they keep them).

v- **Duration of stay by the guests:** The duration of stay by the guests at the host's house should be short. The third day of the guest is not appreciated by the host: *Machhi te parohna, tije din bo maar janda ay* (p.27) (Fish and guests start emitting smell the third day). The guests for only two days are respectable and honored: *Do dinan di mehmani, teeje din di be-imani* (p.22) (Guests of two days are served well, on the third day, they are considered being dishonest).

The same type of descriptions are given in a Ganda proverb: "A visitor is a visitor for several days, and then put the person to work", as well as in a Swahili proverb, which says: "A visitor is a guest for two days, on the third day, put him/her to work (by giving him or her a hoe)". The duration of guests' stay at host's home in Urdu proverbs is described as *Aak din ka mehman, do din ka mehman, tisaary din ka balaye-jaan* (p.53) (The guest is for only two days, on the third day he becomes a trouble). African proverbs also exhibit an impatient behavior of the host regarding the longer stay of guests. A Chewa proverb also denotes a similar notion: "Treat the visitor well because he/she is like morning dew which disappears very quickly with the morning sun" (Gathogo, 2008, p.6).

vi- **The arrival of guests without gift:** It is usually expected from the guests to come with a gift, when they come to another person's home. To visit someone empty handed is not considered appreciable. *Aaye nein Rub de swali, chitte kapre kheese khali* (p.13) (The guests with dignified dressings are mostly ones without a gift for the host). The only guests who come with the gift are considered as respectable persons: *Eho jahe aao taan, kiyaon na bhao* (p.15) (If the guests come with a gift, then why they must not be liked.)

vii- **Frequent arrival of the same guests:** It is usually advised to the guests that they should not come frequently to someone's house, as it is considered as an unethical act: *Wekho ni haner aaya, kal torya si aj fer aaya* (p.29) (See the storm, I sent him yesterday, he is here again).

viii- **The excessive arrival of guests:** Here, it is again advised to guests, not to go to that place where the guests are already in excess: *Ik utthe ik bahwe, deewan khana lagya rahwe* (p.14) (One leaves, another arrives; the drawing room remains occupied). *Agle naen bhaonde, hor dhid kadai aaonde* (p.15) (Previous guests do not go, more come with greedy appetite).

ix- **Avoid visiting too many places:** The visit of a guest in too many places at a time is not considered a wise act and it mostly leads to hurt the honor of the guest him/herself: *Bohtey gharan da parohna bhuka rehnda ay* (p.17) (A guest of many homes often remains hungry).

xi- **Do not find faults with food:** The guests are advised that they should not find faults with the food when they are being served: *Ik tawwe di roti, koi motti koi chhoti* (p.14) (The bread baked on the same stove can be thick or thin). It is advised through this proverb not to invite fault-finding people to your feast: *Dastar khan te bulaya sao aeb, nah bulaya ik aeb* (p.22) (To invite on dining table lead to many faults, not inviting is just one).

xii- **Status of guests:** It is the local ideology that associates the higher- status people with passivity and they are considered not as hospitable as lower status people: *Wadda ghar, bhukh da dar* (p.29) (Large house, the fear of hunger). Lashley (2015) describes that the status of people is not determined by what they acquire as wealth but the amount they have given away for hospitality. The people who are more generous to guests are considered as having a high status.

xiii- Level of guests: It is a common observation that hosts usually invite the guests according to their economic and social status: *Khaanan de khan prohane, koi ghareeb da yaar nahein* (p.23) (The rich get rich guests; no one befriends a poor person).

xiv- Beliefs about guests: There are certain beliefs about the guests prevailing in particular cultures. These beliefs are both in negative as well as positive sense: *Tarkali da mehman te badal, khaali naen janda* (p. 18) (The guest and clouds of the evening do not go empty). *Koun kise de aawe jawe, dana paani khich ke leawe* (p.25) (The arrival of guests is pre-destined). The guest brings his own food/sustenance (metaphorically).

xv- Superstitions about guests: There are several superstitions about the arrival of guests, which are commonly considered as a sign of their arrival: *Kutte di pasli pharki* (p.24) (Dog's rib moved). *Banery tey kaan bolya* (The click of the crow at the wall). These gestures of the animals are considered an indication of guests' arrival.

xvi- The departure of guests: It is a norm of the Pakistani culture that the arrival of the guest may be without the permission of the host, but the departure is always based on the will of the host: *Jaan apne wass, aawan begane wass* (p.19) (To come is with the personal will but to leave you should be allowed by the host).

These different proverb categories are a true representative of cultural norms and the different stances about guests and hosts in Pakistani society. Moreover, Punjabi proverbs are the representative linguistic evidence of cultural script of guests and hospitality, in which the guests are advised about the ethics of guest-hood and have suggestions for hosts how they should welcome and respect even the uninvited guests.

1.2-Quantitative data analysis:

Initially, total number of proverbs are categorized into major thematic domains i.e. generosity and guest-hood etc. In which 55 proverbs are on guest-hood and hospitality having various themes.

Table1: Proverbs about hosts and guests.

Theme	Number	Percentage
Hosts	20	36.6%
Guests	35	63.63%
Total	55	100%

Table2: Themes for hosts and guests in Proverbs:

Themes for guests	Total numbers	Percentage
The Arrival of guests without a gift	3	5.45%
Do not go uninvited	5	9.09%
The frequent arrival of the same guests	5	9.09%
Duration of stay by guests	4	7.27%
Excessively frequent arrival of guests	2	3.63%
Do not Visit too many places	2	3.63%
Level of guests	3	5.45%
Status of guests	1	1.8%
Beliefs about guests	5	9.09%

Superstitions about guests	2	3.63%
Departure of guests	1	1.8%
Do not find faults in food	2	3.63%
Total	35	63.6%

The themes about guests in Punjabi proverbs are usually pieces of advice for guests in which major advice is about the infrequent visits and not going uninvited to the host's house.

Table 3: Themes for Hosts

Themes	Total numbers	Percentage
Welcome the guests	3	5.45%
Respect for guests	10	18.1%
Sincerity	1	1.8%
Arrival of uninvited guests	6	10.9%
Total	20	36.6%

Hosts are advised to show unconditional respect to their guests and such proverbs have a high percentage of 18.1%.. The respect of guests, as well as a warm welcome, is necessary for the host. To warmly welcome their guest show the positive politeness to guests which minimize the FTA.

1.3-Qualitative analysis of Speech acts of hospitality:

1-Food offering and receiving patterns:

The level of formality is higher in food offering and receiving. Out of 25 instances, 19 are based on the formal level in which food is presented by the sequences of exchange while, 6 instances are based on informal level or preferred responses, where food is offered and received without any use of insistence words There are examples of formal offering and receiving of food:

Formal level with a family friend :

(1) Female-female

(A is a family friend of B)

A: *Baita, doodh ka glass le aao.*

(Daughter, bring a glass of milk)

B: *Nahi auntie, main pee kr aii hon.*

(No aunt, I have had that at home.)

A: *Acha phir bottle ya juice mangwa loon?*

(Okay, then should I call for soft drink or juice?)

B: *Nahi nahi auntie mujy kisi cheez ki talab nahi.*

(No no, aunt I need nothing.)

A: *Chalo phir khana kha lo.*

(Then please have some meal.)

B: *Nahi auntie bohat bohat shukria.*

(No aunt, thank you so much.)

A: *Acha chawal banaye hain. Thore se kha lo.*

(Ok, I have cooked rice. Have some of it.)

(While serving rice to the guest.)

B: *Itne zada. Ap isse kam kar den.*

(It is too much. Please reduce it.)

A: *Zyada nahi hain, thore se to hain, kha lo.*

(It is not too much, just some. Do have/eat them!)

B: *Bohat bohat shukaria auntie.*

(Thank you very much, aunt.)

In this example, both the recipient and the presenter have used the positive politeness strategies. Guest refuses, again and again, to take food for face-saving and feels reluctant to accept the offer of food directly she is insisted on in three or more exchanges by the host to take it. It is considered rude and against the norms if someone takes food directly without the repetitions of the offering exchanges. The host consistently insists on the guest to take food regardless of her capacity.

(2) At dinner, at some stranger's home

(B is invited at A's home.)

A: *Khana kha len.*

(Have some food.)

B: *Is ki kia zarurt thi, ap nay itna takaluf kia.*

(What was the need of it, you are being indulged in formalities)

A: *Koi baat nahi ap khaen to sahi.*

(It is okay you take some food.)

A: *Bas itna sa, aur len.*

(Only this much? Take some more)

B: *Nahi nahi, itna hi kafi ha.*

(No no, it is enough.)

A: *Thora sa to aur le len.*

(Take a little more at least)

B: *Nahi nahi, main itna hi khati hon.*

(No no, I eat in small quantity)

A: *Bas, thora sa aur kha len. (Adding more food in guest's plate)*

(Just, eat a little bit more)

B: *Nahi, bas itna hi kafi ha.*

(No, it is enough now)

A: *Acha ya sweet dish to taste karen.*

(Okay, then taste this sweet dish)

B: *Nahi, maine pait bhar kar kha lia hay.*

(No, I have eaten to my full)

A: *Bas thora sa ley lo*

(Just take a little bit more)

B: *Nahi nahi, bohat bohat shukaria.*

(No, no, thanks a lot).

In this example, "Take-Take-Take" concept is prevailing through-out the sequence of conversation during the serving of the meal. Hosts and other people force the guest to take as much as humanly possible. They follow the strategy of "stuff-guest-till-he-screams" and force them until they accept the items which are served by the hosts. When the host has had foreknowledge about the arrival of guests, they offer a variety of foods to them and expect that they take it to their full and taste every dish they have served. Lashey (2015) has stated that the status and power is never measured by wealth but the amount given away by hosts to guests. Similarly, Niozmurodov & Aliev (1990) state a proverb, 'Bread signifies the host's generosity, the guest's respect, and our homeland's strength. To cherish and value bread is the duty of every

person's noble humanity." (p. 47). In the Punjabi proverbs, the same theme is prevailing in which the respect and services of guests is the responsibility of the host at any cost: *Aaye di kr aadar, bhanwein ja wech* (p.13) (Respect the guests, even if you have to sell your property).

(3) (A is newcomer in a society and B is his neighbour)

A: *Kia piyen gay?*

(What would you like to drink?)

B: *Nahi, bohat shuakria kisi cheez ki zarurat nahi.*

(No, thanks nothing is needed.)

A: *Nahi, phir be kuch to btaen?*

(No, tell me something.)

B: *Nahi, auntie kisi takaluf ki zarurt nahi. Phir kabi sahi.*

(No aunt, there is no need of any formality. Let it be some other time)

A: *Nahi, phir be ap btaen. Ap konsa roz roz ati hain.*

(No, tell something. You do not come frequently)

B: *Nahi. Auntie bohat bohat shuakria.*

(No aunt thanks a lot.)

A: *Acha, phir shake bna lete hain.*

(Ok, then I will get you milk-shake)

B: *Khamkhwa takaluf kar rahi hen, rahen daen.*

(You need not bother, leave it)

A: *Acha, chalo ab pie lo* (While serving shake.)

(Okay, now drink it)

B: *Jazakillah auntie*

(Allah gives you its reward aunt!)

Example (3) reveals the informal level that is present even in neighbors. Politeness phenomenon during serving describes the generosity of the host. A new neighbor is considered as a stranger whose service is an obligation of the host. It is a moral obligation to serve strangers and provide accommodations which are evident from the overall human history and throughout the globe (Meyer, 2008). People visiting others often say that they will take food or drink when they come next to the host's house. This kind of behavior is very common in Eastern culture, where people deny food with the promise to come next time just to minimize the face-threatening effects of refusal and showing positive politeness.

Female-male interaction:

(A is male and B is female, while A is a close relative of B)

A: *Chae piyen gay ya phir juice mangwa len?*

(What would you like to take, tea or juice?)

B: *Nahi nahi kissi cheez ki zarorat nahi. Main khana khaa kar aee hon?*

(No, no. there is no need of anything. I have already had food.)

A: *To phir fruit mangwa len ya machhli fry krwa len?*

(OK then, shall I bring some fruit or fry some fish for you?)

B: *Nahi, nahi mujay daer ho rahi hai. Phir kabi sahi*

(No no, I am getting late. Next time I will have something.)

This example (4) is a typical food offering and acceptance situation in less formal contexts in Pakistan in which the host asks the guest a question about his/her choice through mention of food. The acceptant has an appropriate reason to deny the food.

Male-male interaction:

(4) (A is guest with relatively lower social status & B is a host with a higher status)

A: *Kiaa piein gay? Chae ya cold drink?*

(What would you like to drink, tea or cold drink?)

B: *Nahi, kisi cheez ki zarorat nahi.*

(No need of anything.)

A: *Phir bi kuch to btaen*

(Tell something, I insist.)

A: *Meharbani, bas koi talb nahi*

(Thanks, I don't feel like having anything.)

B: *Mera khyal hy cold drink theek hai.*

(I think cold drink will be fine.)

Example (5) shows the hesitation of the guest in the house of the host who has a higher status than him. In the start, the host wants confirmation from the guest but at the end, he decides himself as he notices the discomfort of the guest in his house. It is the local ideology that associates the higher- status people with passivity and they are considered not as hospitable as lower status people: *Wadda ghar, bhukh da dar* (p.29) (Large house, the fear of hunger). In his hesitation he remains unable to ask his guests for food that leads to cause of hunger. Guests of high status serve only their rich hosts that come with some present for hosts which is shown through this proverb *Eho jahe aao taan, kiyaoon na bhao* (p.15) (If the guests come with a gift, then why they must not be liked.). Moreover, the proverb *Khaanan de khan prohane, koi ghareeb da yaar nahein* (p.23) (The rich get rich guests; no one befriends a poor person), shows the norm of the higher-status people in which they serve only the same status people.

(5) Formal level having an age difference

(A is the elder female guest while B is a younger host.)

A: *Bottle pi len gi ya phir chaey banwa len?*

(What will you like to drink, soft drink or tea?)

B: *Bottle pi lon gi lekin cola nahi piti*

(I will have cold drink but not cola.)

A: *Aach to juice mangwa len?*

(Then will I get you juice?)

B: *Nahi koi baat nahi, rahne den.*

(It is okay, leave it.)

A: *Bas do minute mein aa jata hai, khana khaa kr jayee ga. Machli banwahi ha.*

(It will come only in two minutes, please have some food before leaving. There's fried fish for lunch today.)

B: *Nahi bilkul be zarurt nahi*

(No, there is no need of this.)

A: *Phir kuch fruit hi kha len.*

(Then, have some fruit.)

B: *Khwamkha hi takaluf kia ap ne.*

(You are getting formal)

A: *Koi baat nhi.*

(It is okay.)

B: *Bohat mazay ka khana ha*

(It is very delicious)

A: *Ji, Bohat bohat shukria*

(Thanks a lot)

Example (6) reveals the formal level but with age difference. This situation reveals that it is too difficult to force elders to take food. The repeated refusals to take food shows the intension of the guest to save his/her face which may be threatened in the case of direct acceptance. All these examples display the sequences which are built before presenting some food, what conversational analysts call ‘pre-sequences’ that lead to paving the way to offer food. O’Gorman (2010) giving the definition of hospitality states that hospitality is related to hosts and guests, to care, protect and create a sense of well-being and trust. The sense of trust is shown through the sincerity of hosts *Wande di muri, jitthe rakkhi otthayee puri* (p.29) (The guests find their things where they keep them). Additionally, the attitude of the host should be cheerful: *Ghar aay mehmaan aan, has ke bulao* (p.25) (Treat the guest at your home favorably/politely/in a pleasant way). Hospitality is shown by showing great care for the guest about food selection.

Informal level with a close relative:

(6) (B is an elder brother as guest, A is the younger brother as host)

A: *Chae bnwaa loon ap ke liye?*

(Shall I order for tea?)

B: *Chae ki zarorat nahi*

(There is no need for tea.)

A: *Phir hum khana kahne lage han. Ap be khaa len.*

(Then, we are going to have a meal, please join us.)

B: *G bhai, mujy bht bhok lagi hy, subha nashta b nhi kiya.*

(Yes brother, I am feeling hungry as I couldn’t have breakfast in the morning, too).

Example 6 shows close relations and the informal level in which food is offered as well as accepted in a straightforward manner. This example sounds so informal but it depends upon the relationship between the offerer and the recipient. The relationship between giver and recipient reveals the function of hospitality speech acts. In some relationships, hospitality speech act is possible because the speaker is showing some superiority. It might be considered as rude and an action of negative politeness when someone asks himself/herself for food. So, the level of directness between those people who do not know one another will be different and sound more face-saving than those who are less or more familiar with one another. It also reveals the cultural norms of Pakistani society, where the exhibition of collectivism is more visible than individualism at the dining table. Moreover, African culture also has a concept of collectivism that is shown through a proverb by ‘The Kikuyu of Kenya’, “He who eats alone dies alone.” (Gathogo, 2008, p. 283). This proverb reveals the ‘face threatening act’ about individualism as African culture negates the individual life of a person in which he is threatened about the consequences of individualism, in which who enjoys (food) individually will have to (die) alone. Moreover, “On record” strategy is applied here where guest is using the direct words to take some food and shows less politeness phenomenon regardless having the positive face for host.

2- Gift offering and acceptance (G.O.A):

There are 20 instances in which gifts were offered, were declined first, and then the gift was re-offered and re-offered again and finally accepted. The additional material and information such as justification, pre-sequences, and self-assessment are used to persuade the recipient to accept the gift despite the difference of age, gender, status, positions, and so on.

Formal level of G.O.A:

(1) (A is the elder female, B is a younger female host)

A: *Yeh meri taraf se Ali(the host's son) ko de den.*

(This is from me for Ali.) (*Giving 1000 rupees*)

B: *Nahi nahi rehnay den is ki zarurat nahi.*

(No, no. there is no need of it.)

A: *Koi baat nahi me apny bache ko de rahi hoon ap ko nahi*

(It is okay. I am giving this to my child, not to you.)

B: *Nahi, nahi, Aap pahli baar aye hain, aise achha nahi lagta.*

(You have come for the first time; it does not seem nice.) A: *Nahi, nahi, rakh len.*

(No, no, keep it.)

B: *Nahi, nahi jab hum ap ke ghar aen gay tab le len gay.*

(No, no, when we will come to your home, then we will take it.)

A: *Achha, jab ap hamare ghar aaein gay to dobra den don gi.*

(Whenever you will come to our home, I will give you again.)

B: *Achha phir kam Karen, ya zyada hain.*

(OK then reduce it, it is a huge amount.)

A: *Acha bas theek hay, rakho isy.*

(It is reasonable, keep it.)

B: *Bohat shukria*

(Thanks a lot.)

In this instance, A is giving money as a gift, but B refuses again and again to A. A uses an additional material as a sequential structure to prepare a ground for the acceptance of the gift. Sometimes, the gift is presented after hospitality as a reward or gesture of thankfulness to the host, which is denied by the host and the seesaw battle of re-offer and decline, continues until the host accepts it as a gift. The analysis shows that gift offers in Pakistani cultural context are almost always structurally marked with additional materials and information which delay the final act of acceptance or rejection. Conversational analysts have said that the word of preference is independent of the personal liking of the speaker or hearer; nevertheless it is 'structural notion'. The main feature of preference organization is that "not all the potential second parts to the first part of an adjacency pair are of equal standing: there is a ranking operating over the alternatives such that there is at least one preferred and one dis-preferred category of response" (Levison, 1983: 307). Preferred responses are usually unmarked—they come about as structurally simple turns, where dis-preferred responses are evidenced by mechanism of delay and diverse forms of structural complexities.

(2) (A is B's senior officer. B is preparing for his sister's wedding.)

A: *Kia tayaarin mukamal ho gai hain?*

(Have all preparations been done?)

B: *Jee sir, ho gahi han.*

(Yes sir, everything is ready.)

A: *Ya meri taraf se ek suit gift ha ap ki behan ki shaadi ke liye.*

(Here it is a dress as a gift for your sister for her wedding.)

B: *Nahi sir, ap ka bohat bohat shukria*

(No, sir, I am grateful to you.)

A: *Shukria ki koi baat nahi, le lo.*

(There is no need to say thanks. Keep it.)

B: *Shukria sir.*

(Thanks a lot sir.)

In this example, 'A' first prepares the ground by asking about preparation, rather than making the offer straightforwardly. The offerer, in doing so, not only justifies his sequential act, but also makes him accept the gift. Here, he contextualizes his act by pointing to the reason for the offer. Joy (2001) has manifested that the relationship closeness (i.e. close friend, good friend or just friend) leads to the quality of the gift. Moreover, Zahu et. al. (1998) explored the context and nature of the gift factors that affect the quality of the gift and the pattern of acceptance and offer. They analyzed that high solidarity and equal power cause the straighter and direct pattern of offering and receiving a gift as compared to a situation consisting for people who have medium solidarity and unequal power relations, use more re-offer and decline exchanges. This example shows the second condition in which both persons have almost medium solidarity and unequal power so, the re-offer and decline exchange continues.

3- (A is a student of B. B brings a watch for A)

A: *Ya ap ke liye hay. (Giving a packet containing the gift)*

(This is for you.)

B: *Is ki kia zarorat thi?*

(What was the need for this?)

A: *Nahi, ap rakh len.*

(No, keep it.)

B: *Ya to bohat mahnga ho ga?*

(It must be very expensive.)

A: *Nahi ya kuchh be nahi ha, ap rakh lny*

(It is worthless. You keep it.)

B: *Sahi, shukria.*

(Thank you, then.)

In the above example, one of the strategies the gift offerer uses is to devalue the gift by saying that it is worthless. The recipient uses the opposite strategy by saying that it is too expensive. This seesaw battle between the gift offerer and recipient lasts over several turns and at last, the recipient accepts the gift. When an expensive gift is given to someone in high power, it leads to the usage of more respectable verbal and non-verbal messages. Zahu et al. (2000) also examined the same type of example in which recipients feel hesitation when they are presented an expensive necklace (p. 95). To take an expensive gift from someone results in a position of emotional and material indebtedness of the giver which affects the negative face, by showing through a state of the imposition of the receiver (Godelier, 1999).

(3) (A is at the birthday party of B's son, B is a friend of A's)

A: *Kia baat hai janab? Bare achhe kapre pehne hain.*

(Bravo/WOW! You are wearing a very nice dress.)

B: *Meharbani*

(Thanks)

A: *Yeh kia ha? (Pointing towards gift packages)*

(What is this?)

B: *Yeh Ali(B's son) ke liye hai.*

(This is for Ali.)

A: *Wase is ki koi khas zarort to nahi thi.*

(By the way, there was no need of it.)

B: *Achha to phir wapis le jate hain.*

(Then we may take it back.) (Smilingly)

A: *Maine kaha koi khaas zarurt to nahi thi. Lakin thori bohat to hay na (Laughter)*

(I said it is not essential but in fact, a little bit need is there)

This example shows the informal attitude of people during their presentation of the gift. The level of informality is higher in friends or close friends where the relationship between the recipients and givers matters as it is measured by Joy (2001). In the relationship of host and guest where level of informality is lower, things look to be imposed which cause the face threatening effect and feelings of embarrassment of the guest. In the politeness phenomenon, the function of the gift is revealed through the positive expressions and compliments of the guest that depends upon the social distance and social variables. In Chinese culture; this politeness phenomenon is different according to social distance (Pan, 2000)

By examining, the above-mentioned examples of food and gift offering and accepting, it is explored that these examples are the mirror of the Pakistani society and culture. The various conversational strategies have been used, such as the dis-preference before making of an acceptance, the elaboration of the offer through justification and self-assessment, the seesaw battle of 'offer-decline-reoffer-re-decline-reoffer-final-acceptance', all show the contextualization cues to describe the socio-cultural values of Pakistani people.

The interviews of many people following the observation sheet of their food offering and acceptance as well as gift offering and receiving have been conducted. All of them commented that they would never offer food or gift without verbal sequences as it is considered an arrogant or impolite act. Other comments that they would use as sequential strategies to show them respect as it is evident through proverb *Ghar aaye da maan rakhna chahida ay* (The guests must be honored) (p.28). Moreover, to offer food to the guest is considered as a gesture of showing or building a healthy relationship, purity and self-satisfaction i.e. in Urdu proverbs it is stated as *Awaal taam bad kalaam* (First serve food, then talk). One informant commented that 'when someone offers you food or gift, you should not accept it at once. You should show respect and use polite words'. Women bake bread and when the bread is praised, it will be a cause of pride and prestige for women. So, the use of thanking strategies and paying compliments leads to a source of happiness. Through these comments, it is revealed that hospitality is the politeness phenomenon to maintain social harmony and Pakistani culture shows similar norms as exhibited by Hua (2008) about the Chinese context (Hua, 2000).

Conclusion:

This research paper has explained the pattern of food and gift offering and acceptance during host-guest interaction in Pakistani context. Conversation between host and guest is analyzed by using politeness theory that depends on the social variables (differences of gender, status, age) and contextual formalities (social status, social distances and social values). It gives the comprehensive overview of the social behavior during food and gift exchange that varies

from formal to informal level. The findings reveal that these social variables create slight to huge differences in the pattern of food and gift offering and acceptance. The interaction between male-male and female-female is more informal than male-female and female-male interaction during host-hood. Moreover, the pattern of offering shows the hospitality as a politeness phenomenon in the Pakistani context, in which seesaw battle (to offer, decline, reoffer- re-decline, and finally accept) is playfully fought to get interpersonal harmony and to build social network between the participants. It also helps to have an insight into the cultural values and norms through routine conversations and through linguistic evidences found in the Punjabi proverb. "The guest often feels flattered by the new and seemingly spontaneous attention, but what's actually going on is the activation of a social network." (Niozmurodov & Aliev 1990, p. 36). However, it is an ethnographic approach to reveal the human behavior through open eyes and mind. The findings also describe the collectivism stance of Pakistani society during these host-guest interactions. The cultural practices of gift-giving show the ethos of a culture and its various value systems, in which gift acts as a way of communication (Senior 1996). Additionally, the guests use the thanking and positive politeness strategies such as compliments to praise the food and gifts.

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Appendix

Observation sheet

Gender: ----- Relationship between A and B: -----
 Age: ----- Type of items or gift: -----
 Setting of gift and food offering and receiving: -----
 Status: -----
 Exchange of gift and food sequence: