



ADVANCE SOCIAL SCIENCE ARCHIVE JOURNAL

Available Online: <https://assajournal.com>

Vol. 05 No. 01. Jan-March 2026. Page#.5986-6010

Print ISSN: [3006-2497](#) Online ISSN: [3006-2500](#)Platform & Workflow by: [Open Journal Systems](#)<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.22014660>

Exploring the Honorifics in Balti Linguistic Practices: An Analysis of Communicative Functions of Balti Linguistic Expressions in Different Contexts

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Abstract

This research investigates the functions of Balti honorifics within various communicative contexts. The researcher has employed the Politeness Theory developed by Erving Goffman and Penelope Brown, (1978) as the primary theoretical framework to investigate and identify honorific words and phrases in the Balti language. The researcher has used different books in order to investigate the research questions. The researcher has devised semi-structured interviews to collect data from Balti language experts. The study reveals that Honorifics in Balti language are rooted in Balti cultural traditions and linguistic practices varying across different social contexts such as kinship, social status, age, sex, profession, rank, religious status, and social status. The findings of the current study highlighted that Balti language is one of the richest languages in terms of honorific expressions with different structural and semantic features. These honorifics encompass different linguistic, cultural and social implications playing significant roles by determining politeness and social hierarchies in the Balti community

Keywords: Balti, honorific linguistic practices, politeness theory and politeness strategies

Introduction

Balti language is spoken in the five major districts of Gilgit Baltistan; Skardu, Shigar, Ghanche, Kharmang, and Rondu. Balti language has originated from the Tibetan family of languages. It is spoken in Tibet China, Ladakh and Bhutan at varying degree owing to socio-cultural settings and linguistics variance. Diversified dialects are spoken due to difference in its geographical, cultural, ethnic and social settings. The native speakers sometimes use different honorifics and social deixis as dialectical changes but these are perceived and understood in others regions as well. The Balti speakers have been ruled by the Dugra Raj and Rajas in the remote past which identically contributed to the construction of social deixis and honorific expressions. It has become a common practice that every Balti speaker uses these words;

/jinaab/, /hazoor/, /qibla/, /sunyey/, /bhai jee/, behen jee/, chacha jee/ etc. while interacting with one another in the community. After the initiation of the English-speaking schools and technological advancement, Balti language received hundreds of words and expression from English language. Now, almost 90% of Balti language users commonly use /excuse me/, /hello/, /dear/, /Oh my God/, /please/, /bye/, /welcome/ /Happy birthday/, /sorry/, /take care/ etc. in their day-to-day communication.

Rehman (2024) clarifies that the Balti language has gone through the influence of Urdu and Persian languages after the advent of Islam in the region. The Balti language users currently use Urdu and English honorific words while communicating with each other in the Balti speech community. The current study focusses on identifying the honorific words and phrases which contribute to the linguistic resources of the Balti language. Rehman (2024) clarifies that the Balti language has gone through the influence of Urdu and Persian languages after the advent of Islam in the region. After accession to Pakistan, Balti language has undergone a lot of linguistic changes at different linguistic levels. Balti is a rich language, especially in the areas of syntax, semantics, morphology, and phonology. Hasan (1995), there are various categories of social deixis; honorific words, social deixis and discourse deixis. The Balti language encompasses metaphorical as well as common languages to construct meaning in terms of social deixis. It has high frequency words for highly respected and reverent people, less frequency words and expressions for less respected people, low frequency honorifics for less respected people and informal social deixis for common use. Balti language has one or more social deixis i.e., honorifics for a single expression. Balti language has been explored at various linguistic levels in terms of phonological (Abbas et al.,2022), morphological (Mustafa et al.,2025), syntactic (Abbas et al., 2025, and semantic (Rehman et al.,2024) aspects but its sociolinguistic aspects, particularly politeness strategies and social deixis remain under-researched.

The current study aims to identify the Balti Social deixis; honorific words, phrases and sentences. Balti language has multiple honorific words for a single expression. One expression carries multiple honorific words such as English; (die) (pass away). Balti: Rgals (honorific), Shis (Neutral), Gyurs (Honorific), Stors (Neutral), Khyars (Informal), Ghzims (Honorific). Similarly, Shaqs (went respectfully), Song (went), Shis (went informal use).

Objectives

- To Identify the honorifics in Balti linguistic practices.
- To investigate functions of honorifics in Balti within various communicative contexts

Research Questions

- What kind of words/linguistics expressions are used as honorifics in Balti in different communicative contexts?
- What communicative functions do the Balti honorifics depict/show in various communicative contexts?

Literature Review

Honorifics in Different Languages

One of the clearest examples of language shaped by social hierarchy is the use of honorifics, which are linguistic markers that convey respect and social rank. In languages like Japanese, French and Korean, honorifics are essential for indicating the speaker's status relative to others. The honorific makers not

only assist polite communication, however also strengthen the societal principles of deference and hierarchical arrangements. The linguistic styles vary in different languages for formal and informal interaction (Shibatani, 1990).

Table 1: *Different Languages with Societal Context and Hierarchy*

Language	Words	Social Context	Social Hierarchy
Japanese	Keigo	Respectful language	Formal setting, offices, businesses
Korean	Jondaemal	Formal language	Respect and politeness to elders
French	Cher / Chere	Respectful exchanges	With elders in family and outside family for near and dear

Richardson and Sterne (2005) considered that the clear honorifics are used less for social hierarchies in the cultures where English language is used. The expressions are shown more through choices of words, tone, and indirect forms. In several other languages, use of pronoun also shows hierarchical differences, with special pronouns which are used to show levels of deference or acquaintance (Noerofi'a & Bahri, 2019). The difference influences social limits and facilitate the speakers to lead the opportunities connected with a variety of relationships Macrae, (2019). The language of social hierarchies extends to non-verbal communication as well. In many cultures, body language and gestures complement verbal language to convey respect or deference. Such non-verbal cues work alongside language to reinforce social hierarchies and express respect Foley, (1997). Understanding how social hierarchies influence language allows us to appreciate the complex ways in which societies express and reinforce social order. Whether in the course of clear honorifics, precise linguistic selection, non-verbal signs, and the language provide as a mean for running social associations and ensuring social accords. This understanding is principally pertinent in cross-cultures as well as multilingual settings. With recognition of such linguistic indicators of social hierarchy, an individual can turn into more adjusted to the civilizing expectations in a variety of communication circumstances and better outfitted to find the way in varied social landscapes (Green, 2008).

Honorifics in Social Ranks

Many languages incorporate honorifics or titles that mark social status and respect, which are central to politeness in hierarchical contexts. Honorifics—like “Sir,” “Madam,” or professional titles such as “Dr.” or “Professor”—signal the speaker’s recognition of the listener’s rank or authority. In languages like Japanese and Korean, honorific systems are extensive, with speech levels adjusted according to the listener’s status, age, or relationship with the speaker. This system allows speakers to acknowledge and reinforce hierarchical boundaries through language, showing both respect and an understanding of social order (Lyons, 1977).

Table 2: Different Languages Showing Honorific Words with Social Ranks and their Context

Languages	Honorific Words	Social Ranks	Context
Japanese	Sama	Respect to superiors	Formal correspondence and business dealings
Korean	Nim	A suffix used to show regards and respects	Hierarchical interactions and formal settings
French	Monsieur	Politeness towards an individual	Formal communications and written communications
Hindi	Shri	Respect for both men and women	Formal interactions and cultural context
English	Excellency	Individual with high ranks	Formal, governmental and diplomatic settings

Honorifics and Titles

Landry and Allard, (1994) described that the honorifics in English language ensures the respect and deference to an individual with professional position. In formal settings and in professional linkages, the honorifics cover a huge audience. The use of honorifics in Balti language is common and essential part of everyday conversations. The honorific here are also used in informal context and outside the family relations. *Kaka* which is a word for elder brother is also used for superiors or elders in community outside the family bonding. Same like, *Lay rozi* is a word to attract the attention of someone towards the speaker irrespective of age. *Ashay* is used for elder sister in the family and also for the elder girls outside the family members. The honorifics in Balti language helps in maintaining the community bonds and traditional structure of society (Maryam et al., 2024).

Research Methodology

Research Design

This study is qualitative in nature as the researcher has collected data through semi-structured interviews from Balti speakers. Along with these, the researcher has also analyzed relevant texts from various Balti books. The analysis method employed in the current study is descriptive that the extracted texts have been analyzed descriptively through the lenses of the research questions and the theoretical framework.

Theoretical Framework

The researcher has employed the Politeness Theory developed by Erving Goffman and Penelope Brown, (1978) as the primary theoretical framework to investigate and identify honorific words /expressions in the Balti language. The theory provides a robust analytical lens through which to examine how linguistic expressions, including honorifics and discourse deixis, function to manage social interactions and convey

varying degrees of politeness and respect. By applying this theory, the research aims to uncover the underlying social norms and cultural values that influence language use in Balti, particularly in contexts where social hierarchy and interpersonal relationships are emphasized.

Data Analysis

Honorific Titles Commonly Used in Balti Language

In Balti culture, kinship honorifics are an integral part of social interaction, reflecting respect, familial bonds, and social hierarchies. Balti families use a set of diverse honorific titles for their kinship. English has fewer kinship titles to address their relatives as compared to Balti language. The following tables shows how the people of Balti culture use set of diverse honorific titles to address their familial relations.

Table 3: Honorifics of Kinship Relations

Honorifics	Referent	Honorifics	Referent
Grandmother	Api	Grandfather	Apo
Father		Younger Sister	Nomo
Mother	Ata, Aba	Elder Sister	Ashy/ Stringmo
Elder Brother	Amo/		Nomo (sister to sister)
Younger Brother	Ano Kaka	Cousin (Male)	Kaka/ Fono
Uncle (elder)	Fono	Cousin (Female)	Ashay/
paternal Uncle	Ata	Aunt (Younger)	Nomo Amo
(younger) paternal	Chohgho	Maternal uncle	Sunchay
Aunt (elder)	Ata Sunsay	Paternal Aunt	Momo
Aunt (yonger)	Amo		Nanay
	Chogho Ano		
	Sunsay		

From the extracts of the given table, the data shows that English has fewer honorific kinship titles such as English honorific titles Uncle and Aunt are used for both maternal and paternal relatives but Balti has diverse titles such as /Momo/, /Nanay/ etc. It is forbidden in Balti culture to call your kinship relations by their names or call them using words like uncle or aunt as in English and instead, the speakers of Balti Language used honorifics to address their relations. As the elder brother of the father is addressed as *Ata chohgo* which literally means elder father as *Ata* here means Father and *Chohgo* means elder instead of calling him just uncle as in English. Speakers of Balti Language use different prefixes to relations to show their respect towards their relations. Prefixes such as **Chohgo** (elder) and **Sunsay** (younger) further enhance the precision and hierarchy in addressing kinship relations, emphasizing respect for age and rank. This linguistic practice strengthens family bonds and upholds the cultural values of reverence and order within the community, showcasing how language is deeply intertwined with social norms in Balti society.

Honorifics of Kinship Relations in Syed Family

The Balti culture has different types of families like the families of common people and the Families of

Syed (the family of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in which the Syed families hold special respect and people address them in a more polite way than address the common families. Balti Syed families use different honorific titles for their kinships. Syed families are considered sacred in Balti community due to their allegiance to Prophet Muhammad's Family. From the table given below, it is presented that the Syed families are considered sacred across the globe by Muslims and use specific titles to address them but Balti Language in particularly developed special honorific titles to address all members of Syed family from old to young ones.

Honorific Kinship Titles Borrowed from Urdu

Being a part of the country, whose national language is Urdu, there are clear influences of this lingua franca in other languages. Like the influence of Urdu on other languages of Pakistan i.e. Punjabi and Pashto, Urdu language also has influenced on Balti language suppressing Balti honorific kinship titles. Urdu honorific titles are used by all the strata of the society without having any linguistic issues. This is because of globalization and technological advancement contributed to the linguistic transitions. The replacement of these titles by other language titles is more observable in cities and in those families whose members are or were part of some academic institutions. With increased access to television, social media, and other forms of digital communication especially in cities and in educational settings, Urdu has become more dominant in everyday conversations, further diminishing the use of native Balti terms.

Table 4: Honorifics with English Referents

Honorifics	English Referents	Honorifics	English Referents
Chacha	Uncle Aunt	Nana	Grandfather
Chachi	Brother	Dada	Grandfather
Bhai	Aunt	Daadi	Grandmother
Khala	Sister	Mamu	Maternal uncle
Baaji		Mami	Maternal aunt

The Balti language users generally use Urdu honorific words subconsciously without any linguistic issues at discourse level. From the above examples, we can see that the Balti people easily use the word *Chacha* for younger uncle and *Taya* for Elder uncle. Though these words have the origins of Urdu language, native Balti users commonly use them in daily conversations. The contemporary, Balti community tends to use even English honorific titles as well, especially by the upper class of the families. Even some complex kinship titles are vanishing from society due to their complexity as younger generations are not interested in such divisions. Like the children of the modern age of Balti community call their father Daddy and mother Mommy. This is just because of the access to television, media, and other forms of digital communication, leading to the erosion of the Balti language's distinctiveness and the richness of Balti's linguistic heritage. From the above examples of Balti kinship and the Urdu borrowed kinship titles, the evidence suggests that The Balti speakers always use honorific titles and social deixis to address and

talk to the people to maintain social hierarchies and politeness. It shows that Balti language is an honorifically rich language as the language users tend to choose honorific words and expressions to address the addressees in discourse. According to data derived from questionnaires, the language users use politeness strategies and titles during communication.

Balti Honorifics for Different Positions and Professions

The Balti language has a rich tradition of honorific titles used to address individuals based on their profession, social status, and lineage. Historically, Balti-speaking regions were governed by various officials, from kings to landlords, necessitating a diverse range of formal titles. The given table below demonstrates the Balti honorific titles used for different professions along with its Urdu and English Equivalents.

Table 5: Honorific Titles borrowed from Urdu and their English Equivalents

Balti Honorific Titles	Borrowed from Urdu	English Equivalents
Cho	Raja Badshah	King
Rgyalfo	Wazir	Emperor
Ano	Numberdar	Minister
Trangpa	Naib-numberdar	Village head man Sub-
Kangskin	Muntazim Munchi	village headman
Trangna	Kheton me Pani lany wala	Manager
Khoshree	Charwaha	Clerk
n	Sipah Salaar	-----
Lorapa/	Munsif Saalis	Shepherd
hrkongpong	daakya	Soldier Judge
Lorzey/ norespa	Pasbaan/ shurta	Umpire
Smaqgo	Chokedaar	Postman Police
Shakhpa	Muhafiz	Watchman
Barmi	Ustad	Bodyguard
Phongya	Shehzada	Teacher Prince
Yulstrungpa	Shehzaadi	Princess
Zgostrungp	Taajir	Merchant
a	Jolaha	Weaver
Rgosrtungp		
a Hlsabkhan		
Cho-phru		
Cho-cho		
Tshongpa		
Thakskhan		

History shows that the areas inhabited by Balti speakers are always administrated by someone (Dani,2001). So, it is usual to have different titles for the officials of government from king to landlord. The researcher collected data through semi-structured interviews from the language activists and notables from Balti community to know the real use of Balti honorific titles. The researcher highlighted a number of honorific words and titles used by the Balti language users. Most of the honorific titles have been extinct from the Balti community after the arrival of new governing systems, Urdu and English. Now the contemporary Balti community uses Urdu and English honorific titles to address the socially honorable people. These titles are also used for the members of descendants of officials who worked during any king's rule in past or even with descendants of king's family. Like the descendants of king family put *Cho* with their names and people also address them with title *Cho*. Despite all the titles of Balti professions present in Balti language, the Balti English speakers often use Honorific titles in English while communicating with others due to the influence of the new governing systems. The data from the questionnaires also suggest that most of the English social deixis of English language are adopted by the Balti language users while using Balti language to maintain high standard social hierarchies such as Dr. Professor, engineer, pilot etc.

Balti Honorific Expressions for Greetings and Gratitude

Balti language enjoyed the status of being the official language of government in the far past. So, it is obvious to have vocabulary related to greetings and gratitude in this language. Balti language is honorifically rich to express gratitude and greetings.

Table 6: *Balti Expressions with English Translation*

Balti Phrases	Corresponding English Equivalent(s)
Rozi, Ngi Rozi, Lay Rozi	Dear, My dear, Hello dear

Most of the honorific words and phrases have their equivalences in Urdu and English but some of the expressions are distinct in Balti language. The Balti people express gratitude and greetings verbally with culturally constructed honorific words and phrases. The word like */Bzangmo/* which means welcome is contextually fixed only for the dining and meal. When a person suddenly comes to your home while you are eating a meal then the whole family members simultaneously utter the word */Bzangmo/* which means your arrival to a meal may bring blessings to us. The Balti greeting word */Phronmo Songshik/* which means congratulations is culturally constructed. The Actual meaning is the occasion may bring blessings and bounties. So, certain honorific greetings do not have equivalence in Urdu and English language. Balti language is honorifically a rich language in terms of imperative sentences. Balti has independent words to express imperatives respectfully considering age, gender and status. The */Bjes/* is an honorific verb which means please eat. Whereas, the verb */Zo/* is a neutral verb which means eat. */Bgyong/* is a slang which is used in a harsh mood to ask someone to eat. English does not have its equivalence.

Table 7: Extract No. 1

Balti Honorific Imperatives	Neutral	English Neutral	English Honorific
Ani tong Ghzim Tong Juu	Nit Tong	Sleep	Sleep please

The Balti imperative sentence */Ani Tong/* is used for children to go to sleep. It is specific for only kids. For adults, the honorific sentence */Ghizm Tong Juu/* is used which means sleep please. Whereas, the neutral imperative sentence */Nit Tong/* is used for all ages, genders and status which means sleep. There is a slang expression giving the same meaning; *[MUND]*. The variations in these commands reflect the cultural and linguistic norms of politeness, respect, and hierarchy in Balti society..

Table 8: Extract No.2

Balti Phrases	Corresponding English Equivalent(s)
Rozi, Ngi Rozi, Lay Rozi	Dear, My dear, Hello dear

The word */Rozi/* means dear, it is attached with nominative cases or demonstrative adjectives in Balti to show politeness and closeness. The word */Rozi/* is a metaphorical expression which means an entity that bodes well for you that denotes something which is blissful and spiritually beneficial. Rozi is not the actual equivalent to dear. It is used as the entity is */Rozi/* is as dear to the beholder in Balti culture. The phrase */Ngi Rozi/* which means my precious or source of prosperity hold strong emotive meaning according to emotive theory of meaning. So, while producing */Ngi Rozi/*, or */Ati Rozi/*, or */Ami Rozi/* it is natural to create feelings and emotions. English speakers use */my doll/* to address their beloved daughters as English society might have emotive meaning attached with dolls.

Table 9: Extract No.3

Balti Phrase	Corresponding English Equivalent(s)
Ronmoshay	No equivalence in English

The Balti word */Ronmoshay/* is a metaphorical expression which is used to show deep honor, affection and dignity. In Balti language, the word */Ronmoshay/* is a special term without having an exact equivalent in English. It is the name of a precious or miraculous thing that carries great cultural and emotional significance in Balti cultural speech practice. If you have */Ronmoshay/* in your house, it brings blessings, success and prosperity in your life. Therefore, Ronmoshay is used in speech to value someone who is being addressed. When someone uses */Ronmoshay/* to address a person, they are essentially saying that the person is a source of great joy, fortune, and positivity in their life. */Ngi Ronmoshay/* means, my blessings, my success, and my prosperity of life. It is used while addressing to someone whom you love, you care, and you value as an honorific word. It shows how much the speaker values and respects the other individual. Whether for a loved one, a revered elder, or someone who infuses your life with joy and positivity, using */Ronmoshay/* in daily life represents profound connections and sincere gratitude. It beautifully represents the warmth and richness of Balti culture.

Table 10: Extract No.4

Balti Phrase	Corresponding English Equivalent(s)
Migi Ot	Apple of eyes

The above extract is a poetic and affectionate metaphorical expression in Balti language that translates “the apple of my eyes” in English. The phrase is used to express love and care to their loved ones. However, in Balti culture, the phrase carries an even deeper meaning, as it literally combines the words **Mik** (eye) and **Ot** (light). Together, they represent “the light of one’s eyes,” symbolizing someone who brings brightness, joy, and meaning to the speaker’s life. When someone says /Lay ngi migi ot/ which means “Oh the apple of my eyes” but the cultural connotation is the light of one’s eyes. This honorific is reserved for someone deeply cherished, whether it’s a child, a beloved partner, or a close family member. It conveys that the person being addressed is not only valued but also a source of happiness and vitality in the speaker’s world.

Table 11: Extract No.5

Balti Phrase	Corresponding English Equivalent(s)
Yari Shazday	Obligated to bestow upon me

The above expression is expressed to honorifically request or gratitude to someone at higher rank or higher position. In *Balti*, the expression /Yari Shazday/ that is not exactly translated into English “Obligated to bestow upon me” is a culturally significant honorific phrase that is used to show humbleness, gratitude and humility in the community at discourse level. This expression reflects the speaker's acknowledgment of the other person’s authority, generosity, or position in society. /Shazday/ means bestow when added to Yari which creates a meaning of gratitude for bestowing something or for seeking something from someone. /Yari Shazday na la rokh byos/, obliged to you if you help me. This expression gives different senses and implicature in different contexts of utterances and demonstrates the speaker's respect and humility, emphasizing the politeness and deference often valued in Balti culture. It also reflects the importance of maintaining harmonious relationships, a sense of sincerity, and showcasing the rich linguistic and cultural traditions of the Balti people.

Table 12: Extract No.6

Balti Phrase	Corresponding English Equivalent(s)
Xhe Ringmo Songshik	May you live long

The above Balti honorific expression /Xhe Ringmo Songshik/ translates to “May you live long” in English is uttered in a context when the speaker is highly obliged to someone’s act of kindness. This is an optative sentence in Balti which is not simply uttered as prayer but rather a heartfelt way to convey gratitude to create empathy, respect and honor. This expression is commonly used in a situation where a person is thankful and wants to show their gratitude in a respectful way. It reflects not only gratitude but also a sincere wish for the other person’s well- being and longevity. For example, when someone helps you in your difficult times, you respond to that person with /Yari Xhe Ringmo songshik/ shows your humility and acknowledgment to their kindness.

Table 13: Extract No.7

Balti Phrase	Corresponding English Equivalent(s)
Yari azana tangsey kher	No equivalence

The above extract is a Balti honorific expression that holds profound emotional and cultural significance and has no equivalent in English. It is an intensely honorific and poetic phrase meaning "My life may be sacrificed for you" or "I dedicate my life to you", to express deep love and respect to someone whom you love, respect or submit devotion and reverence. When the speaker wants to emphasize that they would do anything for the person being addressed, they frequently use this expression in moments of intense affection, loyalty, or submission. It is a means of expressing the highest regard, deference, and emotional bond, frequently towards significant others, loved ones, elders, or spiritual leaders. The use of */Yari Azana Tangsey Kher/* in Balti culture represents more than just words; it also reflects the speaker's deep feelings and their cultural value of honoring and poetically expressing love and devotion. Phrases like "I adore you" and "I would do anything for you," which convey similar feelings but may not have an exact equivalent in English, do not fully convey the depth and cultural significance of the Balti expression.

Table 14: Extract No.8

Balti Phrase	Corresponding English Equivalent(s)
Na Skory tong	No equivalence

The above expression holds a deep emotional and cultural meaning that has no direct equivalence in English. It is used to honorifically show great importance, love, care, and reverence to the addressee. English does not have its equivalence. It can be understood as 'I may be sacrificed for you'. It is used to describe an intense bond between a mother and her child when a mother feels too much love for her kids, she might say */NA Skory tong/* showing her readiness to give everything for the happiness of her child. Similarly in the context of lovers, the above expression is used to express deep affection, devotion, and willingness to do anything for their beloved. The Balti language users think that politeness strategies and honorifics leave strong impacts on others. According to data from the questionnaires, Politeness strategies create strong harmony and empathy between people in communication. Using honorific words and expressions create a sober and formal environment where respect and positive image is constructed.

Balti Honorific Pronouns to show Reverence

Table 15: Extract No.9

Balti Honorifics	Corresponding English Equivalent(s)
Yang, Yangi, Yari	No equivalence

There are no direct English equivalents for the honorific pronouns *Yang*, *Yangi*, and *Yari* in the Balti language. When addressing someone, especially elders, people in positions of authority, or people who deserve great respect, these pronouns are used to express deference, reverence, and civility. The Balti society's emphasis on social hierarchy and respect is reflected in this honorific system.

- *Yang*: The subject pronoun for politely addressing someone.
- *Yangi*: The honorific pronoun's object form.

- *Yari*: The possessive form that denotes possession and respect.

In the case of neutral pronouns, this layer of respect is absent from the neutral pronoun *Khyang*, which has the possessive form *Khiri* and the object form *Khiyangi*. When speaking to an elder or someone who deserves respect, using *Khyang* rather than *Yang* can be impolite or disrespectful. In contrast to Balti, English employs a single pronoun, "you," for every person, irrespective of their social standing or connection to the speaker. Although there are ways to show respect in English, such as through tone, formal titles, or expressions like "sir" or "ma' am," the language does not have a specific pronominal system like Balti's *Yang/Yangi/Yari*, which naturally incorporates respect into common speech. The richness and complexity of Balti cultural and linguistic practices are emphasized by this distinction. The Balti language users use honorific pronouns in Balti during communication to maintain social hierarchies. Without using honorific pronouns, Balti language looks informal for the Balti language users.

Table 16: Extract No.10

Balti Honorifics	Corresponding English Equivalent(s)
Myuli Ata, Myuli Ango	No equivalence

The above expressions */Myuli Ata/*, and */Myuli Ano/* are uttered to show closeness and high respect. */Myuli/* means of whole world */Myuli Ata/*, means father of the whole world. */Myuli Ango/* means mother of the whole world. Such honorifics are used to show great respect and devotion to the addressee. *Myuli*, which translates to "of the whole world," highlights the universal importance of the individual being addressed. These words are not used lightly; rather, they are saved for situations in which the speaker wishes to convey genuine respect and devotion, frequently in an extremely formal or loving setting. There is no comparable expression in English that blends such familial and universal awe. The rich customs of respect and devotion ingrained in Balti culture are reflected in *Myuli Ata* and *Myuli Ango*, which have a deeper poetic and cultural depth than words like "beloved father" or "revered mother," even though they may convey some of the same feelings.

Table 17: Extract No.11

Balti Honorific	Corresponding English Equivalent(s)
Ju	No equivalence

/Ju/ is added to the end of sentences or phrases or words to create politeness and honorific senses in Balti discourse. It is uttered with deep feelings and love; */Juuuu ngi stroqpo/*, means my soul but */juu/* does not have equivalence in any other languages. */shoqs ju, hltos ju, Sna byos ju, thung ju, shazday bes ju, and met ju/* which mean; come please, listen please, drink please, give me please, no please. The English word */please/* is not the equivalence but it is the cognate for the honorific expression */JU/*. The sense of */Ju/* is not cognitively or emotively found in any other languages. */Ju/* performs many linguistic responsibilities in utterances. In the ground, uttering the word */Juh/* means appreciating the players in the ground. It is also uttered when some does something good for you */Juh Ngi Rozi Juh/* means well-done my dear. */In Ju, Men Ju/* means Yes and No but the words yes and no are neutral words without any further meaning. The Balti word */In ju/* and */Men Ju/* are uttered respectfully or with great care and love. When you are involved in conversation, if you want to respond yes multiple times, you can simply utter */Ju, Ju, Ju/* which means yes, yes, yes.

Negative Interrogative Expressions to Create Politeness in Balti Language**Table 18: Extract No.12**

Balti Honorific	Corresponding English Equivalent(s)
Yo nala mi mina ju?	Could you please give it to me?

The above negative interrogative sentence is an indirect request which is uttered honorifically pragmatic in Balti languages. /Yo Nala mi mina ju? /, literally means ‘Don’t you give it to me? It seems awkward in English but in Balti it gives positive meaning to the hearer which is embedded in pragmatic meaning. The English equivalence, /could you please give it to me? /Approximates, the polite intent but fails to fully capture the implicit social harmony encoded in the Balti utterance. This highlights the broader linguistic phenomenon of how indirect speech acts often hold culturally specific meanings that may not directly translate across languages. Balti speakers mostly rely on these pragmatic constructions in real life communication in different contexts to maintain politeness and foster social cohesion, illustrating the richness of their linguistic and cultural ethos. The direct request structure remains away from pragmatic meaning rather is would be easier to understand such as /Yo nga la min/ mean give it to me. It gives awkward meaning rather than a polite and honorific meaning to the addressee. The Balti language users have a manner to seek things from others using pragmatic language constructions. If certain utterances are directly responded the request will be entertained in either case /Yo nga la mi mina ju/ If the response is /Mi min/ means I don’t want to give, the communication is successful in both cases.

Table 19: Extract No.13

Balti Honorific	Corresponding English Equivalent(s)
Ngi rokh chi mibya ju?	Could you please help me?

The above negative interrogative sentence is an indirect request which is uttered honorifically in Balti language. /Ngi Rokh chi mibya ju? /, literally means ‘Don’t you help me? It seems awkward in English but in Balti it gives positive meaning to the hearer. The English equivalence is ‘Could you please help me? The Balti people do not request directly; /Lay ngi rokh bes/, it is a neutral sentence and slang if it is used to address the elders or respectful people. In Balti, the negative interrogative sentence /Ngi Rokh chi mibya ju?/ is a remarkable example of how linguistic structures encode cultural values of politeness and deference. Literally translated as /Don’t you help me? This expression may appear awkward or even confrontational in English, but in Balti, it functions as an honorific and highly respectful way to make an indirect request. The implied meaning is closer to the polite English equivalent, /Could you please help me? This indirectness reflects a deeply ingrained cultural norm of humility and respect toward others, particularly elders or individuals of higher social standing. In Balti society, direct requests such as /Lay ngi rokh bes/ (literally, you help me) are considered neutral at best and disrespectful or even slang when directed toward elders or people deserving of respect. Such directness contradicts the cultural ethos of Balti, which values modesty, indirectness, and social harmony in communication. The use of negative interrogative constructions as honorific requests reflects the speaker’s desire to soften the imposition and show consideration for the listener. This linguistic choice is not just about grammar but also about maintaining relationships and upholding the social hierarchy. By framing the request negatively, the speaker avoids the assertiveness of a direct demand, making the statement sound more like an

invitation or a suggestion than an obligation. The fact that a seemingly negative question can carry such a positive and respectful tone underscores the richness of Balti as a linguistic and cultural system. This also highlights the challenges of translating culturally specific linguistic nuances into other languages, where directness and literal meanings might overshadow the subtleties of honorific intent. Ultimately, the use of expressions like /Ngi Rokh chi mibya ju?/ demonstrates how language can act as a bridge, fostering understanding and cooperation, while also preserving the cultural identity of a community.

Table 20: Extract No.14

Balti Honorific	Corresponding English Equivalent(s)
Ye payu chik nala mi mina ju?	Could you please pass me the salt?

The above extract shows a negative interrogative sentence which is an indirect request and is uttered honorifically in Balti languages. /*Ye payu chik nala mi mina ju?* /, literally means ‘Don’t you give me this salt? It seems awkward in English but in Balti it gives positive meaning to the hearer. The English equivalence is ‘Could you please pass the salt to me? The Balti people do not request directly; /*Lay payu mini*/, it is a neutral sentence and slang if it is used to address the elders or respectful people. The above extract illustrates how negative interrogative sentences function as indirect, honorific requests in Balti, reflecting the deeply ingrained politeness and respect in the language. The sentence /*Ye payu chik nala mi mina ju?*/ literally translates to /Don’t you give me this salt?/ which might sound awkward or even impolite in English. However, in Balti, this construction conveys a positive and respectful tone, equal to the English equivalent, /Could you please pass the salt to me?/ This indirectness is rooted in Balti cultural norms, where direct requests, such as /*Lay payu mini*/, (You give me the salt), are considered neutral at best and even offensive or slang when directed toward elders or individuals deserving respect. By framing the request as a negative interrogative, the speaker not only softens the imposition but also acknowledges the autonomy and dignity of the listener. This choice of expression underscores the Balti people's emphasis on humility, politeness, and maintaining harmonious social interactions. It reflects a broader cultural preference for indirectness in communication, especially when addressing those in positions of authority or respect. Such honorific use of language helps preserve social hierarchies while fostering mutual respect and understanding.

Table 21: Extract No.15

Balti Honorific	Corresponding English Equivalent(s)
Yo besna liakhmo migva ju?	Isn't it better to do this?

The literal meaning of the above extract is ‘Isn’t it better to do this? It means that both English and Balti have the same expression to honorifically ask about doing something with the consent of others. Actually, this question indirectly seeks the consent of the hearer to act upon something collectively. The Balti people do not say; /*Na dui ben*/ which means I am going to do this, rather they indirectly seek the consent of the others through interrogative negative sentence to save the face. The Balti people use Face-Saving Act by structuring interrogative negative sentences. The literal meaning of the Balti negative interrogative sentence /*Ye payu chik nala mi mina ju?*/ is akin to /Isn’t it better to do this?/ an interesting parallel between Balti and English in their shared use of interrogative constructions to seek consent or cooperation honorifically. In both languages, such expressions soften the act of asking, making the

request sound less direct and more collaborative. In Balti, however, this linguistic strategy holds deeper cultural significance as it reflects a collective decision-making ethos, where the consent of others is sought before taking action. For instance, instead of saying /Na dui ben/ (I am going to do this), which might appear unilateral or assertive, Balti speakers frame their intentions as a question through negative interrogative sentences. This approach not only preserves the autonomy of the hearer but also mitigates any potential imposition on them, embodying the cultural value of humility. Furthermore, this construction serves as a Face-Saving Act (FSA), ensuring that the speaker avoids appearing domineering or disrespectful while maintaining harmony in social interactions. It is a form of linguistic diplomacy that prioritizes maintaining relationships over asserting individual authority. Additionally, this practice underscores the importance of preserving "face" in Balti society, where maintaining one's social image and respecting others' dignity are paramount.

Table 22: Extract No.16

Balti Honorific	Corresponding English Equivalent(s)
Nit mitanga ju?	Would you like to sleep?

The Balti people do not directly ask the elders or honorable people to sleep. If said directly; /Nit Tong/, which means /sleep/ that create slang meaning or ungraceful impact on the hearer. They rather would say /Nit mitanga ju? /, which means don't you sleep? It seems awkward in English and Balti to directly ask. Therefore, the Balti people use Face-Saving Act by structuring interrogative negative sentences. In Balti culture, indirectness in communication is not only a linguistic trait but also a reflection of deep-rooted cultural values of respect and politeness, especially when addressing elders or honorable people. For instance, the direct expression /Nit Tong/ (Sleep) may sound harsh, abrupt, or even disrespectful, creating an ungraceful impact on the hearer. Instead, Balti speakers prefer to use the negative interrogative construction /Nit mitanga ju?/ (Don't you sleep?), which softens the directive and transforms it into an indirect, respectful suggestion. While this may appear awkward in English, where directness is often seen as efficient and clear, in Balti, the indirectness is a Face-Saving Act that preserves the dignity of both the speaker and the listener. Moreover, this usage demonstrates how language is carefully adapted to cultural expectations, with speakers mindful of their tone and phrasing to avoid any perception of rudeness. This practice also exemplifies the broader linguistic phenomenon of politeness strategies, where negative interrogative sentences serve as a tool to balance clarity with deference. Ultimately, this approach underscores the Balti belief in the power of language to preserve mutual respect, showcasing how linguistic form is deeply intertwined with cultural values and social practices.

Table 23: Extract No.17

Balti Honorific	Corresponding English Equivalent(s)
Zan chi mi bjesa ju?	Isn't it better to have meal?

The above extract shows a negative interrogative sentence which is an indirect request and is uttered honorifically in Balti languages. /Zan chi mi bjesa ju? /, literally means 'Don't you eat food? It seems awkward in English but in Balti it gives positive meaning to the hearer. The English equivalence is 'Would you like to have food? The Balti people do not ask directly; /Lay zaan zeta/, it is a neutral sentence and slang if it is used to address the elders or respectful people. The above extract highlights how negative

interrogative sentences in Balti serve as indirect, honorific requests, reflecting the cultural norms of politeness and respect. The expression /Zan chi mi bjesa ju?/ which translates literally to /Don't you eat food?/, might sound unusual or awkward in English but carries a positive and respectful connotation in Balti. Its English equivalent, /Would you like to have food? / captures the intended politeness but does not fully convey the cultural nuances embedded in the Balti phrasing. In Balti society, directly stating /Lay zaan zeta/ (Do you want to eat food?) is considered neutral at best but may come across as disrespectful or even slang when addressing elders or people of higher status. The use of a negative interrogative, on the other hand, transforms the request into a polite invitation, softening the tone and respecting the autonomy of the listener. This linguistic strategy not only upholds social hierarchies but also fosters a sense of mutual respect and inclusivity. It reflects the communal values of Balti culture, where interactions are guided by an awareness of social roles and the importance of preserving relationships. Furthermore, such honorific expressions reveal how language adapts to cultural expectations, allowing speakers to navigate complex social dynamics effectively. This nuanced use of negative interrogatives exemplifies how linguistic structures can embody cultural principles, making Balti communication a fascinating intersection of language, respect, and tradition.

Table 24: Extract No.18

Balti Honorifics	Corresponding English Equivalent
Yo zospa chokh ju	No equivalence

The above honorific expression is a polite way of refusing the invitation on meal. It is uttered when someone invites or offers someone to eat something then in response he would say /Yo Zospa Chokh/ which mean it is like I have eaten. Although, he has neither eaten nor going to eat. It is a polite expression to refuse. The above honorific expression, /Yo Zospa Chokh/ (It is like I have eaten), reflects the intricate politeness strategies embedded in Balti culture, particularly when refusing an invitation to eat. This phrase is not meant to convey a literal meaning; rather, it serves as a culturally appropriate and polite way to decline an offer without offending the host. In reality, the speaker may neither have eaten nor plan to eat, but the use of this expression softens the refusal, maintaining respect and cordiality in the interaction. This indirect refusal highlights the Balti preference for preserving social harmony and avoiding confrontation or discomfort, which is a fundamental aspect of their cultural ethos. Direct refusals in such contexts might appear abrupt or discourteous, potentially harming the relationship or offending the host's generosity. By employing such honorific expressions, Balti speakers manage to decline graciously while simultaneously expressing gratitude for the offer. This linguistic strategy not only reflects humility but also reinforces the communal values of respect and mutual understanding. The phrase /Yo Zospa Chokh/ acts as a Face-Saving Act, allowing the speaker to reject the offer while upholding the dignity of both parties. It demonstrates how language in Balti is tailored to meet the cultural expectations of politeness, where even refusals are framed in a manner that fosters goodwill. This example beautifully illustrates how language serves as a tool for maintaining relationships, reflecting the values of respect, humility, and cultural harmony inherent in Balti society.

Table 25: Extract No.19

Balti Honorifics	Corresponding English Equivalent(s)
Choq Zospin Ju	Just have eaten

The above extract is a polite expression to refuse the offer of eating or meal from someone. The offer is like; [SHOKHS JU NANA YAMBO ZANCHI BJESET] and the polite refusal; [CHOQ ZOSPIN JU]. The first sentence means / let's have some food with me and the response means I have just eaten. The above extract showcases a polite exchange in Balti culture, where indirect and honorific expressions are employed to maintain respect and social harmony during interactions. The offer, [Shokhs ju nana yambo zanchi bjeset], translates to /let's have some food with me/ extending an invitation for a meal. In response, the polite refusal, [Choq zospin ju] which literally means /I have just eaten/, is a graceful way of declining the offer. While the responder may not have actually eaten, this expression functions as a culturally appropriate way to refuse without offending the host or diminishing their hospitality. Such exchanges reflect the Balti emphasis on subtlety and respect, where direct refusals are avoided to preserve the dignity of both the inviter and the invitee. By framing refusals with expressions like [Choq zospin ju], speakers employ a Face-Saving Act, softening the rejection to prevent any potential awkwardness or negative feelings. This practice underscores how language adapts to cultural norms, with expressions tailored to convey respect and politeness in every interaction. Moreover, such exchanges highlight the intricate pragmatics of Balti, where even routine interactions, like sharing a meal, are deeply infused with cultural and social considerations. These polite refusals serve not only as a means of communication but also as a reflection of the values of humility, gratitude, and mutual respect central to Balti society

Table 26: Extract No.20

Balti Honorific	Corresponding English Equivalent(s)
Yangla kha mashakhna na kara chik zera?	If you don't mind, may I tell you something?

The literal meaning of the above extract is 'If you don't mind, may I tell you something? It means that both English and Balti have the same expression to honorifically ask about doing something with the consent of others. Actually, this question indirectly seeks the consent of the hearer to see something. The Balti people do not say; /Na kara chik zeret/ which means I am going to tell you something, rather they indirectly seek the consent of the others through interrogative negative sentence to save the face. The Balti people use Face-Saving Act by structuring interrogative negative sentences. The above extract demonstrates how Balti, like English, utilizes a similar expression to honorifically ask for permission or consent in a polite and indirect manner. The phrase, /If you don't mind, may I tell you something? serves as an example of a negative interrogative that indirectly seeks the hearer's approval before proceeding with an action. In Balti, the literal translation might be something like /Zan kara chik zeret?/ meaning /If you don't mind, may I tell you something? This expression softens the request, making it sound more like an invitation to engage in a conversation rather than a direct statement of intent. On the other hand, if Balti speakers were to use a direct sentence like /Na kara chik zeret/ (I am going to tell you something), it would be considered too direct and potentially disrespectful, especially when addressing someone of higher status or elders. Instead, Balti speakers structure their request in a way that

acknowledges the autonomy and dignity of the listener by seeking their consent first. By phrasing their statements in the form of a negative interrogative, Balti speakers maintain respect and humility, ensuring that their actions are perceived as considerate rather than presumptive

Table 27: Extract No.21

Balti Honorifics	Explanation
Ringchen Baba	Most valued or precious father

The above phrase has been extracted from a poetry composed about the massacre of Karbala. The word /Ringchen/ means most valued or most precious whereas /Ringchen Baba/ is a poetic expression to call ones father. It is used by the reverent families to call their respected fathers. It is not used by the common Balti people. Here, /Ringchen Baba/ signifies Imam Hussain A.S not a common father. Common Balti people use /Lay Ata/ or /Lay Baba/ that means O' father.

Table 28: Extract No.22

Balti Honorifics	Explanation
Khschespa baba	Beloved father

The extract has been taken from the book *Khazeenat ul Buka*: collection of Balti *marsiya and Noha*. The above phrase /Khschespa Baba/ is a religiously transmitted expression in Balti language which means beloved father. The word /khschespa/ is an honorific referent used to the person who is most respectful and dear. It is mostly used to the sacred personalities of the family of Holy Prophet (PBUH). It can be used by the Syed families to address their fathers or grandfathers. The above extract refers to Hazrat Ali AS and the Holy Prophet PBUH; /khchespa Baba nala izin-e-jahad shazday byos/, When Iman Hussain AS was going to fight against the Yazeed and his people, he sought permission from his father Hazrat Ali AS and the Holy Prophet PBUH.

Table 29: Extract No.23

Balti Honorifics	Explanation
Yang gyury diring	You passed away today

The above phrase portrays the massacres and the tragedies occurred in Karbala. The above Balti phrase \Yang gyury diring\ is an honorific expression means you passed away today. The word *yang* is a second person pronoun as "You" in English, commonly used to address the respected and elder persons. *Gyury* is a highly honorific expression refers to the demise of a reverent person especially the Ahlebait AS. It is not commonly used for all the deceased people. For the death of a normal person, the word *Shis* and *Rgals* are used but for the family of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) only the phrase *gyurs* is used to show respect towards them.

Table 30: Extract No.24

Balti Honorifics	Explanation
Hazrat Zahra si kasal byung nuyen hlsahma Baba	Lady Zahra cried and said, O my pious Father

The above sentence has been extracted from the elegy of Karbala in which Lady/ Queen of Islam, Fatima (SA) called her pious father in sorrows and grief. The honorific title /Hazrat/ has been borrowed from

Urdu, /kasal byungs/ and /hlsahma/ are Balti honorific words used to show honor and reverence to the Prophet's family. Although, there is neutral word /zars/ means said or told that do not show reverence. /Yangi kasal byung/ [Honorific], /Khyangi Zer/.

Table 31: Extract No.25

Balti Honorifics	Explanation
Na fangsey su med byasy shakhsa?	You left me all alone?

The above extract has an ending honorific word [shakhsa?] which creates a strong polite impression. The neutral sentence can be; /Na fangsay su med basy songsa? /, [SONGSA/ is a neutral expression which means /went away? /, whereas [SHAKHSA] which means the same went away but it is an honorific imperative verb in Balti.

Table 32: Extract No.26

Balti Honorifics	Explanation
Khchespa Zizi Fiya	For the sake of your beloved mother

In the above extract the Balti adjective /Khchespa/ has been used to create honorific sense as it is added to another honorific title of kinship /Zizi/ which mean mother of religious sacred family. /Khchespa Zizi/ is a compound Balti word which creates honorific sense. The neutral expression for this compound word is /Ongway fya/ mean for the sake of mother. /Khchespa Zizi/ creates a reverent impression in the context.

Table 33: Extract No.27

Balti Lines	Explanation
Khschespa Hussaini nu hrsingnu kasal byungs	Beloved Hussain AS expressed in grief

In the above extract, the honorific words /Khchespa/, and /kasal byugs/ add honorific senses to the overall meaning of the sentence. Without these two expressions the rest of the sentence does not create honorific and polite impressions. Adjectives are added to the common nouns and proper nouns to make the nouns more reverent and respectful. In the above sentence, [Hussain] has been honored with the words khchespa and kasal byungs. The honorific verb /kasal byungs can be replaced by the neutral verb /ZERS/ but the verb zers does not create sense of honor and dignity. The religious figures and reverent personalities are addressed with honorific words at various cases in the sentence.

Table 34: Extract No.28

Balti Lines	Explanation
Storbana Ringchan Nabi	When beloved Prophet passed away

In the above extracted phrases, the honorific verb /Storbana/ and the adjective /Ringchen/ create sense of honor and dignity referring to the noun /Nabi/. The neutral expression of this very honorific phrase is /Shana Nabi/ which means 'when the prophet dies'. The Balti language is culturally constructed giving honor and dignity as Balti is honorifically rich language.

Table 35: Extract No.29

Balti Lines	Explanation
Zahrayi Staghoyekha Sharfi Nimay chokh	Like the rising sun at the sacred gate of Hazrat Zahra's (S.A)

In the above extract, the word */Staghoyekha/* which means gate or doorstep is an honorific noun for specific gates. The common doors and gates are called */Rgo/* or */Zgokha/*. Balti language has strong honorific nouns which are specific to the holy or sacred homes or house of prestigious personalities. The additional phrase [SHARFI NIMAY CHOKH] has been used to create deep honorific meaning and politeness as Hazrat Fatima Zahra (SA) is a sacred personality. The Balti language users use honorific words while talking about the infallible.

Table 36: Extract No.30

Balti Lines	Explanation
Na yangla juful bet	I respectfully request you

In the above extract, the words */yangla/* and */juful/* both are honorific words. The word */Juful/* which means request but it does not have any alternate neutral word. The word */juful/* itself is an honorific word which naturally creates the honorific effect on the hearer. */Na YANGLA JUFUL bet/* and */Na khyangla laspo bes zeret/*. The honorific words */yangla* and *juful/* can be replaced by the neutral words; */khyangla* and *laspo bes zeret/*.

Table 37: Extract No.31

Balti Lines	Explanation
Yari Hlsahma khasoh	Your sacred mouth

In the above extract, the word; */Yari/*, */Hlsahma/*, and */Khasoh/* are positive words and combine together they construct an honorific noun phrase which means 'your sacred mouth' and the neutral expression can be '*khiri khao/* means 'your mouth'. The poet has used three words to honorifically describe the word mouth; [YARI HLSAHMA KHASOH] as the part of belief and devotion. The word [HLSAHMA] is an additional adjective which means pure or sacred. Otherwise, there is no need of this very word to convey the meaning. Adjectives are added to noun phrases to create honorific sense and politeness.

Table 38: Extract No.32

Balti Lines	Explanation
Zizi sningni rgano shakhfana	When the cordial happiness of the sacred mother goes

In the above extract, the words */ZIZI/*, */SINGINGI RGANO/* and */SHAKHFANA/* create honorific effect in the phrase. However, the word */ZIZI/* can be replaced by a neutral word */AMI/*, and */SHAKHFANA/* can be replaced by the neutral word *[GWANA]*.

Table 39: Extract No.33

Balti Lines	Explanation
Chingsay Hlsahma Fyaqlaq po hlchaqthur la	The sacred arms were tied with iron chain.

In the above extract, the word *[FYAQLAQ PO]* refers to the hands which are tied with iron chain. It further describes the brutality faced by the martyrs of Karbala. The word */Fyaqlaq/* is an honorific substitution for the neutral word 'hands' or 'arms'. There are specific honorific nouns for the religious and reverent personalities to describe their character and even parts of body; */khasaoh/*, */Hasoh/*, *Fyaqlaq/* etc.

Table 40: Extract No.34

Balti Lines	Explanation
Yari hlsahma mindoghi-kha shakhsay	Coming to your sacred funeral

The above extracted phrase has four words and all the four words are honorific words which show politeness. All these words have their neutral words as well; */Yari vs Khiri/*, */Mindoghikha vs Rowakha/*, and */Songsay/*. These binary words have equal meaning but in sense of politeness the latter words are neutral. Balti language has rich honorific words with different lexical entries in the lexicon. Balti language users attach their cultural, social, religious and political feelings, emotions, and devotions with the linguistic expressions at utterance level to create honorific and politeness effects.

Table 41: Extract No.35

Balti Lines	Explanation
Ghzimfa song khraqna seng chohsi rgyalfo	The great leader of the religion fell on the land and blood

The above extract honorifically describes the brutal scenario of the martyrdom of Imam Hussain (AS). The above Balti line has been constructed with politeness using honorific words and expressions. The line; *[Ghzimfa song khraqna seng chohsi rgyalfo]* can be replaced by neutral words; *[Foqpa song khraqna seng [Name]]*. The poet has deliberately used pronoun instead of the proper name i.e. Imam Hussain (AS) to create honorific effect in the line.

Balti Honorific Expressions on the Occasion of Death

Balti language is rich enough as it has situational and contextual structures and words to expression and talk about sensitive things, issues and matters. The Balti people choose honorific words and phrases on the occasions of death in the community as death is a very sensitive issue in Balti community. The speakers indirectly talk about the deceased */Dey sey met po/* which means the short life person. */Jafar rgalset lo/ NOT /Jafar shiset lo/*. When the people visit the grieved family, they construct death honorific language. For condolence, they use */Maser Zary gwa/* means 'don't miss'. The actual word is */Sning byol/*. The researcher has collected data from the language activists and notables regarding the death honorifics.

Table 42: Extract No. 36

Balti Honorific Expressions	English Translation
Khuda skalfo la thyaqp byos	Accept the expediency of the God
Rgyalfoye rgyalam la gama gven	We all will return to the Lord
Ly anoye yaslong masongfi jawan	Oh the young half bloomed rose of Mother
Shi khanpi fari laqpa zun	Pray for the deceased
Ly anoye yas pherel la shomfi khabu	Oh the withered rose of mother

The Balti language and its honorifics are deeply rooted in cultural sensitivity especially when discussing the sensitive topics such as death. The Balti people have created a system of honorific expressions that show their regard, compassion, and understanding for the departed and their bereaved loved ones. Since direct language regarding death is frequently avoided, these expressions help maintain dignity while offering condolences. Examples are given as *Khuda Skalfo la Shukr Bes*, which means Accept the expediency of God in English. */Ly anoye yaslong masongfi jawan/* "Oh, the young half-bloomed rose of the mother" is a poetic and gentle way of referring to a deceased young person, symbolizing their untimely departure. This metaphor helps soften the grief. The above Balti honorifics used on the occasions of death demonstrate the Balti people's deep sense of respect, empathy, and togetherness in times of sorrow. Rather than using blunt words about death, they rely on indirect, poetic, and comforting language that aligns with cultural and religious values.

Discussions and Findings

Honorific Diversity in Balti: Linguistic Politeness and Social Stratification

Balti language holds specific honorific expressions and linguistic features for different social contexts. There are specific terms and expressions to address the adults, elderly people, kids, relatives, strangers, religious and political figures and so many others. All of these individuals take distinctive linguistic and honorific and politeness features which show the connection between the individuals and the social relationships, roles and status. The terms and expressions which are used to address the children are soft and affectionate in nature that cannot be used to address the older people. For instance, to address a kid [*Ajuu ngi fangming anti tong*], for older people [*Ghzim tangma shoqs Juu*]. If we say to an older person [*Ajuu ngi fangming ani tong*], it would give awkward meaning. The Balti speakers add –Rozi– to address the kids or the loved ones; [*Aju Ami Rozi dikha ong*] etc. The Balti language holds reverent and honorific words and expressions to address the older and reverent personalities. For instance, [*Mili Ata zan bjesay shoqsi ju*]. It is a polite expression to invite the respectful person. The findings also reveal that Balti speakers tend to borrow Urdu honorific titles while conversation in Balti. Urdu language has left a strong impact on the Balti lexicon of the Balti speakers. They subconsciously use Urdu words especially Urdu honorific titles during communication. The findings of the study also reveals that the Balti Syed families use different

honorific titles for their kinships. Syed families are considered sacred in Balti community. When a common Balti speaker addresses to Syed family members, they also consider the same social values and honor for them using the relevant honorific titles. Balti males use different honorific titles to female kinship and vice versa and it is not the case in English. The findings further reveal that the honorific titles /Rgyalfo/ and /Rgyalmo/ are used to address the people on higher rank and position in the society especially in religious context. This title is not entitled to the common Balti people unless they have certain social, religious or political positions and status. These titles are archaic in the contemporary Balti speech community as these only found in Balti elegy and religious poetry; */Rgyalfo Hussain AS Shakhfana thangla/*, when the great king Hussain AS depart to the Warfield. */Rgyalmo Zainabi AS kasal byungs/*, the great queen Zainab AS said.

Honorific Markers and the Uniqueness of Balti Language

The findings of the study revealed that Balti language is a linguistically rich especially in the area of honorifics and politeness that there are different honorific expressions, vocabulary and phrase that do not have suitable and direct equivalents in English language. Certain linguistic resources cannot be translated as they have been culturally and religiously woven into Balti linguistic repertoires. For instance, the Balti mostly uttered expression *[JU]* and *[AJU]* cannot directly be translated. These expressions are uttered with strong emotive and cognitive linguistic power. Such distinctive features are not available in English and mostly in any other language. When someone calls your name *[Ali]*, you would probably respond by uttering *[YES]* with high pitch but in Balti when someone calls your name, you would surely respond to him by uttering the polite expression *[Juuu]* with high pitch which creates polite effect. Balti language; *[SHOQS JU]*, *[BJES JU]* *[THUNG JU]* etc. whereas English does not have any specific vocabulary or expression. These expressions are uttered with soft tones to convey respect and love. The only English expression which creates politeness effect is the word *[please]*. For instance, *[Sit please]*, *[Eat please]* etc. but Balti *[SHOQS and BJES]* are specific vocabulary for honorific situations and individuals. The slang and informal words are *[ONG, ZOH]* etc. Balti language has multiple honorific words for a single expression such as *[RGALS, GYURS, STORS, and GOT SONG]* which means passed away in English. This reveals that Balti speakers are always aware of their interlocutors and their social status, age, gender and relationship and select appropriate honorifics. The use of honorific words and expressions is not the matter of politeness but a deep and rooted socially linguistic practices.

Forms of Imperative Sentences and Honorific Verbs to Show Reverence

The findings revealed that the Balti language has unique structure especially imperatives to create honorifics and politeness in discourse and communication. There are specific imperative verbs in Balti; *[BJES, KASAL BYUNG, SHOQS, etc.]*. The verb *[SHOQS]* is lexically an honorific imperative verb. It is often added with different verbs in Balti to make a polite effect on the hearer; */Zosay Shoqs/*, */Hltasy shoqs/*, */Itu basy shoqs/*, */Yarparay shoqs/* etc. In certain cases, the verb *[SHOQS]* acts like the word *[Juu]*; */Thung ju/*, */Song Ju/*, */Bjes Ju/*, */Hltos ju/*, */Len ju/* etc. There are some slang verbs giving the same meaning; *[KHYOR]*, *[SHIS]* etc. *[Asarey ray shoqseda ju]* which means 'could you please get a side?' Balti language is

honorifically a rich language in terms of imperative sentences. Balti has independent words to express imperatives respectfully considering age, gender and status. The /Bjes/ is an honorific verb which means please eat. Whereas, the verb /Zo/ is a neutral verb which means eat. /Bgyong/ is a slang which is used in a harsh mood to ask someone to eat. English does not have its equivalence. The Balti imperative sentence /Ani Tong/ is used for children to go to sleep. It is specific for only kids. For adults, the honorific sentence /Ghizm Tong Juu/ is used which means have a nice dream or sleep please. Whereas, the neutral imperative sentence /Nit Tong/ is used for all ages, genders and status which means sleep. There is a slang expression giving the same meaning; /MUND]. The imperative sentence and structure used to command or request a socially honorable person or a religious is different than that of children and friends in the informal contexts. The honorific language purely depends on the contexts of use and the person being addressed in real life communication. This linguistic diversity within Balti language reveals the power dynamics embedded within Balti language that constructs linguistic boundaries between the social hierarchies.

Honorific Language in Balti Poetry for Revered Figures

The findings reveal that Balti language has rich linguistic resources to address, talk about and describe the religious sacred entities. In the line [YARI HLSAHMA KHASOH], the word; /Yari/, /Hlsahma/, and /Khasoh/ are positive words and combine together they construct an honorific noun phrase which means 'your sacred mouth' and the neutral expression can be 'khiri khao/ means 'your mouth'. The poet has used three words to honorifically describe the word mouth; [YARI HLSAHMA KHASOH] as the part of belief and devotion. The word [HLSAHMA] is an additional adjective which means pure or sacred. Otherwise, there is no need of this very word to convey the meaning. Adjectives are added to noun phrases to create honorific sense and politeness. The study further reveals that the honorific phrase [Yari hlsahma mindoghi-kha shakhsay] has four words and all the four words are honorific words which show politeness. All these words have their neutral words as well; /Yari vs Khiri/, /Mindoghikha vs Rowakha/, and /Songsay/. These binary words have equal meaning but in sense of politeness the latter words are neutral. Balti language has rich honorific words with different lexical entries in the lexicon. Balti language users attach their cultural, social, religious and political feelings, emotions, and devotions with the linguistic expressions at utterance level to create honorific and politeness effects.

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