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Appendices

Appendix A : DCT of Present Study

Situation 1 (appearance):

- a. Your friends have organized a party to celebrate the end of semester. You've dressed up for the party. As you arrive at the party, one of your friends (girl) says: "Hey, you look great! You're really beautiful today."

Your response:

- b. You go to the hairdresser's and want to cut your hair. As soon as the hair dresser sees your hair says: "Nice hair you have. How can I cut it? It's really beautiful."

Your response:

Situation 2 (character):

- a. One of your friends together with her family has recently moved into a new apartment. She asks you to help her unpack her things. It takes you several hours to put all the things away. As you are about to say goodbye, your friend says: "Thank you! You are really kind and helpful".

Your response:

- b. Your superior (male) finds you very busy with your work and says to you, "You're a real hard worker!"

Your response:

Situation 3 (ability):

- a. After you have completed a presentation, your male classmate says: “Wow, that’s brilliant, I hope I can do it the way you did. Well done!”

Your response:

- b. A family friend (female) compliments your cooking after dinner by saying, “Your food is so delicious. You’re a fantastic cook!”

Your response :

Situation 4 (possession):

- a. You just bought a new mobile phone. When you received a call, your friend notices that your phone is different from the one you had before. Having looked at it and tried some functions, she says: “Wow, how smart! My mobile does not have such functions. It is really great!”

Your response:

- b. Your friend is visiting your newly-built house and she says, “What a beautiful house!”

Your response:

Appendix B : DCT of Preliminary Study

1- "You have beautiful eyes"

- a. Thank you. Nice of you
- b. Really? Do you think so?
- c. Not at all. I don't think so
- d. No. I have some wrinkles
- e. Satisfied and smile
- f. Yours too

2- "Your hair is really beautiful"

- a. Thank you. Nice of you
- b. Really? Do you think so?
- c. Not at all. I don't think so
- d. Oh, it falls too much
- e. Satisfied and smile
- f. Yours too

3- " You are in good shape"

- a. Thank you. Nice of you
- b. Really? Do you think so?
- c. Not at all. I don't think so
- d. I believe I am a little fat/slim
- e. Satisfied and smile
- f. You too

4- "What a beautiful coat you have!"

- a. Thank you. Nice of you
- b. Really? Do you think so?
- c. Not at all. I don't think so
- d. oh, it's an old and cheap one
- e. Satisfied and smile
- f. You offer your coat by saying you can take it , it's yours

5- "What a beautiful bag you have!"

- a. Thank you. Nice of you
- b. Really? Do you think so?
- c. Not at all. I don't think so
- d. oh, it's an old one, I bought it very cheap
- e. Satisfied and smile
- f. You offer your bag by saying you can take it, it's yours

6- "I like the model of your car and I think it has got a really fantastic colour"

- a. Thank you. Nice of you
- b. Really? Do you think so?
- c. Not at all. I don't think so
- d. oh, it's an old model and cheap one
- e. Satisfied and smile
- f. You offer your car by saying you can take it , it's yours

7- " I have heard you are a real cook"

- a. Thank you. Nice of you
- b. Really? Do you think so?
- c. Not at all. They have told you the reverse
- d. Oh, yes so so
- e. Satisfied and smile
- f. Why don't you come to our house and try it

8- " Your language pronunciation is like a native speaker "

- a. Thank you. Nice of you
- b. Really? Do you think so?
- c. Not at all. I don't think so
- d. I have some problems with intonation and stress of words
- e. Satisfied and smile
- f. You too

9- " You are a good driver"

- a. Thank you. Nice of you
- b. Really? Do you think so?
- c. Not at all. I don't think so
- d. Come on there are many people better than me
- e. Satisfied and smile
- f. You too

Appendix C : Interview Questions

- 1- Do you think you would give the same responses for the compliments if you were to speak in Malay/Persian?

- 2- Do you think that compliments are appreciated or dreaded in Iranian/Malay society?(I mean Are giving compliments to others an appreciated behaviour in Malay/Iranian culture?)Can you give examples of when compliments are welcomed and when they are not.

- 3- How is modesty shown in compliment responses in your culture? Is modesty expected in Malay/Iranian culture?

- 4- Do you think you should accept compliments or reject them?

- 5-What kind of compliments you accept more?
Compliments on: a. appearance b. character c. ability d. possession
why?

- 6- What kind of compliment you reject more?
Compliments on: a. appearance b. character c. ability d. possession
why?

- 7- Is “Smiling” a kind of strategy among Malays for acceptance or rejection of a compliment? And why do they use this strategy? Is there any justification for this matter?

8-When someone uses “*taarof* ”, or offer her possession does she really mean that ? or she just wants to show obedience? Is it obedient to take the possession or not.

9-Do you think the way a person responds to compliments is a pragmatic matter (something related to who is speaking to who? what is the occasion? Why is the person paying the compliment? What is the mood of the compliment recipient? etc.)or is it due to cultural conditioning?

Appendix D : Samples of Interview Transcription

Interviewee : Iranian Student with code no. L1

Interviewer : Italic words

Ok. Nice to meet you again and your code no. is L1. Am I right? Yes. Ok. Now I have 9 questions regarding compliment. I really appreciate if you think about them and answer me carefully.

Do you think you would give the same responses for the compliments (The one that you just gave previously to the DCT, if you were to speak in Persian, I mean in Persian? If you want to speak in Persian would you respond the same?

For some of them yes and for some of them no because we don't have the same expressions in Persian, I guess.

You mean they are different?

Ya a little different.

Different from English yes. Because English compliments are straighter forward but in Persian we have to say more. It's applied only to answer a compliment with 1 sentence or 2. You'd better, you know, to explain more.

2- Do you think that compliments are appreciated or dreaded in Iranian society?

It is very appreciated. Because it is in our custom and our culture when someone compliments you, you have to, you know, reply back in a very nice manner and sometimes even you have to exaggerate it because it is in Persian culture you have to respect the person who is complimenting you a lot.

So you mean when you accept a compliment, is a kind of respect manner?

Yes you have to respect the person and show that how appreciated you are to receive such a compliment.

Suppose that a person doesn't say anything or...does it mean that she doesn't accept that compliment if she doesn't say anything?

Yes of course It is very rude. When someone compliments you, you have to say sth. back in return say sth. Nice.

Oh very good, so it is appreciated in Iranian culture and can you give examples when compliments are welcomed?

For example when people appreciate specially we girls like to be complimented on our look so when s. o. notices you when you changed your hair or bought a new bag or sth. When s.o. notices you look different it's a great feeling. You feel people notice you. They understand you look different .it's good it's a positive energy that people give.

Very good. How about the cases? I mean are there any cases that for example you think compliment is not welcomed? Are there any cases like this? Can you give any examples? Do you remember any example?

I don't know because we define compliment as if people think sth. Good about your look or whatever you have done. I am not able to recall any memory or any evidence that compliments are not welcomed. I think they are always welcomed.

Always welcomed ok .very good.

How about modesty, you know modesty? Yes. ok. How is modesty shown in compliment responses in your culture? Is modesty expected in our culture?

It is in fact one of the differences between English culture and Persian culture because in our culture we have to show we are modest and when s.o. compliments us we are not supposed to show we are happy and that's all .We are supposed to say no don't you think so. You have to question the compliment again and you know discuss it. We are

not supposed to accept it and say ye well that's it . That's the end of it. You have to be modest in our culture and you have to say thank you very much but I am not really thin you know for example losing weight, I don't think so that I have lost weight , thank you so much you made my day.

Very good, so you think you use downgrading strategy for your acceptance?

Sometimes yes. Sometimes yes. For example I don't know... specially the cases you've bought a new thing, but the person who is giving you the compliment is not able to buy that particular thing so when she compliments on that new thing for example new bag or car or sth. In our culture we are supposed to downgrade it for example say no I am not really happy with the colour of the bag or it is not a very good car I wish I had a better one or the other car.

Ok. Now, do you think you should accept compliments or reject them as a whole?

Of course we have to. I do believe that compliments are positive energy and means people notice you and it's good so I think accept it as a whole.

5- What kind of compliments you accept more?

Compliments on: a. appearance b. character c. ability d. possession

why?

I think ability because it depends I don't really care about my look and I am not really comfortable if people keep looking at me and say sth. About my appearance but I think ability is more important. When you do sth. Good, for example recently I defended my proposal so when my supervisor complimented me about the way I presented my paper I guess it is more important and appreciated.

Ok. Sorry for the sound.

No no, fine.

6- What kind of compliment you reject more?

Compliments on: a. appearance b. character c. ability d. possession

Do you reject any compliment?

No, no I don't think so.

7- How about smile you know "Smiling" a kind of strategy among Malays for acceptance or rejection of a compliment maybe we don't know? What do you think? Is it a kind of rejection or acceptance among Malays?

I think people don't smile unless they are happy so I haven't seen a rejection smile so far. I guess it's nice it's a positive attitude.

You have been studying here at least for more than 2 or 3 years, don't you think, have you seen that Malays use this strategy most of the time or it's just me?

For rejection?

No, for acceptance.

Ya, they have smile all the time because and it is one of the best things here because when you walk on the street or you go to the universities people keep noticing you and they nod and smile. Very good thing that usually Iranians don't do that.

8- How about *taarof*, You know most of us use *taarof* strategy, when someone uses "*taarof*", or offer her possession does she really mean that? I mean does she really mean that in reality or she just wants to show obedience?

I think in Iranian culture *taarof* is not real it is the way it is. That's why even in answering the compliments so we have to keep saying nice things even we don't believe it. so it is the way it is.

So It is a kind of culture . It's not a reality.

Ok. Is it sth. to show being obedient or polite?

I think it's not a matter of obedience like if my close friend changes her hair colour ,so the day after when I speak, I have to say you look nice even though she doesn't look.

Oh. My God....(laugh). How about sometimes you offer sth. do you think it's obedient (polite) to take that possession or not?

No not at all because all Iranian know what kind of *taarof* is real and what kind of *taarof* is not real for example in my city we have special *taarof* that we are all aware of so when for example people come to our door you have to *taarof* pls. come in but doesn't mean that you have to come in and immediately accept and come in. That's what we all know we keep repeating it even though we don't believe it. But this is our culture.

We should be familiar with it first and it would be different from city to city so it would be difficult then. How can I explain these things then....(laugh)

9- Do you think the way a person responds to compliments is a pragmatic matter (something related to who is speaking to who? what is the occasion? Why is the person paying the compliment? What is the mood of the compliment recipient? or is it due to cultural conditioning? Which one? Are you familiar with pragmatics?

Yes.

I guess it is. Because if the person is a senior and if the person is superior than you yes the way you compliment is different and the way you accept it again is different. But I don't think it's exactly just pragmatics but also cultural too.

Thank you very much for your taking part in my interview. I really appreciate.

Interviewee : Iranian Student with code no. A4

Interviewer : Italic words

1 - Do you think you would give the same responses for the compliments if you were to speak in Persian?

Of course not. Yes, If I am supposed to speak in Persians I elaborate on some terms for example when I want to answer the situation I can exert my feelings better in my own Language

So you think you can communicate better if you shift to your own language?

Yes, of course yes.

But anyway do you think you transfer your culture when you want to answer to the compliments?

I think when we want to answer in English, I think most of Iranians transfer their L1 to L2, it's a natural matter. Because you know, they haven't learned how to actually use L2 strategies in the related situations.

2- Do you think that compliments are appreciated or dreaded in Iranian society, in Persian culture? I mean are giving compliments an appreciated behaviour?

Yes of course I think so. Because when for example you appreciate someone it is natural to wait and expect an answer so I think it is an appreciated behaviour.

3- How about modesty? How is modesty shown in compliment responses in Iranian culture? Is modesty expected in Iranian culture?

I think yes for some situations yes.

Can you give an example?

I don't have any idea now. Let me think and answer it later on.

Ok.

4- Do you think you should accept compliment or reject them? What do you think?

Actually we should accept the compliment.

Do you think acceptance have sth. to do with obedience(politeness)?

Acceptance of compliment with obedience? No I don't think so.

Do you think if you reject it, it's impolite?

Again no, I think these two terms and concepts are totally different, not so much related.

You know when s.o. appreciates, he or she is showing his /her respect to some extend towards us and it's very appreciated and respectable to accept it.

So it's a kind of obedience then, it has something to do with being obedient because you respect somehow.

Yes somehow yes.

Ok. very good.

5- What kind of compliments you accept more?

Compliments on: a. appearance b. character c. ability d. possession

Which one?

The first 3 compliments but not the last one. Because you know every person wants to be appreciated or be complimented regarding her or his appearance, ability or character.

You know....

How about possession?

No, not that much.

You know because when somebody, for example, appreciates your character or ability your appearance it gives you self confidence and it's very good and (unclear)

Ok. you can answer your phone.

Ok. sorry

6- *What kind of compliment you think you reject more? Compliments on appearance, Character, ability or possession? Which one you think you will reject more?*

If I want to choose among these 4 compliments, I prefer to reject the last one.

Again last one, possession.

Yes.

You reject it more.

I reject it more but not totally, but if I want to choose I choose the last one.

Can I ask you why you reject compliments on possession? What do you think that you reject?

Because you know it's not so important for me.

For example, if I tell you your bag is very beautiful what do you think in the beginning? I mean what is the first thing that comes to your mind? What do you think?

The first thing that I think is you like for example my bag too.

Do you think that I want to take your possession?

No, no, I don't think so. But I feel that you like it or maybe for example it's a very expensive bag and you cannot afford buying that bag and I become sad.

For me?

Yes(laugh)

And in this case do you want to offer your bag to me?

To tell you the truth not(laugh).

You never offer your possession to the people who compliment?

Yes, actually I offer, say ok. you can have my bag but not in reality it is just Taarof .

Just taarof, but not in reality.

Yes, it's just taarof.

Ok. so many Iranians use taarof but not in reality.

Yes.

So when s.o. uses taarof strategy, you mean that he or she doesn't mean she/he wants to give that possession to you. It's just taarof. He/she wants to show he/she is obedient(polite). Is that right?

Yes.

You know because *taarof* is not a good thing because you know for example, you just show off with *taarof*. I have to apologize because some of the Iranians are not truthful and just play with the words and it's not reality.

So it's not in reality? Ok. another thing,

7- Do you think smiling is a kind of strategy among Malays? Have you seen Malays most of the time have smile?

Yes they have smile on their face most of the time and it's a symbol of what can I say, kindness.

Do you think it's a kind of strategy they use for accepting or rejecting a compliment?

Which one? I mean when we compliment them, they just may laugh. Do you think by smiling they are accepting or they are rejecting?

No when they smile it means that they accept.

So they are happy with the compliment.

Yes of course.

Do you have any justification for their using this strategy?

I think it stems from, results from their culture. You know every culture and Language has its different strategies. For example Iranians, when someone appreciates them, they try to say something in addition to smiling but Malaysian people first smile you know they keep silent. This is their strategy for accepting a compliment.

9- Ok. so you think that the way they respond to a compliment is a pragmatic matter or it's a cultural conditioning?

You know I think it is mostly something related to culture. And culture is not sth. Different from Language. As you know Language and culture are inter related and when we are in another culture different from our own culture, we should know, we should learn how to behave and how to react in those cultures, you know what I mean? For example we should know when for example we compliment a Malay person what his or her reaction would be. We can read about these things.

So you think it's better you have some familiarity with their culture when you want to communicate? What do you think, do you think we can learn it from anywhere or is it good do you think as a lesson, be included in our pedagogy when we want to take English courses prior to coming to the universities ?

Yes I myself have some suggestion for this matter. I think the best thing is to include or insert some lessons or courses or at least 2 courses for this matter, learning how to behave in other cultures. I think it's an important matter for syllabus designers and teachers should pay attention to this matter. It's very important. Specially for those who want to migrate or those who intend to study in other countries or cultures because this matter can be resulting to misunderstanding or for example misbehaviour or miscommunication.

So you think pragmatics is an important matter in learning a language specially the language that you are studying in that country or you are living in that country.

Interviewee: Iranian Student with code no. M3

Interviewer: Italic words

Do you think you would give the same responses for the compliments if you were to speak in Persian?

I think yes my responses would be the same but in Iranian culture there is a little bit more I don't know *taarof*.

You mean that you don't transfer your culture when you speak in another language, English? Or you want to keep English or American culture? Which one?

It's better to keep American / English culture when you are speaking with a native but I don't know any *taarof* in American culture may be I cannot find any good words to transfer from Persian into English.

Do you think that compliments are appreciated or dreaded in Iranian society? I mean are giving compliments to others an appreciated behaviour in Iranian culture? Is it a kind of appreciation when you compliment some one? And does someone think it's a kind of appreciation when she or he is complimented?

May be a kind of appreciation. Yes most of the compliments are welcomed because it's our custom. All Iranians use compliments and use *Taarof*.

Can you give examples when compliments are welcomed and when they are not welcomed in Iranian culture?

(Unclear) I don't know.

You don't know. You cannot give any example when they are welcomed? Do we have any example like this when they are not welcomed? You think most of the time it is welcomed?

Yes, because it's our custom, all of Iranians, most of Iranians use to do

compliment, *taarof*.

So it's a kind of appreciation? Yes?

Yes.

3- How is modesty, you know modesty?

No.

You don't know modesty? Modesty means when you want to tell, for example I tell you how beautiful you are, and you say no I am not that much beautiful or modesty means when you downgrade yourself.

Maxim?

Yes a kind of maxim.

How is modesty shown in your culture? Is modesty expected in your culture?

Yes of course (laugh) It is expected.

So Iranians believe they should be modest when they want to respond to a compliment, they believe they should be modest you think?

Some of them yes Some people are modest but some people who like themselves more prefer to answer ok. I know I am beautiful.

You mean selfish people.

Yes.

So it shows selfishness when you don't go through modesty., it's maybe a little bit selfishness in Iranian culture.

4- Do you think you should accept compliment or reject it? Which one? As a whole?

I think most Iranians reject compliment in our culture specially in female ,a woman do not agree with ...for example oh you are so beautiful or your cooking is so good, because in our culture the woman ...(garbled).

So you believe that.... it's not a rejection then, you mean acceptance but maybe with modesty because when you say no I am not that much well, sorry...that much good cook doesn't mean that you reject a compliment. Maybe you mean to be modest.

Yes to be modest. I mean that they don't accept directly. Most of time they don't have selfishness.

5- What kind of compliment you accept more? Compliments on appearance, for example you have beautiful eyes; compliment on character for example you are such a nice girl; ability or possession ? Which one? For example your bag is beautiful. Which one do you think you would accept more?

Ability

Ability, very good.

6- What kind of compliment you reject more? Compliments on appearance, character ability or possession ? Which one you reject more?

What do you mean by reject?

Reject means you say no I am not like this; you are exaggerating, not at all.

Do you have some answers like this in compliment? For example I say your bag is very beautiful and you say no, it's very ugly .It is rejection.

I don't think so. In my personal idea no I don't reject any compliment.

7- Is smiling a kind of strategy, have you seen Malays, most of the time smile when you compliment them. I don't know whether you have got the experience or not but do you think smiling is a kind of strategy among Malays for acceptance or rejection of a compliment which one?

Accept. Ya they are accepting.

Is there any justification for this smiling, why do they use this strategy. For example if we tell them your eyes are very beautiful maybe most of them just smile. What does this mean? I mean why do they use this strategy? Why don't they say anything?

I think maybe they know and accept that God for example has given them beautiful eyes and they mentally from their heart accept it, and in their mind they are thankful to God.

8- *When someone uses "taarof", or offers her possession does she really mean that she wants to give that possession to the other person? or she just wants to show (politeness), obedience?*

Sometimes, most of all, for obedience It depends on to whom you want to give or offer that possession. Sometimes it's my sister, my mother or my brother, I really want to give them.

So it depends on the situation and who is speaking to who they are using taarof for example if you use it for your mother maybe if you use taarof strategy, it means in reality you want to offer your possession, but maybe for your friend no, you just want to show obedience(politeness), am I right?

Yes.

9- *Do you think the way a person responds to compliments is a pragmatic matter? You know pragmatics?*

Yes.

For example something related to who is speaking to whom? What is the occasion? Why is the person paying the compliment? What is the mood of the compliment recipient and etc. or is it due to cultural conditioning? Which one? It depends on cultural conditioning? Or it's a pragmatic matter?

I think it's because of differences of the culture. Because all the languages and cultures have pragmatics but pragmatics in different cultures are different so it's because of the culture.

So as a whole 'it means it's a kind of cultural transfer? Am I right? Or pragmatic transfer? Both of them? Can be both of them?

Yes, can be both of them. Ok. both of them.

Yes, because they are interrelated. Pragmatics is interrelated to culture, yes? Am I right? Pragmatics is language in use. Different cultures have got different usages of language.

Yes.

And you believe, they would transfer this to the another language they are speaking.

They shift it?

Yes.

Thank you very much for your taking part in my interview.

Welcome.

Interviewee : Iranian Student with code no. M7

Interviewer : Italic words

1- Do you think you would give the same responses for the compliments if you were to speak in Persian?

Yes of course more or less.

So most of the time you answer the same.

2- Do you think compliments are appreciated or dreaded in Iranian society?

I think it is appreciated because Iranians, they use to using a lot of compliments especially in conversation. It is our custom and when it is a custom people use it in different situations for each other specially friends and relatives.

Can you give some examples when compliments are welcome and when they are not welcomed? I mean are they welcomed or not welcomed first of all?

You know , for example, when you see your friend has a new car or you say what a beautiful car, or hair cut, it is a kind of positive compliment and your friend may say oh I love it. These kinds of compliments are welcomed. But in another occasions maybe you want to say something negatively for example your hair style was nicer before, and not nicer than before, maybe this compliment is not welcomed just as before.

How is modesty shown in compliment responses in your culture? Is modesty expected?

Sure it is. I think it has a really special role in Iranian conversation.

So they use it more.

Yes they use it more and more.

4- Do you think you should accept compliments or reject them as a whole ?

Usually we try to accept even we don't reject it . Maybe indirectly but I think in our culture it is not polite to reject and we try to show we like it.

5- *What kind of compliments you accept more as a whole?*

Compliments on: a. appearance b. character c. ability d. possession

Compliments on my character I accept more. Compliments on my appearance are ok. but not as much as ability and character.

How about possession?

Compliment on possession yes it is ok. about something, that I have about my cell phone, car, house or something yes it is ok I like to accept to compliment about these things.

Can I ask you why?

Because it gives me positive energy, I feel more relax and happy. I like when people give me nice compliment.

6- *What kind of compliment you reject more? Compliments on appearance,*

Character, ability or possession?

Maybe compliments on ability I reject more, because appearance is something selective. It is something I may like but the other people don't like. Or about the possession maybe I like the model of a car or I like the design of a house but people don't like it but something. about my ability, I think I can't be sure about it , maybe I am not sure about it so I may reject even it is true.

So which one you reject more?

I reject compliments on ability more.

But the others you accept more?

Yes the others I accept more.

7- *Is smiling a kind of strategy among Malays for acceptance or rejecting a compliment? Which one? What do you think?*

I think we sometimes show smile because we want to show we are happy but in our culture, sometimes we smile even when we want to reject because we want to show we are polite.

Yes, ok.

8- *How about taarof, when someone uses taarof and offers her possession, does she really mean that or she just wants to show obedience(politeness)?*

I think it can be both of them, but usually greeting and also *taarof* for Iranians are a lot and it can have both of them. Maybe two sides are important.

Do you think when they taarof, they really mean to give it or it's just for showing politeness?

Yes of course it is showing politeness when they offer and sometimes they want to transfer their feelings, happy things or maybe positive energy to their friends and is a kind of politeness.

Do you think it's obedient to take the possession or not?

Sometimes it can be. I think it is obedient to take the possession.

9- *Do you think the way a person responds to a compliment is a pragmatic matter?*

I think all of them are related. Means all the things that you code about pragmatic aspects are directly related; culture, who is to whom they are talking and I think all of them are important.

So you believe both of them have effect?

Yes, they have completely, in my idea 100 percent they have effect .

Ok. let's just ask you a question (regarding question no. 8), if I offer something to you, you will take the possession then?

What do you mean by take the possession?

I offer it to you and you take it. For example, you say, your coat is very beautiful, then I say you can take it it's yours. Do you take it?

It depends. Maybe If it's food or a small thing yes, but if it is something big maybe not.

So you believe when someone offers something she really wants to give it to you?

Maybe yes it can be. When someone offers me maybe she really wants me to take it but usually we have these kinds of things in our culture. But when you answer that it is a kind of present from a dear friend in this way maybe we don't take it .

So you believe it's not impolite if you take the possession.

Yes, yes.

Thank you very much for your participation in my interview.

You are welcome and have a nice time.

Thank you.

Interviewee: Malay Student with code no. No5

Interviewer: Italic words

Nice to meet you again. Your code number is No5, am I right?

Yes.

Do you think you would give the same responses to the compliments if you were to speak in Malay?

Yes, I think so.

The same?

The same.

2- Do you think that compliments are appreciated or dreaded in Malay society?

Actually in Malay is dreaded. (laugh)

Can you give some examples when compliments are not welcomed or dreaded?

For example when you compliment someone, “how beautiful she looks” then that person would definitely say, “no, no, no I am not”.

How about when they are welcomed? Are there any cases like this?

No, no. Just in Malays.

You don't welcome.

3- How is modesty shown in compliment responses in your culture? Is modesty expected in Malay culture?

Let's say If you compliment me and say, “you look so beautiful today”; I just say “ oh, ok.” that's being modest in our culture.(laugh)

But you should say something because I am recording. You're just using body language.

They don't understand. Alright so probably they would say.....

Not that much beautiful, for example?

Yah, they would say “ok.”. Ok. is just like they don’t elaborate. They don’t say much. They would just say “oh, m, m” just nodding. Just looking at you probably smiling but you know the smile is not real.(laugh)

Oh my God!

Ok. so is modesty expected in Malay culture?

Yah.

It is expected?

Yah.

For example you downgrade the things and say I bought it very cheap.

Yeh, that’s right. Yah, you are right .We use it.

.4- Do you think you should accept compliments or reject them as a whole?

Firstly I believe we should accept compliment. Because I think when people say nice things to you, you should acknowledge them.

But it’s your personal idea, it is not believed in your community?

Yah, not so much in our culture because when people compliment you, you are supposed to be modest, you are not supposed to acknowledge that, because if you do, you may be perceived as arrogant.

Oh! Very good.

5- What kind of compliments you accept more?

Compliments on: a. appearance b. character c. ability d. possession

I would rather accept more on character.

Can I ask you why?

I think because when people compliment you by your character, it’s something good , make you feel good, comfortable and nice.

Gives you self confidence?

Yeh, that's right.

6- What kind of compliment you reject more?

Compliments on: a. appearance b. character c. ability d. possession

I think possession because definitely I don't want to offend the person who is complimenting me.

Ok. you mean that if I say your bag is so beautiful, you won't accept it?

Yah, I would say, "no, no, no. It's just an ordinary bag".

Why? Can I ask you why?

Because I don't want the person who compliments me to feel inferior or to feel that oh I am having things better than what she is having.

Oh! Ok. very good.

7- *Is "Smiling" a kind of strategy among Malays for acceptance or rejection of a compliment? And why do they use this strategy?*

Well it can be both. Sometimes it can be acceptance and sometimes rejection. Because we are not that much expressive and we try to be polite.

Oh! Very good but how can we distinguish whether this smiling is because of satisfaction or dissatisfaction?

Probably you can look at body language maybe the whole expression on the face.

Ok. so you mean if they don't explain a lot means that they are not satisfied, just say "ok." "nodding", it means that they are not satisfied.

Yes that's right.

Very good. We should remember this

.

8- *Taarof in Iranian culture means offer. We offer our possession when someone compliments our possession and say it's yours, you can take it. Do you have something like this in your culture?*

No we don't.

If an Iranian offers her possession to you, do you accept?

I think I do. I would accept.

But you shouldn't. It's impolite, sorry to tell you the truth. (laugh)

Because in our culture if someone offers we are supposed to receive it.

Oh!

Let's say I offer you and say, "oh have some chocolate" and then you say, "no, no that's ok. I don't want it", that offends me.

Oh! my God.

So you should take even though you don't like it.

Because in Iranian culture we don't mean that you should really take it. It's just a culture we show politeness that's why we offer.

9- *Do you think the way a person responds to compliments is a pragmatic matter (something related to who is speaking to who? what is the occasion? Why is the person paying the compliment? What is the mood of the compliment recipient? etc) or is it due to cultural conditioning? what do you think?*

I think it's very much due to pragmatics you know whom you are talking to, it depends for example I would accept compliment if the person who is much older than I am as a sign of respect. Definitely related to pragmatics.

How about cultural conditioning?

It depends. Yah it depends. Some times that also might come into picture but mostly in my opinion, I think is pragmatics.

Thanks a lot for your good answers and information. Thank you.

Interviewee : Malay Student with code no. A7

Interviewer : Italic words

Nice to meet you again. Your code number is A7, am I right?

Yes that's right .

1- Do you think you would give the same responses to the compliments if you were to speak in Malay?

Yes, basically because I am use to it. I am use to rejecting compliment.

So your thinking would be the same?

It would be the same for both English and Malay.

2- Do you think that compliments are appreciated or dreaded in Malay society?

It is appreciated but we try to show that we don't like the compliment.

Try to be modest?

Yes we try to be modest.

Can you give an example when compliments are welcomed and when they are not welcomed?

Compliments are welcomed when someone thanks you for your help and we appreciate it that you say thank you and we would say you are welcome because we really appreciate that you need our help, so it is modest but at the same time we need the compliment. For the compliments that we don't like when you say " you look beautiful today" it could mean are you trying to ask me something?"

Oh you believe maybe they need something or they want to begin speaking or they are not truthful maybe, you believe?

Exactly the sub reason for compliment is asking for help or something.

Oh my God! So you don't like compliment on appearance?

Something like that, yes most of the time.

How is modesty shown in compliment responses in your culture? Is modesty expected in Malay culture?

It is very much expected because we tend to be humble all the time especially with older people.

Do you think to be modest is a kind of rejection then or rejection is a kind of being modest?

It could mean both. But rejecting sometimes shows we want to be modest but at the same time it could mean that we really don't like it.

So it means that Malays as a whole don't like to be given compliment that much, is that right?

That's right, we don't really like compliment.

4- Do you think you should accept compliments or reject them as a whole?

Personally I believe in accepting by saying thank you and after that compliment that person so....

In return? You give it back in return?

Yah, in return because we don't want to show that we are proud or arrogant.

So you don't reject it personally.

I am a bit of both, but I think mostly I reject it because I am humble.

Very good.

5- What kind of compliments you accept more?

Compliments on: a. appearance b. character c. ability d. possession

Why?

I would say more on character because I think that's what people see more or people appreciate more rather than what you wear or what you have.

6- *What kind of compliment you reject more?*

Compliments on: a. appearance b. character c. ability d. possession

Definitely appearance.

You reject more?

Yah.

And why?

Because I hate biasness and I think when people say “you’re beautiful”, I tend to interpret it differently. It could mean that yes I am very pretty or no I am not pretty at all. So which one is it? You know?

So you mean when someone says you are pretty maybe has got a negative bar or she mean the reverse?

Yah, it could mean the other way round, it could mean I am not beautiful and she is just saying it to make you....?

You mean it has got a sarcastic bar?

Yes, sarcasms.

Oh my God! I didn't know that.

7- *Is “Smiling” a kind of strategy among Malays for acceptance or rejection of a compliment? And why do they use this strategy?*

Yes it is both. But actually a lot of people do reject more.

By smiling?

Yes, by smiling. Because we are not the type who doesn't like it we would frown and if we don't like something we reject it politely with smile.

So you want to show politeness?

Yes.

8- *Taarof in Iranian culture means offer. We offer our possession when someone compliments our possession and say it's yours, you can take it. Do you have something like this in your culture?*

No we don't. When we compliment the possession of someone, it means that we just complimenting that probably in return you just tell us where you got that thing. We don't mean when we compliment you have to give it to us.

If an Iranian offers her possession to you, do you accept?

Definitely no. it doesn't mean I don't want it but it's not in me just simply take that thing.

You don't want to take it?

I will never take it.

9- *Do you think the way a person responds to compliments is a pragmatic matter (something related to who is speaking to who? What is the occasion? Why is the person paying the compliment? What is the mood of the compliment recipient? etc) or is it due to cultural conditioning? What do you think?*

I think it's a lot more on pragmatics because we definitely respond to how the person talks to us and what is it that they want when they compliment, and things like that, so we respond according to how we are being talked to and mostly we respond in a similar way because basically like what I said in our culture we are humble people, like I said we reject compliment so in any way it also depends on the person who is talking to us.

So it's pragmatics? How about cultural conditioning?

Cultural conditioning I think it depends, if the person is very open minded person I think that person may at times accept or may reject compliments but if the person is very much in to the culture or is brought up in a way that culture is very strong such as me, I think we would reject compliment.

So you mean cultural conditioning has got some effects too?

Yah, pragmatics and cultural conditioning both have effect.

Very good. Thanks a lot for your cooperation and taking part in my interview. I really appreciate.