

A Corpus-Based Linguistic Analysis of the Menus in Lahore's Elite Cafes and Restaurants

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Abstract

Food makes a strong connection between a person and his culture. However, the culture is greatly influenced by the language, and a person can be easily identified by his food choices. Food is also a source of globalization, for example, we can easily find Chinese, Japanese, and Italian cuisines in Pakistan. The elite cafes and restaurants in Pakistan are offering menus with unique languages that do not represent our culture and social norms. One cannot find Pakistani cuisine with its traditional name on the menus of elite cafes and restaurants. They are under the influence of cultural imperialism. Cultural imperialism is the attempt to dominate another culture in our own traditions and values. This resulting cultural homogenization affects the lifestyle of people too. The menu writers are using international languages and cuisines to attract consumers. The names of the dishes and beverages are so weird and bizarre that a person can't get an idea of what the actual dish is without reading the description of the food item. The research aims to study the menu cards of fifty-five (55) elite-class restaurants and cafes in Lahore, Pakistan. Using purposive sampling in this corpus-study, we have analysed 200 names of different dishes and beverages from these upper-class eateries. The study clearly reveals that Pakistani cuisine and its traditional names are subservient to the international cuisine in Pakistan. This is a major threat to Pakistani food culture and lifestyle that needs to be taken into consideration by the restaurant owner and menu writers. They need to dwindle the availability of international cuisine more than our Pakistani food and the use of international language in naming their food items. The results of this research are an eye-opener for the protectors of Pakistani food culture.

Keywords: Cultural Imperialism, Corpus Linguistic, Cultural Homogenization, Identity, Cuisines, Menu.

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Introduction

Linguistics is the scientific study of language. It includes studying the sounds, words, grammar, and meaning used for communication in a certain language. Linguistic analysis involves the study of various aspects of a language and how they are acquired by individuals. It basically helps us study the complexity of human languages (Sagheer et al., 2024). General linguistics may be defined as the science of language. As with other branches of knowledge and science study, such as definition, it involves the subject in certain relations with other disciplines and sciences outside itself and in subdivision into different branches of the subject comprised within it (Robins, 2014). Highlighting the cultural identity of a person is a set of traits that he inherits from his cultural background. Culture involves traditions, customs, language, beliefs, and food. It is just having your personal fingerprint that includes or represents your traditions, language, customs, etc. The cultural identity of a person makes a man recognisable in a community. Food, in this regard, is one of the basic aspects of one's cultural identity. Culturally speaking, in essence, what one eats defines who one is and is not (Almerico, 2014). These two are closely interlinked. Food, recipes, ingredients, and cooking techniques. It helps to shape and express cultural identity. It is a powerful symbol of heritage.

Adopting one culture over another is cultural imperialism. Foreign food tastes and dishes inject into our culture by adding different dishes and cuisines to our restaurant menus. One small evidence of cultural imperialism took place in neighbouring countries. Most Hindus are vegetarians, but these days, Hindus are starting to eat non-vegetarian food. Cultural imperialism deals with affairs ranging from the ideological effects of imported cultural products to the process of cultural homogenization to the nature of cultural autonomy (Tomlinson, 1991). We surveyed 55 restaurants and came to the point that cultural imperialism and homogenization also comes into our society. The younger generation adopted foreign cultures and left our culture. As with food items, cultural imperialism and homogenization is starting to spoil our culture rapidly. The goal of including foreign dishes on the menu is to help foreigners understand foreign culture. But the negative impact of this evolution is that our cultural dishes come into danger.

In this research, we have linguistically analysed 55 menus of elite cafes and restaurants and the various expressions that are being used by our menu writers to appeal to their customers. Foreign vocabulary is now being used as a symbol of standard in our society, which may demolish our

traditional language. However, in today's globalised world, globalisation is one of the key components that made foreign dishes dominant over Pakistani food items and had a serious impact on Pakistani culture, beliefs, and norms (Shah, 2019) The term basically defines how technology has connected the world (Shahzad, 2015). Moreover, it is through globalisation that we spread information, norms, culture, and other things to different countries across the world. Therefore, as mentioned in the study, Pakistan is famous for its desi cuisines, but as a result of globalisation, nowadays foreign dishes are ruling over Pakistani food items as our young generation is attracted to international dishes with unique names. So, it is globalisation that has played a part in promoting western culture by means of technology such as social media.

An interesting and diverse aspect of human culture and cuisine includes an extensive range of tastes, methods of cooking, and traditions from all around the world. Each cuisine tells a different tale by fusing topographical and historical components with cultural influences to provide delectable eating experiences. There is something for every palate, from the spiciness and scent of Indian food to the refined and delicate flavours of French cuisine. Italian, Thai, Mexican, Chinese, and Japanese cuisines have become popular around the world for their unique ingredients and preparation methods. More than any other aspect of human civilization, cuisines and food ways, according to (Timothy, 2015), offer invaluable insight into the evolution of humanity. Exploring cuisines provides insight into a particular region's culture and traditions in addition to providing wonderful food. A cuisine is something fresh and appetising that is just waiting to be explored in the vast and different world due to the usage of local ingredients, the significance of a particular cuisine during festivals or festivities, and the ways of cooking.

In recent years, there has been a noticeable shift in Pakistan's culinary scene, with traditional favourites like biryani and kebabs facing increasing competition from foreign dishes. Many restaurant owners seem more captivated by international cuisines, reflecting the influence of globalisation, travel, and media on consumer preferences. While embracing global flavours can enhance culinary diversity, it's crucial to strike a balance between preserving Pakistan's rich food heritage and exploring international influences. Biryani, with its aromatic spices and flavourful rice, is an emblem of Pakistani cuisine and should not be overlooked. To maintain this balance, restaurants can draw inspiration from foreign cuisines while upholding the authenticity of their local traditions. Ultimately, Pakistan's food culture can continue to evolve by

blending traditional and international elements. By doing so, restaurants can honour beloved dishes like biryani while embracing the exciting possibilities of a more diverse culinary landscape, ensuring that both locals and visitors can savour the best of Pakistan's culinary traditions. This study focuses on the vocabulary of Lahore's elite restaurants or café menus to understand how it represents Pakistani food and its association with societal stigma. Cultural homogenization is not only affecting the lifestyle of Pakistanis but also their choices for local products. Moreover, it will help us to comprehend how the menu targets its customers and what's the relationship between food, society, and language.

Research Questions:

1. Which elite restaurants or cafés in Lahore are offering an exclusive and unique language menu?
2. What type of language is used by these restaurants and cafes to name the courses and beverages on their menu, causing cultural homogenization?
3. How are these elite restaurants or cafés using vocabulary as a tool to appeal their customers and affect their lifestyle?
4. What are the factors behind cultural homogenization?

Statement of Problem:

Language fluctuates with time because of social, cultural, and political impacts. In this era of globalisation, a wide range of food companies and brands are adopting new ways to enhance their marketing strategies for selling their products (Sagheer Malik et al. 2023). These homogenising forces are not only marketing their brands but also imposing their lifestyle on consumers. It is now becoming a trend to name cuisines under the influence of cultural imperialism. Food items and dishes in elite restaurants and cafes all over the world typically exhibit unique names, which are either their marketing tactics or ways to attract customers' attention. This study highlights the vocabulary of Lahore's elite restaurants or cafes, which shows that cultural homogenization is happening in the name of globalisation and that international cuisine is now preferred over Pakistani cuisine which is affecting the essence of Pakistani food language and lifestyle.

Literature Review

In late 20th century, in United states Cultural imperialism had two most important objectives. One of them was economic and the other was political (Petras, 1993). Now a days, Cultural imperialism revolves around social media which makes fancy cafes serve food and drinks that are inspired by popular traditions, which makes local food less in demand and makes prices so high that a common man couldn't afford them. Cultural imperialism is a concept in which a country's way of life, norms, food, music, etc. are imposed on another country. This study highlights the issue of cultural imperialism, as we have discussed how foreign food items have ruled out Pakistani dishes. A major factor in cultural imperialism is our media, through which our young generation gets attracted and wants to follow that specific culture that is being hyped. In this manner, they feel up-to-date as they have not lost track of being Gen Z. Hence, the effects of globalisation can be seen everywhere.

Moreover, advisers play a crucial role in promoting cultural imperialism and distracting the young generation from different cultural beliefs or norms. When any dominant culture spreads its values, traditions, etc. over other cultures, cultural imperialism can clearly be seen in that nation. It may happen through social media, foreign content, globalisation, etc. It is affecting the food culture of many nations. As we know that half of the Pakistan's population is Generation Z. Gen Z is the most speedy and sprightly than any other generation. They opened there eyes in world brim-full with globalization (Jamal, 2020) that why most people in developing countries like Pakistan are switching to western culture and food, as can be seen in our elite restaurants and cafes. Not only are trending cafes and restaurants serving us with western tastes, but they are also using western languages in their menus to attract consumers. This eventually leads to demolishing our own identity.

Cultural imperialism may lead to the loss of the identity of one culture or nation. As we know, cultural imperialism usually takes place in a country or nation. Pakistan is a developing country economically and culturally, and it is facing serious cultural imperialism in the present years. Our traditions, food, tastes, customs, and values are greatly dominated by western culture. Culture imperialism is a good thing, but it also has a negative impact. We adopted the foreign culture's food and left the traditional food behind. Through this method, our culture and traditional food have become unpopular. The other thing is that foreign cultures are based on their religion, but our religion is different from that of western

countries, so some dishes are not allowed in our religion and culture. For instance, pig meat is haram in our religion, but it is normal in foreign countries. So, cultural imperialism has a good impact, but we cannot dismiss its negative impact.

If we relate Cultural imperialism to Linguistics, then according to (Phillipson, 1992), Linguistic Imperialism is actually a prime ingredient of Cultural imperialism accompanied by technological, media and educational imperialism as its other elements. It accomplishes Linguistics and Cultural discrimination in middle of English and other languages. Cuisine is somehow the style of how people of different countries and culture cook. Every person naturally has a taste of his own culture. Cuisines is all about different ingredients, flavours, cooking styles, tastes, etc and all these things make one taste differ from others cultures taste. According to *Edward B. Tylor*, 'Culture is that comprehensive entity which embraces faith, knowledge, ethics, art, legislation, traditions, and other abilities and consistencies attained by a person as a member of this community (Tylor, 1871). An Italian annalist of Food and Culture states that, 'Cuisines is the set of implementation, understanding, strategies, and norms in cooking. (Montanari, 2006). He highlighted the historical and cultural factors of Cuisine in his article. Furthermore, Fast food is one of the most visible forms of cultural imperialism. Elite cafes and restaurants like Tim Hortons, PF Chang, etc. have western-style fast food that can replace our traditional food. Someone who exchanges food is beneficial for both countries, like introducing new flavours, serving styles, and cooking methods. But the increase in food exchange will affect the traditional food, or sometimes it will also affect the agricultural food production system. There are many other food trends that can be composed of or introduced by western countries that spread rapidly in other countries, and they also affect traditional foods, for instance, hamburgers, sushi, prawns, etc.

Cultural homogenization refers to the lessening of cultural diversity as different cultures adopt similar practices, media, and values. This can be driven by globalization, where exposure to a dominant culture leads to the erosion of local traditions. It can have both positive and negative consequences, promoting understanding but also potentially leading to cultural loss. It leads to a blending or merging of cultural elements, which can happen in various domains, including language, cuisine, fashion, music, and values (Robertson, 1995). As people and ideas move more freely across borders, cultural exchange becomes more common, and distinct cultural boundaries begin to blur. An example of cultural

homogenization in food is that regardless of the variety of native and domestic cuisines on a global scale, the United States fast food culture dominates a significant portion of the global food market. Street food or fast food from other cultures, such as Momos, Tacos, Hot dogs, Burgers, etc., are also blended into the worldwide homogenised food culture along with insignificant variations.

Moreover, Food is the true representative of one's cultural identity. In present days, the food our youngsters are opting for are questioning their identity. In menus of elite cafes and restaurants, weird names and expressions are used to name dishes that has no direct link with the actual dish. This trend can easily be observed through the conducted research (Ali, 2019). Explicit techniques were used to discourage the unhealthy eating but all in vain. As the language written on the menu is the main communicator between the consumer and the server. Implicit techniques were practised which proved to be beneficial in discouraging unhealthy diet.(Gynell et al., 2022). Menus in fancy restaurants are like a fascinating mix of culture, food, and language. These special menus go beyond just listing meals – they capture the spirit of a place's food traditions and how they're described. It is like a journey through different cultures on a plate, where every dish tells a story. The words they use to describe the food are like a form of art, painting pictures in your mind and making you feel something special. So, when you dine at these upscale places, you are not just eating; you are experiencing a blend of culture, cuisine, and language that makes it a unique and exclusive adventure. In fancy restaurants, the menus are like special books that tell stories about different cultures through their food. The words they use to describe the dishes are like paintings that make the food sound exciting and unique.

Research Methodology

The primary concern of this qualitative descriptive research is to linguistically analyse the names of food and drinks offered at expensive cafes and restaurants in Lahore. We added a total of 200 names of elite cafes and restaurants for the final study. As we know that the data gathered for this corpus study is qualitative which is based on purposive sampling technique by selecting the menus of fifty-five (55) elite cafes and restaurants found in the posh areas of the city. Corpus-based studies look at corpora, which are often examined by researchers. Corpora are collections of text that have been obtained using certain criteria. Corpus linguistics is an approach that investigates naturally occurring language using a corpus(Mozaffari & Moini 2014). These elite cafes and restaurants

were selected after analysing their menu which were available on the internet. We are in an era of social media, so the menus of many restaurants and cafes were easily available on their social media pages. Another reason for choosing these restaurants and cafes is that they are mostly visited by young adults who belong to an elite class. Although the preferred restaurants and cafes present an extensive range of food items, drinks, and sweets, only those items have been chosen in the study that carry unique names and simply have no relation with the recipes or food items at all. It had no connection with the local Pakistani culture. The names are linguistically analysed to understand the relationship between culture and language. Language and culture play an important role in building our ideologies.

Data Analysis

The majority of the names given to the food and drinks available in the cafes and restaurants chosen for the research are unusual and differ from the traditional Pakistani culture. The unique names written on the menus of these elite cafes and restaurants are the outcome of the writers who wrote that menu using various expressions encouraging unique cultural identity but these names are mismatched or oddly synchronize with the Pakistani identity. The language used in the menus of these restaurants and cafes is greatly influenced by foreign culture which is a great menace for the identity of our culture. The list of all elite cafes and restaurants that are used for this research is enlisted in the appendix. The analysis of menus is given below.

Language as an Expression of Violence and Aggression:

Different elite class restaurants and café menus are the centre of attraction of our young generation who are attracted towards violence and brutality. These menus have diverse and strange names of food items on their menus. Therefore, all the elite class eateries in Lahore have food menus with unique names that promotes violence, anger, viciousness and natural disasters. An example of a mocktail served at *London Courtyard*, an elite restaurant in Lahore, is *Bloody Berry*, and a mocktail served at *PF Chang* is named *Black Berry Blast*. Examples of beverages with such names include, *Thunder Lemonade*, *Blood Orange*, *Sky Bully*, *Bulletproof*, *Boost*, *Strike*, *Bloody Mary*, *Punch Juice*, *Death by chocolate*, *Luxe Punch*, *Lightening Shot*, *Strawberry Punch* and *Electric Soda*. Not only are such names assigned to different beverages but also to main eateries, fast food items and desserts.

Examples of name, conveying violence and aggression, assigned to desserts includes: *Molten Lava Cake* served at **Arcadian Cafe** and at **Tenerife Cafe** a brownie is served with name *Hit Me Brownie*. Furthermore, examples of such names assigned to other food items include: *Volcano Maki*, *Fish in Dragon Fire sauce*, *Hunter beef on Toast*, *Dynamite Shrimps*, *Bull Ride*, *Peeka boo Bomb*, *Dynamite Prawns*, *Dynamite Chicken*, *Loaded Queso Fries*, *Smash x BAO Burger*, *Buffalo Wings*, *Volcanic pickled Chicken*, *Wild Shitake Mushroom Steak* etc. In some restaurants like **Rina's kitchenette**, **La Cornucopia**, **Dahlia**, and **Saku Hana**, for instance, the names assigned to some burgers shows no connection with the food itself. Example include: *Rina's Smash Burger*, *Bang Bang Prawns*, *Saku explosion* and *Burning King of Fire Burger*. Words like *Explosion*, *Fire*, *Smash* and *Dynamite*, speaks for violence and aggression in semantic field. Another example of beverage is *Red Punch* and *Knock Out the Flu* at **Wasabi**. Therefore, food items, which connotes violence and aggression, are shown as bringing about ferocity which turns eating into a fierce experience.

Language Denoting Disgust Food Items:

Food represents the culture and identity of every country. Its name should also sound delightful just like its smells or taste. The criteria for judging food by its look, fragrance, and title differ from one culture to another. Some countries have very different choices in selecting food names which is opposite to other countries. When people of one country visit to another country, they carry stored food items from their own country and some people have to survive on fruits and vegetables unless they find a restaurant where the food of their choice is available. One example of Chinese food which is very different from Pakistani food is *Kuai*. It is a famous dish of Chinese cuisine as it is made up of cut stripes of raw meat or fish but for Pakistanis it is only the raw fish that is enough to cause vomiting. Furthermore, raw meat is not eaten in our culture and religion. Another example of a Japanese dish is *Sashimi* which is also just like the *Kuai* but a little bit different. It is also made up of slices of raw fish. It has to be cooked well according to the local people. Not only can food selection become an issue because of the taste but also because of the names given to the dishes in some restaurants and cafes. When we started researching on menus of elite eateries, we came to know about the recipe of *Tuna melt*. Its name is based on very dangerous sea fish Tuna but when we went through the recipe it is a simple piece of bread with some cheese and some simple fish meat.

Similarly, there are some elite eateries in Lahore as well where food products and beverages are assigned names that sound abhorring and awful. These names are very nasty and disgusting for Pakistanis and it is enough to kill their hunger. For instance, *Ooey Gooley Brownie* where gooley literally means sticky, is served at **Tattle Tea House**. Another example is of a main course food item is served at **PF Chang** with name *Dragon Roll*. Further examples include: *Rustica*, *Crispy Dragon Beef*, *Dragon fire Chicken*, *Firecrackers Prawns*, *Carnivora*, *The Dragon*, *Sticky Finger*, etc. In some restaurants names of those species are assigned to beverages and food items which are not even Halal. One example is of *Beef in Oysters* served at **Yum Chinese Thai**. Moreover, *Lava Balls* at **Noi Stir Fry Kitchen**, *Slow Drip Coffee* at **Soul Kitchen**, *Rattle Snake Pasta* at **Tenerife Cafe**, and other examples included *Prawn Bulldog Sauce*, *Cho Yuen Squids*, and *Chicken Chilli in Oyster Sauce*. The last name is showing that it is made up of oysters but in the recipe, no oyster is involved, it is simply cooked chicken with different sauces.

Language Depicting Geographical Labels; Showcasing Non-Native Identities:

Most of these restaurants have given their dishes or beverages names that are influenced by foreign cuisines. They have preferred foreign cuisines as compared to local ones. Some items carry the names of exotic lands making these dishes sound non-native. The menus of these elite cafes and restaurants are influenced by foreign areas because it is reputable in our contemporary society.

We can easily find *Thai soup*, *Mexican burgers*, *Thai red snapper and prawn*, *Russian salad*, *Italian pizza*, *French onion soup*, etc. It is easier to find *Bangkok chili chicken* at **The Skye restaurant**, *French vanilla* at **Tim Horton**, *Turkey potato salad* at **The Balcony**, *Thai red curry* at **The Brasserie**, *Moroccan chicken* at **Maribelle**, *Mexican Tostadas* at **London Courtyard**, *Beijing prawns* at **Yum Chinese and Thai**, *Thai Yam salad* at **Veera5**, *Sole Mediterranean* at **Tuscany Courtyard**, *UK Breakfast Steak* served at **Urban Kitchen** ---- in the elite restaurants and cafes located in the posh areas of Lahore. Whereas it is hard to find dishes named locally in these elite eateries. These restaurants avoid local names to maintain their status. Names like *Belgian chocolate tart* at **Rina's Kitchen** and *New York-style cheesecake*, *California Roll*, *Shanghai Sunrise*, *Mandarin Crunch Salad*, and *The Great wall of Chocolate* served at **PF Chang**, further build up the point. Likely, beverages named *Brazilian lemonade* at **The Balcony** and *Spanish latte* at **Tim Hortons** are indicating the same craze. At **Saku**

Hana, an elite restaurant in DHA which is one of the posh areas in Lahore, there is a long list of items with foreign alliances like *California roll*, *Schezuan soup*, *Beijing beef*, *Thai clear soup*, etc. The same goes for **London Courtyard**, also located in DHA Lahore, with dishes like *London fish and chips*, *Moroccan grilled fish*, *Mediterranean grilled fish*, *Thai basil gal*, etc.

In some cafes and restaurants, the entire range of a menu is served with non-native names. For example, the *Korean menu* at **Mandarin Kitchen**, *Continental breakfast* at **Sasha's**, *Irish Breakfast* at **Butler's Chocolate Cafe**, and *Japanese menu* at **NOVU**. Somehow, some salads are also named according to the above trend, for example, *Thai chicken salad* at **Rina's Kitchen**, *Mexican bean salad* at **The Skye Restaurant**, and *Greek salad* at **English Tea House** is served. The supremacy of names of foreign places suggests that menu writers and consumers are enchanted by exotic and foreign cultures and places.

Language Usage of Collocations as Adjectives:

Adjectives that are used with some food items in many restaurants is to gain the attention of customers and to enhance the appetite of their customers. The common adjective that we find is 'Juicy', 'Sour', 'Spicy', 'crunchy', etc. They were commonly used in many traditional as well as fast-food restaurants. For instance, a continental dish named *Sautéed Vegetables* served at **Jade Cafe by China Town**, another dish is served with name *The Spicy Spider* at **Café de Como**, *Crispy Fried Calamari* served at **The Polo Lounge** and at **Tenerife Cafe** a drink is named *Virgin Mojito* and food items are named *Spicy Chicken Fingers*, *Mamma Mia Pizza*, etc. At **Arcadian Cafe**, an elite cafe in Gulberg, Lahore serves main course items named, *Creamy Mushroom*, *Crispy Onion Rings*, *Sizzling Chicken Fajita*, etc and in beverages a shake is named *Blue Lagoon* and Fruit flavoured drinks named *Purple Heaven* and *Lovely Day*. At **PF Chang** a salad is served named *Mandarian Crunch Salad Salmon* and a dish is served named *Spicy Tuna Roll*. Other examples include: *The Salty Cake*, *Sour chocolate*, *Bitter ice-cream*, *Crispy Duck*, *Dry Chicken Chilli*, *Crunchy Spicy Prawns*, *Chunky Chicken Sandwich*, *Skinny Iced Latte*, etc. But in most of the elite cafes and restaurants, they don't use these kinds of adjectives. They write the food names on their menu in such a way that give them a very exceptional meaning. For example, *Luxurious grilled cheese sandwich*, *Por Pia Tord*, *Yum special Ped*, *Haute cuisine fried chicken*, *Fiesty Chicken Tikka*, *Glazed Wings Parcel*, *Scraggy Eggs*, *Croque Monsieur*, etc. Inculcation of these words in menus as food items

becomes the symbol of elite cafes and restaurants. Young generation is enchanted by their names and order these items to look trendy and updated.

Language Endorsing Elite Status:

Globalization is focusing to erase unique cultural identities in third-world countries, while simultaneously promoting class-consciousness in various aspects, including the restaurant and cafe industry. In upscale establishments, the menu not only signifies class consciousness through high prices but also through the names given to dishes and beverages. It's important to note that food not only showcases cultural affiliation but also serves as a way to judge people's socioeconomic backgrounds. This is why some individuals purposely choose food items with names associated with the elite class.

It is not unfamiliar to find branded food items listed on the menus of elite eateries, which further strengthens class consciousness. This practice reflects an exclusive society driven by social class divisions. Examples of such food items includes: *The Veera Chinese Soup* served at **Veera 5**, *Yum special soup* and *Yum Rice* served at **Yum Chinese and Thai**, *LCR special club sandwich* and *LCR meat house* served at **London Courtyard**, *Balcony special beef burger* at the **Balcony**, *Wok special soup* served at **The Wok**, *Pantry special toast* served at **The Pantry**, *Tuscany fish and chips* served at **Tuscany Courtyard**, *Butler's signature* served at **Butler's Chocolate Café**, *Sumo Philadelphia roll* served at **Sumo**, *Taipan steamed Lapu-Lapu* served at **Taipan**, *Chang's Apple Crunch* served at **PF Chang**, *Rina's Classic Club Sandwich* served at **Rina's Kitchenette** and *NOVU special soup* served at **NOVU**, a mocktail named *Ferrari Bully* is served at **Arcadian Cafe**, *Royal Mei Kong Chicken* at **Mei Kong**, *L'Amour Special Tea* at **Cafe L'Amour**, *Brownie Ala Mode* at **Noi Stir Fry Kitchen**, *Gold Boost* at **Wasabi**, all of which carry brand labels to make them more appealing.

Language Promoting Sexual Imagery:

Menus showcasing sexual imagery are used to mesmerize consumers about food items. Many reputed international brands are using sexual imagery and clearly illustrate sexual pictures to promote their products, these brands include PETA, Victoria's Secret, Dallas Opera, etc. But now the trend of sexual imagery for promotion is not just restricted to international brands only. This trend has further grabbed the attention of menu writers of elite cafes and restaurants to name their food items. These

names of the items indicate sex clearly or vaguely. Sexual imagery is used in naming beverages, pizzas, other dishes, and especially desserts. For instance, a dessert is named *Drop it on me* at **Sweet Affairs**. Some other names of desserts with this imagery includes: *Melting Moments*, *Sizzling Skillet Brownies*, *Oh! My Chocolate*, *Melting Globe*, *Angel kiss*, *Temptation Cake*, *Passion Fruit Cheesecake*. Names of other food items that employ sexual imagery includes *Hot Garlic Prawns*, *Open Face Sweet and Sour Cheese Panind*, *Sizzler Steak*, *Buck Skin*, *Hot Ebi Union*, and *Hot Garlic Snapper*. Some beverages are named *Passion Fruit Mojito* and *Passion Fruit Green tea*. At the **Dessert Directory**, items are served named *After Eight Mint Galore*, *Lindt Indulgence in Dark*, *Coffee Oh So Natty*.

Gender Biased Language:

Gender biasness is an important issue that is being practiced in our culture irrespective you are working in an organization or staying at home. However, nowadays it became very offensive especially when we talk about women. There are many elite class restaurants whose food menus represents sexual aggression and disrespect towards women. For instance, **Dahlia** an elite cafe located in Gulberg, Lahore, a beef burger is named *Mother in law's Meatloaf*. It is clearly representing sexuality and aggression towards women and at an elite cafe named **Paola's Cosa Nostra**, a mocktail is served with name *Wonder Women*. Similarly, a drink name *Lady in Red* is served at **Tenerife Cafe**, a continental breakfast with name *Croque Madam* is served at **Sasha's**, and at **Howdy**, a popular place in Lahore has food item names like *Hot Cowgirl*, *Kick of a Chick* and *Wild chick*. Here we can see that 'cowgirl' is addressing sexuality whereas the word 'chick' also speaks the same aggression and not only pointing out to a young chicken but is also used as a slang to refer to a charming young lady or a teenage girl.

Personification in Language Usage to Adore Evilness:

Personification is a lingual device which is adopted in literature for introducing dormant object as human. The names given to some food items and beverages on the menus of most of the elite cafes and restaurants are so revolutionary that they are quite different from the real recipes. They show that unless one reads the description of the recipe, one cannot be convinced of what they really are. The sponsors also use this device consistently to fascinate consumers and menu writers are no special case in this regard. For example, at **Howdy** a steak is served with name *Gunslinger*, burgers are named *The Masher*, *The Basher*, and a wrap is named *Monsta Wrap*. These words are related to crime which eventually

is a result of sinful and evil practices. Moreover, at **PF Chang** a dish is served as *Midnight Ritual, Rising Dragon, and Kung Pao Dragon Roll*. Here the word ‘dragon’ shows evilness and in many religions and traditions, dragon is symbolized as malicious chaotic creature and of untamed nature. At **London Courtyard** a main course item is served with name *Dragon Fire Pot Chicken* and a beverage named *Monster shake*. At **Mandarian Kitchen** a food item is served with name *Dragon Noodles*. Such names do not show any direct or indirect connection with the food item itself. Using such names in menus glorify evilness and crime which is not practical in our culture.

Language Exalting Divergence in Lifestyle:

Words are an effective tool in shaping people’s thoughts. The influential adaptation of words has a significant impact in transforming certain thoughts of people and their perceptions about things around them. By altering words or choosing words in an effective manner, people can change their insights regarding things that might once considered prohibited and forbidden in our society and culture. Concepts regarding such things can also be changed by persistent exposure to them and things related to them. Words can change an unacceptable thing to an admirable one. Here are some examples of the words that are used in the elite cafes and restaurants of Lahore in this regard. At **Howdy**, a burger is named as *Wrangler* which literally means a person who wrangles or disputes and a dessert is presented with the name of *Chocaine* which shows the amalgamation of chocolate and cocaine. At **Tin Roof**, a beverage is named as *Red-Eye* and further examples of beverages include: *Minty Madness, Electrical ease*, etc. The above used words cannot be used in a positive sense. The term like *Wrangler and Chocaine* are used as negative connotation and indicate destruction. Similarly, *Pad Ki Mao* at **Noi Stir Fry Kitchen** is representing fried noodles but literally it means ‘drunk’. *Godspell Beef Load* at **Broadway** is also glorifying people’s thought. **Boba teas**, where Boba means large breasts, are now available at many restaurants. Regardless of their negative connotations, the writer has included these words as food items to change the perception of young generation. This has become a trend now. This trend is changing people’s perception of wrong and right by honouring such words. By using negative connotations, menu writers are helping in glorifying a deviant lifestyle.

Language Depiction of Foreign Fictional and Fairy Tale Characters:

Now a days in order to get attention of children and youngsters, the menu writers of some elite eateries have given the names of unreal characters

like in cartoons and movies to certain dishes and beverages. Teenagers and children order dishes and beverages that have imaginary and fictional names not essentially because of the food item or its taste but because they are attracted to those words or like those characters whose names are given to those items. For instance, on the menu of *Arcadian Cafe*, a creamy shake with the name of fairy tale character, *Pink Barbie* is served. Similarly, at *Coco Cubano*, an elite restaurant in Gulberg, Lahore, a coffee is served which is named *Piccolo*, a famous fictional character from James Baddock novel *Piccolo*. Furthermore, at *Howdy*, a food item is named *The Lord of the Wings* and at another elite restaurant *Maribelle*, in DHA Phase 5, desserts are served with the name *Whimsical Fairy Floss* and *Maribelle's Cheesecake*, they are mostly ordered by girls as they always fantasize fairy tales. At *PF Chang* a dish is served named *Buddhas feast* and at *Sumo* a dish is named *Buddha bowl*, at *London Courtyard*, food items are named *Mini Man Burger*, *Space Getti* and *Sinbad's Carpet* from kids' menu, *Berry Blitz* at *Butler's Chocolate Cafe*, and at *Café Aylanto* a cocktail is served with name *Zombie*. Another example is *Phantom* means 'ghost' serve at *Broadway*. Now we should not be amazed by this that none of the food items and beverages in these elite eateries is named after any Pakistani fictional character. There are only fictional characters that are glorified by foreign culture.

This corpus-based research reveals that cultural imperialism is happening in our food sector, which is due to the dominance of western media and cultural food items. The diffusion of western culture is affecting our Pakistani lifestyle and food choices. These markets are selling what is desired by consumers who are under the influence of western culture. Though there is a rise in consumerism, this is resulting in the loss of traditional knowledge and practices. Cultural hegemony and power imbalances are also resulting in and leading to a loss of diversity.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Food symbolises one's culture and tradition; therefore, it holds significant importance for the country you are living in. It reflects people's identities, thus promoting the tradition all over the world. However, as discussed in this research, our people are busy carrying the foreign culture by promoting and fantasising about elite-class dishes and beverages. Lahore is one of the most famous cities in Pakistan with respect to food and cultural heritage, but these days it has not only resulted in the replacement of local dishes with foreign cuisines due to cultural imperialism and

homogenization but has also led to a change in traditional food terminologies with weird, culturally strange, and unique terms.

It is evident through our corpus-linguistic analysis that we have lost Pakistani taste and tradition while promoting western culture. As discussed in this study, our young generation is attracted by the new trends set by our society. Therefore, from the fifty-five (55) elite-class restaurants and cafes, the 200 names of dishes and beverages that we have analysed, indicate and promote the supremacy of weird and strange names of food items in Lahore. Elite-class menus have focused more on foreign cuisine than promoting Pakistani cuisine. This is a clear sign of being dominant, as our youth are very much attracted to dishes like *Bang Bang Prawns*, *Smash x BAO Burger*, *Peek-a-boo Bomb*, etc. over Pakistani cuisine. They prefer desserts named *Hit Me Brownie* or *Oh! My Chocolate*, on Kheer or Halwa. Energy drinks and Mocktails like *Lightening Shot*, *Death by Chocolate*, *Sky Bully* and *Zombie* have taken the place of fresh juices and cold drinks. Chinese rice on Biryani or Pulao. As it seems cool and up-to-date to them instead of being called old school.

Cultural homogenization occurs when any society emphasises or de-emphasises certain parts of your identity. If your identity is disapproved by your surrounding people, you search for new individuality and only display that aspect in order to fit in. This includes frequently sacrificing your wardrobe, cuisine, language, and name as well. This loss increases with prejudice and occurs when culture is lost, resulting in cultural homogenization. This research depicts that Pakistani people are losing their cultural identity and are influenced by other western cultures, which is the main reason for this cultural homogenization, specifically generation Z, who is inspired by K-pop culture. Another important factor of this cultural homogenization in Pakistani society is the availability of new products and services influenced by the western culture that these restaurants are providing. People want to be at the best location for food, and these restaurants offer what they want to buy. The pressure in business is sink or swim; without sales, these markets would fail, thus it cannot escape cultural homogenization. If people you are associated with or in your community believe that everyone's individualism or culture is acceptable, homogenization will be reduced.

The research also indicates that we should stand by our traditions and all these elite-class restaurants should promote Pakistani cuisines by going with decent and local food names that we have been using previously instead of foreign food names that mostly promote aggression and

violence, gender bias, and those that sound abhorrent and disgusting, as mentioned in this research. However, we should create awareness about our Pakistani cuisines. We should divert the attention of elite cafes and restaurants towards making room for local Pakistani dishes on their menus, as most of these restaurants serve Chinese, Japanese, Italian, French, and Korean food items, but there are only a few Pakistani dishes on their menus, which are also disappearing with time due to cultural homogenisation.

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APPENDIX:

List of all elite cafes and restaurants in Lahore:

1. Amu
2. Arcadian Café
3. Boba Teas
4. Broadway
5. Butler's Chocolate Café
6. Cafe Aylanto
7. Cafe de Como
8. CAFÉ L'AMOUR
9. Coco Cubano
10. DAHLIA
11. Deja by Khadija
12. Desert Directory
13. El Momento Lahore
14. English Tea House
15. Fuchsia Kitchen
16. Fujiyama Restaurant
17. GAI A Japanese Restaurant
18. Howdy
19. Haute Dolci
20. Jade Cafe by China Town
21. La Cornucopia
22. London Courtyard
23. Mandarin Kitchen
24. Maribelle
25. Mei Kong
26. MON CHERI
27. Nando's
28. Noi Stir Fry Kitchen
29. NOVU
30. Paola's Cosa Nostra
31. Pasta la vista
32. Penthouse Lahore
33. PF Chang
34. Rina's Kitchenette
35. Saku Hana
36. Sasha
37. Soul Kitchen
38. Sumo
39. Sweet Affairs
40. Taipan
41. Tattle Tea House
42. Tenerife Cafe
43. The Balcony Lahore
44. The Brasserie
45. The Pantry
46. The Polo Lounge
47. The Skye Restaurant
48. The Wok
49. Tim Hortons
50. Tin Roof Café
51. Tuscany Courtyard
52. Urban Kitchen
53. Veera5
54. Wasabi
55. Yum Chinese and Thai