

Request Refusal in Historical Arabic Cinematic Dialogues: A Pragmatic Study of *Lion of the Desert*

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ABSTRACT

This study analyzes strategies of request refusal in the dialogues of the film *Lion of the Desert* with the aim of classifying these strategies according to the Beebe, Takahashi, & Uliss-Weltz (1990) model and of elucidating their pragmatic and narrative functions within the cinematic text. The research adopts a functional pragmatic framework that links the choice of refusal form to power relations, social distance, and narrative context, addressing the lack of systematic studies that connect traditional refusal taxonomies to their dramatic functions in historical films. The design is a descriptive qualitative content analysis. The sample comprises 27 dialogue excerpts selected from a 173-minute film, treated as focused analytical units. Data were collected through repeated viewing and close observation, coded using a coding sheet based on the categories of Beebe et al. (1990), organized in Excel, and then subjected to manual qualitative analysis using content-analysis techniques. The principal findings reveal a dominant use of indirect refusal as the preferred discursive strategy by characters seeking to avoid direct confrontation and to maneuver politically within the complexities of wartime. By contrast, direct refusal appears in decisive military moments and existential situations to convey resilience and principled steadfastness, while supportive strategies occur only marginally and are largely confined to emotional protection. This distribution leads to the interpretive conclusion that coercive political and military hierarchies reshape speech acts, transforming refusals from routine social politeness into symbolic, struggle-laden linguistic choices that reflect power struggles and assertions of national identity. The study's implications contribute to the literature on pragmatic mitigation and its cinematic applications, and it recommends that future research adopt mixed methods and broader comparative studies across Arab and global cinemas to trace the particular dynamics of resistance language.

Keywords: Pragmatics, request refusal, speech act, refusal strategy, cinematic dialogue

BACKGROUND

Refusal is not merely the word “no” but a complex speech act that threatens interlocutors' faces and requires a balance between frankness and relationship maintenance. Recent studies indicate that speakers select direct or indirect forms of refusal according to the degree of face threat and the social context, often employing mitigating or justificatory devices to reduce friction (Zhang, 2022). This underscores that refusal intersects with identity, power, and cultural expectations, making its formulation a communicative skill that demands high contextual sensitivity. In everyday interaction, refusal strategies are distributed among avoidance, justification, postponement, and explicit rejection, varying with social distance and authority. In cinematic texts, however, these strategies are deployed for dramatic and narrative purposes: they shape character, build tension, and convey ideological messages (Hendar & Anshari, 2021). Regional studies have shown a tendency toward indirect strategies in sensitive situations, reflecting an interplay between pragmatic considerations and artistic representation, which selects refusal formulations that serve plot and symbolism and thus calls for careful contextual analysis. Accordingly, refusal is a multidimensional speech act requiring precise linguistic tools, and cinema exploits these tools for dramatic and political ends. Analyzing refusal in *Omar al-Mukhtar — Lion of the Desert* therefore provides a window onto the interaction of language, power, and representation.

Research Problem

The pragmatic field lacks systematic studies that focus exclusively on how speakers choose refusal forms and how these forms are distributed across diverse social contexts. Contemporary literature suggests the need for fine-grained classification between direct and indirect refusals and their accompanying devices, and that selection patterns are influenced by authority and social distance (Zhang, 2022). This research gap limits our ability to construct general explanatory models and calls for empirical, analytical studies that challenge assumptions about the stability of refusal strategies in everyday interaction. Although cinematic discourse has been studied as a site for representing power and identity, few studies dissect refusal formulations within Arab historical screenplays. Studies of global cinematic texts indicate that refusal is exploited dramatically to build tension and character (Wongsittikan, 2022). The scarcity of research on Arabic historical cinema makes it difficult to understand how refusal forms are used to transmit ideological messages or to manage characters' faces in contexts of colonization or resistance, thereby justifying a textual analysis of *Omar al-Mukhtar — Lion of the Desert* as a case study. Moreover, most available studies concentrate on pedagogical skills or cultural comparisons, while research based on natural interactive data from everyday life is rare. The absence of naturalistic data reduces the credibility of applied conclusions and necessitates the collection and analysis of recorded dialogues according to a unified classification to capture pragmatic subtleties across formal and informal situations. These three issues converge into a clear methodological and epistemic gap: there is insufficient pragmatic research that integrates analysis of refusal in everyday interaction with analysis of historical cinematic texts in Arabic. This gap motivates a study that combines naturalistic and textual data and applies a unified taxonomy of refusal strategies to clarify the relationship between language, power, and representation.

Aim and Research Question

The general aim of this study is to explore the pragmatic methods and mechanisms by which characters in *Omar al-Mukhtar — Lion of the Desert* express the speech act of request refusal, in order to demonstrate the richness of cinematic discourse and the diversity of its communicative functions. The analysis also seeks to show how these linguistic strategies vary according to interactional context and the relational stance between interlocutors. Accordingly, the present study addresses the following principal question: What request-refusal strategies are used in the dialogues of *Lion of the Desert*, and how can these strategies be classified according to the Beebe, Takahashi, & Uliss-Weltz (1990) model?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Interest in the Beebe et al. (1990) model began with its framing of refusal as a distinction between direct and indirect refusals and their accompanying strategies, and it became a point of departure for understanding pragmatic transfer in refusal performance. The model posits that strategic choice is influenced by factors of power and social distance. Subsequent studies indicate that the original taxonomy is amenable to modification and rearticulation to fit diverse data sets, including learner data and recorded dialogues (Beebe et al., 1990; Zhang, 2022). Applied research has shown that accompanying strategies such as justification, postponement, and alternative suggestion play a central role in mitigating face threat (Hendar & Anshari, 2021). Accordingly, reading Beebe et al.'s classification in a cinematic context requires analytical expansion that accounts for the dramatic and symbolic functions that may repurpose these strategies in unexpected ways. Contemporary literature demonstrates wide applications of the Beebe et al. (1990) model in studies of request refusal among speakers: the taxonomy has been used to analyze refusal patterns of both language learners and native speakers, with repeated findings of the predominance of indirect strategies in sensitive situations (Zhang, 2022; Mohd Kamal & Ariffin, 2023). In cinematic contexts, analytical studies highlight that screenplays reshape refusal strategies to serve character construction and dramatic tension, necessitating a critical reading that links pragmatic structure to narrative function (Hendar & Anshari, 2021). Applying this framework to *Lion of the Desert* enables tracing how refusal formulations are employed to embody ideological stances and to manage characters' faces, which calls for a methodology combining textual and pragmatic analysis to capture nuances between linguistic performance and cinematic representation. Integrating Beebe et al. (1990) with recent empirical findings opens methodological avenues for analyzing refusal in historical film texts, showing that the

theoretical taxonomy requires interpretive flexibility to connect strategy with dramatic function and the socio-political context in which it appears.

DISCUSSION OF LITERATURE

This review synthesizes the origins of the Beebe et al. (1990) model with contemporary analyses to show that request-refusal strategies distribute across direct and indirect forms with functional accompaniments used to mitigate threat or to buy time. The literature indicates that while the theoretical taxonomy is useful, it requires interpretive flexibility when applied to cinematic texts, where pragmatic formulations are reworked to serve character building, symbolism, and narrative. Applied studies consistently report the dominance of indirect strategies in sensitive contexts, whereas explicit refusals surface in decisive moments; this pattern necessitates a multi-level approach that combines textual analysis with interactional context. Thus, applying this framework to *Lion of the Desert* offers an opportunity to demonstrate how language, power, and historical representation intersect in the production of layered meanings. Finally, methodological gaps are evident in the reliance on contrived data rather than natural dialogues, which calls for deeper fieldwork and critical studies.

Previous Studies

The Beebe, Takahashi, & Uliss-Weltz (1990) model constitutes a historical point of departure for classifying refusal strategies into direct, indirect, and accompanying moves, and it has influenced subsequent pragmatic research. The model indicates that strategy selection is affected by authority and social distance, and that accompaniments such as reasoning and postponement function to mitigate face threat (Beebe et al., 1990; Zhang, 2022). Later studies applied the taxonomy to learner data and interactive corpora, revealing a tendency toward indirect strategies in sensitive situations and underscoring the need for interpretive flexibility when transferring the model to cinematic texts with dramatic and symbolic functions.

Applied research has shown the suitability of Beebe et al.'s classification for analyzing refusal patterns among language learners and native speakers, employing instruments such as written and oral DCTs to obtain codable data (Zhang, 2022; Mohd Kamal & Ariffin, 2023). For example, a student study using a DCT with 60 participants revealed heavy reliance on indirect strategies and justifications, while other studies reported variation according to gender and relative authority (Mohd Kamal & Ariffin, 2023; Zhang, 2022). A principal methodological challenge is the frequent reliance on contrived data rather than natural dialogues, which affects the external validity of applied conclusions.

When the Beebe et al. (1990) framework is transferred to screenplay analysis, cinema is seen to repurpose refusal strategies for dramatic ends: indirect refusal may serve tension and symbolism, while direct refusal appears in moments of moral or motivational mobilization (Hendar & Anshari, 2021; Zhang, 2022). Analytical studies of film texts have used qualitative coding of selected dialogue excerpts with relatively small samples, concluding that narrative function can alter the pragmatic meaning of a strategy (Hendar & Anshari, 2021; Mohd Kamal & Ariffin, 2023). Therefore, analyzing a historical film such as *Lion of the Desert* requires combining pragmatic coding with narrative analysis to capture the interplay between language and authority. Overall, previous studies validate Beebe et al. (1990) as a foundational classificatory framework but indicate that its application to historical cinema demands methodological expansion: integrating naturalistic and textual data, enlarging samples, and employing mixed qualitative–quantitative tools to overcome the limitations of contrived DCTs. Such a methodological blend will enable a deeper understanding of how refusal strategies are mobilized to represent power and identity within Arabic cinematic discourse.

In sum, this section synthesizes the literature to present a coherent account linking the origins of Beebe et al. (1990) to the functions of refusal strategies in interactive and textual contexts. It highlights core relationships between strategy choice and determinants such as authority and social distance, and it repeatedly notes patterns—justification, postponement, and mitigation—as tools for reducing face threat and, simultaneously, as dramatic devices in cinema. Strategically, there is a need to broaden the taxonomy to encompass narrative and symbolic functions that cinema reassigns to refusal meanings, while the methodological challenge of overreliance on contrived data underscores the need for mixed methods and larger samples to fill theoretical and empirical gaps and to better understand the intersection of language, power, and representation.

Research Design

This study adopts a descriptive qualitative content-analysis design for examining cinematic dialogues, a choice appropriate for describing pragmatic patterns and refusal strategies without imposing quantitative measures. This design permits the extraction of symbolic and linguistic categories from the film text and the tracing of their recurrence and functions across contexts while preserving sensitivity to the historical and political setting (Martin & Oliver, 2022; Creswell, 2023). Combining thematic coding with interpretive analysis reveals relationships between contextual factors and strategies, and it requires methodological verification procedures to maintain reliability and consistency.

Methodologically, the research follows a descriptive approach aimed at providing an accurate, organized description of refusal strategies as they appear in the cinematic text, accompanied by functional interpretation within the Beebe et al. (1990) framework. The descriptive method affords flexibility in using qualitative analytic tools such as thematic coding and contextual analysis, and its application is guided by contemporary methodological protocols that specify transparent steps for data collection and analysis (Villamin et al., 2024). This approach ensures the researcher can link pragmatic patterns to semantic and narrative outcomes without claiming statistical representativeness.

Sample Size and Sampling Method

Sample size. The study sample comprises 27 dialogue excerpts extracted from *Lion of the Desert* (173 minutes). These excerpts serve as focused analytical units for identifying expressions of request refusal and classifying them. Selecting this number of excerpts is appropriate for qualitative content analysis, as recent literature recommends small to medium sample sizes (approximately 10–40 documents/excerpts) to achieve thematic saturation in topic and content analyses (Wutich et al., 2024). Systematic reviews support flexible sample determination according to the depth of data required and the nature of the document, with the aim of in-depth analytical description rather than statistical generalization (Subedi, 2021). Thus, 27 excerpts provide a balance between comprehensiveness and analytical focus to capture the diversity of refusal strategies within the film text.

Sampling method. The study employs purposive sampling to select dialogue excerpts that contain instances of request refusal. Excerpts are extracted according to predefined objective criteria related to the presence of a refusal act and its dramatic context, a common and reliable approach in qualitative content research that targets specific linguistic phenomena within selected texts (Palinkas et al., 2015). Purposive selection is justified by the study's aim to focus on explicit and implicit refusal cases in the film, ensuring the sample's relevance to the analytical purpose and enhancing the validity of qualitative inferences when linking strategies to pragmatic and narrative contexts.

Research Instrument and Data Collection

Instrument. A coding sheet was used as the methodological instrument to classify each refusal instance according to the categories of Beebe et al. (1990), thereby ensuring coding consistency and inter-coder verifiability. This instrument is practical and familiar in qualitative content research because it combines code definitions, textual examples, and inclusion/exclusion criteria, facilitating replication and verification (Saldana, 2013; Wutich et al., 2024). In the present study the coding sheet includes: excerpt identifier, start and end timestamps, character, type of refusal, and interactional context, enabling linkage between pragmatic category and narrative function and strengthening coding reliability through methodological checks.

Data collection procedures. Data collection involved repeated, systematic viewing of the 27 selected dialogue excerpts, recording each refusal instance on the coding sheet, and transferring the records into Microsoft Excel for temporal and contextual sorting, with preliminary interpretive notes. This practice aligns with modern qualitative analysis guidelines that recommend repeated immersion and organization of codes in reviewable tables (Villamin et al., 2024; Wutich et al., 2024). The data underwent a dual review stage to ensure coding consistency, after which records were reorganized to facilitate thematic analysis and semantic interpretation by linking strategy to narrative context.

Data Analysis Procedures

Data analysis began with a manual qualitative content analysis aimed at classifying refusal acts and linking them to their interactional contexts. Following repeated immersion in the excerpts and iterative reading of the transcriptions, explicit and implicit refusals were identified and labeled according to the coding sheet based on the Beebe et al. model. Results were organized in tables that connected excerpt, timestamp, character, and strategy, which facilitated objective comparisons. Contemporary methodological guidance supports the effectiveness of repeated immersion and manual coding for achieving thematic saturation and inter-coder reliability (Wutich et al., 2024; Villamin et al., 2024). Finally, reciprocal reviews were conducted to ensure coding consistency and to formulate coherent interpretive conclusions.

Research Findings

Table 1 below illustrates the distribution of the identified and precisely classified request refusal strategies within the dialogues of the film *Lion of the Desert* in terms of frequencies and percentages. Each speech interaction was contextually examined and classified based on direct refusal, indirect refusal, and adjuncts to refusals, according to the pragmatic model proposed by Beebe et al. (1990).

Based on the extracted data, statistical results demonstrate an overwhelming dominance of the indirect refusal strategy as the most frequently utilized method in the cinematic discourse, accounting for **70.4%**, followed by the direct refusal strategy at **25.9%**. Conversely, a minimal and highly restricted use of adjuncts to refusals was recorded compared to the other methods, constituting only **3.7%** of the total analyzed dialogues.

This uneven distribution clearly indicates the characters' reliance on diverse indirect pragmatic methods to express refusal in accordance with the nature of the shifting conversational contexts within the film. Based on these indicators, it can be concluded that the highly charged military and political environment necessitates a diversification of expressive modes, transforming verbal responses into pragmatic tools that serve either political maneuvering or steadfast existential resolve.

Table (1): Frequency and Percentages of Request Refusal Strategies

Strategies	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Direct Refusal	7	25.9
Indirect Refusal	19	70.4
Supporting Strategies	1	3.7
Total	27	100

Presentation and qualitative interpretation of textual data by category

First: Direct Refusal

Table 2: Direct refusal strategy

No.	Character	Studied dialogue	Pragmatic subform	Interactional and dramatic context
5	Ismail	لا.	Non-performative explicit refusal	Combat field context; refusal issued by Ismail out of concern for safety.
8	Lobito	هذا مرفوض تماماً. إنهم يطلبون اعترافاً دولياً وكأنهم أمة مستقلة. وهم ليسوا كذلك. بل رعايا ضمن ولايتنا.	Non-performative explicit refusal	Asymmetric political negotiation; refusal of the Arab party's request to preserve colonial dominance.
21	Sandrini	لا!	Non-performative explicit refusal	Military order context concerning execution; refusal on moral grounds.
25	Italian officer	هذا مرفوض تماماً.	Non-performative explicit refusal	Morale-building context; absolute rejection of the idea of surrender.
26	Omar al-Mukhtar	لن نستسلم أبداً. إما أن ننتصر، أو نموت.	Absolute refusal	Existential resistance context; refusal framed as a binary, life-or-death ideological stance.
27	Omar al-Mukhtar	وماذا أقدم لكم؟ تعاوناً؟! لا! لا!	Non-performative explicit refusal	Categorical rejection of any cooperation or concession to the colonial authority.

The direct refusal category in Table 2 exemplifies unequivocal linguistic closure and frontal confrontation in the film's discourse. The instances coded as non-performative explicit refusals (single-word or formulaic negations such as "لا" "No" and declarative formulas like: ("هذا مرفوض تماماً" "This is completely unacceptable") function to terminate proposals, orders, or demands without mitigation. Such forms appear in contexts of immediate personal danger (Ismail's safety-driven refusal) and in moral objections to punitive orders (Sandrini's rejection of an execution order). Declarative, categorical formulations—evident in Lobito's and the Italian officer's "This is completely unacceptable"—serve to maintain hegemonic control or to mobilize collective resolve against capitulation.

The category reaches its rhetorical apex in Omar al-Mukhtar's absolute refusal ("We will never surrender لن نستسلم أبداً") Either we triumph, or we die."—where refusal transcends a mere conversational move and becomes an ideological and existential posture. In this configuration, refusal operates as a performative identity marker: it publicly enacts steadfastness, constructs moral authority, and delineates in-group resolve against colonial pressure. Omar al-Mukhtar's subsequent emphatic negation of cooperation ("No! No!" لا! لا!) further converts refusal into a ritualized repudiation of compromise, reinforcing the film's narrative of resistance.

Collectively, these direct forms are deployed selectively at moments that demand clarity, moral certainty, or rhetorical mobilization; they contrast with the predominance of indirect strategies elsewhere in the film by foregrounding confrontation, principle, and decisive agency.

Second: Supportive Strategies

No.	Character	Studied dialogue	Pragmatic subform	Interactional and dramatic context
4	Umm Ismail	أنت صغير جداً، لم يحن دورك بعد.	Psychological support / emotional soothing	Acute psychological and emotional context; the mother attempts to calm her son and restrain his impulsive anger after the traumatic loss of family members.

Table 3: Supportive strategies

The supportive strategies category appears extremely rarely in the dataset, represented by a single instance in which Umm Ismail addresses her enraged son with a soothing, protective formula: "*You are far too young; your time has not yet come*." أنت صغير جداً، لم يحن دورك بعد. This utterance functions as emotional containment—a parental intervention aimed at de-escalation and the preservation of the child's safety in a context of acute grief and potential impulsive action.

In the film's diegesis, the supportive move operates as a protective pragmatic shield, combining parental affect and prudent guidance to prevent reckless behavior in an environment marked by detention and warfare. The marginal presence of this category underscores that affective, protective refusals are exceptional within the film's discourse, surfacing primarily in intimate, family-centered moments rather than in the public or political arenas where indirect and direct refusals predominate.

Third: Indirect Refusal

Table 4: Indirect refusal strategy

No.	Character	Studied dialogue	Pragmatic subform	Interactional and dramatic context
1	Prince Amedeo	كوئونيل، لا... أرجوك.	Mitigation / avoidance	Elite colonial interaction; refusal to acknowledge repressive practices.
2	Graziani	ألا يمكنك الانتظار؟ كما ترى، إنك تُزعج ضيوقي.	Disapproval / criticism	Formal ceremonial context; refusal to interrupt protocol to preserve authority.
3	Tomelli	لقد خُذت، كن حذراً.	Threat / warning	Military attack on a village; a humanitarian request is refused with an authoritative warning.
6	Bu Muttari	هذا الحصان لا يحمل شخصين، وإسماعيل يعلم ذلك.	Reasoning / conditional	Emergency during battle; proposed plan rejected for practical logistical reasons.
7	Diodici	الأمر لن يكون بهذه السهولة الآن.	Expression of difficulty / doubt	Internal Italian military discussion; proposal to negotiate rejected due to protracted conflict and loss of trust.
9	Omar al-Mukhtar	لسنا إيطاليين، فلا تُقبل علينا من تكون.	Principled assertion	Ideological confrontation; rejection of colonial identity classification.
10	Lobito	مسألة البرلمان تُبحث في روما، وهذه الخيمة ليست مكاناً مناسباً لها.	Postponement / strategic delay	Formal political negotiation; refusal used to stall and gain time without genuine intent to concede.
11	Diodici	في الوقت الحاضر، سنؤدّن مطلبكم بإقامة برلمان.	Postponement	Colonial justification context; refusal to recognize legitimate demands.
12	Diodici	لا أقول إنها أراضي مُصادرة، بل أراضي مخصصة للاستيطان والزراعة، أراضي للتطوير.	Redefinition / justificatory reframing	Denial of land-seizure practices with ostensibly rational but misleading justifications.
13	Al-Fadil	ما دمت تسليون أراضينا، وطالما استمعلمنا المقاومة، فسنقاتلكم.	Rhetorical interrogative / objection	Escalating military context; rejection of any alternative to armed struggle.
14	Omar al-Mukhtar	لسنا على عجلة من أمرنا، فلماذا هذا التأجيل؟	Rhetorical interrogative / implicit objection	Negotiation marked by deliberate delay; question used to implicitly object to premature closure.
15	Bu Muttari	هذه الشروط تعني العار.	Value judgment / moral evaluation	Public rejection of unjust political terms that affront dignity and rights.
16	Omar al-Mukhtar	كيف لي أن أطمئن، وشعبي في معسكرات الاعتقال؟!	Assertion of prior commitment / concern	Decisive political confrontation regarding the legitimacy of colonial presence.
17	Omar al-Mukhtar	لا أريد أن أواجه، أريد أن أرى نهاية.	Declaration of principled/ideological stance	Implicitly charged context; expression of rejection of Italian presence as an external force.

The indirect refusal category is the most abundant and the most varied in the dataset. Characters deploy a wide repertoire of pragmatic subforms to maneuver politically and to avoid direct confrontation in formal and military settings. Subforms include mitigation and avoidance as in Prince Amedeo's plea, disapproval and criticism to preserve ceremonial dignity, and threats or warnings when refusals are backed by coercive force. Practical reasoning appears in logistical refusals during combat, while expressions of difficulty and reframing function to obscure or justify contested practices. Political tactics such as postponement and strategic delay are used to buy time without genuine intent to concede. Rhetorical interrogatives and moral evaluations serve as implicit objections, and repeated assertions of prior commitment and ideological principles by Omar al-Mukhtar and Al-Fadil articulate a sustained rejection of colonial presence and a firm commitment to resistance. Collectively, these indirect forms enable characters to negotiate power asymmetries, to preserve face, and to encode ideological positions within the film's narrative.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The findings confirm that indirect refusal predominates in *Lion of the Desert* (70.4%), with direct refusal at 25.9% and supportive strategies at 3.7%. This distribution indicates a clear preference for mitigation, justification, and postponement in political and negotiation contexts. The pattern aligns with recent pragmatic research reporting the dominance of indirect strategies in sensitive situations where interlocutors' faces are at stake (Zhang, 2022; Mohd Kamal & Ariffin, 2023). Cinematic analysis supports the view that screenplays

repurpose refusal forms for dramatic and symbolic functions: indirect forms serve diplomatic maneuvering while direct refusals are reserved for moments of mobilization and decisive action (Hendar & Anshari, 2021). The presence of a substantial minority of direct refusals is explained by field contexts and immediate confrontations that necessitate explicit rejection. Overall, the distribution in *Lion of the Desert* reflects a balance between face-saving communicative demands and narrative imperatives that require clarity and firmness, underscoring the need to read refusal as a linguistic-dramatic tool intertwined with the text's ideological structure.

Implications

The dominance of indirect strategies in the film carries strategic and applied implications. Theoretically, the distribution supports the claim that strategy selection is shaped by power relations and social distance, suggesting that refusal taxonomies should be expanded to incorporate narrative and symbolic functions in dramatic texts (Zhang, 2022). Practically, analysts and linguists should account for narrative context when interpreting refusal forms because screenplays may redeploy pragmatic moves to serve character development and dramatic tension (Hendar & Anshari, 2021). Pedagogically, language teaching and communication training programs can use cinematic examples to illustrate mitigation and justificatory strategies in negotiation scenarios. Finally, the results highlight the value of an integrated pragmatic–narrative approach to understand how refusal formulations produce layered ideological meanings.

Recommendations for Future Research

Based on the study's findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

- **Methodological expansion:** Broaden samples to include multiple films, television scripts, and recorded everyday dialogues to obtain naturalistic data that strengthen external validity.
- **Mixed methods:** Combine manual coding with quantitative measures of inter-coder agreement and statistical analysis to enhance reliability and replicability (Wutich et al., 2024).
- **Model testing:** Examine the flexibility of the Beebe et al. (1990) model by introducing new media and contextual variables and by employing peer-review sessions and advanced reliability metrics (Villamin et al., 2024).
- **Audience studies:** Integrate discourse analysis with reception studies to investigate how viewers interpret refusal forms and reconstruct their meanings, thereby linking pragmatics with cultural and narrative studies.

These directions will deepen understanding of how refusal strategies operate at the intersection of language, power, and cinematic representation.

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