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Refusal Strategies in a Kabyle Community of Bejaia: A Socio-pragmatic Study

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for a Master's Degree in Linguistics

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Abstract

Present research is a socio-pragmatic study exploring refusal strategies in the Kabyle Berber community, focusing on the effects of age, gender, and social status. The study was conducted in different settings within the Kabyle community of Bejaia. The data were collected through a DCT comprising 20 scenarios, including offers and invitations across various situations. 60 individuals constituted the participants of the study. Later, 3 of them were asked to answer interview questions to back up and clarify some patterns of data that have emerged from the DCT. The findings demonstrate that excuse/explanation and apology were the most commonly utilized refusal strategies. The results also indicate that age, gender, and social status, as well as culture, influence directness strategies and the type of politeness that moderates the situation. Women tend to refuse indirectly more than men by showing excessive respect to age categories and social status (High, equal, and low). Finally, thematic analysis of Kabyle refusal acts highlights five interconnected dimensions, which are Emotional impact, Strategy awareness, Cultural perception, Contextual variation, and relationship impact. Collectively, these themes clarify how Kabyle refusal strategies implement socially coded power, emotion, and ethical relationships negotiation. Kabyle Berber culture draws attention to collectivism and the interlocutor's positive face contrast to the hierarchical collectivism of China and the individualist US.

Keywords: Age, Gender, Social Status, Refusal Strategies, Kabyle Berbers.

Dedication

Al Hamdoulillah, I am truly grateful to Allah (sbw) for His guidance that has been my source of strength and blessings in every step of my life.

*To my father, **SAMIR**, your faith in me, even in silence, has always been a lighthouse in moments of doubt. Thank you for all your sacrifices and true love. You are my only source of strength. To my mother **DJAZIA**, your endless prayers, sleepless nights, and quiet strength have carried me through every storm. You are the heartbeat behind this accomplishment, the reason I never gave up.*

*To my dear brother **PITCHOU**, though miles separate us, your presence has never left my heart. Even from afar, your encouragement, your faith in me raised louder than the distance. This achievement carries your name too, because I never walked this road alone. You were always with me, even when I couldn't see you.*

*To my best friend **ASSIA**, we didn't just share a thesis, but we shared a journey filled with doubts and discoveries, stress and laughter, pressure and purpose. This journey would never have been the same without you. Thank you for your loyalty, your resilience, and your companionship through every challenge.*

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*To my lovely **NOUNOUCH**, thank you for your support, for believing in me and your encouragement. To my dear grand-parents **SEDDIK** and **SALIMA**. To my dear uncle **AREZKI**, my dear cousin **MASSINISSA** and my dear **HMIMI** Thank you for your support and love. Thanks to my beautiful family.*

To the fierce soul in the mirror. You turned doubt into determination, shadows into strength. Through storms of effort and silent battles, you built this triumph, not just with your mind, but with your heart. Little princess, warrior of grit, wear this moment like a crown.

My dream comes true.

LAMIA

Dedication

All praise is due to Allah, by whose favor good deeds accomplished thank you for giving me the strength when I was weak, Alhamdulillah for every step every lesson every breath that led me here.

*To my beloved parents **Rachid** and **Saida**, sister **Samra**, brother **Amine** and lovers, my best friends **Meriem** and **Ouardia**, my lovely cousins **Lyna**, **Manel**, you are the reason behind every page of this work words remain insufficient to acknowledge your sacrifices but this achievement as a humble thank you from the depth of my heart it is my sincere hope that I may make you proud.*

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*To my partner **Lamia**, we laughed and cried together we knew that success was ours because no storm could break what we built together*

And finally, to me to the little princess I see in the mirror you did it you made it you were always working hard be proud of yourself keep strong you worth the best you didn't just earn a degree you earned your place in your own story.

Your dream comes true.

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

DCT: Discourse Completion Test

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

FTAs: Face Threatening Acts

FSA: Face Saving Act

ICT: Information Communication Technology

L2: Second Language

ODCT: Oral Discourse Completion Test

TA: Thematic Analysis.

WDCT: Written Discourse Completion Test

CHAPTER ONE: General Introduction

1.1 Overview

Linguistic communication is the act that human beings employ to communicate and transmit knowledge in different ways within various social groups (Allwood, 1976). Communication is a fundamental pillar in the formation of each individual, since correct social development depends on it, enabling individuals to stand out in their professional work, educational pursuits, and daily activities (Dominguez & Gonzalez, 2024).

The key idea in the study of language use is pragmatic speech acts, which highlight how speakers carry out activities through their utterances in response to contextual clues. Speech act theory, first proposed by Austin (1962) in his theory of performative utterances and expanded upon by Searle (1969), emphasizes that language is used to perform actions like asking, promising, apologizing, or demanding in addition to conveying information. Austin (1962), regarded as the pioneer of speech act theory (which was later developed by his student John Searle in the book titled "Speech Acts"), proposed that when we say something, we act. He categorized speech acts into three types: locutionary, which means understanding the literal meaning; illocutionary, which involves grasping the hidden or intended meaning; and perlocutionary, which refers to the impact of the speech act on the listener.

Searle (1976) improved the theory and thus highlights how language serves as a tool for social interaction rather than just a means of information transmission. As such, he has divided speech actions into five groups: assertives, directives, commissives, and expressives and declarations. Therefore, it is crucial to comprehend pragmatic speech acts to interpret meaning beyond the literal level and to understand how speakers accomplish their communication objectives in everyday contexts.

Refusals, like other speech acts, exist in various languages; however, they are expressed differently from one culture to another. According to the Oxford Dictionary, a refusal is an act of saying or showing that you will not do, give, or accept something. In other words, refusal is a dispreferred response (Al-Shboul et al., 2012 & Yule, 1996). It represents a critical communication strategy that reflects cultural norms, social relationships, and interpersonal dynamics (Brown & Levinson, 1987). It can occur when the listener rejects an

offer, invitation, or request, either directly by explicitly saying "NO" or indirectly by giving expressions showing regret.

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), refusals are regarded as one of the most delicate and important speech acts because they frequently involve face-threatening acts (FTAs), which can threaten the social harmony between interlocutors. Refusals can potentially harm either the speaker's or the hearer's positive face, which is the desire to be liked, accepted, or approved, because they demand turning down an offer, invitation, request, or suggestion. Every culture has its belief system, which indicates the possible threats to confront, in addition to cultural norms that significantly impact how refusals are carried out. According to Beebe, Takahashi, and Uliss-Weltz (1990), "speakers in individualist cultures like the US tend to value clarity, sometimes at the expense of face considerations, while speakers in collectivist cultures like China or Japan frequently use indirect, ambiguous, and extremely polite refusal strategies". Therefore, for both native and second-language communication to be successful and well-mannered, refusals must be understood as socially strategic speech acts as well as culturally formed speech acts (Felix-Brasdefer, 2008).

Another notable fact about refusals is their challenging nature. Refusals are deemed to be a complex form of response that typically uses several tactics to keep the other person from being offended. Accordingly, refusals may demand more pragmatic proficiency and social and communicative skills than other target language speech acts for second language learners with linguistic limitations (R. Eslami, 2010). For students to correctly understand and execute this speech act, pragmatic training is required. In our daily lives, refusal is a crucial speech act that requires a high degree of pragmatic skill.

The speech act of rejecting requests, invitations, and offers is defined by Boonsuk and Ambele (2019). They indicate that refusals are particularly interesting pragmatic acts because they show how language, civility, and social norms interact in a complex way, often requiring speakers to strike a balance between relational harmony and honesty. In contrast to direct affirmative answers, refusals usually include turning down invitations, requests, and offers, which necessarily puts the interlocutor's face in danger and may lead to social conflict (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Because every culture has its ways for softening or delivering negative responses, refusals are not only linguistically complex, often involving indirectness, mitigation methods, or unoriginal expressions, but also culturally sensitive (Beebe et al., 1990). In low-context cultures, for example, more clear refusals are socially acceptable, whereas in high-context societies, a refusal may be communicated through shared cultural knowledge and subtle

indications (Gudykunst & Ting-Toomey, 1988). When speakers relate their cultural expectations to the interpretation of refusals, there is a particularly high risk of misunderstanding and conflict. This can result in unwanted judgments of rudeness or insincerity. Therefore, the study of refusals provides important information on how politeness theory, pragmatics, and cross-cultural communication interact.

Brown and Levinson (1987) propose the concept of face, which relates to a person's self-image in social interaction, and it is one of the key elements driving refusal strategies. The way that different cultures affect the balance between the need for autonomy and freedom from intrusion (negative face) and the desire to be liked and accepted (positive face) influences refusal patterns. The larger concept of politeness, which influences the verbal and non-linguistic decisions speakers make when expressing refusals, is closely related to face. The relationship between interlocutors, the environment, and the perceived risk of social discord all influence politeness tactics. The role of relational distance and social expectations in pragmatic choices is highlighted by Blum-Kulka et al. (1989), who observed that speakers of Hebrew, English, and other languages alter their refusal strategies based on whether the conversation involves close friends, familiarity, or authority figures.

A crucial cultural factor is social hierarchy. Refusals aimed at someone of a higher rank are frequently greatly mitigated or delayed in high power-distance cultures, where social roles are strictly outlined and hierarchical relationships are valued. To soften a rejection, a subordinate can, for instance, utilize indirect language or conditional clauses ("if it were possible..."). However, even in unequal relationships, refusals might be more direct in low power-distance societies that prioritize equality (Hofstede, 2001). The extensive field of research on the cultural background of refusals shows how complicated social institutions and values influence communication. It is crucial for theoretical linguistics as well as for practical intercultural competency to comprehend how concepts like face, politeness, and social hierarchy affect refusal tactics. Understanding these elements helps promote more civil and efficient communication in a variety of international contexts.

The Kabyle language, which is a dialect of Berber (Amazigh), is spoken mostly in the northern Algerian Kabylie region and coexists with Arabic and French in a complex multilingual setting. Every indigenous group has a distinct and distinctive history, culture, language, and legal system. The majority of indigenous people have a profound connection to their historical land and territory and are rooted in their environment. The Berber language,

Known as Kabyle, is spoken in Kabylia, which is in Algeria's northern part, as well as throughout the vast Kabyle diaspora in Algeria and other countries, including France, Belgium, Canada, and the United States. An estimated 7 million people in Kabylia and 8 million people worldwide are Kabyle speakers. Kabyle is spoken in eight wilayas (provinces) as a result of the Algerian regime's administrative division of Kabylia. The majority of the people living in the wilayas of Tizi Ouzou, Bejaia, Bouira, and Boumerdes speak Kabyle (Lafkioui, 2008).

Because of Kabylie's rugged territory, the village has historically been relatively isolated, which has allowed it to maintain its unique cultural and linguistic identity during times of French and Arab occupation (Chaker, 2018). Algeria's Berber (Amazigh) heritage is very well represented in the area. One of the main varieties of the Berber (Amazigh) branch of the Afro-Asiatic language family is Kabyle, also known locally as Taqbaylit. Kabyle has a root-and-pattern structure, gender distinctions, and extensive verb morphology, just like other Berber languages. Although writing systems based on Latin, Tifinagh, and Arabic characters have all been employed at various points in antiquity, it has primarily been transmitted orally (Chaker, 2018). Kabyle has received increased official recognition in Algeria in recent decades, particularly since Tamazight was recognized as a national and official language by the constitution (Algerian Constitution, 2016).

Despite the predominance of Arabic and French, which continues to undermine its intergenerational transmission and institutional support, Kabyle has great vitality in non-formal settings, particularly in family and community life, as well as through the creation of cultural products like literature and music (Kessar & Hamdan, 2023). The community's active usage of Kabyle on social media and in diaspora settings further strengthens its resilience (Ghoul, 2013). Thus, Kabyle's sociolinguistic position shows both the conflicts and creativity that characterize minority languages in a post-colonial multilingual setting.

The Kabyle Berber community presents a unique linguistic landscape that is tied to cultural values and social structures. Previous studies on refusal strategies have centered on different linguistic communities, leaving a significant gap in understanding Kabyle Berber communication patterns. These strategies are employed across various social contexts involving age, power, and gender. Researchers have overlooked a crucial puzzle component in socio-pragmatic studies of the Kabyle community.

This research is significant because it will establish a clear comprehension of Kabyle Berber communication strategies by highlighting how politeness and indirectness take place in

interaction. Additionally, it will bring insight by demonstrating how gender, age, and social status influence refusal communication. According to Holmes (1995), women tend to prioritize relational communication strategies, in contrast to men who often use communication strategies emphasizing independence and autonomy. Moreover, Spencer-Oatey and Jiang (2003) claim that socio-culturally based principles influence the use of language; thus, this study will shed light on how culture can impact these strategies. This research combines speech act theory (Searle, 1969), discussing refusal as a face-threatening act, with politeness theory (Brown & Levinson, 1987) to examine how these strategies employ either negative or positive politeness to reduce these threats. These theoretical approaches will help to obtain relevant data.

1.2 Research Background

Berber, also called "Tamazight" in Berber, extends over a vast geographical region: North Africa, the Sahara-Sahel. It can be considered the native language of North Africa. In the absence of reliable linguistic censuses and the general sociolinguistic situation is very unfavorable to the Berber language. Berber speakers are mainly present in Morocco (40% to 45% of the population) and Algeria (25% to 30%), in Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso. However, there is a representation and probably a predominant form of Kabyle, based both on demographic weight, geographical extent, representation in Berber studies and bibliography, and representation also in contemporary cultural production. It is the Kabyle spoken in what is called the "Greater Kabylie" and especially the Kabylie of Djurdjura or Upper Kabylie, the Kabyle of "ZOUAOUAS" (Chaker, 2004).

The Kabyles are Berber, a long-standing native group from North Africa whose existence dates at least as far back as Herodotus's day. Berber demands have always focused on Kabylia, especially from those who want to acknowledge that Algerian identity cannot be boiled down to Arabism. Although it has been Algeria's "national language" since 2002, it was the "official language" in 2016. It is estimated that between 22.7% and 46% of vocabulary is made up of borrowed words from Arabic, as well as French and other languages, as a result of historical interactions (Lucas & Manfredi, 2020).

Communication is important for people around the world. When communicating with others, people frequently use the same language to help them comprehend and grasp the meaning of what is being said; one could refer to this incident as communication. The definition of communication strategies varies among academics. By expressing various points of view regarding the communication strategies themselves, they highlight the definition. According to

Putri (2013), these tactics are "A methodical approach used by a speaker to convey his meaning when confronted with some difficulty". The term "Communication strategies" is frequently restricted to tactics used by second language learners who encounter communication difficulties. Communication is therefore, "A space tire for emergencies" and is employed when things go wrong (Cook, 1993).

However, communication strategies are psycholinguistic plans that are a component of a language user's communicative competence (Ellis, 1985). Through the use of linguistic symbols, linguistic communication is a unique type of social interaction. For instance, when children engage socially with adults who speak the language, they are exposed to linguistic symbols (Tomasello, 2006).

Many scholars have also focused a lot of attention on refusal as one of the speech act types (Al-Kahtani, 2005; Henstock, 2003; Kwon, 2004). Refusal has been identified as a face-threatening behavior that harms the hearer's and speaker's faces. It differs from other speech acts used in everyday communication in that the speaker does not initiate; rather, it is a negative reaction to the other person (Gass & Honk, 1999). The speech act of refusal is the negative counterpart to acceptances and consents; it includes rejection and refusals. Each of these can be turned down or rejected, just as offers, applications, and invitations can be accepted (Searle & Vandervken, 1985).

According to Felix-Brasdefer (2006), from a sociolinguistic perspective, the concept of refusal is one of the most complicated topics that has been the subject of many studies because it is sensitive to social variables like gender, age, level of social distance, power, and education. Furthermore, it may not meet the hearers' expectations and is viewed as a face-threatening act (Sahragard & Javanmardi, 2011).

1.3 Research Questions

This study focuses on the socio-pragmatic study of Kabyle Berber speakers, examining refusal strategies employed by 60 participants. The study was conducted specifically to investigate how gender, social status, and contextual factors influence communication patterns; therefore, the study aims to answer the research questions to fill in the gap in studies. The study is an attempt to answer the following questions:

1. What types of refusal strategies do Kabyle Berber speakers employ when declining requests, invitations, and suggestions in various social situations?

2. How do demographic characteristics (age, gender, and social status) of Kabyle Berber speakers correlate with their preferences for direct versus indirect refusal strategies?
3. What linguistic and pragmatic features characterize polite refusal behavior in Kabyle Berber, and how do speakers maintain social harmony while declining requests?

1.4 Research Assumptions

As a member of the Kabyle Berber community with a strong background in language studies. It was effortless to know the Kabyle culture and analyze the Kabyle refusal strategies. Therefore, hypotheses serve to provide potential answers to the research questions, with the following as the central focus of this study:

- Kabyle Berber speakers utilize a systematic range of refusal strategies that reflect both universal pragmatic principles and culture-specific linguistic patterns, with different strategy types emerging based on the nature of requests, invitations, and suggestions.
- Demographic characteristics significantly influence refusal behavior, with younger speakers favoring more direct approaches, female speakers employing more indirect strategies, and social status differences creating distinct patterns of deference and authority in refusal acts.
- Kabyle Berber speakers prioritize social harmony through the use of specific linguistic politeness markers, face-saving mechanisms, and compensatory
- strategies that soften the face-threatening nature of refusals while maintaining interpersonal relationships.

1.5 Context of the Study

The Kabyle Berber community presents a unique linguistic landscape where communication strategies are deeply embedded in cultural values and social structures. Previous cross-cultural studies on refusal strategies have predominantly focused on various linguistic communities, leaving a significant gap in understanding Kabyle Berber communication patterns.

1.6 The Objectives of the Study

In his book "Beyond Culture " (1977), Hall proposed the concept of "High" versus "Low" context as a way of communication. Being someone's wavelength is related to what anthropologist Edward Hall characterizes as high context, in which communication is in the people, or more specifically, the relationship between the people, as opposed to just the words.

In high context, people aim to be more indirect and to expect the person they are communicating with to decode the implicit part of their message.

On the other hand, low context needed low context messages for comprehension, because the essence of the communication is transmitted by the words used. In low-context communication, the speaker is expected to be responsible for composing an understandable message that the listener can decode easily; in other words, it seeks to get straight to the point.

To recapitulate, based on the aforementioned discussion, the fundamental aim of our study is to analyze refusal strategies in the Kabyle Berber community. This indeed situates the research within the field of pragmatics. A secondary aim is to report the influence of all of gender, age, and social status on the realization of refusals. This brings the sociolinguistic dimension to our work. The implied but fundamental aim is to show whether the Kabyle speech community is a high- or low- context culture. Accordingly, we aim to bring some knowledge about our language and culture.

1.7 The Significance of the Study

This research holds significant theoretical, empirical, and cultural value for several interconnected reasons. First, it contributes to the understanding of Kabyle Berber communication patterns by examining how speakers navigate the complex interplay between politeness, indirectness, and face-saving mechanisms in refusal acts. Given that refusals constitute one of the most face-threatening speech acts in human interaction, requiring sophisticated pragmatic competence and cultural sensitivity to mitigate potential relational damage, this study provides crucial insights into the pragmatic strategies employed by an understudied speech community.

The research addresses important sociolinguistic gaps by investigating how demographic variables, specifically gender, age, and social status, influence refusal behavior within the Kabyle Berber context. Building on Holmes' (1995) findings that women typically prioritize relational communication strategies while men emphasize independence and autonomy, this study examines whether these universal gender patterns manifest similarly in Kabyle society or whether culture-specific variations emerge. This investigation is particularly significant as it tests the cross-cultural validity of established socio-pragmatic theories within a Berber-speaking community.

Furthermore, the study contributes to our understanding of how cultural orientation influences linguistic behavior. By analyzing refusal strategies through the lens of individualism versus collectivism, as suggested by Spencer-Oatey and Jiang's (2003) assertion that sociocultural principles shape language use, this research will position the Kabyle Berber community within broader cultural frameworks. This positioning has implications for understanding how cultural values are reflected in and reinforced through everyday linguistic practices.

Theoretically, the research integrates Speech Act Theory (Searle, 1969) with Politeness Theory (Brown & Levinson, 1987) to provide a comprehensive framework for analyzing refusal strategies. By examining how Kabyle speakers employ positive and negative politeness strategies to mitigate the face-threatening nature of refusals, the study contributes to the refinement and cultural validation of these foundational pragmatic theories. This theoretical integration offers a robust analytical framework that can inform future cross-linguistic pragmatic research.

Finally, this research has practical implications for intercultural communication, language pedagogy, and the documentation of Berber linguistic practices. The findings will inform cross-cultural communication training, contribute to the development of culturally appropriate language teaching materials, and provide valuable documentation of pragmatic competence in Kabyle Berber, a language variety that remains underrepresented in pragmatic research literature.

1.8 The Gap

Refusal is a face-threatening act due to its non-compliant nature when refusing directives such as requests and suggestions. The speaker protects their negative face; on the other hand, rejecting commissures like an offer or invitation involves denying support for their positive face (Brown & Levinson 1987). It is not a simple response to a static situation but a dynamic negotiated achievement.

Previous studies on Kabyle Berber have mainly focused on phonology, dialectal variations, grammar, politeness, and the act of congratulation, as well as requests. Particularly the Kabyle Berber community presents a unique linguistic landscape in which communication strategies are related to cultural values and social norms while previous cross cultural research has extensively focused on refusal strategies across different linguistic communities, there

remains a significant gap in research how refusals are expressed within Kabyle Berber and how it varies across other cultures such as Americans, Chinese...etc.

1.9 The Organization of the Study

The study's structure is essential for facilitating the reader's comprehension of the dissertation's framework and analytical progression. Organized into five chapters, this research ensures clarity and systematically guides readers through its central findings.

The first chapter focuses on a general overview of the current research, including an overview, key terms definitions, research background, present research as well as the addressed research questions, fundamental assumptions, the context of the study, the objectives, in addition to significance and the gap. This introductory chapter establishes the study's framework, defining its goals and scope.

The second chapter of this research study is dedicated to a literature review dealing with the previous studies done by scholars. The third chapter outlines the research methodology followed for data gathering by indicating the research design adopted, population, and sample, in addition to data collection instruments and interviews used.

The fourth chapter deals with data analysis and discussion of the results gathered from the previous data tools. The last chapter is a recapitulation of outcomes, is presented alongside study limitations and suggests recommendations for future investigation.

CHAPTER TWO: Theoretical Background

2.1 Introduction

According to Yule (1996), the study of meaning as conveyed by a speaker (or writer) and understood by a listener (or reader) is the focus of pragmatics. In other words, pragmatics is the study of the speaker's meaning. Socio-pragmatics encompasses the study of social dimensions of language use.

2.2 Conceptual Framework (Definition of key concepts)

2.2.1 Language

Language has rules that let people create and understand endless sentences (Chomsky, 1965). It is obvious that language serves as a crucial communication medium which is fundamental pillar in the formation of each individual since the correct development in society depends on it standing out in their professional work, educational, and daily activities (Domínguez & Gonzálz, 2024). On the other hand, language serves as a tool that individuals navigate their social lives. It is mixed with culture in various ways. People use words not only to communicate shared experience but also to shape their way of thinking, attitudes, beliefs, etc. Language represents a cultural reality through communication, which is done by verbal and non-verbal cues, such as tone, gestures, and expressions. Furthermore, it is a system of signs containing cultural values to show identity (Claire, 1998).

2.2.2 Dialect

A dialect is a systematically different variety of language, characterized by unique grammatical, lexical, and phonological features tied to the social, geographical, or cultural identity of a group (Hurford, 1994).

As a general term, "dialect" refers to a regional language that is spoken by individuals from a particular area. According to contemporary sociolinguistics, it is any language variety distinguished from other varieties of the same language by systematic differences in grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Despite this, some linguists prefer to use dialect to describe a distinctive blend of phonetic characteristics (which is typically referred to as "accent").

The term "dialect" also refers to the wide range of linguistic differences among various age groups, genders, generations, and occupations (Halliday & Hassan 1989).

2.2.3 Communication

According to Dewey (1916), "Communication is a sharing of experience till it becomes a common possession" (p.11).

Communication is a dialogue, an interaction established between two or more participants, which develops throughout the procedure. It is a system made up of various components, interconnected, which give meaning to the messages exchanged by the participants. In other words, it is a dynamic process, in perpetual motion, which continually modifies the situation (Mouri, 2020).

2.2.4 Pragmatics

According to Yule (1996), "Pragmatics is concerned with the study of meaning as communicated by a speaker (or writer) and interpreted by a listener (or reader). It has, consequently, more to do with the analysis of what people mean by their utterances than what the words or phrases in those utterances might mean by themselves. Pragmatics deals with the study of the speaker's meaning.

Interpreting what people mean in a given context and how the context affects what is said are essential components of this kind of research. It necessitates taking into consideration how speaker arrange their thoughts according to the audience, setting, and situation they are speaking to (Thomas, 1995). The study of contextual meaning is what we can call Pragmatics. Additionally, to determine the speaker's intended meaning, also automatically investigates how a significant section of what is communicated is acknowledged to be unsaid; in other words, Pragmatics is the study of meaning that is invisible. Pragmatics can be defined as the study of intentional human behavior in its broadest sense (Yule, 1996).

As a result, it requires interpreting actions that are thought to be taken with a specific goal in mind. The belief, intention (or goal), plan, and act must be considered the basic concepts of pragmatics. This approach still includes a wide range of communication methods, including nonverbal, nonconventional, and non-symbolic ones, provided that the means and/or ends entail communication (M. Green, 1989).

2.2.5 Sociolinguistics

Sociolinguistics is defined in detail by Hymes (1974) as the study of the relationship between linguistic and societal issues. It provides an answer to the question of how our linguistic usage is influenced by our social and cultural backgrounds.

This area of linguistics aims to provide answers to questions such as who says what to whom, when, where, how, and why. The study of language use in social and cultural contexts is one of sociolinguistics' main goals. It investigates the standards of society as a whole and looks at how people take advantage of their knowledge of these standards to accomplish specific goals.

2.2.6 Socio-pragmatics

The study of how pragmatic meanings reflect "specific/local" conditions on language use is known as "socio-pragmatics", so it is a branch of pragmatics that is separated from the study of pragmatic meaning that is more general.

The study of socio-pragmatics focuses on how language is used in everyday situations and across cultural boundaries. Sociopragmatics studies how language is used in a social context. However, it focuses on how particular social contexts and practices impact pragmatic meaning (Leech, 1983). It investigates how language functions in real-life social interactions, emphasizing the relationship between language and social factors such as identity, culture, and context (Culpeper, 2021).

2.2.7 Speech Act Theory

J.L. Austin (1962) is regarded as the pioneer of speech act theory, which was later developed by his student John R. Searle in the book titled «Speech Acts». According to him, when we say something, we act. He mentioned that language is a way of making factual assertions, and the other uses of language tended to be ignored. Assertions have a significant performative aspect and also alter the world (Wittgenstein, 1994).

Speech act analysis shows that utterances are produced with particular components of linguistic elements. Pragmatics, therefore, is the relation between linguistic meaning and the context in which it occurs (Kaburise, 2005). It is concerned with the relationships between utterances and the acts of functions that speakers or writers intend to perform through these utterances (Bachman, 1990).

Since speech act is a subfield of pragmatics, which is the principles of language usage can read in utterances more than they conventionally or literally mean (Levinson, 1983).

Austin distinguished three types of speech acts in the use of language that are called locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary. A locutionary act is an act of saying something in the full normal sense. Pandey (2008). Illocutionary acts with force, such as assertions, promises, orders, declarations, and apologies. Perlocutionary can occur by convincing, please, influencing, or embarrassing the hearer.

2.2.8 Politeness Theory

Politeness is defined as the capacity of individuals to employ interactive strategies based on the communicative situation. The communicators can use their tools to positively impact the other person and establish an expanding their personal space or have a positive self-image (Slamani, 2006 b, 2007 a, 2008 a, b).

Since Politeness is an element of interaction, it can be characterized as the methods used to demonstrate consideration for the face of another individual. In this way, being polite can be achieved in socially close or distant circumstances (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Being indirect can serve as a politeness tactic. A system of interpersonal relations known as politeness is intended to promote interaction by reducing the likelihood of conflict and confrontation that are inherent in all human interactions (Lakoff, 1990). Politeness is one of the most detailed and extensively studied theories in the field of pragmatics (Brown & Levinson, 1978). It covered a wide range of topics and turned out to be very useful in the majority of cultures. But the theory is likely Western-biased and leaves out aspects that are more relevant to many Middle Eastern speech communities and cultures (Bharuthram, 2003; Nwoye, 1992; Shum, 2008). This in no way implies that the theory is inappropriate for these kinds of cultures. But broadening theory to incorporate some useful aspects of how politeness is presented and perceived in these cultures would likely increase the theory's universality (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

2.2.9 Refusal Strategies

Refusals, like other speech acts, exist in various languages; however, they are expressed differently depending on the culture, allowing the speaker to deny the action proposed by the interlocutor (Taguchi, 2011). Refusal strategies can be performed in various categories of strategies, either direct or indirect. On the other hand, direct strategies called performative, which are by using the verb directly "I refuse". Or non-performative statements by saying "NO"

or a sign of willingness or ability. For the indirect refusal strategies by including expressions of regret, giving excuses or explanations, proposing conditions, offering alternatives, making promises for future acceptance, and using avoidance techniques. Furthermore, refusal can have three stages: pre-refusal by giving the listener time to the listener and prepare him for the rejection. The second stage is the main refusal, which is the act of doing it, and the last one is called post-refusal, by giving justifications and finding solutions to save their face (Palanques, 2011).

Refusal to communicate can also be achieved by using body language such as knocking fingers on the table, tapping the feet on the floor, or moving the hand horizontally from left to right.

2.3 Indirectness and face threats as inherent characteristics of refusal

Refusals can also be interpreted as messages that are disliked. Refusing is a complicated matter because it involves the speaker either directly or indirectly declining an invitation, request, or suggestion from their interlocutor. The addressee's negative face, or the wish for his/her future words or actions to be unrestrained, is threatened by refusals. Chen (1996) asserts that indirect tactics, which call for a higher degree of pragmatic competence, are frequently used to realize refusals. Additionally, refusals have detrimental effects on a person's mental health as well as society at large. Emotion, thought, and even physical health can all be impacted by social rejection (Weir, 2012). The dynamics of social interactions play an important role in how refusals are perceived and handled (Goffman, 1972). The shaping of refusals through social interactions reveals the intricate relationship between individual psychology and societal structures. Refusals not only affect personal well-being but also influence group behaviors and societal norms. Moreover, understanding these interactions allows for a deeper comprehension of how refusals manifest in various contexts, from personal relationships to workplace dynamics.

2.4 Politeness and status-related differences

Beebe and Takahashi (1987) examined the study of Japanese refusal strategies. The result of the study showed that Japanese English language learners exhibit the sequencing of refusal formulas, their precise content, and their actual frequency of use, all contribute to sociolinguistic transfer in refusals. The status of the addressee is a much stronger conditioning factor in Japanese speech, both in English and their native tongue. For instance, the associated

status differences in Japanese behavior, who did not apologize or show regret when responding to people in lower positions. Japanese responses to invitations from higher-status interlocutors versus those from lower-status interlocutors provide further evidence of status-related differences. Americans, on the other hand, distinguish themselves in these circumstances along the lines of social distance by giving to peers.

The Berber language spoken in Algeria maintains social harmony, politeness, and respect, all of which are highly prized in Kabyle society forms the basis of how interlocutors relate to one another has the big impact on how people refuse. According to Brown & Levinson (1987), people are more elaborate and indirect in their responses to people of higher status, but they use power refusal strategies when speaking to people of lower status. The cultural context has a significant impact on refusal strategies because Kabyle culture places a high value on keeping the other person's face intact; indirect refusals are preferred. Techniques like offering justifications or apologizing are frequently used because they lessen the possible offense that refusal should cause. In other words, Kabyle culture places a strong emphasis on maintaining one's face (self-respect) and other faces (respect of others), and refusals are frequently made indirectly to prevent embarrassment or offence. Kabyle's linguistic structure affects refusal strategies as well. Refusals are often softened by using the language's built-in politeness markers and expressions of regret or explanation. This is consistent with more general trends seen in Algerian Arabic, where being indirect helps to protect interpersonal relationships.

Beebe (1990) classified refusals into 2 taxonomies: direct, by directly using "I refuse" or "no," and indirect opinion by expressing a regret through an apology, such as Sorry, I cannot. It can also be by giving an excuse or reason to justify their unwillingness, for example, I can't because I am busy. It can also be by utilizing a statement of alternative, such as why don't you tell another person. A promise for a future acceptance (I can't make it this day, but next time it will be possible, I promise), a condition for future or past acceptance (if I had known earlier, I would have done it. A statement of principle (I believe that I will not do that), a statement of philosophy, self-defense, or silence by changing the topic. Kabyle Berber speakers prefer to use indirect refusals to preserve relationships and maintain social harmony by using hedging phrases like "Ad nzer mbeed" we will see) this current study is grounded in Brown and Levinson's politeness theory (1987) which tackle how politeness function in communication through this theory individual gains insight into the strategies employed to manage face threatening act (FTAs) according to watts: politeness should not focus only on polite behavior but also should include all forms of polite language usage (2003).

Many studies have investigated the effect of interlocutors' social status on the degree of indirectness of responses (Beebe et al, 1990). Higher, equal, and lower social status levels are used to study refusals. These studies found that the degree of indirectness in strategy use is conditioned by the interlocutors' social rank.

Beebe et al. (1990) carried out another significant study in which they examined American and Japanese refusals. They discovered that Japanese people interact with people of higher social status less directly than Americans do when they use refusal speech acts. According to Hall (1976), three dimensions influence cultural interactions: time, context, and space. Hall considered culture as a guide to every aspect of human life.

Al Shawali (1997) investigated the semantic formulae that American and Saudi men utilize. The spoken act of refusal is performed by undergraduate students. His research indicates that, except for direct denial, Saudis and Americans employ comparable refusal formulations. The usage of semantic formulations in the substance of Saudi and American refusals varies as well; Saudis are known to deliver vague responses or employ avoidance techniques like postponing and hedging.

For instance, Yemeni speakers were found to be more direct in their refusals towards lower-status individuals compared to American speakers. Beckers (1999) looked at American and German English rejection; the Germans employed less direct tactics than the Americans. Additionally, she discovered that German refusals were impacted by the role of social distance in the production of refusals, whereas American refusals were heavily influenced by the social status of the interlocutor.

Al Eryani (2007) studied Yemeni EFL learners 'speech act of refusal. The researcher employed a WDCT to gather data, which comprised 6 written scenarios that involved refusals to people of higher, lower, and equal status. To familiarize the YANSs with the situations, the questionnaire was translated into Arabic with appropriate modifications. The result of the study also revealed that the semantic formulas 'order varied between the two groups.

Understanding and employing appropriate refusal strategies is crucial for effective communication across different cultural contexts. Pragmatic competence enables individuals to navigate social interactions fluently and avoid misunderstandings that may arise from direct refusals. The choice of strategy often depends on factors such as the relationship between interlocutors and the social context of the interactions. The current study varies from the previous studies in many aspects. Shahpouri and Soltani's (2013) study, as well as Saud's

(2019) study, took place in different geographical contexts such as Iran, China, and Saudi Arabia.

The social status notably affects the methods that individuals use to refuse, offer apologies, or accept invitations. For instance, depending on the previous study of Iranian students (Seyedan & Nazari, 2016) found that participants used more direct refusal strategies when addressing people of lower social status and preferred indirect strategies for those of higher status. And when interacting with equal status, they used both direct and indirect refusals.

According to Satıç and Çiftçi (2018), the study is an investigation of refusal strategies used by Turkish learners of English, showing how they can be impacted by social factors such as Power, social distance, and formality. The study, based on a pragmatic approach, focuses on various social contexts. The author finds out that refusal behaviors can be impacted by social status. This exploratory research analyzes data from an enhanced DCT, retrospective verbal reports, and interviews. It is employed by a cohort of 80 Turkish learners (40 males and 40 females) studying at a foundation university preparatory school, revealing notable variability in the use of refusal strategies among the participants. The study raises the following strategy types: statement of error, statement of regret, negative willingness/ability, promise of future acceptance, wish, and positive opinion. It highlights the role of proficiency in implementing strategies. Furthermore, Turkish learners with higher levels of English show greater flexibility in their use, unlike those with lower proficiency who tend to refuse directly. The findings show the challenges faced by non-native speakers in having cultural knowledge when performing. Overall, the research gives an insight into refusal considering the perception of second language(L2), social factors, and context in response to invitations and requests. It highlights the critical importance of socio-pragmatic study.

Saud (2019) conducted the refusal strategies used by Saudi EFL learners in various social statuses and situations. The participants of this study were 150 Saudi female EFL undergraduate students in their third year in the English department at King Khalid University, Saudi Arabia. They ranged in age from 18 to 25 years old. A discourse completion task (DCT) was used to gather data. Finding out how well the students performed in the speech act of refusal was the goal of the DCT. There were twelve scenarios in all three requests, three recommendations, and three offers. The university, home, friends, and bosses were at the center of each of these scenarios, which involved rejection of someone of a higher, equal, or lower status. The results showed that the participants 'strategies of refusal were different in each

situation. They used indirect strategies of refusal in offers and suggestions less than with invitations and requests. On the other hand, the social status of the interlocutor has no crucial effect on the participants' choices of refusal strategies. The speech act of refusal has garnered a lot of attention, and many studies have tackled the strategies of refusals in various cultures such as Japanese, Arabic, American, Turkish, etc. These studies contributed to their importance in our communication.

Another examination made by Moini and Hariri (2020) identified the influence of social status and distance on this topic. Data were analyzed using role-play scenarios, and the participants were 70 (35 males and 35 females), ranging from 20 to 29. Kashan University of Iran. The findings point out that speakers use indirect and polite strategies when refusing a higher status, providing an apology, hedging, etc, whereas in equal status they tend to be direct and at ease to express. Moreover, social distance plays a significant role as well as social status.

Depending on the speaker and the factors that influence their way, such as gender, age, and social status, depending also on cultures. This study will focus on language, specifically the language of Kabyle Berber of Bejaia, which is a city located in the Northeastern region of Algeria. An Islamic country where speakers are respectful and polite, especially when talking to elders and someone with high power or who has authority. For instance, in English culture, "God" is employed in formal situations, whereas in Algerian culture, "God" is a religious reference used in various situations to perform speech acts such as requests, offers, invitations, and refusals. Either by using discourse conditionals, God willing/Inshallah, or by swearing by using "Wallah" (Bennacer, 2021).

Benbouya and Rababah (2022) examined the refusal strategies utilized by 30 native Algerians (15 males and 15 females) at the University of Mohamed Seddik Benyahia, Jijel, Algeria. Data were collected through an oral discourse completion task (ODCT) written in both Arabic and English. The results explained that Algerian Arabic speakers use an indirect manner in refusals in all categories (Higher-Equal-Lower) in response to offers.

Additionally, Brown and Levinson categorize two types of politeness: positive which emphasize respect and solidarity, while negative politeness deals with respecting the hearer's autonomy but these categories may differ from cultures to another, this study examines the use of politeness strategies in expressing the speech act of refusals among Kabyle Berber speakers using Brown & Levinson's framework. The language which is spoken by Bejaia speakers is Tamazight, which is spoken by 3 million people in various dialects (Kossmann & Stromer,

2021). Direct refusal is it happens in interactions where clarity is important, like in a formal setting and when talking to others, but this way is harsh and may be considered a disrespectful manner. this is the reason why the indirect refusal is used to soften the situation. For the direct refusal, the stand and negation, which is the primary way central Kabyle negates verbal declarative main clauses. The verb used in negation should be in the imperative or the negative form; the meaning and the function of negation are different in the way of realization, in which negation occurs in this way: "ur...ara" (Mettouchi, 2021).

2.5 Age and Gender in refusal strategy use

Women are seen to speak more fluently, emotionally, and indirectly, which might convey hesitancy, doubt, and a lack of authority. On the other hand, men are thought to communicate in an uncomplicated, concise, and helpful manner. Because of their capacity for empathy and connection, women are more likely to build rapport that stimulates response, despite the perception that their communication style may be weaker. Women's communication styles represent their need for connection, whereas men's conventional styles typically focus on their independence (Von Hippel et al, 2011).

Shahpouri and Soltani (2013) examined the impact of age and sex on the refusal strategies used by Iranian EFL learners. The researchers collected data from three groups of graduate students (males/females) of different ages, sexes, and different fields of study. The first group was 30 American English speakers. The second group consisted of 30 participants whose ages were between 22-29 years old, and the third group was about 30 participants, both males and females. The researcher used a modified version of the DCT (or questionnaire) as a tool to collect data. The results of the study showed that middle-aged speakers (30-60 years old) favored the standard variants, while younger speakers (10-19 years old) used non-standard variants. Although not as much as the younger generation, older speakers (70+ years old) showed use of non-standard variants. In an attempt to explain this pattern, Crippler and Widdowson (1900) propose that middle-aged speakers are more influenced by mainstream societal values and have less cohesive social networks, whereas younger speakers are more susceptible to social pressures from their peer group.

Deviani and Gunwan (2013) examined the refusal strategies used by old and young foremen in a bakery in Surabaya. The researchers collected data from the old and young foremen. The researchers used refusal expressions by the old and young foremen to the requests of workers. The results of the study showed that the most frequently used refusal strategy by

both the old and the young foremen was the indirect strategy. In particular, the young foremen employed indirect tactics like non-performative verbs and direct tactics like a statement of alternatives, an explanation, justifications, and an attempt to dissuade the interlocutor were all used but the old foremen did not. Additionally, the most commonly employed indirect strategy also differed. The young foremen used expressions of excuse, reason, or explanation more often, 17% than the old foremen, who preferred to use statements of alternatives, 21 %.

Hayati et al. (2014) examined gender differences in refusal recognition among Iranian EFL learners. The researchers collected data from 64 Iranian students, including 34 males and 30 females from Saveh institutes. Their ages ranged from 16 to 19 years. The researchers used a written discourse completion task and a proficiency test as instruments to collect data. The situations were written in English. The results of the study showed that in offer situations, the most preferred answers were based on regret. Moreover, boys tend to use indirect refusal strategies than girls. Overall, the study reveals that female learners show greater sensitivity to contextual factors and use different strategies than males. The findings highlight that gender and cultural background play an important role in shaping refusal performance.

Liu and Qian (2018) investigated the refusal strategies employ by 100 students (50 males and 50 females) aged from 18 to 23 years. The study analyzes data from questionnaire interviews that were collected by using the online system. The findings reveal notable variability in the use of refusal strategies among the participants. Specifically, the two gender groups avoid 'NO' to maintain a polite manner. They employ more indirect strategies than direct ones when expressing requests and invitations, whereas there is a difference in expressing suggestions and offers. Female students tend to be more indirect and employ more hedges by initiating speech acts. Overall, this study contributes to the understanding of gender differences in Chinese college students' speech acts of refusal. This study highlights the importance of gender in showing refusal strategies to avoid offense.

Kayang (2018) examines refusal strategies performed by speakers of different ages. The researcher collected data from two groups of 40 respondents, a younger group consisting of speakers of 18-28 years, and an older group consisting of speakers aged 40-50 years. Cirta uses a DCT, which contains 6 questions with different situations of requests, invitations, and offers. The results of the study show that the younger group's speakers are more likely to answer "no" when making direct rejections, while the older group's speakers were more likely to do so by denying a proposition. More respondents from the younger demographic use excuses and provide alternatives when making indirect refusals. Younger respondents decline by expressing

their willingness and demonstrating empathy when expressing the adjuncts of refusals. Moreover, the majority of respondents use an apology to decline an invitation from an older person with whom they have a close relationship. One older respondent and two younger ones flatly rejected the invitation, saying things like “no, I’m fine, Mom, ...” and “Mom, I can’t join...”. Only two older respondents used the same tactic (e.g., ‘om, I already have my favorite chicken burger and fries...’), while three younger respondents close to declining such an invitation by explaining.

Wang (2019), conducted a comparative study to look into the methods of Chinese students use to refuse to speak English in specific circumstances. The study also looked at the gender differences in the English refusal techniques employed by Chinese English majors. This study was carried out in the Chinese province of Guizhou at Bijie. So female English majors who were chosen at random from Guizhon University of Engineering Science’s Junior college and 23 male students-only 14 of whom were English majors-who were chosen from other colleges in the province of Guizhon, were the study’s participants. They were between the ages of 18 and 22. The researcher used a questionnaire comprising a DCT, and a personal information survey was used to gather data. According to the study’s findings, both male and female students used specific tactics when performing the English refusal speech act. However, the majority of male students tended to employ direct refusal strategies, whereas the majority of female students tended to employ the indirect ones, such as setting conditions, pity, apology, suggestion, promise, explanation, and dissuasion, as well as adjunctive strategies to save the face of the interlocutors.

Another study was conducted by Amraoui (2019) employing politeness strategies to perform refusal speech acts. The sample chosen consisted of 25 out of 88 students of English at Biskra University 4 sections are serve as instruments to collect data. The age range is from 20 to 26. The findings reveal that there are a bunch of strategies to refuse invitations, offers, requests, and suggestions. The most dominant one is refusing by thanking, apologizing, or giving excuses. The participants with lower performance avoid using body language. Lastly, females refuse indirectly by using a polite manner, especially in requests and invitations, or suggestions, to protect their face, in contrast to males who prefer to be direct. This study is also unlike the two mentioned before in their way.

The way refusals are expressed is significantly influenced by gender. According to previous studies, women tend to use indirect refusal techniques than men, who might choose to

use more direct methods. This difference implies that in their interactions, women may place a higher value on face-saving strategies than men (Tuncer & Turhan, 2019).

However, in the study of Mohamed and Adeeb (2021), examined the refusal strategies of refusal used by EFL learners. The data were collected from 100 (50 males and 50 females) EFL learners chosen randomly from the department of English at Diyala University. The researchers used a discourse completion test consisting of 7 proposed situations as an instrument to collect data. The situations were written in English. The results of the study show that the participants of both genders express requests, suggestions, and invitations directly. Additionally, the findings of the study show that the male participants use fewer indirect and adjuncts than the female participants. Comparing both studies, the difference between the Japanese and Iraqi genders when expressing refusal is that the Japanese tend to be indirect and polite in other parts Iraqis are direct especially when expressing in their native language. Each individual has a unique communication style and is influenced by other factors such as culture, environment, and personal experiences. Respect for differences and awareness of different communication preferences can enrich interactions between men and women in various communication contexts.

2.6 When gender, social status and pragmatic transfer coincide

According to William and Kraiss (2000), people's habits, which are influenced by social structures and past experiences, affect how they use their social capital and negative various social fields. These ideas offer a foundation for comprehending how social factors such as gender, age, and social networks may interact to influence both individual and group behavior in Kabyle society. Additionally, traditional social structures and modernizing influences, like ICT, can interact to present Kabyle society with both opportunities and challenges. Traditional forms of communication, social relationships, and the dissemination of cultural values can all be changed by this interaction. Language is a means of social cohesiveness and identity marking. The Kabyle language can be used to strengthen social boundaries and foster a sense of community, which can impact interactions within and outside the Kabyle community. Refusal strategies in Kabyle are deeply rooted in cultural values of politeness, respect, and social harmony. They are influenced by the interaction context, the speaker's relationship, and the linguistic resources available to express refusal in a way that is acceptable for the cultures also we can gain a better understanding of the complex interactions between various elements that affect refusal strategies in Kabyle and other sociolinguistic contexts (Félix-Brasdefer, 2008). The oral tradition is very strong in Kabyle society. Proverbs and other oral traditions are

essential for passing down historical knowledge, social norms, and cultural values across generations. The Kabyle proverb "Argaz d awal" (a man of his word) highlights the value of honesty and speech in a person's social standing. Oral communication is a performance, a social act in which the speaker's credibility is crucial and within his oral framework communication patterns are invariably influenced by differences in skill, knowledge and social standing; however, social context has a big impact on Kabyle communication patterns especially the emphasis on indirectness results from a cultural focus on preserving social harmony and avoiding confrontation age, gender and social status are some examples of factors that affect how direct or indirect. A communication is for instance, dealing with elders or people in positions of power, frequently calls for a more indirect and submissive approach (Bourdieu,1980; Mammari,1978). On the other hand, Hassani et al. (2011) analyze refusal from the perspectives of both gender and social status to show differences in their use. Employing a cohort of 60 Iranian EFL university students from TEHRAN university. The data were collected by using a discourse completion task. The results shed light that Iranians use indirect strategies in the Persian test compared to the English therefore, they tend to be indirect when addressing to higher status. To conclude, this study offers a broader understanding of how the first language (Persian) on L2 (English) influences refusal performance, showing the role of language.

Go back to (2011) Abed shed light on the importance of pragmatic transfer on refusal strategies by comparing Iraqi EFL learners and American native speakers. The results show that EFL learners express indirect refusal by employing a statement of explanation, regret, or wish and adjuncts for across all status levels in contrast to American native speakers, who use indirect strategies for both higher and equal status, but in lower they are more direct.

The last study is introduced by Iliad and Larina (2017), compared 30 Russians and 30 British refusals using a discourse completion test. The outcomes are that Russians prefer fewer words and moves; on the other hand, the British avoid brief refusals, are indirect in response to offers, requests, and invitations. In addition to this, it highlights similarities in the way of expressing apology, regret, and explanation. Finally, this study contributes to distinguishing between the two cultures.

Also, Boucif and Benhattab (2022) examine the refusal strategies employed by Algerian male vendors in face-to-face haggling encounters using questionnaires using 115 participants who were people from the market of Medina J'dida in Oran. The findings indicate that vendors

use two main categories indirectly and in combination in various ways, like excuse, reason, explanation, etc.

Kamal and Ariffin's study (2023) examine how gender and power influence in refusal strategies of English as a second language of Malay undergraduates. The sample chosen contained 60 participants (30 males-30 females), refusing requests from three addressees (lecturer-friend junior), and it was analyzed quantitatively by DCT. The results find out that both male and female students use indirect refusal strategies when considering social status. It is noticeable that both Japanese and Iranian students share the same results.

The gap in the current research is that it is limited to other cultures and lacks knowledge to explore refusal strategies in Berber Kabyle speakers compared to other cultures. Many studies on Kabyle Berber focused on structural aspects such as phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics comparing them to other dialects. However, few studies tackled the refusal strategies used and influenced by gender, age, and social status in the Kabyle community which has a unique culture. Refusal strategies are a pillar in speech act and politeness theory. Previous studies have focused on Tasahlit or other dialects, but Kabyle Berber is limited. A little-known how-to Kabyle speakers express disagreement or their strategies in rejecting invitations or offers in their daily life conversations, focusing on their mother tongue since language influences them way. This study will not only contribute to the understanding of these strategies but also shed light on how this language differs and its impact on the strategies. This study is significant and gives an insight into how language, culture, age, gender, and social status influence refusal.

2.7 Conclusion

In Kabyle society, the enduring influence of orality, the nuances of social context, and the dynamic forces of linguistic innovation and technological change all contribute to the complex phenomenon of variation in communication patterns. Understanding these differences requires a framework that acknowledges the importance of indirectness and the creative adaptation of language to changing social demands. By understanding the complexities of Kabyle communication, we can gain a deeper understanding of the social dynamics, cultural values, and linguistic diversity of this vibrant community.

CHAPTER THREE: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

As established in the previous chapter, the theoretical background centered on refusal strategies. The reviewed literature provided a deep understanding of refusal strategies as socio-pragmatic conventions. This outlines the research design and methodology, including sampling criteria and data collection instruments.

3.2 Research design

Greene et al. (1989) suggested five key purposes for mixed-method evaluations, drawing from both theoretical literature and in evaluations drawing from both theoretical literature and their review of 57 empirical studies. These purposes include triangulation, complementarity, development, initiation, and expansion. In its traditional sense, triangulation aims to ensure convergence, corroboration, and consistency of results across different methodological approaches.

Mixed-method designs are characterized by the combination of at least one quantitative method, which focuses on numerical data collection, and one qualitative method, which gathers textual or descriptive data. Significantly, neither method is inherently tied to a specific research paradigm or philosophical approach (Greene 1989). Additionally, this method is valuable when a single data source is not enough, when there is a need to clarify initial results, to generalize exploratory findings, or to strengthen a study by employing a second method (Creswell & Clark, 2011).

This study includes the combination of qualitative and quantitative data to get a deeper insight, to understand the research problem, and to validate findings. Quantitative analysis of refusal strategy frequencies is not only about calculating how often strategies are used, but also about understanding how social variables (gender, age, and social status) impact these frequencies. The use of DCT (Discourse Completion Test) to look for quantitative data is a widely used technique in sociolinguistic research for eliciting language data. It consists of a questionnaire featuring brief descriptions of specific situations, each designed to prompt a particular speech act. Participants read each scenario and provide a written response based on the given prompt. Moreover, systematic modifications to the situational prompts can influence the nature of participants' responses (Verghese & Billmyer, 1996). DCT is used to calculate the frequency and the percentage of refusal strategies. The use of qualitative methods includes

interviews, particularly semi-structured interviews conducted with native Kabyle speakers to understand cultural aspects of refusals and politeness norms, which offer depth and context by showing why some strategies are preferred rather than others in a specific setting. We use both qualitative and quantitative methods to show validity, reliability, and appropriateness.

Mixed methods approach enhances quantitative precision with qualitative depth to better understand the refusal strategies by employing instruments to collect data (Creswell & Ivankova, 2009).

Since refusal is a complex speech act we cannot use only one method, by quantitative method we measure the variations statistically, for example the variation between male and female in using refusal strategies (gender), while by qualitative data we take a look into socio-cultural usage of these strategies about politeness and other norms.

3.3 Sampling

This research is carried out with participants from the Bejaia region and examines both similarities and differences between the Kabyle men and women in their use of refusal strategies when expressing offers and invitations. Taking into consideration age and social status as factors that influence their use. Since it is a socio-pragmatic study mixed-method was employed to gather both quantitative and qualitative data. This study used a Discourse Completion Task (DCT) to examine refusal strategies among Kabyle Berber speakers, with data analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), for quantitative and qualitative insights. The participant pool consisted of 60 individuals (30 males, 30 female) from the Bejaia community, ensuring gender balance. Participants represented diverse academic backgrounds (such as; Teachers, Students, Doctors, Housewives, Sellers...etc.), enhancing the sociolinguistic variability of the sample. The DCT, originally designed in English to align with cross-cultural pragmatics research standards, was translated into Arabic a language of formal education in Algeria, to ensure comprehension while maintaining pragmatic authenticity. This approach allowed for systematic comparison of refusal tactics across genders while controlling for cultural influences. The age range is from 18 to 50 years old. All of the participants were asked to fill out the DCT in the form of a questionnaire containing 20 scenarios in many situations in which the respondents are asked to answer by making refusals to offers and invitations. Each type included a various status: higher, equal, or lower. Their answers will be collected and compared, and analyzed to find out the results. The questionnaire was originally written in English and later translated into Arabic for broader accessibility. The participants were also

asked to answer questions when conducting semi-structured interviews, allowing participants to express themselves using their own words. This provides the opportunity to get deeper claims, and it is also a way to explore the peculiarities of the community about the speech act of refusing. The purpose of this sampling is to represent native Kabyle speakers and to shed light on the gender-based and age-based differences in refusal strategies, as well as status-based details allowing insight into the cultural and social nuances of the Kabyle community.

3.4 Data Procedures

Our DCT is categorized into three parts, the first one is related to social distance, in which it shows the familiarity levels between interlocutors, the second involves situations dealing with social power (high-low and equal) the last one deals with the cost of composition. These situations show the reaction of participants when performing invitations and offers. The data were analyzed quantitatively by the use of DCT. Using statistical analysis of refusal strategy frequencies will be conducted to show the most used strategies. The qualitative analysis deals with thematic analysis (TA) to identify the linguistic structures of refusals and to communicate verbally and non-verbally with participants during the interview. Additionally, some communication strategies will be addressed to examine politeness, face-threatening acts (FTA), and various techniques in refusals. Ethical considerations are a key part of this study to ensure equality and respect for participants. Everyone is asked to give their agreement and told what the study is about. Their identities are anonymous; thus they will have the opportunity to express freely without being imposed upon. Their data is protected to maintain privacy; individuals retain the right to decline answering any questions.

3.5 Sampling Strategy

We used a sampling technique aimed to gather a wide range of perspectives in order to examine refusal strategies across the Kabyle community. To ensure a diverse representation, participants were chosen based on a stratified random sampling. Accordingly, we carefully looked for variations among participants in important social factors (e.g., age, gender, position, and educational level), and the explicit participation of people with various statuses was considered to enhance our data collection by producing an expanded variety of refusal responses that reflect the diversity that is representative of the community.

3.6 Conclusion

The data were collected from the participants by employing DCT and semi-structured interviews to gather data quantitatively and qualitatively. The next chapter will be about the discussion and the implications of the refusal strategies of Kabyle Berber speakers.

CHAPTER FOUR: Data Analysis and Discussion

4.1 Findings and Results

4.1.1 Introduction

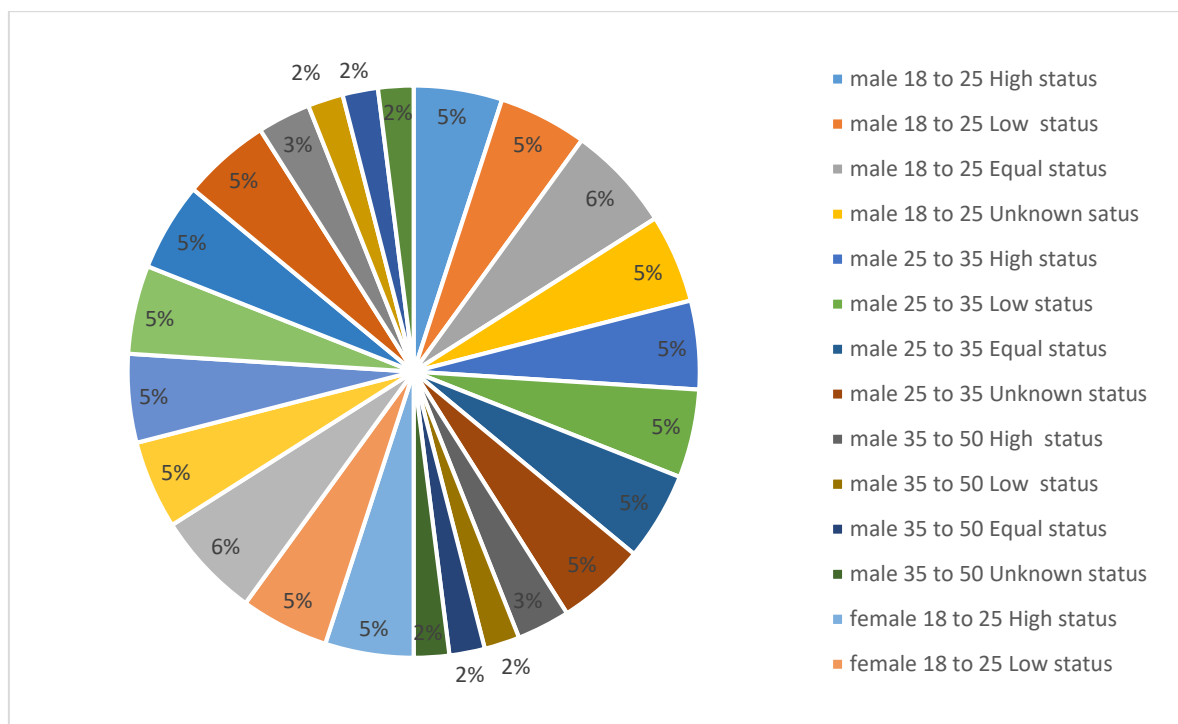
This section is regarded as the most significant part of this thesis, as acknowledged by Woods, interpreting gathered data and communicating its importance to others is an assignment for analysts in linguistic research, which necessitates combining findings to highlight the most important patterns. Complex approaches become unnecessary when addressed imaginatively to ensure effective data use, which is frequently accomplished through simple visuals like charts or graphs. The goal of the research is to identify Kabyle refusal strategies and compare them according to social factors.

As the chapter title signifies, the chapter uses the presentation of pie charts, tables, and graphs to describe the findings and provide the analysis of the collected data. Last but not least, the way of the participants' refusal was investigated through a thematic analysis of the interview.

Overall, the current section offers crucial background knowledge on the data collection of the study, which is necessary to comprehend the results presented in the following step.

4.1.2 Pie Chart

Distribution by Gender, Age, and Social Status



4.1.3 Analyzing Age Tables

Table 1: Refusing to help an old neighbor

Scenario (1)		Frequency	Percent
	Direct refusal (No)	9	15
	Indirect refusal (Excuse/Explanation)	18	30
	Indirect Refusal (Regret)	7	11,7
	Indirect Refusal (Apology)	4	6,5
	Indirect Refusal (Wish)	7	11,7
	Indirect Refusal (Alternative/Suggestion)	10	16,7
	Indirect Refusal (Thanking)	1	1,7
	Indirect Refusal (Promise of future acceptance)	4	6,7
	Total	60	100

Table 2: Rejecting family marriage

Scenario (5)		Frequency	Percent
	Direct refusal (No)	9	15
	Indirect refusal (Excuse/Explanation)	18	30
	Indirect Refusal (Regret)	7	11,7
	Indirect Refusal (Apology)	4	6,5
	Indirect Refusal (Wish)	7	11,7
	Indirect Refusal (Alternative/Suggestion)	10	16,7
	Indirect Refusal (Thanking)	1	1,7
	Indirect Refusal (Promise of future acceptance)	4	6,7
	Total	60	100

The tables below demonstrate that, "Indirect Refusals" dominate, especially "Alternative/Suggestion" (16%) and "Excuse/Explanation" (30%), which reflect a cultural capacity for minimizing face-threats when refusing elders. "Wish" and "Regret" (11% each) are equally common, indicating that Kabyle speakers soften rejections with feelings of regret. Direct Refusal (NO) rates were similar between neighbors and family (15%). "Thanking" (1%) and "Promise of future acceptance" (6%) are examples of low-frequency techniques that suggest their situational application (e.g., gratitude for offers but inability to respond). So Kabyle speakers avoid being direct and place of higher value on "Respect for age and social hierarchy". The common usage of "Excuse/Explanation" and "Alternative/Suggestion" is consistent with societal norms that avoid complete rejection.

Table 3: Refusal of an Elder Colleague's Request

Scenario (10)		Frequency	Percent
	Direct refusal (No)	7	11,7
	Indirect refusal (Excuse/Explanation)	10	16,7
	Indirect Refusal (Regret)	3	5
	Indirect Refusal (Apology)	15	25
	Indirect Refusal (Wish)	4	6,6
	Indirect Refusal (Alternative/Suggestion)	9	15
	Indirect Refusal (Thanking)	7	11,7
	Indirect Refusal (Promise of future acceptance)	5	8,3
	Total	60	100

The table below shows that, "Apology" enhances to (25%), compared to (6% in Scenario 1 and 5) suggesting that interaction is more important in professional settings, "Thanking" increases to (11%) from (1% in Scenario 1 and 5) but, "Excuse/Explanation" decreases to (16%) from (30%) indicating that professional settings combine transparency (apologies) with civility (thanking). The lack of "Direct Refusals" (NO) highlights the negative perception of openly rejecting older people in professional hierarchies. To maintain a balance between respect and refusal, the workplace creates "strength variation", necessitating additional "symbolic politeness" (thank you, apologies). The decline in "Excuse/Explanation" can be a reflection of adults.

Table 4: Refusal of a student to join another student's group

Scenario (13)		Frequency	Percent
	Direct refusal (No)	7	11,7
	Indirect refusal (Excuse/Explanation)	13	21,7
	Indirect Refusal (Regret)	3	5
	Indirect Refusal (Apology)	11	18,3
	Indirect Refusal (Wish)	7	11,7
	Indirect Refusal (Alternative/Suggestion)	8	13,3
	Indirect Refusal (Thanking)	4	6,6
	Indirect Refusal (Promise of future acceptance)	7	11,7
	Total	60	100

The table below indicates that, "Apology" reduces to (18%) compared to (26% for coworkers). Although "Excuse/Explanation" stays high (21%), suggesting less need for ritual mitigation. It appears that friend rejections emphasize negotiation, as evidenced by the high percentage of "Alternative/Suggestion" (13%) and "Promise of future acceptance" (11%). The mix of "Directness and negotiation" that Kabyle speakers employ with other students ("Alternative", "Promise") reflects eliminated hierarchies. The consistent rate of direct refusals (NO) at 11% underscores their connection to age-based power dynamics, whereas the continued reliance on indirect refusals (e.g., excuses) aligns with broader cultural standards of politeness.

4.1.4 Analyzing Gender Tables

Table 5: Rejecting family marriage

Scenario (5)		Frequency	Percent
	Direct refusal (No)	7	11,7
	Indirect refusal (Excuse/Explanation)	15	25
	Indirect Refusal (Regret)	3	5
	Indirect Refusal (Apology)	15	25
	Indirect Refusal (Wish)	7	10
	Indirect Refusal (Alternative/Suggestion)	11	20
	Indirect Refusal (Thanking)	1	1,7
	Indirect Refusal (Promise of future acceptance)	1	1,6
	Total	60	100

Table 6: Refusal of coworker's coffee invitation

Scenario (20)		Frequency	Percent
	Direct refusal (No)	9	15
	Indirect refusal (Excuse/Explanation)	10	16,7
	Indirect Refusal (Regret)	2	3,3
	Indirect Refusal (Apology)	16	26,7
	Indirect Refusal (Wish)	5	8,3
	Indirect Refusal (Alternative/Suggestion)	10	16,7
	Indirect Refusal (Thanking)	3	5
	Indirect Refusal (Promise of future acceptance)	5	8,3
	Total	60	100

The data demonstrates varied gender-based patterns of refusal strategies, with "indirect strategies" predominating in both situations but with different points of focus. Speakers mainly use "Excuse/Explanation" and "Apology" (25% each) in family marriage refusals. The scenario (5) demonstrates that the gender variable is activated by highlighting the necessity of reducing face-threats in high-stakes familial scenarios. While "Direct refusals" (NO) are still rare (11%), the strong usage of "Alternative/Suggestion" (20%) further indicates a preference for negotiation over directness. In contrast, "Apology" rises at (26%) in workplace coffee refusals (Scenario 20), indicating increased politeness in work environments, whereas "Direct refusals" (NO) increase almost at (15%). Notably, males may choose practical options (equal "Alternative/Suggestion" in both); however, women may apply "Excuse/Explanation" in

familial situations (25% vs 16% in the workplace). Promising is used in situations where it is possible to happen in the future unlike when it is not possible, such as Rejecting family marriage (scenario 5) (1%) but is mostly used in workplace refusals (8%) shows how context and gender roles influence the choice of strategy; professional refusals allow avoidance, while family refusals require certainty. Although cultural norms in Kabyle society probably moderate these universal preferences, these trends are consistent with broader sociolinguistic findings that women frequently value unity in marriage, while men may adopt fewer emotional approaches.

4.1.5 Analyzing the Tables of Social Status

Table 7: Refusal of manager's help (High to Low)

Scenario (6)		Frequency	Percent
	Direct refusal (No)	7	11,7
	Indirect refusal (Excuse/Explanation)	12	20
	Indirect Refusal (Regret)	3	4
	Indirect Refusal (Apology)	17	28
	Indirect Refusal (Wish)	8	13,3
	Indirect Refusal (Alternative/Suggestion)	9	15
	Indirect Refusal (Thanking)	4	6,3
	Indirect Refusal (Promise of future acceptance)	1	1,7
	Total	60	100

The table below indicates the frequency of occurrence and percentages of the refusal strategies employed in response to social status. .it shows that social status influences the strategies used by Kabyle Berber speakers when dealing with higher, equal, and lower status. The most frequent strategy is indirect refusal apology (28%) participants use this strategy to show respect and reduce the social cost of refusal followed by excuse/explanation (20%) by justifying the refusal to not make it disrespectful then followed by suggestion/alternative (15%) then by wish (13%) to express good intention followed by direct refusal (11%) then by thanking (6%) to soften refusal then by regret (4%) to minimize the social damage finally, promise for future acceptance (1%) by leaving the door open.

Table 8: Rejecting agent's offer (High to Low)

Scenario (8)		Frequency	Percent
	Direct refusal (No)	8	13,3
	Indirect refusal (Excuse/Explanation)	10	16,7
	Indirect Refusal (Regret)	2	3,3
	Indirect Refusal (Apology)	15	25
	Indirect Refusal (Wish)	6	10
	Indirect Refusal (Alternative/Suggestion)	10	16,7
	Indirect Refusal (Thanking)	6	10
	Indirect Refusal (Promise of future acceptance)	3	5
	Total	60	100

The table shows that, the most dominant strategy is "Apology" (25%), showing power "Excuse/Explanation" and "Alternative/Suggestion" (16%) to maintain relationships. "Direct refusal" (NO) is used (13%) but not frequently due to the high risk of refusal. "Wish" and "Thanking" (10%) to mitigate the refusal, "Promise for future acceptance" (5%), and "Regret" (3%) by showing empathy.

Table 9: Refusal to grade absent student (High to Low)

Scenario (9)		Frequency	Percent
	Direct refusal (No)	7	11,7
	Indirect refusal (Excuse/Explanation)	10	16,7
	Indirect Refusal (Regret)	4	6,6
	Indirect Refusal (Apology)	13	21,7
	Indirect Refusal (Wish)	5	8,3
	Indirect Refusal (Alternative/Suggestion)	9	15
	Indirect Refusal (Thanking)	5	8,3
	Indirect Refusal (Promise of future acceptance)	7	11,7
	Total	60	100

Table 10: Refusing a teacher's invitation (High to Low)

Scenario (14)		Frequency	Percent
	Direct refusal (No)	7	11,7
	Indirect refusal (Excuse/Explanation)	13	21,4
	Indirect Refusal (Regret)	2	3,3
	Indirect Refusal (Apology)	14	23,6
	Indirect Refusal (Wish)	6	10
	Indirect Refusal (Alternative/Suggestion)	6	10
	Indirect Refusal (Thanking)	6	10
	Indirect Refusal (Promise of future acceptance)	6	10
	Total	60	100

Table 11: Refusal of a company owner to an employee's invitation (High to Low)

Scenario (16)		Frequency	Percent
	Direct refusal (No)	7	11,7
	Indirect refusal (Excuse/Explanation)	11	18,3
	Indirect Refusal (Regret)	4	6,7
	Indirect Refusal (Apology)	14	23,4
	Indirect Refusal (Wish)	6	10
	Indirect Refusal (Alternative/Suggestion)	8	13,3
	Indirect Refusal (Thanking)	2	3,3
	Indirect Refusal (Promise of future acceptance)	8	13,3
	Total	60	100

The tables below demonstrate that, “Direct refusal” (NO) appeared with similar percentage (11%) but always indirect strategies are preferred “Excuse/Explanation” was highly used in scenario (9) (16%), in scenario (14) (21%) and in the scenario 16 (18%) indicates that refusing offers and invitations is preferred by giving reasons to soften refusal by justifying. “Apology” is considered as most used strategy (21%) in scenario (9) and (23%) in scenario (14) and (23%) in scenario (16) this shows that when refusing someone with higher status participants felt in need to apologize to express humility and save their face. “Regret” was less employed (3%) in scenario (14), in contrast to scenarios (9 and 16) (6%). Kabyle Berber speakers consider emotions of others, especially when dealing with academic relations. “Wish” in scenario (9) (8%), in scenario (14) and (16) (10%), expressing the desire to accept, especially when it is related to invitations.

“Alternative/Suggestion” is used but in a small percentage (10%) in scenario (14) and (13%) in scenario (16), and (15%) in scenario (9). “Thanking” in scenario (9) (8%), in scenario (14) (10%) and in (16) (3%) reflects that expression of gratitude are essential more in professional than the academic context setting. “Promise for future acceptance” in scenario (9) (11%), in scenario (14) (10%) and in scenario (16) (13%) are showing that they may accept to avoid harming other’s face.

Table12: Teacher’s refusal of student blood donation invitation (Low to High)

Scenario (17)		Frequency	Percent
	Direct refusal (No)	7	11,7
	Indirect refusal (Excuse/Explanation)	11	18,3
	Indirect Refusal (Regret)	5	8,3
	Indirect Refusal (Apology)	13	21,7
	Indirect Refusal (Wish)	6	10
	Indirect Refusal (Alternative/Suggestion)	8	13,3
	Indirect Refusal (Thanking)	3	5
	Indirect Refusal (Promise of future acceptance)	7	11,7
	Total	60	100

The table indicates that, the most dominant strategy is indirect refusal “Apology” by (21%) teachers tend to soften refusal to maintain politeness the next strategy is by giving “Excuse/Explanation” (18%) and “Alternative/Suggestion” (13%) which are helpful to keep relations. Other observed strategy includes “direct refusal” (NO) (11%) it means teachers prefer to be more indirect than direct. The less used strategies are “wish” (10%), “Regret” (8%) and “Thanking” (5%) to avoid offense.

Table13: Refusing to help a friend (Equal status)

Scenario (2)		Frequency	Percent
	Direct refusal (No)	7	11,7
	Indirect refusal (Excuse/Explanation)	20	33,3
	Indirect Refusal (Regret)	4	6,6
	Indirect Refusal (Apology)	21	35
	Indirect Refusal (Wish)	3	5
	Indirect Refusal (Alternative/Suggestion)	4	6,7
	Indirect Refusal (Thanking)	0	0
	Indirect Refusal (Promise of future acceptance)	1	1,7
	Total	60	100

This scenario shows a strong preference for indirect techniques particularly through apology (35%) and excuse /explanation (33%) direct strategies are absent because mutual support is expected among equals the less use of future promises indicate limited willingness to commit help is situational not obligatory.

Table14: Refusing to lend car to a friend (Equal Status)

Scenario (4)		Frequency	Percent
	Direct refusal (No)	7	11,7
	Indirect refusal (Excuse/Explanation)	15	25
	Indirect Refusal (Regret)	3	5
	Indirect Refusal (Apology)	17	28,3
	Indirect Refusal (Wish)	10	16,6
	Indirect Refusal (Alternative/Suggestion)	7	11,7
	Indirect Refusal (Thanking)	0	0
	Indirect Refusal (Promise of future acceptance)	1	1,7
	Total	60	100

In this scenario apology is dominant (28%) lending a car involves high risk an apology needed to soften the refusal by showing regret in the other hand excuse justifies the refusal as beyond the refuser's control additionally, wish and alternatives mitigate face threat this scenario demand heavy politeness to avoid appearing distrustful.

Table15: Declines paying friend's meal (Equal Status)

Scenario (7)		Frequency	Percent
	Direct refusal (No)	7	11,7
	Indirect refusal (Excuse/Explanation)	10	16,7
	Indirect Refusal (Regret)	2	3,3
	Indirect Refusal (Apology)	15	25
	Indirect Refusal (Wish)	5	8,3
	Indirect Refusal (Alternative/Suggestion)	14	23,3
	Indirect Refusal (Thanking)	4	6,7
	Indirect Refusal (Promise of future acceptance)	3	5
	Total	60	100

This table shows that; financial favors involve pride wishing demonstrate desire without ability to reduce refusal thanking is rejection as gratitude also regret all these strategies preserve the friend's offer apology is rare because it might show that the friend's offer was inappropriate.

Table 16: Refusing a friend's invitation (Equal Status)

Scenario (11)		Frequency	Percent
	Direct refusal (No)	7	11,7
	Indirect refusal (Excuse/Explanation)	12	20
	Indirect Refusal (Regret)	5	8,3
	Indirect Refusal (Apology)	11	18,3
	Indirect Refusal (Wish)	6	10
	Indirect Refusal (Alternative/Suggestion)	7	11,7
	Indirect Refusal (Thanking)	6	10
	Indirect Refusal (Promise of future acceptance)	6	10
	Total	60	100

The most frequent strategy used is indirect refusal with an excuse or explanation (20%), followed closely by apology (18%). Other commonly used strategies include direct refusal (No) and alternative/suggestion, both at 11.7%, and wish, thanking, and promise of future acceptance, each at 10%. The least used form is regret (8.3%). This suggests that while participants leaned toward politeness via indirect strategies, they were still relatively comfortable offering a direct "No" to friends in some cases.

Table 17: Refusing neighbor's invitation (Equal Status)

Scenario (12)		Frequency	Percent
	Direct refusal (No)	7	11,7
	Indirect refusal (Excuse/Explanation)	13	21,6
	Indirect Refusal (Regret)	3	5
	Indirect Refusal (Apology)	12	20
	Indirect Refusal (Wish)	6	10
	Indirect Refusal (Alternative/Suggestion)	7	11,7
	Indirect Refusal (Thanking)	5	8,3
	Indirect Refusal (Promise of future acceptance)	7	11,7
	Total	60	100

In this table remains the most frequent (21%), similar to the friend's case. Apology also ranks high (20%), showing again a preference for polite, face-saving strategies. Interestingly, regret is significantly lower (5%) compared to the friend scenario, possibly reflecting a more distanced or formal relationship with neighbors. Direct refusals and alternative/suggestions both account for 11%, the same as in Table 16. Thanking and promise of future acceptance remain stable at around 8% and 11 %respectively.

Table 18: Refusing a friend's night party (Equal Status)

Scenario (15)		Frequency	Percent
	Direct refusal (No)	7	11,7
	Indirect refusal (Excuse/Explanation)	12	20
	Indirect Refusal (Regret)	4	6,7
	Indirect Refusal (Apology)	11	18,3
	Indirect Refusal (Wish)	6	10
	Indirect Refusal (Alternative/Suggestion)	8	13,3
	Indirect Refusal (Thanking)	3	5
	Indirect Refusal (Promise of future acceptance)	9	15
	Total	60	100

This table shows that social rejections risk implying disinterest an excuse and apology validate the inviter's effort direct refusal appears because some are low-stakes it is permitted if softened by alternatives.

Table 19: Refusal of neighbor's request to help with house renovation (Equal Status)

Scenario (19)		Frequency	Percent
	Direct refusal (No)	7	11,7
	Indirect refusal (Excuse/Explanation)	11	18,3
	Indirect Refusal (Regret)	2	3,3
	Indirect Refusal (Apology)	18	30
	Indirect Refusal (Wish)	6	10
	Indirect Refusal (Alternative/Suggestion)	9	15
	Indirect Refusal (Thanking)	2	3,4
	Indirect Refusal (Promise of future acceptance)	5	8,3
	Total	60	100

In this table renovation help is time-sensitive apology is used to show regret for failing expectations alternatives (15%) are employed to offer solutions transforming rejection into cooperation. direct refusal is acceptable but needed a high apology.

Table 20: Refusing to give a phone to a stranger (Unknown Status)

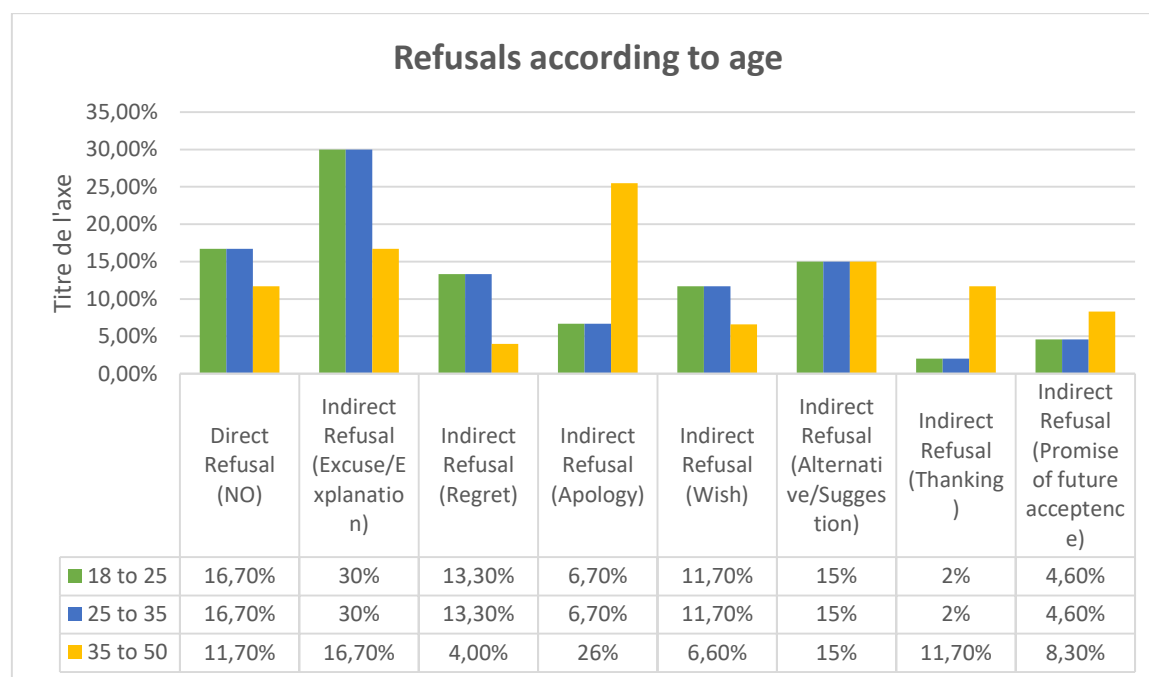
Scenario (3)		Frequency	Percent
	Direct refusal (No)	7	11,7
	Indirect refusal (Excuse/Explanation)	18	30
	Indirect Refusal (Regret)	3	5
	Indirect Refusal (Apology)	21	35
	Indirect Refusal (Wish)	3	5
	Indirect Refusal (Alternative/Suggestion)	7	11,7
	Indirect Refusal (Thanking)	0	0
	Indirect Refusal (Promise of future acceptance)	1	1,6
	Total	60	100

Table 21: Refusal of stranger's park cleanup invitation (Unknown Status)

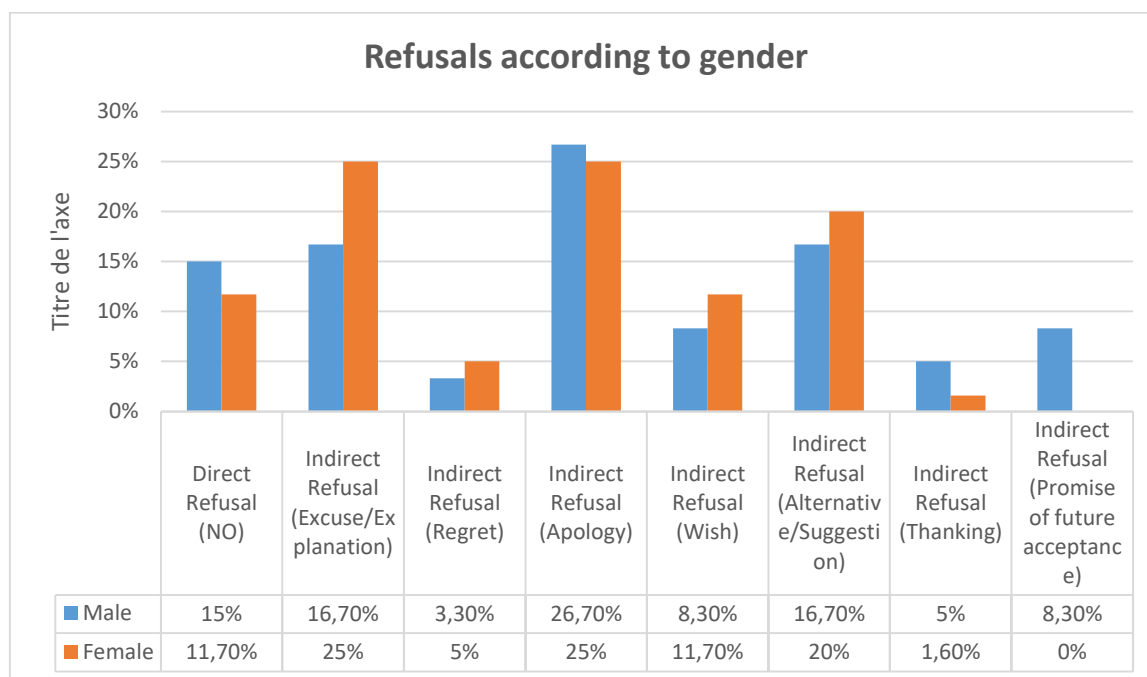
Scenario (18)		Frequency	Percent
	Direct refusal (No)	7	11,7
	Indirect refusal (Excuse/Explanation)	11	18,3
	Indirect Refusal (Regret)	3	4,3
	Indirect Refusal (Apology)	16	26,7
	Indirect Refusal (Wish)	5	8,3
	Indirect Refusal (Alternative/Suggestion)	9	15
	Indirect Refusal (Thanking)	3	5,7
	Indirect Refusal (Promise of future acceptance)	6	10
	Total	60	100

The two tables indicate that, the scenario (3) and (18) are similar in refusing directly (NO) offers or invitations (11%) indirect strategies differ significantly in scenario (3) "Apology" (35%) and (26%) in the scenario (18) followed by "Excuse/Explanation" (30%) in scenario (3). By contrast, in scenario (18), the use of "Regret" and "Wish" differs from their application in offer contexts (scenario 3). While invitations notice sparing gratitude (10%) and higher future-acceptance promises (10%), offers avoid thanking (0%) to prevent implying obligation and rarely use promises for future acceptance (1%). These indirect strategies are used to maintain politeness and mitigate face threats.

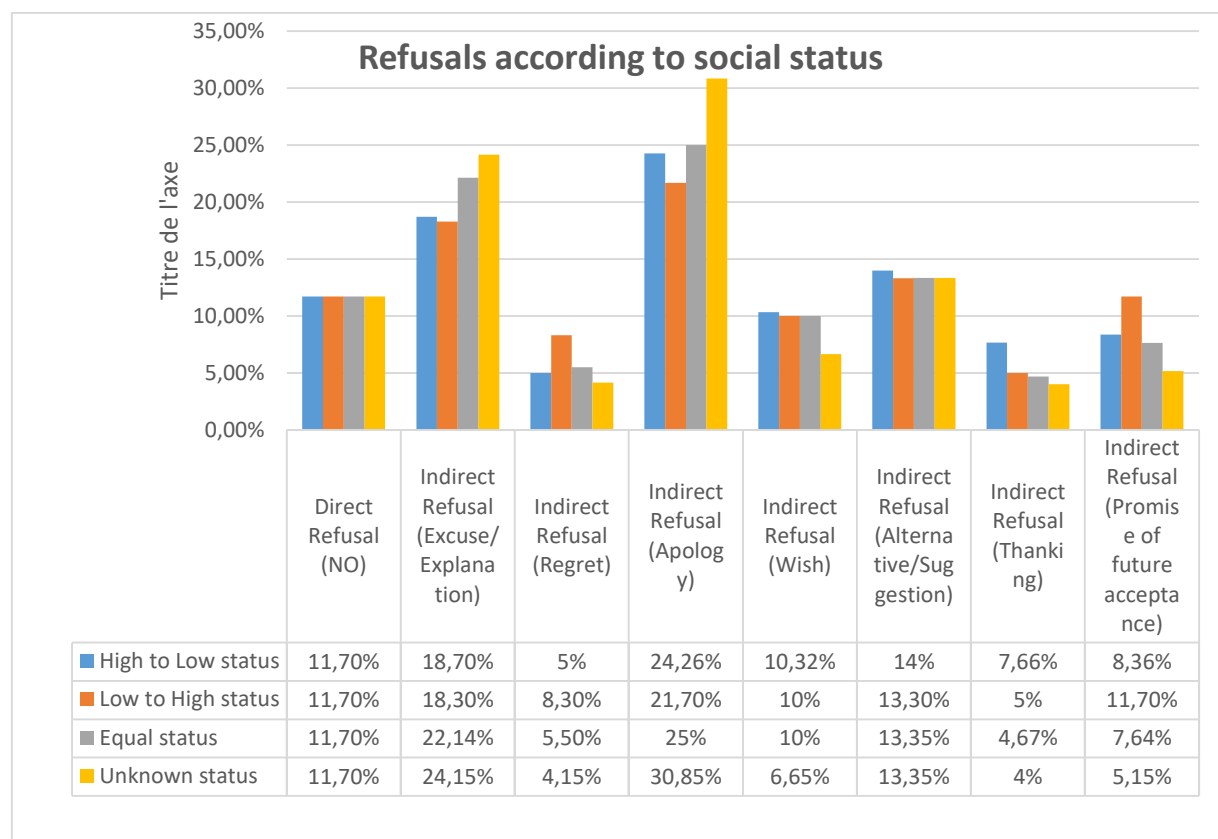
4.1.6 The Analysis of the Graphs



The bar chart demonstrates that participants of all ages frequently used indirect refusals (such as "Excuse/Apology", with percentages among younger participants increasing direct refusals (30% vs. 15% for participants aged 18 to 35) age group showing reduced total usage (17% indirect, 12% direct), illustrating that older persons might prefer assertiveness or simplicity over complicated politeness.



The bar chart reveals gendered differences in refusal strategies. Males implement more direct refusals (15% "NO") and opt for indirect apologies (26%) and excuses (16%), contrary to females, prioritize indirect alternatives (20%) and excuses (25%), mitigate directness (11% "NO"), and totally neglect promise of future acceptance (0%). This indicates that although women depend primarily on indirect, face-saving methods to mitigate rejections, men combine directness with regulated politeness, possibly reflecting social or cultural norms that impact gendered communication patterns, which means that societal expectations are probably the cause of the observed variations between men and women's refusal strategies (e.g., men appearing more direct, women employing nuances in their strategies). Men are frequently instructed by their cultures to value assertiveness, whereas women are instructed to prioritize politeness or avoid conflict.



The bar chart shows that distinct variations in indirect refusal techniques are identified when refusals are analyzed by social status. The most common strategies used in all social status categories are "Apology" (24%) and "Excuse/Explanation" (18%) for high-to-low. "Apology" (21%) and "Excuse/Explanation" (18%) for low-to-high. "Apology" (25%) and "Excuse/Explanation" (22%) in equal-status, and "Apology" (30%) and "Excuse/Explanation" (24%) for unknown status. This establishes a balance between politeness and respect for one another. Refusal to commit is observed by the fact that "Thanking" is the most rarely encountered across all categories. These structures establish how social hierarchy shapes refusal strategies, with lower-status encounters including deference through apologies.

4.1.7 Conclusion

The findings indicate that Kabyle Berbers strongly prefer indirect refusal strategies, with variations observed across age, gender, and social status by the prioritization of face saving and social cohesion within the community.

4.2 Discussion of the Results

Using the three research objectives as a guide, we aim to discuss the pattern of outcomes that has developed from this study in light of previous studies after analyzing the data gathered from the tools.

From the results stated in the tables above, it could be noticed that there were more similarities than differences between refusals according to age across all scenarios. Indeed, scenarios (1,5,10) most respondents used indirect strategies as "Excuse/Explanation" with a high use of "Alternative/Suggestion" which demonstrates a cultural preference for offering solutions rather than directly refusing. Expressions of gratitude were rarely used with requests (scenarios 1 and 5) to avoid upholding a responsibility or the obligation to assist. In contrast, participants' use of gratitude to appreciate the effort of the inviter while declining was significantly raised in invitation scenarios (10 and 13). According to this distinction, Kabyle speakers adjust their indications of politeness according to the social act that is being declined; in requests, gratitude is used carefully to avoid conveying dependency, but in invitations, it is considerably increased to mitigate the impact of the refusal. Another difference is that when refusing someone close (neighbor, family member), one does not need to apologize for not being able to accept the offer or invitation, but for a distant person (scenario 13), there is a need to save the speaker and the hearer's faces. The findings show that age in the Kabyle culture is a fundamental factor to consider in the speech act of refusing. Accordingly, this community attaches a high importance to respecting elderly people and thus employs politeness strategies which are representative of community values, and honor-based social hierarchies. In line with this, let us recall the Kabyle council called anciently "Tajmaat" or what we can refer to as the traditional village assembly, where participation was celebrated. Beyond this, the elders held a special status in this council as their decisions were rarely contested, reflecting a gerontocracy aspect within the democratic framework. Interestingly, this age-based value is dynamically modulated to cope with situational, institutional, and professional norms, which are not all the time by universal politeness. In contrast to cultural norms such as respecting elders, which have their

Based on deeply established societal values and traditions, indirect ways of declining requests, such as providing explanations or excuses/explanation, are a standard component of professional behavior, intended to preserve workplace harmony and diplomacy, and are not necessarily related to cultural preference. This result seems to be similar to the study of Kayang (2018), who worked on refusal strategies performed by speakers of different ages. He argues that the data reveal a marked predominance of indirect strategies and people in different age groups refuse an offer/invitation in the same way, with more similarities than differences.

As far as gender is concerned, about Kabyle Berber speakers, indirect refusals are asserted to preserve the interlocutor's emotions and avoid conflicts as well. This pattern of results is common in serious situations like rejecting a family marriage (scenario 5). To cope with this, recurrent indirect strategies such as excuses (e.g., "I am still studying") are used. Furthermore, apologies are equally common as they serve to soften refusals. They may even go beyond and suggest other options to avoid refusing overtly and deliberately. Less serious situations also involve using indirect mitigating strategies; speakers prefer these as they serve to keep good bounds between interlocutors, so apologizing is very common when it comes to not being able to accept invitations. Women in particular resort to these strategies to save their standing within the family, and they also appeal to the aforementioned strategies as an indicator of respect and kindness. Above all, it seems that females are indirect with regard to refusing because they tend to care about saving others face and they drive by the need to be in peace with everyone. This has longstanding roots in the Berber culture, where women are called "les gardiennes de la tradition". Historically, the Berber women has been known as the pot that contains everyone and try their best even at their own expense in the pursuit of the wellbeing of others. Women specifically may use these techniques in family concerns save their reputation in this both scenarios refusals seem to be act of care trying to save everyone's face to be in peace.

Moving to social status, when declining higher status individuals like (teachers, managers, elders) speakers depend mainly on apologies and excuses to reduce the face-threatening act, as it is observed in the scenarios (6,8,9,14, and 16) for the case of teachers refusing to abide by institutional norms. Participants used alternative strategies less frequently in collaborative peer-based contexts (6, 8) than in hierarchical organizational scenarios (14, 9, 16). In the latter, superiors placed a higher priority on maintaining mutual respect and encouraging collaboration to maintain formal stability and organizational hierarchy. Moreover, in low to high status (scenario 17), apologies are necessary to show respect, contrariwise to

equal status scenarios (2,4,7,11,12,15,19) where speakers employ "Excuse/Explanation" and "Apology" to protect the relationship and due to the implied risk of ruining the friendship. These results seem to be comparable to those of Satiç and Çifçi (2018), who claim that Turkish people use more excuses and explanations, which means they are less likely to be direct. In addition, another pattern of results by Izadi and Zilaie (2015) confirms that Persian speakers employ indirect strategies more than direct ones in refusals. Concerning the unknown status, indirect refusals "Excuse/Explanation" and "Apology" toward strangers (scenarios 3 and 18) a need to prove the universal respect, avoiding offense and misunderstanding, even for anonymous ones, who may have hidden authority, indirectness plays a role of cultural safety.

Surprisingly, Benbouya and Rababaa (2022) in their analysis of Algerian Speakers' Arabic found that they prefer to use direct refusal strategies in their response to people from all statuses. Their pattern of results raises an interesting consideration of a cross ethnic study of refusal strategies within the Algerian society itself. Results contradict due to cultural variation for Kabyle Berbers; the refusal strategies are highly indirect. Directness is rare especially with high status it risks face threatening they preserved values, customs and traditions from one generation to the next but for the Algerian culture it is totally different since directness use of strategies in all status is due to the influence of modern tradition and living in cities which allow them to perceive directness as normal and not offensive. It is crucial to recognize that social status plays a significant role in shaping refusal strategies in accordance with cultural norms and these strategies may vary across cultures.

Overall, the Kabyle community prioritizes the use of indirect refusal strategies when declining requests, invitations and suggestions in various social situations in order to save both interlocutors face as it is mentioned in Brown and Levinson's politeness theory to maintain social ties.

In accordance to the second inquiry which is how do demographic characteristics (age, gender and social status) of Kabyle Berber speakers correlate with their preferences for direct vs indirect refusal strategies, the results indicate that Age, gender, and social status all have influence on the direct or indirect choice of refusal strategies in Kabyle Berber community, which reflects the group's emphasis on hierarchy, respect, and collectivism. In order to maintain harmony and provide an example of humility, older people with a high social status frequently prefer indirect strategies by expressing regret. They might, however, use direct refusals to show their authority when addressing to younger speakers. Additionally, younger speakers nearly often use indirect strategies to avoid insulting or criticizing elderly people. In order to

get around societal limits. Furthermore, when relating women, who operate under gender norms, typically prioritize indirectness by softening refusals with politeness markers. Men particularly those of higher status may employ direct refusals in peer encounters but turn to indirect techniques when speaking to superiors or elders. These dynamics are further complicated by social status: while lower-status people mainly rely on indirectness to avoid being viewed as impolite, high-status people balance indirectness to maintain harmony. these demographic patterns explain how Kabyle refusal strategies reinforce cultural values of deference and face-saving act.

Age, gender, and social status influence the formulation and perception of refusals. Empirical data demonstrate that age significantly shapes the choice of refusal strategies, with individuals often opting for indirect techniques when addressing elders. For instance, the term "Tajmaat" refers to councils of elders with the authority to resolve conflicts and guide decision-making processes, reflecting a sociocultural prioritization of intergenerational tradition. Regarding social status, professional settings often emphasize transparency and civility; thus, indirect refusal strategies (e.g., excuses or explanations) may not stem from cultural norms but rather from performative professional structures. This contrasts with contexts where indirectness aligns with cultural values, such as showing deference to elders. Additionally, the cost of imposition affects refusal strategies: high-stakes scenarios (e.g., refusing a marriage proposal) necessitate elaborate justifications, whereas low-imposition scenarios (e.g., declining a coffee invitation) may involve brief apologies. In summary, indirectness reduces face-threatening acts to maintain symbolic politeness while enabling avoidance of direct conflict. The current chapter analyzed the data gathered from the tools and discussed the results, which demonstrate that indirectness is dominant in relationships and that Kabyle refusal strategies are highly socio-pragmatically influenced by age, gender and social status.

Finally, answering the last question, Kabyle Berber polite refusal is characterized by pragmatic strategies that put social harmony and respect for cultural hierarchy first, as well as linguistic indirectness. In linguistics, people use formulaic expressions softened by honorifics thus, wish and promise for future acceptance, Proverbs and figurative language are used to avoid direct confrontation. Pragmatically, refusals are embedded with gratitude and appeals to suggestions /explanation and apology, reframing refusal as a necessity dictated by social roles rather than individual choice. Speakers maintain harmony by invoking hierarchical deference cultural values like solidarity and interdependence are significant to preserve relationships.

To conclude, the general findings of this chapter helped us achieve our study objectives and answered clearly to research questions.

Chapter Five: Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

By examining the refusal strategies of Kabyle Berber, his paper highlights the linguistic strategies (direct and indirect) to refuse offers and invitations by investigating how social factors (age, gender and social status), in addition to settings shape refusal formation including how politeness and cultural values influence indirectness.

The study incorporates a mixed-methods approach, combining questionnaire and interview to examine how Kabyle Berber sociocultural norms affect communication strategies, particularly when opposition is involved. According to research, people with high status like elders or community leaders most frequently use indirect refusal strategies to maintain social harmony and respect, which is consistent with cultural norms that place an importance on politeness and hierarchical relationships. The prospect that indirectness would predominate only in formal or hierarchical interactions was clarified; rather, indirect strategies are employed in a variety of contexts, and their degree of complexity (such as excuses and apologies) varies according to age, gender, and social status. Refusals aimed to others, for example, may be less indirect than those made to superiors, where politeness acts are more significant. The use of "approximant" signifies that indirectness is not necessarily related to politeness instead functions on a range that is adjusted to maintain common cohesion and face-saving. This requires to question commonly accepted assumptions about communication methods and underlines how Kabyle Berber norms distinctly establish a balance between situational flexibility, indirectness, and cultural values like cohesiveness over individual directness.

The results show that refusal strategies are carefully adjusted to mitigate face threats in Kabyle socio cultural setting, particularly when speaking to elders. Direct refusals are sometimes used rarely in age-based hierarchical situations. However, they are carefully constructed to indicate power imbalances and are usually followed by statements to make a balance between civility and transparency. Indirect techniques like negotiated delays or polite excuses are increasingly used and represent a culture that values harmony among individuals as well as respect for elders. The study additionally illustrates that indirectness is not limited by social standing. Kabyle speakers opt for indirect refusals to protect feelings of others in various setting, whether speaking to peers, superiors or inferiors. Even when directness is justified, gender remains a critical factor which has been found that women in Kabyle communities apply indirect strategies more frequently than men do. The pattern is related to gender values of

modesty and relational diplomacy. Finally, these choices are not only language decisions; instead, they represent fundamental cultural values that distinguish Kabyle pragmatics from rejection norms in cultures. This study highlights that Kabyle refusals are performative acts of cultural identity that negotiate personal autonomy with social norms. Finally, Age, gender and social status significantly influence Kabyle Berber refusal strategies, with indirect approaches predominating in hierarchical interactions, as they reflect politeness norms aimed at maintaining social harmony within the community.

5.2 Limitations of the Study

Undoubtedly, conducting research involves obstacles that challenge the researcher's ability to fully achieve the study's aims. This work is not a rare case, and it is important to recognize its limitations. One major obstacle was the lack of academic sources, especially socio-pragmatic research on Kabyle Berber refusal strategies. Our theoretical framework is constrained by the absence of books or published papers in our library at the University of Bejaia. Second, only speakers of Kabyle Berber from a particular area (Bejaia) were included in the study, although this made it possible to conduct a thorough examination, the result cannot apply to Kabyle speakers from other regions, cultures or other Berber dialect (such as Chaoui, Chelhi, ...etc.). Third, the DCT participants' varied responses made analysis challenging. Particularly in socially sensitive situations (such as declining elders or people of high position), some respondents gave brief or unclear responses, which could be a reflection of cultural hesitation or the artificiality of the task. Fourth, spontaneity might have been limited by using a written DCT rather than an oral one. Kabyle refusal strategies frequently depend on tone, pauses, or nonverbal signals in real-life conversations, which are difficult to convey effectively in written responses. It is also possible that participants overanalyzed their responses, which resulted in more artificial or idealized rejections. Lastly, even though the study looked at age, gender, and social status, the sample might not fairly reflect all subgroups (e.g., speakers from rural VS urban areas), which could lead to the missing of important pragmatic variations.

5.3 Recommendations of the Study

Although this study sheds light on Kabyle Berber refusal strategies, its limitations, specifically, the lack of time that affected data collection indicate that future research should be conducted over an extended period of time in order to increase the reliability and validity of the findings. In addition, while factors such as age, gender, and social status were examined, other variables, such as urban versus rural differences, education level, or the effects of bilingualism

need to be investigated. Additionally, because Kabyle refusals are multimodal, incorporating video recordings would also allow for the analysis of non-verbal cues (gestures, tone, and facial expressions) in Kabyle communication. Finally, using statistical tools like Chi-square tests could reveal significant differences in the frequency or distribution of strategies across distinct demographic groups. Lastly, this study highlights the need for further investigation into how second language (L2) learners acquire and employ refusal strategies in Kabyle Berber and other languages. Given that pragmatic competence particularly in face-threatening acts like refusals is often a challenge for L2 speakers, future studies could: Compare native and non-native refusal strategies to identify potential pragmatic transfer (e.g., do L2 learners apply first-language (L1) indirectness norms when refusing in Kabyle Berber?).

5.4 General Conclusion

To conclude, this thesis has demonstrated that within Kabyle Berber-speaking communities, female speakers systematically employ indirectness in their refusal strategies compared to their male counterparts. Significantly, the findings underscore that the selection and realization of refusal strategies are profoundly shaped by a complex interplay of sociocultural variables, including age, gender, and social status, reflecting deeply embedded cultural norms. Furthermore, the research affirms that distinct national contexts demonstrate unique sets of social conventions, which in turn govern communicative expectations and politeness strategies. These insights indicate the importance of cultural particularities specifically Kabyle cultural norms in shaping communicative behavior.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

English Discourse Completion Test

We are conducting a study for our thesis at the English Department of Bejaia University, focusing on Refusal Strategies in Kabyle Berber: A Socio-Pragmatic Study.

Your participation in responding to the following scenarios would be greatly appreciated. Kindly reply with whatever comes naturally to you in each circumstance. As much or as little as you think is appropriate is yours to write.

Your answers will help us gather important information for our study. Thank you for your cooperation in advance.

The researchers.

Choose what suits you:

*Gender: Male Female

*Age: 18 to 25 years old 25 to 35 years old 35 to 50 years old

*Social status: Teacher Student

- An elderly neighbor (significantly older than you) asks you to help them carry heavy groceries up the stairs every week, but you have a busy schedule and cannot commit to this regular responsibility.

How would you refuse?

.....
.....

- You are a student at a university, your friend asks you to do his homework because he did not understand the lesson, but you do not want to help him.

How would you refuse?

.....
.....

- Imagine that you are walking outside, a stranger person comes to you and asks to borrow your phone to make a call, but you do not feel comfortable handing it over.

How would you refuse?

.....
.....

- Your friend asks you to lend him/her your car, but you need it because you have an impediment.

How would you refuse?

.....
.....

- Your [father/mother/uncle/aunt] insists that you should marry someone they have chosen for you, but you want to make this decision for yourself.

How would you refuse?

.....
.....

- You are a director working on a high value deal, your manager offers to help you but, you know that he may not have the expertise required.

How would you refuse?

.....
.....

Appendices

- You are in a restaurant with your friends, after finishing the meal they ask you to pay for them the dish, but you disagree.

How would you refuse?

.....
.....

- A client who wants to launch an advertising campaign with your company, so your boss asks you to create a high-quality viral video, that you set up a social media strategy for 5 different platforms, and you write 10 optimized blog articles, and also find 50 influencers to promote the campaign, for this evening. But you can't do that much for the evening, time is not enough and you have other things to do.

How would you refuse?

.....
.....

- Your student comes to see you and tells you that he didn't attend the exam, because he had something to do, so he asks you to give him a good mark because he is always present during classes. But you cannot give him a mark you can't since he did not do the exam.

How would you refuse?

.....
.....

- You are a young professional and a much older colleague asks you to cover their work responsibilities during a three-day absence so they can attend a family event, but you are already overwhelmed with your own tasks.

.....
.....

- Your friend invites you to his graduation ceremony but you are unable to go because you don't have time.

How would you refuse?

.....

.....

- Your close neighbor invites you to his daughter' wedding, but you don't want to go because, the other neighbor with who you have conflicts is invited to the ceremony.

How would you refuse to your neighbor who invited you?

.....

.....

- You are a five-year student a second year student from your field invites you to join their study group to appeal for help but you don't want to attend.

How would you refuse?

.....

.....

- Your teacher invites you to his conference at the university, but you do not want to go because you are not interested.

How would you refuse?

.....

.....

- Your friend invites you to a night party you decline the invitation but he invited you again.

How would you refuse for the second time?

.....

.....

- Imagine that you are owner of a company your employee invites you at his house but you want to keep the relationship professional.

How would you refuse?

.....

.....

- The university organizes a blood donation campaign, so your student invites you to this campaign, but you do not want to do it because you never had this experience before.

How would you refuse to your student?

.....

.....

- Stranger of a park invites you to a cleanup day but you hate cleaning.

How would you refuse?

.....

.....

- Your neighbor invites you to assist him in transporting materials for the house renovation but you are tired of helping him each time.

How would you refuse?

.....

.....

- A person of the opposite gender from your workplace invites you to have coffee alone after work, but you prefer to maintain professional boundaries.

How would you refuse?

.....

.....

Appendix 2

Arabic Discourse Completion Test

اختر ما يناسبك :

الجنس : ذكر. / أنثى

العمر : 18 إلى 25 سنة / 25 إلى 35 سنة. / 35 إلى 50 سنة

الحالة الاجتماعية: أستاذ(ة). / طالب (ة)

يطلب منك جار مسن (أكبر منك سنًا بكثير) مساعدته في حمل أغراض ثقيلة إلى أعلى الدرج أسبوعيًا، لكن جدولك مزدحم ولا يمكنك الالتزام بهذه المسؤولية المنتظمة

كيف سترفض؟

.....
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.....
.....

أنت طالب في الجامعة، يطلب منك صديقك حل واجباته لأنه لم يفهم الدرس، لكنك لا تريد مساعدته. كيف سترفض؟

.....
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.....

تخيل أنك تمشي في الخارج، ويأتي إليك شخص غريب ويطلب منك استعارة هاتفك لإجراء مكالمة، لكنك لا تشعر بالراحة في تسليمه. كيف سترفض؟

.....
.....
.....
.....

صديقك يطلب منك إقراضه سيارتك، لكنك بحاجة إليها. كيف سترفض؟

.....
.....
.....
.....

يُصرّ [والدك/والدتك/عمك/خالتك] على أن تتزوج بمن اختاروه لك، لكنك تُريد اتخاذ هذا القرار بنفسك. كيف سترفض؟ -

.....
.....
.....
.....

أنت مدير تعمل على صفقة عالية القيمة. يعرض عليك رئيسك المساعدة، لكنك تعلم أنه قد لا يمتلك الخبرة المطلوبة. كيف يمكنك الرفض؟

.....
.....
.....
.....

أنت في مطعم مع أصدقائك، وبعد الانتهاء من الطعام طلبوا منك أن تدفع لهم ثمن الطبق، لكنك رفضت. كيف سترفض؟

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.....

يرغب أحد العملاء في إطلاق حملة إعلانية مع شركتك. يطلب منك مديرك إنشاء فيديو عالي الجودة، ووضع استراتيجية تواصل اجتماعي لخمس منصات مختلفة، وكتابة عشر منشورات مدونة مُحسّنة، وإيجاد 50 مؤثرًا للترويج للحملة - كل هذا لهذه الليلة. لكنك لا تستطيع إنجاز الكثير في تلك الليلة؛ فالوقت ضيق ولديك مهام أخرى. كيف يمكنك الرفض؟

.....
.....
.....
.....

يأتي إليك طالبك ويخبرك أنه لم يحضر الامتحان، لأن لديه عملاً، فيطلب منك منحه علامة جيدة لأنه دائم الحضور أثناء
الحصص. لكنك لا تستطيع منحه علامة، لأنه لم يمتحن. كيف سترفض؟

.....
.....
.....
.....

أنت شابٌ محترف، وطلب منك زميلٌ أكبر منك بكثير أن تؤدي واجبات عمله خلال غيابٍ لمدة ثلاثة أيامٍ ليتمكن من حضور
مناسبةٍ عائلية، لكنك مُثقلٌ بمهامك الخاصة. كيف سترفض؟

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صديقك يدعوك لحفل تخرجه، لكنك لا تستطيع الحضور لضيق الوقت. كيف سترفض؟

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جارك المقرب يدعوك لحفل زفاف ابنته، لكنك لا تريد الذهاب لأن جارك الآخر الذي بينك وبينه خلافات مدعو للحفل. كيف
سترفض دعوة جارك الذي دعاك؟

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.....

أنت طالب في السنة الخامسة، ودعاك طالب في السنة الثانية من تخصصك للانضمام إلى مجموعته الدراسية لطلب المساعدة، لكنك لا ترغب بالحضور. كيف سترفض؟

.....
.....
.....
.....

يدعوك أستاذك لحضور مؤتمره في الجامعة، لكنك لا ترغب بالذهاب لأنك غير مهتم. كيف سترفض؟

.....
.....
.....
.....

صديقك دعاك لحفلة ليلية، رفضت الدعوة، لكنه دعاك مرة أخرى. كيف سترفض للمرة الثانية؟

.....
.....
.....
.....

تخيل أنك صاحب عمل، ودعاك أحد موظفيك إلى منزله، لكنك لا ترغب، تريد ان تبقى العلاقة رسمية. كيف سترفض؟

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.....

تنظم الجامعة حملة للتبرع بالدم، فيدعوك طالبك لهذه الحملة، لكنك لا ترغب بالقيام بذلك لأنك لم تخوض هذه التجربة من قبل. كيف سترفض دعوة طالبك؟

.....
.....
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.....

غريب في الحديقة يدعوك ليوم تنظيف، لكنك تكره التنظيف. كيف سترفض؟

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.....

جارك يدعوك لمساعدته في نقل مواد تجديد المنزل، لكنك مللت من مساعدته في كل مرة. كيف سترفض؟

.....
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.....

يدعوك شخص من الجنس الآخر من مكان عملك لتناول القهوة بمفردك بعد العمل، لكنك تُفضّل الحفاظ على الحدود المهنية

كيف سترفض؟

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Appendix 3

Interview

How do you feel when refusing a request by a foreigner and a close person?

.....

Do you think your refusal might have caused offense in each of the situations? Why or why not?

.....

How do you choose a particular way to refuse?

.....

Which parameters would you refuse differently?

.....

In your opinion, how acceptable is it in Kabyle culture to refuse this a request based on power, social distance and cost of imposition?

.....

Would you refuse differently if the interactions happened in a public setting versus a private one?

.....

How do you think the refusal might affect your relationship with the person?

.....

Proposed English Discourse Completion Test Response Scenarios

Discourse Completion Task (DCT):

We are conducting a study for our thesis at the English Department of Bejaia University, focusing on **Refusal Strategies in Kabyle Berber : A Socio-Pragmatic Study**.

Your participation in responding to the following scenarios would be greatly appreciated. Kindly reply with whatever comes naturally to you in each circumstance. As much or as little as you think is appropriate is yours to write.

Your answers will help us gather important information for our study. Thank you for your cooperation in advance.

The researchers.

Choose what suits you:

*Gender: Male

☒ Female

*Age:

☒ 18 to 25 years old

☐ 25 to 35 years old

☐ 35 to 50 years old

*Social status:

☐ Teacher

☒ Student

- An elderly neighbor (significantly older than you) asks you to help them carry heavy groceries up the stairs every week, but you have a busy schedule and cannot commit to this regular responsibility.

How would you refuse ?

I will help him whenever I can and just avoid him when it's not possible for me. If he complains, I will present my pardon then explain that I was just busy

- You are a student at a university, your friend asks you to do his homework because he did not understand the lesson, but you do not want to help him.

How would you refuse?

I will suggest helping him instead of doing it myself.

- Imagine that you are walking outside , a stranger person comes to you and asks to borrow your phone to make a call , but you do not feel comfortable handing it over.

How would you refuse ?

Sorry, I have no credit

- Your friend asks you to lend him/her your car , but you need it because you have an impediment.

How would you refuse ?

I'm sorry, I can't lend it to you today. I planned to go somewhere

- Your [father/mother/uncle/aunt] insists that you should marry someone they have chosen for you, but you want to make this decision for yourself..

How would you refuse ?

I said NO, if you like him then marry him yourself

- You are a director working on a high value deal, your manager offers to help you but, you know that he may not have the expertise required.

How would you refuse ?

Kind of you sir, but no need, I can do it myself

- You are in a restaurant with your freinds, after finishing the meal they ask you to pay for them the dish, but you disagree.

How would you refuse ?

Chouf a Sidi! only in your dreams dears

- A client who wants to launch an advertising campaign with your company, so your boss asks you to create a high-quality viral video, that you set up a social media strategy for 5 different platforms, and you write 10 optimized blog articles, and also find 50 influencers to promote the campaign, for this evening. but you can't do that much for the evening, time is not enough and you have other things to do.

How would you refuse ?

Sir, I can't do all this today, it is impossible for me, at least give me two days

- Your student comes to see you and tells you that he didn't attend the exam, because he had something to do, so he asks you to give him a good mark because he is always present during classes. But you can not give him a mark you can't since he did not done the exam.

How would you refuse ?

...Your presence means nothing dear, it is a duty for all of us to come. You will have the exam tomorrow.

- You are a young professional and a much older colleague asks you to cover their work responsibilities during a three-day absence so they can attend a family event, but you are already overwhelmed with your own tasks.

...I'm sorry I can't, each one assumes his responsibilities.

- Your friend invites you to his graduation ceremony but you are unable to go because you don't have time.

How would you refuse ?

It would have been a great pleasure for me to come and share this happy moment with you, but I have a very important thing to do dear, I'm so sorry.

- Your close neighbor invites you to his daughter's wedding, but you don't want to go because, the other neighbor with who you have conflicts is invited to the ceremony.

How would you refuse to your neighbor who invited you ?

I will just thank him for the invitation and say Inshallah, then I don't go.

- You are a five year student a second year student from your field invites you to join their study group to appeal for help but you don't want to attend.

How would you refuse ?

I will do my best to come, but if it happens that I can't, I don't want you to be mad okay! Promise!

- Your teacher invites you to his conference at the university , but you do not want to go because you are not interested.

How would you refuse ?

I won't go without telling him, he won't notice my absence

- Your friend invites you to a night party you decline the invitation but he invited you again.

How would you refuse for the second time ?

I will leave him on seen

- Imagine that you are owner of a company your employee invites you at his house but you wan't to keep the relationship professional.

How would you refuse ?

Another time Inshallah, thank you

Proposed Arabic Discourse Completion Test Response Scenarios

اختر ما يناسبك :

الجنس : ذكر. ☒ / أنثى ☐

سنة 50 إلى 35 سنة. ☒ / 35 إلى 25 سنة ☐ / 25 إلى 18 العمر : 36 سنة

الحالة الاجتماعية : أستاذ. (د). ☐ / طالب (ة). ☐ / حالة أخرى : محامي

يطلب منك جار مسن (أكبر منك سنًا بكثير) مساعدته في حمل أغراض ثقيلة إلى أعلى الدرج أسبوعيًا، لكن جدولك مزدحم ولا يمكنك الالتزام بهذه المسؤولية المنتظمة

كيف سترفض؟

أرجو... أن تتفهم... و... يعني... أن تفهم... حاجتك للمساعدة... لكننا... بسبب التزاماتي... اليومية... لا أستطيع... أن أكون... متاحًا... للمساعدة... لكننا... سأقوم... بذلك... في يوم آخر.

أنت طالب في الجامعة، يطلب منك صديقك حل واجباته لأنه لم يفهم الدرس، لكنك لا تريد مساعدته. كيف سترفض؟

أفهم... أنك... تجد صعوبة... في هذا... لكن... أعتقد... أن... أفضل... طريقة... هي... أن نحاول... بمفردك... أن... تطلب... مساعدة... هنا... الأستاذ.

تخيل أنك تمشي في الخارج، ويأتي إليك شخص غريب ويطلب منك استعارة هاتفك لإجراء مكالمة، لكنك لا تشعر بالراحة في تسليمه. كيف سترفض؟

معذرة... لا أستطيع... إعارة... هاتفي... في الوقت الحالي... كوني... بحاجة... ملسة... إليه... أعتقد... أن... تجد... حلاً... آخر.

صديقك يطلب منك إقراضه سيارتك، لكنك بحاجة إليها. كيف سترفض؟

لا...

لا... يُصنّر [والدك/والدتك/عمك/خالتك] على أن تتزوج بمن اختاروه لك، لكنك تُريد اتخاذ هذا القرار بنفسك.. كيف سترفض؟

لا...

أنت مدير تعمل على صفقة عالية القيمة. يعرض عليك رئيسك المساعدة، لكنك تعلم أنه قد لا يمتلك الخبرة المطلوبة. كيف يمكنك الرفض؟

أستفهم... وجهة... نظرك... وأقدر... رغبتك... لكن... خلال... حترتي... في هذا... المجال... لا أحتاج... إلى... المساعدة...

أنت في مطعم مع أصدقائك، وبعد الانتهاء من الطعام طلبوا منك أن تدفع لهم ثمن الطبق، لكنك رفضت. كيف سترفض؟

لا... أستطيع... شكرًا... لتفهمكم...

يرغب أحد العملاء في إطلاق حملة إعلانية مع شركتك. يطلب منك مديرك إنشاء فيديو عالي الجودة، ووضع استراتيجية تواصل اجتماعي لخمس منصات مختلفة، وكتابة عشر منشورات مدونة مُحسنة، وإيجاد 50 مؤثرًا للترويج للحملة - كل هذا لهذه الليلة. لكنك لا تستطيع إنجاز الكثير في تلك الليلة، فالوقت ضيق ولديك مهام أخرى. كيف يمكنك الرفض؟

CS Scanné avec CamScanner

أُقدّر طالبكم لهذا نظرًا لوجود مهام أُجري على إنجازها
سأحاول إتمام ما أستطيع أتمنى أن تشفع

بأنني أطلب منك ويخبرك أنه لم يحضر الامتحان، لأن لديه عملاً، فيطلب منك منحه علامة جيدة لأنه دائم الحضور أثناء
الحصص. لكنك لا تستطيع منحه علامة، لأنه لم يمتحن. كيف سترفض؟

لا أستطيع

أنت شابٌ محترف، وطلب منك زميلٌ أكبر منك بكثير أن تؤدي واجبات عمله خلال غياب لمدة ثلاثة أيام ليتمكن من حضور مناسبة
عائلية، لكنك مُنقلٌ بمهامك الخاصة. كيف سترفض؟

أُفهم تماماً موقفك وأقدر حاجتك لكنني حالياً مشغول
بعدة مهام وأحتاج إلى التركيز عليها

صديقك يدعوك لحفل تخرجه، لكنك لا تستطيع الحضور لضيق الوقت. كيف سترفض؟

أُسئرك كثيراً على دعوتك لحفل تخرجه وأتمنى لك
كل التوفيق

جارك المقرب يدعوك لحفل زفاف أبنته، لكنك لا تريد الذهاب لأن جارك الآخر الذي بينك وبينه خلافات مدعو للحفل. كيف سترفض
دعوة جارك الذي دعاك؟

آسف لا يمكنني الحضور

أنت طالب في السنة الخامسة، ودعاك طالب في السنة الثانية من تخصصك للانضمام إلى مجموعته الدراسية لطلب المساعدة، لكنك
لا ترغب بالحضور. كيف سترفض؟

لا

يدعوك أستاذك لحضور مؤتمره في الجامعة، لكنك لا ترغب بالذهاب لأنك غير مهتم. كيف سترفض؟

لا يمكنني الحضور بسبب ظروف شخصية

صديقك دعاك لحفلة ليلية، رفضت الدعوة، لكنه دعاك مرة أخرى. كيف سترفض للمرة الثانية؟

آسف ما زالت غير قادر على الحضور هذه المرة كنت
أخفق لك هذه الليلة أنا مشغول

تخيل أنك صاحب عمل، ودعاك أحد موظفيك إلى منزله، لكنك لا ترغب، تريد أن تبقى العلاقة رسمية. كيف سترفض؟

لا أحب الخروج عن إطار العلاقة المهنية

تنظم الجامعة حملة للتبرع بالدم، فيدعوك طالبك لهذه الحملة، لكنك لا ترغب بالقيام بذلك لأنك لم تخوض هذه التجربة من قبل. كيف
سترفض دعوة طالبك؟

أنا مرهق ووقتني محدود هذه الأيام

غريب في الحقيقة يدعوك ليوم تنظيف، لكنك تكره التنظيف. كيف سترفض؟

لا أتمتع بالقيام بالتنظيف وأفضل عدم المشاركة

جارك يدعوك لمساعدته في نقل مواد تجديد المنزل، لكنك مللت من مساعدته في كل مرة. كيف سترفض؟

كنت أقود ذلك لكوني رجلي. مخرجة وبالتالي لا أستطيع حمل الزعزعة المشفيلة.

يدعوك شخص من الجنس الآخر من مكان عملك لتناول القهوة بمفردك بعد العمل، لكنك تفضل الحفاظ على الحدود المهنية.

كيف سترفض؟

لا أحب احتساء القهوة أثناء العمل.



المخلص

البحث الحالي هو دراسة اجتماعية عملية تستكشف استراتيجيات الرفض في مجتمع البربر القبائلي، مع التركيز على آثار العمر والجنس والوضع الاجتماعي. أجريت الدراسة في أماكن مختلفة داخل المجتمع القبائلي في بجاية. تم جمع البيانات من الذي يضم 20 سيناريو، بما في ذلك العروض والدعوات عبر مواقف مختلفة. 60 فردا شكلوا المشاركين في DCT خلال الدراسة. وفي وقت لاحق، طُلب من ثلاثة منهم الإجابة على أسئلة المقابلة لدعم وتوضيح بعض أنماط البيانات التي ظهرت وتوضح النتائج أن العذر/التفسير والاعتذار كانا أكثر استراتيجيات الرفض استخدامًا. وتشير النتائج أيضًا إلى DCT. من أن العمر والجنس والوضع الاجتماعي، فضلاً عن الثقافة، تؤثر على استراتيجيات المباشرة ونوع الأدب الذي يخفف من حدة الموقف. تميل النساء إلى الرفض بشكل غير مباشر أكثر من الرجال من خلال إظهار الاحترام المفرط للفئات العمرية والوضع الاجتماعي (عالي، ومتساوي، ومنخفض). وأخيراً، يسلط التحليل الموضوعي لأفعال الرفض القبائلية الضوء على خمسة أبعاد مترابطة، وهي التأثير العاطفي، والوعي الاستراتيجي، والإدراك الثقافي، والتنوع السياقي، وتأثير العلاقة. بشكل جماعي، توضح هذه المواضيع كيف تنفذ استراتيجيات الرفض القبائلية التفاوض على القوة والعاطفة والعلاقات الأخلاقية المشفرة اجتماعيًا. تلفت ثقافة البربر القبائلية الانتباه إلى الجماعية والوجه الإيجابي للمحاور الذي يتناقض مع الجماعية الهرمية في الصين والولايات المتحدة الفردية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: العمر، الجنس، الوضع الاجتماعي، استراتيجيات الرفض، البربر القبائليون