

A Critical Pragmatic Analysis of Direct Rebuttal in English and Arabic Novels

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ABSTRACT

This paper is primarily concerned with investigating the critical pragmatic perspective of rebuttal in Arabic and English novels. From a critical pragmatic perspective, rebuttal has not been received enough attention. Consequently, the purpose of this study is to investigate rebuttal within the framework of the chosen model. Thus, it aims: finding out how rebutters employ positive self presentation and negative other presentation in the selected data, tracing the strategies that are employed to rebut someone's arguments, and shedding light on the different types of persuasive appeals that are utilized in the selected data to effectively rebut someone's arguments. According to the aforementioned aims, it is hypothesized that: in both English and Arabic novels, the strategies of positive – self presentation and negative other presentation are used to rebut someone's arguments, a number of impoliteness and politeness strategies are employed to rebut someone's arguments, and ethos, pathos and logos are types of persuasive appeals that are used in the selected to effectively rebut someone's arguments. The findings of the investigation provide evidence that verifies the first, second, and third hypotheses.

KEYWORDS: Rebuttal , Critical , Pragmatics, Novels, Contrastive , Ideology

1. Introduction

Analyzing the manner in which individuals in English and Arabic literary works, particularly novels, engage in direct argument or express dissatisfaction with each other is fundamental to grasping what is referred to as "direct rebuttal". This act refers to a pair of arguments that are logically ordered rather than temporally, with one argument preceding the other, and the second argument being directed against the first. Although its significance, the essential critical pragmatic strategies that form the framework of this act have not been investigated, leading to a lack of attention given to the critical pragmatic aspects of rebuttal. Thus, to bridge this gap, the present study tries to answer the following questions: -

1. How do rebutters employ positive self-presentation and negative presentation of others in the chosen data?
2. What are the strategies that can be utilized to counter someone's arguments in the chosen data?
3. What are the different types of persuasive appeals that are utilized in the selected data to effectively rebut someone's argument?

This study aims to address the following points:

1. Finding out how rebutters employ positive self-presentation and negative other presentation in the selected data.
2. Tracing the strategies that are employed to rebut someone's arguments.

3. Shedding light on the different types of persuasive appeals that are utilized in the selected data to effectively rebut someone's arguments.

This study hypothesizes that: -

1. In both English and Arabic novels, the strategies of positive –self presentation and negative other presentation are used to rebut someone's arguments.
2. A number of impoliteness and politeness strategies are employed to rebut someone's arguments.
- 3- Ethos, pathos and logos are types of persuasive appeals that are used in the selected to effectively rebut someone's arguments.

2. Related Works

2.1 Critical Pragmatics

Critical pragmatics, as proposed by Mey (2001), is a field of study that focuses on the connection between social power and language usage. It draws inspiration from critical linguistics, particularly the work of Fowler et al. (1979), as well as the critical discourse traditions of Teun van Dijk and the critical language awareness tradition of the Lancaster School that is founded by Norman Fairclough and his colleagues. Like the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) tradition, the term 'critical' in pragmatics refers to the study of the fundamental relationships that allocate power to various social groups. It specifically focuses on language as a powerful tool for exercising power and emphasizes the importance of analyzing the context in which language is used. Critical pragmatics emphasizes the significance of pragmatics in participating in social conflicts. It aims to analyze and comprehend the social dynamics of language and its various patterns of utilization.

Critical pragmatics views language from a sociological perspective. The claim posits that language usage cannot be just classed and characterized in theoretical terms or examined using sociological variables such as class or other societal factors. It asserts that language variation goes beyond mere linguistic diversity. Mey (2001) asserts that the main consequence of this is the ability to recognize social prejudice and the subsequent drive to eradicate it. He contends that, adopting a critically pragmatic perspective, conversation analysts should primarily focus on the correlation between the mechanisms of language deployments and the societal forces that act in discourse, encompassing various forms of communication beyond just conversation.

2.2 Direct Rebuttal

A rebuttal is defined as one of a pair of arguments that is structured in a logical sequence, rather than chronologically, where the second argument is directed against the previous argument. Directed against refers to the situation where one argument is aimed at or targeted towards another argument. One argument might either serve to support the other, or can be meant to attack the other, or the two arguments can be independent of each other. A rebuttal is an argument directed against another argument to prove that the first argument is defective, questionable, or unsupported by evidence. (Walton 2006)

In literature, a rebuttal is a literary device that refers to the strategic use of reasons or facts by a writer to undermine or contradict an opposing argument. Rebuttals are commonly seen in literature, but they are

mostly associated with court cases, where they function as evidence that contradicts or weakens the evidence presented by the opposing party. (Web source 1)

The purpose of employing a rebuttal is to demonstrate the illogical and inaccurate nature of another argument. It is common in literature, public affairs, law, and politics for opponents to present comments in order to disprove or rebut specific arguments made against them. Rebuttal in the field of law requires attention to certain regulations. The rebuttal evidence that is presented must limit to the primary subject of the evidence being rebutted. Whereas, in literary works and politics Rebuttals serve as a means for writers to defend their viewpoints and provide constructive criticism through argumentation (Web source 2)

2.3 Politeness strategies

1. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), politeness strategies have been developed in order to maintain the hearer's "face". Brown and Levinson (1987) subsequently suggest certain strategies that individuals can employ to deal with face threatening acts. In discussing politeness, the concept face means public self-image of a person. It's the social and emotional sense of self that everyone has and thinks everyone else does too (Yule, 1996). Brown and Levinson states that face is something that was emotionally invested, and that can be lost, maintained, or enhanced, and must be conventionally paid attention to when interacting ((1987). Meanwhile, in many forms of face-to-face interaction, all participants will be concerned to maintain their own face as well as the others face. Therefore, Face Threatening Acts (henceforth FTAs) can be explained as actions that hurt someone's need to maintain his/her self-esteem, and be respected. The main purpose for developing politeness strategies is to deal with these FTAs. Brown and Levinson's politeness strategies are developed as follows. **Bald On-record politeness**

As much as possible, this strategy is carried out in a direct, clear, unambiguous, and brief way.

2. **Off-record politeness**

This strategy itself is not as clear. The speaker doesn't force the listener to do anything. This means that face is not directly harmed. People who use this strategy often have to figure out what the speaker means. Off-record approach is a way for the speaker to communicate in an indirect manner.

3. **Positive Politeness**

This strategy tries to keep the threat to the audience's good mood as low as possible. You can do this by paying attention to what the audience wants, promoting equality and a sense of belonging to the group,

4. **Negative Politeness**

This strategy tries to minimize threats to the individual's negative face. It can be done by being indirect, using hedges or questions, minimizing imposition and apologizing.

2.4 Impoliteness Strategies

It is common for every community to have its own set of social norms. These are the rules that everyone should follow when they are in a certain situation or acting in a certain way. A positive assessment (politeness) is made when an action is similar to the norm, and a negative assessment (impoliteness, rudeness) is made when an action is different from the norm (Fraser 1990). Culpeper says that there are three things that must be true in order to be rude. To begin, the speaker connects "face-attack." Second, the person being addressed recognizes or acts in a way that is intentionally or consciously face-attacking. Finally, these conditions are met by both the speaker and the target.

Depending on definition of impoliteness, a model consisting of 5 super-strategies was presented (Culpeper, 2005):

1. Bald On Record Impoliteness

Culpeper (1996) says that this strategy is different from Brown and Levinson's (1978, 1987) "bald on record" strategy in some ways. He says that the speaker of this strategy intends to harm or violate the listener's face. This Types of impoliteness happen when one person does face-threatening acts (FTAs) to another person with the clear, unmistakable, and direct goal of ruining the other person's face when the other person can't reply with impolite remarks (Culpeper 2005).

2. Positive Impoliteness

As Culpeper (2003) says that these strategies are used to hurt the positive face wants of the person being addressed. Culpeper (1996) says that positive impoliteness is "the use of strategies designed to damage the addressee's positive someone face who wants to be acknowledged as a part of society." In this case, "positive face" means that the person wants to be respected by others. As Bousfield (2008) says, Culpeper (1996) lists the following as the ways that good impoliteness speech is used:

- a. You are ignoring someone if you don't recognize their presence.
- b. Keep the other person from doing something.
- c. For example, you could reject having anything in common with the other person, avoid sitting next to them, or use any of a number of other strategies to distance yourself from them.
- d. Using the wrong identifiers, like position and last name when talking about a close relationship or a nickname when talking about a faraway relationship.
- e. To make your point clear, use slang that the other person doesn't understand or a code that only the group knows but not the target.

3. Negative Impoliteness

Based on what Culpeper (2005) says, negative impoliteness is a way to attack what is undesirable in the other person. Culpeper (1996) says that tactics of rude and negative speech lead to the following results:

- a. Scare Someone: Make someone think that something bad will happen to them.
- b. Show that you are less important by dropping your voice and making sarcastic comments.

- c. Take over the other person's space, either literally (by getting as close to them as the relationship allows) or figuratively (for example, by asking for or talking about private information that is too close for the relationship).
- d. Make a link between the bad thing and the other person by saying "I and you."
- e. Write down what the other person owes you.

4. Off-Record Impoliteness

The speaker utilizes face-threatening acts to convey implicatures, ensuring that the intended message is emphasized over any alternative readings. The implicit expression of menace towards the listener's countenance is conveyed (Huang, 2007). Mugford (2019) illustrates that this approach is employed when the danger or harm to the person's face is communicated indirectly through implicature.

5. Sarcasm

Culpeper (1996) suggests that the strategy of using impoliteness or feigned politeness is a distinct and overarching method. Therefore, acts that threaten one's face are carried out by external consciousness. Sarcasm refers to the use of words or expressions that convey a meaning that is opposite or different from what is really spoken. Individuals employ sarcasm as a substitute method to publicly attack others, as such activities may be deemed inappropriate depending on the circumstances.

2.5 Persuasion Appeals

In the realm of rhetorical theory, persuasion refers to the effective and intentional effort to influence the mental state of another individual through verbal communication, within a context where the persuader has a certain degree of freedom (O'Keefe 2016). There are three kinds of persuasion, as identified by O'Reilly and Stooksbury in 2013:

1. Ethos refers to the speaker's credibility, character, and ability. Consequently, he attempts to present himself as an ethical representative.
2. Pathos refers to the speaker's capacity to evoke powerful feelings in the audience.
3. Logos refers to the arguments and evidence presented by a speaker.

2.6 Ideological Square

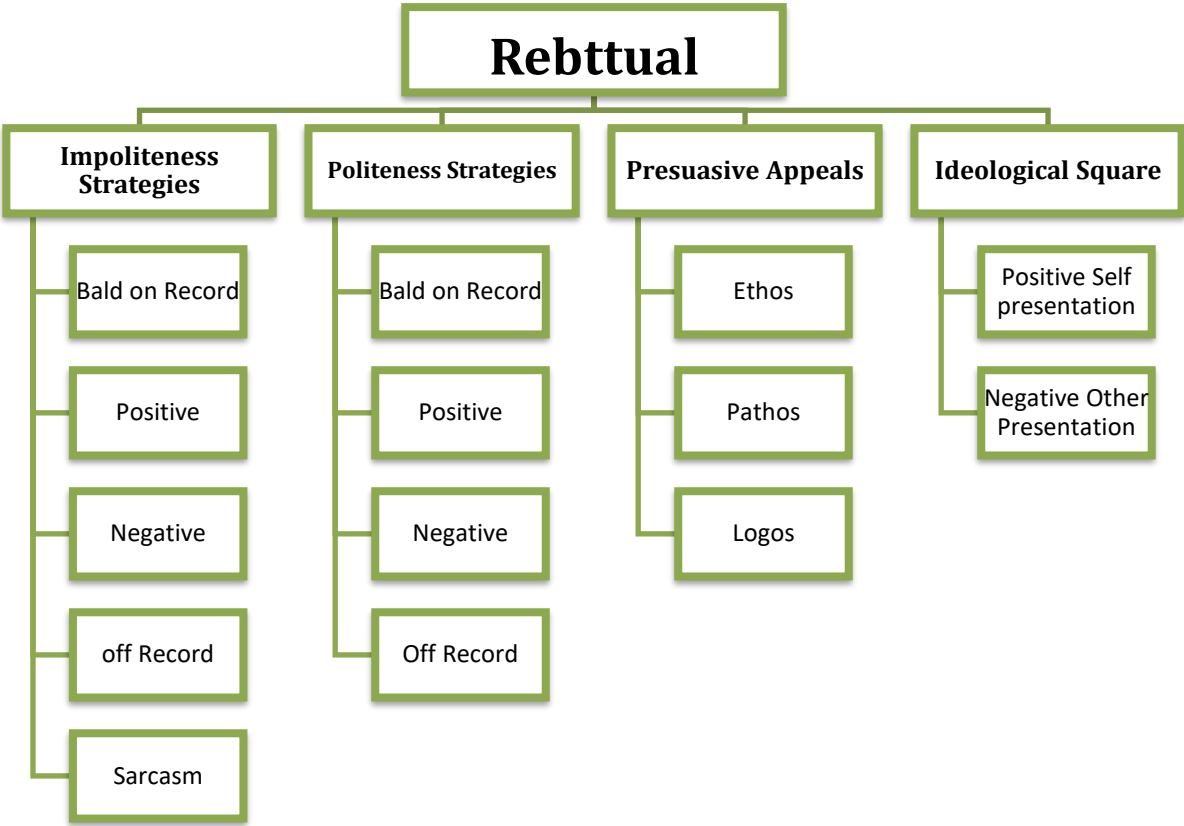
According to Van Dijk (1998), the ideological square is a crucial aspect of the socio-cognitive method. It deals to the strategies employed by various social groups to present themselves in a positive way while presenting other groups in a negative manner. This phenomenon focuses on the polarization of individuals and, specifically, the media's discourse that highlights the positive actions of the in-group and the negative actions of the out-group. Furthermore, it de-emphasizes the negative actions of the out-group and the positive actions of the in-group.

These four steps play an important role in the broader contextual strategy of self-positive representation and other negative presentations. The self-presentation explores how individual presenting as group members while expressly expressing ideological ideas. Positive self-representation includes emphasizing the positive actions and characteristics of oneself, while expressing negative opinions about others. The abstract characteristic of group conflict is manifested through a positive attitude and interaction patterns with other groups (Van Dijk, 2000).

3. Methodology

Gathered data are analyzed qualitatively according to the items found in the eclectic model of the analysis (see figure 1).

Figure (1) The Modal of Analysis



Data that is used in present study is two novels. The English one is The Kite Runner B by Khaled Hosseini Published 2003, and the Arabic one is The Mirage by Naguib Mahfouz published in1948. Three extracts from each novel are chosen randomly. Generally speaking, the data under analysis are characterized by certain features that can be elucidated as follows in the following table:

Table (1) Data Description (According to Hymes' 1974 Model)

Contextual Factors	
Setting and scene	The Kite Runner" takes place in Afghanistan and published in 2003. The novel spans several decades, from the 1970s to the early 2000s while The Mirage by Naguib Mahfouz takes place in Egypt and published in 1948.
Participants	In Kite Runner, the main characters include Amir, Hassan, Baba, Assef, Rahim Khan, and other supporting characters while in the Arabic novel, the main characters are Kamil Ru'ba al-Dawla, his mother and his wife.
Goal	Both novels explore several themes and purposes of communication. One of these themes is to express his emotions and reflections, and the impact of the past and express his emotions and reflections.
Act Sequence	The act sequence in English and Arabic novels is creating set-ups, conflicts and resolution.
Key	Both novels use a literary style that combines realism with symbolism and allegory.
Instrumentalities	Different instrumentalities of communication are utilized in the novels, such as spoken language, written language (letters), and non-verbal communication (gestures, facial expressions).
Norm	Each novel is influenced by its cultural norms, family expectations, and societal values. These norms shape the characters' behavior and choices in how they communicate.
Genre	Literary works.

3.1 Analysis of *The Kite Runner* Novel

Extract No.1

Amir: *"But despite Baba's successes, people were always doubting him. They told Baba that running a business wasn't in his blood and he should study law like his father. So Baba proved them all wrong by not only running his own business but becoming one of the richest merchants in Kabul. Baba and Rahim Khan built a wildly successful carpet-exporting business, two pharmacies, and a restaurant."*

The opening phrase **"But despite Baba's successes"** sets the stage for a contradiction. It indicates that what follows will challenge or oppose a previously mentioned or implied notion. Starting with politeness strategies, positive politeness is evident in Amir's admiration and validation of Baba's achievements, aligning with Baba's self-image and aspirations. Off-record politeness is also presented, allowing listeners to draw their own conclusions about Baba's perseverance. Concerning impoliteness strategies, one could interpret the narrative's reference to Baba's doubters as a form of off-record impoliteness, subtly critiquing those who doubted him. Regarding persuasive appeals, the speaker employs persuasive appeals

effectively. Ethos, or credibility, is established through the recounting of Baba's successful ventures, portraying him as a capable and resilient businessman. Pathos, which refers to the emotional appeal, is created by emphasizing the challenges Baba encountered and successfully conquered, so prompting sentiments of appreciation and potentially a sense of unfairness surrounding the initial doubt. The logical path from doubt to success, known as logos, enhances the persuasive nature of the speech by highlighting Baba's strengths and unwavering resolve. Shifting to an ideological context, the negative portrayal of others is used by highlighting the doubters' erroneous assessments and undervaluation of Baba's skills and potential.

Extract No. 2

*"Amir agha and I are friends," Hassan said. He looked flushed.
"Friends?" Assef said, laughing. "You pathetic fool! Someday you'll wake up from your little fantasy and learn just how good of a friend he is."*

In the speech, the politeness strategies are absent. Assef's response to Hassan's statement about friendship lacks any form of politeness, which is typically direct yet considers the listener's sensitivities. Additionally, impoliteness strategies are employed, Assef attacks Hassan directly and shows no care for his feelings, which is obviously impolite. Assef's in his response uses both positive and negative impoliteness. For example, he makes fun of Hassan's belief in his friendship and doesn't care about his point of view or respect. Concerning persuasive appeals, the emotional appeal (pathos) in Assef's response employed, aimed at emotionally hurting Hassan rather than constructively persuading. Within ideological square, Assef avoids from being part of positive self-representation. His strategy mostly focuses on degrading Hassan rather than presenting himself in a positive or manner. On the other hand, Assef shows Hassan as foolish in order to damage Hassan's self-image and how he is perceived by others. This strategy demonstrates a deliberate intent to weaken and minimize Hassan, rather than promoting any kind of beneficial discussion or comprehension.

Extract No. 3

*Please leave us alone, Agha," Hassan said in a flat tone. He'd referred to Assef as "Agha," and I wondered briefly what it must be like to live with such an ingrained sense of one's place in a hierarchy. Assef gritted his teeth. "Put it down, you motherless Hazara."
"Please leave us be, Agha," Hassan said.
Assef smiled. "Maybe you didn't notice, but there are three of us and two of you."*

Starting with politeness strategies, Hassan utilizes negative politeness strategies by addressing Assef as "Agha," demonstrating his understanding of Assef's higher status and power within their social hierarchy. The use of this form of address is a strategy used to minimize possible dissatisfaction by displaying respect and so in order to reduce the risk to Assef's image or self-image. Hassan's repeated utterance of the phrases "Please leave us alone, Agha" and "Please leave us be, Agha" illustrate negative politeness. These phrases serve as indirect requests rather than direct demands, displaying deference towards Assef's autonomy. Regarding impoliteness strategies, Assef's reply to Hassan illustrates clear and direct impoliteness. The degrading comment he made ("Put it down, you motherless Hazara") is a clear insult, showing a lack of regard for Hassan's emotions and targeting his positive self-image. Assef's impoliteness

is further intensified by his utilization of negative impoliteness, as he disregards Hassan's request and minimizes him simply because of his ethnic background, showing complete disregard for Hassan's respect. Concerning persuasive appeal, Assef's speech includes aspects of pathos, as he strategically employs his words and actions to create fear and a feeling of powerlessness in Hassan. Nevertheless, this emotional appeal is employed in a detrimental manner, aiming to frighten rather than to convincingly persuade. Finally, Hassan's self-presentation is characterized by passivity shown by his polite requests and his choice of "Agha" for Assef. This demonstrates his cognizance of the societal hierarchy and his position within it. On the other hand, Assef participates in negative representation of others by derogatorily addressing Hassan and showing overt scorn for his ethnicity. This strategy aims at enhancing the power difference and Assef's obvious authority.

3.2 Analysis of *The Mirage* Novel

Extract No. 1

الأم : هل تتصوّر يا أبي أن كامل يستطيع أن يعيش بعيدا عن أمه؟ إنّ يدي هاتين تطعمانه وتلبسانه وتنيمنانه، إنه يخاف خياله، وإنه لتفزع زفرات الصراخ، فكيف يأذن الشرع بأن يُنزع مثل هذا الطفل من أحضان أمه؟

Starting with politeness strategies, the speaker appears to use politeness strategies, namely "positive politeness." They show concern for the child's well-being by addressing the recipient as "father." The speaker attempts to be polite by framing the argument as a question and expressing empathy for the mother's role. Regarding impoliteness methods, the employment of the "negative politeness" strategy involves the speaker indirectly questioning the recipient's perspective by inquiring whether they can envision the child living apart from the mother. Regarding persuasive appeals, the speaker utilizes a range of persuasive techniques. The use of Logos involves giving a logical argument that emphasizes the child's need on their mother for care and comfort, and raises concerns about the legality of separating them based on religious principles (Sharia). On the other hand, Pathos is deployed by explaining the child's feelings of fear and being overwhelmed. This evokes empathy and sympathy for the child's situation. Moving to ideological square, this speech is mostly concerned with self-presentation. The speaker presents herself as someone who is highly worried about the child's well-being and who believes the moral and legal issues of the child's separation from their mother.

Extract No. 2

كامل :- أشتد حنق جدّي وقال بصوت وشت نبراته
بانفعاله وتأثره
الجد: أي اتفاق يا هذا؟ ... نحن لا نتحدث صفقة تجارية، ولكن عن ابنك، فأين الأبوة -
والعطف ؟

In terms of politeness strategies, grandfather's statement does not employ overt politeness strategies like positive politeness. Instead, it falls more into the category of direct communication, bordering on bald on record politeness. He expresses his concern directly without using excessive courtesy or euphemisms. Concerning impoliteness Strategies, negative politeness strategy is employed. While it may not be overtly impolite, the use of a harsh voice and the phrase "What deal is this?" can be perceived as confrontational

and impolite. The speaker's anger and emotion also contribute to the impoliteness of the statement. Furthermore, this speech is not primarily focused on persuasive appeals but does carry elements of emotional appeal (pathos). Grandfather's anger and emotional tone aim to emphasize the seriousness of the situation and his concern for the well-being of his son. Finally, regarding Van Dijk's (1989) ideological square, this speech involves self-presentation. Grandfather presents himself as someone deeply concerned about the situation involving his son. He questions the lack of fatherly care and kindness, which can be seen as advocating for his role as a concerned and caring parent. There is no significant negative presentation of others in this statement; instead, the focus is on highlighting the absence of fatherhood and kindness.

Extract No.3

ولما طلع جدّي على الشهادة غضب كامل:-
وقال لأمي بحدة
هذا نتيجة تدليك ... لقد... أفسدته يا -ستي
ثم تواعد الناظر شراء، ومضى لمقابلته في المدرسة.
ورجع إلينا بعد ساعة وهو يقول بارتياح:
نجحت يا سيدي بالقوة، وإياك أن تسقط في
السنة التالية

Concerning politeness strategies, grandfather in his speech uses of a bald on-record strategy of politeness in his direct and unambiguous statement (“This is the result of your pampering... You... you spoiled him, my lady.”), which makes no effort to minimize threats to the mother’s face. This strategy indicates either a display of authority or a disregard for the mother’s feelings. Regarding to impoliteness strategies, grandfather’s direct accusation and critique of the mother’s parenting style (“You... you spoiled him”) exemplify bald on-record impoliteness, targeting the mother’s character openly. This extract is also an instance of positive impoliteness, as it shows a lack of solidarity and respect. Furthermore, the grandfather’s disregard for the mother’s feelings or autonomy falls under negative impoliteness. Furthermore, analyzing the statement through the lens of persuasive appeals reveals a distinct use of ethos, as the grandfather positions himself as an authority figure with the right approach to parenting (“After that, sir, by force...”). His satisfaction with his own intervention underscores this appeal to ethos. The logical appeal (logos) is subtly present, with the grandfather implying a cause-and-effect relationship between the mother’s actions and the child’s behavior. Finally, in terms of self and other presentation, the grandfather positively portrays himself, especially evident in his satisfaction following his intervention. This self-presentation suggests he views his method as effective and superior. Conversely, he negatively portrays the mother, directly blaming her for the child’s behavior. This negative portrayal is emphasized by his approach, implying that her methods are inferior compared to his. He uses his authority to persuade, presenting himself in a positive light while casting the mother in a negative one.

4. Discussion

This section is intended to sum up the findings of the analysis of direct rebuttal in Arabic and English novels: -

5.1 Similarities between English and Arabic Novels

1. English and Arabic novels both examine the utilization of strategies related to politeness and impoliteness. The characters employ these strategies to navigate social hierarchies, handle situations that challenge their reputation, and express their viewpoints.
2. Ethos, pathos, and logos are often employed techniques in both languages to bolster arguments and sway readers or listeners. Ethos pertains to credibility, pathos to emotional appeal, and logos to logical reasoning.
3. Direct rebuttal is a prominent literary technique utilized in both English and Arabic literature. It is frequently used to enhance character interaction by rebutting or contradicting opposing views, so exposing character motivations and progressing the plot.

5.2 Differences between English and Arabic Novels

1. English and Arabic literature exhibit distinct cultural and socioeconomic norms, influencing the usage of politeness and impoliteness as well as the nature of arguments employed. These disparities alter the manner in which individuals communicate with one another and the content of their responses.
2. There is a disparity in the literary style and presentation between the two languages. This encompasses the utilization of symbolism, allegory, and reality. This alters the manner in which direct responses are sent and the way in which the audience comprehends them.
3. The utilization of rebuttal methods by characters is impacted by their societal roles, which might vary considerably in English and Arabic literature.

5. Conclusion

Analyzing the selected data by using the elected model of the study introduces various details. Both English and Arabic novels employ direct rebuttal as an essential literary device, adopting similar techniques such as politeness strategies and persuasive appeals. However, the way in which they are used and the effect on the relationships between characters are affected by specific cultural and social situations that are different for each language. It highlights the intricate influence of language and culture on literary expression and character interaction, particularly in the setting of argumentation and rebuttal.

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