A Pragmatic Study of Aggression in Disney Animation movies

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Abstract

The current study examines aggressiveness as a societal phenomenon in five American animated movies. Children can learn a lot from animation movies, which are typically regarded as the best form of entertainment. They do, however, contain a large number of violent sequences. Aggression and its societal consequences have been studied from several angles. However, research on aggressiveness in American animated movies has not been done from a pragmatic standpoint. Thus, the current study seeks to overcome this gap by distinguishing aggression types and causes pragmatically. The study mainly aims at identifying the types and causes of aggression perpetrated by aggressors by examining the ways in which impoliteness strategies are used to represent each type and cause of aggression in the selected data.

To achieve the aim of the study, Culpeper's (1996) model is adopted. The study concludes: The majority of instrumental and reactive aggression is produced by a negative impoliteness strategy. Relational aggression and bullying are more frequently used in pairing with positive impoliteness strategy. The following causes of aggression: (failure, psychological pathology, lack of conversational skill) occur in situations that are most compatible with the negative impoliteness strategy. However, the social learning factor occurs most with the positive impoliteness strategy

Keywords: Instrumental aggression, reactive aggression, relation aggression, bullying, impoliteness, animation.

1. INTRODUCTION

Crystal (1985) defines pragmatics as the study of language from the point of view of users, especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction, and the effects their use of language has on other participants in the act of communication (p.240). Impoliteness is an unpleasant attitude against particular acts happening in particular contexts (Culpeper, 2010).

Animation movies are watched by a huge audience, particularly kids, as they are released globally by large companies, like Walt Disney Animation Studios. According to Azad (2009), animation movies can make any tale interesting as they are entertaining and can be played with the viewer's imagination while telling stories with vivid graphics. However, investigations throughout the years have shown that animated movies are not as innocent or harmless as they seem. The researcher becomes interested

in studying animated movies after discovering that they contain numerous instances of aggression. Aggression can manifest social harm that weakens the target person's social identity and lowers their power. Social harm can be caused by insults, reprimands, sarcasm, and other rude behaviors (Tedeschi & Felson, 1994).

2. REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE
2.1 Pragmatics

Pragmatics is a relatively new area of linguistics. Since the 1970s, linguists have begun to focus increasingly on this area. The Journal of Pragmatics has begun publishing 400 pages annually in the 1970s, but it gradually grew to almost 2,500 pages annually by 2009. It has grown from a humble beginning at the margins of philosophy and linguistic semantics into a wide domain (Mey, 2001).

Pragmatics has its roots in Charles Morris' semiotic ideas in 1938, which suggested that pragmatics was one of three divisions of semiotics (besides syntax and semantics) (Warner, 2014). Pragmatics is defined differently by different linguists. According to Yule (1996), pragmatics is the study of invisible meaning, or how humans understand what is intended even when it is not explicitly expressed (or written). In the same vein, Briner (2013) defines pragmatics as the study of context-sensitive language use.

Impoliteness is defined as the lack of, failure to practice, or departure from politeness (Eelen, 2001). According to Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness, impoliteness is defined as "communicative strategies designed to attack face, and thereby cause social conflict and disharmony" (Culpeper, 1996, p.349).

2.2 Aggression

Human aggression is a social behavior that has been examined from a variety of angles, but the clearest foundation for understanding it has come from the theoretical models and empirical studies in the field of social psychology (Warburton & Anderson, 2015). Aggressive behavior as violence is what defines antipathetic and, subsequently, antisocial children (Berger, 2019). According to social psychology, aggression is defined as any action taken with the aim to cause harm to someone else without the target person's knowledge to prevent harm (Anderson & Bushman, 2002).

According to Berger (2019), there are four different types of aggression, all of which start in childhood.

1. Instrumental Aggression: An act of harm is intended to take something that another person already has.
2. Reactive Aggression: It describes an impulsive act of revenge in response to verbal or physical abuse (deliberate or unintentional).

3. Relational Aggression: A non-physical act that seeks to destroy the victim's social bonds with others, such as insults or social exclusion.
4. Bullying Aggression: Bullying differs from other forms of aggression because it involves an imbalance of power between the aggressor and the target, which is always in a weaker position.

Infante et al. (1984) indicate that aggressive behaviors may have a wide range of causes. According to Tang et al. (2014), humans engage in aggressive behavior for the following four factors:

a. Failure is the first factor. If people do not reach their aims, obtain what they need, or accept what they see, they begin to commit aggressive behavior.

b. Social learning is the second factor. Children, adolescents, and adults who live in environments where abusive language is widespread acquire certain linguistic habits .

c. The third psychological factor is that people behave aggressively as a result of psychological trauma or pathology.

d. The lack of conversational skills is the fourth factor. In other words, humans use aggression because they are unable to communicate themselves clearly, ask for what they need, or convey their emotions and desires.

2.3 Animation Movies

As indicated by Steinberg (2012), an animation movie is one that intentionally conveys the feeling of motion in animated figures and forms. Animated movies are considered a vital and active factor in forming and sculpting children's behavior in society (William, 1981). Children who watch cartoons keep acting in ways that influence how they interact with other children (Baran & Davis, 2009).

There are a lot of violent and destructive animations. Correspondingly, the main drawback of watching animation movies is embodied in encouraging children to become aggressive adults. Gentile et al. (2007) state that violent media exposure increases the risk of aggressive responses. As a matter of fact, the violent actions of cartoon characters are imprinted into chlidern's personalities because they have a very limited capacity for self-control, so they cannot stop watching their movies (Irkin, 2012).

3. METHODOLOGY

The current research utilizes a qualitative approach. According to Denzin and Lincoln (1994, p.2), qualitative research is the "study of things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them". The current study uses internet-based data collection methods. In this way, the data collection of the study revolves around the issue of how aggressive behaviors are represented in American animation movies.

The researcher initially looked for data and identified about five animation movies. These movies are produced by Walt Disney Animation Studios and Disney Toon Studios which are American animation studios. The researcher then watched the animation movies and marked the scripts necessary for analysis in order to choose the scenes appropriate for the topic under investigation. The scenes were chosen based on the availability of aggressive interactions between the animated characters. The researcher watched each of the selected animated movies and compared them to their texts in order to increase the validity of the data.

The following criteria were used to select the data used in this study :

First, because they are in English and the animated characters speak American English as their first language, the animation movies are viewed as congruent with the researcher's requirements to achieve her objectives.

Second, Walt Disney Animation Studios and Disney Toon Studios were picked because they have the majority of their sales in the United States, despite the fact that they promote media works and related items abroad.

Third, the researcher chooses ten movies for a variety of reasons:

a. The films depict various sorts of hostility.
b. They have piqued the curiosity of the media and spectators.
c. Because they are available for streaming online, both domestically and globally, a large number of individuals watch them.

Fourth, keep in mind that the screenplays chosen for the study are drawn from the beginning, middle, and finish of each film. Culpeper's model of impoliteness (1996) is employed to analyze the data under scrutiny. The framework of impoliteness strategies is built by Culpeper (1996) on the basis of politeness strategies. There is an impoliteness strategy for every politeness strategy. The following are Culpeper's (1996) impoliteness strategies:

The following are Culpeper's (1996) impoliteness strategies:
1- Bald On Record Impoliteness
2- Positive Impoliteness
3- Negative Impoliteness
4- Sarcasm or Mock Politeness
5- Withhold Politeness.

4. DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" (1937)
Extract (1)
"**The Queen:** *Take her far into the forest. Find some secluded glade where she can pick wildflowers.*
The Huntsman: *Yes, Your Majesty.*
The Queen: *And there, my faithful Huntsman, you will kill her!*
The Huntsman: *But, Your Majesty, the little Princess!*
The Queen: *Silence! You know the penalty if you fail.*
The Huntsman: *Yes, Your Majesty.*
The Queen: *But to make doubly sure you do not fail, bring back her heart in this*"
(00:07:01)

Impoliteness Strategies

The Queen demonstrates her power by ordering him to murder, and she treats him with contempt by ordering him to remain mute and forbidding him from expressing an opinion. As a result, she deploys negative impoliteness. Another example of negative impoliteness is found in "You know the penalty if you fail," in which the queen threatens the Huntsman in order to achieve her purpose. The Queen, who lacked empathy in the first place, becomes even crueler when she instructs the Huntsman to place the princess's heart in the box. This type of behavior is interpreted as a positive impoliteness strategy.

This scene contains numerous instances of aggression. The aggressive behavior in this extract is verbal. The Queen grows aggressive as she realizes the Huntsman does not intend to murder the princess. As a result, she utilizes a negative impoliteness strategy to halt any conversation and instruct the Huntsman to quit talking: *"my faithful Huntsman, you will kill her!"* and *"Silence"*. Then, she threatens him by performing a negative impoliteness strategy: *"You know the penalty if you fail!.* The type of aggression is instrumental because she believes the huntsman, who is extremely reluctant to murder the young princess, is the only person who can help her accomplish her aim. Additionally, the Queen pressures the huntsman to carry out her commands by using a positive impoliteness strategy in *"But to make doubly sure you do not fail, bring back her heart in this"*. Hence, this type is referred to as relational aggression.

4.2 "Dumbo"(1941)
Extract (2)
"**One boy**: *Hey, guys, look it! Smitty's an elephant!*
Smitty: *Aw, let me see! Boo!*
Other boys: *You can't hide him from us.*
Yeah, his ears are still sticking out.- Come on!
We wanna see him!- We wanna laugh.
Sure, that's what we came for.
Smitty: *Hey, the biggest slingshot in the world.*

Hey! Cut that out!- Hey, let's get out of here.
You're hurting me! Help!
The owner*: Here, you! What's going on?*
Down. Mrs. Jumbo, down!
Surround her. Tie her down.
Get down! Calm down! Tie her down!" **(00:18:51)**

Impoliteness Strategies

To begin, the lads deploy a negative impoliteness strategy when they scorn and mock Dumbo. They warn Mrs. Jumbo not to hide her son because they are there to mock him. This behavior is seen as a negative impoliteness strategy and is perceived as an extremely evident confirmation of their indifference to her emotions. Furthermore, the villains deploy a positive impoliteness strategy by describing Dumbo as the world's largest slingshot. It is an extremely difficult feeling when someone considers that he/she has become an instrument of mockery. Making Mrs. Jumbo feel uncomfortable counts as another positive impoliteness strategy. Another positive impoliteness strategy utilized by the owner of the circus by acting unsympathetically *"Surround her, Tie her down"*.

For starters, the scene is extremely hostile for youngsters due to the presence of verbal and physical abuse. There are three sorts of aggressive behaviors visible here: instrumental aggression, bullying, and reactive aggression. The instrumental aggression is employed by the boys when Mrs. Jumbo tries to prevent them from mocking her baby, which is, for them, a source of fun. As a consequence, they start shouting at her, ordering her to let them laugh by insulting Dumbo. The boys utilize a negative impoliteness strategy. Bullying is another type of aggression used by the boys, who find pleasure in mocking Dumbo. The boys deploy a positive impoliteness strategy: *"the biggest slingshot in the world"*. The third type of aggression is reactive aggression. This type is utilized by Mrs. Jumbo when the boys keep teasing her by hurting her baby. As a result, she starts hitting Smitty. Another act of reactive aggression is made by the owner of the circus, who thinks that Mrs. Jumbo is trying to ruin the show and damage his business by using a positive impoliteness strategy: *"Surround her", "Tie her down", "Get down"!*

Because the circus is a place where people attend and pay money to laugh without considering the feelings of the animals, social learning is what led to the boys' hostile behavior. The failure factor is what makes the circus owner aggressive because he wants to protect his business from Mrs. Jumbo's anger.

4.3 "Cinderella" (1950)
Extract (3)
*"**The stepmother**: Close the door, Cinderella. Come here.*
Cinderella: You don't think that I...
The stepmother *: Hold your tongue. Now, it seems we have time on our hands.*
Cinderella : But I was only trying to...
The stepmother *: Silence!*

Time for vicious practical jokes.
Perhaps we can put it to better use.
Now, let me see...
There's the large carpet in the main hall. Clean it!
And the windows, upstairs and down. Wash them!
Oh, yes. And the tapestries and the draperies.
Cinderella *: But I just finished...*
The stepmother *:Do them again! And don't forget the garden.*
Scrub the terrace. Sweep the halls and the stairs. Clean the chimneys.
And, of course, there's the mending and the sewing and the laundry.
Oh, yes. And one more thing. See that Lucifer gets his bath" **(00:22:01)**

Impoliteness Strategies

This extract has numerous impoliteness strategies. Cinderella is ordered by the queen to be silent and not express any opinions. This behavior emphasizes the stepmother's power and is perceived as a negative impoliteness strategy. Cinderella is accused by the stepmother of playing practical jokes, and she is associated with negative aspects. This is considered another negative impoliteness strategy. Lastly, using a positive impoliteness strategy appears when the stepmother overburdens Cinderella with a variety of responsibilities while showing no sympathy.

This scene contains numerous instances of aggression. In this scene, the form of aggression is verbal. The stepmother uses abusive language to communicate with Cinderella, preventing her from defending herself. Unjustly, the stepmother condemns Cinderella for playing practical jokes by employing a negative impoliteness strategy to imply relational aggression *"it seems we have time on our hands"*. The stepmother employs a negative impoliteness strategy to generate reactive aggression. The reactive aggression is reinforced through the use of a negative impoliteness strategy *"See that Lucifer gets his bath ."*

Failure, which prevents the stepmother and her daughters from being equally beautiful and charming as Cinderella, is the source of enmity.

4.4 "The Sword in the Stone" (1950)

Extract (4)

*"**Kay**: Quiet, Wart.*
***Arthur**: I'm trying to be.*
***Kay**: And nobody asked you to come along*
in the first place.
***Arthur**: I'm not even moving.*
***Kay**: Shut up.*
Here we go. What a set-up.
Right smack through the old gizzard.
Wha... Wait. Whoa!
Why, you clumsy little fool!
***Arthur**: Kay, please, I'm sorry. I couldn't help it. Please.*
***Kay**: If I ever...*
If I ever get my hands on you
I'll wring your scrawny little neck,
so help me, I will.
***Arthur**: I'll get the arrow, Kay.*
I'm sure I can find it." **(00:6:40)**

Impoliteness Strategies

Kay seeks to emphasize his relative power by frequently insulting Arthur, especially when he employs orders like *"Quiet"* and *"Shut up."* These attempts are interpreted as negative impoliteness strategies. Kay also tries to make Arthur feel uncomfortable by attempting to exclude him by utilizing a positive impoliteness strategy, saying, *"And nobody asked you to come along."* The deployment of such a strategy is reinforced by calling Arthur clumsy little fool. Kay's attempts to terrify and threaten Arthur are used as an example of a negative impoliteness strategy.

There are two types of aggression in this scenario. Kay's initial type of aggression is relational, which he uses to make Arthur feel naive. To imply this type of aggressive behavior, Kay employs orders *"Quiet, Wart",* and *"Shut up"* as an example of a negative impoliteness strategy, as well as his statement that includes a clear indication of social exclusion *"And nobody asked you to come along in the first place".* So, no wonder this statement is delivered through the use of the use of a positive impoliteness strategy. *"Why, you clumsy little fool!"* denotes another type of aggression, i.e., reactive aggression, which is used by Kay, who believes that he fails to hunt because of the existence of Arthur via the use of a positive impoliteness strategy. *"If I ever get my hands on you I'll wring your scrawny little neck"* is another example of reactive aggression, which is employed through the use the negative impoliteness strategy. This example is followed by another example of reactive aggression by using a negative impoliteness strategy *"so help me, I will".*

In the illustration above, there are two causes of aggression. The first is social learning. Kay had witnessed his father's violent treatment of Arthur. Failure is the

second factor. Kay lacks Arthur's enthusiasm and determination, as well as his ability to hunt.

4.5 "The Rescuers" (1977)

Extract (5)

*"**Madam Medusa**: Now, my dear...you're going to find the big, shiny diamond...for your Auntie Medusa. Aren't you?*
***Penny**: Teddy doesn't like it down there. He's afraid. Aren't you, Teddy?*
***Madam Medusa**: Aw. Poor Teddy. I'll just keep him up here with me, where he'll be safe.*
***Penny**: Give me back my teddy bear!. He's mine! He's mine!*
***Madam Medusa**: You get down there and find the big diamond...or you will never see that Teddy again!*
***Penny**: All right, all right. I'll go."* **(01:00:44)**

Impoliteness Strategies

There are two impoliteness strategies used in this extract. Both of them are employed by Madam Medusa. The first one is a positive impoliteness strategy, which is revealed by Medusa's act of showing neither sympathy nor care for Penny's anxieties over being left by herself in a dark cave: *"I'll just keep him up here with me, where he'll be safe"*. Then, a negative impoliteness strategy is deployed by Medusa when she threatens Penny that she will never see her Teddy, who is very precious to Penny, if she does not bring the diamond from the cave: *"You get down there and find the big diamond...or you will never see that Teddy again!"*

Madam Medusa's aggressive behavior is shown when she claims that Teddy will be safe with her: *"I'll just keep him up here with me, where he'll be safe"*. By saying so, she proves that she does not care about Penny's fears; this is seen as an act of positive impoliteness strategy. Madam Medusa is captivated by the idea of getting the biggest diamond in the world since she believes that the diamond gives her the utmost power and beauty. She also believes that only Penny can go into a little blowhole to bring the diamond. That is why her aggressive behavior towards Penny is considered instrumental aggression. Another example of Medusa's instrumental aggression is made by Medusa's statement *"You get down there and find the big diamond...or you will never see that Teddy again!"*. This aggressive statement contains a negative impoliteness strategy.

The explanation of aggression is the failure factor. Madam Medusa reacts aggressively when she realizes she will not be able to get what she wishes.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

	Impoliteness Strategies / Aggression	Bold on Record		Positive		Negative		Sarcasm		Withhold Politeness		Total	
		Fr.	Pr.	Fr.	Pr.	Fr.	Pr.	Fr.	Pr.	Fr.	Pr.	Fr.	Pr.
Types of Aggression	**Instrumental**	0	0%	5	31.25%	9	56.25%	2	12.5%	0	0%	16	100%
	Reactive	0	0%	4	19.04%	16	76.19%	1	4.76%	0	0%	21	100%
	Relational	0	0%	10	52.63%	9	47.36%	0	0%	0	0%	19	100%
	Bullying	0	0%	4	57.14%	2	28.57%	1	14.28%	0	0%	7	100%
Causes of Aggression	**Failure**	0	0%	11	28.20%	25	64.10%	3	7.69%	0	0%	39	100%
	Social Learning	0	0%	9	56.25%	6	37.5%	1	6.25%	0	0%	16	100%
	Psychological	0	0%	0	0%	1	100%	0	0%	0	0%	1	100%
	Lack of Conversational Skills	0	0%	3	42.85%	4	57.14%	0	0%	0	0%	7	100%

Aggressive people employ the previous list of impoliteness strategies. Their aggressiveness and willingness to disrespect others, especially those they harm, can be attributed to their frequent use of impoliteness strategies. Regarding the types of aggression, it is found that aggressors who present instrumental aggression utilize the negative impoliteness strategy the most (56.25%). The lowest rank is occupied by bold on record and withhold politeness (0%). Instrumental aggression is performed with the objective of altering or affecting a situation's specific result. Someone who acts aggressively like this usually has a hidden goal, such as harming someone or obtaining their desired outcome. The rate of aggression of this type is suitable for the level of impoliteness conveyed by applying the negative impoliteness strategy since it aims at damaging the target's negative face wants. A bold on record impoliteness is used to carry out a face-threatening act in such a manner that the face is not diminished. Moreover, aggressors never employ withhold politeness strategy because, according to the data under examination, they are never put in a position where they must act politely .

Similarly, the negative impoliteness strategy occupies the highest percentage with reactive aggression (76.19%). While the lowest positions go to bold on record and withhold politeness equally (0,0%). This result is obviously logical because reactive aggression occurs in retaliation for threats, insults, and other forms of damage, and the negative impoliteness strategy appears to be appropriate for such a goal.

Relational aggression occurs most with a positive impoliteness strategy (52.63%) and it is never manifested by bold on record and withhold politeness in the data being examined. Relational aggression is a deceptive type of aggression that frequently starts in disguise. Aggressors can employ tactics like deceiving or inventing a story that appears reasonable. That is why it goes well with the positive impoliteness strategy to demonstrate to the target that he is not respected, is not a part of, and cannot be given assistance.

Bullying most frequently occurs with positive impoliteness (57.14%) and it is never reflected by with bold on record and withhold politeness. One of the various methods employed by bullies is to call their target names with the purpose of hurting them which is employed by positive impoliteness strategy.

With regard to the causes of aggression, negative impoliteness (64.10%) is the most commonly utilized impoliteness strategy, with the failure factor considering the fact that aggressors frequently use it to attack the negative face in an effort to get rid of their anger, which is brought on by their failure in accomplishing their aims. However, the bold on record and withhold politeness have never been utilized. Social learning factor is used most with positive impoliteness strategy (56.25%) while it is not reflected by using bold on record and withholds politeness. Meanwhile, psychological pathology occurs only with the negative impoliteness strategy (100%). Lack of conversational skills is most frequently present (57.14%) while using the negative impoliteness strategy and is never employed when using bold on record, sarcasm, and withhold politeness. People become so enraged because they are unable to effectively express their underlying demands and feelings, which make them, want to completely damage the targets' negative face.

6. CONCLUSION

- The majority of instrumental and reactive aggression is produced by negative impoliteness. Since the goal of the negative impoliteness technique is to harm the target's negative face desires, the rate of aggression of those types is appropriate for the degree of impoliteness given. Additionally, reactive aggressiveness happens in response to threats, insults, and other types of harm, and the negative impoliteness tactic seems suitable for such a goal.
- Relational aggression and bullying are more frequently used in pairing with positive impoliteness strategy. Aggressors prefer using techniques like deception or portraying a plausible tale. In light of this, it is appropriate to use the positive impoliteness strategy to show the target that he is excluded and not respected.

Positive impoliteness is a strategy used by bullies to damage their targets by calling them names.

- The following causes of aggression: (failure, psychological pathology, lack of conversational skill) occur in situations that are most compatible with the negative impoliteness strategy because it appears to be very helpful for the aggressors to attack the negative face in an effort to get rid of their anger, which is brought on by their failure to achieve their desired outcomes, or to effectively express their underlying demands and feelings, which make them want to damage the target's face. However, the social learning factor occurs most with the positive impoliteness strategy because aggressors, in the data under scrutiny, learn to call names and exclude others through mimicking role models in their environment.

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المستخلص

تفحص الدراسة الحالية العدوانية كظاهرة مجتمعية في خمسة أفلام رسوم متحركة أمريكية. يمكن للأطفال تعلم الكثير من أفلام الرسوم المتحركة، والتي تعتبر عادةً أفضل أشكال الترفيه. ومع ذلك ، فإنها تحتوي على عدد كبير من العواقب العنيفة. تمت دراسة العدوان وعواقبه المجتمعية من عدة زوايا. ومع ذلك ، لم يتم إجراء البحث عن العدوانية في أفلام الرسوم المتحركة الأمريكية من وجهة نظر براغماتية. وبالتالي ، تسعى الدراسة الحالية إلى التغلب على هذه الفجوة من خلال التمييز بين أنواع العدوان وأسبابه بشكل عملي. تهدف الدراسة بشكل أساسي إلى تحديد أنواع وأسباب العدوان الذي يرتكبه المعتدون من خلال فحص الطرق التي يتم بها استخدام استراتيجيات الفظاظة لتمثيل كل نوع وسبب العدوانية في البيانات المختارة.

لتحقيق هدف الدراسة ، تم اعتماد نظرية الفظاظة لكالبيبر 1996 استنتجت الدراسة أن غالبية العدوان الآلي و العدوان التفاعلي ينتج عن استراتيجية فظاظة سلبية. يتم استخدام العدوانية العلائقية والتنمر بشكل متكرر في الاقتران باستراتيجية الفظاظة الإيجابية. الأسباب التالية للعدوانية: (الفشل ، علم الأمراض النفسي ، الافتقار إلى مهارة المحادثة) تحدث في المواقف الأكثر توافقًا مع استراتيجية الفظاظة السلبية ، ومع ذلك ، فإن عامل التعلم الاجتماعي يحدث بشكل أكبر مع استراتيجية الفظاظة الإيجابية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: العدوان الآلي ، العدوان التفاعلي ، العدوانية العلائقية ، التنمر ، الفظاظة ، الرسوم المتحركة.