

Chapter four: results of the study and discussion

4.1 Part 1 – Discourse analysis

The discourse analysis of this study intended to determine whether verbal aggressions were used in the cartoon *The Fairly OddParents* and if so, find out what type of assaults were used according to the direct and indirect forms mentioned by Lucas et al. (2008). The authors comment that different actions could be regarded as direct or indirect aggressions, whether physical or verbal. For the purpose of this research, verbal assaults were the only forms of violence that were considered for the analysis. Although some of these aggressions could have or not resulted in a physical aggression, language was the main aspect to analyze. The categories given to the results obtained from the analysis were taken from the ones provided by Björkqvist, Lagerspetz & Serman (1992), Crick & Grotpeter (1995), Owens, Dali & Slee (2005) (as cited in Lucas et al. 2008). Direct insults, mocking, name-calling, and wanting to hurt others, were considered as forms of direct verbal abuse; ignoring, excluding, lying about others, or speaking badly of others, were considered as forms of indirect verbal abuse.

After doing the transcriptions and looking at the dialogues in *The Fairly OddParents*, both direct and indirect forms of verbal aggressions were found. The results obtained will be presented in Spanish since it is the language in which the cartoon is transmitted in Mexico. The results will be presented in two subsections. The first will show the direct forms of verbal violence and the second the indirect forms of verbal aggressions.

4.1.1 Direct forms of verbal violence.

In this subsection, the three categories of indirect verbal aggressions that were found in the discourse of the *Fairly OddParents* are presented. The first is *wanting to hurt others*, the second *insults*, and the last *mockeries*.

Wanting to hurt others

- Quizás lo haga llorar muy bien (Crocker, pensando en Timmy)
- Quizás pueda sacarle la respuesta a golpes (Guardaespaldas de Trixi a Trixi, al decir esto, le muestra su gran puño a Timmy)
- Destruyelo (la verruga Bob le dice a Elmer esto para que destruya a Timmy)
- Quizá haya dulces en esa piñata (Francis dice esto señalando a Crocker, después de que Timmy les hace ver a todos los niños que el profesor no cumplió con los dulces y comida que les prometió)
- sino le costará caro al pronosticador del tiempo (el Sr. Turner desea que el pronóstico del tiempo se cumpla, al decir esto saca un tridente y una antorcha)
- debo golpear a ese pronosticador (ya que el pronóstico no fue como había previsto el pronosticador, el Sr. Turner dice esto)
- pero por si acaso... (la mamá de Timmy se convierte en la nueva pronosticadora del tiempo en la TV, como no saben si acertará con las predicciones, Cosmo saca un tridente y una antorcha por si no se cumple lo que ella dijo, ya que será atacada como sucedió con los otros pronosticadores que fallaron)
- ¡que saquen a la mamá de Timmy, atáquenla! (la turba que ataca a los pronosticadores que se equivocan)
- Caballeros, preparen sus trinches (un señor de que es parte de la turba quiere atacar a la mamá de Timmy)
- te duele la fría indiferencia, ¿cierto? Adiós. (la Sra. Turner quiere vengarse de que Timmy la ignoró, ella se vuelve indiferente con Timmy)
- ¿dónde está la turba? ¡quiero mi turba! (Cosmo quiere participar con la turba que ataca a los pronosticadores del tiempo que fallan)
- ¡atrápenla! ¡sí, que no escape! (la turba confunde a la mamá de Timmy con el títere que tiene el Sr. Turner y quieren atraparla para golpearla por no haber hecho un pronóstico del tiempo acertado)
- Nuestro hijo no ha torturado a los prisioneros hoy (la reina extraterrestre Jipjorrulal al rey extraterrestre Grippulon, se preocupan porque su hijo Mark no ha ido a lastimar a los prisioneros)
- ¡Preparen los destructores, volaremos la Tierra! (Rey Grippulon quiere destruir la Tierra)
- Pues veamos cuántas vidas te quedan (Francis hace bolita a Timmy, lo mete a una catapulta y lo lanza)
- Hora de probar mi nuevo mata-reprobados (Crocker dice esto a Timmy cuando no pudo responder a lo que el profesor le contestó)

- Hora de probar mi nueva trampa para gatos (el profesor de teatro de la escuela tira de una cuerda, se abre el escenario y Timmy cae)
- hay que extirpar las amígdalas dolorosamente (la enfermera que revisa a Timmy en la escuela)
- Y hablando de dolor, probemos tu cama robótica y automatizada (Vicky aprieta un botón del control de la cama, ésta comienza a elevarse y a azotar a Timmy contra el techo)
- tenemos que rajarte la garganta (Vicky le dice a Timmy cuando quiere atraparlo para hacerle la cirugía)
- ¡vamos por él! (los doctores persiguen a Cosmo)

Inslults

- tarado (Wanda a Cosmo)
- silencio imbécil (la verruga Bob a Elmer)
- torpe exhibicionista (Wanda a Timmy)
- torpe exhibicionista (una vez más Wanda dice esto a Timmy)
- perdedor (Trixi refiriéndose a Timmy)
- tonto (amiga de Trixi, refiriéndose a Timmy)
- pobre renacuajo (Crocker a Timmy)
- silencio tonto (la verruga Bob a Elmer)
- basura intergaláctica (Crash Nébula, el superhéroe , a los extraterrestres)
- basura terrícola (un guardia extraterrestre a Timmy)
- escoria intergaláctica (Timmy a Mark el extraterrestre)
- Soy un idiota (Sr. Turner refiriéndose a sí mismo)
- hijo ignorante (Sr. Turner refiriéndose a Timmy)
- esta estúpida esfera (Timmy se refiere así del globo terráqueo porque no puede hacer su tarea de geografía)
- estúpido círculo (Cosmo se refiere así de un círculo que intenta meter en un hueco por un cuadrado)
- hoyo estúpido, hoyo estúpido (Cosmo le dice así al hoyo porque no puede pasar por ahí un cubo)

- torpe madre (Mamá Cosma, madre de Cosmo, a Wanda)
- ¡lárgate tonto! (Vicky le dice a un robot que apareció junto a ella y que al mismo tiempo que ella atacaba a Timmy, el robot se acerca para ayudarla. Al decirle esto ella le da una patada y lo saca del lugar)
- despídete mocoso (Vicky le dice así a Timmy cuando lo manda con el Dr. Descuartizador)

Mockeries

- Hola Timmy, soy mamá (el Sr. Turner coloca en su mano un títere que tiene la misma apariencia que la Sra. Turner y la imita)
- deja de ignorarme (Sr. Turner imitando con el títere a la Sra. Turner)
- creo que estás siendo muy severo con Timmy (Sr. Turner imitando a la Sra. Turner)
- ¿qué quieres decir con eso, piensas que ella es más bella que yo? (Sr. Turner imitando a la Sra. Turner)

The data collected from the analysis of the episodes of The Fairly OddParents showed that three types of direct forms of verbal violence were found in the discourse used. From the categories found in the analysis, the one with more entries was *wanting to hurt others*. In the next subsection, the indirect forms of verbal aggression that were found will be presented.

4.1.2 Indirect forms of verbal violence.

In this part, the three types of indirect forms of verbal violence that were found in the discourse of the cartoon are presented. The indirect forms were less numerous than the direct forms. The categories of indirect forms of verbal aggression that were found were: *insults*, *ignoring*, and *speaking badly about others*.

Insults

- qué pregunta tan estúpida (Wanda, refiriéndose a la pregunta que hizo Cosmo)
- su cabeza hueca es un estuche muy práctico para cargarlo todo (Wanda habla de la cabeza de Cosmo)
- ¿quién habría pensado que la cabeza hueca de Cosmo nos salvaría? (Wanda)

- el mucho menos guapo que yo (Pepe Veraz, conductor de noticias, refiriéndose a Alfa Cero, el pronosticador del tiempo)
- el también mucho menos guapo que yo (Pepe Veraz refiriéndose a Man Chubasco, otro pronosticador del tiempo)
- tu estúpido disfraz (Vicky a Mark , un extraterrestre, pensando que él tiene un disfraz)
- Quítate ese estúpido disfraz (Vicky a Mark)
- Igual que esa otra palabra: idiota! (Cosmo dice que geografía, geología y geometría se escriben con “j”, Wanda le responde con la frase mencionada, no le dice idiota directamente a Cosmo)
- quisiera llamar a alguien más inteligente (Timmy le dice a su papá porque él no puede ayudarle con su tarea)
- ¿no desearías que otra persona fuera lista? Es alguien que rima con Cosmo (Wanda refiriéndose a Cosmo)
- jajaja, no te ha visto en bañador (el Sr. Turner dice que el pescado tiene poca grasa, por lo que Cosmo le dice esto a Wanda, haciendo referencia a que ella no tiene poca grasa)
- Según la historia médica necesitas una *imbecilectomía* (Vicky le dice a Timmy, después de haber revisado su garganta)
- Huyó un imbecil (Vicky se refiere así de Timmy al pedir auxilio cuando éste escapa)
- Veamos qué puedo hacer por esos dientes horribles (Cosmo estuvo curando a varios enfermos en el hospital, cuando se encuentra con Timmy le dice esto)

Ignoring

- ¿sí? Qué bien, adiós. (Timmy y el Sr. Turner están viendo la tele y no prestan atención a la Sra. Turner)
- ¡el pronóstico! (el Sr. Turner dice esto para que la mamá de Timmy no lo moleste mientras ve la tele)

Speaking badly about others

- Vicky es el ser más repugnante del universo (A.J le dice a Mark el extraterrestre)

From the indirect forms of verbal aggressions that were found in the discourse of the cartoon, the most numerous forms were indirect insults. In the next section the discussion of the information presented in section 4.1.1 and 4.1.2 will be presented.

4.1.3 Discussion of the direct and indirect forms of verbal violence found.

The different forms of direct and indirect verbal aggressions that were identified in the analyzed episodes of *The Fairly OddParents* in the sections above clearly point out the diverse forms of violent language used by the different characters in the cartoon. Using any of these forms of verbal assaults is a discrete manner that can be used to hurt someone. As mentioned in Chapter 2, verbal aggressions may slowly destroy the victims' self-esteem and although scars are not palpable as physical attacks, verbal harassments are harmful to the psychological wellbeing of the victims.

Specific findings of the discourse analysis will be presented according to the direct and indirect forms of verbal aggressions that were identified. Also, information related to the gender of the perpetrators will be shown. In addition, the direct and indirect forms of verbal assaults were examined to see whether they exhibit or not any of the four contextual factors Potter and Warren (1998) refer to which are: consequences, reward or punishment, hero status, and remorse.

4.1.3.1 Direct forms of verbal violence in The Fairly OddParents.

In the 5 episodes of *The Fairly OddParents* that were analyzed, a total of 44 direct verbal aggressions were identified. The categories found were *insults*, *wanting to hurt others*, and *mockeries*. The most frequent form of direct verbal aggression was the category *wanting to hurt others* with 21 phrases, followed by 19 *insults*, and 4 *mockeries*. In the next paragraphs information related to the gender of the characters that performed any of the three types of acts will be provided, as well as to whom.

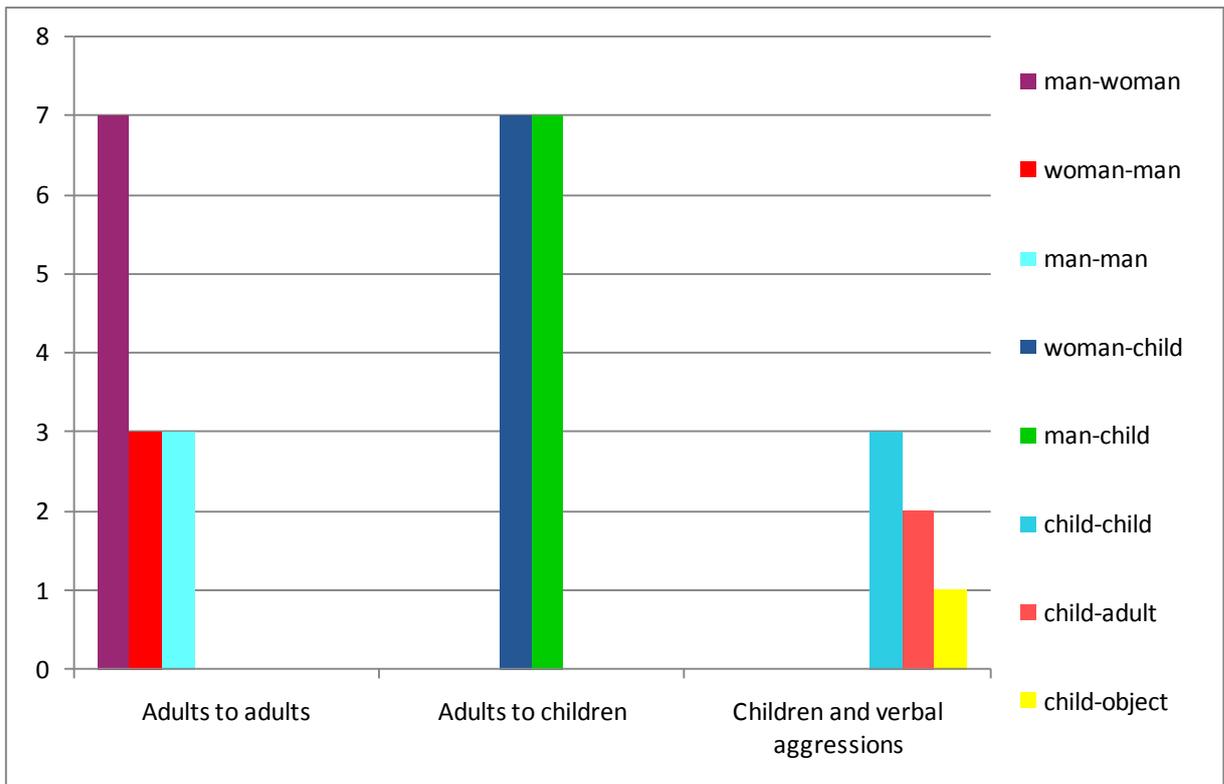
The most common form of aggression found was adults to other adults, to themselves, or to objects; there were 21 phrases or words found. From those verbal assaults, 7 were from

a man to a woman, 3 from a woman to a man, 3 were man to man, 2 were from a crowd to a woman, 1 from a crowd against a man, 1 from woman to woman, and 1 from man to himself.

The second most common form of direct verbal assault was from adults to children, 14 phrases or words were identified. From this type of aggression, 7 were from a woman to a child, 3 of those assaults were from Vicky, one of the principal villains to Timmy. The 7 remaining aggressions were from a man to a child, 3 of those came from Bob who is a wart; for the analysis this character was considered as an adult man because of its voice.

Direct forms of verbal aggressions were also found between children. There were 3 phrases or words identified. From those aggressions, 2 were from a girl to a boy, 1 from a boy to a girl, and 2 from a child to an adult, which was from Timmy to an alien, and from Francis to Professor Crocker. In addition, a single insult was found from a child to an object.

Graph 1 presents the number of direct forms of verbal aggressions out of the 44 phrases or words that were obtained from the analysis. The numbers in the axis represent the number of aggressions. The graph also shows the gender of the perpetrator as well as of the victim.



Graph 1 Direct forms of verbal aggression

This graph shows that adults were the ones who used most of the verbal assaults that were found in the analyzed text. Direct forms of verbal violence were higher from man to woman, from woman to a child, and from a man to a child. The graph also demonstrates that the direct forms of verbal aggression were less among children. Nonetheless, in the category *children and verbal aggressions* it can be seen that direct verbal aggressions were more from child to child.

Having provided a description of the most frequent forms of verbal harassments as well as the gender of the perpetrators and the victims of direct verbal violence in the analyzed episodes of the cartoon, the indirect forms of verbal aggressions that were found in the analyzed episodes will be presented in the next section.

4.1.3.2 Indirect forms of verbal violence in The Fairly OddParents.

From the analyzed chapters, a total of 18 indirect verbal aggressions were found. The categories found were *insults*, *ignoring*, and *speaking badly about others*. The category with

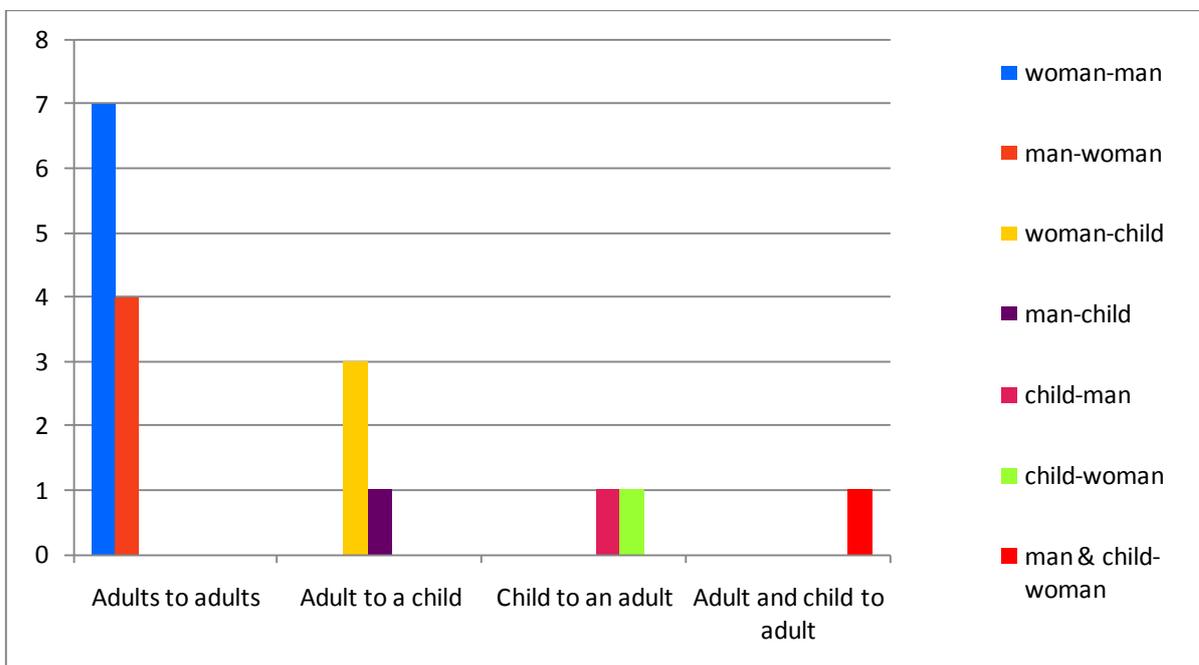
more aggressions was *insults*, with 14 findings; it was followed by *ignoring* with 3, and *speaking badly about others* had only 1.

The indirect aggressions that were more common in the analyzed episodes were from adults to adults or to themselves, where 11 phrases or words were identified; there were 7 aggressions from a woman to a man and 4 from a man to a woman.

Furthermore, there were 4 aggressions from an adult to an infant, where 3 were from a woman to a child and 1 from a man to a child.

Additionally, there were 2 indirect verbal assaults identified from children to adults, 1 was from a child to a man and another from a child to a woman. Additionally, there was 1 act found that involved the indirect verbal aggression from a child and an adult to a woman, it was Timmy and his father to Mrs. Turner.

Graph 2 presents the number of indirect verbal assaults that were found in the analysis. The gender of the perpetrators as well as of the victims is shown. The numbers in the axis represent the number of indirect verbal harassments that were found in the analyzed episodes.



Graph 2 Indirect forms of verbal aggression

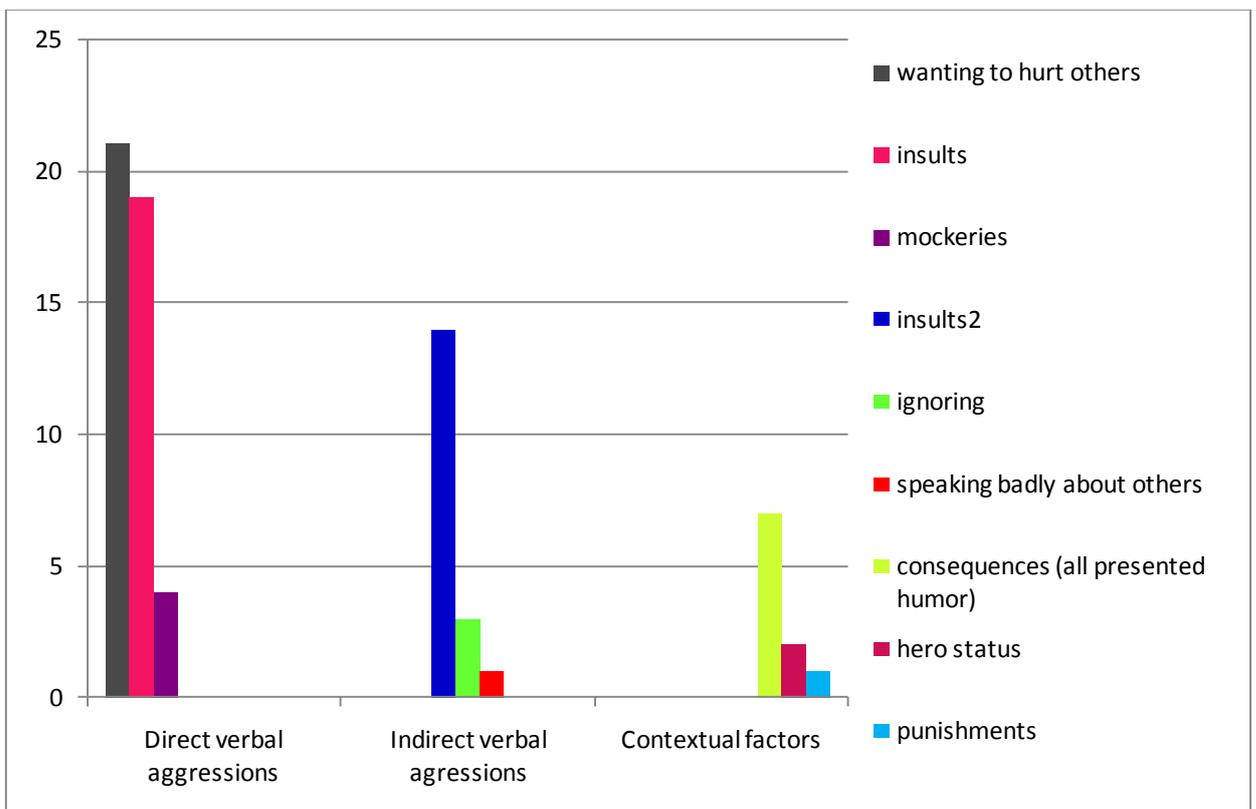
The graph above shows that the characters that used most of the indirect forms of verbal harassments were adults, using them mainly with other adults or to children. In the categories *adults to adults* and *adults to a child*, women were the ones who used more the indirect forms. From the results obtained in the research and as it is shown in the graph, children were characters that barely used this form of verbal harassment.

While the transcriptions of the cartoon were being analyzed, there were interesting aspects found in some episodes. Firstly, in one of the episodes, the television host Pepe Veraz, mentions that the forecaster Man Chubasco had been attacked by a furious crowd and laughs about this situation. Later, he realizes that he is being watched on TV and tries to fix what he said. Also, in another episode, the general plot presents Timmy in a hospital, where he is supposed to have a surgery done and where three of the characters that participate in it want to cause him as much pain as possible. These two observations may suggest that there might be other representations in the cartoon where characters laugh about the misfortunes of others, or simply enjoy the pain others suffer.

Secondly, a classification that was not included for this analysis, but that would be interesting to look at is the tone used by the characters when expressing themselves. This feature was found particularly in the episode "Un peligro en el espacio" where several times Vicky used a very high tone when talking to children or when asking them to do things. The third aspect that was observed was in "Un peligro en el espacio" as well, where Timmy and his friends try to reconstruct what happened in Capitán Nébula's show, their favorite superhero. In the episode, it is shown how children try to include all the elements that can help them to recreate in a precise manner what occurred on the program, including the characters, the scenes, as well the dialogues. Presenting this may reinforce children's desire to imitate what is presented on television and making it look as something that is correct or usual.

In addition, the direct and indirect forms of verbal violence that were analyzed were examined to see if they presented any of the four contextual factors Potter and Warren (1998) mention. These contextual factors refer to consequences, approval/disapproval, reward/punishment, and remorse. From the 5 episodes that were examined, the total number of consequences that were presented were 7; all of them showed a physical consequence where pain was shown in a humorous manner. No rewards were displayed, and only 1 punishment was presented, which consisted in a disapproving look. Furthermore, 2 hero statuses were exhibited, which may suggest that as long as it is an act of heroism, violence is acceptable.

Graph 3 shows the number of direct and indirect forms of verbal violence that were found in the cartoon. The contextual factors Potter and Warren (1998) refer to and that were looked at in the analysis will also be presented.



Graph 3 Forms of aggression found and contextual factors (Potter & Warren, 1998)

Graph 3 illustrates that the most numerous forms of verbal aggressions in the analyzed episodes were direct. Also, it shows that from all the direct and indirect forms of verbal violence that were found, the contextual factors that were presented were few. The graph shows that all the consequences that were exhibited in the cartoon were presented humorously, only 2 of the verbal aggressions had a hero status and only a single punishment was found.

In the next section the second part of this study which consisted of presenting an episode to a group of children and then discussing what they watched, will be addressed.

4.2 Part 2 – Group discussion with the children

The main objective of watching an episode of *The Fairly OddParents* and then having a group discussion was to know what the perceptions of children were about specific violent behaviors that were exhibited in the cartoon. The whole conversation was recorded and then transcribed, see Appendix 2. In the following section a brief description of the episode will be given to understand the conversation the researcher had with the children.

4.2.1 Description of the episode “Abre y di aaagh”.

In this episode Timmy wakes up with a sore throat and even though it is bothering him a lot, he decides to go to school afraid that if his mother finds out, she will take him to the doctor to get his tonsils removed, something that Timmy does not want to happen. Timmy goes to school and before classes begin he is at the playground. Francis, the school's brat, takes Timmy by his feet but Timmy can not ask for help because of this sore throat. Francis puts Timmy in a catapult and tosses him into Crocuch's class; the teacher asks a question to Timmy, but his pain does not allow him to speak. Crouch takes a huge weapon, which according to him, is to kill children who fail. Professor Crouch shoots a big F to Timmy, the boy crashes into the wall and makes cracks on it. Later, a nurse that works in the school checks Timmy's throat and decides he needs to go to the hospital so he can get his tonsils removed.

At the hospital, Timmy asks his fairy godparents to remove his tonsils since he does not want to have a surgery. Cosmo and Wanda are almost ready to make Timmy's wish come true when suddenly, the nurse who is in charge of Timmy goes into the room. To Timmy's surprise, that nurse is Vicky, his cruel babysitter. Vicky introduces Timmy to his surgeon, who seems to be quite brutal with his tools. After some troubles, Timmy manages to escape from Vicky.

In the meantime, Cosmo and Wanda pretend they are doctors. Cosmo starts using his magic powers to cure some patients. The doctors at the hospital were impressed with Cosmo's work. However, while Cosmo was enjoying his fame, Timmy keeps trying to escape from Vicky, who is looking for him desperately. In the end, Timmy puts Vicky in his place for the surgery and finds Cosmo to cure him with his powers from that terrible pain.

Now that a description of what the episode was about has been given, the impressions children obtained from this cartoon will be provided in the next section. To carry out this activity, children were reminded of particular parts of the cartoon that were considered to have a type of verbal violence, and questions were made.

4.2.2 Looking at children's perceptions of the episode.

First, children were reminded of the part where Francis takes Timmy by his feet and scrunches him and tosses him using a catapult; they were asked what they thought of what Francis did. The children said that it was something bad, that what Francis did made Timmy feel bad. Pedro, the oldest boy in the group, said that Francis was discriminating Timmy with this action. Despite the answers children provided about being a bad action, while they were watching the cartoon, they all laughed during this part.

Afterwards, children were asked what they thought of professor Crouch, specifically of the part where he shot Timmy for not being able to answer his question. Children said it was bad, they were asked why this was bad; to this, children said it was not good because that

made Timmy feel worse. Nonetheless, children also laughed about this situation when they were watching it. Later, the children were asked if they thought it was good that Vicky had said that Timmy would have his tonsils removed painfully; the children answered that it was not good and they made clear that Vicky was the villain in the story. They mentioned that she is Timmy's babysitter and that she always hits him when Timmy's parents are not around. The children expressed that since Vicky is the villain in the story, it was expected that she had this type of behavior with Timmy.

In the episode there was a part where Vicky had Timmy tied on to the bed to take him to the operating room. Timmy was able to get out of the bed and took the control and pressed some of its buttons. The bed was transformed into a robot and started to slam Vicky against a wall. The children were asked if what Timmy had done to Vicky was alright. At first, Liz said it was not good. Lulu, the youngest girl in the group, intervened and said that what Timmy had done was fine. To this, she added that it was acceptable since Vicky always hits Timmy harder. Sofi and Liz agreed later with Lulu's response. From this comments, it can be assumed that children accept this kind of violent behaviors when it is a vengeance, or when the performed actions are against villains.

In the cartoon, after Timmy escaped from Vicky, she went to ask for help from other nurses. To do it, she took a microphone and started asking for help, she said "huyó un imbécil". When the children were asked what they thought about this particular event, Luis said it was a bad word and laughed. Lulu, the youngest, said it was bad to say those things, she was asked why this was bad, but she did not answer. Pedro responded that it was bad because it was a bad word, and Liz said the same thing; immediately, Juan, the oldest boy, said it was bad because it was Timmy, a boy, who was being insulted. After he gave this answer, Lulu added that boys and girls should not be mistreated or hit. Juan intervened again and mentioned that Timmy should be respected. In this particular part of the discussion it can be perceived that

younger children do not associate completely the events that are presented on the cartoon; while they were all saying that what Vicky had said was wrong because it is a bad word, it was only the oldest boy who said that the negative aspect was that by using this word Vicky was insulting indirectly Timmy.

The next part that was discussed was when Timmy finally found Cosmo to remove his tonsils; Cosmo invites Timmy to sit down on his chair and says “Veamos qué puedo hacer por esos dientes horribles”, Timmy says he wants him to remove his tonsils. Then, Cosmo uses his powers and cures Timmy. In the end Timmy has a different voice and sings as a professional, showing his throat is fine again. Children were asked what they thought of this part. Liz said it was bad but did not say why; Lulu said that Cosmo removed Timmy’s teeth, then she reflected on her answer and said Cosmo did not do anything to Timmy. Pedro said Cosmo changed Timmy’s voice because at the end he started to sing as a professional. Children were asked about this phrase since it is an indirect insult. Cosmo saying that Timmy’s teeth are horrible is something that could affect the child internally, but the children did not get the meaning behind and just focused on the actions that came later, that Timmy was healed and his voice had changed thanks to Cosmo’s magic powers.

The information that has been presented in this section, gives a general idea of what children understand and get from what they watch on television. This also shows that sometimes children do not assimilate all the information that is being presented and that as they are watching they are constructing their own conclusions. In the following chapter, the general conclusions of the verbal harassments found in the analyzed episodes of The Fairly OddParents will be presented, and the research questions will be answered.