

## Investigating Verbal Aggression as a Type of Communication Behavior of English Speakers in the Internet Space

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### Abstract

The purpose of this study is to determine whether it is still relevant to examine speech aggression as a form of communication in online discourse. Different ways to understand this idea are taken into consideration. The author defines speech aggression as intentional and driven communication behavior aimed at upending the media environment. On the content of French-language comments to a news article, four different forms of aggression are displayed: verbal passive direct, verbal passive indirect, verbal active direct, and verbal passive indirect. Speech aggression can be classified into two categories based on the degree of purposefulness and the intensity of expression. The most common ways that speech aggression manifests itself in online comments are examined. The analysis concludes that the commentator's intention to manipulate other Internet users, express his own negative emotions about the subject matter of the article or other interlocutors who share his viewpoint, and discredit or offend the other person determines the speech aggression in the comments.

**Keywords:** English Language; Aggression; Communication; Internet Space.

### 1. Introduction

Since the Internet is an open media platform that allows users to directly participate in discussions sparked by events that cause participants to react in conflicting or divergent ways, linguists' attention is turning toward Internet communication in English as a result of advancements in modern technologies and the Internet. "An additional characteristic of online discourse is its ability to alter conventional "one-to-many" mass communication models into ones where participants engage in constant interaction with one another through the use of multimodal content" (Tyutelova et al. 2019). Numerous scientific studies have demonstrated that commentaries are of interest to scholars as a genre of Internet discourse (Abdullina et al., 2018; Shin & Lee, 2020; Takhtarova et al., 2020). The majority of news websites and communities purposefully include a "Comments" form on their sites so that users can share their thoughts on the articles they've read. Reasoning, remarks, questions for clarification, and extra information go in this section.

When debating a significant issue, commentators frequently "fight" and use clever remarks to support their positions rather than attempting to find common ground with their opponents. Negative responses that are well-known and frequent, coupled with animosity and unsuitable for productive discourse, are not always connected to the content of the article that is being discussed. They can be related to any barely discussed micro-topic as well as the text's main theme. From this perspective, speech aggression can be interpreted as an intentional distortion of the addressee's communicative space. Instead of attempting to establish a shared communication space with the addressee, the speaker intrudes into the recipient's space and attempts to alter it as he sees fit. A linguist is very interested in this variability of speech at this stage of development (Deputatova et al., 2019). The interpretation of speech aggression can be approached from various angles (Cavazza, 2017; Huerta-Velasco & Calvo, 2022). Speech aggression, in the words of Vorontsova (2006), is defined as conflict-oriented speech behavior that is motivated by a dislike of the subject-object form of English communication and a detrimental effect on the addressee. Every language has a unique way of conceptualizing reality that is influenced by both individual and national characteristics (Khasanova et al., 2020).

## **2. Literature Review**

Violence is known to happen even in cyberspace, and people who might otherwise follow the law and conform to social norms may engage in a variety of violent online activities. Empirical research has tested theories that claim we acquire a second moral standard when we are online (Michelet, 2003). These behaviors can take many different forms, including gender and identity swapping and online harassment. These originate from the downdraft of conformity in cyberspace and the apparent anonymity of social networking sites (Aronson, 2007). Online social networking sites are preferred by online harassers who are frequently anonymous in their attacks. A state of mind free from behavioral constraints on the internet known as disinhibition may arise from perceived anonymity and pseudonymity. Young people who use the internet readily embrace the virtual world because it offers them more freedom and is thought to be anonymous and uncontrolled by others. Cyberspace messages lack the verbal and nonverbal indicators—such as body language and facial expressions—that would indicate disappointment, worry, and misunderstanding (Suler, 2004). It also lessens the possibility of an instantaneous outcome. Users of cyberspace may experience a "subjective state" where they lose self-awareness, further deindividuating them. People who interact online are liberated from the conventional restraints on their behavior because it deindividuates them (Diener, 1980).

The Cyber-Routine Activity Theory (Choi, 2008) states that the likelihood of coming across criminal activity increases with the amount of time spent online. People encounter criminality on social networking sites because they spend a growing amount of their free time there. Interpersonal violence victimization in cyberspace is further increased by routinely partaking in risky online leisure activities, such as sharing life events and personal information on a regular basis, expressing opinions and feelings on sensitive issues through social networking sites (SNS), and having inadequate online security management. Risky SNS activity pursuits are a sign of poor self-control (Peterson & Densley, 2017). Studies examining the general theory of crime claim that low self-control is the common denominator of aggressive and antisocial behavior, with environmental factors playing a role in its evolution. Reactive and instrumental forms of aggression have their roots in early life, when identity seeking is strong, and are strongly correlated with levels of self-control, satisfaction, and the strength and intensity of provocative stimuli. According to research, people who experience online harassment frequently worry that the aggression they experience online will carry over into real-world situations and occur there as well (Duggan, 2017). Bullying that takes place both offline and online (as a form of online aggression) is connected and entwined; bullying that occurs offline may commence first and continue in both contexts. There is a correlation between an individual's online aggression and their overall level of aggression (Parti et al., 2018).

## **3. Methodology**

The research's focus is on verbal abuse in online comments on political news stories. The study's foundation is the communicative-pragmatic method, which enables the identification of speech aggression types employed by speakers during French conversation in conjunction with the pragmatic characteristics of linguistic units in relation to the communication context and the assessment of individuals' communicative behavior. Intent analysis is also used in the work; its primary goal is to locate and evaluate the author's intentions within the comments. 324 French-language online commentary on political articles from popular English-language periodicals, such as *Release* and *The World*, served as the study's source material.

## **4. Results**

Aggression can be expressed in two main ways: emotionally, defensively, or impulsively. This kind involves reacting angrily, irrationally, and emotionally to the other person's verbal abuse. Hey Allobroge, what a moron! I haven't read anything foolish or absurd! I haven't come across any more foolish writing. Aggression that is "cold-blooded" or "active." This kind of aggression is defined as deliberate, controlled, and emotionless, and it is intended to establish dominance and control over others. Finkelstein Norman: Never! You have no understanding of this subject; switch on the TV frequently or never! Watch more TV; you don't understand anything about this subject. As demonstrated by the examples, both forms of aggression can be expressed verbally in the comments. There are two ways in which verbal aggression manifests itself: overt and covert. Certain syntactic structures directly convey overt aggression, whereas covert aggression is an indirect attack (Sadiq et al., 2021). We distinguish four types based on the information provided above:

Verbal active direct humiliation is when someone or something is verbally insulted, threatened, sarcastic, or openly ridiculed. ag20160: The article's photo really doesn't work well for it. He appears to be insane. / "The article's

picture doesn't really work in his favor... Sounds like the fool of madness. verbal active indirection (talking behind someone's back and slander); roro62: He and his kind only use charity to cover their asses, not their consciences. "Those who are similar to him have no morality and only practice charity." verbal passive direct—a sudden rejection of conversation with the other person; Thus, I'm bored! You don't understand me, so there's no point in carrying on with this conversation. / "I'm tired, and there's no point in talking to me anymore; you don't get me." Jar Jar Binks: Haha. Not a brain. Aloha! / Hehe. lacking intelligence. Goodbye. Verbal passive indirection is the refusal to provide an explanation for words and actions that have been unfairly directed towards someone. Jepetto: I won't offer any justifications. You are not concerned with it; it's just my opinion. I will not offer any justifications. This is just my viewpoint, and it has no bearing on you. Cmoi78: I've already said everything I wanted to say, so I won't be talking about this topic any more. Two categories of speech aggression can be distinguished based on its intensity: strong, abrupt, and direct use of foul language and libel when the aggressor or the target of the aggression does not disguise his goal to degrade and harm the other person's feelings; damn it, aquaserge! You are a complete moron. Who doesn't know the fundamentals? I suggest you avoid engaging in conversation with intelligent people if you find it difficult. / 'damn! Are you a simple-minded idiot who lacks basic knowledge? I suggest you refrain from interfering in intelligent people's conversations if you find this to be extremely challenging. Steve30: Her puppy dog expression in the picture makes you want to cast your vote for her! She truly makes me want to vote for her in the picture with her battered dog star! ..

Weak (erased): an act of hostility directed at the other person while utilizing courteous language (irony, for example). Pypatch: Is the hospital the one that has no regard for charitable giving? Saying "it's the other, not me" is far too simple! wisely / Is this a hospital that has no regard for charitable giving? Saying that it's not me and that it's someone else is just too simple! incredibly intelligent. Additionally, two categories are identified based on the degree of intentionality and awareness of speech aggression: deliberate and intentional aggression in speech. This kind is explained by the fact that the aggressor or the target of the aggression is someone who consciously sets out to offend or humiliate the other person; pedrocito: What nerve! He treats people like infants... a man who has no tolerance whatsoever for the complaints of his people or for democratic principles. / "How daring! He views people as though they were little children. a person who shows complete disregard for the grievances of his community and democratic principles.

Speech aggression that is either totally unconscious or partially conscious. This kind of aggressiveness is defined by an individual's lack of intention; for instance, when he uses words to assert himself or defend himself and unintentionally causes harm to others, he does so without considering the repercussions. Princeps: How's your mental health, um? The LR and socialists were the ones who insisted on maintenance. Macron made the error of caving in. / "Hmm, do you have any mental health issues?" Support was demanded by republicans and socialists. Macron made a mistake by caving in.

## 5. Discussion

There are several ways that verbal aggression can appear at the lexical-semantic and grammatical levels. The most frequent cases that we have recorded are as follows: Utilizing your nomination. It is more frequently applied to the same comment author when their viewpoints diverged and it wounded someone else's pride or sentiments. However, if the views are in agreement, they usually turn to "you," meaning that a polite you-nomination persists. @ echo16: the on-duty scholar who shares his expertise.

Broad generalization. There is a shift in the comments from talking about a particular case or individual to talking about the overall situation in the state. "English or a crazy ship... alas... alas... without a rudder and unattended....." is what Rene Fegueux says about France or the crazy ship. We can say that any display of aggression depends on the aggressor's objective as well as his emotional and mental states thanks to the study of the two types of speech aggression: "emotional," "defensive," or "impulsive," and "active," or "cold-blooded." The term "verbal aggression" refers to the use of words that are currently offensive, harsh, or inappropriate in the context of a conversation and that the other party finds unacceptable.

## 6. Conclusion

When negative emotions and feelings are present, verbal aggression takes the form of aggressive speech behavior, which is a small conscious activity that shows up as behaviors that a person has either personally experienced or learned from their surroundings. Consequently, a deliberate verbal assault constitutes an aggressive speech activity. It

is only after examining specific English communication circumstances (time, location, participant makeup, intentions, and relationship) that the message can be identified as verbal aggression. Initially, the following factors are used to explain the conditions: the speaker's bad intention (desire to offend the addressee, express his disapproval, etc.); the message's departure from the English communication form (cheeky and unruly behavior in an official setting; offensive ridicule to the opponent, etc.); and the addressee's negative response (resentment, hatred, disagreement, anger, etc.). Through our work, we were able to prove that verbal aggression, or speech, is one of the processes that directly impacts society. It can also affect people's emotional states, attitudes toward politicians, other citizens, and national events.

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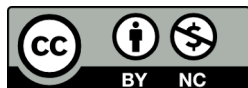
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