
External Conflict Management in *Dolittle* Movie

Dewa Gede Widiya Putra¹, I Gusti Agung Rwa Jayantini^{2*}, & Ida Bagus Gde Nova Winarta³

¹ Universitas Mahasaraswati Denpasar, Indonesia

² Universitas Mahasaraswati Denpasar, Indonesia

³ Universitas Mahasaraswati Denpasar, Indonesia

*Correspondence: agung_srijaayantini@unmas.ac.id

Abstract

The analysis of external conflict in this study used a movie as the subject, namely *Dolittle*. This study aims to know the kind of conflict by the source of the conflict faced by the main character in the *Dolittle* movie. The qualitative method was used to collect and analyze the data, which was achieved through observation. This study aims at (1) classifying the types of external conflict, (2) describing the source of the conflict, and (3) analyzing the conflict based on the conflict management strategy. The data were collected by conducting close observation of the movie. After analyzing the data, this study found that the main character faced two types of external conflict, namely, man against man and man against nature which the conflict arose dominantly caused by Limited resources. As for the conflict management strategy, the Avoidance strategy is commonly found in the main character resolving the conflict. The conclusion developed by the interpretation of the data is that it is from the kind of external conflict which is related to the source and the conflict management strategy that shows the dominant data used by the main character who encountered the conflict.

Keywords: *Movie, External Conflict, Main Character, Management Strategy*

1. Introduction

The creation of literary works, especially in English, has a value to entertain the audience, not only provide pleasure but should affect the readers in both excitement and essential to educate truthfully. Literature is an individual reflection of human life through feelings, thoughts, ideas, and faith expressed by the language (Wellek & Warren, 1968). It can be classified into several varieties, such as poetry, drama, and prose, categorized as fiction and non-fiction. The movie is one of the types of fictional literary work that also mean a represented story through motion pictures (Merriam Webster, 1928). The visual effects in movies are essential to connect with the audience's feelings to think what is happening is like

in the real world, the strength to focus one's mind into that space called impersonal magnetic resonance imaging (IMR) (Chambell & Shafto, 2015). A movie is structured by intrinsic elements of literature such as plot and character. That element is essential and cannot be separated because to run the sequence of the story needed an object, that is, character. Character is the people in narratives, and characterization is the author's presentation and development of characters' traits (Griffith, 2006: 66). The character's struggle or conflict causes the event inside the story to reach the goal.

Conflict is defined as a form of incompatibility in the interaction process that occurs either personally or in groups caused by disagreements from one participant to another that triggers differences of opinion to achieve self-satisfaction. The basis of occurrence of a conflict is based on the character's experience, not only expressed through verbal but also nonverbal such as in form face, body action that expressed opposition (Dietrich, 1953, p. 78; Lewis Coser, 1956, p. 214). Conflict as its classification is divided into two types: internal conflict and External conflict. However, external conflict can be distributed into several varieties: Man against Man, man against nature, and Man against society (William Kenney, 1966). The sources of conflict are the root of how the problem is triggered and why the conflict become happens. That is related to the character's action that causes friction with the other character's goal. The issues depend on the situational context of the character and environment. Several comparative studies of conflict were conducted to see the comparison and the analysis style to improve the theories of conflict analysis. Antara (2013) analyzed movie conflict by using movie scripts to search for the psychological aspect and the types of conflict. Artawan, Dewi, and Savitri (2020) elaborate that the external conflict of the movie relates to the characterization and psychological aspects. Wijayanti and Laba (2020) mention the analysis of the central character conflict by discourse perspective strategy in the novel. Pratama and Sinaga (2012) present the data analysis by investigating the types of external conflict involving the conflict management strategy of Thomas and Kilmann's theories.

The voyage of *Dolittle* (2020) is a movie sequel to the 1920s adaptation of Hugh Lofting's children's book series. This movie is a visual work directed by Stephen Gaghan released on January 17, 2020. The movie is set during Queen Victoria's reign in England, where Dr. Dolittle lives in the middle of a nature reserve with a sizeable queen-given house. To note, Dr. Dolittle can communicate with animals. After the departure of his lover, John confined himself for seven years in the house and was only accompanied by his animal friends, including Poly (Macaw), Jip (dog), Dab-Dab (swan), Chee-Chee (monkey), and many more.

This study focuses on how the main character handles his conflict along the journey through the conflict management strategy in *Dolittle's* (2020) movie, which tells and shows the main character's adventure during his search for the Eden tree. Dr. Dolittle was chosen as the subject of the study because his struggle to fight against the opposition perception of the other character was dominantly shown in this movie. Moreover, he must face a different kind of problem that triggers his goal in a conflict situational context. The escape strategy is either by argumentation or body movement, such as fighting or defending. Therefore, conflict theories were worth the core of analyzing this study because the data are classified through the kind of conflict or the types, sources, and the management strategy used by the main character. The purpose is to help people understand how and why the character inside literary



work can cope with the problem even in crucial situations, especially when facing an outside problem or external conflict.

2. Theoretical Base

2.1 External Conflict

External conflict is a character's struggle against outside factors that impact the character's self by forces that could be in the form of a fight, argument, disagreement, or the presence of opposition. The typical external conflict can be in terms of physical conflict that caused the clash of actions between the character and the environment and social conflict that caused related to the society between the character and the social relationship. It can be a conflict between man against man, man against nature, and man against society. (Kenney, 1966:19; Brady, 2010:1).

1) *Man against man*

The conflict occurs when the character struggle against another character. These struggles may be born from moral, religious, or social differences and maybe emotional, verbal, or psychical conflict. This conflict happened caused by the disagreement between two opponents of the parties.

2) *Man against nature*

The conflict of man against nature is an external struggle positioning the character against a natural force such as animal and natural disaster. The conflict allows most playwrights to explore the relationship between man and nature in one way, and it considers nature a hostile or destructive force.

3) *Man against society*

The conflict leading caused by the character's struggle against societal differences such as the idea, groups, practices, or the custom of other people. In case the conflict is potentially structured by the organization itself.

2.2 Source of Conflict

The source of the conflict is the basis of how the conflict has happened. Several factors triggered the thing that caused the conflict. There are four different issues as the source of conflict (Deetz & Stevenson, 1986: 207-208).

1) *Different opinions*

Many common conflicts are based on differing opinions. In simple, the case is rooted in the lacking of information by one party with the other parties.



2) *Incompatible roles*

This type arises whenever individual roles in interaction cannot be appropriately assumed because each requires a complementary role that the character is not playing.

3) *Incompatible goal*

This type is the accomplishment of the goal that arises when the group of the parties has someone who wants to change or want to do something different from the main focus goal.

4) *Limited resource*

Conflict happens because one of the parties has limited information about the valuable thing essential to reach the goal. That made the parties try to achieve the goal violently.

2.3 Conflict Management Strategy

The character uses a management strategy to resolve the conflict in the cooldown situation of the high-tension situation. These are essential to prevent oneself from the complication of the other problem bound by the central conflict that may arise. There are three issues of conflict management strategy as a basis of avoidance.

1) *Avoidance*

This style is a positive way of managing the conflict because the character is avoiding the core of the conflict in several ways by defending, distancing, and protecting oneself in encountering the conflict. Avoidance is also beneficial when the conflict is based on a short-lived situation and when it is much better to let the conflict pass rather than to be against it (Deetz & Stevenson, 1986: 212).

2) *Competition*

This management strategy refers to an instance where each individual in a conflict decides to win to get what they want. This situation is enhanced by good discussion and valuable answers, but they are damaged when people lose sight of the issue and only want to win (Deetz & Stevenson, 1986: 214).

3) *Pacification*

Pacification strategy is the style to block the discussion of a conflict issued by undermining rather than avoiding the conflicting discussion. Pacifying messages appear to deal with the problem but subvert the conflicting discussion (Deetz & Stevenson, 1986: 213).



3. Methods

This study applied a qualitative descriptive method. The data in this study were analyzed based on the theory of conflict. Several steps were done in this study to collect and arrange the data, it begin by downloading and watching the Dolittle movie, reading the scripted dialogue, arranging the chosen sequence into drafting data, and the last step was observing and taking notes to record the critical information related to the theory of conflict. That means the data descriptively presented is based on the leading theory. The collected data were written and classified based on the problems discussed. The steps in the analysis consist of first classifying the data according to their types. Second, analyze the conflict source and how the main character resolves the conflict. As the focus of this study, the data focused on analyzing the external conflict.

4. Discussion

The classification of the types of conflict can be seen that the main character faced the conflict of Man against man and Man against nature. As seen in the movie, from the beginning of the story external factor gives a lot of influence on occurrences of the conflict of the character. The table below explains the ratio of occurrence of the conflict encountered by the main character.

Table 1. Types of External Conflict Encountered by the Main Character

No	Main Character	Types of External Conflict	Occurrences of the conflict
1	Dr. Dolittle	Man, against man	3
		Man, against nature	3
	Total		6

External conflict is a conflict that occurs between a character to another character inside the story, it could be in form of disagreements, fights, or the appearance of opposition. External conflict is the conflict between a character with something outside himself. Man against man is a conflict that occurs when the characters struggle against another character. While Man against nature is an external struggle positioning the central character against an animal or force of nature (William Kenney, 1966: 19). This finding can indicate the conflict encountered by the main character as its source and the management strategy used to avoid the conflict. The explanation detail of the data elaborated on this study by the use of the storyline action and the scripted dialogue. This analysis is carried out by describing the background of the problems faced by the main characters before the conflict begins to make it easier for readers to understand the flow of analysis presented by the methods and theories that are applied to the data analysis.



1. Man against man

Data (1)

Dr. Dolittle between Lady Rose

The conflict occurred when Lady Rose came to visit Dr. Dolittle's residence. At that time, Dr. Dolittle was in a panic and chaos because his place was visited by a stranger who suddenly entered without permission. Those made Dr. Dolittle protect himself by taking refuge not to be touched by the outside world, even with Lady Rose. Lady rose's insistence on the order given to him to heal the Queen, he flatly refused because, as previously mentioned, Dr. Dolittle tried not to get out of his comfort zone. From this incident, conflict arose between the two. There was an argument between them where Lady Rose needed Dr. Dolittle to save the Queen, but on the other hand, Dr. Dolittle did not want to do that and would not interfere in people's business because he tried to be involved in medical matters anymore, especially for humans. From this situation, an essential role of one character must be played for the continuity of the story and the rules of the main plot itself. Based on the source of the conflict, it can be concluded that this conflict occurs due to **Incompatible roles**. This might be because the interaction of one individual party cannot occur, and the action that will be caused cannot be carried out, requiring another party's role. In line with that, the movie's sequel cannot continue if Dr. Dolittle does not come to help the Queen because of that Lady Rose comes as an envoy to send him. That means the role of Dr. Dolittle is essential.

In dealing with the conflict that occurred in Dr. Dolittle, several actions were taken to avoid the occurrence of aggression from conflicts that might arise. In the movie, Dr. Dolittle makes a refusal by kicking Lady Rose out of his house as a threat. One of the sentences uttered by him is used in identifying the management strategy of conflict used by the character.

Dr. DOLITTLE: Go... on. Go on and be gone! I don't care about anyone, anything anywhere anymore

From the sentence above, it can be concluded that the conflict management strategy used is **Pacification**. Pacification is a way to avoid conflict by blocking the other party's arguments. Dr. Dolittle interrupts Lady Rose's words and immediately restricts his argument in the conversation. This situation positioned one of the parties to survive by protecting their argument from the gaps that are obtained to break the other party's argument so that the relationship of one individual becomes debilitated by the incapacity of decision-making.

Data (2)

Dr. Dolittle between Blair Mudfly

In this section, the conflict occurs when Dr. Dolittle explores the ocean to find the island that holds the map of the Eden Tree, namely Monteverde, which is ruled by King Rassouli. On his voyage, Dr. Dolittle and his entire crew were surprised to know that was a ship following them. After stating that the ship is an enemy, Dr. Dolittle prepares to run away to keep his ship being chased. The conflict that happens in this scene does not occur directly between



characters to other characters or face to face but from the actions caused by the opposition's presence. Blair's presence following Dr. Dolittle's journey becomes a threat because he wants to thwart Dr. Dolittle's mission. Besides that, he is also anxious about an Eden Treemap. The aggression from the conflict begins to peak when Blair fires a cannon at Dolittle's ship, causing a commotion on Dolittle's side. This method is one way to subdue the other party by making destruction for the sake of personal desire. Based on the conflict, the roots come from **Limited resources**. Limited resources are when one party has limited information from another party with value. Those cause a desire to seize for the benefit of the ownership of others. Blair tries to chase the escape from Dr. Dolittle because he believes that the only person who knows where the location of the Eden Tree is is Dr. Dolittle. In the movie, it is told that Dr. Dolittle's wife created the map. From this assumption, Blair has taken over by all means.



Figure 1. Dr. Dolittle installs a hasp to Humphrey

On the other hand, the conditions experienced by Dr. Dolittle in the conflict were depressing because he realized that his ship could not match the speed of Blair's ship. To avoid chaos and to avoid conflict, he calls his whale friend, Humphrey, to pull his ship away from Blair's surveillance. Dr. Dolittle does it is included in the conflict management strategy, namely **Avoidance**. Avoidance is a passive way to overcome a conflict by repelling an unfavorable situation that might arise by taking advantage of the situation in the context. Dr. Dolittle tried to avoid Blair's attack because his ship was unarmed, and his crew had not been able to repel Blair's cannon attacks. Therefore, he summoned the whale to be used like a horse pulling a chariot.

Data (3)

Dr. Dolittle between King Rassouli

In this section, the conflict occurs when the main character commits a violent act. When Dr. Dolittle arrived in Monteverde, with some of his crew, run a sneaked plan into the kingdom to steal the map from the Eden Tree. King Rassouli is the father of Dr. Dolittle's wife, and it can be said that the King is his father-in-law. The action carried out through the kingdom was



a way to get the map. Dr. Dolittle disguised himself to hide his identity from the citizen and the kingdom's soldiers because he had become a fugitive for what he had done in the past, which made the King disappointed and angry until vengeance on him. In action, Dr. Dolittle was accompanied by Stubbins, who was used as a tool to retrieve the map from the secret royal room. Due to the carelessness of one of his crew, Dr. Dolittle was arrested and held in prison.

The conflict occurs slowly until it finally breaks out due to personal aggression from one of the parties peaking. King Rassouli explained to him that he had made a mistake by daring to snatch a precious treasure from his daughter, and by that violent action, the King wanted to kill him. King Rassouli's actions rendered Dr. Dolittle helpless due to the unfortunate situation. From that problem of conflict, the source is **limited resources**. As previously explained, limited resources come from personal variables or the personal desires to achieve a valuable thing. In fact, in that sequence, Dr. Dolittle does not have the map, so it requires him to commit theft for the item to complete the journey. When one of the parties does not have sufficient information to fulfill his goal, they will do whatever it takes to achieve the desires without caring about the effect. Dr. Dolittle did not think about the consequences he would receive by doing a violent act, so he dared to infiltrate the kingdom at the scarifying of himself.

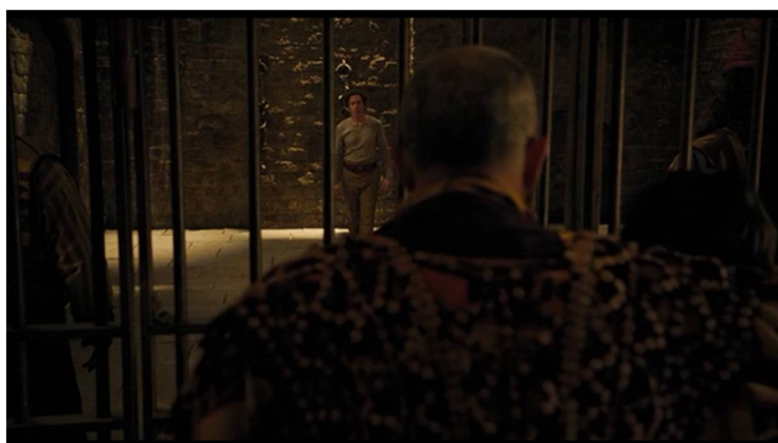


Figure 2. The distance between Dr. Dolittle and King Rassouli

Because the situational context faced by Dr. Dolittle was under pressure, he did not fight back and resigned himself to the situation. In addition, by being in prison, he was unable to find a way out of the conflict he encountered, thus making him defend against the threat of King Rassouli. The conflict management strategy used by Dr. Dolittle is **Avoidance**. He tries to avoid any clashes by putting himself at a distance from King Rassouli. Even though he is in prison, he remains out of sight of other characters. Avoidance to avoid a conflict not only by staying away but also by taking advantage of the time to be in a defensive position until the tension of the conflict at hand begins to decrease or disappear.



2. Man against Nature

Data (4)

Dr. Dolittle between Poly (the bird)

In this part, the conflict occurs between Dr. Dolittle and his bird, namely Poly. Conflict can occur because, in this movie, Dr. Dolittle is said to speak and understand the language of animals. After all, his profession is a veterinarian, and because of that, he gains the ability to talk with animals. When Stubbins visited his house and was followed by Lady Rose there, Dr. Dolittle seemed to panic because of his fear of the outside world. Besides that, Poly tries to convince the Doctor to accept someone as his guest; Poly wants Dr. Dolittle to get out of his house and carry on with his usual activities without confinement. After several incidents, Dr. Dolittle accepted them in, and at that moment, they saw the Dr treating the squirrel. In that scene, Lady Rose had said to Stubbins that if Dr. Dolittle did not help the Queen, his place would be withdrawn by the Royals. Can be seen in the sentence below

LADY ROSE: Her Majesty has designated this land in nature preserve. **If she dies, the deed will be owned by the Treasury, and this place goes away.**

The dialogue relates to the conflict that occurred in data 1 because the conflict that occurred in this data was a continuation of the previous conflict because conflict did not occur only with one problem but could be tied to other problems depending on the tension generated by the initial conflict. This dialogue explains that the assets owned by the Doctor are derived from the policies given by the Queen. In the next scene, a conflict occurs when Poly wants to convince Dolittle to help the Queen because Poly had previously heard a conversation with Lady Rose. However, Doctor Dolittle was adamant about his position and denied that the ownership of the place was purely his, but it was a gift from the kingdom. Based on the incident, the conflict stems from **Differing Opinions**. A differing opinion is a condition where one of the parties in a discussion has a different argument about the focus of the problem that causes friction in the interaction. This conflict positions Poly as the opposition party against Dr. Dolittle's argument. It can be explained because Poly knows the truth about the assets of the place, while Dr. Dolittle only thinks based on his truth.

The conflict strategy used by the main character in overcoming the conflict is **Competition**. Competition is a unique way to fight against other parties that decide to win. The actions taken by Dr. Dolittle show that he wants to strike back at Poly's opinion because the belief in the truth that is in him is great, but Poly directly breaks it so that the Doctor is cornered. This strategy is the same as a win-win solution because in this management, even though the party is using Competition to win, there is a note that they "wish" want to win. The risk arising from this strategy is that one party will lose, and the other will win. Other conflicts occur between these two characters whose problems are the same as in this explanation but only in different settings, with sources and strategic management categorized as the same.



Data (5)

Dr. Dolittle between Barry (the tiger)

This conflict is a continuation of the conflict that occurred in Data 2 after the problems faced by Dr. Dolittle with King Rassouli. After the conflict subsided, Dr. Dolittle was shocked by the arrival of a tiger because, in the movie, the place used to imprison the doctor is connected to Barry's cage. With Dr. Dolittle's chained hands-on guard for the actions that would follow his arrival. Barry is an old doctor-patient, but his treatment is interrupted because he is distracted by the king's daughter. With Dr. Dolittle's return, Barry wants to avenge his old days of neglecting him. Dr. Dolittle, in that position, tries to come to terms with passive actions as if it were meeting an old friend to be in a position to be safe from Barry. However, the plan does not work out as expected, making Barry even angrier and threatening him. Barry carried out several attacks to weaken Dr. Dolittle, and immediately, the doctor tried to dodge. This conflict occurs slowly with the arrival of Barry at the beginning of the conflict. The unbalanced argument from Dr. Dolittle, which irritates Barry begins to raise the tension of the conflict until Barry decides to eat the doctor because of his anger.

BARRY: I will never be good enough. **Unless I eat you.** Because every mother wants their son to grow up and eat a doctor

The sentence above explains that Barry has a goal that he has been waiting for, and when the opportunity comes, it is used in every way possible to achieve it because a conflict occurs. After all, one of the parties wants to achieve a personal goal. The source of this conflict can be included in the **Incompatible goals**. Incompatible goals are raising a conflict due to a change in the shared goals of one party that makes the other party stumble in achieving the primary goal. The movie does not show how Dr. Dolittle ignores Barry's previous treatment, but it can be explained by Dr. Dolittle's sentence below.

Dr. DOLITTLE: I'm back now. **Perhaps we should just pick up where we left?**

That explains that the cause of the conflict occurred because the goals of the two characters deviated from the actions taken by Dr. Dolittle, which made the relationship between the two of them disharmony. In overcoming this conflict, Dr. Dolittle uses **Avoidance** strategies. Barry suddenly attacked Dr. Dolittle several times in the dispute but was avoided because Dr. Dolittle knew when Barry would attack. This is the bonding that resulted from their past knowing each other. Avoiding the actions taken will prevent Dr. Dolittle from threatening an escalation of conflict. It will make the cornering party feel tired of the attack and decrease the tension.

Data (6)

Dr. Dolittle between The Dragon

Conflicts that occur in this data are carried out by two parties, making the other party neutrally involved in a conflict. When Dr. Dolittle arrived on the island of Eden to look for the fruit of the tree, Blair caught him and arrested the entire crew of the ship, which made Dr.



Dolittle unable to act. Blair tries to force Dr. Dolittle to show him where the tree is, but the doctor does not tell him, making Blair furious. He vented his anger, which caused the island guards to wake up. As a result of this incident, the Dragon was angry and attacked the people. This is what means a conflict can spread due to the tension generated being too high so that it makes the parties feel friction and are triggered by the action that is generated. The Dragon makes the two groups split up, and on the other hand, Dr. Dolittle tries to gather his entire crew to escape. Because the Dragon's rampage was too loud, one of his crew was crushed by the Dragon's tail, which made Dr. Dolittle not think twice to attack to save his friend, but Dr. Dolittle was caught.

The description above explained that the conflict comes from **Limited resources**. In this incident, Blair and Dr. Dolittle's group was to look for the fruit of Eden because there was no clue to reach their goal finally. There was a conflict that led to chaos. Dr. Dolittle would not have experienced a conflict if he had not come to the island, but he wanted to complete his mission based on survival to defend his home. Therefore Dr. Dolittle must full-filled the task assigned to him to save the life of the Queen. When the Dragon captured Dr. Dolittle, he could not put up a fight due to the imbalance of one of the parties, where Dr. Dolittle was in human form while the Dragon had a size and strength far more significant than what the doctor said could do. At a moment when he was about to be burst by a fire, Dr. Dolittle tried to talk, and instantly, the Dragon was fixated on him and interacted.

Dr. DOLITTLE: But I do. **I had it as well**. The kind that doesn't come from a bullet or a blade, but cuts much deeper. And now in every moment, **in every movement, you feel that pain again. It's hard to carry on.....when you've lost the one you love**"

The dialogue above is an interruption made by Dr. Dolittle to touch it internally through the feeling. It is a **Pacification** strategy where Dr. Dolittle tries to bring the Dragon's mindset to believe him that he is not meant to bother him. on the other hand, pacifying messages appear to deal with the problem but subvert the conflict discussion. Pre-plan the way to deal with the conflict is how Dr. Dolittle does it by positioning himself in a positive scope to expand the complexity of the issues.

5. Conclusion

Based on the finding of this study, the research of conflict of the main character analysis in Dolittle's movie is in terms of the external conflict. This study concludes several points, as already mentioned in the aim of the study. First, the types of external conflict encountered by the main character. Second, the source of conflict is the root of the reason for the conflict occurred. Third, the use of conflict management strategy by the main character to cope with the problem he faced. The main character in this movie struggles with many problems that caused a conflict to arise: Man against man and man against nature. As the story is told inside the movie, the main character's journey becomes the core of the development of the conflict,



especially the external factor. By the use of theories of conflict, the researcher has found the data of analysis to be explained according to the focus of this study.

The conflict encountered by the main character is mainly between the other characters. Based on the previous analysis, the conflict is primarily rooted in Limited resources. Referring to the genre of the film is an adventure related to the conflict that is built to bring up new events in the storyline. Dr. Dolittle completes his mission and requires him to carry out a quest as a step in his adventure. Indirectly, one must plunge into a conflict from the desire to fulfill that personal desire. The explanation describes the background before a conflict and continues with a conflict management strategy. As mentioned in the third research question, it was found that the strategy most frequently used by the main character was Avoidance. It is an essential step in resolving conflicts by finding a safe position and away from the involvement of conflicts that can escalate at any time. With this result, the researcher concludes that Dr. Dolittle has a way of resolving a conflict based on the situational context that he encounters, from utilizing the surrounding environment or dealing with other goals to decreasing the tension of the conflict.

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