

# Essay on attribution theory and framing effect in the movie shrek

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Attribution theory believes that people find explanations behind a person's behavior. According to Fritz Heider, the father of attribution theory, these attributions could be internal which have to do with the person's attitude, character or personality, or external wherein the behavior is influenced by the situation (qtd. in "Attribution Theory"). In the movie Shrek released in 2001, Shrek concluded upon meeting Donkey for the first time that the ass talked a lot because it was his personality. Similarly, in the scene where Shrek admitted to Donkey that the reason why he wanted to be alone was because of the negative reactions he always got when others see him, he was attributing the other creatures' behaviors to their character. Both scenes exhibit internal attribution. However, when Shrek said mean things to Donkey after Fiona accepted Lord Farquaad's marriage proposal, Donkey attributed this reaction to the situation, wherein Shrek was hurt because he liked Fiona. This is an example of external attribution.

Framing effect is how people react differently when given a particular choice which may represent a loss or a gain. A positive frame pushes people to avoid risk while negative frame drives them to take risks (Sher & McKenzie). This was exhibited in the scene where Donkey was being sold by the old woman who owned him, and the guard told her that she would be getting 10 shillings if Donkey could really talk. The old woman fervently convinced the guard that Donkey could really talk. Similarly, when Lord Farquaad chose Shrek to save Princess Fiona, Farquaad offered to give the swamp back to sway Shrek to accept the task. Negative frame was presented when Shrek asked who among the fairytale creatures could bring him to Farquaad. As everyone was afraid of him, nobody volunteered except Donkey.

## **Works Cited**

“ Attribution Theory.” University of Twente. n. d. Web.

Sher, Shlomi & R. M. McKenzie. “ Framing Effects.” forthcoming. n. pag. Web.