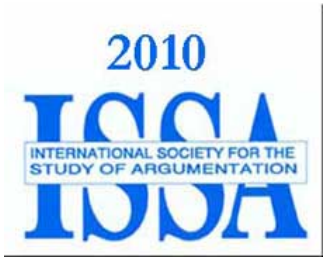
ISSA Proceedings 2010 – Iconicity In Visual And Verbal Argumentation



1. Functional equivalency

Imagine a drawing of a boat that clearly resembles the Titanic, but its bow has the shape of Bill Clinton's face. The bow has just hit an iceberg. The iceberg is now sinking. It is not difficult to imagine this drawing as a cartoon. Does this cartoon represent argumentation?

Answering this question requires an argumentative reconstruction. Just as it requires an argumentative reconstruction to determine whether the verbal text *"If Clinton were the Titanic, the iceberg would sink"* represents argumentation. It was actually this verbal text that circulated in Washington during February 1998 (Fauconnier & Turner 2002, 221). I do not know whether the cartoon has ever been drawn and published.

The reconstruction processes that are required to determine whether either the cartoon or the joke represent argumentation develop in parallel**[i]**. Generally speaking both texts are just a sharp and funny way to express the opinion that Bill Clinton survives incidents that cost others – even those who are held to be unassailable – their position. In a specific context however it may be plausible to reconstruct a move in an argumentative discussion on the basis of this expressed opinion. In that case the texts can be said to represent this move**[ii]**. The expression fills a slot in a reconstructed discussion structure.

Suppose that shortly after January 17, 1998 – the moment that the world heard about the Lewinski affair – a Washington in-crowd democrat makes the joke to his or her colleagues or publishes the cartoon on the bulletin board. Given that context one can propose that by performing the communicative act this person takes up a role in a discussion, even though almost all elements of the discussion structure stay implicit. These elements can stay implicit because the context sufficiently indicates the discussion structure.

The following is a possible reconstruction. The person who makes the joke or

publishes the cartoon projects a protagonist of a standpoint: *Bill Clinton is going to lose his position*, based on the argument that *Bill Clinton is involved in the Lewinski scandal*. A formulation of a minimally implied argument can be: *If Clinton gets involved in a scandal as the Lewinski scandal, then that will cost him his position*. Because more specific information is lacking one may assume that this implied argument rests on the more general argument: *Anyone who gets involved in a scandal such as the Lewinski scandal loses his or her position*. The person who makes the joke or publishes the cartoon fulfils the role of the antagonist. The antagonist questions the relevance of this more general argument, therefore questions the tenability of the minimally implied argument and therefore questions the standpoint. One may even say that he takes a standpoint himself, making the discussion a mixed discussion. The alternative that he expresses suggests a largely implicit but clear argumentation: *Bill Clinton will not lose his position, because it is Bill Clinton who is involved in the Lewinski scandal. If it is Bill Clinton who is involved in the Lewinski scandal, this will not cost him his position*, because *Bill Clinton survives incidents that cost others – even those who were hold unassailable – their position* = the joke or the cartoon *(Figure 1)* **[iii]**.

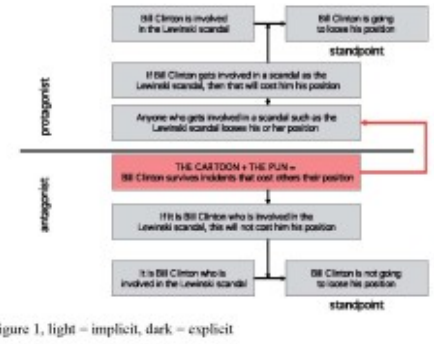


Figure 1, light = implicit, dark = explicit

Figure 1

We can conclude from this example that an image can be interpreted as the expression of an element of a complex speech act argumentation**[iv]**. From the realm of verbal argumentation it is clear that complex argumentative episodes can be represented with minimal textual means and that in many cases no explicit argumentative indication is added**[v]**. So we should not be surprised that an image can express information that leads to the reconstruction of a rather complex episode in an argumentative discussion. Images may not be suitable to express either general principles or illocutionary functions**[vi]**. However, to

represent one or more moves in an argumentative discussion does not require that the warrant is explicitly expressed, nor that information is explicitly marked as a standpoint or as an argument. This obviously limits the argumentative use of purely non verbal images to specific contexts from which its argumentative function can be understood. Contexts are not always that informative. That is why we usually see non verbal images combined with verbal texts. Often the image presents information that functions as a set of data or as a backing, while the warrant or the standpoint are verbally expressed.

So when we compare a visual text (here the cartoon) with a functionally equivalent verbal text (here the pun), both texts call upon a similar body of knowledge in the reconstruction of the represented argumentation. This notion of (functional) *equivalency* is not a well defined theoretical concept. I use it to indicate a heuristic method to compare visual text fragments with verbal counterparts that express an equivalent position in the argumentative reconstruction**[vii]**. The idea is that maximizing the relevant similarities makes significant differences visible.

2. Iconicity in visual texts

In the next example we touch upon such a theoretically interesting difference. This difference concerns the division of labor between the narrator and the interpreter. Prototypically the narrator in a visual text presents a narrative in its iconic, mimetic value, while the narrator in a verbal text already embeds the narrative in a context of experiences (indexical values: if you observe A, this indicates B) and cultural habits (symbolic values: A is normal, understandable or good, B is marked, strange, not preferred, and so on)**[viii]**. This difference in what the (abstract) narrator is doing is reflected in a difference of the work to be done by the interpreter.

In an almost entirely non verbal advertisement clip we see a somewhat elder boxer, thickset but well-trained. He is initially knocked down by an aggressive looking, tattooed, skinhead opponent. While the referee is counting him out we see the boxer in flash-backs: as a nice little child, as a hard training adolescent, as the groom, as a family man, loved by his wife, his child, his coach, loved by a large crowd of friends. Then we see him, roused by his coach, muster up his courage and get up just in time to carry on the fight. A slogan appears: “Nu se termină acum. Acum începe” (Romanian for “It does not end now. Now it starts”). Finally we see the logo and name of the CEC Bank, with the words: Banca nostră.

picture 1, stills from first 20 shots

Still One

picture 2, stills from the last 20 shots

Still Two

I first present an argumentative interpretation of the visual text that is obvious to at least one Romanian reader**[ix]**.

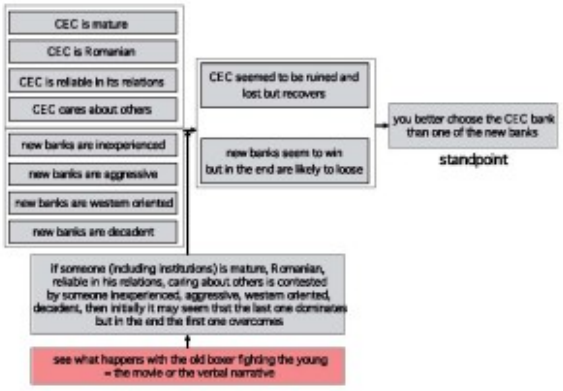


Figure 2

Figure 2

The implicit standpoint is (based on the ratio of this advertisement): *You better choose the CEC bank than one of the new banks*. The metaphor – as soon as recognized at the end of the movie – foregrounds a series of characteristics from both boxers and their story that can be meaningfully projected on CEC bank and competing financial institutions. From the boxers: *CEC is mature*, *CEC is Romanian*, *CEC is reliable in his relations*, *CEC cares about others*. *The new coming banks are inexperienced, aggressive, western oriented and decadent*. From the story is projected: *CEC seemed to be ruined and lost but recovers*. *The new banks seem to win but in the end are likely to loose*. An argumentative relation based on causality**[x]** is suggested between the first and the second projection. The implied argument is: *if someone (including institutions) is mature, Romanian, reliable in his relations, caring about others is contested by someone inexperienced, aggressive, western oriented and decadent, then initially it may seem that the last one dominates, but in the end the first one overcomes*. This implied argument is backed by the pictorial part of the clip.

This argumentative reconstruction is complicated and one can surely argue about the details. However, the way the metaphor is transformed into an argument based on analogy is familiar**[xi]**. In the reconstruction a set of relevant correspondences between the boxing match and the competition between banks is identified and successively reconstructed as an orderly set of propositions.

We can however also reconstruct an argumentation as in figure 3.

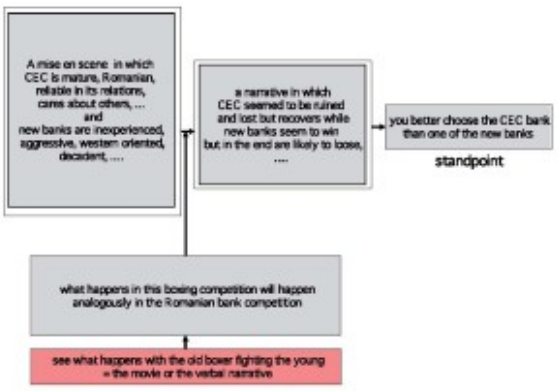


Figure 3

Figure 3

In this reconstruction the visual text has not been interpreted as an orderly set of propositions. The text is placed in an argument structure in its mimetic quality. In Peircean terminology this means that its iconic value is dominant. What is shown is (as yet) is dominant over what the discourse voice or the interpreter attaches to it on the basis of his or her experiences (index in Peirce's terminology) and is dominant over the cultural values that the discourse voice or interpreter attach to it (symbol in Peirce's terminology, diegesis in a narrative terminology). One may say that the work to transform its information into an orderly set of proposition still has to be done.

In both reconstructions the expressed information is perceived as a narrative**[xii]** that functions argumentatively as a backing. But it seems evident that the second reconstruction in figure 3 stays much closer to the iconic visual text than the first reconstruction in figure 2. However, when we try to construct a functionally equivalent verbal version of the visual text, we experience that it is difficult or at least feels rather artificial to construct a similar iconic verbal narrative, while the construction of a version with more attributive and evaluative propositions that is closer to the reconstruction in figure 2 appears as much more natural. We repeat the initial verbal description, now marking attributive and evaluative elements:

We see a somewhat elder boxer, thickset *but* well-trained. He is initially knocked down by an aggressive looking, tattooed, skinhead opponent. While the referee is counting him out we see the boxer in flash-backs: as a nice little child, as a hard training adolescent, as the groom, as a family man, loved by his wife, his child, his coach, loved by a large crowd of friends. Then we see him, roused *by* his coach, muster up his courage and get up just in time to carry on the fight.

This difference between the visual and the verbal mode is not coincidental. In a prototypical visual text the spectator needs to select the relevant information out of a sequence of shots to construct a coherent story from the text. It is also the spectator who forms hypotheses about explanations, who attributes motives and who evaluates. In a prototypical verbal text the narrator selects, explains, attributes and evaluates explicitly. This means however that the reader who wants to construct a more elaborated mental image of the story has to fill in the mise en scene. The reader has to imagine what the dynamics of a contrast 'thickset – aggressive' look like, what brings the narrator to a qualification family man, how the supportive friends actually behave and how they look, and so on.

In the verbal text many interpretations and evaluations are cut-and-dried presented already by the narrator. The narrator informs the reader that these people are friends and that what they do is supportive. In the visual text the spectator has to form these interpretative attributions and evaluations himself. The visual text is relatively more iconic, the verbal text is relatively more 'symbolic', embedded already in a conventional system of values and interpretations.**[xiii]**

This is a relative distinction. Visual texts have a powerful narrator too, in the cinematographic choices, in the editing, in the construction of the mise-en-scene, in the dynamics of the music. This narrator guides the selection of what is relevant for the story and can strongly suggest attributions and evaluations**[xiv]**. But in the visual text far less descriptive elaboration and far more attribution and evaluation is left to the spectator.

In a schema:

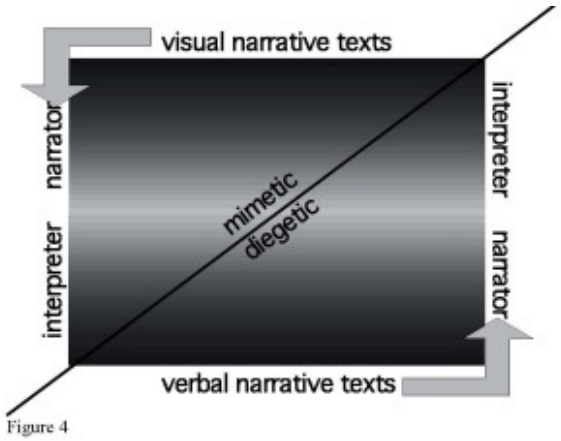


Figure 4

3. Iconicity in verbal texts

When the verbal mode is taken as the unique mode to express argumentation, it is plausible to associate argumentation with a rather directly expressed propositionality, because prototypically the narrator of a verbal text confronts the reader with an ordered set of logically connected propositions. The visual mode is then somewhat 'inferior', because now the spectator has to interpret the text as such a set of propositions. The interpreter has to transform an iconic reconstruction (figure 3) into a propositional reconstruction (figure 2), an unwished complication in the reconstruction process.

However if the verbal as well as the visual mode are both taken seriously as ways to express argumentation, we can bring up the following question: if a verbal text expresses a structure close to the propositional analysis (as in figure 2), does that not imply that now the interpreter needs to reconstruct its iconic values (as in figure 3)? If that is the case then there is at least on this aspect no reason to see the visual mode as a derivative. So the question is: is the narrative in its iconic value relevant for an argumentative reconstruction, or is it just an intermediate step? The answer seems to be that at least in some arguments the reconstruction of the text in its iconic value is far from just an intermediate step as the next example illustrates.

A short movie that was made by the defending counsel shows the suspect, a habitual offender, a year after the start of his trial **[xv]**. We see him as a member of a Christian community. The movie shows his life in the community and shows him explaining his motives and intentions.

Clearly the movie is meant to fill the 'data – slot' in an argument that supports a standpoint that a specific sanction should be imposed on this accused, namely a sanction that supports his will to improve. However, as in the CEC example, it is the interpreter who has to distil a set of ordered propositions from the movie: the relevant facts, leading to the relevant evaluations and attributions of motives. In other words when we stay close to the text a reconstruction of the narrative in its iconic value is adequate and this reconstruction needs to be transformed into a propositional one by the interpreter.

But now look at this almost literally translated part from a Dutch judicial decision. This is a verbal text in which the judge presents a set of ordered propositions. It seems functionally equivalent to the movie; it also presents information that is meant to support the standpoint that a specific sanction is appropriate.

Accused has terrorized his family for a large number of years. He has used disproportionate violence as an instrument to maintain authority in the family. Among other things he has repeatedly assaulted family members – regardless of their age – by beating them, also with a belt, and kicking them. He also has bitten his wife during a scrimmage which resulted in a bite wound. During a fight he has kicked his son, hit him and gave him a hard butt of the head. […] Furthermore, the accused has hit his daughter once with a tool on her fingers while her fingers rested on the table. On another occasion he has twisted her wrist and thereupon

hit it with a hammer. This broke her wrist. […] Finally the accused has threatened his family repeatedly with arson. To enforce his threats he stored jerrycans with petrol in the basement. During such a threat he sometimes locked the door. Never his wife and children knew whether he was going to put his threats into effect. Because of this he has caused his family terrifying moments for a long period. […] Considering the above the court deems a […] detention of the following length appropriate**[xvi].**

Interpreted as a set of related propositions we may reconstruct an argumentation as in figure 4.

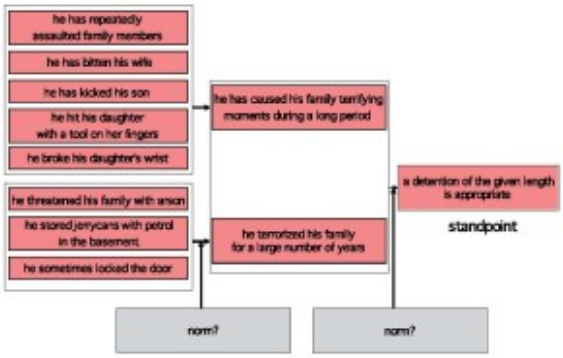


Figure 5

Figure 5

The position of the first and the one but last utterance is significant. Evidently there is not an a priori established norm that guides the inference from the facts to these utterances. That may be surprising in a carefully written formal decision. It is however less surprising if we search for and discover the iconicity of this text, which is a narrative schema. In that case we can reconstruct the text as in figure 6.

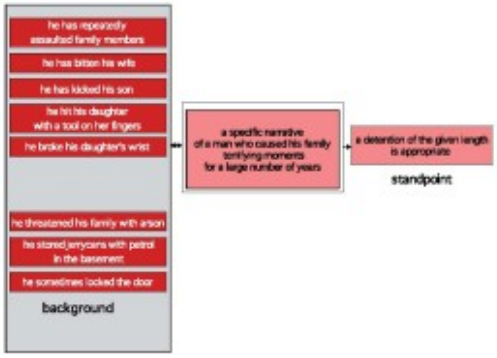


Figure 6, darkest color indicates foregrounded elements that imply a background, to inferred

Figure 6

In this reconstruction we read the expressed descriptions as a plot, a foreground that evokes a background story filling in a large number of years with a continuous process of terror and suppression. The interpreter has to fill in this background. That does not mean that he has to make up all kind of other, not formally proven incidents. It means that he has to 'read' the propositions as a story that covers and characterizes a series of years.

This example illustrates that both stages in the argumentative reconstruction need to be recognized as relevant stages. From a formal legal point of view the list of propositions is relevant: each of them needs to follow from the presented evidence. This implies that a movie as presented by Jaap Bakker has to be transformed into a set of propositions as soon as formal legal proof of elements of it is required. However the iconic narrative expressed in Jaap Bakker's visual text and implied in the background in this judge's verbal text is relevant too. It is clear that the utterances in the text of the judge are meant to represent a story that is much more than only the 'foregrounded' events. That implies that the utterances are not only a set of propositions, related to the standpoint by an implicit argument that has a form "If proposition 1 to N, then it is reasonable to hold standpoint S". The utterances are at the same moment a plot that should evoke a story that relates to the standpoint by an implicit argument that has a form "On the basis of this story it is reasonable to hold standpoint S".

NOTES

[i] In line with the pragma-dialectical approach I understand argumentation as a complex illocutionary act that can be reconstructed as a move in a critical discussion. I use the terms (mixed) discussion, protagonist, antagonist, standpoint, argument, implicit argument in accordance with Van Eemeren &

Grootendorst 2004, although the concept of a propositional content in their definition of the illocutionary act may turn out to require reconsideration.

[ii] Throughout this paper I intend to distinguish carefully between *to represent* and *to express*. We can argue that expressed elements in a context lead to a representation that is more than what is expressed.

[iii] Evidently the joke as well as the cartoon is able to convey a much richer meaning. That is the brilliance of them. The specific use of the Titanic for example can bring into mind the self-confidence, tending to arrogance, of the engineers and constructors, which can be projected on Clinton, and so on. This regards the visual as well as the verbal.

[iv] Whether a (solely) visual text can represent (or express?) argumentation leads to a sometimes heated debate. In the reference list I sum up some of the contributions. Often the question seems to be whether a visual text *is* an argument. Blair formulates: "That any of these paintings might have been an argument in other circumstances does not make it an argument as it stands" (1996, 28), strongly referring to intentions of the historical creator of the visual text, in casu Picasso. Such a position seems inadequate to me. (a) A verbal or visual text can be called upon by another than the historical author. (b) A function as an argument is first of all a matter of an (if one wants externalized and socialized) interpretation. Of course this may lead to a debate similar to that in narrative theories. Are there any textual features that characterize a text *inherently* as a narrative text? Ryan for example (2004, 9v) tries to make a distinction between being a narrative and possessing narrativity. To require that a text has to bear inherently in its form the argumentative function before calling it an argument seems in the verbal as well as in the visual domain an untenable position to me. (c) The term argument can refer to a 'complete' argumentative move in a discussion (neglecting the fact here that often it is not so easy to determine when a move is complete) or to an element from which (maybe in connection with other expressed elements) one can reconstruct such a complete move. This possibility seems to be neglected by some of advocates as well as the opponents.

[v] In Van den Hoven 2007 an argumentative analysis of two full newspaper articles shows that in more than 50% of all relations there is no explicit indication.

[vi] This claim is contested in Groarke (2002, 2007) as well as in Chryslee c.s. (1996), but strongly supported in Johnson 2003.

[vii] This method seems important to cleanse the debate whether and how visual

texts that represent argumentation differ from verbal texts. To search for functional equivalence become even more important now that advocates as well as the opponents show such a strong preference for complicated visuals (cartoons, metaphorical texts in complicated advertisements, and so on). These require complicated analyses as in my first two examples. This suggests that visual texts – if they represent argumentation at all – do this in a very complicated way, so different from Socrates mortality that follows from his being human. If one constructs a verbal equivalent text, the analyses required by the verbal texts turn out to be just as complicated.

[viii] See for this interpretation of Peircean semiotics Van den Hoven 2009, and more specific Van den Hoven 2010.

[ix] Camelia-Mihaela Cmeciu presented me the outline of the interpretation that I use as the basis for the argumentative reconstruction (Cmeciu & Van den Hoven 2009).

[x] Causality is used here in a broad meaning, covering relations that run form cause to effect as well as from effect (as a symptom) to cause, and in the socio-physical domain as well as in the pragma-epistemic domain.

[xi] Whether the warrant should be formulated in a generalized form as I did here can be debated. But that regards the theoretical debate whether the argument on analogy requires this kind of generalization.

[xii] From a cognitive perspective we define a narrative text as a discourse (the plot) that invites the interpreter to construct a in some sense coherent series of events in their temporal sequence (a story).

[xiii] I prefer to use a terminology that refers to Peircean semiotics. There are two reasons. The first one is that the pair mimetic/diegetic strongly suggests an opposition, which is untenable. A more important reason is that Peircean semiotics can model the process in which a sign develops from its iconic value through its indexical value (the empirically motivated experiences) to its symbolic value (the habits attached). Compare Van den Hoven 2010. The idea that for example moving pictures are purely mimetic and lack a narrator is untenable. Bordwell & Thompson (2004) offer an elaborated neo-formalist analysis of these elements of a film narrator.

[xiv] Also compare the first of "five elements for developing a claim from a moving picture" that Alcolea-Banegas (2009) distinguishes.

[xv] Made by Jaap Bakker: see http://www.jaapbakker.com/

[xvi] An almost literal translation from LJN: AD5930, Rechtbank 's-Gravenhage 09/900408-01, November 16 2001.

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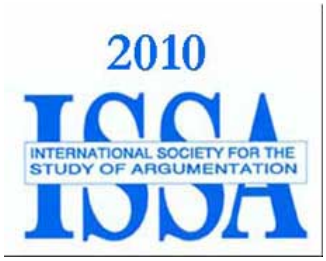
ISSA Proceedings 2010 – Evaluating Pragmatic Argumentation: A Pragma-Dialectical Perspective



1. Introduction

Pragmatic argumentation – also referred to as 'instrumental argumentation,' 'means-end argumentation,' 'argumentation from consequences'– is generally defined as argumentation that seeks to support a recommendation (not) to carry out an action by highlighting its (un)desirable consequences (see, e.g., Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca 1969; Schellens 1987; van Eemeren & Grootendorst 1992; Walton, Reed & Macagno, 2008). Pragmatic arguments are fairly common in everyday discourse and particularly in discussions over public policy. Cases can be identified in the print media on a regular basis. For example, by the end of June 2010, the U.K.'s Chancellor George Osborne was defending the Lib-Con budget as a means to "boost confidence in the economy" ("Budget: Osborne Defends 'Decisive' Plan on Tax and Cuts", 2010); Israel's defence minister, Edhud Barak, was attacking the timing of plans to demolish 22 Palestinians homes in East Jerusalem as being "prejudicial to hopes for continuing peace talks" ("Ehud Barak Attacks Timing of Plans to Demolish 22 Palestinian Homes", 2010); and major oil companies were attacking the US government's ban on deepwater drilling as a policy that was "destroying an entire ecosystem of businesses" and "resulting in tens of thousands of job losses" ("US Gulf Oil Drilling Ban Is Destroying 'Ecosystem of Businesses'", 2010).

In this paper I propose an instrument to evaluate pragmatic argumentation. My theoretical framework is the pragma-dialectical theory of argumentation. Instruments to analyse and evaluate pragmatic arguments have already been proposed in pragma-dialectics. These instruments consist of an argument scheme and a set of critical questions. The argument scheme represents the inference

rule underlying the argumentation and the critical questions point to the conditions a pragmatic argument should fulfil for that inference rule to be correctly applied. I consider these proposals extremely useful – as it happens, the evaluative instrument I set out in the following sections relies heavily on the existing instruments. This said, there is significant room for improvement and that's why this paper seemed necessary. Specifically, I am inclined to formulate the argument scheme somewhat differently and to reorganise, reformulate, and complement the list of critical questions. When designing the critical questions I have drawn occasionally on the work of Clarke (1985), Schellens (1987), and Walton (2007) who have also studied pragmatic argumentation from a dialectical perspective. Even though Clarke and Walton deal with 'practical inferences' and 'practical reasoning' respectively, from the definitions they propose, it is clear that these labels refer fundamentally to the same argumentative phenomenon defined above as 'pragmatic argumentation.'

Due to the limited scope of this paper, I will not start, as is customary, with a review of the pragma-dialectical literature on the pragmatic argument scheme and critical questions, but restrict myself instead to the presentation and justification of a reformulated version of the aforementioned instruments.**[i]**

2. The evaluation of argumentation in pragma-dialectics

Before putting forward my proposal, I shall make explicit my theoretical starting points. In pragma-dialectics the evaluation of argumentation (with an unexpressed premise) proceeds in two stages (van Eemeren & Grootendorst 2004, pp.144-151). The first stage is to examine whether the parties agree that the material premise of the argumentation is part of the shared material starting points of the discussion.**[ii]** The procedure by which the parties determine this is referred to as the *inter-subjective identification procedure (IIP).* If this procedure yields a negative outcome the argument used by the protagonist is then deemed 'fallacious' and the evaluation of the argument comes to an end. If the result is positive, the analyst must turn to the next evaluative stage to determine if the parties agree that the argument scheme used is a shared procedural starting point. If the protagonist has made used of an argument scheme that is not part of their agreements the argumentation is fallacious. This is the second point at which the evaluation may come to an end. In contrast, the evaluation must continue if the parties agree that the scheme is a shared procedural starting point. The reason for this is that, by agreeing on the legitimacy of the scheme, the

protagonist is conferred the right to employ a specific type of inference rule to transfer the acceptability of the material premise to the conclusion. However, since this inference rule can be instantiated in infinite ways and not all of these substitution instances will actually transfer the acceptability to the conclusion, the analyst must examine, also, whether the parties agree that the argument scheme has been applied correctly. The procedure by which the parties determine if the argument scheme is appropriate and has been correctly applied is referred to as the *inter-subjective testing procedure (ITP)*.

Critical questions are the dialectical method used by the parties to take a decision concerning the correctness of the application of the scheme (van Eemeren & Grootendorst 2004, p.149). More specifically, critical questions are questions by means of which the antagonist asks the protagonist if there are circumstances in the world – that is, the world as depicted by the material starting points of the discussion – that could hinder the transference of acceptability from the material premise advanced to the conclusion. (Note that this 'world' can expand during the discussion, since the list of material starting points can be enlarged throughout the discussion.) If the protagonist wants to maintain his argumentation, he should give as an answer an argument showing that circumstances in the world that could count as 'obstacles' are not in place.**[iii]** These obstacles may fall under two categories: those relating to presuppositions of the standpoint and those linked to the connection premise of the argumentation. I shall give examples for each category in section 3.2.2.

3. Proposals for the evaluation of pragmatic argumentation

3.1. Argument scheme

Having explained the procedures involved in the pragma-dialectical evaluation of arguments, I turn to the characterisation of the pragmatic argument scheme I use as my point of departure:

Standpoint:	Action X should (not) be carried out	
Because:	Action X leads to (un)desirable consequence Y	(MATERIAL PREMISE)

And:	If action X leads to (un)desirable consequence Y, then action X should (not) be carried out	(CONNECTION PREMISE)

Argument schemes specify the type of propositions involved in a type of argumentation and their functions. As detailed in the scheme, the *standpoint* of pragmatic argumentation is prescriptive. This prescription can aim at creation of either a positive obligation or a negative one (i.e., a prohibition). The *material premise* of the argument is complex: it can be separated into two propositions, one *causal,* 'Action X leads to consequence Y,' and another *evaluative,* 'Consequence Y is (un)desirable.' As regards the *connection premise*, 'If action X leads to (un)desirable consequence Y, then action X should (not) be carried out,' it is important to realise that it does not commit the arguer to the statement that the conclusion necessarily follows from the material premise but, rather, that the conclusion *can* follow, in principle, from this premise. It is an inference licence subject to conditions expressed by the critical questions.

3.2 The evaluation procedures

The procedures introduced below are pertinent only to the evaluation of positive variants of pragmatic argumentation, where the recommendation to carry out an action is grounded by mentioning its *desirable* consequences.

3.2.1 The inter-subjective identification procedure

Given that the material premise of pragmatic argumentation involves two propositions, one evaluative and another causal, both need to be checked for their acceptability. The acceptability of the evaluative proposition is checked in turns (1) to (4) of the dialectical profile represented in Fig.1 and the acceptability of the causal premise in turns (5) to (8). Nevertheless, it is also possible for the parties to check the acceptability of the causal proposition first.**[iv]**

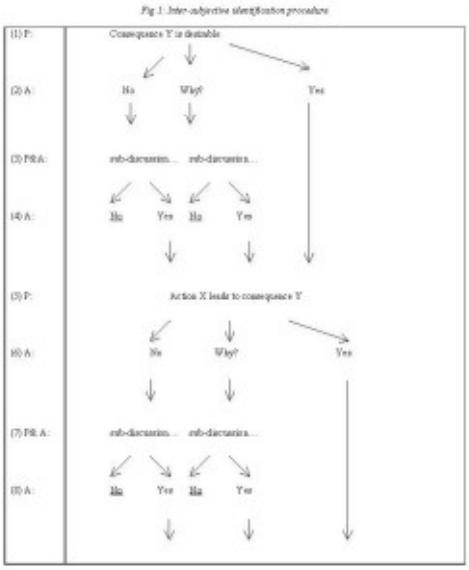


Figure 1

To cut a long story short, I have not represented in the profile each and every option available to the parties at this point of the discussion. The main point I seek to illustrate by means of this profile is that the parties have two opportunities to agree on the acceptability of the evaluative and the causal propositions. For example, the antagonist may immediately concede that the evaluative proposition is part of the material starting points of the discussion. This option is represented in turn (2) by the answer 'Yes'. It is also dialectically possible for the antagonist to claim that the proposition is not part of their common ground. In that event, the antagonist has two options. One alternative is to simply raise doubts concerning the acceptability of the proposition and subsequently request argumentation from the protagonist to justify its acceptability. This is represented in turn (2) by the question 'Why?' A second alterative for the antagonist is to assume an opposite standpoint towards the proposition. This option is represented in the same turn by the answer 'No'. In both cases, the parties may decide to enter into a sub-discussion to determine the acceptability of the evaluative proposition. If these sub-discussions reach the concluding stage, they will end with either a 'yes' or 'no' answer by the antagonist. If the answer is affirmative, as represented in turn (4), the proposition is acceptable in the second instance.**[v]** Exactly the same procedure applies to the examination of the causal proposition.**[vi]**

3.2.2. The inter-subjective testing procedure

As explained earlier, the ITP is applied only if the IIP has yielded a positive outcome. Turns (1) and (2) of the profile represented in Fig.2 summarise the first

step of the ITP, where the parties check if the pragmatic argument scheme is an acceptable means of defence. The interaction between the parties at this point can become much more complex, but I will stay with this abridged version because my main interest lies on the critical questions. Recall that the point of applying critical questions is to examine whether there are obstacles in the transference of acceptability from the material premise of the argument to the conclusion. This means that the acceptability of the material premise and, thereby, the acceptability of the causal and evaluative propositions, is presupposed by these questions.

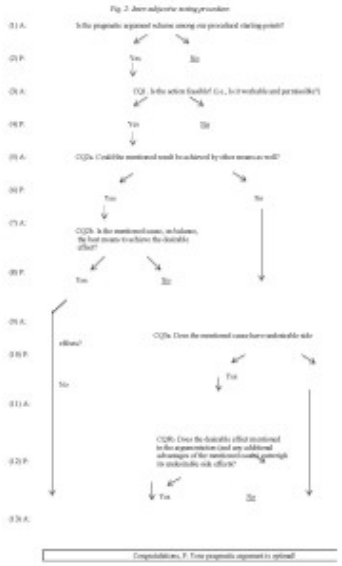


Figure 2

The first critical question relates to a presupposition of the prescriptive standpoint. This presupposition is expressed by the familiar principle 'ought implies can' (see, e.g., Kant 1970, A807/B835, A548/B576). In essence, the principle states that the feasibility of an action is a necessary (but not a sufficient) condition to establish an obligation to perform that action. It is also possible to find the inverse version of this principle, which states that the *unfeasibility* of an action is a *sufficient* (but not necessary) *condition* to cancel the obligation to perform that action (see Albert 1985, p.98). Hence, a pragmatic argument will fail to provide support to its standpoint if the action recommended *cannot* be carried out. Clarke (1985), Schellens (1987) and Walton (2007) include a critical question inquiring if the recommended action is feasible in their accounts.

An action can be 'unfeasible' because it is '*unworkable*' or '*non-permissible*.'

Schellens (1987) acknowledges these two senses of feasibility when he introduces two questions relating to the contextual limitations for carrying out an action: 'Is action X practical?' and 'Is action X allowable?' By the term 'unworkable action' I mean an action that is incompatible with factual limitations, and by a 'non-permissible action' one that is incompatible with institutional or moral principles, norms, or rules. For example, the policy of rising education spending could be 'unworkable' if there is a budget deficit. Similarly, the development of nuclear power as a method of energy production could be unworkable if there is no capacity to forge single-piece reactor pressure vessels, which are necessary in most reactor designs. In contrast, the measures of an immigration bill could be unfeasible, in the sense of 'non-permissible,' if they were incompatible, for example, with the European Convention of Human Rights. Note that an important corollary of including the notion of permissibility under the concept of feasibility is that a pragmatic argument can be defeated by a rule or principle. The latter, however, only insofar as the principle or rule is part of the shared starting points of the discussion and if the parties agree, also, that such principle or rule should take precedence over the desirable consequences brought about by the action.**[vii]**

As illustrated in the profile, when the protagonist is faced with a critical question concerning feasibility, he has two options. One is to acknowledge that the action is unfeasible and retract his argumentation. This is represented by the answer 'No' in the profile. The second alternative is to maintain his argumentation and provide further argumentation. This choice is represented by the answer 'Yes'. His argumentation may show that the action *is feasible* or, alternatively, that the action *will become feasible* if some changes are introduced in the status quo – changes which, in turn, he should prove viable.**[viii]**

Necessary-means question

Once the parties have agreed that the action is feasible they should turn to critical question (2a), 'Could the mentioned result be achieved by other means as well?' Note that the question does not ask whether the action will indeed lead to the mentioned effect. The question presupposes a positive answer to the latter and inquires, instead, whether the action is a necessary cause. To prove that the mentioned cause is necessary the protagonist needs to show that unless the action is performed the desirable state of affairs will not take place.

How can the protagonist prove the cause 'necessary'? It seems there are two

ways of establishing this claim. One is to show that some presumed alternative means X' does not actually lead to desirable effect Y. Another way would be to indicate that alternative action X' cannot be carried out. Any of these responses would allow the protagonist to maintain, for the time being, his argument and standpoint. This move is represented by the answer 'No' in the profile.**[ix]** As a case in point, consider the argument: 'The UN Security Council should send Iran a package of positive incentives (e.g. selling Iran light water nuclear technology, civilian aircraft, etc.) to encourage the halt of its uranium enrichment program.' Suppose that the antagonist puts forward an objection of this sort: 'However, the same effect could be achieved if the UN, instead of sending positive incentives to Iran, decided to apply economical sanctions to Iran, such as requesting Iran's most important trading partners (e.g. China, Japan and India) to cut back on their imports of Iranian crude oil. In response to this objection, the protagonist could attack the causal relation of the antagonist's argumentation. He could claim, for example, that economical sanctions by the UN Security Council would prove futile given Iran's growing expansion of economic and political ties with countries such as Turkmenistan, Venezuela, Kuwait and Malaysia. Alternatively, he could point out that the UN cannot impose economical sanctions on Iran because, for instance, two important council members, China and Russia, disapprove of such measure.

Best-means question

Next, consider a situation where the answer to critical question (2a) is 'Yes', that is, if the action proposed is *not* a necessary cause. On the surface, it appears that if action X is not necessary because there is another means X' to achieve exactly the same effect Y, there is *no obligation* to carry out action X. From this it seems to follow that a positive answer to this question would, if not defeat, at least weaken the pragmatic argument of the standpoint.

On closer inspection, however, it is possible to identify cases where pragmatic argumentation can be reasonable even if it mentions an action that is not a necessary cause. As an illustration, consider the following pragmatic argument: 'In order to mitigate greenhouse gas emission we should invest in building more concentrated solar energy plants (CSP).' If an arguer, in his role as antagonist were to ask 'Are there other ways, besides building CSP, to mitigate greenhouse emissions?,' the answer (in our world) would be an emphatic 'Yes' – it is clear that there are alternative ways. One of them has been at the centre of much talk on

global warming: the development of nuclear power as a method of energy production. The crucial difference with the example about Iran and its enrichment uranium program is that, in the CSP case, nuclear power *does* emit relatively low amounts of carbon dioxide, leading therefore to the desired effect of mitigating greenhouse emissions. Moreover, it is feasible in several countries since the technology is readily available. In other words, the alternative means is indeed a 'means' to the desired effect and it is feasible. Building CSP is therefore not really necessary to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions. However, should one conclude from this that the argument is a bad argument? Not necessarily. The protagonist can maintain his argumentation so long as he shows that this action is the *best* among other alternative means to achieve the desired effect. In this specific example, he could argue that, on balance, that is, considering the advantages and disadvantages of building CSP, on the one hand, and of developing nuclear power, on the other, the former is a better alternative than the latter. He could point out, for instance, that the problem of radioactive waste is still unsolved and that there are high risks related to the production of nuclear energy. For the reasons adduced above, an affirmative answer does not necessarily undermine the argumentation, but rather leads to another critical question, represented in turn (7): ''*Is the mentioned cause, on balance, the best means to achieve the desirable effect?*'**[x]**

In his study, Clarke (1985) distinguishes a "basic" and "option" pattern of practical inferences. The basic pattern entertains a single action as a means of what is wanted. In the option pattern, the agent must choose between a number of alternative means rather than decide on a single action (p. 22). In a similar vein, Walton (2007) formulates two schemes for practical reasoning, one referring to a 'single action' and another that accounts for 'a situation with alternative means' (p. 202). In this way, Clarke and Walton acknowledge that the action recommended by a pragmatic argument can be intended sometimes as the one to be preferred among several options rather than as the only means available to achieve some desirable end. Both authors, however, seem to treat the requirements that the action proposed should be a *necessary cause* and that this should be the *best means* as perfectly compatible. In fact, Clarke argues that all positive variants of practical inferences should mention a necessary cause (1985, pp. 22-23) and Walton proposes a 'necessary condition scheme' for a situation with 'alterative means' (2007, p. 204). I disagree with them in this last respect. These requirements are mutually exclusive: an action that is claimed to be the

best among alternative means to achieve some desirable effect cannot be claimed to be, at the same time, a necessary means to achieve that effect. In addition, it seems that in evaluating pragmatic arguments, the analyst should start by asking whether the cause is a necessary cause and, only if the answer is negative, ask if the cause is the best means to realise the desired effect.

Certainly, in determining whether an action is the best means to achieve or avoid some state of affairs the parties will have to deal not only with issues concerning causality but also desirability. In particular, they will have to weigh up the *costs* and the *additional advantages* of the proposed action and the alternatives means.

Side-effect questions

Let us assume now that the parties have agreed that the mentioned cause is a necessary cause, as indicated in turn (6). The next question that needs to be considered is question (3a), namely, whether there are any cost effects to the proposed action. If the parties agree that there are *no* cost-effects, then the protagonist has successfully defended his standpoint.

The above does not mean, however, that a 'Yes' answer will automatically defeat the protagonist's argumentation. His argumentation still has a chance of success. Take the events that took place in Greece some months ago. Prime Minister Papandreou proposed a series of austerity measures to address the country's financial crisis. In defending the government's case, the PM argued that the measures were necessary to borrow money from the international market and that this was in turn necessary for the country to avoid bankruptcy. Suppose, for the sake of the argument, that the only means of borrowing money from the international market was to implement the hefty cuts and reforms included in the government's proposal. Faced with the question 'Does the mentioned cause have undesirable side-effects?' the PM would have answered most certainly 'yes': in fact, he admitted that the planned changes were "painful" and referred to them in terms of "sacrifices" required to put the country's finances in order ("PM Sets Scene for 'Painful' Measures", 2010). Does this make the Greek government's argument for the approval of the measures a weak argument? Not necessarily: Not if the benefits resulting from those measures – borrowing the money and thereby remedying Greece's fiscal situation – outweigh the costs brought about by those measures.**[xi]** This possibility is accounted for by critical question 3b, 'Does the desirable effect mentioned in the argumentation (and any additional advantages of the mentioned cause) outweigh its undesirable side effects?'**[xii]**

4. Conclusions

In the preceding sections I have outlined an instrument to evaluate pragmatic arguments from a pragma-dialectical perspective. This instrument consists of a dialectical procedure to establish the acceptability of the argumentation (the IIP) and another one to examine its justificatory function (the ITP).

Concerning the first of these procedure, I have stressed that both causal and evaluative propositions involved in the material premise ought to be checked for their acceptability. This point is worth emphasising since the evaluative proposition of pragmatic argumentation is often left implicit in practice.

As regards the justificatory function of pragmatic argumentation I have provided a rationale for each critical question. Furthermore, I have situated these questions in a dialectical profile to make clear that certain critical questions have priority over others – that is to say, that there are certain questions whose inappropriate response makes the subsequent questions in the list unnecessary. For example, if the action proposed is unfeasible the reaming questions become irrelevant. The profile also shows that sometimes there is more than one *reasonable type of response* to a critical question. Thus, according to the procedure outlined, a pragmatic argument is reasonable if (1) the proposed cause is the best means among several options to achieve some desired effect, (2) if it is a necessary means with no cost effects, or (3) if it is a necessary means with cost effects, but the desirable effects outweigh the former.**[xiii]**

NOTES

[i] Pragmatic argumentation is described in van Eemeren, Grootendorst & Kruiger 1983; van Eemeren & Grootendorst 1992, p. 97, 162; Garssen 1997, p.21; van Eemeren, Grootendorst & Snoeck Henkemans 2002, pp.101-102. The argument scheme is outlined in Feteris 2002, p.355 and also, with some modifications, in van Eemeren, Houtlosser & Snoeck Henkemans 2007, p.170. The critical questions for pragmatic argumentation are listed in Garssen 1997, p.21 (available only in Dutch). An English translation of these questions can be found in van Eemeren, Houtlosser & Snoeck Henkemans 2007, p.170.

[ii] This description of the evaluative process is premised on an immanent view of dialectics. According to this perspective, the analyst should examine the acceptability of the argumentation solely in consideration of the material starting points of the discussants (see Hamblin 1970). Nevertheless, it is also possible to conceive the evaluative process from a non-immanent perspective and assign the

analyst a more active role in the evaluation. In the latter case, if the analyst considers that the material premise of the argumentation is unacceptable when both parties have recognised it as a shred material starting point, the analyst may start a discussion with the parties concerning the acceptability of that proposition. In this discussion, the analyst not only questions the acceptability of the argumentation but also assumes the opposite point of view than the parties. Being protagonist of his own standpoint, he should put forward argumentation to justify his position.

The description also assumes that there are two real parties to the discussion. The same alternatives – and immanent versus a non-immanent view of dialectics – apply even if the antagonist is only 'projected' by the protagonist. In both cases the analyst should try to 'reconstruct' the projected antagonist. In the first case, the analyst will judge the acceptability of the argumentation in view of the presumably shared starting points by protagonist and antagonist; in the second case, he will take a more active role in the evaluation, making explicit his disagreement concerning the acceptability of the argumentation.

[iii] In the ideal model of a critical discussion, where every argumentative move is made explicitly, the parties expressly agree on the critical questions at the opening stage. This agreement is reached more or less simultaneously to the agreement that a certain type of argument scheme will count in the present discussion as an acceptable means of defence. By contrast, discussants rarely agree explicitly in practice on the critical questions relevant to a type of argument scheme. This puts the burden on argumentation theorists to propose critical questions for conventionalised types of argument schemes such as the pragmatic argument scheme. In designing these questions, they look for the kind of evidence that could count against a specific type of argumentation starting from the assumption that the material premise is acceptable.

[iv] From an evaluative perspective, the acceptability of the causal proposition is just as significant as that of the evaluative proposition. For this reason, the order followed by the parties when checking the acceptability of the material premise in the IIP is irrelevant. This is not to say, however, that the order is irrelevant from the point of view of the production of a pragmatic argument: means cannot be defined without having established the goal to be achieved first.

[v] It is worth noting that the desirability of an effect is always a matter of degree. We judge the desirability of a state of affairs not only against some shared standard but also in relation to the desirability of other possible state of affairs. For example, we might consider that diminishing the rate of unemployment by 2%

is desirable but diminishing it by 4% is even more desirable. Judging the 2% against the 4%, the 2% is less desirable, but at the same time, it is not undesirable when judged against a 0% reduction. Because desirability is a matter of degree, the 'Yes' and 'No' answers in the dialectical profile should not be understood in absolute but rather relative terms. I fact, the antagonist may dispute the desirability of Y not only by assuming the opposite standpoint 'Y is undesirable', but also by assuming two related standpoints of the form 'Y is less desirable than Z' and 'We should pursue Z instead'. Proving the acceptability of the second standpoint is necessary because Z might be more desirable than Y but Z might be nonetheless unattainable under the current circumstances. If that is the case, then the acceptability of the evaluative premise 'Y is desirable' has not been attacked successfully. I am grateful to one of my commentators for drawing my attention to this point.

[vi] The causal proposition can be justified in several ways. It can be grounded, for instance, by an argument from authority (e.g., '*According to a recent research in the U.S.*, wide availability of firearms results in more violence and homicides'). It can be justified as well by an argument from analogy (e.g., 'Policies reducing access to firearms in the UK have resulted in less homicides and violence. We should apply the *same* policy in U.S.'). Also, the causal proposition can be supported by a symptomatic argument, where the specific causal relation in the causal premise of a pragmatic argument is justified by referring to a causal generalisation (e.g., The conflict between Israel and Palestine ought to be solved by peaceful means. I don't believe in the concept of a 'just war'.)

[vii] In this way, the procedure leaves up to the parties the decision to follow a teleological or a deontological conception of 'reasonable actions', when there is a clash between desirable consequences and moral principles.

[viii] Once the protagonist has advanced argumentation to meet a critical question, the antagonist may regard this argumentation unconvincing. In that event, the parties may decide to go into a sub-discussion. To keep the profile simple, I have not represented these sub-discussions. It is important to bear in mind, though, that this is a dialectical – and, therefore, reasonable – possibility.

[ix] This critical question does not ask from the protagonist to refute the existence or the feasibility of ANY possible alternative means. Dialectically speaking, the protagonist has the obligation to show that the action cannot be achieved by other means only if the antagonist has proposed alternative means to achieve the desirable effect. If the antagonist does not come up with any alternative means, then the action can be considered – for the time being, that is,

within the present critical discussion – necessary.
The burden of proof of the protagonist in this respect becomes clearer when his argumentation is judged within the context of an activity type. As an illustration, consider the context of parliamentary debates, where pragmatic arguments are quite common. In this activity type the measures of a bill will be 'necessary' for the achievement of some desirable aim if (for the time being) the opposition has not come up with alternative measures, or if the measures proposed by the opposition do not really lead to the desired effect or are unfeasible. Moreover, because parliamentary debates are discussions not only among MPs but also – and, probably, mainly – between MPs and the public, the protagonist of a pragmatic argument should also take into consideration the alternatives being debated in the broader public sphere (i.e. in the media).
[x] Walton (2007) acknowledges that we do not always need to argue from necessary causes in practical reasoning. In his view, it is sometimes perfectly reasonable to argue from sufficient cause.
He illustrates this with the following example: 'My goal is to kill this mosquito. Swatting the mosquito is a sufficient means of killing the mosquito. Therefore, I should swat the mosquito.' I certainly concur with Walton that this argument seems perfectly reasonable, even though swatting the mosquito is not a necessary condition for killing it (there are many other more creative ways of doing this). However, I don't think one can conclude from this that it is permissible to argue from sufficient causes in pragmatic argumentation. The cause is not necessary because there are other available means of killing the mosquito. That being the case, one should still ask in principle if swatting it is the best means on balance. Of course, in this case, the side effects and additional advantages of each of the means available are probably almost equivalent (or, to some, irrelevant), so that in the end, it does not really make so much of a difference which of the means is chosen.
[xi] It is interesting to observe how politicians strategically defend their policies in terms of 'necessary' or 'unavoidable' means when in fact there are other options available – options which could eventually lead to more advantages and less disadvantages than the policy recommended. This point is nicely made, in my opinion, by David Milliband (UK shadow foreign secretary) in his commentary 'These cuts are not necessary: they are simply a political choice', published in response to the 2010 budget introduced by the Lib-Con government. See, *The Observer*, 27.06.10, p. 19.
[xii] This critical question covers a situation in which both parties agree that X

leads to Y and that Y is desirable, but they also agree that there is another desirable outcome Z that is both more desirable than Y and incompatible with Y. In such a situation, the answer to the critical question 'Does the desirable effect mentioned in the argumentation (Y) outweigh its undesirable side effects?' should be 'No'. The response should be negative because: (1) X indirectly precludes – by furthering outcome Y – the achievement of Z and (2), since Z is more desirable than Y, the negative effect of precluding the attainment of Z outweighs the benefit of achieving Y. I am grateful to one of my commentators for drawing my attention to this case.

[xiii] I presented a similar paper earlier and I received a critical comment concerning the different reasonable paths outlined in the profile along the following lines: Suppose the claim at issue is 'X should be carried out', and that in one context – let us call it context 1 – X is a necessary cause, with 3 cost effects. Suppose further that the protagonist convinces the antagonist that achieving the desirable effect is so significant that it outweighs those 2 cost effects. In this context, the claim would be justified: X should be carried out. Now imagine some context 2, where not only X but also X' is a means to achieve the desired effect. Moreover, X has 3 significant cost-effects and X' has 2. In this case, the conclusion is not that X should be carried out, but rather that X should not be carried out and that Y' should be carried out instead. How is it possible that the same procedure leads to inconsistent results?

My answer to this objection is as follows: It is true that the parties may reach different conclusions concerning the reasonableness of carrying out an action X according to this procedure. But it is important to keep in mind that the profile does not portray one critical discussion. For each of these options – necessary means versus best means option – the material starting points are different, which means that each option is part of a different critical discussion. In critical discussion 1, there are not other available means and in critical discussion 2 there are available means. So in the second case, X is judged relatively to other options, while in the first case the action is judged only in relation to its claimed advantage(s) and possible disadvantages.

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ISSA Proceedings 2010 – Gendering The Rhetoric Of Emotions In Interviews: Argumentation And Counter-Argumentation

1. Introduction

Media interviews carried out during election campaigns provide an important resource for documenting the communication styles and strategies of political candidates. These interviews are important communication tools consisting of a question-answer based dialogue in which the interviewer is acting as a mediator between the interviewee and the audience. Political journalists and reporters are assuming an increasingly influential role through the impact their rhetorical strategies have on both the politicians' careers and on the choices made by electors. In interviews they often resort to rhetorically manipulative tactics that exert decisive influence on the politicians' performance and image, as well as on the audience's perception and emotions.

As more women are entering the political arena, a number of gender-related aspects are becoming apparent in the rhetorical style and argumentative strategies used in both mixed-gender and same-gender interviews. According to

common stereotypes, women tend to express their emotions more often, experience their emotions more intensely and show greater emotional awareness. As visual prompts (pictures, ads, streaming video) are increasingly used in framing an interviewee's personality and roles, mainstream media coverage of women politicians still emphasises their traditional roles as wives and mothers and focuses on their appearance, dressing styles, and personal lives. The depth and quality of media coverage of women is still inadequate in that it exhibits pervasive stereotypical thinking that leads to gender-specific expectations and evaluations. Thus, while rationality and assertive attitude are highlighted as positively-valued masculine traits, soft emotions are most frequently associated with socially desirable traits in women. Women's emotional manifestations are often assumed to involve the expression of tender feelings and empathy for the feelings of others. Gender biases disseminated by the media are significant because they can have electoral consequences. At a time when politics is thoroughly mediatised, voters respond to candidates largely in accordance with information (and entertainment) received from mass media.

2. Aim and method

In principle, the interviewer's role is to ask questions that trigger the interviewee's beliefs and opinions for the sake of the intended audience. In political interviews politicians are expected to answer the interviewer's questions and at the same time use the opportunity to promote their own agenda for the benefit of the overhearing audience. But usually interviewers too have their own agenda and this is why their questions are rhetorically framed in a manipulative way so as to elicit particular answers and responses, since their end-goal is to trigger emotional reactions in the overhearing audience. In order to reach this goal, interviewers often confront their interviewees with questions that become argumentative in that they probe into the emotions of the interviewees, while appealing to the emotions of the audience.

Women politicians often face a 'double bind' when running for office: if they enact the masculine qualities needed to convey strength and decisiveness, they appear "unfeminine"; yet if they do not display such qualities, they are considered to be too weak and unsuited for the tough job of politics. Maurizia Boscagli (1992/3: 75) pointed out: "While a man who cries is a human being, a woman who cries is a woman."

The present analysis concerns one particular interview conducted by a female

CBS journalist, Katie Couric, with Hillary Clinton, the first female contender for the White House in 2008. The focus is on the biased ways in which the interviewee's emotions are perceived, evaluated, and exploited by the interviewer to trigger a particular image of the interviewee, and consequently particular audience reactions. By mapping the recurring appeals to emotions used by Couric, the analysis shows that her questions acquire varying degrees of fallacious argumentativeness.

The aim is to show how the argumentative and rhetorical framing of interview questions and responses contributes to reinforcing, as well as refuting, gender roles and stereotypes. The analysis draws on an integrated pragma-rhetorical approach (Ilie 2006, 2009a) used in a gender perspective. This approach makes use of the analytical tools of rhetoric and argumentation theory that integrate complementary perspectives on both reasoning and emotional processes involved in gendered patterns of discourse and behaviour in dialogic interaction.

3. Gendering emotions in political campaign interviews

Extensive research data (Gal 1991, Case 1994, Tannen 1994) provides evidence that men's communication styles are institutionalised as acknowledged ways of acting with authority and that most institutions enforce the legitimacy of behaviour and interaction strategies used by men. The institution of the presidency is by tradition male-driven and male-run, and it thus reinforces and creates expectations for conventional masculine attributes of strength, determination, and decisiveness. Hillary Clinton was the leading candidate competing for the Democratic nomination in opinion polls for the election throughout the first half of 2007. By the end of the year the race tightened considerably, and Clinton started losing her lead in some polls by December. In early January 2008 Obama gained ground in national polling, with all polls predicting a victory for him in the New Hampshire primary. However, Clinton surprisingly won there on January 8, defeating Obama by a narrow margin.

Speculations about her New Hampshire comeback varied but centered mostly on the sympathy she received, especially from women, after her eyes welled with tears and her voice broke at a coffee shop in Portsmouth, N.H., where Hillary Clinton became emotional the day before the election while responding to a woman voter's question: "How did you get out the door every day? I mean, as a woman, I know how hard it is to get out of the house and get ready." Clinton said: "I just don't want to see us fall backward as a nation. I mean, this is very personal

for me. Not just political. I see what's happening. We have to reverse it." This may well have been the only moment in that campaign when Clinton publicly displayed vulnerability and frustration, but it triggered endless discussions in the media. As a female presidential candidate, Clinton was subject to the predicament of the double-bind. The same people who had been complaining that she is cold and unemotional were now seizing the occasion to treat her unique emotional moment as a sign of weakness and vulnerability.

4. Disagreement about a female presidential candidate's emotions

The focus of the present analysis is on the interview aired on the CBS Evening News on the 9th of January 2008 after Hillary Clinton's victory over Barack Obama in the New Hampshire primary. The interviewer, Katie Couric, is a well-known American journalist, who led CBS News' coverage of the 2008 Presidential election. Couric was already known as a tough interviewer, violating certain gender stereotypes about women being cooperative and consensus-seeking. The interviewee, Hillary Clinton, is an equally determined and strong-minded woman, well-known as the former First Lady of the United States (married to former U.S. President Bill Clinton), and United States Senator from New York.

4.1 Rhetorical emotion elicitation

Couric starts the interview by asking Clinton, who was lagging behind in the opinion polls at the beginning of January 2008, to explain why the polls were not able to anticipate her victory in the New Hampshire primary. The first question is illustrated in extract 1 below.

Extract 1

K. Couric: How though, how could so many polls get it so wrong?
H. Clinton: I know that New Hampshire is fiercely independent. I came in there with a very, you know, big problem, as we know. And I just determined that I was gonna dig down deep and reach out and listen and talk and do what I have always done, which is what makes me get up in the morning. That is to figure out how I could tell people what I want to do to serve them. Because I always believe it's, you know, it's about service for other people. So when I began to talk about what I wanted to do and answer people's questions. I took hundreds of questions from Friday until late on Monday, it really began to connect and I could see that people were really going to give me a fair hearing.

Taking into consideration Clinton's unexpected victory, Couric's question may

seem fully justified at first sight. However, on closer examination, it becomes apparent that the question is not a straightforward information-eliciting question (Ilie 1994, 1999) in the sense that the questioner does not ask the interviewee to provide any particular piece of information, but rather expresses a strong feeling of surprise with the intention to elicit an emotional response. The statement underlying this question could be paraphrased as: 'I cannot see any reasonable explanation as to why the polls were so wrong. And I want to hear your opinion'. Obviously, one of Couric's purposes in this interview is to challenge the interviewee, Hillary Clinton, to reveal emotional reactions and personal comments.

What appears less justified is that, in spite of the Hillary Clinton's newly recorded victory in the New Hampshire primary, Couric's first question does not insist on the importance of this achievement, but on its unpredictability. In other words, Couric chooses to ignore what was 'positive' about Clinton's victory against all odds and to focus on what was 'negative' about the polls.

Rhetorically, an important distinction was made by Quintilian (1943) between two main interrogative strategies: (i) *to ask*, i.e. to require information by means of a straightforward question, and (ii) *to enquire*, i.e. to emphasise a point in order to prove something by means of a rhetorical figure, such as a rhetorical question. Pragmatically, the distinction can only be made in context, since there are no specific linguistic indicators that can differentiate the two types of questions (Ilie 1994). A relevant illustration of this distinction is provided in Couric's question in (1): taken out of context, the question can lend itself to either interpretation, but in the present context it can only be interpreted as a rhetorical question. And this is how Hillary Clinton, the addressed interviewee, has interpreted it. Her response reveals personal details at the interface of her public sphere identity [*"And I just determined that I was gonna dig down deep and reach out and listen and talk and do what I have always done"*], and her private sphere identity [*"which is what makes me get up in the morning."*]. Unlike Couric, who simply sees Clinton's victory as contradicting the opinion polls, the latter knows that it is the result of a constant and determined political struggle: *"I took hundreds of questions from Friday until late on Monday, it really began to connect and I could see that people were really going to give me a fair hearing."*

4.2 Rhetorical emotion attribution

With the exception of the first question in Extract 1, Couric uses the interview to

focus on one topic only, namely the interpretations, re-interpretations, implications and potential consequences of the Clinton's emotions revealed during the episode in Portsmouth prior to the New Hampshire primary. Although initially the alleged goal of the interview was to question and scrutinise a presidential candidate about topical issues relevant to the election campaign in general and to the New Hampshire primary in particular, Clinton is faced with emotion-eliciting questions that are being asked of her simply because she is a woman:

Extract 2
K. Couric: Some observers believe that moment when you got emotional on Monday, when your voice cracked and your eyes welled up, that that humanized you and made you much more attractive to women voters.
H. Clinton: You know, I'm someone who is pretty much other-directed. I want to know what is happening with you and what we can do to help you, and that moment, which obviously I've heard a lot about since, gave people maybe some insight into the fact that I don't see politics as a game. You know, I don't see it as some kind of a travelling entertainment show where, you know, you get up and you perform and then you go on to the next venue. You know, for me it is a way of figuring out what we stand for, what our values are, and getting in a position to actually help people and I take it really seriously and I think people kind of got that for the first time, because I know that there are a lot of questions and I'm trying more to get over sort of my natural reserve which is sort of who I am and where I come from, to give people a little better understanding of why I do this.

Whereas in the preceding Extract 1, Couric's question was rhetorical and not a straightforward question, in Extract 2 she does not even ask a question. What she does instead is to provide a reported description of Clinton's emotional behaviour: "*that moment… that humanized you*". The statement, which may seem positively intended, is in fact implicitly confirming a stereotypical image of Clinton as cold and unemotional. By means of the reported statement, Couric uses emotion attribution in a manipulative way. Emotion attribution can be problematic, especially when it concerns individuals who are acting at the interface of the private and the public sphere, as in Clinton's case. Moreover, Couric is undoubtedly aware that emotion attribution makes it possible to trigger particular mental states and emotions in the audience, which in its turn contributes to rhetorical changes in people's perceptions and attitudes. In her response, Clinton

gives her personal account of what happened during those emotional moments, trying to provide a more nuanced image of herself: on the one hand, she is "*someone who is pretty much other-directed*", on the other, someone who is trying "*to get over sort of my natural reserve*". An important point made by Clinton in this response is that interpersonal engagement with others, as well as responses to others, is what produces emotion. While Couric persists in highlighting the irrational side of emotions, Clinton emphasises their rational side.

4.3 'Slippery slope' fallacy

As the interview progresses, Couric insists on confronting Clinton with further challenges on the same topic as in extract 2 – the emotional moment on the day before the New Hampshire primary – , as illustrated below:

Extract 3

K. Couric: Where did that come from, though, that moment? There was a sense that perhaps you were feeling so discouraged and frustrated and exhausted, and perhaps even seeing this thing that you worked so hard for, slipping away.

H. Clinton: That's not how it felt to me, you know, I go out and I meet on a campaign day hundreds, if not thousands of people. And I'm always asking them: How are you, what are you doing, what do you need or what do you think, and when I was asked that it felt like there was this real connection, it was so touching to me, it was about how we are all in this together, you know. We have to start understanding that the problems we have as a country are eminently solvable, number one, but number two, we've got to be more sympathetic, we've got to be more empathetic.

The question in extract 3 is obviously not information-eliciting, but rather confession-eliciting in the sense that it is meant to prompt Clinton's further disclosures and personal reactions. With regard to the elicitation process, a parallel could be drawn between Couric's interviewing strategy and the 'talking out' practice of A'ara speakers of the Santa Isabel island, as reported by White (1990). The practice is known as *graurutha*, or 'disentangling', by means of which family members or village mates meet together to talk about interpersonal conflicts and 'bad feelings'. The purpose of this talk is to make bad feelings public so as to defuse their destructive potential. Disentangling is an institutionalised event in which people are encouraged to talk about conflicts and resentments that need to be sorted out. With regard to the 'talking out' ritual, a comparison was

made in Ilie (2001) between a *therapy session* and a *talk show*, since "a major purpose of talk shows is to get people to speak out and to create public awareness about current problems" (p. 217), while the show host can often be seen to act as a therapist. However, there is an essential difference between the disentangling practice and the talk show media event: whereas disentangling is purposefully carried out primarily for the benefit of the persons 'talking out' and thereby for their community, the 'pseudo-therapeutical' interaction in talk shows is a mediatised event organised for the entertainment of an onlooking audience. Unlike genuine therapy sessions, which are confidential, one-to-one conversations between a patient and a therapist, talk shows are not actually concerned with individual therapeutic counselling and consist instead of audience-oriented talk.

In certain respects, this interview with a female presidential candidate is different from other election campaign interviews with male candidates in that it appears to share several features with therapeutically oriented talk shows: the focus is on the interviewee's private rather than public roles; the purpose is mainly to trigger personal confessions or revelations from the interviewee; the emphasis is on examining and discussing the interviewee's emotional experiences; the interviewer uses manipulative strategies to rhetorically appeal to the emotions of the audience. A significant difference consists in the fact that Couric is not a listening interlocutor, she is far too eager to offer her interpretation of the interviewee's mental and emotional states: "*There was a sense that perhaps you were feeling so discouraged and frustrated and exhausted …*". Refuting the extreme picture of doom and gloom painted by Couric, Clinton proposes her own interpretation, which is radically opposed to Couric's. Whereas Couric sees desperation in a female candidate who shows emotion, Clinton sees new opportunities for experiencing and sharing more sympathy and empathy together with others.

In trying to impose her own interpretation of Clinton's emotions, Couric's opening statement becomes argumentative. She resorts to a *slippery slope* argument (van Eemeren and Grootendorst 1992) when she makes negative predictions about Clinton's failure as a presidential candidate based only on insufficient and impressionistic evidence. In this case, the slippery slope argument is fallacious because no valid reason is given in favour of the presumed conclusion. Actually, Clinton explicitly refutes Couric's fallacious reasoning and provides counter-arguments regarding her newly found connection with voters: "*it felt like there*

was this real connection, … we've got to be more sympathetic, we've got to be more empathetic."

4.4 Talking out about you vs. talking out about us

Clinton's confident and self-assertive message in Extract 3 above does not succeed in stopping Couric from pursuing her line of questioning about the same topic – Clinton's emotions.

Extract 4

K. Couric: Did you feel that coming from that question, because she was saying to you: 'How do you do it?' And suddenly you had to talk about yourself…

H. Clinton: I did, I did, but, you know, a lot of people who asked me that are asking me because they are trying to figure out how to do it themselves. So it's not about me and it's not just about you, it's about us. It's about who we are together, because it's easy to get a kind of isolation when you are in the public eye. And the people that you are with you are talking at and the people who are responding, you know, almost the backdrop and I keep trying to bring people out about what they need, and this woman reached out and I just felt this real connection.

Couric exerts her authority as interviewer and keeps asking practically the same question, which reinforces the stereotypical image of Clinton as an emotional female candidate. By using appeals to pathos, she is determined to trigger further personal confessions from Clinton: "*And suddenly you had to talk about yourself*." As in Extract 3 above, Couric's strategy is not so much to ask straightforward questions, but to encourage a dialogue about the interviewee's emotions. Her manipulative strategy consists in providing her own interpretation and thereby appealing to the emotions of the interviewee, as well as of the audience. However, Clinton refuses to be cornered by Couric's emotional stereotypes and insists on providing her own version of the event. In so doing, she is determined to turn the apparent weakness of her tearing moment into a display of personal strength: "… *but, you know, a lot of people who asked me that are asking me because they are trying to figure out how to do it themselves*." According to her own interpretation, that moment of alleged weakness provided her with a new and special bond with other women who were looking for a role model: "*this woman reached out and I just felt this real connection*." What she actually claims is that a special kind of strength emerged from that moment of apparent weakness. There is obviously an underlying disagreement between interviewer and interviewee as to their

respective interpretations of Clinton's emotional behaviour: Couric's point is that Clinton's talking out was about herself ('yourself'), whereas Clinton insists that it was about 'us' and connecting with other people.

4.5 Gendering presidential prerequisites

While Couric's questions discussed above focus on emotions associated with a past event, her subsequent questions focus on emotions projected into the future. The emphasis is still on Clinton's emotional profile, as illustrated in Extract 5 below:

Extract 5

K. Couric: Will you be willing now to reveal more of yourself and be less reserved?
H. Clinton: Well, you know, one of my young friends said well, that was like Hillary unplugged. I thought, "OK, I can't sing, I can't play an instrument. But, you know, I will try to let people know enough about me to know that, you know, I don't need to go back and live in the White House. That's not why I'm doing this. I certainly don't need anymore name recognition. And, I mean, I just want to try to convey that we're going to have to make some big decisions in this country." This is the toughest job in the world. I was laughing because you know in that debate, obviously Sen. Edwards and Sen. Obama were kind of in the buddy system on the stage. And I was thinking whoever's up against the Republican nominee in the election debates come the fall is not gonna have a buddy to fall back on. You know, you're all by yourself. When you're president, you're there all by yourself.

Couric starts from the assumption that being reserved is not desirable for a presidential candidate and according to her the right thing for Clinton to do is to "*to reveal more of yourself and be less reserved*". Interestingly, the message in Couric's question in Extract 5 – "*Will you be willing now to reveal more of yourself and be less reserved?*" – sounds like as a follow-up to the declarative question in Extract 2. This question is redundant, since Clinton already answered Couric's previous question by saying: "*I'm trying more to get over sort of my natural reserve*" (see Extract 2). Evidently, Couric is not simply asking a question, she is actually calling into question the suitability of Clinton's personal profile for a future president. Nevertheless, two aspects of this assumption are indirectly contested by Clinton, who provides two counter-arguments in her answer. First, she specifically points out what is important for a president to be able to do, i.e. to make big decisions: "*I just want to try to convey that we're going to have to make some big decisions in this country.*" Second, she indicates that one of her own

strengths is being able to act on her own: "*When you're president, you're there all by yourself.*" So Clinton does actually answer Couric's question by revealing more about herself, namely her capacity to make decisions and to act independently. Rhetorically, an important distinction can be noticed between them: while Couric makes use of appeals to pathos (arousing the emotional involvement of the audience and affecting the emotional response of the audience), Clinton provides answers involving appeals to ethos (invoking her own reliability, trustworthiness and commitment to ethical values).

4.6 Loaded questions: male confidence vs. female humility

To round off the examination of interactional moves and rhetorical appeals in this interview, I am going to discuss gender-related argumentative strategies in one last extract from the interview.

Extract 6

K. Couric: When we last spoke you said with certitude, "I will be the Democratic nominee." Unwavering certitude. Are you sorry you said that with such confidence? Do you think that perhaps turned some people off?

H. Clinton: Well it might have. I was laughing about it afterwards because I can remember when I first met Jimmy Carter in 1975 and I introduced myself to him and he said, "I'm Jimmy Carter and I'm going to be president." I said, "well, you know, Gov. Carter, well, maybe you shouldn't say that." And so I was laughing because I thought well, if you really believe you'd be the best president, you can't get up everyday and do this job that we're doing running for president – which is really a full time job – unless you really believe you are the person that can best serve our country at this time.

K. Couric: Can't you just say I hope so though? Isn't it a little humility appealing though?

H. Clinton: I'm humble everyday in the face of what I'm facing. I am absolutely aware of how difficult this is and how hard the job that I'm seeking will be but I also know that you've got to really believe that you can do it. But ultimately you have to be humble because it's up to the voters. Voters get to decide.

Harking back to the same topic of emotions, Couric proposes to focus in Extract 6 on a further aspect of Clinton's emotions. This time she deals with the "*unwavering certitude*" with which Clinton is perceived to have declared in an earlier interview that she would be the Democratic nominee in the presidential campaign. But what Couric proposes to concentrate on is not Clinton's certitude

and confidence as positive emotions, and the way in which she acquired them, but rather the sense that it was 'wrong' to show too much confidence. A male presidential candidate would never be confronted with such a challenging question, since it is usually taken for granted that one of the prerequisites of a politician, and in particular of a president, is precisely a strong feeling of self-confidence. And as a matter of fact, this question never arises in any of the interviews made by Couric with Barack Obama.

The rhetorical force of Couric's first couple of questions is highly manipulative in that they do not only report Clinton's statements, but they also call into question the appropriateness of Clinton's behaviour: *"Are you sorry you said that with such confidence? Do you think that perhaps turned some people off?"* Such argumentative questions are known as *loaded or complex questions*. A loaded or complex question is a question that is deliberately used to limit a respondent's options in answering it (Walton 1981). A loaded question is often fallacious in the sense that it combines several presuppositions, which eventually amounts to combining several questions into one. This is why a loaded question often becomes what is called a *fallacy of many questions*. The classic example is *"Have you stopped abusing your spouse?"* No matter which of the two short answers the respondent gives, s/he concedes engaging in spousal abuse at some time or other. In our case, the loaded question is framed in such a way that no matter which answer Clinton chooses to give – Yes, I am / No, I am not (sorry) –, she inevitably ends up incriminating herself. And this is simply because being or not being sorry presupposes that one has done or said something one ought to be sorry about: the implication is that not only did Clinton boast about becoming the Democratic nominee, but she also did so confidently. The fallacy originates in Couric's evaluative qualifier "*with such confidence*". A similar argumentative mechanism occurs in the immediately following question: no matter what answer Clinton might give – Yes, I do / No, I don't (think) –, she is trapped into admitting that her attitude might have turned some people off.

Clinton retorts by ironically reporting her dialogue with Jimmy Carter as an *example by analogy*, which actually serves as a counter-argument to Couric's argumentative and face-threatening questions. Like herself and all other (male) presidential candidates, Carter openly displayed an attitude of self-confidence about his future political role. However, there are two significant differences between the two of them. First, Carter aimed higher when he said "*I'm going to*

be president", whereas Clinton's declaration was slightly more cautious "*I will be the Democratic nominee*." Second, since Carter is a man and all American presidents have so far been exclusively men, Carter's declaration, unlike Hillary Clinton's, did not cause any debate in the media or among the members of the general public. Clinton rounds off her response by pointing out the fundamental similarity between the two cases, namely that without self-confidence "*you can't get up everyday and do this job that we're doing running for president – which is really a full time job*".

Couric is obviously not satisfied with Clinton's answer and proceeds to ask two more questions. This time her questions are even more face-threatening as she also explicitly suggests that Clinton may need to show some "*humility*": "*Can't you just say I hope so though? Isn't it a little humility appealing though?*" Couric is clearly reinforcing the stereotypical emotion gendering: *confidence* is a strong, male-specific emotion, so Clinton should show less confidence; *humility* is a soft, female-specific emotion, so Clinton should show more humility. These questions are not information-eliciting since they do not elicit information, nor loaded questions like the preceding two, since they do not imply several presuppositions or questions. They are *leading questions*, i.e. questions which are designed to invite a particular answer that is easily inferable by the addressee (Ilie 2009b). Typical leading questions occur in courtroom questioning by means of which defendants and witnesses are induced to provide particular answers. In this particular case, the implied and expected answers are "Yes, I can" and "Yes, it is", respectively. But Clinton refuses to acknowledge the validity of the implied answers arguing that "*I'm humble everyday in the face of what I'm facing*", and explaining that she knows "*how hard the job that I'm seeking will be*". Her two closing sentences contain a powerfully argumentative message about voters as the eventual and decisive evaluators of the presidential candidates: "*But ultimately you have to be humble because it's up to the voters. Voters get to decide*."

5. Concluding remarks

This article is devoted to a close examination of an interview conducted by a female CBS journalist, Katie Couric, with Hillary Clinton, the first female contender for the White House in 2008. The aim was to identify and analyse the ways in which the rhetoric of emotions and the argumentative framing of interview questions and responses contribute to reinforcing or refuting gender

roles and stereotypes. The analysis has particularly focused on the different roles, behaviours and positionings enacted by the two women in the public institutional setting of a TV-interview.

The question-response interaction during the interview is heavily impacted by two much debated events: Hillary Clinton's public display of emotion during a meeting with voters and her unexpected victory in the New Hampshire primary. While election campaign interviews normally are normally devoted to discussing a wide range of key issues, Couric's interview focuses almost exclusively on Clinton's emotions, which she interprets in a stereotypical way. Couric is less keen on questioning as she is on calling into question Clinton's behaviour, feelings and statements. Rather than eliciting information, Couric is mainly interested in eliciting Clinton's confessions and emotional responses.

A close examination of Couric's line of questioning reveals her frequent use of fallacious arguments (conveyed by rhetorical questions, loaded questions, slippery slope fallacy), to which Clinton responds by means of refutations and counter-arguments. Particularly biased are her gender-specific emotion attributions: speaking with *certitude* and showing *confidence* are not suitable emotions for a female presidential candidate, although the same emotions are normally expected and appreciated in a male ditto. Instead, she recommends that Clinton show 'a little *humility*' as a more appealing, soft emotion. Not unexpectedly, Clinton is not willing to play the emotion game and she vigorously refutes Couric's repeated attempts to trigger displays of emotion and/or weakness. While Couric's discourse is informed by repeated appeals to pathos, she tries to elicit emotional responses from her interviewee for the sake of the audience, Clinton's discourse exhibits appeals to ethos as she tries to consolidate her image as a trustworthy and reliable presidential candidate.

There are two significant aspects that play a decisive role in the ongoing performance and negotiation of their respective gender roles during the interview. Both female interlocutors are tenacious, self-confident and strong-minded. However, whereas women interviewers may be expected to also ask interviewee-friendly and face-saving questions, Couric confronts Clinton with very challenging or face-threatening questions (although this hardly happens in her interviews with Barack Obama, for example). As interviewer, Couric is not simply asking questions, she is practically calling into question the suitability of Clinton's personality type for the position of president. As interviewee, Clinton can be seen

to overtly comply with her role by providing skillfully framed responses. At the same time, she uses her responses to provide counter-arguments and thereby firmly refute being stereotyped and to dismiss being accused of over-emotionality.

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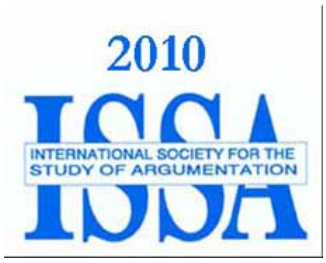
ISSA Proceedings 2010 – Analyzing Repetition In Argumentation



1. Introduction

I submit that repetition is a strategy that skilled arguers may use to openly incur responsibility for the veracity of their claims and propriety of their argumentative conduct; and that a normative pragmatic perspective accounts for how it does so. To support this claim, I explain how a normative pragmatic perspective approaches analysis of repetition in argumentation, and illustrate claims about what aims repetition in argumentation may be designed to achieve and why it may be reasonably expected to achieve them using Abraham Lincoln's 1860 *"Cooper Union"* speech as a case study. By doing so I add to scholarship discussing repetition in argumentation that makes claims about what repetition is designed to do but does not provide a rationale for why arguers may reasonably expect it to work for a situated audience.

2. Repetition from a normative pragmatic perspective

Normative pragmatic theories of argumentation aim to account for strategies arguers actually use – to explain why strategies may be expected to do what they are apparently designed to do (e.g., Goodwin 2001, Innocenti 2006, Jacobs 2000, Kauffeld 1998). Normative pragmatic theories approach repetition differently

from other theoretical perspectives in three main ways.

First, from a normative pragmatic perspective, repetition does not fall outside the scope of analysis but is considered to be a design feature that argumentation theory ought to be able to account for. This is in contrast to an analytical method that involves standardizing an argument in premise-conclusion form and therefore deleting repetition (e.g., Govier 2005, pp. 31, 34; Johnson and Blair 2006, p. 264) in order to evaluate the acceptability, relevance, and sufficiency of the premises. This is also in contrast to an analytical method that involves reconstructing argumentation as a critical discussion in order to measure it against that normative ideal. That analytical method calls for deleting material that is redundant (van Eemeren and Grootendorst 2004, p. 108), although it may not always be clear when repetition of, say, a standpoint in different ways becomes a different standpoint (van Eemeren and Grootendorst 1992, p. 24).

Second, from a normative pragmatic perspective, the purposes of repetition are not predetermined by critics and inherent in its analytical methods. Identification of purposes is based on what speakers say and do and on the situation. This is in contrast to informal logic which, broadly speaking, focuses on justified belief; and on pragma-dialectics which focuses on resolving differences of opinion and arguers getting their own way (van Eemeren and Houtlosser 2000).

Third, normative pragmatic theories provide accounts of repetition that incorporate the full dynamic of the communication transaction: speech, speaker, audience. A brief survey of some of the scholarship on repetition indicates that other accounts cover only part of the transaction. For example, a claim that repetition expresses emotion (Fogle 1986) may begin to explain the speaker-speech side of the transaction but does not incorporate the audience. Likewise, claims that repetition may unify ideas, divide a narrative into segments, or emphasize (Fogle 1986), or that some figures relating to repetition may associate (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 1969, p. 504) while others “really aim at suggesting distinctions” (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 1969, p. 175; see also p. 478) may describe the speech itself but not how it is designed by a speaker to work for a situated audience. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca orient their account of repetition toward how a text may affect an audience when they include repetition among “figures relating to presence” which “make the object of discourse present to the mind” (1969, p. 174; see also p. 144) but do not incorporate the speaker. A normative pragmatic perspective, in contrast, aims to

account for strategies by explaining how speakers use them to openly undertake commitments for themselves and to generate obligations for auditors; put differently, speakers design strategies that involve manifestly undertaking risks for themselves and creating risks for auditors.

3. Case study

One exemplar of civic argumentation, Abraham Lincoln's 1860 "Cooper Union Address," features repetition. There are many kinds of repetition – repetition of parts of words, of entire words, of phrases, sentences, ideas (Quinn 1993, pp. 73-95). For now I focus on Lincoln's repetition of the standpoint that in the understanding of the founding fathers, there is nothing that properly forbids the federal government from controlling slavery in federal territories. Why does Lincoln, an astute reasoner and consummate stylist, choose to repeat this conclusion more than a dozen times? What is it designed to do, and why may he reasonably expect it to do just that?

To answer this question, first consider the context in order to understand Lincoln's purposes. The speech is part of a campaign to secure the Republican nomination for President of the United States. It was reprinted in newspapers and as a political pamphlet. Lincoln wanted to feature his attractiveness as a candidate to run against the Democrat Stephen Douglas (Leff and Mohrmann 1974, p. 347). In particular, he aimed to be a voice of moderation amidst partisan rancor and the voice of Republican party principles (Leff and Mohrmann 1974, p. 347-48; White 2009, p. 314). One obstacle he faced was that he was a relative unknown to New Yorkers and, as one planner of the Cooper Union speaking event put it, "[t]he first impression of the man from the West did nothing to contradict the expectation of something weird, rough, and uncultivated" (White 2009, p. 311). In short, Lincoln wants to induce serious attention to his potential as a Republican presidential candidate.

The speech may be divided into three sections: a discussion of Douglas' claim to be on the side of the framers of the United States Constitution regarding whether the federal government can control slavery in federal territories, an address to the South, and an address to members of the Republican party. For now I focus on the first section and its refutation of Douglas' claim to be on the side of the framers. Focusing on Lincoln's repetition of the point that in the understanding of the founding fathers, there is nothing that properly forbids the federal government from controlling slavery in federal territory is justified by its strategic

intensity. A recent analysis of the speech describes that line as a phrase that "will echo like mortar fire, repeatedly and relentlessly, throughout the Cooper Union address" (Holzer 2004, p. 120) and as "[t]he rhetorical spine around which Lincoln will hang his proof – and the oration's rhetorical delight as well" (Holzer 2004, p. 121).

Critics of the speech have proffered claims about what repetition does. Here I focus on those of Holzer, recent author of a book-length study of Lincoln at Cooper Union, and Leff and Mohrmann, rhetorical critics who have given the closest attention to the rhetorical dynamics of the speech. Holzer points to the sheer entertainment value of repetition as well as its properly argumentative functions when he speculates about how "the audience breathlessly awaits the next iteration" and is "eager to hear how Lincoln next pronounces it, and how he uses it to punctuate an argument, puncture a Democratic viewpoint, or implicitly pillory Douglas" (2004, p. 122). In addition, Holzer points to its capacity to associate when he notes that Lincoln "associates slavery with the founders by repetition of their names and votes on slavery-related issues" (2004, p. 122). He also points to its capacity to dissociate when he notes that "through similar thrusts of repetition, he mocks Stephen A. Douglas's contrary assertion that the Constitution bars congressionally imposed limits on slavery" (2004, p. 122). Holzer summarizes Lincoln's case in the first section of the speech: Lincoln "has shown himself a master of history, a self-confident logician, and a merciless debater, using repetition to crush and ridicule his absent opponents" (2004, p. 131). Likewise, Leff and Mohrmann point to the role of repetition in association when they note that Lincoln associates himself and the founding fathers with Republicans (1974, p. 348; Leff 2001, p. 234). They also note that repetition can be used for emphasizing arguments when they remark that repetitions "accentuate the single line of argument" and that Lincoln "weaves [repetitions] into the fabric of the inductive process. Furthermore, the repetitions concomitantly reinforce and control the emotional association with the fathers and their understanding of the Constitution" (1974, p. 351). Leff notes that at the close of that section Lincoln could assert that the Republicans were on the side of the founding fathers "with considerable logical force" (2001, 237).

A normative pragmatic perspective builds on the insights that repetition may associate and dissociate, emphasize, augment logical force, orchestrate emotion, invite attitudes, and more by explaining why Lincoln's use of repetition pressured

addressees to give his candidacy serious consideration. In this case repetition intensifies how Lincoln openly incurs responsibility for the veracity of his claims and propriety of his conduct.

First, consider how Lincoln designs the initial iteration of the point: "In his speech last autumn, at Columbus, Ohio, as reported in 'The New-York Times,' Senator Douglas said: '*Our fathers, when they framed the Government under which we live, understood this question just as well, and even better, than we do now*'" (Holzer 2004, p. 252). He describes this text as "a precise and an agreed starting point for a discussion between Republicans and that wing of the Democracy headed by Senator Douglas" (Holzer 2004, p. 252). After defining key terms including "the frame of government under which we live" and "our fathers that framed the Constitution," Lincoln states "the question which, according to the text, those fathers understood 'just as well, and even better than we do now'": "Does the proper division of local from federal authority, or anything in the Constitution, forbid *our Federal Government* to control as to slavery in *our Federal Territories*" (Holzer 2004, p. 253). About this question Lincoln asserts: "Upon this, Senator Douglas holds the affirmative, and Republicans the negative. This affirmation and denial form an issue; and this issue – this question – is precisely what the text declares our fathers understood 'better than we'" (Holzer 2004, p. 253).

This initial iteration holds Douglas accountable for the position and manifests the propriety of Lincoln's argumentative conduct. It holds Douglas accountable because the words are Douglas'. At the same time, using Douglas' words brings to bear on the situation and manifests Lincoln's adherence to two norms of argumentation: willingness to find common ground with opponents and openness to discussing issues with them. Lincoln openly incurs responsibility for his argumentative conduct not only by what he does but by saying what he is doing: using Douglas' words as "an agreed starting point for discussion." Thus Lincoln enacts the kind of campaign he would run if nominated. He chooses to engage Douglas rather than, say, opponents for the Republican nomination, and he engages him in a manifestly appropriate way. Other things being equal, addressees who do not tentatively consider a responsibly-made case risk criticism for irresponsible argumentative conduct. In Lincoln's situation the risk is particularly serious given that partisan rancor was splitting the union. Addressees can avoid the risk by giving his potential for candidacy serious consideration.

In the first point of the proof that follows, Lincoln discusses six occasions on which one or more of the original framers of the U.S. Constitution acted on the question. He repeatedly concludes that of the framers who voted on relevant issues, almost all indicated that "in their understanding, no line dividing local from federal authority, nor anything in the Constitution, properly forbade Congress to prohibit slavery in the federal territory" (Holzer 2004, p. 258; see also pp. 254-55, 257, 259. 260). Certainly repetition emphasizes the point, but why emphasize at all and by repeating it? The strategy pressures addressees to seriously consider his candidacy for Republican nominee for President. By repeating the standpoint, Lincoln incurs and intensifies responsibility for the veracity of the claim, because repeating it creates argumentative conditions in which it becomes increasingly difficult for him to deny a commitment to its veracity. Addressees can reason that Lincoln would not open himself to criticism for poor judgment or inappropriate argumentative conduct unless he had made a responsible effort to ascertain the facts. Thus repetition of the standpoint creates a reason for addressees to take his candidacy seriously. At the same time, repetition creates risks for addressees if they do not take his candidacy seriously. Because the repetition comprises Douglas' words, each iteration manifests Lincoln's adherence to norms of finding common ground and discussing issues with opponents. Again, other things being equal, addressees who do not tentatively consider a responsibly-made position risk criticism for acting irresponsibly.

When Lincoln concludes this subsection, he makes manifest the alignment of norms of argumentation with norms of political action, namely responsibility for the veracity of standpoints and propriety of conduct. He remarks that of the twenty-three framers "who have, upon their official responsibility and their corporal oaths, acted upon the very question which the text affirms they 'understood just as well, and even better than we do now,'" twenty-one of them "so act[ed] upon it as to make them guilty of gross political impropriety and willful perjury, if, in their understanding, any proper division between local and federal authority, or anything in the Constitution they had made themselves, and sworn to support, forbade the Federal Government to control as to slavery in the federal territories" (Holzer 2004, p. 261). Lincoln also asserts that "as actions speak louder than words, so actions, under such responsibility, speak still louder" (Holzer 2004, p. 261). Thus Lincoln holds addressees accountable for norms of veracity and propriety in arguing and political action; other things being equal,

failing to recognize them is a fallible sign that they were not attending to Lincoln's speech or that they do not understand appropriate political action. In either case they risk criticism for poor citizenship if they do not recognize that his case and therefore his candidacy deserve serious consideration. Moreover, at this point in the speech Lincoln does not openly and explicitly accuse Douglas of willful perjury or gross political impropriety. Instead he openly and explicitly considers norms of argumentation and political action adhered to by the framers of the U.S. Constitution. In this way Lincoln manifests restrained partisanship instead of partisan rancor, thereby creating an additional reason for addressees to seriously consider his candidacy.

Lincoln's next two points cover the topic of the understanding of those framers who "left no record of their understanding upon the direct question of federal control of slavery in the federal territories" (Holzer 2004, p. 262) and the understanding of those in the first Congress. Predictably, Lincoln concludes by repeating that "a clear majority of the whole – certainly understood that no proper division of local from federal authority, nor any part of the Constitution, forbade the Federal Government to control slavery in the federal territories; while all the rest probably had the same understanding. Such, unquestionably, was the understanding of our fathers who framed the original Constitution; and the text affirms that they understood the question 'better than we'" (Holzer 2004, p. 263). It is recorded that this line was followed by laughter and cheers from the audience (Holzer 2004, pp. 263, 250-51).

Certainly this iteration contributes to what Leff describes as logical force and the entertainment value of the speech. It also creates reasons for addressees to give his position and therefore his candidacy serious consideration. First, continuing to repeat Douglas's words continues to manifest his adherence to the norms of finding common ground with opponents and openness to discussing differences of opinion. Further, by repeating his standpoint Lincoln intensifies his commitment to it and thus creates conditions for addressees to reason that he would not continue to risk criticism for getting the facts wrong unless he were confident about the veracity of the standpoint.

Second, repeatedly examining Douglas' words with respect to a variety of evidence, and concluding that the evidence supports Lincoln's standpoint rather than Douglas', makes manifest the quality of Lincoln's reasoning skills and discredits both Douglas' argument and method of arguing. This strategy

pressures addressees to seriously consider Lincoln for the Republican nomination for U.S. President, because not doing so would be a fallible sign that they do not recognize appropriate argumentation. Consequently, the strategy puts them at risk of criticism for poor citizenship. They can avoid the risk by giving Lincoln's candidacy serious consideration. Moreover, the strategy increases the risk Lincoln undertakes because it becomes increasingly apparent that Lincoln is impugning Douglas' conduct. Addressees may reason that Lincoln would not risk Douglas' wrath for impugning his character and conduct unless he were confident in the veracity of his claim and the propriety of his conduct.

The final point Lincoln makes in this section of the speech is that opponents are on shaky ground when, based on amendments to the U.S. Constitution, they argue that federal control of slavery in federal territories is unconstitutional. Lincoln notes that the amendments were framed by the first Congress that sat under the Constitution, and that this Congress passed the act that enforced the prohibition of slavery in the Northwest Territory (Holzer 2004, p. 264). Lincoln concludes the point with another iteration:

I defy any man to show that any one of them ever, in his whole life, declared that, in his understanding, any proper division of local from federal authority, or any part of the Constitution, forbade the Federal Government to control as to slavery in the federal territories. I go a step further. I defy any one to show that any living man in the whole world ever did, prior to the beginning of the present century, (and I might almost say prior to the beginning of the last half of the present century,) declare that, in his understanding, any proper division of local from federal authority, or any part of the Constitution, forbade the Federal Government to control as to slavery in the federal territories. To those who now so declare, I give, not only 'our fathers who framed the Government under which we live,' but with them all other living men within the century in which it was framed, among whom to search, and they shall not be able to find the evidence of a single man agreeing with them. (Holzer 2004, pp. 265-66)

Using repetition, Lincoln continues to incur responsibility for the veracity of his claims and the propriety of his conduct. In this iteration Lincoln increases the emotional intensity and the intensity with which he impugns Douglas' conduct. But because he does not attack Douglas by name, he continues to enact restrained partisanship, thus manifesting his merits as a political candidate.

This strategy is more apparent in the paragraph that concludes this section of the speech. In that paragraph he twice repeats the lines about the proper division of federal and local authority or anything in the Constitution forbidding the federal government from controlling slavery in federal territories and does so in the course of impugning opponents' conduct. He states that if anybody "sincerely believes" that the federal government may not prohibit slavery in federal territories, "he is right to say so, and to enforce his position by all truthful evidence and fair argument which he can. But he has not right to mislead others, who have less access to history, and less leisure to study it, into the false belief," thereby "substituting falsehood and deception for truthful evidence and fair argument" (Holzer 2004, p. 266). He repeats that if anyone believes this "he is right to say so. But he should, at the same time, brave the responsibility of declaring that, in his opinion, he understands their principles better than they did themselves; and especially should not shirk that responsibility by asserting that they 'understood the question just as well, and even better, than we do now'" (Holzer 2004, p. 266). Again, then, Lincoln uses repetition to openly incur responsibility for the veracity of his claims and the propriety of his conduct, and thereby to pressure addressees – even those who view him as "weird, rough, and uncultivated" – to give his potential candidacy serious attention or risk criticism for poor citizenship. Moreover, by openly impugning Douglas' conduct, he creates conditions for addressees to reason that he would not risk Douglas' wrath unless he had made a responsible effort to assess Douglas' claims and conduct.

4. Conclusions

In short, in the *"Cooper Union"* speech Lincoln uses repetition to openly incur responsibility for the veracity of his claims and the propriety of his conduct, and to put addressees at risk of criticism for not seriously attending to his candidacy for the Republican nomination for the office of U.S. President. A normative pragmatic perspective explains how repetition may be designed to work in argumentation by considering both sides of the rhetorical transaction – speaker and audience – and helps to explain why repetition pressures even reluctant addressees to manifest serious consideration of Lincoln's merits as candidate for the Republican nomination for U.S. President.

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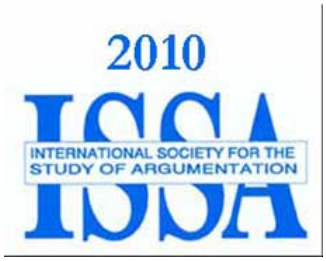
ISSA Proceedings 2010 – The Argumentum Ad Hominem In A Romanian Parliamentary Debate



1. Preliminary remarks

This paper **[i]** is an attempt to apply the extended pragma-dialectical theory of strategic maneuvering in argumentative discourse (van Eemeren 2010) to the particular case of the *argumentum ad hominem*, using the data provided by a debate in the Romanian Parliament (April 19, 2007). The debate had on its agenda the proposal of President Trajan Băsescu's suspension from office, a proposal initiated by the Social Democratic Party, the main opposition party at that time.

Taking as a starting point the idea of the context-dependency of different communicative practices (van Eemeren 2010, p. 129), we shall focus on those aspects of the debate under consideration which have an impact on the evolution of the argumentative processes. The next step will be the reconstruction of the debate as a critical discussion, keeping in mind the relationship between the four stages of a critical discussion as an ideal model: the confrontation stage, the opening stage, the argumentation stage and the concluding stage, and their empirical counterparts: the initial situation, the starting points, the argumentative means and the outcome of the argumentative discourse (van Van Eemeren 2010, p. 146).

In defining the fallacies in general, we shall make reference to the basic concept of strategic maneuvering; the violation of one (or more) critical discussion rule will be the criterion used to distinguish the main types of fallacious moves. The analytical part proper will discuss and comment the way the three basic variants of the *ad hominem* arguments are actualized in the considered debate.

2. Argumentative processes in the considered parliamentary debate

The considered debate is a concrete speech event representing the communicative activity type of the parliamentary debate, which belongs to the domain of political communication. Its specific goal is to scrutinize the President's

performance (consisting of his policies and actions) and accordingly to evaluate it as being up to constitutional standards or not. Given the quite uncommon topic of this debate, beside the general conventions for conducting a certain form of parliamentary activity, a number of distinctive conventions can also be noticed. They design a special format of this debate.

Debating the proposal of suspending the President from office was the unique point on the agenda of a joint session of the two Chambers of the Romanian Parliament. Even if parliament is typically a confrontational setting, the case under consideration illustrates a particularly hostile form of parliamentary argument, engaging two polar groups: the President's supporters (his former party fellows**[ii]**) and his opponents (the members of all the other parliamentary parties). The representatives of these two groups were given approximately the same amount of time for their interventions, the Chairman of the session keeping a strict record of the timing.

Participants' positions are completely predictable, as predetermined by their party membership. The speeches were written (or at least sketched) in advance (usually, by specialized teams). Consequently, they appear as basically monological in nature, even if they could make reference to certain definite adversaries or anticipate their position.

The attempt to reconstruct this debate as a critical discussion brings forward some particular aspects determined by the above described specific features of the context where argumentation takes place. The standpoint at issue could be phrased as "the President should be suspended from office because he infringed the Constitution". The confrontation stage is mostly implicit, as involved in the definition of the activity type represented by the considered speech event. The difference of opinion is already included on the agenda of the parliamentary session.

Practically, the discussion starts with the expression of the commitments of the two parties, that serve continuously as a frame of reference for the arguers in the rest of the discussion. This can be seen as the opening stage.
The participants' roles are preassigned by the procedural institutional rules. The protagonist's role is played by the President's opponents (as authors of the suspension proposal), starting with the leader of the Social Democratic Party. The President's supporters play the antagonist's role; they attack the protagonist's

standpoint concerning the President's status and performance, and express a negative standpoint with regard to his suspension from office.

In the argumentation stage, the members of each group successively present their pros and contras. One can notice a certain uniformity of the arguments advanced by the representatives of the same group. Most of the arguments are connected with the fact that the President explicitly defined himself as a "president-player". The protagonists consider this definition as contravening with the constitutional requirements. In the antagonists' opinion, the President's involvement in solving a large diversity of problems is a positive feature of his performance. Mutual concessions lack completely.
Accordingly, the concluding stage does not bring a change in the initial position of the two groups. The dispute is not resolved by the parties involved, but settled by the final vote of the MPs, whose decision is mandatory for everybody.

The genre of communicative activity implemented by the considered speech event is mainly the deliberation. Still, there are some special aspects that should be mentioned. As usual in a public debate, it is not each other that parties try to convince, but the audience that determines the final outcome. This feature brings the case dealt with close to the adjudication genre (see also Ieţcu-Fairclough 2009, p.136). Moreover in this case, when the speakers' main target was not represented by the insiders (the MPs who did not take the floor), as their voting decision was predictable, depending on their party affiliation. Given the institutional regulations, if the final vote is in favor of the President's suspension – as it happened – after 30 days a national referendum should decide on whether he should come back into office or not. The speakers had in view a multilayered audience of outsiders whose future voting decision should be influenced.

3. Strategic maneuvering and fallacies
As van Eemeren and P. Houtlosser (2002, p.132, footnote 4) have put it, reasonable argumentation can occur in all spheres of life, including those where value judgments may play a major part, such as political discourse. This type of discourse has an important persuasive component, and a good rhetorical move becomes effective if justified by the political/ institutional goals (Ieţcu-Fairclough 2009, p. 133).

The concept of strategic maneuvering (see van Eemeren & Houtlosser 2002, and especially van Eemeren 2010) proves to be a very useful analytical instrument. It

defines a discourse management form aiming at diminishing the potential tension between the dialectical and the rhetorical goals, simultaneously pursued by the speakers within a critical discussion.

Strategic maneuvering is affected by institutional primary and secondary preconditions, that may impose some constraints on the topical choices of the parties, on the adaptation to audience demand, as well as on the use of presentational devices (van Eemeren 2010, p. 152). Each form of strategic maneuvering has its own continuum of sound and fallacious acting (van Eemeren & Houtlosser 2002, p. 142). One cannot draw the boundaries between sound and fallacious strategic maneuvering in different macro-contexts in exactly the same way (van Eemeren 2010, p. 199).

Fallacies involve a derailment from the sound strategic maneuvering, by the violation of a pragma-dialectical rule in a certain stage of a critical discussion (van Eemeren, Garssen & Meuffels 2009, p. 28). The interpretation of an argumentative move as sound or fallacious always depends on the communicative context, as these moves are instances of „situated argumentative acting" (van Eemeren & Houtlosser 2002, p. 142). Fallacies are considered prejudicial for the realization of the general goal of a critical discussion to resolve the difference of opinion on a certain issue (van Eemeren 2010, p. 192). Understood as part of a normative theory of argumentation, they are treated as "faux pas" (van Eemeren 2010, p. 193). Usually, the strategic maneuvering gets derailed when arguers' commitment to reasonableness is neglected in favor of their eagerness to achieve effectiveness (van Eemeren 2010, p. 198).

Within the political discourse it is particularly difficult to distinguish between sound and fallacious strategic maneuvering (Zarefsky 2009, p. 120). This happens because, in this case, the balance between the arguers' dialectical and rhetorical goals is quite unsteady, given the fact that for most arguers winning a heterogeneous audience and gaining image is more important than committing to the critical ideal of a discussion.

4. The ad hominem arguments in the considered parliamentary debate

Ad hominem arguments belong to the class of emotional arguments (along with *ad misericordiam* and *ad baculum*). They involve a derailment of strategic maneuvering and accordingly are characterized as fallacies.

Van Eemeren, Garssen & Meuffels (2009, p. 6) define *ad hominem* as the fallacy of attacking the opponent personally instead of responding to the actual arguments put forward by the opponent in support of a standpoint. It involves a violation of the Freedom Rule, the first rule for the resolution of differences of opinion, "by hindering the expression of a standpoint or doubt in the confrontation stage through a personal attack that prevents the other party from fulfilling his role in a critical discussion" (van Eemeren 2010, p.201, footnote 18). In other words, parties should not prevent each other from presenting standpoints, putting forward arguments or expressing doubts or other forms of criticism. Affecting the personal liberty of the other party involves also discrediting his expertise, impartiality, integrity or credibility (van Eemeren 2010, p. 196).

Defining the *argumentum ad hominem* in connection with the violation of the first rule of the critical discussion, pragma-dialectics diverges from the traditional definition of this class of arguments, restricting it "to the fallacious cases of strategic maneuvering" (van Eemeren 2010, p. 201).
It should be added that when analyzing the fallaciousness of the *ad hominem* arguments the primary as well as the secondary preconditions of a certain communicative event type must be taken into account. In the considered case, they are represented by the general formal and procedural preconditions of a plenary debate in a Parliament, well known and accepted by the participants, and the informal and substantial preconditions (as, for example, serving the interests of a certain political party). These preconditions could explain, for example, why the antagonists use more *ad hominem* arguments than the protagonists or why their attacks are directed mainly not towards a certain opponent, but towards the whole group supporting a different standpoint. Being a numerically inferior group, their defeat in the final vote is foreseeable. As they could remain in power provided that the President comes back into office after the national referendum, they are interested in discrediting their adversaries, undermining their credibility.

There are three variants of the *argumentum ad hominem*: (a) the abusive, (b) the circumstantial and (c) the *tu, quoque* variants. The first variant involves a direct personal attack where one party casts doubts on the individual or moral quality of the other party, trying to undermine his credibility. The second variant involves an indirect attack, based on references to special circumstances bringing forward the suggestion that the standpoint or the arguments of the other party are not

motivated by rational criteria, but by certain personal interests. The third variant involves a conflict in the positions expressed by the other party on different occasions: either he lacks consequence or his acts contradict his affirmations.

Most of the *ad hominem* arguments in the considered debate illustrate the circumstantial variant. They are used by the antagonists:
(1) It is in fact some people who have been disturbed from their business, taking revenge over the one who had systematically jeopardized their games.
(2) The initiators of the suspension process don't care too much for the Constitution or for the country and the people. What motivates them is their own interest, unfortunately one that is mean and dirty.
(3) At a certain moment, it seemed that these so-called knights of the justice from different parties put on their shining armor, mounted on white horses and started brandishing the arms of the democracy. Eventually, it turned out that the glorious cortège was a masquerade concocted by a bunch of barons who have been constantly harassed by this Trajan.

The President's supporters deny the legitimacy of the President's adversaries to criticize his performance, discrediting their impartiality. The adversaries are not animated by the ideal of serving the national interest, but have personal reasons for demanding President's suspension: in his direct and objective manner, the President brought to light their onerous combinations, their corruption or unmasked some of them as crypto-communists. This is an attempt to stop the discussion in the confrontation stage, eliminating the political adversaries as credible discussion partners. The presentational devices vary from the simple definition of the attacked group (ex. 1) to rude evaluative expressions: *mean*, *dirty* (ex. 2) or even the use of a complicated ironic allegory (ex. 3)

There are not too many examples of the *ad hominem* abusive variant. They appear in the speeches of President's opponents:
(4) From the viewpoint of the President's supporters there was nothing good before, all starts with Mr. Băsescu's mandate and I cannot accept that and I believe that no mentally sound person over two and a half years can accept that.
(5) I am sick and tired to accept labels like "the Mafiosi's revenge", "pack", "hyenas" and so on from the part of some good-for-nothing, who don't understand that I respect their right to vote against the suspension and I don't insult them, and I don't criticize them; it is their right and I have the same right; and it should be normal that they respect my right to express my opinion.

(6) And because I don’t like to owe anything to anybody, honorable Mr. Vasile Blaga, no, our parties did not gather against the President, but around the Constitution. It is a change of stress. Of course, you have the freedom of expression, we are living in a democratic state.

In example (4), the target of the attack is the credibility of the adversaries’ viewpoint. The sharp irony is the presentational device exploited by the speaker. In example (5), a negative label is applied to the adversaries: *good-for-nothing*. One can notice also that the speaker uses some formal aspects of the adversaries’ discourse: its stereotypic character, the vulgarity of its language, to anchor his attacks. The final part includes a metacommunicative comment on the issue of the freedom of expression. The parallel between the attitude of the two groups regarding this matter serves also as a means of criticizing the rigidity of the adversaries’ views. In example (5), the attack is directed towards a definite member of the adversarial group. It has the form of a correction act, strategically presented in the following metacommunicative comment as non-impositive.

The only example of the *tu, quoque* variant of *ad hominem* includes an attack directed towards Mircea Geoană, the president of the Social Democratic Party, who presented the suspending proposal:
(7) Yesterday, the president of the same SDP, tried to destabilize and compromise four institutions of the state. Applying the same logic that is applied to the President, Mircea Geoană should also suspend himself from office.

The speaker tries to cast doubt on the honesty and impartiality of an important adversary, revealing the fact that the accusations he stated against the President are equally valid in his case.

5. Final remarks
Writing this paper was to us an opportunity to reflect on the general problem of the relationship between an ideal model: the standard pragma-dialectical model (van Eemeren & Grootendorst 2004) and its actualization in a specific situation and context, that is on the relationship between a theoretical construct and the reality modeled by it. At the same time, the analysis of a concrete speech event created a good opportunity to determine and evaluate the impact of the institutional primary and secondary preconditions on the possibilities of strategic maneuvering and to explain the presence of fallacious argumentative moves. We realized the importance of the concept of strategic maneuvering in integrating the

theoretical and practical aspects of argumentation. At the same time, relating the fallacies to the standards expressed in the rules for critical discussion appeared as an appropriate way to avoid subjectivity in distinguishing between sound and fallacious moves.

NOTES

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[ii] In Romania, the President is obliged to resign from his political party after he had been elected.

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ISSA Proceedings 2010 – 'If That Were True, I Would Never Have …': The Counterfactual Presentation of Arguments that Appeal to Human Behaviour

1. Introduction

In 2008, the Dutch Parliament held a debate on embryo selection. In this debate, the Christian political parties adopted a negative stance towards embryo selection. The newspaper *NRC Handelsblad* reported the debate citing a few reactions from a 23-year old girl who had watched it from the gallery. The girl countered the claim, made by the Christian Union, that more attention should be paid to the medical treatment of cancer, by saying:

(1) *"If my disease were treatable, I would not have had my breasts amputated."* (*NRC Handelsblad*, 5/6/08)

The standpoint in this argument is that the hereditary form of aggressive breast cancer from which this girl is suffering is not treatable. This standpoint is supported by assuming that the opposite standpoint is hypothetically true for the moment, and then deducing an implication from it that is falsified by reality. The implication is that the girl would not have had her breasts amputated. This implication is falsified in the implicit argument – that states the implicature of the counterfactual statement – that the girl has had her breasts amputated.**[i]** In a schematic reconstruction of this argument based on the pragma-dialectical method, the standpoint has number 1, the explicit argumentation 1.1 and the element that remains implicit 1.1':

(1. My disease is not treatable)

1.1 _____ &If my disease were treatable, I would not have had my breasts amputated	1.1'I have had my breasts amputated	

The reason this girl gives as a support for her standpoint is remarkable for several reasons, but I'm interested in the fact that it is formulated with a counterfactual *If…then*-sentence. I have been studying this way of formulating an argument – or, in other words, this *presentation mode* of an argument – for some time. Over the years I have gathered a wide collection of arguments presented in the counterfactual mode, examples that I have found in newspapers and sometimes heard on radio or television and examples that my students have found for me. A large part of my collection consists of examples in which an appeal is made to human behaviour, as in the above argument displaying the girl's opinion about whether breast cancer is a treatable disease.

In this paper I will discuss some reasons why it is strategic to present an argument with a counterfactual *If…then*-sentence. It has often struck me that arguments in which an appeal to behaviour is made, are frequently presented in this way. From the perspective of the theory of strategic manoeuvring (van Eemeren 2010; van Eemeren & Houtlosser 2002) this presentation mode of an argument can be considered to be a strategic choice for formulating an argument. This would mean that this presentation mode was chosen for these arguments for good reason, namely to make it easier for them to be accepted in the evaluation procedure. To answer my question I will first give a more precise description of the arguments in which an appeal to behaviour is made and discuss their evaluation criteria. Then I will address the issue of their presentation mode.

2. Arguments that appeal to human behaviour

In my collection of arguments in which an appeal to human behaviour is made, an appeal such as this is made to argue the truth or falsity of a descriptive standpoint.[ii] I have divided the examples in my collection into two categories based on the criterion of whose behaviour is being referred to.

In the first category the protagonist him/herself refers to his/her own behaviour. An example of this is the girl's argument about the medical treatment for cancer,

in which the proposition of the standpoint describes a current state of affairs. Besides this more general type of standpoint, the proposition can also contain a more particular description of a state of affairs. An appeal to behaviour is often used to argue that the person or group that has displayed the behaviour has certain intentions or emotions. An example of an argument with a standpoint such as this can be seen in an interview which was conducted with an organizer of music parties called 'Technootjes':
(2) "I don't do this for commercial reasons. You can see this from my bookings, because *otherwise [if I did this for commercial reasons] I would have booked bigger names*." (http://3voor12.vpro.nl/artikelen/artikel//40769443)

The second category of arguments in which an appeal to behaviour is made deals with the behaviour of a person other than the arguer. This other person is often the antagonist, but (s)he may also be someone who is the topic of discussion. In this category the same distinction can be made between standpoints in which the proposition expresses the existence or absence of a general state of affairs, and standpoints in which the proposition is about the intentions or emotions of the person whose behaviour is referred to. An example of the first was put forward by Thomas Dekker, a former member of the Rabo cyclist team, who was accused of using dope. Although Dekker is currently suspended for using dope, when he put forward the argument, in an interview in 2005, only an uncorroborated accusation had been made. Dekker denied the accusation in the following way:

(3) "If there really was a problem, Rabo would not have put me [in the Sachsen Tour], but would have fired me immediately." (*NRC Handelsblad*, 23/9/08)

An example of such an argumentation supporting the standpoint how likely or unlikely someone's intentions or emotions are was put forward by someone who responded to a complaint made by the so-called Party for Freedom – the political party of Geert Wilders. The complaint was that the other political parties in the Dutch city Almere had debarred them from forming a coalition. The arguer questions whether the PVV really intended taking a leading role in the city council of Almere, saying:
(4) "*If you really had wanted this, you would have made an effort to negotiate a lot more* (…). If everyone were to keep the position they held in the campaign, a council will never be formed." (*Het Parool*, 19/03/10)

In this argument, the arguer questions the veracity of the intentions or emotions

that the one whose behaviour is referred to claims to have. The argument put forward by Robert Dekker shows that an arguer can also attribute intentions or emotions to the person whose behaviour is referred to.

3. The counterfactual presentation mode

The arguments that I have discussed so far were presented with a counterfactual *If…then*-sentence. They could also have been presented without one. Formulated without a counterfactual *If…then*-sentence, the above arguments would then read:

(5) My disease is not treatable, because I have amputated my breasts.
(6) I don't have commercial aims, because I don't book big names.
(7) There is no problem [I am not guilty of using dope], because Rabo put me on the team.
(8) The PVV doesn't really want to take a leading role in the city council of Almere, because they have not made an effort to negotiate more.

In a pragma-dialectical reconstruction, their implicit inference licenses read something like this:

(9) If a person has her breasts amputated as a precaution against a certain disease, this indicates that the disease is not treatable.
(10) If organizers of events have commercial aims, they will book big names.
(11) If the management of a cyclist team gives a team member a place on a tour, this indicates that this cyclist has not been using dope.
(12) If political parties do not make an effort to negotiate more, this indicates that they are not really interested in taking part in the city council.

These arguments all have the schematic structure of *X*, because *Y*, with an implicit inference license that connects the argumentation with the standpoint, reading *If Y, then X*. See, for example, the pragma-dialectical reconstruction of the PVV-argument:

1.The PVV does not really want to take a leading role in the city council of Almere *(–X)*

.1.1_____ They have not made an effort to negotiate more*(-Y)*	1.1' If political parties do not make an effort to negotiate more, they do not really want to take a leading role in the city council*(If –Y, then –X)*	

If we compare this with the presentation mode using a counterfactual *If…then*-sentence, then the latter obviously has a different structure:

1. The PVV does not really want to take a leading role in the city council of Almere *(–X)*	
1.1_____ If they had really wanted this, they would have made an effort to negotiate a lot more(*If X, then Y*)	& 1.1'They have not made an effort to negotiate more *(-Y)*

The elements that both arguments consist of are more or less the same, although there is a difference with regard to the issue as to whether the *If…then*-sentence – the inference license – contains negations. The argument with the counterfactual *If…then*-sentence has an inference license that reads *If* [not standpoint], *then* [not argumentation]. Or, in other words, in the *if*-part of the inference license the standpoint is denied and in the *then*-part the implicit element is denied. In the inference license of the presentation mode without a counterfactual *If…then*-sentence, the antecedent of the inference license repeats what is stated in the argumentation and the consequent repeats what is stated in the standpoint.**[iii]**

In Jansen (2007b; 2007c; 2008; 2009a; 2009b) and Jansen, Dingemanse & Persoon (2009), for each of the three pragma-dialectical types of argument (symptomatic, causal and analogical) it is hypothesized whether the presentation mode with a counterfactual *If…then*-sentence is a more advantageous way of

formulating an argument than a presentation mode without one. Using the theory of strategic manoeuvring as my theoretical framework, I propose that, along with all the other reasons that determine which of these two presentation modes is chosen, rhetorical motives have a role to play. That is: arguers will presumably choose to formulate their arguments in the most convincing way. I start with the assumption that the arguments that I have discussed so far were formulated with a counterfactual *If…then*-sentence to easily pass through the evaluation procedure. The question then is: what would put this presentation mode before the other one? To answer this question, I first want to examine what arguments that appeal to human behaviour actually try to argue and how we should evaluate them. I will then turn to the issue of their presentation mode from the perspective of the evaluation criteria and address the question as to whether the counterfactual presentation mode hinders the critical testing of such arguments.

3.1. Evaluation criteria for arguments that appeal to human behaviour

Arguments in which an appeal to human behaviour is made, seem to fit descriptions of the antique argument from plausibility, known in classical rhetoric as the *eikos* argument. These arguments allude to generally held views on how people act under certain circumstances or as a result of their state of mind (Aristotle, a.o. 1357a35-157b; *Rhetorica ad Alexandrum*, 1428 a 25 ff.). And because of these shared views on what is likely behaviour, we can argue about the (un)likelihood of someone's state of mind (intentions or emotions) or of a certain (general) state of affairs. In the examples that were discussed above, an appeal is made to three ideas: that women will usually try anything to avoid having their breasts amputated, that if you really want something, you do your best to get there (the party organizer; the PVV), and that no cyclist team management would like bad publicity because of dope users in their team (Rabo cyclist team). As it is acknowledged by the authors of the classical handbooks, there are, of course, exceptions to these general principles about how people usually behave, but the arguments that are based on them appeal to the most likely patterns of behaviour exhibited under normal circumstances.[iv]

Braet (2004; 2007, p. 73) and Walton (2002, a.o. pp. 107; 119; 326) have characterized the classical argument from plausibility as a plausible causal or symptomatic generalization about human behaviour. This means that an evaluation of such argumentation would either depend on the issue of whether it is likely or not that certain behaviour is a sign of a certain state of affairs or a

certain state of mind. Or it depends on whether or not it is likely that a certain state of affairs or state of mind could have caused certain behaviour. But if we are going to examine these arguments critically, it becomes clear that the evaluation of arguments in which an appeal to behaviour is made, should involve more. For one thing, rather than the generalized principle about human behaviour itself, it is the applicability of this principle to the person whose behaviour is referred to, that plays a role in the evaluation. After all, a critic can always say that the character traits of this person or the circumstances that this person is in, make it unlikely that (s)he has acted in the way that people generally do. The PVV may be a political party which behaves differently from other parties because they are rather inexperienced. And the organizer of the music parties called Technootjes may behave differently because he lacks the skills necessary to persuade big names to come to his party. So, arguments in which the standpoint expresses the intentions or emotions of the person whose behaviour is referred to, should be evaluated by taking this person's character into account. Rather than querying the likelihood of how people in general would behave in a certain situation, the question must be asked as to whether this particular person would be likely to behave in this way in such a situation.

Another factor also plays a role in the evaluation of arguments in which an appeal to behaviour is made. This factor is especially applicable to arguments that have a standpoint in which a state of affairs is expressed and concerns the fact that this state of affairs is always an *estimation* of the state of affairs by the one whose behaviour is referred to. The argument used by the Rabo cyclist Thomas Dekker claims that because Rabo did not fire Dekker, this indicates that Dekker had not been using dope. The appeal to behaviour consists of the assumption that if a cyclist team management knows about dope usage, they would fire the cyclist in question. But this assumption would never support the standpoint. After all, if Rabo thinks that Dekker has not been using dope, this is certainly no guarantee that he has indeed not been doing so. This conclusion seems to reveal the weak spot of all the arguments that have a standpoint in which a state of affairs is expressed. After all, the state of affairs expressed in a standpoint is always an *estimation* of the state of affairs by the one whose behaviour is referred to.

What this means is that in order to evaluate arguments in which the standpoint expresses a general state of affairs, the relevant question is whether the person whose behaviour is referred to can be considered to be a competent or

knowledgeable source. We have to consider whether this person has the capacity to make a sound judgment of the state of affairs expressed in the standpoint. The argument of the girl who had her breasts amputated shows that such an evaluation does not have to result in a negative judgement per se. The state of affairs expressed in the standpoint of the girl's argument – that there is no medical treatment for hereditary aggressive breast cancer – is actually the estimation of this state of affairs by this individual girl. So why should we believe her? Well, we have pretty strong reasons to believe her. In fact, we would probably believe any person who had had her breasts amputated. It is very unlikely that women would misjudge whether an amputation was necessary, because they would do all they could to get the relevant information. And we also know that doctors will only amputate if there is no other way possible. We can therefore conclude that it is quite likely that the girl is a knowledgeable source.

3.2. Presentation mode and critical examination

Having dealt with the evaluation criteria for arguments in which an appeal to behaviour is made, it is time to discuss the issue of their presentation mode. Many factors may influence the choice of the counterfactual presentation mode (see Jansen 2007b; 2007c; 2008; 2009a; 2009b), but for now I will only address the reasons that seem particularly applicable to arguments in which an appeal to behaviour is made. These reasons are related to the evaluation criteria, according to which the arguer's character or competence have to be judged. They will become clear by discussing two examples of arguments in which an appeal to the arguer's *own* behaviour is made. The first example is an argument from the website Marktplaats (the Dutch eBay):

(13) "These clothes are in good condition; otherwise [if they were not in good condition] I would not be selling them."

The other is put forward by a minister who had sexually abused his daughter. His argument was:

(14) "God approves of what I do. Otherwise [if he did not approve of it] I would not do it." (*Algemeen Dagblad*, 13/03/10)

These arguments, pretty bizarre already, are even more bizarre when they are formulated without a counterfactual *If…then*-sentence:

(15) "These clothes are in good condition, because I am selling them."

(16) "God approves of what I do, because I am doing it."

Now the question is: What makes these arguments more bizarre in the presentation mode without the counterfactual *If…then*-sentence? It seems to me that the latter presentation mode shows very clearly that these are cases of non-argumentation, because they rely completely on an appeal to ethos. The inference license of the first argument is: 'If I am selling these clothes, they are in a good condition'. This statement raises all kinds of questions. First, we don't know anything about this person's character: we don't now what this person's general judgement of the condition of clothes is and we don't know whether we can trust him/her about these specific clothes. Second, the reason that is put forward looks circular because the fact that this person is selling these clothes on the internet specifically raises the question as to whether they are in good condition or not. After all, this is precisely what a potential buyer would wonder about. These problems mean that this argument cannot be evaluated. In contrast, the counterfactual argument brings the appeal to ethos and its circularity less to the fore. Its inference license camouflages the circularity because it suggests new information by calling up a new situation, namely the hypothetical situation in which the clothes are *not* sold. Therefore the argument distracts attention from three facts: these clothes are indeed actually being sold, this situation is being put forward as a reason for their good condition, and this reason cannot be evaluated because, to do so, we have to rely on the ethos of a person whom we do not know. Although the counterfactual argument is a gratuitous argument as well, it conveys the impression that a reason is actually put forward.

The same holds for argument (16), with the inference license 'If I am doing it, God approves of it'. In this non-counterfactual presentation mode, it is very clear that the argument is based on the assumption that this minister knows exactly which actions are approved of by God and which are not. That the minister is a knowledgeable source about God's intentions is supposed to be apparent from the circular reasoning in which an appeal is made to behaviour which both father and daughter know is not right. It seems to be the case that, in the presentation mode with a counterfactual *If…then*-sentence, this dubious assumption is less obvious. In this mode a hypothetical situation is created in which the dubious behaviour is transformed into hypothetical behaviour that the minister would *not* do. As a result, the counterfactual presentation may blur the fact that the minister's argument is also completely based on ethos.

4. Conclusion

Many arguments in which an appeal to behaviour is made are presented in the counterfactual presentation mode. My question was to ask why this mode was used for these arguments. In order to answer this question, I have provided a description of these kinds of arguments and addressed the question as to how they should be evaluated. An evaluation of such arguments cannot consist in judging the plausibility of a generalization about human behaviour alone, but has to take into account the character of the person whose behaviour is appealed to or his/her capacity to make a sound judgment about the topic under discussion. These evaluation criteria may have provided one of the reasons that explain the choice of the counterfactual presentation mode. Arguments that appeal to the arguer's own behaviour may derail in such a way that they completely rely on the arguer's ethos. It is my impression that this derailment comes less to the fore in the counterfactual presentation mode.

NOTES

[i] How this implicature can be derived from a counterfactual statement is analysed by Ducrot (1973, p. 255-256). His analysis starts with the presupposition of the falsity of the antecedent. He combines this with the idea that what is stated in the antecedent is a necessary condition for what is stated the consequent (on the basis of the Gricean Economy Maxim). This combination results in the implicature of the denial of what is stated in the consequent.

[ii] As we will see from the examples, the appeal to human behaviour can only provide evidence for the likelihood or unlikelihood of the state of affairs described in the standpoint. Nevertheless, most arguers who put forward such an argument formulate their standpoints in a much stronger way than their argumentation can account for.

[iii] That both reconstructions still contain the same elements is because they are based on structures that are each other's logical counterpart. The structure of the argument without the counterfactual *If…then*-sentence is comparable to the structure of a *modus ponens* argument. The structure of the presentation mode with the counterfactual *If…then*-sentence is comparable to the structure of a *modus tollens* argument (for more see Jansen 2007a).

[iv] See Aristotle (1975, 1357a35-157b): 'For that which is probable is that which generally happens, not however unreservedly.'

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