

DONETSK NATIONAL TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

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Department of Foreign Languages for Professional  
Communication



**Nataliya Todorova**

# Business Communication: Argumentation

Міністерство освіти і науки України  
Донецький національний технічний університет  
Факультет економіки і менеджменту  
Кафедра іноземних мов професійного спілкування

**Н.Ю.Тодорова**

# **Ділове спілкування: аргументація**

(навчальний посібник для студентів спеціальностей “Міжнародна економіка” і  
“Зовнішньоекономічна діяльність підприємств”)

Розглянуто  
на засіданні кафедри іноземних мов  
професійного спілкування  
Протокол № \_\_\_\_ від \_\_\_\_\_ 2006 р.

Затверджено  
на засіданні ради ІМС  
Протокол № \_\_\_\_ від \_\_\_\_\_ 2006 р.

Донецьк - 2006

# Business Communication: Argumentation

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## РЕЦЕНЗЕНТИ

Кафедра англійської мови для економічних спеціальностей  
Донецького національного університету  
Канд. філол. наук. Г.Є.Бакаєва

ББК 81.2 Англ

Н.Ю.Тодорова. Ділове спілкування: аргументація (навчальний посібник для студентів спеціальностей “Міжнародна економіка” і “Зовнішньоекономічна діяльність підприємств”) - Донецьк: ДонНТУ, 2006. - 103 с. (англійською мовою)

Комунікативна культура сучасного фахівця та його вміння успішно і професійно спілкуватися, переконливо доводити свою точку зору в реальних ділових ситуаціях визначають теоретичну і практичну спрямованість модулю курсу «Ділове спілкування: Аргументація». Викладання модуля англійською мовою, вільне володіння якою є необхідною кваліфікацією фахівця в галузі міжнародного бізнесу, забезпечує знайомство з закордонним досвідом ділової полеміки і практичне тренування риторики та навичок переконувати усно та на письмі.

Посібник наводить теоретичний матеріал щодо значення аргументації в діловому спілкуванні, розпізнавання аргументів, їх форм та типів, засобів оцінки повноти та якості аргументів. Викладені основи побудови критичних міркувань та дані практичні рекомендації щодо написання переконуючих есе. Добірка вправ, яка надана після теоретичних розділів, забезпечує студентам можливість практично опанувати окремими аспектами аргументованої бізнесової комунікації англійською мовою.

Посібник рекомендується як складова частина основного навчально-методичного комплексу курсу “Ділове спілкування англійською мовою”. Він також може бути корисний усім, хто самостійно вивчає ділове спілкування і прагне опанувати навичками переконливої ефективною комунікації англійською мовою.

# Table of Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>2</b>		
<b>CHAPTER 1. RECOGNIZING ARGUMENTATION</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>CHAPTER 5. WRITING AN ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>Basic Notion</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>Structure of an Argumentative Essay</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>Types of Arguments</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Writing a Successful Argument</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>Reaching Logical Conclusions</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>Arguing for Consensus</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>Forms of Argumentation</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>Coherence: Transitions Between Ideas</b>	<b>74</b>
<b>Analysing Argumentation</b>	<b>13</b>		
<b>Complications in Argumentation</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>EXERCISES ON ARGUMENTATION</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>CHAPTER 2. ASSESSING COMPLETENESS OF ARGUMENTATION</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>EXERCISES ON COHESION AND COHERENCE</b>	
<b>Standard Matters in Dispute</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>Cohesion</b>	<b>95</b>
<b>The Order</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>Coherence</b>	<b>99</b>
<b>Coherence</b>	<b>26</b>		
<b>Onus of Proof</b>	<b>27</b>		
		<b>LIST OF SOURCES AND REFERENCES</b>	<b>102</b>
<b>CHAPTER 3. ASSESSING QUALITY: ARGUMENTATIONS AND FALLACIES</b>	<b>28</b>		
<b>General Demand</b>	<b>28</b>		
<b>Types of Argumentations and Evaluative Questions</b>	<b>31</b>		
<b>Fallacies</b>	<b>40</b>		
<b>CHAPTER 4. CRITICAL REASONING</b>	<b>46</b>		
<b>Three Argumentative Appeals: Reason, Ethics, Emotion</b>	<b>47</b>		
<b>A System of Practical Reasoning</b>	<b>49</b>		
<b>Criteria for Evaluating Practical Arguments</b>	<b>55</b>		
<b>Analyzing the Text</b>	<b>59</b>		

# Introduction

The study of argumentation was once one of the seven liberal arts, at the very core of humane learning. Argumentation is a very important subject, as each of you will find yourself in situations in which some knowledge of argumentation is essential.

Both at university and later when you have a job, you will be given assignments to read and write texts, deliver presentations, or take part in debates in which you will try to convince others that your point of view is correct, or in which you will have to criticize another person's argumentation. Many students find this very difficult. That is why we will learn how to set up or criticize an argumentation. To achieve this, we will see how argumentations work. If you see how they work, you will also be able to set up an argumentation yourself.

'Argumentation' is a course in classical rhetoric. This is not rhetoric the way the word is used commonly today, but a course in how to debate, how to influence others by sound reasoning, how to gain support for your position in a disagreement. The objectives of the module are to master the skills of argumentation and persuasion. By the end of the term, you will be able to identify and generate sound arguments on a variety of topics and in a variety of forms, such as the essay, the rebuttal, and the executive summary. You will also be able to identify, categorize and define flaws and weaknesses in written or oral arguments and improve flaws and weaknesses in specific pieces of argumentative writing.

In order to meet the above objectives, we will recollect the basics of standard logic. Your knowledge of argumentation techniques will also help you to solve disputes.

There are many different types of disputes. Of course there is a dispute when two people exchange opposite opinions. But even when one person makes a statement, and another person expresses doubt whether the statement is true, we consider this to be a dispute. So, a dispute is a difference of opinion, a disagreement in the broadest sense of the word.

Basically there are two ways to end disputes: settlement and solution

- *settling a dispute* has always been a very popular way to end a dispute. There are various ways to settle a dispute: war, violence, blackmail, bribery, letting fate decide, or by voting. Another common way is to take the matter to court.
- *solving a dispute* means that both parties try to convince each other that they are right. They do so by giving arguments supporting their opinions. In many companies management does not take decisions by taking a vote, but by exchanging opinions and arguments until consensus is reached. After all, decisions must often be carried out by everyone involved.

Although in many democracies argumentation is considered the best way to end disputes, this does not mean that in these countries disputes are always solved in a rational way. If the interests at stake get too big, many people cannot resist resorting to other means.

The decision to end a dispute by means of debating, for that matter, has certain consequences. As soon as you give arguments for your opinion or proposal, you allow it to be disputed. And that implies that you must be prepared to change your mind.

If you know how to analyze an argumentation, you will be able to read or listen to another person's argumentation and criticize it in systematic way. Everyone takes decisions partly on the basis of other people's argumentations, more or less instinctively.

Later, when you have a job, intuition will not do. You will be expected to account for your decisions. Therefore, you will have to be able to analyze other people's arguments. After all, you will usually not know so much about a subject that you can take a decision without reading texts about it written by other people. These texts will present arguments that you will have to analyze, and criticize carefully.

By the way, in this book 'to criticize' is a neutral word, implying both positive and negative criticism. In a critique you give an opinion about other people's work, and you defend your own opinion.

As I said before, we will mainly deal with analysing texts written by others, because we think that this will also enable you to set up good argumentations yourself.

In this course we will restrict ourselves to *argumenting on policies*, because the decisions that you will have to take in your jobs will often be policy decisions. Furthermore, you will have to write many policy-making texts yourself, e.g. your graduation thesis. You will have to talk about policies as well: persuasive presentations, debates etc. In business meetings you will have to respond to policy proposals by other people. Another reason is that all policy proposals in texts/debates/presentations have more or less fixed structures. This makes it easier to analyze them.

*Set-up of this book.* In chapter 1 we will deal with some basic notions that we will use in this book and we will explain how you can recognize and analyse argumentation. Chapters 2 and 3 are devoted to assessing completeness and quality of argumentations. In chapter 4 we will cover the skills of critical reasoning and show how you can use and evaluate argumentation in a text. Chapter 5 will give recommendations on writing an argumentative essay. The theoretical material is followed by exercises on argumentation and text cohesion/coherence. The provided list of sources and references can be of help to those who may need further information on the issues covered by this book.

## Recognizing argumentation

It is not always easy to recognize argumentation. Statements that resemble argumentations cannot always be regarded as such. And once you have established that there is argumentation, it is sometimes difficult to recognize the different arguments. In this chapter you will learn how to determine whether a piece of text is an example of argumentation or not. But first, let us define some important notions before we can deal with argumentation.

### Basic notions

So far we have used a number of concepts, such as *to argue*, *persuade*, *dispute*, *an argument*, *argumentation* and *dispute* without giving a definition. In everyday use there is not much difference, but if you want to discuss this subject you must use the correct terminology.

One of these basic notions is *to argue*. This means that someone tries to prove that a statement is correct by means of one more other statements (arguments).

To make this concept clearer, we will now give you a definition of *an argumentation*:

*An argumentation is a combination of statements of which one (the opinion or conclusion) is supported by one or more other statements.*

Typical of argumentation is that the statements show a support relation. If I say "The weather is going to be fine today", then this is just an observation, for example when looking out of the window. So, it is not an example of argumentation. But this observation may be used as an opinion or argument, depending on its relation with other statements:

<i>The weather is going to be fine today,</i>	<i>(opinion)</i>
<i>the swallows are flying high up in the air.</i>	<i>(argument)</i>
<i>Let's go to the beach,</i>	<i>(opinion)</i>
<i>the weather is going to be fine today.</i>	<i>(argument)</i>

The word *statement* in the above definition is in itself a neutral word. A statement can be used as an opinion or an argument; it may even not be argumentation at all.

An *opinion* or *conclusion* is not neutral. It has a subjective element. We define it as follows:

*An opinion or conclusion is a view of reality that is not shared by everyone, in other words a statement that is or may be disputed.*

The above implies that by arguing (orally or in writing) one admits the following:

- There is a disagreement (a dispute), or a disagreement may occur.
- The reader/listener is regarded as a person who can be convinced by means of arguments. In other words argumentation is thought to be of use.

A *dispute* is the same as a disagreement, a disagreement about a statement (an opinion). There are two types of disputes:

- One person's statement is doubted by another person, and the first person gives one or more arguments to support his opinion. Here is an example:

*A: I think it is beginning to get more difficult for the university graduates to get a job.*

*B: Why?*

*A: Well, in the past few years there has been an explosion of the university graduates.*

- The second person does more than cast doubt on the first person's statement. He sets his own opinion against his opponent's. This makes the situation more complicated. They both have to play double roles: they dispute each other's opinion and give arguments to support their own. An example will make the situation clear:

*A: I think it is beginning to get more difficult for the university graduates to get a job.*

*B: In my opinion, it is getting easier.*

*A: Where did you get that idea from?*

*B: Well, the demand for the university graduates is increasing because everyone knows by now what to expect from a university graduate.*

In this course we will do mainly with the first type. So only one of the two parties is obliged to give arguments for his opinion.

To add to the confusion, the notion *argumentation* is also used for a combination of several argumentations, together forming an oral or written text of some length. Such an argumentation consists of one main opinion or conclusion which is supported by the rest of the text. In this book we will use the words *argumentative text* to indicate an argumentation of some length.



Now we will explain the notion *'to convince'*. The purpose of argumentation is to convince the listener/reader by means of arguments that a certain opinion is correct. The way in which this aim is achieved is confined to rules.

In everyday language 'to convince' is also used when other methods than arguing are used. In this broader sense 'to convince' means: to make someone adopt a certain view. In that case, the goal is more important than the means. Here are some of the methods that may be used:

- Appealing to the readers'/listeners' needs, emotions or wishes. This is what happens in advertising. The audience's rational capacities are not involved.
- Exerting pressure. Some parents use pressure in an attempt to make their children share their own opinions.
- Making use of one's authority in certain matters. The readers'/listeners are convinced because it is an expert who is saying something.

As you can see, there are many ways of convincing, ranging from rational methods (argumentation) to attempts that can hardly be considered reasonable. It is perhaps better to call the latter persuasion, but the dividing line is hard to define.

By the way, we do not consider the above methods objectionable, and some of them, e.g. accepting the speaker's authority, are quite common in argumentation. Pressure is a common device in international politics and diplomacy. Obviously they are considered to be 'reasonable'.

Other basic terms are borrowed from logic and they include:<sup>1</sup>

**Proposition** can be true or false in an argument, but not alone. It can be a premise or conclusion. It is not equal to a sentence.

**Premise** is a proposition used as evidence in an argument.

**Conclusion** is proposition used as a thesis in an argument.

**Argument** is a group of propositions of which one is claimed to follow from the others.

**Induction** is a process through which the premises provide some basis for the conclusion

**Deduction** is a process through which the premises provide conclusive proof for the conclusion.

In this book we will also deal with forms of argumentation that are not, or not so reasonable: the so-called fallacies or sophisms (see Chapter 3).

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<sup>1</sup> Source: *Writing Arguments: A Rhetoric with Readings, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition*, 2001 Logic in Argumentative Writing <http://webster.commnet.edu/grammar/composition/logic.htm>

## EXAMPLE 1

*"Universities are full of knowledge. The freshmen bring a little in, and the seniors take none away, and knowledge accumulates."*

--Harvard President A. L. Lowell

<b>Premise 1</b>	Freshmen bring a little (knowledge) in
<b>Premise 2</b>	Seniors take none away
<b>Premise 3</b>	Knowledge accumulates
<b>Conclusion</b>	Universities are full of knowledge

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## EXAMPLE 2

(Here, the conclusion of one argument is used as a premise in another. This is very common.)

*"Even though there may be a deceiver of some sort, very powerful and very tricky, who bends all his efforts to keep me perpetually deceived, there can be no slightest doubt that I exist, since he deceives me; and let him deceive me as much as he will, he can never make me be nothing as long as I think I am something. Thus, after having thought well on this matter, and after examining all things with care, I must finally conclude and maintain that this proposition: I am, I exist, is necessarily true every time that I pronounce it or conceive it in my mind."*

-- René Descartes, *Meditations*

<b>Argument 1 Premise 1:</b>	To be deceived ... I must exist
<b>Conclusion of Argument 1</b>	When I think that I exist I cannot be
<b>Argument 2 Premise 1:</b>	deceived about that
<b>Conclusion:</b>	I am, I exist, is necessarily true ... .

## Types of Arguments<sup>2</sup>

When most people think of arguments, they picture two people fighting over different viewpoints. Therefore, many of us feel as if the argumentation process is meant to cause conflict rather than resolve it. But, originally, arguments were invented to *persuade* others to alter or compromise their position on a certain topic.

To persuade your audience to reconsider their beliefs, you must move them from one position to a different one. So you should assess how resistant your audience will be to your position: Are they a neutral audience that is undecided about your topic? Or are they openly hostile to your stance and refuse to see your side of the argument? Below you will find strategies to write for these audiences so you can convince them that your viewpoint is important.

### Classical Arguments

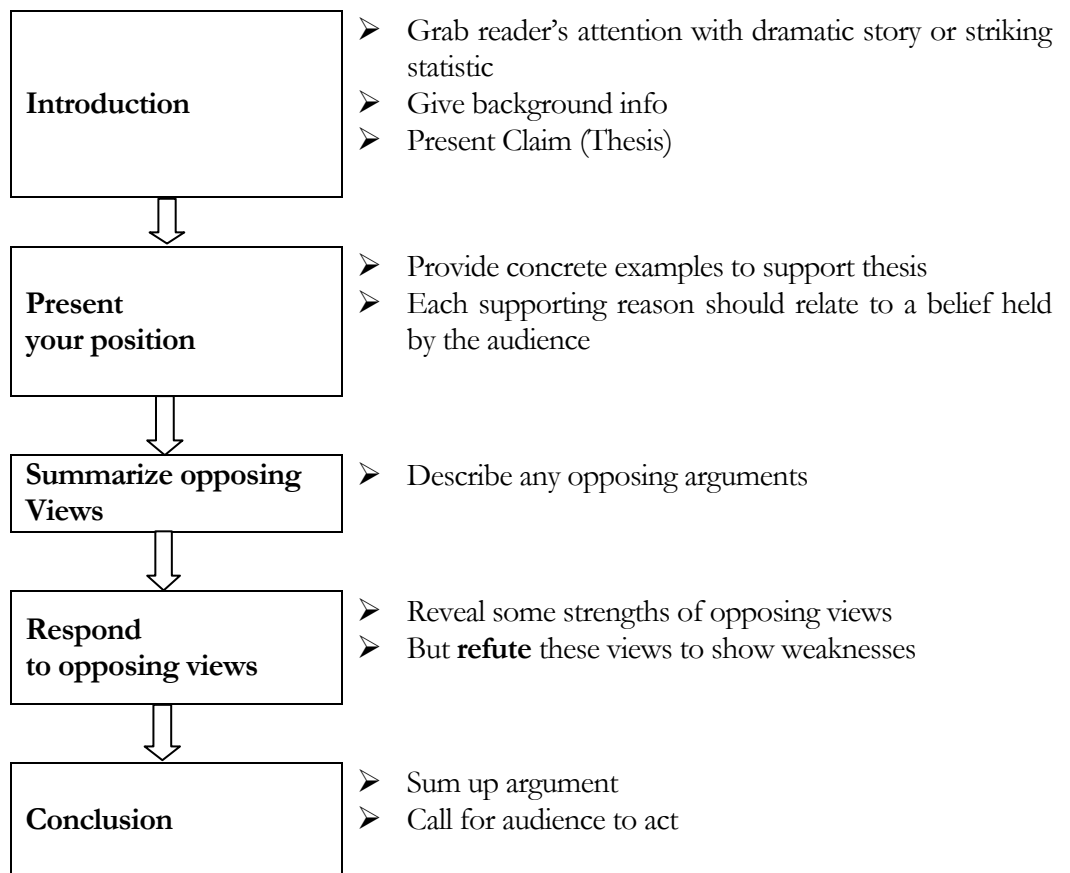
□ Classical arguments were used by ancient Greek philosophers like Aristotle and Plato.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.stark.kent.edu/writing/argument.htm>

- ❑ Classical arguments are written to persuade **undecided or neutral audiences**.

### Diagram of a Classical Argument



### **Rogerian Arguments**

- Rogerian arguments use empathy and self-reflection to connect with audiences.
- Writers who construct Rogerian arguments imagine themselves in their audience's position – they establish common ground with their hostile readers by highlighting shared values and similar goals.
- Rogerian arguments are written to persuade **resistant audiences**. You must soothe their heated emotions and address their side of the story if you want your position to be accepted.

*When Writing Rogerian Arguments, you:*

- Summarize audience's position
- Demonstrate understanding of audience's position before presenting your own position
- Point out areas of agreement between your position and your audience's
- Reach a compromise in the conclusion that will satisfy both you and your audience

## Evaluation arguments

- Evaluation arguments prove how a particular topic is good or bad.
- Topics that could be addressed by Evaluation arguments include:
  - 1.) Are organically-grown vegetables more nutritious than regular ones?
  - 2.) Should the government support programs that promote abstinence or safe sex?
  - 3.) Do students receive a better education at public or private universities?
- Before you write an Evaluation argument, you have to establish a set of criteria that relates to your paper's topic.
- Then you should **evaluate** these criteria.

Stephen Toulmin, a 1950s philosopher, came up with a courtroom model called the **Toulmin system** to evaluate his arguments.

When you use the Toulmin system, you are acting as a **defence attorney** would in a courtroom: you need to anticipate *counter-arguments* from the prosecutors and present *evidence* so the judge will rule in your favour.

## The Toulmin System

**Claim:** the position you try to get your audience to accept (thesis)

**Stated Reasons:** supporting claims that prove your paper's thesis

**Grounds:** Evidence (facts, testimonies, statistics, examples) to prove your stated reasons

**Warrant:** the unstated assumption behind your claim (i.e., the statement of belief or principle)

**Backing:** Evidence needed to support your warrant and to persuade your audience to gradually accept the beliefs and values that inform your claim

## Reaching Logical Conclusions<sup>3</sup>

Consider the two statements:

1. Any member of a varsity squad is excused from physical education.
2. Henry is a member of the varsity football squad.

Our common sense tells us that if we accept these two statements as true, then we must accept the following third statement as true:

3. Henry is excused from physical education.

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<sup>3</sup> This article is reprinted from pages 78-79 of Pearson-Allen: *Modern Algebra*, Book One.

We say that the third statement follows *logically* from the other two.

In drawing logical conclusions it does not matter whether the statements we accept as true are reasonable or sensible. This is because we depend entirely upon the form of the statements and not upon what we are talking about. Thus, if we accept the following statements as true:

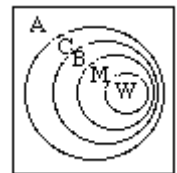
1. All whales are mammals;
2. All mammals are warm-blooded animals;
3. All warm-blooded animals are subject to colds;

then we must conclude that

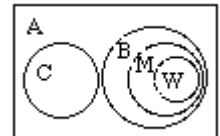
4. All whales are subject to colds.

Do you see that statements 1, 2, and 3 are arranged in *logical order*?

In the diagram at the right the set of whales is represented by W, the set of mammals by M, the set of warm-blooded animals by B, the set of animals by A. The diagram shows that W is a subset of M as required by statement 1, that M is a subset of B as required by statement 2, and that B is a subset of C as required by statement 3. The only conclusion that uses all of our given statements is that W is a subset of C, as asserted by statement 4.



Had our third statement been "no warm-blooded animals are subject to colds," our diagram would have been the one shown at the right and our conclusion would have been "no whales are subject to colds."



If you have read *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* or *Through the Looking-Glass*, you know that their author, Lewis Carroll, delighted in giving sets of nonsense statements which lead to logical conclusions. One such set is the following:

1. Babies are illogical;
2. Nobody is despised who can manage a crocodile;
3. Illogical persons are despised.

When these statements are arranged in logical order we have:

1. Babies are illogical;
2. Illogical persons are despised;
3. Nobody is despised who can manage a crocodile.

From these we can draw the logical conclusion:

4. Babies cannot manage crocodiles.

To draw a conclusion from each set of statements, first arrange the statements in logical order. A diagram such as those in the preceding column may help you.

## Forms of Argumentation

In the previous section we dealt with all the parts that make up an argumentation. Now we will have a look at the structure of argumentation, and discuss three forms of argumentation. As we explained in the previous section argumentation consists of two parts: an opinion (or conclusion) and one or more arguments supporting the opinion. The three forms of argumentation that we will now have a look at differ in their combinations of opinion and argument(s) [3].

### Simple argumentation

The simplest form of argumentation, the basic form, consists of two statements: an opinion supported by an argument (the order maybe reversed).

Example (simple argumentation)

*John will probably drop out of the course,* (opinion)  
*he hasn't done a thing.* (argument)

Schematically it looks as follows:

1. (opinion)
- 1.1 (argument)

As we stated above, the order may be reversed:

Example (simple argumentation, reversed order)

*John hasn't done a thing,* (argument)  
*he'll probably dropout of the course.* (opinion)

So far we have said that a simple argumentation consists of two statements. This does not mean that it is necessarily a combination of two sentences. The opinion or argument may consist of a combination of sentences.

Example (simple argumentation, with an argument consisting of two sentences)

*Surely Becker must be able to beat Agassi.* (opinion)  
*Agassi was defeated in the semi-finals by Chang last Sunday. And everyone remembers that only three weeks ago, Becker bested Chang hollow.* (argument)

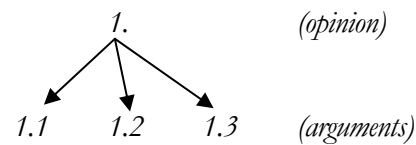
### Multiple argumentation

A multiple argumentation is a combination of two or more simple argumentations: one opinion is supported by two or more arguments. It makes the position of the person who uses them more convincing, because he has more strings to his bow.

Example (multiple argumentation)

*John will probably drop out of the course,* (opinion)  
*he hasn't done a thing,* (argument)  
*his first-semester marks were insufficient,* (argument)  
*and he has cut at least half of the classes.* (argument)

Schematically:



But there is danger in excess. If a speaker/writer gives three or more arguments - without having been asked to give so many - the listener/reader generally gets the impression that there is something fishy about it. "Qui prouve trop, ne prouve rien" (he who proves too much, proves nothing at all), the proverb says.

### Subordinate argumentation

Of course an argument can in its turn be supported by another argument. The writer/speaker will do so when he thinks that his opponent may dispute his first argument. An argument supporting another argument is called a subordinate argument (or: subargument). In an argumentative text subordination is indispensable: it is the only way to write an argumentative text.

In a discussion subordination usually occurs when someone disputes an argument mentioned by someone else. We will give you an example of both.

Examples (subordinate argumentation)

A *I always buy branded clothes. (1.) After all, you get value for money (1.1), because branded clothes keep their shape longer than an obscure brand (1.1.1). For example, look at this Portobello sweater of mine: I have had it for four years and it is still beautiful. Another sweater that had been worn as often as this would have been worn out by now (1.1.1.1).*

B

A: *It's better to buy branded clothes than an obscure brand. (1.)*

B: *Why? Branded clothes are much more expensive, aren't they?*

A: *Yes, but you do get value for money (1.1): branded clothes keep their shape longer (1.1.1).*

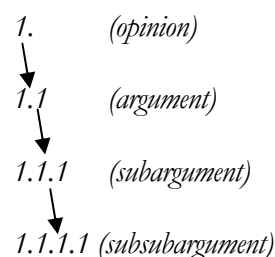
B: *Where did you get that idea from?*

A: *Well, look at this Portobello sweater of mine: I have had it for four years and it is still beautiful. Another sweater that had been worn as often as this would have been worn out by now (1.1.1.1).*

The numbers used in the above example are a notation system that is frequently used when analysing argumentation. It is called the decimal notation system:

1. = opinion  
1.1 = first argument (1.2 = second argument etc.)  
1.1.1 = first subargument (1.1.2 = second subargument etc.)

Schematically (this is called the graphic notation system) both argumentations look the same:



The above diagram makes clear that an argument that is supported by a subargument in fact has two functions: 1.1 is an argument to 1., but is in itself an opinion supported by 1.1.1. So, in subordinate argumentation a statement can be both argument and opinion.

## Analysing Argumentation

So far we have explained some important aspects of argumentation, and shown you the various forms of argumentation. Knowledge of the preceding is essential to be able to analyze argumentations. But how do we know what part of an argumentation is the argument, and what part is the opinion? This is not always easy. In this section we will discuss methods to analyze argumentation.

### For/so test

Analysing an argumentation in a text boils down to determining what support relations exist between the statements. Usually the text contains few signals of these relations. This does not bother the reader, but it may make an analysis rather difficult. How can you analyze an argumentation if the text does not have any signals?

One way to determine whether a statement is an argument or an opinion is by carrying out the for/so test. You should be able to place for or so between the two parts of an argumentation. For example:

*I quit,  
I have done enough for one day.*

It is possible to put the word for between the first and second sentence. This means that the first sentence is the opinion, and the second the argument. Of course the order may be reversed:

*I have done enough for one day, I quit.*

Now the word so may be inserted between the two sentences. This means that the first sentence is the argument, and the second is the opinion. In fact, the for/so test consists of two tests. You either apply the 'for' test or the 'so' test. But you may also use both: if you are not sure that your first analysis is correct, you may do the second test as well. Of course you must reverse the order of the sentences first.

Schematically the for/so test looks like this:

opinion, *for* argument                      argument, *so* opinion

Occasionally both *for* and *so* are possible. In that case the surrounding text must make clear which of the two is required. For example:

*Most dog owners are highbanded people: they enjoy giving orders.*



## Signals

The for/so test is suitable when the text has no signals of the relation between its statements. Before applying the for/so test you should check whether such signals are present. They may be words, word groups or parts of the sentence.

We will discuss the following signals:

- A. Signals of opinions
- B. Signals of arguments
- C. Signals of multiple or subordinate argumentation

At the end of this section we will present a list of all signals discussed.

### A. Signals of Opinions

There are several possibilities; first of all phrases that refer to a large piece of text (macro signals):

*I will first outline the facts and then draw a conclusion*  
*My opinion on this matter is...*  
*This leads to the following conclusion...*  
*These arguments justify the conclusion that...*

The following phrases refer to shorter pieces of text, or sentences (micro signals).

*It follows that...*  
*We may conclude from this that...*  
*All this shows/proves/goes to show that...*  
*That is why...*  
*so,...*

Another way to announce an opinion is by contrast:

*Contrary to what A has said... B will have to admit that...*  
*Although opinions differ on this matter, ...is really the case.*

The following words/expressions are also often used to indicate an opinion:

*I think, according to me, in my opinion/view, I hold the opinion that,... it is advisable that..., the verbs must, should, ought to ; etc.*

For example:

*The burden of taxation is, according to us, much too high at the moment: fraud and tax evasion are increasing steadily.*  
*Taxes must go down. The current burden of taxation paves the way to fraud and tax evasion.*

Punctuation marks may also be used to indicate argumentation, especially the colon.  
For example:

*The red light is burning: he is probably developing his photos.*

The colon in itself does not announce an opinion, it may also introduce an argument. You must carry out the for/so test to analyze the argumentation.

The above signals all announce an opinion, but they do not necessarily imply argumentation! It is possible to voice an opinion, without supporting it, i.e. without giving arguments. In that case there is no argumentation.

There is another matter you must take into account. Some of the above expressions may also be used in an argument. Of course, in that case the statement is in itself challengeable, but the writer/speaker may use it as an argument. For example:

*It is high time that Roald Dahl received the Pulitzer Prize (opinion). In my opinion he is one of our major literary writers (argument).*

### **B. Signals of Arguments**

There are words/phrases announcing arguments as well, some of them again referring to bigger pieces of text (macro signals):

*I have three arguments for this, the first of which...  
This conclusion is based on four arguments.  
I will give two arguments for the proposition that... I have demonstrated in succession...*

Examples of signals used for shorter pieces of text, or sentences (micro signals) are:

*Some arguments for this are...  
This follows from...  
This conclusion is justified by...  
For  
Because  
As  
After all*

Again punctuation marks may serve as signals of an argumentative relation. For example:

*Probably forgot to fill up with oil: the red light is burning.*

In many cases the signals occur between the opinion and the argument, but not always. We will give you some examples:

*You will get a fine (opinion), because you were speeding (argument).  
As John is coming (argument), the party will be fun (opinion).  
Considering the fact that the exams take such a long (argument), attention is bound to wane (opinion).*

### **C. Signals Announcing Multiple or Subordinate Argumentation**

Some signals do not announce an argument or an opinion, but indicate a relation between two or more arguments.

The following micro signals are used to announce two or more arguments (multiple argumentation):

*Besides*  
*Also*  
*Furthermore*  
*Apart from that*  
*All the more since/ because... All the more reason for/ to... Another*  
*What is even more important....*

Subordinate argumentation is indicated by the same signals as the ones announcing arguments.

All the signals mentioned above are useful when you analyze argumentation, but you must not look for them blindly. Remember that signals also occur in texts that are not argumentative. You must apply the for/so test as well.

Here is a more complete chart of the transitional devices we have discussed so far (also called **conjunctive adverbs** or **adverbial conjunctions**) accompanied with a simplified definition of function (note that some devices appear with more than one definition):

<b>addition</b>	again, also, and, and then, besides, equally important, finally, first, further, furthermore, in addition, in the first place, last, moreover, next, second, still, too
<b>comparison</b>	also, in the same way, likewise, similarly
<b>concession</b>	granted, naturally, of course
<b>contrast</b>	although, and yet, at the same time, but at the same time, despite that, even so, even though, for all that, however, in contrast, in spite of, instead, nevertheless, notwithstanding, on the contrary, on the other hand, otherwise, regardless, still, though, yet
<b>emphasis</b>	certainly, indeed, in fact, of course
<b>example or illustration</b>	after all, as an illustration, even, for example, for instance, in conclusion, indeed, in fact, in other words, in short, it is true, of course, namely, specifically, that is, to illustrate, thus, truly
<b>summary</b>	all in all, altogether, as has been said, finally, in brief, in conclusion, in other words, in particular, in short, in simpler terms, in summary, on the whole, that is, therefore, to put it differently, to summarize
<b>time sequence</b>	after a while, afterward, again, also, and then, as long as, at last, at length, at that time, before, besides, earlier, eventually, finally, formerly, further, furthermore, in addition, in the first place, in the past, last, lately, meanwhile, moreover, next, now, presently, second, shortly, simultaneously, since, so far, soon, still, subsequently, then, thereafter, too, until, until now, when

## Complications in Argumentation

**S**o far we have not dealt with the complications that may occur in argumentation. In the heat of the argument the different parts of the argumentation are sometimes given another shape. Nevertheless, you must be able to recognize them. That is why in this subsection we will show you somewhat more complex forms of argumentation.

## Variants of the basic form

The basic form may appear recognizable enough at first sight, but in reality you will come across some variants that may be confusing. We will first give some examples:

1. *John will probably drop out of the course, for he hasn't done a thing.*
2. *John will probably drop out of the course, for if you don't do a thing, you are bound to drop out of the course.*
3. *John hasn't done a thing, and we both know that if you don't do a thing, you are bound to drop out of the course.*

The above sentences are three variants of the same simple argumentation. Variant 1 is the most frequent of the three, but the other two are not uncommon. How is this possible?

Every argumentation consisting of an opinion and an argument is in fact based on a combination of three statements:

conclusion (= opinion)  
argument  
linking statement (= assumption 1.1->1. in the decimal notation system)

The complete argumentation underlying both 1, 2 and 3 is:

*John will probably drop out of the course,* (1)  
*for he hasn't done a thing.* (1.1)  
*If you don't do a thing, you are bound*  
*to drop out of the course.* (1.1->1.)

Usually the linking statement is simply left out, but the argument or even the opinion may be left out too. It is no problem that one element is usually left out. Language users are capable of completing the argumentation in their minds. It is a matter of being economical: the speaker or writer leaves out elements that are superfluous.

Here are the three variants again, in their completed forms:

- 1 *John will probably drop out of the course,* (1.)  
*for he hasn't done a thing.* (1.1)  
*[if you don't do a thing, you are*  
*bound to drop out of the course]* (1.1->1.)
- 2 *John will probably drop out of the course,* (1.)  
*for if you don't do a thing, you are*  
*bound to drop out of the course.* (1.1->1.)  
*[John hasn't done a thing]* (1.1)
- 3 *John hasn't done a thing,* (1.1)  
*and we both know, that if you don't*  
*do a thing, you are bound to drop*  
*out of the course.* (1.1->1.)  
*[John will probably drop out of the course.]* (1.)

So, one of the three elements - usually the linking statement - is implicit. A further complication is that the order in which the elements are put is not fixed. So, the order

is no help when you are analysing argumentation. Instead you must look at signals and apply the for/so test.

Another problem is that an argumentation is often 'condensed'. This means that you must rephrase it to determine that it is really a combination of statements. We will give you an example:

*You, a seventeen-year-old, are not yet allowed to vote.*

At first sight this may not look like an argumentation at all. But it is. It becomes clear when we rephrase it:

*You are not allowed to vote, (1.)  
for you are not eighteen yet. (1.1)*

## Implicit Elements in Argumentation

**A**rguing requires careful and comprehensible expression of one's thoughts. Nevertheless, everyone comes across argumentations that seem incomprehensible. This need not mean that the writer/speaker is a bit soft in the head; the speaker/writer probably did not realise to whom he was speaking/writing or what his audience knew about the subject. In such a case a writer/speaker leaves out certain steps that he thinks the reader/listener knows. But he is wrong: too much is implicit for the reader/listener to understand.

Usually it is possible to find out what element was meant to be the argument, and what element was supposed to be the opinion (for/so test; signals). Sometimes you simply do not have enough information to understand the argumentation.

Example 1 (implicit elements in argumentation)

*A cold front was forecast for Christmas, so I think I will go round to the bank after all.*

There is argumentation in this example (so), but there does not seem to be a connection between the argument and the opinion. Suppose that the person speaking is in doubt whether he will go away on a Christmas holiday or not. The latest weather forecast makes him cut the knot: he decides to go to the bank and book a holiday in a seaside resort. Knowing this, the argumentation makes sense after all.

Example 2 (implicit elements in argumentation)

*A gentleman enters a dress hire shop in Utrecht to try on a dress suit, as he will soon take his Ph.D. The following conversation develops between the Ph.D. student and the sales assistant.*

A: Where *will the ceremony* take place?

B: *In Leiden.*

A: *So you will need a black waistcoat.*

B: ???

From the fact that the ceremony will take place in Leiden, the sales assistant draws the conclusion that a black waistcoat is needed. We can rephrase this argumentation as follows:

*The ceremony takes place in Leiden, (1.)  
so a black waistcoat is required (1.1)*

Now we must tell you that during a Ph.D. ceremony white waist-coats are the rule, except in Leiden, where a black waistcoat is required. The signal so discloses a set of clothing rules with which the sales assistant erroneously assumes the student to be familiar.

The above examples demonstrate how important knowledge of the subject is in order to understand and analyze argumentation. Do not discard an argumentation too quickly. First try to get extra information that will help you to reach a meaningful interpretation.

## Masked argumentation

The opinions and arguments we have dealt with so far were always, sometimes after some rephrasing, recognizable as such. They were always statements that showed a support relation. But sometimes argumentation is more complicated.

Some arguments and/or opinions are presented in another form, e.g. a question or exclamation that on reflection should be interpreted as an argument. So these arguments do not immediately show their true appearance. That is why we call them masked arguments. When analysing a text you may have to unmask such statements first in order to demonstrate that they are arguments. We will give some examples.

Examples (masked argumentation)

*(at dinner) Do use your napkin! Or would you rather go on spilling food all over your shirt?*

*(at an illegal consult during a written exam) Gentlemen, would you please take care? Or would you prefer my taking receipt of your sheets now?*

*Knowledge is power! Why don't you attend a written course?*

In these examples the opinions assume the shape of an order (or exclamation), a question, - and a question respectively. The arguments are a question, a question and an exclamation respectively.

Especially the questions are interesting: they are usually rhetorical questions to which no meaningful answer can be given, since the answer is included in the question. In the first example it is quite obvious that the person addressed does not want to spill food on his clothes.

If you come across masked argumentation in a text, you can analyze it as follows:

1. Rephrase the sentences into statements.
2. Apply the for/so test.

We will do this for the three examples above.

Examples (unmasked argumentation)

*You should use your napkin, for if you don't you will go on spilling food all over your shirt.*

*Gentlemen, you must take care, for if you don't I will take receipt of your sheets now.*

*Knowledge is power! So you should attend a written course.*

## Non-argumentative elements

An argumentative text may contain a lot of ‘frills’. It may be very redundant: a writer repeats information in a different way, because he wants it to be clear, or simply because he has a circumlocutory style.

In many argumentative texts the conclusion is repeated. Often the conclusion is stated both at the beginning and the end of the text.

Furthermore, there are texts that contain digressions or asides: fragments that do not play a role in the argumentation of the text. They have been included because the writer did not select the information carefully, or because the text in fact serves another purpose than argumentation.

There is another category of fragments that often occur, without having a logical function in the argumentation, the so-called concessions. We will give an example.

Example (concession)

*In spite of the fact that all the players gave it all they got, the Dutch team deservedly Lost the football match (opinion): the Germans simply were the better team (argument).*

The concession has a mainly psychological function. The writer is aware that part of his readers will not agree. So, to meet their objections he concedes a minor point. This makes his opinion more acceptable.

In the cases described above it may prove useful to make a schematic summary of the essence. This allows you to leave out everything that is superfluous. And you can phrase the statements in such a way that they link up with each other.

So far we have discussed the phenomenon argumentation, sometimes in great detail. This chapter should make it easier for you to analyze argumentative texts written by other people, so that you may deduce from the text what is valuable for you when you have to make a policy decision.

## Assessing Completeness of Argumentation

In the previous chapter we saw that arguments are used to support an opinion. It also became clear that texts may contain non-argumentative elements. That is why it is important that you are able to find the arguments in an argumentative text.

Once you have found the arguments, the next step is to assess them. In this chapter you will learn how to assess the completeness of a text. After all, a policy proposal should be supported by putting forward all relevant arguments.

If you criticize an argumentative text, it will not do to say "This is a bad text, because it is too short". You must give grounds for this opinion. So in fact, when writing a critique of someone's text, you must write an argumentative text yourself: you must give your opinion + arguments. In this chapter you will also learn how to give arguments for statements like "The text is too short", or "The argumentation is incomplete". Chapter 3 will be devoted to assessing the quality of the arguments.

Of course there are many different policy proposals. Nevertheless, there is a fixed set of questions that may be used for any proposal. We call these questions **standard matters in dispute**, as they are standard issues that occur in any dispute. The person supporting the policy proposal should be able to answer all these questions in the affirmative, and give at least one argument for each answer.

An example of such a standard question is: "Is the proposal feasible?" Suppose that someone wants to propose that all DonNTU students should live within a reach of one mile of the university, so that nobody can be late and give explanations that cannot be checked (traffic jams, bus was overdue). It is obvious that the person supporting this proposal cannot possibly answer this standard question in the affirmative. There are many practical objections: the area is too small; you cannot force people to move etc. Should he nevertheless consider the proposal feasible, he will have to bring forward good arguments.

It is not difficult to answer the above question in the affirmative with regard to another policy proposal, e.g. a proposal to lift the smoking ban in public buildings. It is obvious that it is possible to carry out this proposal. An argument supporting this affirmative answer to the standard question is that it is quite easy to remove all the prohibition signs from these buildings.



In order to assess whether the arguments supporting a policy proposal are complete you may use a set of standard questions (the standard matters in dispute). You simply check whether the person supporting the proposal has answered all these questions in the affirmative. If he has not dealt with all of them, his argumentation is not complete.

There is one exception: sometimes the answer to one of the questions is so obvious that the supporter of the proposal decides not to give any arguments. For the sake of completeness he should explain this decision. But you cannot always blame him for not doing so. For example in a discussion regarding the death penalty, nobody mentions its feasibility. And it is not necessary; it is not an important issue in the discussion.

## **Standard Matters in Dispute**

A person making a policy proposal considers a certain measure desirable. It is possible to give arguments for its desirability by answering six questions in the affirmative. In this subsection we will discuss the six questions.

1. Is there a problem? /Are there problems?
2. Are the problems serious?
3. Are the problems caused by the current policy?
4. Is the policy proposal feasible?
5. Is the policy proposal effective?
6. Do the advantages of the policy proposal balance its disadvantages?

If you assess a policy proposal, you check whether all the above questions have been answered in the affirmative. Questions 1, 2 and 3 refer to the current situation and policy. Questions 4, 5 and 6 are about the proposal (the new policy).

### **The questions**

#### **1. Is there a problem/Are there problems?**

If you assess a policy proposal, you must always ask yourself whether there is a problem at all. For why change anything if the present situation is not a problem? After all, changes take time, cost money and are accompanied by uncertainty. People are not prepared to invest money and energy, if it is not really necessary. Changes are needed only if there are problems. And a policy proposal is a proposal to change something. So, a policy proposal must offer a solution to one or more problems.

When someone makes a policy proposal, the first thing you check is whether there really is a problem. If the problem is not mentioned, the argumentation is incomplete.

#### **2. Are the problems serious?**

The fact that there is a problem is not sufficient. The supporter of a new policy must also demonstrate that the problem is serious in size and/or nature. Ten traffic offences a year are not a serious problem, but thousands are. One hundred people suffering from a cold are not a serious (national) problem, but one hundred people suffering

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from Aids are. A minor problem does not require measures: the money, time and trouble it takes do not balance the 'suffering'.

So, when assessing this standard question you must check whether the supporter of the policy has pointed out that the problem is serious. If he has not, his argumentation is incomplete.

### 3. Are the problems caused by the current policy?

In order to be able to solve the problems, you must first find out who is 'to blame'. Perhaps the **problems can** only be solved by doing away with the current policy altogether, but perhaps slight adjustments to the present policy will do.

Example (problems caused by current policy or not?)

*After a long discussion the maximum speed limit in the Netherlands was raised from 100 to 120 kilometres an hour a few years ago. Those in favour of a higher speed limit said that this was the only way to solve the problem of large-scale speeding offences. But were these offences really caused by the limit at that time? Perhaps the problem was caused by other features of the then policy, e.g. the inadequacy of speeding checks. In that case the then policy (limit of 100 kilometres an hour) was not the cause of the problem. And the problem could have been solved by adjusting the policy, e.g. by increasing the speeding checks.*

In order to assess the answer to this question, you must look for the causes of the problems. Who or what is really 'to blame'/who really caused the problems: the current policy or something else?

Example (cause of the problems)

*Someone discovers that in a particular town there is not one woman working at top management level. That is why he proposes preferential treatment of women in application procedures. In order to defend his proposal he must argue that the problem (no women at top management level) is caused by the current policy (the present application procedure). In other words: So far women have had insufficient/fewer opportunities to be employed than men. Opponents of this proposal may object that not application procedures but women themselves are 'to blame'. Women simply do not have executive abilities, or are not ambitious enough. They will say that the cause is not the current policy, but women themselves.*

The third standard matter in dispute makes you check whether the current policy is the cause of the problems. If the person supporting the policy proposal has not demonstrated this, his argumentation is lacking.

### 4. Is the policy proposal feasible?

The supporter of the proposal must argue that there is sufficient money, manpower, time etc. to carry it out.

Example (feasibility)

*The problem of the lack of prison cells may be solved by building new prisons, but if there is no money, it is no more than a theoretical possibility.*

If the supporter of the proposal does not give any arguments why it is feasible, his argumentation is incomplete.

### 5. Is the policy proposal effective?

Are the problems mentioned under 1 solved by the proposal? This is not as self-evident as it may seem: a smoking ban in public buildings might solve the problem of inconvenience to non-smokers, but if nobody observes it, the proposal is not effective. If the person supporting a policy proposal does not discuss its effectiveness, his argumentation is not complete.

### 6. Do the advantages of the policy proposal balance the disadvantages, if any?

The supporter of the policy proposal must weigh the pros and cons, carry out a cost-benefit analysis. A proposal may solve a problem, but also create new problems. These problems may be as bad as, or worse than the problems that are solved by it.

Example (advantages/disadvantages)

*A pregnant woman suffering from head aches may be advised to use medicines to banish the head aches. But if the medicines also cause an abortion, it is obviously not such a good idea. The problem, the head aches, has been solved, but a much more serious problem has been created. The disadvantages outweigh the advantages.*

When assessing a policy proposal you must check whether the argumentation is complete.

Supporter mentions all possible disadvantages of the new policy and whether he is convincing in his argumentation that these disadvantages do not outweigh the advantages. Obviously the main advantage of the proposal is the fact that the problems listed in Question 1 are solved by the measure. But there are other possibilities. A new policy may have extra advantages, advantages that the current policy does not have. This is called a missed advantage.

Example (missed advantage)

*It is possible to type a report on a typewriter, but also on a word processor. A typewriter also serves your purpose, but it is more laborious than a word processor. The missed advantage of the word processor is an extra problem of the present policy: using the typewriter.*

Something can become a problem in the light of a better alternative. That is why the supporter of a policy proposal should give arguments why the advantages (both the problems solved by the new policy and the advantages missing in the current policy) balance the disadvantages of the proposal.

As we said before, the supporter of the proposal must answer all the above questions in the affirmative, in order to give a complete argumentation for his proposal. 'Complete' of course means that he must pay attention to all six of the questions. But the argumentation is incomplete as well, if he lists three problems in Question 1, but

when dealing with Question 5 he mentions only one problem that is solved by the new policy.

Example (incomplete argumentation)

*Someone lists three problems of the current system of donor donation: there are not enough donors; there is a lot of uncertainty among doctors and the surviving relatives often have to make a decision about donation on behalf of the deceased. Then he argues that his proposal is effective, because it will result in more donors. He does not mention whether the other two problems will be solved as well.*

## **The Order**

The order of the above questions is not arbitrary. As we said before, questions 1, 2 and 3 are about the present situation, and 4, 5 and 6 are about the proposed policy. This is logical: you must have a look at the present first before looking at the future.

But within these two series of questions the order is not arbitrary either. If there is no problem (question 1), you need not ask yourself whether the problem is serious. If the problems are not serious, you need not think about a change of policy. If they are, you check whether the present policy is the cause of the problems. If it is not, there is no point in replacing the current policy by another, so you need not wonder whether an alternative would be feasible. If a new policy is not feasible, there is no point in judging its effectiveness. Not until questions 1 to 5 inclusive have been answered in the affirmative, can you have a look at question 6: the cost-benefit analysis.

Each question presupposes that you answered the previous question in the affirmative. In other words the questions are in a presupposition order.

## **Coherence**

There is another matter that you must take into account: the six questions are closely connected. All the questions refer to the same problem. The problems listed under question 1 determine the other questions. After all, it is these problems whose seriousness must be assessed (question 2). With regard to the same problems the writer must demonstrate that they were caused by the current policy (question 3). And the same problems are involved in question 5 (effectiveness): are the problems solved by the proposal. When balancing the disadvantages and disadvantages the same problems are again at stake (question 6).

The above implies that when you assess an argumentative text, you must take into account that the problems discussed should remain the same. Problems. If a supporter of a policy proposal argues that his proposal solves problem A and problem B, but he fails to show that they exist (1), are serious (2), and are caused by the current policy (3), then his argumentative text is incomplete. Only the problems mentioned under 1 should be solved by the proposal.

#### Example (incomplete argumentation)

*Someone considers it a problem that close to the Railway station many bicycles are stolen. He proposes to place cycle stands. According to him his plan is effective, because 'if everyone puts his bicycle in the stand, it will look much tidier'.*

When criticizing this argumentation, you must check whether the same problem is discussed. This is not the case. At first the writer mentions the problem of the quantity of bikes that are stolen. But when he discusses the effectiveness of his proposal, it has shifted to the problem of the mess caused by all these bicycles. He has not given any arguments that his proposal will also solve the first problem. So his argumentation is incomplete.

#### **Onus of Proof**

As we said before, the supporter of a proposal must be able to answer all set of the questions in the affirmative. Generally speaking, anyone who wants to change a situation must give arguments for this change. After all, it is much easier to retain the current policy. In other words the onus of the proof falls on the person making the proposal. He must 'prove' that all the questions can be answered in the affirmative. 'Prove' sounds very strict: of course scientific proof is often impossible. In this case 'prove' means that he is not allowed to make a statement about any of these questions without supporting his statement with arguments. For the time being it is sufficient if the argumentation is complete, but in the next chapter we will explain how you can assess the quality of the arguments.

The fact that the onus of the proof falls on the supporter of the proposal implies that it does not fall on the person criticizing the proposal. It is sufficient if he casts doubt on an affirmative answer to the six questions. After all, the present situation need not be defended. All he has to do is doubt if there is a problem, if it is serious etc.

#### Example (onus of the proof)

*Someone proposes to replace the Dutch monarchy by a republic. The onus of the proof lies with him. The person criticizing this proposal need not prove that abolishing the monarchy is not feasible or not effective etc. All he needs to do is cast doubt on its feasibility and effectiveness. Of course it is not enough when he merely says: "I doubt the feasibility of the proposal". He must explain his doubts.*

If the supporter of the proposal tries to lay the onus of the proof at his opponent's door, e.g. by saying that he must prove his statement that the disadvantages do not balance the advantages, and then he makes an argumentation mistake, a fallacy. We call this the fallacy of shifting the onus of the proof. In the next chapter we will show you other fallacies.

## Assessing Quality: Argumentations and Fallacies

**Y**ou have been able to read in the previous chapters that the purpose of an argumentative text is always to convince the audience of an opinion. In this book we approach argumentative texts from the point of view of the reader/listener. This reader/listener is a very critical recipient of the message who casts doubt on the opinion of the writer/speaker. He may do so by showing that the argumentation is not complete. Another way is to criticize the quality of the argumentations.

In chapter 2 we wrote that you cannot say that an argumentation is incomplete without giving arguments for that conclusion. The same holds good for the quality of the argumentation. It will not do to merely say "This is a bad argumentation." without explaining why you think so.

In this chapter we will show you how you can assess the quality of argumentative texts. That is why we will pay attention to different types of argumentation. For each type we will present evaluative questions that you may use to determine whether an argumentation is convincing or not.

We will also show you what types of argumentation are almost always abused. An argumentation that is misused is called a fallacy. They are very tricky, because at first sight they may look very convincing.

When criticizing an argumentative text you may point out fallacies in the text, thus undermining the cogency of the writer's argumentation. If you are also able to put forward counter arguments, you will be even more successful. In a debate, your opponent will have to defend himself.

Before discussing the different types of argumentations and the fallacies we will first pay attention to a demand that any argumentation must meet.

### General Demand

When criticizing an argumentative text you must realize that there is a (quality) demand that must always be met:

- Every (sub) argument must in itself be true or plausible.
- If a (sub) argument is not correct, the entire argumentation has no value.

Example (incorrect argument)

*You are allowed to vote, because you are eighteen.*

Suppose the person addressed turns out not to be eighteen yet. Then the argument is not true, and the entire argumentation collapses.

Before we can tell you how you can check whether an argument is true or plausible, we must explain the difference between truth and plausibility. The difference is in the nature of the arguments. If a statement is about facts, it is possible to determine whether the information is true. The above example is such a statement: it is possible to determine whether the argument is true.

Example (factual argument)

*In my opinion another organ donor system should be introduced in Holland. (1.) After all, 90 % of the Dutch have a positive attitude towards organ donation. (1.1)*

This argument can be proved true or false e.g. by referring to research. In other words the information is verifiable.

But there are also arguments that are not factual. They indicate an opinion. It is not possible to determine whether they are true or not. But you may judge their plausibility.

Example (non-factual argument)

*I think that colleague X should be fired (1.) Because he is not a good teacher (1.1)*

It is impossible to determine whether this argument is true or not, as it is an opinion. And opinions differ. The only thing you can do when criticizing this argumentation is wonder whether it is plausible or not.

Having determined whether you will assess the truth or the plausibility of the arguments, you should know how you can assess them. After all, it is impossible to check the truth and/or plausibility of all the arguments. It takes too much time to verify all the sources that the supporter of the policy proposal mentions. And it is not always necessary. This is what you can do:

1. If the supporter mentions a source for an argument, you may check whether the source is reliable, expert and objective we will give some examples.

Examples (judging sources)

- *The Times is more reliable than Daily Mirror.*
- *An advertising leaflet is not objective, because the sender has a personal interest in the message.*
- *TNO (a Dutch organization for Applied Scientific Research) has no personal interest in its conclusions, so it is objective.*
- *Kotler is an expert in marketing, but not in nuclear energy.*

Your knowledge of the source is an indication of the truth or plausibility of the argument.

2. If no source is mentioned, you must first find out whether the argument is a common knowledge or a common sense argument.

In an argumentative text there are always arguments that everyone considers true or plausible. In these cases the supporter of the proposal need not mention any source. Besides, it would damage the legibility of the text.

Common knowledge arguments are factual arguments that everyone knows and believes, without any source.

Example (common knowledge argument)

*The Prime Minister is advocating stricter measures to restrict government spending; (1.) as there is still a considerable financing deficit. (1.1)*

Unless the exact figures are important, the argument need not be supported by mentioning a source: everyone knows that the financing deficit is considerable.

Common sense arguments are non-factual arguments. They are generally accepted value judgments that most people will consider self-evident.

Example (common sense argument)

*The Labour Party thinks more money should be set aside for AIDS research, (1.) since an increase in the number of AIDS victims is undesirable. (1.1)*

The plausibility of this argument is obvious: nobody will say that an increase is desirable. Anyone with common sense will feel the same way.

So, in the case of a common knowledge or common sense argument you may assume that it is true or plausible. If not, you may ask for the source of the information.

3. If there is no common knowledge or common sense argument, you may try to determine whether the arguments are at least plausible. You can do this by checking the following:
  - How reliable is the person supporting the proposal? In some cases you may go by his reliability or expertise and assume that such a person only makes use of true or plausible information.
  - Do the arguments correspond to your own knowledge? (=consistency with knowledge present)
  - Have the arguments been clearly and accurately phrased? (If not, it is impossible to judge whether they are true; so the arguments are weak; in a debate you may ask your opponent to phrase the arguments in a different way.)
  - Are the data statistically correct? (if applicable)



Keeping the above in mind, we will now deal with the quality of different types of arguments.

## Types of Argumentations and Evaluative Questions

As we announced in the introduction to this chapter we will discuss some types of argumentation that are quite common and that often degenerate into fallacies. After reading this section you should be able to recognize and assess the different types of argumentation. The sets of evaluative questions are a device to determine whether an argumentation is a valid one or a fallacy.

For every type we will first give an explanation and an example; then we will present the evaluative questions that you may ask to determine whether the argumentation is valid or not. These questions vary depending on the type of argumentation. If the answers to the evaluative questions are predominantly negative, you may state with reasonable certainty that the argumentation is a fallacy. For every type of argumentation we will give you an example of such a fallacy.

### Analogy

Example (analogy)

*I will probably put on weight again now that I am trying to stop biting my nails. When I stopped smoking I put on five kilos too.*

The first statement is the conclusion. It is supported by a reference to a similar situation (an attempt to stop smoking may be compared to an attempt to stop biting one's nails). The similar circumstances (trying to kick a bad habit/addiction) lead to the conclusion that the second time the same effect (putting on weight) will occur.

The argumentation is as follows: if I put on weight when kicking addiction X, I will do the same when kicking habit Y. Or more generally phrased: if something happened in a certain situation, the same will happen in a similar situation.

This type of argumentation is often used when speakers/writers deal with the standard questions 'feasibility' and 'effectiveness'. Then they draw a comparison e.g. with another country where the measure has already been taken and/or where its effectiveness has already been proved.

Example (analogy when discussing the effectiveness of a proposed policy)

*The system of obligatory organ donation would work very well in the Netherlands. Look at Belgium, where the system has been successfully applied for years.*

### Fallacy of wrong analogy

Analogies are frequently applied where they should not. The most obvious reason why they should not be applied is that the situations are not really similar.

### Evaluative questions:

- Are there important similarities?
- Are the similarities relevant to the conclusion?
- Are not the differences much more important than the similarities?

#### Example (fallacy of wrong analogy)

*I won't get a job after graduating from the University, for my brother has been unemployed for four years too.*

The only similarity in the example is the fact that the two are kin. And that similarity is not really relevant: it does not say anything about the speaker's career. After all the differences are more important: perhaps the speaker is more ambitious; he will have a higher education diploma, times have changed etc.

#### Example (fallacy of wrong analogy)

*A medical examination of the population in order to stop AIDS will have little effect, after all a medical examination of the population regarding tuberculosis did not stop the disease at the time.*

Again the analogy is used to answer the standard question regarding effectiveness. It is doubtful, however, whether the circumstances of the two examinations are similar. The tuberculosis research was carried out many years ago. Medical science has developed since then. Besides the two diseases are very different. Therefore the effects of the two examinations cannot be compared.

### Generalization

#### Example (generalization)

*My neighbour's Renault started rusting very early, and my mother's Renault was covered with rust after one year: all Renaults rust away.*

As you can see, this type of argumentation consists of one or more examples on which a general statement is based. More generally phrased: If something holds good for case a (b, c etc), then it holds good for all cases.

Generalizations and analogies are somewhat similar, but a major difference is that in a generalization there is always a general statement, whereas in an analogy there is a comparison between individual cases. Compare the following examples:

#### Examples (analogy and generalization)

*Before World War II there was an economic crisis, just like there is now. So it is obvious what the present crisis will lead to. (Analogy)*

*Every economic crisis leads to war. Just look at the Netherlands: there was an economic crisis before World War II, and the years preceding World War II were the same. (Generalization)*

Generalizations are often used as an argument for the second standard matter in dispute: Is the problem serious?

Example (generalization when discussing the seriousness of the problem)

*Professional social workers are increasing pressure on volunteers. For example an elderly woman who took care of her demented neighbour had to go through a quarrel with his GP to get a few days off for Christmas.*

Generalizations are also used for the standards matter in dispute 'effectiveness'. Have a look at the following examples.

Examples (generalizations used when discussing effectiveness)

*Medical examinations of the population in order to stop AIDS have no effect. In the US the disease has all but decreased since the medical examination.*

*Pregnancy tests are not reliable: my cousin was not pregnant, according to the test, but eight months later she gave birth to a healthy daughter.*

### **Fallacy of the rash generalization**

The most frequent mistake made by people who use a generalization is that they do not mention enough examples (the sample is too small).

You may use the following **evaluative questions** to determine whether a generalization is a fallacy:

- Are the examples mentioned representative?
- Are the examples relevant to the conclusion?
- Are there enough examples to support the conclusion? Are there any opposite examples?

Always try to find representative opposite examples. That is a quick way to determine whether the generalization is a valid one or a fallacy.

Example (fallacy of the rash generalization)

*Rushdie is a bit crazy and Virginia Woolf was quite mad. In my opinion all writers are crazy.*

It is quite obvious that this argumentation is a fallacy. Even if we leave the question whether the two writers pressure crazy or not aside, they may of course not be considered representative for all writers. Furthermore, the two examples are of course not enough and it is quite simple to mention many opposite examples.

## Causality argumentation

There are different types of causality argumentations. They have a cause/result relation in common.

Example (causality argumentation)

*Profits have risen in the past few years, so employment will probably increase.*

The second statement is the conclusion (prediction that employment will increase). It is supported by an argument stating the cause (higher profits). In other words: from a certain situation (the cause) a certain result is expected (conclusion).

The reverse is possible as well: the argument states the result of the situation mentioned in the conclusion.

Example (causality argumentation, reversed order)

*Do not go skiing when there is so much ice in the snow; you are bound to break a limb.*

Causality argumentations often occur when speakers/writers deal with the standard matter of dispute 'inherence'. After all, that is when the causes of the problems are looked at. We will give you an example.

Example (causality argumentation used when dealing with inherence)

*It is nonsense that banks should reduce the possibility to overdraw one's account, in order to protect their clients. Even if they do, their clients will still be pressed for money, for it is not the banks that are to blame. The people simply lack a sense of economy.*

In the above example the speaker opposes the proposal that banks should reduce the possibility to overdraw. His argument to support his opinion is that the clients are the cause of the problem, not the banks.

Causality argumentations are also used when dealing with the standard matter of dispute 'Do the advantages balance the disadvantages?'

Example (causality argumentation used when dealing with disadvantages)

*Making mathematics an obligatory subject for every secondary school pupil will harm talented pupils: the level will drop because the subject matter will have to be adapted to pupils who would otherwise be unable to keep up.*

## Fallacy of causality

You may use the following **evaluative questions**:

- Is it true that the causes mentioned by the writer/speaker may lead to the predicted result?
- Are there circumstances that may prevent the cause mentioned by the writer/speaker from leading to the predicted result?

## Fallacy of causality/slippery slope

You reject a measure because of its negative results, but it is not at all certain that they will occur. In such a case people tend to keep on arguing wildly: they state that a certain measure will make us go from bad to worse. That is why this fallacy is sometimes called the **fallacy of the slippery slope**.

Example (fallacy of the slippery slope)

*I oppose the introduction of manure accounting for farmers: the farmers might get angry and decide to fill up the "Hofvijver" (the pond surrounding the House of Commons) in The Hague with manure.*

This is a clear example of an unfounded prediction of a result (unless the speaker attended a secret meeting by angry farmers). Besides, even if the result will occur, this is not a decisive argument for rejecting the measure. We will give another example.

Example (fallacy of the slippery slope)

*We should not allow shopkeepers to determine their own business hours. In a little while there will be nobody in the streets during the day any more and that will stimulate crime.*

In this example quite a big step is taken in the argumentation: free business hours will eventually lead to an increase in crime. There is no evidence, however, that these results will occur. This makes the argument, and therefore the entire argumentation, invalid. The only way to make the argumentation valid is by substantiating the conclusion.

Not every fallacy of the slippery slope is equally serious. The 'steepness of the slope' may vary.

Fallacy of incorrect cause-result relation/'**post hoc ergo propter hoc**' (if something happens after something else, so the first thing is the cause).

This fallacy occurs when people mistake a chronological order for a cause-result relation.

Examples (fallacy of 'post hoc ergo propter hoc')

*Ever since that teacher switched over to the statistics section, the statistics exams have become much more difficult. So, I would not mind if he went back to his old section.*

*"John and Mary became vegetarians last fall and they've been sick all winter. The absence of meat in their diets must have weakened their immune systems."*

In this example the new teacher is considered to be the cause of the fact that exams have become more difficult, because this happened after he had joined the section. One thing happens after the other, so the first matter is the cause of the second. This fallacy is a very human, but primitive one: in ancient cultures the arrival of a stranger was considered the cause of the natural disaster that happened afterwards.

## **Authority argumentation**

Example (authority argumentation)

*The marketing mix is not yet an outdated notion, but it must be adapted to modern demands. Kottler said so himself the other day.*

The argumentation is as follows: it authority Y says A, A is true. So the conclusion is supported by pointing to an authoritative source who confirms it.

This type of argumentation is not typical of any of the standard matters of dispute. Authority argumentations will occur in all of them.

## **Authority fallacy**

You may use the following evaluative questions:

- Is the authority who has been mentioned indeed reliable and an expert in this field?
- Does he not have a personal interest in the matter?
- Is not the statement that has been put forward in contradiction with other authoritative sources or other information?

Example (authority fallacy)

*Santa Claus does exist. My father said so.*

Of course the father is not an authority in the field of Santas. Besides, his statement is in contradiction with other authoritative sources.

Example (authority fallacy)

*Kitekat is the best cat food there is. The man in the commercial said so.*

The problem is that the authority mentioned is not really an expert (he is not a researcher) and that he is not reliable, because he has a personal interest in the conclusion (he wants you to buy the food). Besides other sources of information do not share this conclusion (research does not show that Kitekat is the best cat food) and other sources have another opinion (other people in commercials say that their cat food is the best there is).

This type of argumentation often occurs in a negative context: the conclusion is that a certain statement is wrong, and the argument is that the source is not an expert. The same holds good for the following type.

## **Argumentation from quality to judgment**

This type of argumentation is quite common. People judge and condemn in and out of season. Their judgments are often based on mere rumours. That is why the argumentation from quality to judgment should always be critically considered.

Example (argumentation from quality to judgment)

*I do not consider this plan a suitable alternative. Its costs are outrageous.*

In other words: if something/someone shows quality/property X, judgment Y on this thing/person is justified.

You may come across this type of argumentation in reviews, sports columns etc.

Example (argumentation from quality to judgment in a review)

*The choreography of Reflex, the new dance group, is refreshing: new gestures are presented with technical perfection and a surprising degree of humour.*

The quality-judgment argumentation is often used for the first two standard matters in dispute, when the seriousness of the problem must be proved. Whether a problem is serious or not is a matter of judgment. That is why the supporter of the policy proposal tries to prove its seriousness by pointing out certain qualities of the problem.

Example (quality-judgment argumentation used when dealing with the seriousness of the problem)

*There is still a big lack of donor organs in the Netherlands. It is obvious that this is a serious problem: in 1989 the waiting list increased by 2.4 % and the waiting time is now 30 months.*

This type of argumentation also occurs frequently when speakers or writers deal with the advantages and disadvantages.

Example (quality-judgment argumentation used when dealing with the seriousness of the problem)

*Making organ donation obligatory is harmful for our legal system, for it is a violation of the right of self-determination over one's own body and the freedom of speech.*

### **Fallacy quality-judgment**

You may use the following **evaluative questions**:

- Do the qualities mentioned justify the judgment?
- Are there qualities or circumstances that justify another judgment?

Example (fallacy quality-judgment)

*I think Paul is such a softie! (1.) (Judgment) He does not go skiing because of the environment. (1.1) (Quality)*

Assuming that 'softie' is not a positive judgment, it is obvious that it is not justified by the quality mentioned in the argument. On the contrary, it may be considered very 'strong' not to join the majority.

Another example:

*Salman Rushdie must be killed (judgment), for his book "Satanic verses" is insulting for many Muslims (quality).*

This argumentation has raised a dust all over the world, but it is a fallacy. Any group of people can never justify a murder. Furthermore it remains to be seen whether the book was really so offensive. If not, the Muslims themselves must reach another judgment.

Another example, this time from the sports columns:

*The results of the Dutch skating team at the world Championships in Innsbruck in 1990 were disappointing (judgment): the skaters came second, third, fourth and fifth (quality).*

The above example shows how opinions may differ. It is possible to state the exact opposite. The results of the Dutch skating team certainly justify another judgment: to be placed second, third, fourth and fifth is very good.

### **Argumentation from purpose to means**

Example

*Trade and industry, and the government should give part-time and twin jobs a chance. Then a breach of the traditional family pattern of the working man and the housekeeping woman will be possible.*

In this example a measure is proposed (part-time jobs) because it will lead to a desirable purpose (breaking the traditional role pattern). In other words: if you want purpose X to be reached, you must take measure/means Y.

In fact all argumentation applied to policy proposals (whether in texts or debates) may be considered one big purpose-means argumentation. A measure or policy decision is advocated because it will lead to a certain favourable effect. All the other standard matters in dispute may be considered barriers put up by the audience. And you must take the barriers in a convincing way in order to gain the audience's support.

At a lower level it is the standard matter in dispute 'effectiveness' where the purpose-means argumentation is used.

### **Fallacy of purpose-means**

The main **evaluative questions** are:

- Is the purpose indeed desirable?
- Does the means indeed lead to the desired purpose? Does the means violate a generally accepted rule?
- Are there any adverse effects?

Example (fallacy of purpose-means)

*You should take up body-building, because then you will get some muscles.*

In this example the means (body-building) will probably lead to the purpose (muscles). But it may not be such a desirable purpose at all! In this case the context determines whether the example is a fallacy or not. If the person addressed has just said that he would like to have more muscles, this statement is a valid argumentation. If not, it may



or may not be a fallacy depending on the opinion that the person addressed has about muscles.

Example (fallacy of purpose-means)

*You should humour that teacher a bit. You do want a sufficient mark don't you?*

In the above example it is questionable whether the means will lead to the desired purpose. Besides the means is a violation of generally accepted rules, and may have adverse side effects.

Another example (fallacy of purpose-means)

*All students in the Netherlands must be given an annual season ticket. It will make this generation develop a positive attitude towards public transport and that is an important development in view of pollution.*

Nobody will dispute the desirability of the purpose. But it is questionable whether the purpose will be reached. The students may develop a negative attitude because of capacity problems, delays etc.

## Fallacies

In this section we will pay attention to fallacies that have no correct counterpart. These fallacies are argumentations that should be rejected on the basis of logic or ethics. That is why we will not present sets of evaluative questions, like we did in the previous section. You will not need them for the fallacies we will deal with in this section. Once you have recognized them as such, you need not prove that they are incorrect (because they always are).

A fallacy is an error of reasoning. It can be used against you in an argument, but if you are familiar with them, you will be able to refute the fallacious argument. Likewise, if you are clever, you can use them to convince others.

Fallacies fall into two major categories:

**Fallacies of Relevance** - premises are irrelevant to the conclusion.

**Fallacies of Ambiguity** - ambiguous, changeable wording in the propositions

If you point out such a fallacy to your opponent, he cannot but admit that it is a weakness in his argumentation. It is impossible for him to adapt his argumentation e.g. by giving additional arguments, all he can do is leave the fallacy out.

Especially in debates you must be prepared for fallacies. As there is an audience and because the opponents immediately respond to each other, the participants make such mistakes much more easily.

We will discuss the most popular fallacies below and provide the list of examples of many other existing fallacies at the end of the chapter.

## **Personal Attack (Ad Hominem)**

Example:

*The Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries may think that there should be more sympathy for corn growers, but he is the one who withheld information from the House two years ago, so we needn't listen to him any more.*

*"State Secretary of Health Saunders recommends vegetarianism. But Saunders is the same guy who has been arrested on drunk driving charges. I think it's pretty obvious we shouldn't listen to Joe Saunders's advice on diet."*

This is a clear example of an aggressive personal attack that is not connected with the matter in question.

In a personal attack a person is depicted as stupid, inconsistent, bad, unreliable or biased. It is not his opinion that is disputed, but his person. That is why we also call this fallacy 'ad hominem' (a free translation: going for the man instead of the ball).

The effect is that the reliability of the person involved is damaged, and therefore the persuasiveness of his opinion. It is an improper way of eliminating an opponent, because the fallacy is not connected with the opinion involved.

In the above example it is obvious that the fact that this man once withheld information is not at all relevant to his opinion about the corn farmers. His proposal should be judged of its merits not of the conduct of the person making the proposal.

## **Manipulating the Audience (Ad Populum)**

Example:

*People, we should all prepare food parcels for Russia: at Christmas we want to show that we are a generous country, don't we?*

As you can see, the audience is directly involved in this fallacy. That is why it is also called 'ad populum' (directed at the people). The speaker/writer makes an appeal to the emotions and prejudices of the audience. This makes the audience accept his conclusion, even if these emotions and prejudices are not really relevant to his opinion.

Have another look at the example above. The speaker appeals to the audience's jingoism/national pride (our country is generous!). Logically these emotions are a weak argument to decide in favour of food aid. Arguments that deal with the need for food aid are much stronger as regards content, but they may be less effective than an 'ad populum'.

An 'ad populum' is only successful if the audience more or less forms a group. If you appeal to emotions, you must make sure that they are present in the majority of your audience. That is why fallacies are often used in situations where the audience has certain views in common, e.g. at demonstrations or political or religious meetings. It is possible to appeal to positive emotions, such as safety or loyalty, but also to negative feelings, such as fear, greed or shame.

You must be aware of the fact that manipulating the audience is often effective because of the way it is presented: usually the 'ad populum' is not clearly presented as an argument. Look at the example above: the argument is 'disguised' as a question (cf. Masked argumentation). But because of the subtle way the audience's feelings are manipulated it has the persuasiveness of an argument.

### **Straw man: twisting someone's opinion**

Sometimes it seems as if people do not want to reach an agreement. An Eastern scientist once said: 'the highest form of communication between people is talking as much as possible at cross-purposes.' Talking at cross-purposes is quite common in discussions too. It is what the fallacy we will deal with in this subsection is all about.

Example (straw man)

A: This course is really not as difficult as some people say.

B: Well, I do not think this course is easy at all. Just look at all the drop outs after the first year!

In this example B twists A's opinion and replaces it by another. A certainly did not claim that the course was easy, but this is what he is saddled with. A must now make clear that this was not the opinion that he brought up for discussion. If the two opponents do not succeed in getting on the same wave-length, they will talk at cross-purposes, each defending a slightly different opinion: in such a case they are having a sham discussion.

Again you must be prepared for this fallacy, because it occurs frequently, especially in debates. Furthermore, it is not always as clear as in the above example. Often the opinion gradually shifts in the course of the discussion. In an argumentative text the straw man is sometimes hard to find, because you may not have the opinion stated by the first person at hand, when you read his opponent's response, for example a letter to the editor about a newspaper article. In such a case it is fairly easy to twist someone's opinion in a subtle way, without the readers noticing it.

An opinion may be twisted in one or more of the following ways:

- Simplification;
- Leaving out modifications or restrictions;
- Generalization;
- Making it absolute.

If Y states that he does not agree with X's (twisted) opinion, he implies that X advocates this twisted opinion. If the audience does not pay attention - and if X does not correct Y - Y may seem more convincing.

In the example you can see that B's statement that he does not think that the course is easy implies that A does think so. An attentive audience notices that B has used two of the means mentioned above to twist A's opinion. First of all, he leaves out the modification "as some people say", and secondly he makes the opinion more absolute

by turning "not as difficult" into "easy". If A does not set this right, the sham discussion is a fact.

### **Evading or shifting the onus of proof**

Example (Evading the onus of proof)

*Any right-minded person knows that this new measure is feasible; I need not even go more deeply into this matter.*

In chapter two we saw that the person putting forward an opinion is obliged to defend it. In other words: the onus of proof lies with the supporter of the opinion. The person attacking the opinion need only cast doubt at some of the arguments. If the supporter of the proposal tries to get rid of some of the standard matters of disputes (as you can see in the example), this is a fallacy called evading the onus of proof.

This means that when criticizing argumentative texts you must pay attention to phrases that make a standard matter of dispute look self-evident, such as:

*There can be no two ways about it that...*  
*It goes without saying that...*  
*It is self-evident/obvious that...*  
*Everyone sees that...*  
*I need not go into.../deal with.../explain...*  
*No one will deny that...*  
*Everyone knows that...*

These phrases often disguise the fact that the speaker/writer has no arguments to support his opinion. The audience is often intimidated: the speaker makes you feel stupid if you do not see that it is self-evident. This means that you may accept a statement without argumentation.

In chapter two we told you that the supporter of a policy proposal may skip a standard matter in dispute if the argumentation is obvious and indisputable. It is therefore questionable whether in the above phrases there is always a conscious evasion of the onus of proof. When criticizing an argumentative text you must therefore always ask for argumentation, if you think that one of the standard matters in dispute has not been sufficiently argued. It does not really matter whether it was a conscious evasion or not, because the supporter of the proposal must be able to give arguments for his opinion and/or the standard matters in dispute at any moment. If he fails to give arguments when he is asked to, then the evasion was probably conscious, so it was a fallacy.

Examples (shifting the onus of proof)

*You doubt whether children have sufficient possibilities for identification if they are raised by a homosexual couple, but can you prove the opposite?*

*"Vegetarianism is a stupid, unnatural lifestyle, and I'd like to see anyone prove me wrong on that."*

The above was said by a person supporting the opinion "homosexual couples must be allowed to adopt children". The opponent has said that a possible, negative, effect of being raised by a homosexual couple is the possible lack of possibilities for identification. This will do: the opponent need not prove his statement.

But the supporter of the proposal tries to provoke him to give arguments for his statement. The supporter of the proposal is guilty of the fallacy of shifting the onus of proof. He should instead try to prove that children do have sufficient possibilities for identification.

## **Circular argument**

Example

*A: Why are there so few people in this pub?*

*B: Because it is so cheerless.*

*A: Why is it cheerless?*

*B: Because there are so few people.*

It is obvious that this argument is a circle: something is A, because of A. In fact something is assumed to have been proved, whereas it has not been proved yet.

Example (circular argument)

*This car is mine, for I am the rightful owner.*

*"Vegetarianism is not healthy because it is not healthy to cut meat out of your diet."*

The reader may not always notice that it is a circular argument. But when you look carefully, you will notice that the same thing is said twice, in slightly different words. It is typical of this fallacy that you may reverse the order without any real change (I am the rightful owner of this car, for it is mine). This is possible because of the fact that the same thing is said twice: then the order does not really matter. In a circular argumentation there is not really any support or proof of the statement, but rather a definition.

Here are other examples of each of the major fallacies. You figure out and write in a definition which makes sense to you.

## **Fallacies of Relevance**

**1. Argumentum ad Baculum** (appeal to force) –

*"Pay back the loan and 10 % daily interest by Thursday, or be sure that you have your hospital insurance paid up."*

**2. Argumentum ad Hominem** (abusive) –

*"Don't believe anything John says; he's a nerd."*

**3. Argumentum ad Hominem** (circumstantial) –

*"Of course he thinks fraternities are great. He's a Phi Delta."*

**4. Argumentum ad Ignorantiam** (argument from ignorance) --

*There is no proof that witches exist; therefore, they do not.*

**5. Argumentum ad Misericordiam** (appeal to pity) --

*"Your honour, how can the prosecution dare try to send this poor, defenceless child to jail for the murder of his father and mother. Have a heart; the boy is now an orphan."*

**6. Argumentum ad Populum** --

*"Don't be left out! Buy your Chevette today!"*

**7. Argumentum ad Vericundiam** (appeal to authority) --

*Joe Namath selling pantyhose; Joe DiMaggio selling Mr. Coffee.*

**8. Accident** --

*"What you bought yesterday, you eat today; you bought raw meat yesterday; therefore, you eat raw meat today."*

**9. Converse Accident** (hasty generalization) --

*"That man is an alcoholic. Liquor should be banned."*

**10. False cause** (Post hoc ergo propter hoc) (Many of our superstitions stem from use of this fallacy) --

*"A black cat crossed Joe's path yesterday, and he died last night." or "Put your money where your mouth is. Whiter teeth and fresh breath will win Susie."*

**11. Petitio Principii** (begging the question) --

- *"It's time to come in the house now, Billy."*
- *"Why?"*
- *"Because I said so!"*
- *"Why?"*
- *"Because it's time, and I said so."*

*"People who adopt vegetarianism as a lifestyle are asking for health problems. Therefore, the Office of Student Services should set up a nutrition program to advise students not to become vegetarians and the cafeteria should not be allowed to offer meat-substitute foods."*

**12. Complex Question** --

*"Have you given up cheating on exams?"*

**13. Ignoratio Elenchi** (irrelevant conclusion) --

*In a law court, in attempt to prove that the accused is guilty of theft, the prosecution may argue that theft is a horrible crime for anyone to commit.*

## **Fallacies of Ambiguity**

### **1. Equivocation –**

*Some dogs have fuzzy ears. My dog has fuzzy ears. My dog is some dog!*

### **2. Amphibole (grammatical construction) --**

*"Woman without her man would be lost." or "Save Soap and Waste Paper."*

### **3. Accent –**

*"We should not speak ill of our friends."*

### **4. Composition –**

*"Each part of this stereo weighs under one pound. This is a very light stereo."  
or " ... ONLY \$1.97 plus processing and postage."*

## Critical Reasoning

**R**easoning, tested by doubt, is argumentation. We do it, hear it, and judge it every day. We do it in our own minds, and we do it with others. What is effective reasoning? And how can it be done persuasively? These questions have been asked for thousands of years — yet some of the best thinking on reasoning and argumentation is very new and represents a break from the past.

The focus on reason distinguishes argumentation from other modes of rhetoric. While other modes of rhetoric may focus on such elements as sequence (narrative) or comparison (metaphor), argumentation focuses on the reasons a person uses to support a claim. Although reasons are presented in other forms of rhetoric, reason is the primary element that makes argumentation a distinct form of rhetoric.

Historically, reason has been treated in different ways. In Classical Greece to Renaissance Europe, two kinds of reasoning were developed. One kind — which is now called formal, deductive logic — was developed to solve mathematical and scientific problems. The second kind — referred to by some writers as practical logic or sometimes informal logic — was developed to deal with issues of human affairs ranging from politics to matters of everyday life. In the Classical as well as in the Renaissance Periods these two systems of reasoning stood side by side, each respected as a proper tool for use in a certain context.

For some, a focus on reason is the same as a focus on logic. Some consider reason and logic so similar that one term is frequently substituted for the other and for many, logic is synonymous with formal, deductive logic.

Formal logic is not the only tool needed to address practical, human concerns. In the realm of human affairs, we cannot assume the truth of premises. An arguer's initial premise frequently is the most problematic aspect of the argument. A complete system of argumentation must include a substantive dimension to account for, among other things, the acceptability of these initial premises. Such a substantive element is absent from logic.

In its simplest form, an argument consists of a claim and a reason to support that claim. An arguer begins with a premise and makes an inferential leap to a claim. The acceptability of the premise (what formal logicians prefer to call "truth") involves the substantive dimension of argumentation. The cogency of the



inferential leap (what formal logicians prefer to call validity) involves the logical dimension. Thus, substance and logic are two interrelated dimensions of reason.

Examining the substantive dimension of an argument involves investigating the facts and evidence on which the premises are based. Are the facts accurate? Is the evidence worthwhile? Are the premises reliable? Are the authorities who reported the facts credible?

Examining the logical dimensions of an argument involves inspecting the connection between the premise and the claim. What kind of claim is being made? What kind of connections would one ordinarily expect given this kind of claim? Are those connections adequately made?

### **Three Argumentative Appeals: Reason, Ethics, Emotion**

While there's no infallible formula for winning over every reader in every circumstance, you should learn how and when to use three fundamental argumentative appeals. According to Aristotle, a person who wants to convince another may appeal to that person's reason (*logos*), ethics (*ethos*), or emotion (*pathos*).

If we think of these three appeals as independent and of the writer as choosing just one, however, we miss the point. The writer's job is to weave the various appeals into a single convincing argument. As you continue to expand and develop your ideas, look for ways of combining the three appeals to create a sound, balanced argument.

#### **Reason**

Much of the clear thinking we do in our everyday lives follows logical principles, but in a less formal and systematic way than the thinking of a research scientist. And for most occasions this informal reasoning is adequate. Aristotle points out that it would be just as much a mistake to expect certain proofs in argument as to expect only probable proofs in mathematics. That's not to say your argument can be illogical, only that you shouldn't confuse formal logic with clear thinking or good sense, the essential qualities your argument should display. *Briefly, informal reasoning requires clearly linking your general claims with concrete, specific data.*

When our thinking begins with specifics and moves toward a generalization, we are moving *inductively*. That is, if you were to taste several hard, green apples and then draw the general conclusion that all hard, green apples are sour, you would be using *inductive reasoning*. And, of course, the more apples tasted and the greater the variation in the times and conditions of tasting, the greater the likelihood that your general conclusion would be valid. In your writing, then, when you reason inductively, ask whether you've examined the evidence carefully, whether it justifies your general conclusion, and whether you've given readers enough specific evidence to persuade them that your thinking is sound and your general conclusion is true.

Reasoning that moves in the opposite direction (from general to specific) is called *deductive reasoning*. Here, you take a general principle that you know to be true and use it to understand a specific situation. For instance, you may know from experience that as a general rule bad weather reduces business at the golf course. You may also learn that today's weather will be cold and rainy. From these two pieces of knowledge, you can produce a third, more specific piece: Business at the golf course will be slow today. In writing, deductive reasoning most often appears in a shortened version (called an *enthymeme*) that may be hard to recognize. That's because one or more links in the chain of reason have not been stated directly but only implied. Consider the following example:

- Bill never turns in his assignments, so he'll fail the course.

What is not directly stated but only implied is the general principle that students who don't turn in their assignments will fail the course.

Such shortened forms are perfectly acceptable, but only if the underlying links and claims are sound. An opponent may want to refute you by challenging some underlying assumptions in your thinking; likewise, you'll want to look for faulty reasoning when you refute your opposition.

## **Ethics**

No matter how solid your reasoning, readers may not accept your argument unless they're also convinced that you're a person of wisdom, honesty, and good will. If you misrepresent the evidence, misunderstand the implications of your own value structure, or seek to hurt some individual or group, you can expect to alienate your readers.

The appeal to character is often subtle, affecting readers almost unconsciously, yet often decisively.

"Ah, I see. This writer pretends to be a friend of Mexican-Americans, but her word choice shows that she understands almost nothing of our culture. And her proposal would undermine our whole way of life. Of course, she'd get to build her apartments, and it's obvious that's all she really cares about."

If you realize that readers are likely to analyze your character and intentions this way, you'll see that the best way to put ethical appeal in your writing is to build a strong, healthy relationship with your readers. Convince them that they can trust you to be fair, honest, well-informed, and well-intentioned. Then, having established that trust, don't betray it.

## **Emotion**

Many people believe that emotional appeals by their very nature subvert reason and are therefore better left to TV hucksters than to writers who want their ideas taken seriously. Because this common view has some validity, emotional appeals must be used with restraint and discretion, or they may prove counterproductive. Nevertheless,

while an argument founded mostly on feelings and emotions may be superficial and biased, an argument that is carefully reasoned and honestly presented probably won't be hurt by a bit of *pathos*. In fact, it may be helped.

One way to build pathos is to illustrate or dramatize an idea. This may involve little more than folding short descriptive and narrative examples into the argument. Are you arguing that your city needs to take stiffer measures against drunk drivers? Why not find a place to include a description of the face of a child who was injured in an accident caused by drinking? Or you might want to tell the story of a driver who caused several accidents because the individual's license was never revoked. Including such narrative and descriptive passages can help readers feel the urgency of your proposition so that it gets beyond the level of abstract intellectual speculation and becomes a matter of immediate human concern.

Careful word choice also influences an argument's emotional appeal. With this in mind, you might review the discussion of *The Best Word* in *Revising Your Writing*. The point here is that the overall emotional texture of your argument is the result of many individual choices about which word to use.

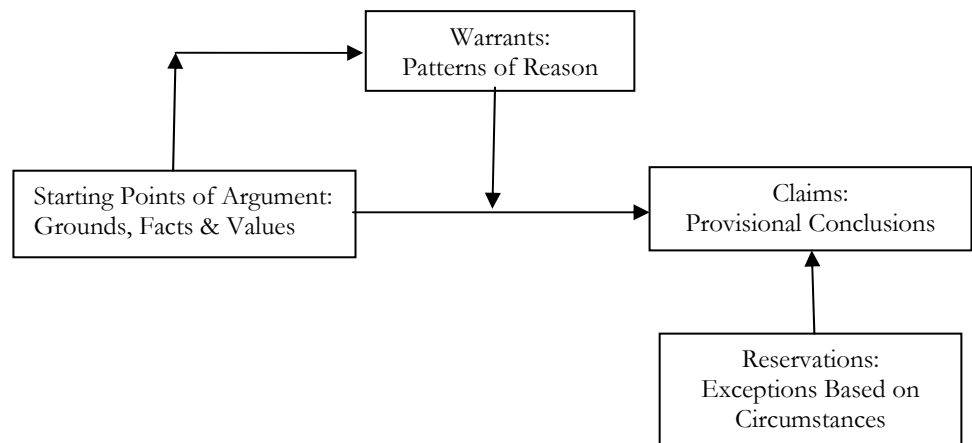
- Should I speak of "drunk" or "intoxicated" drivers?
- Should I call them a "menace" or a "concern"?
- Should they be "thrown into jail" or "incarcerated"?
- Do we need to "teach them a lesson" or "make them aware of the consequences of their actions"?

Such choices, even though they must be made one at a time, cannot be seen as independent of each other. Their force is cumulative. They communicate how you feel -- and by implication think the reader ought to feel -- about your subject. If you want the reader to identify with you emotionally, you will choose words carefully, making sure they are appropriate for you as a writer, for your readers, and for your overall purpose in writing.

## **A System of Practical Reasoning**

The system of practical reasoning used here is based on a model developed by Stephen Toulmin (1958) and later modified by Albert R. Jonsen and Stephen Toulmin. This model describes some important elements of reasoning as they relate to argumentation. It only describes those elements of an argument related to reasoning; it only describes the linguistic elements of reasoning; it only applies to the simplest of arguments. Yet this model has proven itself useful for describing some of the key elements of arguments and how they function together in terms of reasoning. The following diagram illustrates the model of practical reasoning:

Fig. A Model of Practical Reasoning [1]



The model of practical argument includes four important elements: starting points of argument, warrants, claims, and reservations. Argumentative claims are always *provisional* conclusions: because this is a model of *practical* reasoning, claims are always made with certain degrees of certainty and frequently are relevant only to people's values and actions in specific circumstances. Aside from claims, the other three elements (starting points, warrants, and rebuttals) generally fall into a broader category of premises.

### **Argumentative Starting Points: Facts and Values**

Starting points of argument, also referred to as "data" and "grounds", include facts and values and any other kinds of grounds on which the argument is based. Generally, starting points of argument consist of facts and values.

The starting points are considered *factual* because the audience considers them so. If the audience does not consider a starting point factual, the arguer is then obliged to construct an argument which has as its conclusion, the statement of fact. Exhibits, reports and statistics, and expert testimony are among the types of factual starting points used by arguers.

*Evaluative starting points* are different from factual starting points in that they deal with the preferred rather than with the real. Values, value hierarchies, and the principles that order value hierarchies are all potential evaluative starting points of arguments.

Values are concepts people use to evaluate objects. In the abstract, people might say they value freedom of choice, or privacy, or truth. These abstract values can then be made more concrete by attaching them to objects. Values are important to arguments because people are in a better position to make arguments if they understand and share the audience's values. These shared values can be used as starting points of arguments.

So starting points of argument can generally be divided into those which are factual and those which are evaluative. Factual starting points dealing with reality include exhibits, reports and statistics, and expert testimony. Evaluative starting points include values, value hierarchies, and principles which order those hierarchies. These are the elements of argument with which an arguer begins and from which an arguer begins to construct a pattern of reasoning.

### **Argumentative Warrants: Patterns of Reason**

While the starting points of argument provide the grounds on which an arguer's claim is based, warrants provide patterns of reasoning to connect those grounds to the claim. The warrants provide the relationship between the starting point and the claim. These relationships are called patterns of reasoning. In attempts to bring order to the various patterns of reasoning that exist between grounds and claims, different writers have provided different classifications of warrants. In that regard, patterns of reasoning can be divided into eight categories: example, absence and presence, correlation, analogy, classification, authority, incompatibility, and dissociation.

*Reasoning from example* takes individual cases as starting points and makes a claim that is a generalization from those individual cases. Taken together, the individual cases constitute a sample of a larger class. By reasoning from example, an arguer is making a claim about the larger class based on evidence from the sample. Because a class ordinarily exhibits a pattern of regularity, the warrant allows the arguer to infer that what is true of the sample is probably true of the larger class. The claim therefore transfers the characteristics of the sample to the entire class.

*Reasoning from absence and presence* begins with at least two objects, one of which is claimed to be an indicator of the other. This pattern of reasoning assumes that the simultaneous presence or absence of the two concepts supports a claimed relationship between the two. Depending on the kind of relationship being supported, the absence or presence of one concept indicates the absence or presence of the other concept.

The simultaneous presence of two concepts also can be used to support a relationship about a sufficient causal condition. For example, some might argue that money is an indicator of happiness because it is a sufficient cause; regardless of other factors, some might argue, money will lead to happiness. The warrant assumes that since money and happiness are both present in a number of cases, one (money) is a sufficient condition for the other (happiness).

In other cases, the simultaneous absence of each of the concepts can be used to support a claim about a necessary condition as in the claim that money is essential to happiness. If one could show, in this example, that the absence of

money always leads to the absence of happiness, one would have a good start toward support of the claim that money is essential to happiness.

*Reasoning from correlation* begins with a series of instances each of which vary according to at least two characteristics. For example, an argument from correlation might begin with data taken from a group of people who vary along two characteristics (smoking and heart disease, for example). Some of the people are smokers, some are not; some have heart disease, others do not. Assuming that the rate of heart disease can be shown to vary in relationship with the number of cigarettes a person smokes each day, one could then reason that a relationship of correlation exists between smoking and heart disease. Although correlation does not prove causation, it is one method used to support a claim of causation. The pattern of inference present in reasoning from correlation assumes that when two characteristics of an object vary in direct or inverse proportion to one another, one characteristic may be the cause of another.

The starting point for *reasoning by analogy* involves a minimum of two objects that are similar to one another in some important respect. The warrant in this analogy assumes that because the two objects are similar in important known regards, they ought to be similar in other regards. Reasoning by analogy can be used to support claims of similarity and other types of claims as well. Because similarity is so useful in claims of causation and evaluation, this pattern of analogy is relevant to them as well.

Reasoning by analogy also can support an evaluative argument. Beginning with two objects, one of which the audience already evaluates, an arguer can use analogy to transfer the audience's evaluation of one object to the other. For example, assume the audience (not unexpectedly) negatively evaluates murder as immoral. By creating an analogy between murder and capital punishment, an arguer can make an evaluative claim that capital punishment, like murder, is an immoral action.

Starting points for *reasoning from classification* include a specific case and a category - for instance, a specific case of a football player and the category of football players in general. The warrant assumes that the specific case will exhibit the characteristics of the category.

Reasoning from classification can be used to make a variety of claims, such as a claim of causation. Starting with data about a category (for instance, substances that deposit tar into humans' lungs lead to lung cancer) and data about the inclusion of a specific instance in that category (cigarettes deposit tar into humans' lungs), one can then infer the causal claim that the specific instance will have the same effect as the general category (cigarettes lead to lung cancer).

Reasoning from classification also can be used to support claims of evaluation. One can begin, for instance, with data about the category of totalitarian governments (totalitarian governments do not respect individual rights) and information about the inclusion of a specific case in the category (fascism is a form of totalitarian government). From these starting points, one then can infer evaluations about the specific case from classification (fascism does not respect the rights of individuals).

*Reasoning from authority* takes personal testimony as its starting point. For instance, an argument might begin with Ralph Nader's statement that the Chevrolet Corvair is "unsafe at any speed." The warrant then assumes that any statement made by an authority should be taken as true.

Because authorities testify about all sorts of claims, reasoning from authority can be used to make any kind of claim. But when testimony is used as the only pattern of reasoning in an argument, it can short cut the process of *critical* reasoning. In the previous example, to accept the claim that the Corvair is unsafe at any speed *solely* on the testimony of Ralph Nader would be uncritical. A critical consumer of arguments would, of course, ask about Nader's qualifications to make that statement but would go beyond the question of qualification to ask about the grounds of Nader's argument.

Of course, audiences cannot be critical of every word received from an authority because they might not be able to comprehend or understand the grounds for arguments in some fields. In those cases, audiences are virtually forced to rely on reasoning from authority. If an audience does not have the expertise to understand the data which underlie a claim about nuclear physics, they must base their trust in the argument on their trust in the authorities.

*Reasoning from incompatibility* takes as its starting points two concepts which the arguer views as antagonistic to one another. For instance, the arguer might begin by showing how the concepts of capital punishment and the sanctity of human life are antagonistic to one another. The warrant in reasoning from incompatibility assumes that a person cannot logically hold two positions which are incompatible with one another. The arguer might claim, for instance, that one cannot logically maintain a belief in capital punishment and a belief in the sanctity of human life.

Reasoning from incompatibility can be used to support a variety of kinds of argumentative claims. Two examples of claims which can be supported by this pattern of reasoning include claims of fact and claims of evaluation. The claim of fact that O. J. Simpson is innocent of murder was supported by the incompatibility of a glove that didn't fit and the belief that the glove was worn by the murderer. A leather glove soaked with the blood of Nicole Brown-Simpson was believed to have been worn by the murderer. During the trial, the prosecutor asked Simpson to put the glove on his hand. The demonstration appeared to show that the glove was so small it would not fit on Simpson's

hand. This misfit of hand and glove allowed Simpson's defence team to declare poetically "if the glove doesn't fit, you must acquit."

*Reasoning from dissociation* is a special form of argument used when an arguer is faced with an apparent incompatibility. For instance, suppose one wishes to present a pro-choice argument to an audience who believes in the right to life. Because of what the audience sees as an incompatibility between the arguer's position on abortion and their own value of the right to life, they see the arguer in an incompatibility. Reasoning from dissociation attempts to divide the key concept of right to life into two concepts and to distance one from the other. For instance, the arguer might claim that the concept of life is not a single, unified concept, but two separate and distinct ones: general life (as possessed by plants and animals) and human life (as possessed by fully capable human persons). Of course, a further argument is required to show that a live foetus is more similar to animal and plant life than to that of a fully functioning human person.

Reasoning from dissociation is not a very common pattern of reasoning, but is an interesting one because it relies on breaking connections rather than on establishing them. It is also fairly uncommon because it is mainly useful when an arguer needs to avoid the appearance of an incompatibility.

### **Argumentative Reservations: Exceptions Based on Circumstances**

Reservations, exceptions to one's claim, are important in a variety of kinds of argument, but they are particularly important in arguments about ethical and moral action.

Reservations are especially important to practical moral argument because they give people the tools to help liberate themselves from what Jonsen and Toulmin call "the tyranny of principles" [11, p. 5-11]. Unencumbered by statements relevant to individual circumstances, moral principles can be used in tyrannical ways. Moral principles designed to prohibit a person from keeping a secret, telling a lie, having an abortion, or committing suicide regardless of the specifics of the individual's circumstances are tyrannical because they take the responsibility for moral decision-making from the individual and attempt to place it on an assumed-to-be objective and separate moral principle.

These, then, are four elements involved in practical argument: starting points, warrants, claims, and reservations. These four elements and the relationships among them are not intended to replicate arguments as they exist in reality. The model merely includes a few of the features and relationships relevant to their place of reason in argument.

In addition, the model does not contain criteria for evaluating practical arguments. The mere absence or presence of these four elements says virtually



nothing about the cogency of an argument. To evaluate the reasoning contained in an argument, one must go beyond this model.

## **Criteria for Evaluating Practical Arguments**

The criteria for evaluating a formal, deductive logic are truth, validity, and soundness. For practical argument the criteria are similar, but different in subtle ways. These criteria are acceptability, relevance, and sufficiency. Each of these criteria is necessary for a logically cogent argument; taken together these criteria are sufficient for a cogent argument [10, p. 49].

### **Premise Acceptability**

The question asked in practical reasoning is not so much whether premises are true but whether they are acceptable to an audience. If a premise is acceptable to an audience, then it is one from which argument can begin. Evaluating the acceptability of premises is the primary means of evaluating the substantive dimension of an argument.

The concept of premise acceptability (substituted for the logical concept of "truth of premises") provides means for dealing with problematic premises. If the premise or premises are acceptable to the audience, the argument can proceed. An audience need not completely accept nor completely reject a premise. The audience might accept a premise with varying degrees of force, believing a premise is possible, plausible, or probable. If premises are unacceptable, argument cannot proceed.

### **Relevance and Sufficiency**

In addition to beginning with premises which are acceptable, a good argument uses premises which are relevant to the claim and sufficient to warrant our belief in the claim. Thus, the concepts of relevance and sufficiency deal not with the acceptability of the premises but with the connection between premise and conclusion.

Saying that the premise or premises upon which a good argument is based must be relevant to the conclusion seems so obvious as to be trivial. What exactly is a relevant premise? What are the criteria by which relevance is determined? Who is in the best position to decide if these criteria have been met?

A premise is relevant to the claim if the belief in the premise affects an audience's belief in the claim. Notice that a belief in a relevant premise influences a belief in the conclusion but does not automatically guarantee our belief in it.

In addition to being relevant, a premise needs to be sufficient to establish a claim. Belief in a relevant premise makes an audience more or less inclined to

accept a claim but the belief in a sufficient premise directly leads to the acceptance of the claim. Said another way, a relevant claim can be insufficient but a sufficient claim cannot be irrelevant.

Sometimes a premise is relevant but still not sufficient. Frequently a premise is insufficient because the evidence was gathered in a hasty or slipshod manner. These premises might still be relevant to the claim, but they are not sufficient

to establish the claim. A second reason that a premise might not be sufficient involves the fact that a premise might support only a portion of the claim it is intended to prove.

The criteria to evaluate practical argument presented here has as its key elements the concepts of acceptability, relevance, and sufficiency. These concepts do not describe the whole of human reason, but they are important to it.

## Analyzing the Text

The Critical Reasoning is intended to be an effective way of evaluating how people reason. Here's an example of a Critical Reasoning text:

*A CEO of a major company noted a serious decline in worker productivity during the previous five years. According to a report done by an outside consultant, productivity dropped by 35% by the end of that period. The CEO has therefore initiated a plan to boost productivity by giving employees shares of the company as part of their pay package.*

We can use the text above to show the four different parts of a Critical Reasoning text.

### Conclusion/Main Idea

Most problems have a central idea or thesis. This is almost always located in the sentence at the beginning of the text, or in the sentence at the very end. In this case, it is at the end of the passage:

*The CEO has therefore initiated a plan to boost productivity by giving employees shares of the company as part of their pay package.*

Notice the word *therefore* in that sentence. Words like *therefore*, *thus*, *hence*, and so usually tell us that this is the conclusion or the main idea. Let these words lead you to the main idea.

**Premise** - Premises are the facts or evidence that support or lead to the conclusion. Unlike assumptions, they are explicit. Here is an example from the text:

*A CEO of a major company noted a serious decline in worker productivity during the previous five years.*

This premise helps the author lead the conclusion or Main idea of the text,

**Assumption** Assumptions are the facts that support the conclusion, like the premise does but unlike the conclusion and premises they are not stated in the text: they are implicit. Here is what would be an example of an assumption for this particular Critical Reasoning problem

*Owning something or part of something obliges you work harder to make it succeed,*

Note that this line is not in the text: it *cannot* be in the text if it is an assumption of the author. But it does give the argument as a whole some sense and also supports the conclusion.

**Supporting Information** - Like a premise, this is stated and explicit information embedded in the text, but unlike a premise, it does not support the conclusion. At best it supports a premise or provides further detail or information regarding a premise. From the text:

*According to a report done by an outside consultant productivity dropped by 35% by the end of that period.*

This sentence supports the first sentence, the premise that notes that productivity has dropped. Supporting Information does not support the Conclusion or Main Idea; rather, it supports information that is already in the text.

### **General strategies**

These are the strategies that apply to, all Critical Reasoning questions.

1. KISS. Keep things clear and simple.
2. Look for particular types of questions (for example Weaken the Argument), and then use the strategies appropriate for that type of question to choose the right answer.
3. Identify the Argument.

## **Strategies for specific question types:**

### **Weaken the Argument Questions**

1. Identify the argument. Remember, that's usually in the first or last line.
2. Anticipate what will be the answer, if possible. Imagine what would satisfy the question what would strengthen the argument.

### **Strengthen the Argument Questions**

1. Identify the argument. Remember, that's usually in the first or last line.
2. Anticipate what will be the answer, if possible. Imagine what would satisfy the question - what would strengthen the argument.

### **Supply the Conclusion**

1. Identify the premises of the argument.
2. Assume all the premises are true. Try to combine or link those premises. Is there an obvious conclusion that could be made from these premises?

### **Supply the Assumption questions**

1. Identify the premises of the argument.
2. Identify the conclusion. Remember, that's usually in the first or last sentence of the text.
3. Identify the gap in the logic of the argument. What's missing or needed to make this argument convincing?
4. What's the new element or factor in the conclusion? The assumption will probably introduce it.

## Writing an Argumentative Essay

**A**rgumentation is everywhere - in congress and courtrooms, in corporate board rooms, at garden club meetings, and in millions of essays, reports, theses, and dissertations written at colleges and universities throughout the world.

It shouldn't be surprising to learn that modern argumentation theory has roots in Greek and Roman thinking. After all, we trace our democratic form of government to these cultures, known also for their genius in philosophy, the fine arts, and science. The Greco-Romans saw argument as a way to settle disputes and discover truth.

Even wise, honest, caring people don't always agree on what is true or is fair. That's why argument is important in academic writing, where students try to convince professors and classmates to accept their ideas, where professors argue with students and with each other.

We argue not because we are angry, but because arguing causes us to examine our own and others' ideas carefully. It causes us to weigh conflicting claims; to make judgments about the nature of evidence and the methods of investigation; to state our thoughts clearly, accurately, and honestly; to consider, respectfully and critically, the ideas of others.

Almost every piece of academic writing is in some sense argumentative. At first sight, some of the writing tasks you may be given early on in your time in the University may seem not to require you to do anything other than restate other people's opinions. Later on, however, it will become clear that a good research essay (and indeed also a master thesis) demands more than just this: the conventions of English academic discourse require you to use other people's ideas or research *to support your own case*. This is where many students who are unfamiliar with English rhetoric often fail; they assume that academic writing is simply a matter of reciting the opinions of others, rather than arguing a case. Your decisions about which information to include, which authorities to refer to, what to quote, how to explain and interpret data, or which methodology to choose should all be driven by a central desire to argue *your* position.

It is important to remember therefore, that your writing needs to persuade your readers that what you have to say is relevant and important. There is, after all, limited point in presenting an argument in such an unconvincing way that no one will accept it. This means that you have to develop certain strategies and 'tools' in order to put

your point across effectively, and you have to take into consideration the expectations and views of your audience as you write. Studying argumentation can help you to understand these critical tools. However, reading and talking about the qualities of good and bad arguments is only one part of the process. It is essential to actual *do* writing in order to get better at it, and the more academic writing you do, the better writer you are likely to become.

There is a good reason to start developing your skills in argumentation from critical reading and thinking. The skills that you need to think logically in evaluating the writing of others are very much the same as those you need in developing your own arguments. The process of producing a clear and convincing argument helps a writer to mature as a thinker and a critic because written argumentation facilitates the development of important mental skills: developing and organising ideas, evaluating evidence, observing logical consistency, and expressing yourself clearly and economically. All of these are valuable skills in any field of academic study.

## Structure of an Argumentative Essay

**R**ecent research by Rienecker and Stray Jorgensen shows clearly that across disciplines as *varied* as engineering, medical, literature, economics and law, a common feature is that good research papers must always have a clear argument [17]. Most of us rarely have to write a ‘pure’ argumentative essay in real life, but the skills and components of the argumentative essay form the basis of most if not all types of academic and business writing.

A simple argumentative essay can be divided into certain component parts or stages, of which there are four which should almost always be present. These four parts are discussed below.

### The Introduction

In most types of writing, the first thing that a writer does is to introduce the subject to be dealt with. The purpose of this introductory paragraph is to catch the reader’s attention and give an orientation to the topic. It will also usually lead, often through a series of steps, from the more general situation toward the specific issue you plan to discuss. If you want for example to address the topic of infringements of article 13 of the European Convention of Human Rights in Albania, you might well want to start with the topic of human rights generally, then focus on human rights in Albania, before finally addressing specifically article 13 in Albania.

In this part you draw your reader into the argument, build common ground, establish your tone and style, establish your credentials, clarify why the issue is important, build ethos.

Although there is no formula for writing a successful introduction, the following elements commonly appear:

*Introductory Statements:* The first sentence of your essay needs to be interesting enough to make your reader want to keep reading. You might present striking figures, a

provocative statement or a leading question. In any case, you will also need to lead your reader into the topic and focus in on the specific area you will be discussing, so as to prepare for your thesis statement.

*Thesis Statement:* This is typically the last sentence of your first paragraph, and it serves as the controlling force of your essay. The thesis statement states the position you are arguing, that is, which side you are going to defend. It is desirable to tell *your* reader what side you are going to take at the beginning and not to withhold their position until the end.

Sensing your argument's overall scope and direction, you can consider stating your main point. As you do, however, remember that your writing process has barely begun. You don't yet need a final proposition statement for your finished paper, but one to point you forward and help focus your efforts.

In this way an *argumentative proposition* is like a thesis statement. Besides stating your main point, both help you direct, develop, and monitor your thinking while writing. Like a thesis statement, an argumentative proposition should be scrutinized and, when necessary, modified throughout your writing process. At first, both a thesis and a proposition are often hunches or good guesses about what you will finally claim.

As your paper develops, you may find your first hunch was off-target. If so, revise your proposition to show your new understanding. Make a trial statement early and watch for possible improvements to assure a strong proposition in your final paper.

Even at this point, however, your proposition should define your argument's scope and make a debatable assertion. A statement like "Some people ruin things for everyone," is weak because it doesn't make clear what the writer has in mind. It's a vague generalization that provides no direction for writer or reader. If pressed to be precise, the writer might say, "A small group of thoughtless fans is jeopardizing the school's whole soccer program." Now we know what we're talking about.

Like a thesis, your proposition shouldn't be self-evidently true (asparagus is a vegetable) or claim something that's purely a matter of opinion (asparagus tastes great). It should have some uncertainty, yet make a claim that your readers will assent to in the end: "Our county agricultural agent should encourage valley farmers to plant more asparagus."

## **Presenting your Case**

Once you have laid the ground for the discussion in the introduction and outlined the position you intend to adopt, the body of the essay is the arena in which you present your case and try to persuade your reader that you are right. A well-presented case will convince the reader that because certain facts are true, and because certain beliefs are shared between writer and reader, the reader should therefore accept the writer's conclusions as being valid and acceptable.

The most common way of presenting a case in academic writing is to make an assertion or *claim* and then provide evidence to *support* it, usually but not always in the

form of facts and examples. It is equally possible, however, to start with a review of evidence and sample situations (support) and then to draw a conclusion (claim) from them. The following paragraph from an essay on censorship provides an example of the 'claim-support' approach:

Censorship, by its very nature, goes against the principles of a democratic society. (Claim) It is fundamentally undemocratic because it limits freedom of expression and allows the few to dictate what the many may - or may not - view, read or listen to. (Support) For example, removing a controversial book from circulation in a public library, for whatever reason, cuts its author off from a large number of readers who have no other way to access the book. At the same time, the select group of individuals who decide to pull something off the shelf is, in effect, telling the general public that it may not read the book [These two examples develop the supporting sentence.] This action, therefore, is more in keeping with a "dictatorship" than a democracy. [Restatement of initial claim]

Behind these basic building blocks of claim and support lie the *assumptions* on which a claim is based. Assumptions are the philosophical or moral views that we hope others in our society, including our readers, will share. For example, a discussion about the funding of state medical services may be underpinned by the assumption that a cash price cannot be put on a human life. Most of the time, we hope that our readers will share our assumptions; otherwise they will be unlikely to accept the claim we make based on these assumptions. If this is not the case, then we will need to argue differently; our assumptions themselves will then become claims and will need to be supported.

In this part you tell the story behind the argument, give any necessary background information, illuminate the situational context, clarify the issue, characterize and define the issue in terms that are favourable to your point of view.

Develop and support your own case. Use examples, facts, and statistics to back up your claims. Avoid logical fallacies. Argue from authority, definition, analogy, cause/effect, value, and purpose. Base your appeal primarily on *logos*.

Once you have a clear vision of the confirmation's main points and supporting details, you can consider a strategy of disclosure. Which point should come first? Which next? Which last? One effective way of ordering the supporting points is to rank them in order of importance and then arrange them as follows:

1. Second most important point
2. Point of lesser importance
3. Point of lesser importance
4. Most important point



Such an arrangement offers two advantages. It places your strongest points in positions of emphasis at the beginning and end of your confirmation. Also, your strongest point coming last tends to anchor your argument. If you were to lead off with your best point and then run through the rest, you might give the impression of weakness. The reader might feel you were gradually running out of ideas, becoming more and more desperate. However, if your readers are familiar with the subject, they'll see that you have something in reserve, that you've been scoring points steadily and consistently without even going to your real strength. Coming in the last position, that major point will have great emphasis--like the knock-out punch in a boxing match or the ace of trump in a game of bridge.

*Digression* - If you choose, this is a good time to appear to stray briefly from the main issue into a touching or entertaining anecdote designed to appeal to *ethos* or *pathos*.

### **Anticipating Objections**

Argument assumes active opposition to your proposition. To win acceptance, then, you must not only explain and support your proposition, but also anticipate and overcome objections that the opposition might raise.

The conventions of English academic rhetoric require the writer at some stage to acknowledge the opposing view. A common approach to essay writing is to present your own views, then consider critically the views of the opposition, though it is equally possible to start with the views you disagree with and criticise or reject them in order to make space for your own position. It may at first sight appear contradictory or detrimental to your position to show the other side of the argument; however, there are a number of good reasons for acknowledging the opposition:

- If you do not anticipate objections, you are deliberately suppressing the evidence against your case, and this lack of objectivity will very likely lose you your reader's sympathy. Remember that you are trying to persuade your reader to agree with you, not deceive them into agreeing
- Your argument will have more credibility if you acknowledge the opposite side. As in any situation where you are trying to persuade someone of something, there will be people who disagree with you. By anticipating their objections and showing how those objections are less valid or well grounded than your own views, or how your awareness of these views has led you to modify your position, you strengthen your own case
- The practice of including the opposition refines critical thinking, forcing you as a writer to situate yourself within an ongoing debate and realize that other points of view not only exist, but also have validity

### ***Common techniques for dealing with objections***

As a general rule, you should start by identifying the opposing position. It is worth doing this as thoroughly and fairly as you can, given the space available, because misrepresenting or trivializing the opposing view is likely to earn you the sympathy of only the most uncritical reader. Once you have stated the opposing view, you will want to do one or more of the following:

- suggest solutions to the challenges that the opposing view poses to your argument
- point out weaknesses or problems in the support or warrant underlying the opposing claim
- make concessions to the opposing view and suggest a compromise position or solution.

The following questions will help you spot some frequent ways in which people violate the basic principles of clear thinking.

1. Does the evidence truly warrant the general conclusions that the opposition has drawn?
2. Has all the evidence been considered or only evidence that favours the opposition's position?
3. Has the opposition considered all the alternatives or oversimplified and reduced them to two or three?
4. Are conclusions ever drawn from questionable generalizations?
5. Are words always used clearly, accurately, and honestly?
6. Does the argument depend on emotionally charged language?
7. Does the argument ever suggest that ideas or policies are good or bad simply because they are associated with certain individuals or groups?
8. Does the opposition ever argue by comparing one thing to another? If so, is the comparison fair and reasonable?
9. Does the opposition try to sweet-talk and flatter the reader?
10. Does the argument suggest that an idea or course of action is good just because everyone else believes or is doing it?

If you apply these questions to the opposition's case, you'll get a good idea of where the reasoning is vulnerable. In refuting, first show that you understand the opposing argument by summarizing or paraphrasing it in neutral language, and then show how the argument is weak.

The following example from an argumentative essay on censorship illustrates how anticipation of the opposing argument can serve to strengthen your own thesis. After writing the introduction and thesis, several paragraphs are developed in which it is argued that censorship is 'a bad idea', perhaps for several different reasons. Following this, the writer might include a paragraph (or more) on the following lines, acknowledging the other side of the argument and making some concessions:

While censorship is dangerous to a free society, some of the concerned citizens who are in favour of censorship may have valid points when they object that children should not be exposed to television violence. (*Concession made and an objection anticipated*) Indeed, often there is too much violence on television. (*Concession and point of agreement*) Perhaps the answer is for all networks to establish the same guidelines of self-censorship. (*Compromise solution offered*) If the networks were more responsible and tried to avoid material that is poor in taste, governmental officials, religious groups, and concerned parents might not feel the need to be involved in their decisions at all.

Of course, this paragraph might, with minor adjustments, also come after the introduction, before moving on to the main arguments against censorship. Where you place the counter-argument, how much space you devote to it and how you deal with it are just some of the choices you make when writing an effective essay.

### **The Conclusion**

Particularly as you have already said in the introduction which side you are going to take, many students are often unsure what to write in the conclusion. The conclusion is a very important part of the essay because it sums up the thesis and the evidence in favour of it, leaving your reader with a clear picture as to the position you have taken and why. It is not advisable at this stage to start introducing new ideas that have not already been raised in the body of the essay. It is also unwise to use your conclusion as a kind of ‘now here’s what I think’ section. By doing so, you are likely to give the impression that anybody can think whatever they want. While this is in principle true, remember that your purpose is not just to tell your reader what you think, but to persuade them that what you think is in fact a tenable and valid position that they might also wish to adopt, or at least acknowledge. It is thus rather counterproductive at this stage to suggest that neither side is better than the other.

### **Common features of a conclusion to argumentative essay**

*Synthesis of the Argument:* In the conclusion you should restate and summarise briefly the main points of your argument. Try to show the reader how the points you made and the evidence and examples you used fit together to prove your argument.

*Restatement of Thesis:* Restate and stress the importance of your original thesis statement as the entire essay has been spent arguing and supporting this point. Some writers feel that restating the thesis verbatim is an effective rhetorical device, while others believe it is better to rephrase it. You might end with an amplification (ringing conclusion), a review of your main points, a reference to something in your introduction, or a plea for action.

*Concluding Statements:* This section signals the end of the essay and leaves a final impression on the reader. Below are some suggested approaches to writing concluding statements:

- Discuss the future of the subject at issue. This can emphasise the importance of your essay. It may also help the reader to apply the new information or see things more globally
- Give your reader something to think about, perhaps a way to use your essay in the "real" world
- Refer back to your introductory statements in order to "frame" your paper and bring the reader full circle.
- Pose questions, either to your reader or in general, which may help your reader gain a new perspective on the topic that they may not have held before reading your conclusion. This approach may also bring your main ideas together to create a new meaning. You might also invite and facilitate defections from the opposition

Whatever you do, end strongly. Finish with conviction. After all, if you aren't convinced, why should your reader be?

We have considered here especially the structure of the argumentative essay, as it is relatively simple and straightforward, yet it contains most of the features you will need to include in other types of academic writing you do. Almost all types of extended writing will require an introduction and a conclusion, and whenever you are involved in discussing or presenting ideas you will need to make claims and support them, consider the opposing side of the argument and present reasons why that view or interpretation is less valid than the one you believe in. Throughout all this, your writing will need to be guided by a clear sense of the knowledge and expectations of your audience so that it fulfils those expectations both in terms of content and structure. Taking all of these factors into consideration when you write and redraft your work will enable you to become a more effective writer.

***A student essay (sample)***

***The Cloning of Humans is Justifiable***

1. The development of science affects our life. (1) With new findings, with new improvements and technologies, our life and our view of life inevitably change. (2) This is even more so in the case of cloning, this latest, revolutionary method in medical science. (3) By now we can clone vegetables, animal organs and even whole animals. (4) In light of the latest successful mammal experiments, the question inevitably emerges: can we, or more importantly, should we clone humans as well? (5)

2. The possible effects of this new technology upon our society have created huge debates. (1) Some argue that we should not continue these kinds of experiments, while others are thrilled by the possibilities of this new technology. (2) Aversions to cloning stem from ethical and social bases, generated by the fear that cloning might totally

alter us as human and social beings. (3) What we non-experts know about cloning comes mainly from the world of fiction: from films or novels that almost without exception paint a dark picture of how people would use this new technology. (4) New Hitlers will come and whole armies will be created by cloning to help Evil rule the world, and so on. (5) This vision is horrendous, but is it based on fact? (6) Do we really know what cloning is about? (7) Do we know what it can be used for besides making "identical twins"? (8) What can it mean in medical treatment, how can it be of help to many? (9) Without denying that there are views worth considering within the opposing argumentation, this paper will argue that we should not reject this new technology, which might bring many positive changes its our life. (10)

3. Cloning can be a valuable tool for researchers to learn more about human development and about the treatment of diseases and defects. (1) The perfection of cloning human cells and tissues, for example, would solve many questions in medical practice. (2) With the help of this new method certain organs could be reproduced from a single cell, which, in the longer term might replace the transplantation method to everybody's benefit. (3) The organs gained this way would be able to perfectly adjust to the receptive body. (4) Hearts, lungs, kidneys and livers could be produced this way, or skin for burn victims and limbs for amputees. (5) Further experiments made with the help of cloning could result in finding treatments for cancer, since the growth of cancer cells seem to show much similarity to that of the human morula. (6) Furthermore, treating damaged brains or nervous systems might be possible due to cloning. (7) Cloned human embryos would make research into genetics and genetically related diseases possible, as a result of which the risk of genetic diseases and defects could be eliminated. (8) Down's Syndrome, Alzheimer's disease or Parkinson's disease would be remnants of the past. (9) Research in the field of embryo cloning might lead to a greater understanding of the causes of miscarriages, thus helping people in having healthy babies. (10) These are just few fields where the positive effects of cloning can be seen, but even from these examples it is evident that this new methodology could cause significant medical breakthrough. (11)

4. The arguments of those opposing cloning are mainly of an ethical nature. (1) Some religious communities regard cloning as 'playing God', claiming that it is an unnatural method of creating new life. (2) However, cloning is creating life from living material, not from inanimate material, and is just an extension of in vitro fertilization procedures. (3) As many will remember that the first test tube babies provoked the same strong pretexts, but by now this method is widely accepted. (4) Just as the test tube method can help mothers unable to carry their babies to term, embryo cloning is a potential treatment for infertility. (5) Couples who otherwise could not have a baby can use

cloning technology. (6) Helping them does not seem *very* different than assisting in conception with in vitro fertilization. (7)

5. Further arguments against cloning originate from the fear of what this new method could bring into our society. (1) Can we, the opponents ask, deal with the many new, sometimes unforeseeable problems that cloned people would present for themselves as well as for our society? (2) Questions such as the legal status of clones or the social and psychological effect that the presence of many "identical" people can cause are still relevant and unanswered. (3) Another main fear is that people would choose all of the characteristics of their offspring, including their sex, thus endangering human diversity. (4) This concern seems justified, all the more as it shows similarity to the aim of Nazi Germany, which was to create the "perfect man". (5) Though some people think that it is their own right to choose their descendants, and even to recreate themselves if possible, we should make use of these new technologies with great responsibility. (6) There are views on the opposing side that are relevant and we do have to consider them, however, it does not mean that we should ban cloning completely, and thus losing all the benefits that it can bring into our lives. (7)

6. Although there are legitimate concerns regarding the use of cloning that should be weighed, and some steps should even be taken to regulate the use of this method until we have a clearer picture of this matter, we should not throw away all the advantages that this technology can offer. (1) Human cloning is a great opportunity for medical advancement, which can help thousands of people worldwide. (2) We should regard it as a possibility for gaining new information for the benefit of mankind, but we must not ignore the potential negative effects it could cause as well. (3)

## Writing a Successful Argument

You should understand that writing an argument is *not a linear process*. Find below a strategy which may help you to write an effective argumentative essay [adapted from Critical Thinking].

### Before You Write

Writing good argumentative essays requires forethought and preparation. Before you begin writing a draft of your essay, you should take the time to . . .

☞ **know yourself;** To this end, you should . . .

- be willing to argue fairly and maintain critical thinking dispositions;
  - have a clear idea about why you are developing an argument;
  - honestly evaluate your own understanding of the issue you intend to address, distinguishing what you *feel* from what you *think* about the issue;
- ☞ **know your audience;** To this end, you should . . .
- know who your audience is and adjust your style accordingly;
  - anticipate your readers' reactions to what you write; in this aim, you'll want to
    - consider the attitudes, positions and knowledge of your readers;
    - recognize common values between yourself and your readers;
    - assume your readers are somewhat sceptical, intelligent, rational and humane.
- ☞ **choose and narrow your topic carefully;**
- ☞ **write a sentence that expresses your claim;**
- ☞ **gather ideas through brainstorming and research;** In developing your ideas, you should
- list supporting premises;
  - list opposing premises;
  - think critically about your thinking;
  - think on paper;
  - consider various methods of developing your ideas;
  - look over your brainstorming and consider the following questions:
    - Should I refine my claim?
    - Are there any additional premises in my rough collection of thoughts and ideas?
    - What do I still need to find out?
    - What can I use and what do I need to exclude?
  - research your topic.
- ☞ **Organize your ideas;** In developing an organized and well-reasoned argument, you should
- be willing to revise or even change your approach as you are writing;
  - keep in mind that each paragraph in the body of your essay should relate to your thesis;
  - consider using one or more of the following methods of development to organize your paper:
    - Support your claim through **illustration**.

- Organize your argument along the lines of a **contrast** or **comparison**.
- Select a **pattern** of argument:
  - Deductive pattern
  - Problem-Solution Pattern
  - Evaluative Pattern
  - consider how you will respond to your opponent's arguments and objections;
  - consider whether a combination of the above-mentioned patterns of argument would best serve your aims.

### Writing the First Draft

You should become familiar with the basic elements of a well-written argumentative essay. In writing a first draft you should incorporate the following:

- ☞ An **Interesting Opening** that grabs the attention and interests of the reader
- ☞ A carefully worded **Thesis Statement** that makes clear the main point you want to get across
- ☞ Well developed **Body Paragraphs** that logically organize your ideas and help your readers better follow your reasoning
- ☞ A **Satisfying Conclusion** which informs the reader that the essay is completed

### After the First Draft

You should grasp the vital importance of revising your written work. In re-writing your essay, you should . . .

- ☞ read what you have written and revise it, critically assessing the content of your paper from the perspective of a reader who may object to your views;
- ☞ consider what you have not written and revise your essay, critically evaluating any assumptions or evidence you have failed to examine carefully;
- ☞ show your work to others so as to receive critical comments from the perspective of a reader other than yourself;
- ☞ Edit your work for grammatical errors and stylistic shortcomings.

### The following criteria are essential to produce an effective argument:

- **Be well informed about your topic.** To add to your knowledge of a topic, read thoroughly about it, using legitimate sources. Take notes.



- **Test your thesis.** Your thesis, i.e., argument, must have two sides. It must be debatable. If you can write down a thesis statement directly opposing your own, you will ensure that your own argument is debatable.
- **Disprove the opposing argument.** Understand the opposite viewpoint of your position and then counter it by providing contrasting evidence or by finding mistakes and inconsistencies in the logic of the opposing argument.
- **Support your position with evidence.** Remember that your evidence must appeal to reason. The following are different ways to support your argument:
  - **Facts** - A powerful means of convincing, facts can come from your readings, observations, or personal experiences.
  - **Statistics** - Be sure your statistics come from responsible sources. Always cite your sources.
  - **Quotations** - Direct quotations from leading experts effectively support your position.
  - **Examples** - Examples enhance your meaning and make your ideas concrete. They are the proof that backs up your point.

**To evaluate the effectiveness of an argument essay, ask two questions:**

- 1) Is the opinion based on facts and specific evidence rather than on personal judgments and emotional reactions?
- 2) Does the method of presenting the opinion have enough impact to persuade the reader to agree?

For an **affirmative argumentative essay**, you must discuss all six standard matters in dispute.

- Choose the most convincing arguments supporting each standard matter in dispute. If you mention only one argument, then you must be sure that it is absolutely convincing and cannot easily be refuted. Choose the arguments that you think will appeal to the reader most.
- Stress the standard matters in dispute for which you think you have a strong case. Stress the arguments that can hardly be attacked. Spend more time on these matters. You need not necessarily stress the first standard matter in dispute. Very often, the fact that there is a problem is not questioned by anyone.

For a **negative argumentative essay**, in which you are opposed to the policy, you would only have to attack one standard matter in dispute, although it would be better to attack more. Negative writers should mention all the standard matters in dispute but need not attack all of them. Effective attacks are possible if you do the following:

- Choose the standard matters in dispute that you will deal with very carefully. For effective argumentation, choose at least one of the first three standard matters in

dispute and at least one of the last three. Concentrate on standard matters in dispute that an affirmative writer would find difficult to defend.

- Choose your method of attack very carefully. There are two possible methods for attacking a proposal:
  - Attack possible arguments supporting the proposal.
  - Attack the proposal itself by mentioning counter-arguments. In other words, you should consider the opposite to be true and give arguments for your opinion. Remember that you are not obliged to give counter-arguments: the person who makes the proposal has the onus of proof. There is no need to give arguments for the current policy.

If it is obvious that the opponent has very strong arguments supporting a certain standard matter in dispute, then do not deal with that item at all, for instance, if it is beyond a doubt that there is a problem.

## **Arguing for Consensus**

This type of argument, as developed by Maxine Hairston, draws upon the communication theories of psychologist, Carl Rogers. Unlike traditional argument, it's not based on an adversarial model and doesn't seek to "win" in the traditional sense, though it might be argued that if the argument is successful, everyone wins.

### **Rogers's Basic Principles--**

1. Threat hinders communication. People, who feel threatened, tend to shut off communication and stop listening.
2. Strong statements of belief encourage strong opposition from the audience.
3. Threat can be reduced by using neutral, objective language whenever possible.
4. Threat can be reduced by demonstrating an understanding of the reader's point of view.
5. An atmosphere of trust improves the chances for successful communication.

### **Elements of Rogerian Argument--**

1. A brief and objectively phrased statement that defines the issue.
2. A complete and neutrally worded analysis of the other side's position. This should demonstrate that you understand their position and their reasons for holding it.
3. A complete and neutrally worded analysis of the position you hold. You should carefully avoid any suggestion that you are more moral or sensitive than your audience.
4. An analysis of what your positions have in common and what goals and values you share.

5. A proposal for resolving the issue in a way that recognizes the interests of both parties.

As Rogers says, "If you really understand another person in this way, if you are willing to enter his private world and see the way life appears to him, without any attempt to make evaluative judgments, you run the risk of being changed yourself." [Adapted from: Hairston]

### **Arguing in Context**

Like other types of writing, arguments respond to specific situations: a need is not being met, a person is being treated unfairly, an important concept is misunderstood, and an outdated policy needs to be re-examined. Strong arguments respond effectively to such writing contexts. A situation statement helps bring the writing context into focus early.

A situation statement needn't be complicated. Instead, keep it simple and concise. Focus on the interplay of writer, reader, and purpose. Notice how the following situation statement clarifies the writer's objectives as it identifies key issues and concerns:

#### SITUATION STATEMENT

*Purpose:* I work as a medical transcriptionist (typist), and some of the people in my office can type quite a bit more than some of the other people. Since we all get paid the same, some employees won't work at full capacity. We feel that we should be paid more for typing more. And since we don't get paid more, we don't push ourselves to type more. This is a big problem with a couple of employees. It has been going on for about two years. I want to argue in favour of setting up an incentive program to reward transcriptionists who type over nine hundred lines a day.

*Writer:* I know quite a bit about the problem since I am involved. I am one of the employees who won't work as hard as I can. My stake in the outcome would be that I could make more money.

*Reader:* My reader is my boss at work. She is director of the Medical Records department. She is forty-three years of age and has had at least two years of college to get her Accredited Records Technician (A.R.T.) degree. She was once a sergeant in the Marine Corps, so sometimes she is rough. She is a very moody person. I have worked for Pat for four years. She sees me as dependable and hard working. Pat's stake in the issue would possibly be to find a better or fairer way to pay her employees.

This is not thorough or exhaustive. Since it precedes the first draft, the writer doesn't yet know what the paper will turn into. Still, the very act of writing a situation statement helps her envision the task ahead.

### **Here is a brief outline of an Argumentative Essay [12]:**

Paragraph 1: General introduction of the problem. Thesis statement which states your opinion.

Paragraph 2-3: History of the problem (including, perhaps, past attempts at a solution). Sources needed

Paragraph 4-6: Extent of the problem (who is affected; how bad is it, etc.). Sources needed

Paragraphs 7-8: Repercussion of the problem if not solved. Sources needed.

Paragraphs 9-10: You should have led up to a conclusion that your argument is sound. Pull it all together by connecting your argument with the facts. Anticipate objections and make concessions.

Paragraph 11: Conclusion: Restatement of thesis and summary of main ideas.

You are writing a full explanation of the problem and arguing for your viewpoint to be accepted. Work in your own interview and questionnaire in the body of the paper where they make the most sense. Once your paper has been written, check every quotation in it for accuracy.

## **Coherence: Transitions between Ideas**

The most convincing ideas in the world, expressed in the most beautiful sentences, will move no one unless those ideas are properly connected. Unless readers can move easily from one thought to another, they will surely find something else to read or turn on the television.

Providing transitions between ideas is largely a matter of attitude. You must never assume that your readers know what you know. In fact, it's a good idea to assume not only that your readers need all the information that you have and need to know how you arrived at the point you're at, but also that they are not quite as quick as you are. You might be able to leap from one side of the stream to the other; believe that your readers need some stepping stones and be sure to place them in readily accessible and visible spots.

There are four basic mechanical considerations in providing transitions between ideas: using transitional expressions, repeating key words and phrases, using pronoun reference, and using parallel form.

### **Using Transitional Tags**

Transitional tags run the gamut from the most simple — the little conjunctions: *and, but, nor, for, yet, or,* (and sometimes) *so* — to more complex signals that ideas are somehow connected — the conjunctive adverbs and transitional expressions such as *however, moreover, nevertheless, on the other hand.*

The use of the little conjunctions — especially *and* and *but* — comes naturally for most writers. However, the question whether one can begin a sentence with a small conjunction often arises. Isn't the conjunction at the beginning of the sentence a sign that the sentence should have been connected to the prior sentence? Well, sometimes, yes. But often the initial conjunction calls attention to the sentence in an effective way, and that's just what you want. Over-used, beginning a sentence with a conjunction can be distracting, but the device can add a refreshing dash to a sentence and speed the narrative flow of your text. Do not interlard your text with transitional expressions merely because you know these devices connect ideas. They must appear, naturally, where they belong, or they'll stick like a fishbone in your reader's craw. On the other hand, if you can read your entire essay and discover none of these transitional devices, then you must wonder what, if anything, *is* holding your ideas together.

### **Repetition of Key Words and Phrases**

The ability to connect ideas by means of repetition of key words and phrases sometimes meets a natural resistance based on the fear of being repetitive. We've been trained to loathe redundancy. Now we must learn that catching a word or phrase that's important to a reader's comprehension of a piece and replaying that word or phrase creates a musical motif in that reader's head. Unless it is overworked and obtrusive, repetition lends itself to a sense of coherence (or at least to the illusion of coherence). Remember Lincoln's advice:

*You can fool some of the people all of the time, and all of the people some of the time, but you cannot fool all of the people all of the time.*

In fact, you can't forget Lincoln's advice, because it has become part of the music of our language. Remember to use this device to link paragraphs as well as sentences.

### **Pronoun Reference**

Pronouns quite naturally connect ideas because pronouns almost always refer the reader to something earlier in the text. I cannot say "This is true because..." without causing the reader to consider what "this" could mean. Thus, the pronoun causes the reader to sum up, quickly and subconsciously, what was said before (what *this* is) before going on to the *because* part of my reasoning. We should hardly need to add, however, that it must always be perfectly clear what a pronoun refers to. If my reader cannot instantly know what *this* is, then my sentence is ambiguous and misleading. Also, do not rely on unclear pronoun references to avoid responsibility: "They say that . . ."

### **Parallelism**

Music in prose is often the result of parallelism, the deliberate repetition of larger structures of phrases, even clauses and whole sentences.

## Coherence Devices in Action

Look at the following paragraph:

The ancient Egyptians were masters of preserving dead people's bodies by making mummies of them. Mummies several thousand years old have been discovered nearly intact. The skin, hair, teeth, fingernails and toenails, and facial features of the mummies were evident. It is possible to diagnose the disease they suffered in life, such as smallpox, arthritis, and nutritional deficiencies. The process was remarkably effective. Sometimes apparent were the fatal afflictions of the dead people: a middle-aged king died from a blow on the head, and polio killed a child king. Mummification consisted of removing the internal organs, applying natural preservatives inside and out, and then wrapping the body in layers of bandages.

Though weak, this paragraph is not a total washout. It starts with a topic sentence, and the sentences that follow are clearly related to the topic sentence. In the language of writing, the paragraph is *unified* (i.e., it contains no irrelevant details). However, the paragraph is not *coherent*. The sentences are disconnected from each other, making it difficult for the reader to follow the writer's train of thought.

Below is the same paragraph revised for coherence. *Italics* indicates pronouns and repeated/restated key words, **bold** indicates transitional tag-words, and underlining indicates parallel structures.

The ancient Egyptians were masters of preserving dead people's bodies by *making mummies* of them. **In short**, *mummification* consisted of removing the internal organs, applying natural preservatives inside and out, and then wrapping the body in layers of bandages. **And** *the process* was remarkably effective. **Indeed**, *mummies* several thousand years old have been discovered nearly intact. *Their* skin, hair, teeth, fingernails and toenails, and facial features are still evident. *Their* diseases in life, such as smallpox, arthritis, and nutritional deficiencies, are still diagnosable. **Even** *their* fatal afflictions are still apparent: a middle-aged king died from a blow on the head; a child king died from polio.

The paragraph is now much more coherent. The organization of the information and the links between sentences help readers move easily from one sentence to the next. Notice how this writer uses a variety of coherence devices, sometimes in combination, to achieve overall paragraph coherence.

# Exercises on Argumentation



**1. Are the following pieces of text examples of argumentation? (In other words: is there a support relation between the statements?) If so, underline the opinion [3].**

1. Motorcycling is not dangerous. Many more cars are involved in road accidents than motors.
2. Akzo is paying no dividend this year. Shell, on the other hand, is paying the highest dividend in the past ten years.
3. This teacher's employment should preferably not be continued. Teachers who cannot agree to the pursuit of profit, a principle that is held in trade and industry, do not fit in with a business school.
4. They are leaving the room looking rather low. The exam must have been quite difficult.
5. A double income in the literal sense of the word is very rare. In actual practice if one of the two is working full-time, the other cannot but work part-time.
6. The information campaign about radiation and nuclear waste that the government launched today is unique. For example, in this campaign opponents of nuclear energy are absolutely free to express their point of view. In other countries this is not allowed.
7. In my opinion, the new manager will not be Wheeler. He has made several capital blunders this year.
8. Holland has few nice cities. In my view, Utrecht is not one of them.
9. You may think differently! Everyone is entitled to his own opinion.
10. To quit smoking is an important step towards a healthy way of living. Logically, the next steps are of course wholesome food and more exercise.
11. Ask the same for me, for friends should have all things in common.  
-- Plato, *Phaedrus*
12. Matter is activity, and therefore a body is where it acts; and because every particle of matter acts all over the universe, every body is everywhere.  
-- Collingwood, *The Idea of Nature*



13. The citizen who so values his "independence" that he will not enrol in a political party is really forfeiting independence, because he abandons a share in decision making at the primary level: the choice of the candidate. -- Felknor, *Dirty Politics*



**2. Analyze the following argumentations. If possible, first indicate the opinion and then determine whether the other statement is an argument or a linking statement.**

1. You may go now, the traffic light is green.
2. If one's children are small, the best holiday is at the beach. So, that is what we like best.
3. First come, first served. That is why Charles may take his time choosing a book.
4. There is a sheet of ice on the canal. It is freezing obviously.
5. If John takes something upon himself, he does so with all his heart. So, it would be foolish to elect someone else to be our representative in the works council.
6. Wolfgang Wolffenbuttel is a German, so he will probably drink a lot of beer.
7. Anyone who is fond of candy is more likely to get tooth trouble. And you are crazy about candy, aren't you?
8. The financing deficit has barely decreased: the policy of the cabinet has failed!
9. The match has apparently finished, the stadium is empty.
10. You should not complain so much about public transport. If you want to live in the country and work in the city, you must put up with the inconvenience of coaches and trains.



**3. This exercise is about the more complex forms of argumentation. Rephrase the statements below, so that you get a complete argumentation (opinion + argument). Add a signal to make the argumentative relation clear.**

Example: *Japanese food? Never!! You know that it disagrees with me! Paraphrase: I do not want to eat Japanese food (opinion), because it does not agree with me (argument).*

1. You want a clean environment don't you? Use Knox deter-gent.
2. With these bald tyres this car is a menace on the roads.
3. Kicking the habit of taking medicines is awful. You had better not get addicted to these tranquillizers!
4. Isn't it about time to improve your condition? Or do you think such breathless gasping is normal when climbing the stairs?
5. All these nude pictures turn Playboy into a piece of gutter journalism.

6. A reduction of working hours at VW? Sales must be declining!
7. What! This tea tastes quite different! You bought another brand!
8. Do you want to study economics? You are not a Right-Winger are you?
9. My son was crying all night. Now I cannot think clearly any more.
10. You won't see me in that shop again. I won't be cheated out of my money by that creature at the cash desk any more!



**4. Draw a logical conclusion from each set of statements given below.** (from pages 78-79 of Pearson-Allen: *Modern Algebra*, Book One. [14])

I.

1. Everyone who is sane can do Logic;
2. No lunatics are fit to serve on a jury;
3. None of your sons can do Logic.

II.

1. No ducks waltz;
2. No officers ever decline to waltz;
3. All my poultry are ducks.

III.

1. No kitten that loves fish is unteachable;
2. No kitten without a tail will play with a gorilla;
3. Kittens with whiskers always love fish;
4. No teachable kitten has green eyes;
5. No kittens have tails unless they have whiskers.

IV.

1. There is no box of mine here that I dare open;
2. My writing-desk is a box made of rose-wood;
3. All my boxes are painted except what are here;
4. There is no box of mine that I dare not open, unless it is full of live scorpions;
5. All my rose-wood boxes are unpainted.



**5. Analyze the argumentative fragments below. Indicate the opinion and (sub) arguments. Make use of the decimal notation system: 1. Is the opinion; 1.1 the first argument; 1.1.1 the first subargument etc.**

1 Scenic areas in the Netherlands should not be sacrificed to unbridled energy needs. After all they are extremely scarce items; an area like 'the Waddenzee' is unique in Europe: in no other area can so many water birds find a nesting place. Besides there is plenty of natural gas at Slochteren.

2 Many people call things they dislike fascist. Squatters yell about fascism when the police are clearing a squat. Right-Wing dictatorships are called fascist by the media. The word is no longer used in its original meaning.

3 We advocate a general maximum speed limit for motor traffic. It produces fuel savings of about 10% and besides a considerable drop in the number of serious road accidents is to be expected. This became obvious when this measure was introduced in Sweden. And let us not forget its favourable effect on the phenomenon 'acid rain'.

4 Ice dancing should be removed from the list of Olympic sports. Ice dancing is not a sport, but an art. After all, the aspect of dancing is emphasised. Furthermore in every match it is doubtful whether the best participant has won: the jury's political preferences play such a big role in their judgment that objectivity is out of the question.

5 The Association Opposing Noise Pollution is right in demanding attention for noise pollution. It is a good thing that steps are taken against people who do not take into account that other people really need a bit of peace. People who are regularly irritated by other people's noise can get all kinds of problems because of this. Medical reports show that many physical and mental symptoms are caused by noise pollution.

Advertising in newspapers and periodicals is an effective approach to problems such as noise pollution. Non-commercial advertising, provided it is done well, can carry much weight with people.



**6. Below you will find an argumentative text "Two more power stations" (from Braet, 1986). Read it and answer the following questions:**

- a. **What policy proposal is made by the writer? In what lines is it expressed in the clearest way?**
- b. **What standard matters in dispute are dealt with respectively in this text? In what lines?**
- c. **What problems and missed advantages are mentioned or indicated? In what lines?**
- d. **Is the argumentation complete? If not, why not?**



**7. Below you will find an argumentative text "Small inner-city hospitals in Amsterdam must stay" (from Braet, 1986). Read it and answer the following questions:**

- a. **What proposal is criticized by the writer? Mention three fragments of the text where this is expressed.**
- b. **What standard matter in dispute does the writer call into question in lines 14-33?**
- c. **What standard matter in dispute is dealt with in lines 34-44?**
- d. **What disadvantages of the proposal are mentioned in this text?**
- e. **Is the writer's criticism of the proposal convincing? Why (not)?**



**8. Below you will find seven argumentations. What types of argumentation are they?**

1. The French assume that the world is France and France is the world. Take Jean-Claude: researcher at the university in Limoges doesn't speak any foreign languages. Take Marie-Louise: after a piano recital in Beijing she is most surprised and indignant that she is asked questions in English.
2. If John takes something upon himself, he does so with all his heart. So, it would be foolish to elect someone else to be our representative in the works council.
3. I am sure I will not get a sufficient mark for the next mathematics exam. I had an insufficient mark last time.
4. I strongly advised her to report ill for a few more weeks. She did not really feel like it, but in that way her illness can run itself out and after the holiday she can go back to work fully recovered.
5. This car has bald tyres. It is a menace on the roads.
6. You should not watch T.V. so much: you are ruining your eyes.
7. If the roads are slippery, you had better pump the brakes. That is the advice of the traffic police.

## Two more power stations

Should the Netherlands make use of nuclear energy for its energy supply? Our answer to this question is a straight-forward 'yes'! We think there are arguments in favour of building at least two new power stations.

5 Ten years ago Den Uyl's Cabinet accepted a resolution to extend nuclear energy in the Netherlands. But nothing much came of the two new power stations. Successive cabinets postponed the matter. A broad public debate was held; an awful lot was written and said about nuclear energy.

10 Supporters and opponents of nuclear energy fought each other, not always openly. And now we are back where we started. More carefully than in the past we now propose to build two - for the time being - new power stations with a total capacity of 2500 megawatts.

15 We will now argue that an extension of nuclear energy is necessary, and that the results of the broad public debate need not stand in the way of this extension. The disadvantages of nuclear energy will ultimately prove not to balance the advantages.

20 New power stations are especially necessary, because otherwise Dutch industries will not be able to compete with foreign companies in the future. At the moment only seven per cent of our energy needs are being met by nuclear energy, whereas in Belgium and France this is more than sixty per cent. The cause is clear calculations show that in the year 2000 nuclear energy will cost 8.7 cents per kilowatt/hour and electricity from coal and natural gas 11.2 and 13.3 cents respectively. As a result our industries will find themselves in an unfavourable position. It goes without saying that the effects on employment will be negative.

25 In spite of the negative results of the broad public debate we consider our plan definitely feasible. This debate was not a referendum; the Lower Chamber is free to approve of our proposal. We trust that in view of our argumentation the Chamber will do so. It is true that problems may arise over the places where the power stations should be built, but if necessary we can and will make use of our authority to allocate places.

30 Finally, we think that the advantages - not only the cost price but also amongst others the use of different energy sources - clearly outweigh the disadvantages. According to us the greatest disadvantage, nuclear waste, should be put in perspective. The new power stations will produce no more than about five cubic meters a year. The first fifty or hundred years this may easily be safely stored aboveground. In all reason it is to be expected that in that period a final solution for the disposal of waste will be found.

35 All in all it would be extremely unwise to reject an extension of nuclear energy. The Dutch electricity bill would have been about 1 thousand billion guilders less if the power stations we are now advocating had already been built. The results of the broad public debate should not stop us: it was no more than a kind of opinion poll. And the problem of waste is, to begin with, not much more than good supervision of a warehouse.

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### **Small inner-city hospitals in Amsterdam must stay**

In a short period inner-city Amsterdam lost many hospital amenities: the "Binnengasthuis" and "Wilhelmina Gasthuis" merged in the AMC (Academic Medical Centre); the "Centraal Israëlitisch Ziekenhuis" moved to Amstelveen and the "Lutherse Diaconesseninrichting" will go to Amsterdam-Noord after its merger with the "Julianaziekenhuis". In accordance with the advice of Provincial States two other small hospitals, the "Boerhaavekliniek" and the "Prinsengrachtziekenhuis" will be closed before 1990. In 1990 inner-city Amsterdam with its 70,000 to 10,000 inhabitants will not have any hospital amenity any more. This is not only unique in the West, but also unacceptable.

The government has brought forward only one argument in favour of closing down small hospitals and that is economizing by means of a reduction of the number of available beds. The government justifies its intended policy by pointing out that according to national standards Amsterdam has a surplus of 1500 beds. The national standard, however, cannot be simply applied to Amsterdam, because Amsterdam has a number of typical big-city-problems that the national standard does not take into account. For example, there are relatively many elderly people, singles and minorities living in Amsterdam. Furthermore, the two academic hospitals have a regional, even national, function. And Amsterdam -being a tourist and commuter city- is in fact inhabited by more people than officially registered. Finally, it is to be expected that the AMC will not be able to cope with the growing number of AIDS-patients among male homosexuals, heroin addicts, heroin prostitutes and haemophilia patients in the future. A great strain will be placed on all Amsterdam hospitals. It looks like a hare-brained scheme to justify the economy measures.

Furthermore it is questionable whether closing down small hospitals will indeed result in economies. In this context it is interesting to know that these hospitals are the cheapest in Amsterdam. One day in other hospitals costs two or three times as much. Besides, closing down the hospitals is accompanied by retrenchment of staff, and since seventy per cent of the hospital budget is spent on salaries, this means considerable National Insurance costs. It is obvious that closing down small hospitals will not serve the intended purpose – economies – but, on the contrary, will affect it in a negative way.

Besides, justice is at stake here. If there were a surplus of beds, as the government claims, then it is a direct result of its own past policy. The government itself decided to build the AMC and the 'Slotervaartziekenhuis' fifteen years ago, in spite of the fact that some giants had already appeared on the periphery (Lucasziekenhuis, Andreasziekenhuis, Wziekenhuis). It was predictable that there was no need for new giants. So, is it just to pass the effects of past policy mistakes - that were openly admitted - onto the few small hospitals that had no part in it and that are doing well, at low costs?

Finally it is doubtful whether it makes sense to deprive inner-city Amsterdam of hospital amenities. It occurs in no other big city in the civilized West. It shows a Big Brother mentality to think that the inhabitants of the inner city can be forced to go to one of the giants on the periphery, or further away. There should be at least a possibility to choose, and after closing down the small hospitals there will not be any. Closing down contributes to the general impression of impoverishment and neglect of the city in the past twenty years. In addition it endangers the rendering of first aid. Many cases that require first aid, such as wounds resulting from a knifing, demand quick intervention with specialist support by a general hospital.

In view of the above the conclusion is inevitable that closing down inner-city hospitals is not wise, and is not in the interest of Amsterdam or the government, leaving aside whether it is morally right to deprive the entire inner city of the necessary amenities.



**9. What types of argumentation are the following pieces of text? Assess the quality of the argumentations as well: are they fallacies or valid argumentations? Make use of the appropriate sets of evaluative questions.**

1. The government should abandon its plan to raise taxes, otherwise unemployment will rise sharply.
2. At the drop of a hat people claim that the actions of the authorities are too severe. When squats are being cleared, every blow is one too many according to the squatters.
3. Umberto Ecco's latest novel does not add anything to his previous books. Therefore it is superfluous.
4. Regular exercise makes a person less prone to a cold or the flu. You really ought to take up sports.
5. There is hardly a student to be found who can write more than ten sentences without making a spelling error or a stylistic lapse. In my opinion today's youth are not interested whether the result is readable or not.
6. When the maximum speed limit is 100 kilometres an hour most motorists drive 120 kilometres an hour. So, a maximum speed limit of 120 kilometres an hour will make most motorists drive 140 kilometres an hour.
7. We will get a severe winter this year. My granddad said so and he is almost always right!
8. Teachers have on the whole nice jobs, which they chose themselves, are well paid and have a considerable amount of spare time. So it is only fair that they should be faced with more cut-backs than other civil servants.



**10. What types of fallacy are the following pieces of text?**

- 1 As far as the answering possibilities in our questionnaire are concerned, we have not excluded any. In that way we are giving the respondent comprehensive answering possibilities.
- 2 A: It was obvious that the Gulf War was to lead to enormous financial losses.  
  
B: Well, I do not agree that money is more important than freeing people from oppression!
- 3 (What fallacy occurs in the last sentence?) Many religions believe in reincarnation; in such a conviction the body is very important after death. That is why you should never oblige these people to be an organ donor. And even if you do not believe in reincarnation yourself, isn't it better to be on the safe side?
- 4 I think it is obvious that obligatory identification in the Netherlands is not feasible. If my opponent does not agree, I will be happy to hear from him.
- 5 (Someone advocates the legalisation of drugs in a public debate. He starts his speech by asking the audience: "Who has never smoked a joint? » Now his opponent starts speaking in the following way :)

My opponent had a funny opening, ladies and gentlemen. But he obviously strains for cheap effects on his audience rather than for reliable information. His question should of course have been different: "Who has never taken a shot of heroin?" And that is the difference.



**11. This is a mixed exercise, i.e. both argumentations or fallacies may occur. What types are they? Assess them.**

1. The fact that powerful organizations such as the T.U.C. (Trades Union Congress) remain sceptical about some issues is, in my opinion, a sign that a general reduction of working hours will not take place in Britain soon.
2. It is probable that many Dutch people will not take heed of obligatory legitimization. In actual practice about 30 per cent of Dutch motorists do not carry a driving licence with them, and that is obligatory as well.
3. It is striking that your group on average scored much lower for your half-term exams than other first-year groups. It seems unnecessary. You are not going to be beaten, are you? Show them what you are worth next time!
4. And it is not Utopia what I am telling you, because in England many voices are heard in favour of this. And if it is happening in England, why couldn't it happen here? England is only a few kilometres away across the Channel.
5. It is obvious that decentralization at the HEAO in Utrecht had a contrary effect; since then the number of applications has decreased.
6. I do not think that I need to change, because I think that you must accept me the way I am.
7. The safety of citizens really does not increase if they are legally allowed to buy firearms. After all, they already shoot a woman during a quarrel over twenty pounds. There was an article about it in the "Daily Mirror" the other day.



**12. What fallacies do you recognize in this interview with the editor of a newspaper that was held during a talk-show? In what lines? What fallacy is the interviewer (A) accused of by the editor (B) in his second reply?**

A: What made you put that suitcase with a fake bomb near a shop selling American clothes?

B: We wanted to see whether the Dutch public and the police were attentive to such matters at that moment (the Gulf War). Well they weren't. It took a few hours until the suitcase was discovered.

A: Oh, so in fact you did it for the common good. Is that what you are saying?

B: Well, you may pour ridicule on it, but that is not what I said.

A: No, I am not ridiculing it, but I just want to find out what made you do this.

B: Well, then you should start asking the right questions, because so far you haven't. And that is a maxim in journalism, isn't it?



A: Oh, are we going to talk about the right way to work as a journalist. I read a report in your newspaper about my recent trip to Russia in which you wrote that I had had an interesting conversation with the mayor of Moscow. I thought it was very flattering, but for your information: I never met the man. (laughter and applause) I am sorry, I did not mean to bring this up, but if we are getting personal, then I have a few more in store for you.

B: Well, I didn't realize that you had not recognized the mayor.



**13. Identify the Fallacies in the Following Passages and Explain how each Specific Passage Involves that Fallacy or Fallacies: (from Copi, *Introduction to Logic* pp. 85-87 [5])**

1. It is necessary to confine criminals and to lock up dangerous lunatics. Therefore there is nothing wrong with depriving people of their liberties.

2. How much longer are you going to waste your time in school when you might be doing a man's work in the world, and contributing to society? If you had any sense of social responsibility, you would leave immediately.

3. The army is notoriously inefficient, so we cannot expect Major Smith to do an efficient job.

4. God exists because the Bible tells us so, and we know that what the Bible tells us must be true because it is the revealed word of God.

5. Congress shouldn't bother to consult the Joint Chiefs-of-Staff about the military appropriations. As members of the armed forces, they will naturally want as much money for military purposes as they think they can get.

6. Mr. Brown: I will give no more money to your cause next year.  
Solicitor: That's all right, sir, we'll just put you down for the same amount that you gave this year.

7. When we had got to this point in the argument, and every one saw that the definition of justice had been completely upset, Thrasymachus, instead of replying to me, said:

"Tell me, Socrates, have you got a nurse?"

"Why do you ask such a question," I said, "when you ought rather to be answering?"

"Because she leaves you to snivel, and never wipes your nose: she has not even taught you to know the shepherd from the sheep."

-- Plato, *Republic*

8. Narcotics are habit-forming. Therefore if you allow your physician to ease your pain with an opiate, you will become a hopeless drug addict.

9. You can't prove that he was to blame for the misfortune, so it must actually have been someone else who was responsible.

10. You can't park here. I don't care what the sign says. If you don't drive on, I'll give you a ticket.

11. But lest you think, that my piety has here got the better of my philosophy, I shall support my opinion, if it needs my support, by a very great authority. I might cite all the divines almost, from the foundation of Christianity, who have ever treated of this or any other theological subjects: but I shall confine myself, at present, to one equally celebrated for piety and philosophy. It is Father Malebranche...

-- David Hume, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*



**14. Identify the Fallacies in the Following Passages and Explain how each Specific Passage Involves that Fallacy or Fallacies: (from Copi, "Introduction to Logic" pp. 87-88, [5])**

1. Cooks have been preparing food for generations, so our cook must be a real expert.
2. More young people are attending high schools and colleges than ever before in the history of our nation. But there is more juvenile delinquency than ever before. This makes it clear that to eliminate delinquency among the youth we must abolish the schools.
3. You say we ought to discuss whether or not to buy a new car now. All right, I agree. Let's discuss the matter. Which should we get, a Ford or a Chevy?
4. Our nation is a democracy and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. We believe in equality of opportunity for everyone, so our colleges and universities should admit every applicant, regardless of his economic or educational background.
5. Anyone who deliberately strikes another person should be punished. Therefore the middleweight boxing champion should be severely punished, for he assaults all of his opponents.
6. We should reject Mr. Watkins' suggestions for increasing the efficiency of our colleges. As a manufacturer he cannot be expected to realize that our aim is to educate the youth, not to make a profit. His recommendations can have no value for us.
7. Everyone said that the soup had a very distinctive taste, so they must all have found it very tasty.
8. If we want to know whether a state is brave we must look at its army, not because the soldiers are the only brave people in the community, but because it is only through their conduct that the courage or cowardice of the community can be manifested.  
R. L. Nettleship, *Lectures on the Republic of Plato*
9. My client is the sole support of his aged parents. If he is sent to prison, it will break their hearts, and they will be left homeless and penniless. You surely cannot find it in your hearts to reach any other verdict than "not guilty."
10. There is no proof that the secretary "leaked" the news to the papers, so she can't have done it.
11. Diamonds are seldom found in this country, so you must be careful not to mislay your engagement ring.

12. Was it through stupidity or through deliberate dishonesty that the Administration has hopelessly botched its foreign policy? In either case, unless you are in favour of stupidity or dishonesty, you should vote against the incumbents.
13. Since all men are mortal, the human race must some day come to an end.



**15. Read the following statements and comment on their use of informal reasoning. What details would you need to see in order to be convinced? Can you find any unstated assumptions that need to be examined?**

1. Coach Ratcliffe should be fired because a coach's job is to win ballgames.
2. I know he's popular because he drives a Corvette.
3. The president hasn't done anything about welfare reform, so he has no sympathy for the poor.
4. The Sun Belt continues to be the fastest-growing part of the country.
5. Too much smoking ruins a person's health, so you know Louisa's in bad shape.
6. Today's prisons are practically like country clubs.
7. Because several new schools have been built in the past few years, Chicago has an outstanding school system.
8. Imported cars are higher in quality than American cars.
9. Mr. Price got the contract, so you know he paid a few people off.
10. Arthur Jensen should be elected to the city council because he is a successful real estate developer.



**16. Look over the following examples, fill in any missing links in the reasoning chain, and comment on the uses of informal logic:**

- 1      Claim: Coach Ratcliffe should be fired.  
        Link: A coach's job is to win ballgames.  
        Data: The team had a 4 and 6 record this year. They had a 3 and 7 record last year. They had a 1 and 9 record the previous year.

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- 2      Claim: Arthur Jensen should be elected to the City Council.  
        Link: The best person is the most experienced.  
        Data: Arthur has served two terms on the council. His opponent has never been on the council. Arthur is a successful real estate developer.

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- 3      Claim: Omaha has an outstanding school system.  
        Link:  
        Data: The buildings are well-maintained.  
              Most schools have computers.  
              Several new schools have been built in the past few years.

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- 4 Claim:  
Link: Fair grading policies give every student an equal opportunity to succeed.  
Data: Pop quizzes in EM04 discriminate against students who prefer to cram for tests.  
Attendance policies in EM04 discriminate against students who must work during class times.  
Writing assignments in EM04 favour students with access to word processors.



**17. Letting 10 represent the highest and 1 the lowest, rate the following public figures for their appeal to character. Of course, you'll be considering more than just writing, but the activity should still give you some insight into what ethos is and how it affects credibility. When you've finished, compare your ratings with those of a partner. Discuss the reasons for your scoring.**

1. Vladimir Lenin
2. Adolf Hitler
3. Michael Jackson
4. Madonna
5. George W. Bush
6. Bill Gates
7. Yuliya Timoshenko
8. Vladimir Putin
9. Victor Yuschenko
10. William J. Clinton



**18. Read the following speech by Mark Anthony from William Shakespeare's play, *Julius Caesar*. Do you think Mark Anthony is appealing to the emotions of his audience? If so, what is his purpose in doing so? What parts of the speech seem especially designed to appeal to the audience's feelings? Does the speech contain any appeal to reason? To character? Are the various appeals balanced and harmonious or unbalanced and contradictory?**

Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears;  
I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him.  
The evil that men do lives after them;  
the good is oft interred with their bones;  
So let it be with Caesar. The noble Brutus  
Hath told you Caesar was ambitious;  
If it were so, it was a grievous fault,  
And grievously hath Caesar answer'd it.  
Here, under leave of Brutus and the rest--  
For Brutus is an honourable man;  
So are they all, all honourable men--  
Come I to speak in Caesar's funeral.  
He was my friend, faithful and just to me:  
But Brutus says he was ambitious;  
And Brutus is an honourable man.  
He hath brought many captives home to Rome,  
Whose ransoms did the general coffers fill:  
Did this in Caesar seem ambitious?  
When that the poor have cried, Caesar hath wept:  
Ambition should be made of sterner stuff:  
Yet Brutus says he was ambitious;  
And Brutus is an honourable man.

You all did see that on the Lupercal  
 I thrice presented him a kingly crown,  
 Which he did thrice refuse: was this ambition?  
 Yet Brutus says he was ambitious;  
 And, sure he is an honourable man.  
 I speak not to disprove what Brutus spoke,  
 But here I am to speak what I do know.  
 You all did love him once, not without cause:  
 What cause withholds you then, to mourn for him?  
 O judgment! thou art fled to brutish beasts,  
 And men have lost their reason. Bear with me;  
 My heart is in the coffin there with Caesar,  
 And I must pause till it come back to me.



**19. Below you will find two parts of a debate (pro and contra) on the proposal: the Dutch government should build new power stations as quickly as possible. Read the fragments and answer the questions following each of them.**

A (pro)

The seriousness of the problem shows itself in the fact that air pollution is so strong that innumerable scientists and researchers have written horrible scenarios predicting the destruction of all life on this unique planet. It is obvious that we will not live to see it. But we have children, grandchildren. Towards them we have a responsibility to create a livable world.

**1 What standard matter in dispute is dealt with here?**

**2 What is your opinion about the argumentation?**

B (contra)

But even more important is the question whether an increase in the number of power stations will indeed solve the scarcity and environmental problems.

It has been calculated that the present supplies of uranium that can be won are limited, about 5 to 7 million tons. This means that as a result of the large-scale use of this uranium supplies will be exhausted within a few decades. In the long term, therefore, power stations will not remain productive. So, nuclear energy will not solve the scarcity problem.

The second problem was the pollution as a result of current energy supplies. Especially the greenhouse effect plays an important role. Two arguments may be put forward that prove that the use of nuclear energy is not an effective way to fight the greenhouse effect.

First of all, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions - a problem which nuclear energy will ultimately solve - can be blamed for only about half of the greenhouse effect. Other gases are also responsible, such as methane, laughing gas etc. So, nuclear energy would just be a drop in the ocean.

**1. What standard matter in dispute is dealt with?**

**2. What problems must have been discussed before?**

**3. What type of argumentation does the writer use in the last paragraph of the text? Assess it by means of evaluative questions.**



**20. Below you will find part of an argumentative text opposing obligatory identification in the Netherlands. Read the text, and answer the following questions:**

- A**      **What standard matter in dispute is dealt with here?**
- B**      **What type of argumentation does the writer use in the last part (starting "Even worse...")?**

In surrounding countries like Germany and Belgium there is obligatory identification. Most South American countries have the same.

However, no decent research has ever been carried out in any of these countries to find out whether it is effective. For example it has never been proved that crime or fraud decreases as a result of obligatory identification. Even worse, a good forgery may offer a person more safety in a country where identification is obligatory than in countries where it is not. In Germany RAF-members could hide for years using forged identification.



**21. Think about situations in your own life that could give rise to an argumentative essay. You may find it helpful to write freely while you think. In any case, your goal is to discover three actual situations in your life that could serve as the basis for an argumentative paper. For each situation, write a brief paragraph like the one below, telling what point you want to make and for whom you are writing.**

**Write a Situation Statement for each argumentative context you discovered. The following questions may help you think of what to say. Do not answer questions that are not relevant to the situation, but do supply any relevant information you think of, even if it is not covered by one of the questions.**

*Purpose:* What do I hope to accomplish? Why is it important? What benefits would be realized? What problems would be eliminated? What questions would be answered? How would other people be affected? What obstacles must be overcome?

*Writer:* What are my qualifications for discussing this issue? What is my knowledge of the subject? What are the limits of my knowledge? How can I learn more? What is my personal stake in the argument's outcome? What is my relationship to the reader?

*Reader:* How well do my reader and I know each other? What is my reader's age, educational background, occupation, marital status, political preference? Why have I chosen to address my argument to this particular person or group? What stake does my reader have in the argument's outcome? What might the reader stand to gain or lose? What is the reader's impression of me, especially of my integrity, knowledge, and reliability? How well does the reader understand the situation?



**22. Make a *Pro and Con Chart* for each of the three arguments you've been developing. Exchange and discuss these with a partner. Which of your three propositions has the best chance of becoming a successful argumentative essay? Which points look most important?**

Pro and Con Chart	
<i>Proposition: .....</i>	
<i>For (Pro)</i>	<i>Against (Con)</i>
1. ....	1. ....
2. ....	2.....



**23. Rate the following sentences as proposition statements on a scale of 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest). Be prepared to explain why you do or don't think they could work.**

1. Money is the root of all evil.
2. The grading system in Maths 05 doesn't accurately reflect the students' intellectual achievements.
3. In these modern times in which we live, corruption in its various forms has a broad impact of major concern.
4. William McKinley was president of the United States from 1897-1901.
5. There's too much government interference and red tape for the average citizen to feel free.
6. Unless the Zoning Appeals Board shows greater flexibility in granting variances, we can expect businesses to locate elsewhere.
7. Nothing beats the fresh taste of milk.
8. With all the litter and debris that people leave there, the alley behind my house is a mess.
9. Someone needs to do something about the situation with regard to housing on this campus.
10. All tips should be placed in a large bowl and divided equally among the waiters who work each shift.



**24. Write a trial proposition statement to go with each of the three argumentative situations you've been working on. Exchange them with a partner, and discuss their strengths and weaknesses.**

## Exercises on Cohesion and Coherence<sup>4</sup>



# Cohesion



1. Look carefully at the words in *italics*, think about their function, then answer the questions below.

- (a) Have you given it to *him* yet?
- (b) Are we seeing *them* again tonight?
- (c) Did you buy it from *him*?
- (d) Have *they* seen *it* before?
- (e) If I see *him* with *her* again I'll tell you.
- (f) Why did *she* get angry? *He* was very drunk.
- (g) *Hers* is beautiful.

### Questions:

- 1. Why is it not clear what the above sentences refer to?
- 2. What is required to make the reference of the above sentences clear?
- 3. Rewrite the sentences to make their reference clear.
- 4. When would your sentences be more appropriate than the sentences above?
- 5. When would the above sentences be more appropriate than your sentences?
- 6. Are there any situations in which some of your sentences would actually be considered incorrect?
- 7. *he, she, it, they, him, her* and *them* are personal pronouns. What do you think the main function of these pronouns is?
- 8. *I, we* and *you* are also personal pronouns. Why can't you replace them with nouns in the above sentences? How are they different in function from the other personal pronouns?
- 9. You have probably used *her* in your rewrite instead of *hers* (e.g. *Her house is beautiful*). What is the difference in function between *her* and *hers*?



2. a What has caused the breakdown in communication in the following conversations? I

- (a) A: Are they going there again?  
B: Where?
- (b) A: I saw him then.  
B: When?
- (c) A: I'm doing those then.  
B: Which?
- (d) A: Did you buy that there?  
B: What?

b What do *there, then, those* and *that* have in common in the above examples?

c What words in the conversations could have caused a breakdown in communication and why didn't they?

<sup>4</sup> Adapted from: Bolitho R. & B.Tomlinson (1998) Discover English. Macmillan Publishers Limited. [2].





**3. a Why is there very little danger of a breakdown in communication in the following sentences?**

- (a) I'll give you this instead. (c) I'll see you here at six.  
 (b) Are these yours? (d) Let's eat here now.

**b What is the main difference in function between:**

- (a) *this, these, here and now* and (b) *that, those, there and then?*



**4. Look at the way *that* and *this* are used in the following utterances.**

- (a) A: He broke her favourite vase.  
 B: That was very valuable.  
 A: That was very careless.
- (b) A: Don't worry. There'll be nobody in the house. We'll be on the road with the picture in ten minutes' time.  
 B: I still don't like the idea.  
 A: This is it now. Stop the car.  
 B: This is crazy.

What is the main difference in function between the two instances of *that* in (a) and between the two instances of *this* in (b)?



**5. a What is the potential difference in meaning between (a) and (b)?**

- (a) They were a different two books.  
 (b) They were two different books.

What is the difference between the grammatical function of *different* in (a) and *different* in (b)?

**b (a) Complete the following conversation:**

- A: I need some other clothes.  
 B: Not again? You bought some new shirts last week.  
 A: No! I don't mean new clothes. I mean \_\_\_ clothes. I don't want to get these \_\_\_\_\_.

**(b) What does the word 'other' warn you to do in order to understand an utterance which contains it?**

**(c) Write a similar conversation in which *another* causes misunderstanding.**

**c (a) What makes the following sentence ambiguous?**

*We'll have to do more for them.*

**(b) Describe two situations in which the sentence would not be ambiguous. The sentence should not have the same meaning in both situations.**



**6. a What do the words in *italics* have in common?**

- (a) Your cooker is not working properly. — I know, I need a new *one*.  
 (b) Does anyone want to go to the pub? — Yes, *I do*.  
 (c) Has the London train gone? — I think so.  
 (d) My mother fusses and nags me all the time. — Mine *does* too.

- (e) I'll have a pint of bitter. — I'll have the *same*.
- (f) Will the game be postponed? — I hope *not*.
- (g) Don't bother washing the cups. We can use the old *ones*.
- (h) I didn't get a paper today. Can I borrow *yours*?
- (i) Can you give me a lift in your car? *Mine* has broken down.

**b** The words in *italics* have very similar grammatical functions. However they can be divided into four distinct groups. Allocate each utterance to a group and say how each group is different from the others.



**7. a** What do the following utterances in *italics* have in common?

- (a) Mark bought a plant *and* Lynn a basket of flowers.
- (b) Would you like to hear another song? *I know a lot*.
- (c) What did you think of the lectures? — *Two were quite good but two were awful*.
- (d) I thought that one of the twins would get into the team *but I was surprised when both were selected*.
- (e) *Has he gone?* — *Yes, he has*.
- (f) Janet should have been informed *but I don't think she has been*.
- (g) *Bill scored two and Fred one*.
- (h) Has she been laughing? — *No, crying*.
- (f) What should I have done? — *Phoned the police*.

**b** Allocate each of the utterances in *italics* to one of two groups and describe the difference between group one and group two.

**c** Use the examples above to help you to work out generalizations about what can be omitted in a second utterance or response.



**8. a** Look at the following sentences and think about the differences in meaning between them.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| (a) I like football <i>and</i> I like rugby.     | (f) I like rugby <i>in addition to</i> football.      |
| (b) I like rugby <i>and</i> I like football.     | (g) I like football. <i>Also</i> I like rugby.        |
| (c) <i>As well as</i> football I like rugby.     | (h) I like rugby. <i>Also</i> I like football.        |
| (d) I like rugby <i>as well as</i> football.     | (i) I like football. <i>In addition</i> I like rugby. |
| (e) <i>In addition to</i> football I like rugby. | (j) I like rugby. <i>In addition</i> I like football. |

**b** Do the same exercise with the following sentences.

- (k) It is an old car *but* it never lets me down.
- (l) It is an old car. *However* it never lets me down.
- (m) *Although it is* an old car it never lets me down.
- (n) It never lets me down *but* it is an old car.
- (o) It never lets me down. *However* it is an old car.
- (p) It never lets me down *although* it is an old car.

**c** Are there any differences in meaning between the different utterances in (a)—(j)? If so, say what they are.

**d** The words in *italics* in (a)—(j) are examples of words and phrases which can be used to link two statements, ideas, etc together. They represent

three different types of such words and phrases. *As well as*, *and* and *also* belong to different types. Distinguish between the three types and allocate each word or phrase in *italics* to one of your types.

e What are the differences in meaning between the utterances in (k)—(p)?

f Allocate each of the words in *italics* in (k)—(p) to one of the types you have established in d above.



9. a Look at the expressions in the box below and make up sentences exemplifying the use of each of them.

Instead	in that case	and also	similarly	on account of this
In fact	consequently	despite this	Then	as a matter of fact
for example	previously	for instance	however	for this purpose
Thus	in any case	meanwhile	Therefore	on the other hand
Besides	so	furthermore	as well as	at the same time
with this in mind	because of this	likewise	Finally	on the contrary

b Place each item in one of the types established in 8 d above.

c Place each item in the appropriate category, as indicated below.

<i>Exemplification</i>	<i>Sequence</i>	<i>Reason</i>	<i>Result</i>	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Comparison</i>
	first	for this reason	as a result		in the same way
<i>Addition</i>	<i>Contrast</i>	<i>Correction</i>	<i>Dismissal</i>	<i>Reinforcement</i>	<i>Time</i>
	nevertheless even so	rather at least	anyhow	Moreover	

d When you have filled in the columns examine the expressions in each column and then comment on the differences in use between the expressions.



10. Identify, correct and explain the errors in the following utterances.

- The ship finally sank this morning. Meanwhile in Canada there has been an unprecedented heatwave.
- It was a tremendously exciting match. Nevertheless I hope you enjoyed it.
- I don't like musicals. Anyhow I'll come with you.
- I don't like jazz. On the contrary I like folk music.
- It was really cold in the factory. In that case they refused to work.



11. Complete the following sentences. Then make generalizations about the words you have used to fill in the blanks. When are they used and why?

- We all kept quiet. That seemed the best \_\_\_\_\_.
- Any ideas where I should stay in Hong Kong? I've never been to the \_\_\_\_\_ before.
- What shall I do with all this equipment? - Leave the st \_\_\_\_\_ here. We'll come back for it later.
- I thought we were going to London today. - I don't know where you got that \_\_\_\_\_ from.
- Where shall I put this hairdryer? - Put the t \_\_\_\_\_ away in that cupboard.
- Bill's been stealing apples again. I'll have to teach that \_\_\_\_\_ a lesson.
- Mrs Biggins has been spreading rumours about you again. That \_\_\_\_\_ is a damn nuisance.
- She's feeding her dog. That cr \_\_\_\_\_ eats more food than I do.



# Coherence



1. Look carefully at the following dialogues. Analyse each utterance as in the following example.

	<u>Type</u>	<u>Purpose</u> :
1	A: interrogative B: declarative	offer declining offer

- 1 A: Would you like a cigarette?  
B: No thanks.  
A: It's OK. I've got plenty more.  
B: I don't smoke.
- 2 A: It's raining, isn't it?  
B: Yes, it is.  
A: I'd better go and get my raincoat then.  
B: Could you get mine as well please?
- 3 A: It's two o'clock.  
B: Don't worry. I'm nearly ready.  
A: It'll take us at least fifteen minutes to get there.  
B: Do you ever stop worrying?



2. a Describe situations in which the following exchanges would make sense.

- (a) A: It's nearly seven  
B: Yes, I know. I'm just going to ring him now.
- (b) A: The grass needs cutting.  
B: It's nearly ten o'clock.  
A: He'll wait.  
B: Like last week and the week before.  
A: The Robinsons are coming tomorrow.  
B: It's starting to rain now anyway.
- (c) A: shall we stop for a while?  
B: If you want.  
A: The Cow's quite good, isn't it?  
B: If you say so.  
A: We met your friend Jane last time, didn't we?  
B: My mother will be worried.
- (d) A: Hello.  
B: Bob?  
A: I'm not coming tonight.  
B: He's already gone.  
A: Already?  
B: Try Ted's.

b Analyse each utterance in each of the above dialogues in the same way as the following example.

	<u>Type</u>	<u>Purpose</u> :
(a)	A: declarative B: declarative	getting somebody to do something indicating acceptance of suggestion in A



3. The imperative sentence "Do it now" can be interpreted in different ways according to the situation. It could be interpreted as any one of: command, advice, appeal, instruction or warning.

**a Match each of the following mini-dialogues with one of the five functions above.**

- (a) A: What do you think?  
B: Do it now. Then it'll be dry when we come back.  
(b) A: Do it now. There's somebody coming.  
(c) A: Do it now.  
B: Yes, sir.  
(d) A: Do it now. Please, I want to go home.  
(e) A: You need to turn it over very quickly. Do it now.

**b List the set of conditions which you think must prevail for the sentence to be interpreted as each of the five speech acts listed above.**

e.g. *Command*

- (a) A in authority over B  
(b) B accepts authority of A  
(c) A wants B to do something



**4. Read the following paragraph.**

*The suggestion that all industries should be nationalized is ridiculous. Can you imagine the cost and the chaos? Look what happened to the railways. And the steel industry. No. Instead let us encourage private enterprise. Only then will we have initiative and thus prosperity.*

**Now answer the following questions.**

1. What speech act (see Q4) does the question, *Can you imagine ...* perform?
2. What speech act is performed by, *Look what happened to the railways?*
3. What two propositions does *instead* connect?
4. What does *then* refer to in the last sentence?
5. What is the function of *thus* in the last sentence?
6. The following analysis of the strategic structure of the above paragraph is wrong. Correct it.

- |                            |                                  |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| (a) Statement (sentence 1) | (d) Refutation                   |
| (b) Question               | (e) Conclusion                   |
| (c) Exemplification        | (f) Qualification of conclusion. |



**5. Read the following.**

*We have a problem. Yesterday I was told that we couldn't have any more books this year as our budget has been spent. That means of course no tapes for the winter term. However I think I've got an answer. If your brother can lend us the tapes from his school we can lend him that spare set of Mullens' for the term.*

**Now answer the following questions.**

1. What is the problem? How do you know?
2. What does *that* refer to in sentence 3?
3. What two propositions does *however* (in sentence 4) connect?
4. Does the *we* include or exclude the addressee? How do you know?
5. What does *Mullens* refer to? How do you know?
6. What implications for teaching have you discovered from doing 1—5 above?



**6. Identify and analyse the errors in the following extract from a student's work.**

*The most significant power is the purchasing power of consumers. Nowadays, people tend to use central heaters rather than coal. Furthermore, the level of income altered the life style of the consumers. They prefer to use modern electrical appliances such as the electric kettle.*

*Another factor is the change in transportation. The increase of petrol led to the increase in transport especially the electrification of railway and motor vehicles. However, other types of industries increased from 15,210 million therms to 18,445 million therms as a result of the decrease in the iron and steel industry.*



**7. Cohesion and coherence are obviously both concerned with ways of connecting utterances together. It is not easy to actually define the difference between the two as there is considerable overlap between them. Try to complete the following definitions.**

*Cohesion involves indicating the conn \_\_\_\_\_ between consec \_\_\_\_\_ or rel \_\_\_\_\_ utterances. If a text is cohesive you can see by loo \_\_\_\_\_ at the text how one utterance is rel \_\_\_\_\_ to a prev \_\_\_\_\_ or subseq \_\_\_\_\_ utterance.*

*Coherence is the lin \_\_\_\_\_ together of conse \_\_\_\_\_ or rel \_\_\_\_\_ utterances according to the func \_\_\_\_\_ of the utterances. Thus an invitation followed by an acc \_\_\_\_\_ would be coh \_\_\_\_\_ whereas an invitation followed by an anecdote would probably not be coh \_\_\_\_\_.*

**Look at the following examples.**

- 1 Mr Burns is often late. Yesterday I answered the phone.
- 2 A: Which platform does the London train go from?  
B: London? My daughter lives in London. She married a banker there last year.

Example 1 could be coh \_\_\_\_\_ because it could consist of a generalization followed by an example and a consequence. But it is not coh \_\_\_\_\_ because there is no ind \_\_\_\_\_ conn \_\_\_\_\_ between the two utterances.

Example 2 is coh \_\_\_\_\_ because the two utterances are connected by the repetition of *London*. But it is not coh \_\_\_\_\_ because there is no apparent connection between the function of the question and the function of the reply.



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