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THE SPEECH ACTS OF ARGUING AND CONVINCING IN EXTERNALIZED DISCUSSIONS *

F.H. VAN EEMEREN and R. GROOTENDORST

In discussions directed towards solving a conflict of opinion the participants try to convince one another of the acceptability or unacceptability of the opinion that is under discussion. If the participants are co-operative, this means that they are prepared to externalize their position with regard to the opinion and to advance argumentation for or against it. In this article, which is a condensed translation of an article originally published in Dutch (Eemeren and Grootendorst 1980), the authors try to indicate, by reference to the speech act theory, what this entails.

In the way in which it was originally conceived, the speech act theory is inadequate to characterize argumentation. In the authors' view this objection can be met by regarding argumentation as an illocutionary act complex at a textual level. They formulate the conditions obtaining for a happy performance of this act complex and explain that for the speaker the performance is linked by convention to the perlocutionary act of convincing. In the case of an externalized discussion this means that with his argumentation the speaker tries to make the listener, in turn, perform an illocutionary act in which he expresses his acceptance or non-acceptance of the opinion.

1. Introduction

Our subject in this article is the phenomenon of argumentation. Since the reader cannot be expected to know instinctively what we mean by *argumentation*, let us begin with a definition [1]:

Argumentation is a social, intellectual, verbal activity serving to justify or refute an opinion, consisting of a constellation of utterances which have a justifying or refuting function and being directed towards obtaining the agreement of a judge who is deemed to be reasonable.

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[1] It is important to note that this definition of the term *argumentation* must be regarded as a *stipulative* definition.

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We have already commented on this definition elsewhere (Eemeren et al. 1978). We shall confine ourselves here to some remarks.

The need for argumentation arises when language users disagree as to the acceptability of a given opinion and wish to resolve a subsequent conflict of opinion by verbal means. In principle they should then initiate a discussion in which they indicate their positions *vis-à-vis* the opinion which constitutes the point of contention, put questions, elucidate unclear points and, in particular, advance arguments. These arguments may have a more or less complicated structure. We shall confine ourselves here to 'simple' argumentation (which may be part of a compound argumentation) in which one of the parties defends or attacks a given opinion.

In the study of argumentation we regard the following preambles as especially important (cf. Eemeren and Grootendorst 1980):

- (1) Argumentation must not be regarded simply as a 'product', but also as a '(language usage) activity' (which is subject to certain conditions).
- (2) Argumentation need not necessarily be directed at 'justifying' an opinion, but can also be directed towards 'refuting' an opinion.
- (3) Argumentation must not be regarded simply as an 'intellectual' process unfolding itself in the mind of the person who is arguing, but also, and more especially, as 'external' or (as in the case of 'suppressed premisses') at least 'externalizable' activity which creates certain commitments [2].
- (4) Argumentation can in practice be part of a 'monologue' but also of a 'dialogue', and even in the first of these two cases it should be interpreted dialogically.

Starting from these four points, it is our intention in this article to provide an analysis of the argumentative function of the use of language. This means that we are trying to establish what it implies for language usage if a language user tries to resolve a conflict with another language user concerning an (expressed) opinion by convincing her or him, by means of argumentation, of the acceptability or unacceptability (as the case may be) of that opinion. It will be clear that here, unlike some other authors, we take argumentation to be a *specific* language use activity and do not assume a priori that *all* use of language is argumentative.

[2] Our reason for wishing to achieve consistent externalization corresponds to the reason given by Popper in *Objective Knowledge* for the 'linguistic formulation' of theories: only a *formulated* theory can be the subject of a *critical discussion*; a theory which is merely *believed* does not lend itself for discussion (1972: 31, 66). Likewise only *verbally expressed* opinions lend themselves for critical discussion. In order to solve a conflict of opinion in a reasonable way, the parties involved have to make clear, at every stage of the discussion, not only their positions towards the opinion, but also their argumentation for or against it. This means, *inter alia*, that they have to state their standpoint and their arguments *expressis verbis* or at least in such a way that their standpoint and their arguments are 'knowable' from what they have said.

The best theoretical framework currently available for studying language use functions is, in our view, speech act theory. However, in its classical conception speech act theory is inadequate to the description of argumentation and does not always accord with our preambles [3]. We shall try to provide remedies for these objections in our analysis.

The most important questions which we shall attempt to answer during the course of this article are the following:

- (a) What kind of speech act is argumentation?
- (b) What are the conditions for a happy performance of the argumentation speech act?
- (c) What is the relation between the argumentation speech act and the convincing speech act?
- (d) To what extent is the arguing/convincing speech act pair bound by certain conventions?

2. Argumentation as an illocutionary act complex

In authoritative studies of speech acts, such as Austin (1976) and Searle (1970), arguing, or at least *to argue*, is referred to as an illocutionary act. The authors evidently find this a matter of course, since they give no reasons. Yet this characterization is not entirely unproblematical. True, there can be no question but that advancing arguments for and against amounts to the performance of speech acts [4], but this does not necessarily mean that arguing is also an *illocutionary* act.

The specific difficulties presented by the characterization of arguing may be

[3] Cf. Franck (1980: 182-192) for similar criticism of speech act theory.

[4] Against the view that arguing always requires the performance of one or more speech acts one might advance the argument that it is sometimes possible to convince someone of something without saying a word, as by merely showing him something. The speaker can show the listener fingerprints so that he comes to the conclusion desired by the speaker, viz. that the speaker has indeed accused the right person of the crime. Quite apart from the fact that in colloquial speech no one would ever term such a mutely performed (and effective) attempt as convincing *argumentation*, it would be right to observe here that this process of convincing must always be based more or less on the following train of thought: 'These are the fingerprints of suspect X, these fingerprints must be those of the culprit because there was no one else at the scene of the crime, therefore X is the culprit'. Only *seeing* the fingerprints is not enough, nor is it decisive, for the effectiveness of the attempt at convincing: the listener must also endorse to the above reasoning. Whether the reasoning itself remains implicit or is formulated explicitly is of secondary importance. In this case both speaker and listener act on the *tacit* assumption of this reasoning, but if asked to do so they would be able to make it explicit and would be able to affirm explicitly that they endorse it. We therefore prefer in such cases not to speak of a *non-verbal* attempt to convince and a *non-verbal* argumentative act, but instead to refer to an *implicit* ('pre-verbal') performance of the speech acts of arguing and convincing.

indicated by reference to Searle (1970). Here the author considers illocutionary acts performed by uttering sentences with an *unequivocal* and *explicitly indicated* illocutionary force. Searle indicates the relation between the performance of an illocutionary act and the utterance of a sentence as follows:

[...] the characteristic grammatical form of the illocutionary act is the complete sentence [...] (1970: 25)

In the cases discussed by Searle there is always a one-to-one relation between the utterance of a particular sentence and the performance of a particular illocutionary act. If the conditions for the correct performance of the speech acts concerned have been met, the uttering of the first sentence amounts to making a statement, the uttering of the second amounts to asking a question, and so on. And conversely: a statement may be made by uttering the first sentence, a question asked by uttering the second, and so on. In the case of argumentation, however, we regard this one-to-one relation as problematical on at least three counts [5].

First, account must be taken of the fact that a completed argumentation consists of more than one sentence. Even the simplest argumentation for or against a given expressed opinion will always, if it is to be made fully explicit, contain at least two elements (cf. the 'datum' and the 'warrant' in Toulmin's model, 1969: 97–107). Every element can be reproduced in a separate sentence, and if this happens there is no one-to-one relation between what Searle calls the *illocutionary act* of arguing and one particular sentence [6].

Second, it must be borne in mind that the uttering of the sentences that together form an argumentation implies that with the uttering of each individual sentence a new specific illocutionary act is performed which is a different one from arguing. Such a specific illocutionary act might be a statement, an assumption, or – in typical instances – an assertion (and is therefore a member

[5] The breach of the one-to-one relationship which makes it problematical to regard arguing as an illocutionary act also occurs in the case of *indirect speech acts* (Searle 1979a: 30–57). In contrast to argumentation, indirect speech acts, however, do not have to consist of more than one expressed sentence (indeed, they generally do consist of only one expressed sentence), nor are they in any specific manner connected with any *other* utterance (whereas argumentation is always connected with an opinion). Furthermore, in the case of indirect speech acts the primary force is not solely determined by the literal meaning of the sentence uttered and the secondary force is, while in the case of argumentation the forces are in both cases determined to the same extent by the meaning of the sentences uttered.

[6] Naturally it is also possible in other cases that two or more sentences together constitute a complete whole. A statement, for example, can very well consist of two sentences. But in that case the two sentences composing the statement are each in themselves statements, and that is not true in the case of argumentation. The person who sends a telegram stating 'Father dying. Mother not well either' is in fact making two separate statements, albeit interconnected ones.

of the *assertive* class of illocutionary acts; cf. Searle 1976: 12, 13). If arguing is characterized as an illocutionary act, this means that the sentences used in the performance of the illocutionary act of arguing must simultaneously be allocated two illocutionary forces: each sentence individually has a particular illocutionary force (statement, assumption, or assertion), and each sentence is part of a whole which has an argumentative force. This again means that there is no question of the one-to-one relation chosen by Searle as his premiss.

Third, the uttering together of particular sentences can only be a performance of the speech act of arguing if those sentences are linked in a specific manner to the uttering of *another* sentence: the *expressed opinion* to which the argumentation refers. The argumentation serves to justify or refute a given opinion, which may either precede the sentences constituting the argument as a thesis or follow them as a conclusion. Even when uttered together the sentences cannot of themselves constitute an argumentation; they only become an argumentation in relation to a particular opinion. The necessity of such a specific relationship between the sentences which constitute an argumentation and the uttering of another sentence makes it even more difficult to accept a one-to-one relation between the uttering of a sentence and the performance of the illocutionary act of arguing.

Does this triple attack on the idea that in arguing there is a one-to-one relation between sentences and illocutionary acts mean that we endorse the views of those who regard it as impossible, erroneous or undesirable to treat arguing as an illocutionary act? Not necessarily [7]. These problems can be solved if, alongside *elementary illocutionary acts* we also distinguish *complex illocutionary acts* [8]. The elementary illocutionary acts then relate to the uttering of sentences each of which individually has a particular illocutionary force and the complex illocutionary acts relate to the uttering of sentences which together constitute a particular textual whole which can be allocated its own illocutionary force and which accordingly can be called an *illocutionary act complex*. By starting from the functional similarities which make it possible to distinguish between an illocutionary force at the *sentence level* and an illocutionary force at a 'higher' textual level, the speech act theory can also be applied to text entities larger than a sentence.

Argumentation is a speech act entity at the textual level. The illocutionary acts which together constitute the illocutionary act complex of argumentation each have a particular illocutionary force at the sentence level and jointly constitute a textual entity which has an illocutionary force at the textual level.

[7] Quasthoff (1978) does not regard arguing as a *speech act* at all. However, her use of the term 'speech act' appears to be synonymous with the term *illocutionary act*. It would be mistaken to conclude that Quasthoff holds the view that arguing also, or even perhaps predominantly, takes place with non-verbal means.

[8] Cf. Searle and Vanderveken (forthcoming).

If we accept the idea of this situating at more than one level, the one-to-one relation between sentences and illocutionary acts which Searle takes as one of his premisses remains intact in all cases. At the sentence level the uttering of each sentence individually is the performance of one, and only one, illocutionary act, while sentences constituting an argumentation will in principle tend to have the force of an *assertive* illocutionary act [9]. At the textual level the uttering of an entity of sentences is likewise the performance of one, and only one, illocutionary act complex: in this case, an argumentation. Even if the argument, because there is a 'suppressed premiss', constitutes an entity consisting of only one sentence, this still presents no problem: in that case, as an illocutionary act at the sentence level the utterance concerned may have, for example, the illocutionary force of an assertion (and no other) and as an illocutionary act complex at the textual level the illocutionary force of an argumentation (and no other). [10].

The introduction of the distinction between sentence level and textual level enables us to include the relation between the argumentation and the opinion to which the argumentation relates in our analysis. If the analysis were *exclusively* concerned with the sentence level, it would be possible, for example, to account for the manner in which, through the uttering of a particular

[9] Fogelin too appears, though without saying so in so many words, to make a distinction between the argumentative force at the textual level and an (other) illocutionary force at sentence level. The illocutionary acts which at sentence level are the most characteristic of argumentation are, according to him, *statements*. On the relation between the two levels he observes: "Arguments [...], like promises and bets, are not used to make statements. Although an argument is (typically) constructed from statements, the argument itself, *taken as a whole*, is not a statement" (1978: 34; our italics). Searle, again, who incidentally hardly refers to arguing at all, sees a connection between assertions and argumentation. He regards as the distinguishing feature of argumentative speech acts the circumstance that, unlike assertions and related illocutionary acts, they are primarily *attempts to convince*. Referring to *assert*, *state (that)* and *affirm* he observes: "Unlike *argue* these do not seem to be essentially tied to attempting to convince. Thus 'I am simply stating that *p* and not attempting to convince you' is acceptable, but 'I am arguing that *p* and not attempting to convince you' sounds inconsistent" (1970: 66). According to Öhlschläger (1979: 44), however, argumentation is not necessarily an attempt to convince, but he does not explain this statement.

[10] What we understand by the illocutionary act complex of *argumentation* appears to come closest to what Kopperschmidt (following Habermas 1973: 241) calls a 'Kette' or 'Sequenz' of speech acts (1980: 88-89). Van Dijk (1978) and Quasthoff (1978), when introducing the terms *makro-taalhandeling* (macro-speech-act) and *Handlungsschema* (action schema), disregard the distinction between text genres and functional language use units and the distinction between illocutionary forces at textual level and illocutionary forces at sentence level. Quasthoff moreover turns out to think that arguing is not an illocutionary act, so that in her view there can also be no question of an argumentative illocutionary force (1978: 6). This kind of approach to argumentation makes it very difficult to do justice to the connection which in our view exists between the illocutionary acts at sentence level which jointly constitute an argumentation and the conditions for a happy performance of the illocutionary act complex of arguing.

Table 1

Two analysis levels of arguments.

Textual level		ARG + / - → O	
Illocutionary act complex			
Sentence level	Elementary illocutionary acts	$A_1 \dots A_n$	A_i
	Sentences	$S_1 \dots S_n$	S_i

Note: A = assertive illocutionary act; S = sentence; | = one-to-one relationship; ARG + = justifying argumentation; ARG - = refuting argumentation; O = opinion (thesis or conclusion)

sentence, the illocutionary act of assertion is performed, but it would not be possible to account for the fact that by the uttering of one sentence an assertion is made which (at the same time) acts as an *argument*, while by the uttering of another sentence an assertion is made which (at the same time) acts as an *opinion* [11]. These sentences are linked to one another at the textual level, not at the sentence level. Their relationship to one another at the textual level is illustrated in table 1.

Argumentation is a functional language usage entity which is primarily connected with bringing about a particular sort of effect on the listener. The speech utterances used in the performance of the speech act of arguing have a common illocutionary force, since they act as the justification or refutation of an opinion. This means that argumentation is an illocutionary act complex. A speech, chat, sermon or discussion, though of course, both at sentence and textual level, illocutionary acts (or act complexes) are performed, is not [12].

Speeches, chats, sermons and discussions are *text genres* which are principally connected with the way in which social life is organized in a particular

[11] Argumentation has the connecting function at textual level in common with the other members of the group of illocutionary acts which Austin terms *expositives* and which he defines as follows: "Expositives are used in acts of exposition involving the expounding of views, the conducting of arguments, and the clarifying usages and of references" (1976: 161). In our view the majority of Austin's examples could likewise best be situated at a textual level. In his proposal for a better classification of illocutionary acts Searle does not call Austin's 'expositives' a separate class, but he does refer to the connecting function of some illocutionary acts as a possible criterion for classification (1979b: 6). The group of *expositives* he places entirely within his category of *assertives*, referring to their characteristic feature "that they mark certain relations between the assertive illocutionary act and the rest of the discourse or the context of utterance" as not more than an "added feature" (1979b: 13).

[12] The common testing function of argumentative speech acts distinguishes these speech acts from the text genres, in which there is no such all-embracing covering function; the text genres tend rather to correspond to what sociolinguists sometimes call *speech events* (see e.g. Gumperz 1972: 17 and Hymes 1962 and 1967).

community. In each case the organization of verbal action or interaction is a function of the social and cultural context in which the use of language takes place, and of the forms of communication that have developed within that context. The differences between text genres are determined by various factors, one of which is the social and cultural traditions of which text genres are part: a chat for example, is rather different from a sermon, and both have to be organized in accordance with certain social and cultural conventions.

Unlike functional language usage entities like argumentation, text genres are not connected exclusively with one particular illocutionary force. However, that does not of course mean that it is impossible for there to be any connection between text genres and language usage functions. For example, it is possible for a particular text genre to be virtually dominated, in practice, by one specific language usage function, so that that function comes to be regarded as characteristic of that text genre. Thus a discussion whose object is to resolve a conflict relating to an opinion may be characterized by the occurrence of language with an argumentative function, possibly to the exclusion of all other usage. But in the majority of cases a text will contain not only language with the function which is dominant in that particular text genre, but also language fulfilling other functions. In most discussions, too, there will be an alternation between purely argumentative language and, for example, informative questions and statements.

3. Conditions for a happy performance of the illocutionary act complex of arguing

When formulating the conditions which must obtain for a happy performance (that is, one which will be recognized as such by the listener) of the illocutionary act complex of arguing, we have chosen to take as our model the analysis of *promise* given by Searle (1970: 57–64). The starting-point here is a language situation in which a speaker *S* defends or attacks an opinion *O* to a listener *L*, using speech utterances $u_1, \dots, u_n$. *S* and *L* are ordinary language users, who are serious, act of their own free will, mean what they say, are bound by what they say and are free to say what they wish to say. In short, what Searle calls the 'normal input and output conditions' must have been fulfilled.

We shall call a defense of an opinion *pro-argumentation* and an attack on an opinion *contra-argumentation* (cf. Naess 1966). In our view, *S* has *happily performed a pro-argumentation by means of* $u_1, \dots, u_n$, if, and only if, the following conditions have been met [13]:

[13] In our view one of the preliminary conditions for the happiness of the illocutionary act complex of argumentation at the textual level is that the conditions which apply to the happiness of the specific illocutionary acts at sentence level which together constitute the argumentation have been fulfilled during the argumentation. If the argumentation consists of two elementary illocu-

Propositional content condition

$u_1, \dots, u_n$ together constitute a constellation of expressed propositions $C(E_1, \dots, E_n)$.

Preparatory conditions

- (1) *S* believes that *L* does not accept the opinion *O* in advance (without reservation, wholly) [14].
- (2) *S* believes that *L* will accept the expressed propositions $E_1, \dots, E_n$.
- (3) *S* believes that *L* will accept the constellation $C(E_1, \dots, E_n)$ as a justification of *O*.

Sincerity conditions

- (1) *S* believes *O*.
- (2) *S* believes $E_1, \dots, E_n$.
- (3) *S* believes that $C(E_1, \dots, E_n)$ constitutes a justification of *O*.

Essential condition

The uttering of $C(E_1, \dots, E_n)$ counts as an attempt on the part of *S* to justify *O* to *L*, i.e. to convince *L* of the acceptability of *O*.

In our view, *S* has *happily performed a contra-argumentation by means of* $u_1, \dots, u_n$, if, and only if, the following conditions have been met:

Propositional content condition

$u_1, \dots, u_n$ together constitute a constellation of expressed propositions $C(E_1, \dots, E_n)$.

tionary acts which have the force of assertions, then the argumentation is not happy, for example, if the preparatory condition for the making of assertions, viz. that the speaker has evidence (arguments etc.) for the validity of the propositions he is expressing in his assertions, has not been met. The specific thing about the conditions for argumentation at the textual level is that they are calculated to connect the constituent illocutionary acts with a particular opinion.

[14] The reason for referring in the conditions for argumentation (both pro and contra) to the *acceptance* or *non-acceptance* of the opinion and the argumentative expressed propositions, instead of referring – as is commonly done in the speech act analyses of Searle and his followers – to *believing*, is that in this way it is possible to bring about the *externalization* of the discussion which we desire. Here Searle's theory reveals a remarkable inconsistency: the conditions for the happiness of illocutionary acts are always stated from the point of view of the speaker and assume circumstances which may be known to the speaker, but in the case of preparatory conditions Searle regularly includes in his analyses a condition which is stated from the point of view of the listener and relates to a circumstance which, in the way in which it is referred to by Searle, cannot always be known to the speaker (see Searle 1970: 66–67).

Preparatory conditions

- (1) *S* believes that *L* accepts the opinion *O* as it stands (more or less, wholly or partly).
- (2) *S* believes that *L* will accept the expressed propositions $E_1, \dots, E_n$.
- (3) *S* believes that *L* will accept the constellation $C(E_1, \dots, E_n)$ as a refutation of *O*.

Sincerity conditions

- (1) *S* does not believe *O*.
- (2) *S* believes $E_1, \dots, E_n$.
- (3) *S* believes that $C(E_1, \dots, E_n)$ constitutes a refutation of *O*.

Essential condition

The uttering of $C(E_1, \dots, E_n)$ counts as an attempt on the part of *S* to refute *O* to *L*, i.e. to convince *L* of the unacceptability of *O*.

Each of the conditions listed is individually a *necessary* condition for a happy performance of the illocutionary act complex of arguing and together they constitute a *sufficient* condition for it. Even if only one of the conditions has not been met, then the act complex is deficient, or, as Austin calls it, *unhappy*. The degree of deficiency (the act complex may be wholly or partially deficient) and the nature of the deficiency are not, however, the same in all cases. We shall therefore indicate briefly what consequences result from failure to meet each condition.

If the *propositional content condition* has not been fulfilled, this means that there is no constellation $C(E_1, \dots, E_n)$ in which $E_1, \dots, E_n$ are expressions of propositions. The speaker has then failed at the sentence level to perform an illocutionary act with an assertive illocutionary force and this means that his or her speech utterance(s) is (are) *void*, so that at the textual level no illocutionary act complex argumentation has been performed.

If the *first preparatory condition* for pro-argumentation has not been fulfilled, this means that *S* believes that *L* accepts the opinion *O* in advance (without reservation, wholly). Performance of the illocutionary act complex of arguing has then become *superfluous* and will normally be regarded by *S* as a waste of time and effort, while *L* already knows that it would be a waste of time and effort. (The same applies mutatis mutandis to contra-argumentation.)

If the *second preparatory condition* has not been fulfilled, this means that *S* believes that *L* will not accept the expressed propositions $E_1, \dots, E_n$ or that *S* simply *does not believe* that *L* will accept the expressed propositions $E_1, \dots, E_n$. In either case the speaker assumes in advance that his arguments will not convince his listener: performing the illocutionary act complex of arguing has thus, to him, become *pointless*.

If the *third preparatory condition* has not been fulfilled, this means that *S* *does not believe* that *L* will regard the constellation $C(E_1, \dots, E_n)$ as a justifica-

tion (or, in the case of a contra-argumentation, as a refutation) of *O*; it may even mean that *S* believes that his listener will certainly *not* regard $C(E_1, \dots, E_n)$ as a justification (or refutation) of *O*. Here again, in either case performance of the illocutionary act complex has become *pointless* to *S*.

Not complying with the three *sincerity conditions* means (1) that *S* himself *does not believe* *O* (or in the case of a contra-argumentation that he *does*), (2) that *S* himself *does not believe* $E_1, \dots, E_n$ and (3) that *S* himself *does not believe* that $C(E_1, \dots, E_n)$ constitutes a justification (or refutation) of *O*. In all these cases we may speak of a *misleading* or *manipulation* of the listener by the speaker.

Failure to fulfil the *essential condition* means that the performance of the illocutionary act complex is *not* an attempt on the part of *S* to justify (or refute) *O* to *L* by means of $C(E_1, \dots, E_n)$, i.e. the performance of the illocutionary act complex is *not* an attempt by *S* to convince *L* of the acceptability or unacceptability of *O* by means of $C(E_1, \dots, E_n)$. The speaker has in that case not performed the illocutionary act complex of arguing at all. However, it is possible that he has performed one or more illocutionary acts at the sentence level, and that these acts have been happy, but then there is no question of argumentation. For example, the speaker may have made a series of unconnected assertions or statements, or he may (seen at the textual level) have added a comment or an explanation.

The consequences of non-fulfilment of the required conditions vary from a total failure of the illocutionary act complex of arguing to the performance of one or more acts which in some respect have not been wholly happy. Total failure is the consequence of non-fulfilment of the propositional content condition (since then, as a rule, *no* illocutionary act has been performed), or of non-fulfilment of the essential condition (in which case *another* illocutionary force may have been expressed). In the case of the non-fulfilment of the other conditions argumentation has taken place, but the act is *superfluous* (if the first preparatory condition has not been met), *pointless* (if either the second or the third preparatory condition has not been met), or *misleading* or *manipulatory* (if the sincerity conditions have not been met) [15].

4. Arguing and convincing

In the essential condition which we have just formulated for the illocutionary act complex of argumentation the relation between this illocutionary act complex and the *perlocutionary act of convincing* is indicated explicitly:

[15] Cf. Harder and Kock (1976: 50–59) for similar consequences of 'presupposition failure'.

The uttering of $C(E_1, \dots, E_n)$ counts as an attempt on the part of S to convince L of the acceptability or unacceptability of O .

The performance of an argumentative illocutionary act complex is always at the same time an attempt to convince. Since it is also easily demonstrated that a verbal attempt to convince always implies the performance of an argumentative illocutionary act complex [16], it might be thought that arguing and convincing were one and the same act or one and the same act complex. But everyone knows that in practice arguing is not quite the same as convincing. After all, the attempt to convince may fail, even though the listener has recognized the speech utterances as argumentation. True, the verbal means used in arguing and convincing are the same, but the *happiness/effectiveness conditions* are different.

As an illocutionary act complex, argumentation is happy if the listener has *understood* that the speaker, by uttering $C(E_1, \dots, E_n)$, has attempted to convince him of the acceptability or unacceptability of O ; the perlocutionary act of convincing is effective if it has indeed convinced the listener of the acceptability or unacceptability of O and he endorses the point of view of the speaker.

This difference between the *illocutionary* act complex of arguing and the *perlocutionary* act of convincing finds expression in the second and third preparatory conditions for the illocutionary act complex of arguing. Both these conditions are formulated (for both pro- and contra-argumentations) from the point of view of the speaker. They are concerned exclusively with the opinion which the speaker *ascribes* to the listener in respect of the acceptability or unacceptability of $E_1, \dots, E_n$ and in respect of the justification function (or refutation function) of $C(E_1, \dots, E_n)$ as regards O . For the argumentation to be happy as an illocutionary act complex, it is necessary and sufficient that these conditions and the other happiness conditions previously referred to have been fulfilled. But this is *not sufficient* to ensure the effectiveness of the perlocutionary act of convincing.

For the perlocutionary act of convincing to be effective, it is necessary for the listener actually to hold the opinion ascribed to him by the speaker. If that is indeed the case, and if the listener adopts a reasonable position, then the illocutionary act complex of arguing is happy and the perlocutionary act of convincing is effective. If this is not the case, then the perlocutionary act is ineffective and we can speak only of the illocutionary act complex as happy

[16] Incidentally we are of the opinion that illocutionary and perlocutionary acts *always* have different happiness/effectiveness conditions and are thus two distinct sorts of act. Austin, too (with Searle following close behind), clearly and emphatically makes the same assumption, but Holdcroft, for example, finds that perlocutionary acts are really a special sort of illocutionary act (1978: 20, 21), while Sadock opines that illocutionary acts are a special sort of perlocutionary act (1974: 153).

(assuming, of course, that the other conditions have been fulfilled). The difference between arguing and convincing is thus caused by the possible discrepancy between the opinion ascribed to the listener by the speaker and the opinion actually held by the listener.

If the effectiveness conditions of the perlocutionary act of *convincing* have been fulfilled, then the point of the essential condition of the illocutionary act complex of *arguing* has been achieved. Although arguing and convincing are two clearly distinct acts, there is thus nevertheless a specific relationship between them: the one act (arguing) is the *means* whereby the *end*, i.e. that the other act (convincing) is effective, is achieved. Cohen (1973) calls perlocutions that are in this specific way related to illocutions *associated*.

A perlocutionary effect aimed at in the performance of *all* illocutionary acts is that the listener *accept* the act as such [17]. By contrast to such illocutionary acts as *asking*, *requesting* and *ordering*, in the case of the illocutionary act of promising it's even the case that *no other* reaction is asked of the listener than that he accepts the promise [18]. Something of the kind is also true of such illocutionary acts as *asserting*, *stating* and *thanking*. Acceptance of an assertion or statement implies, *inter alia*, that the listener thinks that the speaker has evidence of the accuracy of his assertion or statement; acceptance of thanks implies that the listener actually intended whatever the speaker is thanking him for to be the speaker's advantage. Just as with promising, these conditions for the acceptance of such illocutionary acts, and hence for the achieving of the *perlocutionary* effect, correspond to the preparatory conditions summarized by Searle for the happiness of *illocutionary* acts (1970: 66–67).

[17] In the first instance Cohen appears to feel that the acceptance of the illocutionary act is *not* a perlocutionary effect which can occur in all cases of illocutionary acts. For example, he regards the acceptance of a *promise* as a perlocutionary effect as being *alongside* the other sorts of associated perlocution, *warning*, *arguing* and *threatening* (1973: 499). But a little later he takes account of the possibility that this is a *general* perlocutionary effect (1973: 501).

[18] As we do, Searle accounts it one of the preparatory conditions for the happiness of a promise that the speaker must *believe* that what he is promising is *valued positively by the listener* (1970: 58–59). Our objection concerns his rider that the listener must indeed value positively the thing promised before the *illocutionary* act can be called happy. The same objection, in fact, also applies to the other preparatory condition, in which Searle requires that it be unclear *both to the speaker and to the listener* that what the speaker is promising he would normally have done even without the promise (1970: 59). By thus involving the listener in the conditions for *promising*, Searle is in fact requiring that the speaker always have a correct assessment of the listener's thoughts, wishes and expectations in order to ensure a happy performance of the illocutionary act. But a speaker can very well promise his listener something that he either does not want at all or which he has been expecting for some time anyway. In that case it is also quite possible that the listener *realizes* perfectly well that the speaker is giving him a promise. Essential to the happiness of this illocutionary act, in our view, is that the listener can recognize the speaker's intention to make a promise. Whether this intention corresponds to what the listener thinks, wishes or expects is immaterial to the happiness of the act as *illocutionary* act, but can at most have an effect on the achievement or lack of achievement of the *perlocutionary* effect striven for by the speaker.

If the speaker wishes to use an illocutionary act in order to achieve a perlocutionary effect which goes further than the mere acceptance of the illocutionary act by the listener, then the acceptance perlocution may be a *necessary*, but in no instance a *sufficient* condition for the achieving of this more far-reaching perlocution. We believe that *in general* it is true to say that speakers will not be satisfied if only the acceptance perlocution occurs: they will also wish to achieve the more far-reaching perlocutionary effect. Following this, we propose (without any intention of suggesting a 'natural' hierarchical order) to refer to acceptance perlocutions by the term *minimal perlocution* and to the other (more far-reaching) perlocutions by the term *optimal perlocution*. Minimal perlocutions thus consist (in verbally externalized form) exclusively of the performance of the illocutionary act of *acceptance*, while optimal perlocutions may consist of a particular *state of mind* of the listener (a feeling, thought or conviction) or of one or more (*speech*) *acts* – of various sorts – which have to be performed by the listener.

Returning to the arguing and convincing pair, we must now answer the question when the minimal associated effect of arguing occurs that the listener *accepts*. In the case of an externalized discussion it does not matter whether or not, psychologically, the listener is in a state of mind of being convinced, so that the achievement of the minimal perlocutionary effect of acceptance may be regarded as an *end*. The question is now what acceptance of the argumentation implies for the listener.

Here we conceive of the *acceptance* of the illocutionary act complex of arguing as the performance of an *illocutionary act* [19]. This act implies that the listener *explicitly expresses* the fact that he concurs with the expressed propositions $E_1, \dots, E_n$ and with the justification or refutation function of the constellation $C(E_1, \dots, E_n)$ in respect of the opinion O and that *he therefore accepts or does not accept O* .

The listener accepting the speaker's argumentation does not 'in reality' have to be in a state of mind of 'being convinced' (in which case the *optimal* perlocutionary effect would have been achieved), nor can he once and for all

[19] Austin too regards acceptance as an illocutionary act. In the final lecture of *How to do things with words* he classifies *accept* in the group of illocutionary acts which he calls *expositives*. He notes of this category that some of the examples might equally rightly have been included in some other category. For *accept* and some other illocutionary acts, he says, the group of *commissives* (to which *promise* also belongs) might be considered (1976: 162). This suggestion is understandable, since *accept* has in common with *promise* that the happiness of its performance as an illocutionary act results in the speaker becoming *committed* in some specific manner. (We also believe that the observation that *accept* should preferably be seen as an illocutionary act is of greater importance than the question of what place this act should be allotted in Austin's classification. Moreover, Austin's classification is itself far from perfect; for criticism and an alternative, see Searle 1979b: 1–29.)

be held to O . As regards this last, we are of the opinion that to the acceptance of opinions the same consideration generally applies as that which Popper advances in respect of the acceptance of scientific theories:

[...] all acceptance is tentative and, like belief, of passing and personal rather than objective and impersonal significance (1972: 142–143).

However, by his acceptance of the speaker's argumentation the listener is in a particular manner *committed*. In the case of the illocutionary act of *acceptance* this commitment is based on the permitted assumption (in the case of a happy performance) that the sincerity conditions for this illocutionary act have been fulfilled in exactly the same way as it is in the case of the illocutionary act complex of *argumentation*. Furthermore, the consequences of the commitment are exactly the same for the speakers in the case of both acts. The same is true, incidentally, of the *rights* which the two listeners can derive from it.

In both cases the *sincerity conditions* ensure that, as in the case of a promise, the speaker is *committed* to what by the performance of the illocutionary act (or the illocutionary act complex) he purports to believe. Whether he 'actually' believes it is not relevant in this context. The speaker is serious (and meets the other conditions for a normal 'output') and the listener may call him to account for what he says. The performance by the speaker of the illocutionary act complex of *arguing* gives the listener the right to hold the speaker to the opinion O , the expressed propositions $E_1, \dots, E_n$ and the justification function (or refutation function) of the constellation $C(E_1, \dots, E_n)$ in respect of O . The *acceptance of the argumentation* gives the listener (in this case the person who acted as speaker during the argumentation) the same right to hold the speaker (in this case the person who acted as listener during the argumentation) to the same opinion, expressed propositions and justification function (or refutation function).

The sincerity conditions for the illocutionary act of *accepting an argumentation* thus imply, *inter alia*, that the speaker (the earlier listener) 'believes' the opinion O (or, in the case of a happy attempt at refutation, that he *does not* believe it) in the sense that the listener may hold him to it. That is to say, the speaker *may be regarded as convinced* by the argumentation. This sincerity condition for the illocutionary act of acceptance, the performance of which must be regarded as the *minimal* perlocutionary effect of the happy performance of the illocutionary act complex of arguing, thus corresponds to the *optimal* perlocutionary effect of the illocutionary act complex of arguing. If the person who is arguing succeeds in making the listener *accept* his argumentation (minimal perlocutionary effect), then, though he still has no certainty that the listener is also actually *convinced* in the psychological sense (optimal perlocutionary effect), the consequences for the further (verbal) behavior of the listener are the same, and that is what must count here. In both cases the speaker has the right to reprove the listener if he says or does something which

Table 2
The minimal and optimal perlocution of argumentation.

Illocutionary act complex		Perlocutionary act	Minimal AP (illocutionary act)	Optimal AP (mental)
Arguing	Convincing	Acceptance	'Being convinced'	
$u_1 \dots u_n$				
S_1				
EC: the uttering of C counts as an attempt at convincing PC: S_1 believes that L_1 - endorses C - endorses that C is a justification (refutation) of O SC: S_1 believes - O - C - that C is a justification (refutation) of O				
L_1				
L_1 endorses - C - that C is a justification (refutation) of O				
L_1 is convinced (= L believes does not believe O)				
$L_2 (= S_1)$				
SC: S_2 believes - C - that C is a justification (refutation) of O - O				

Note: S = speaker; L = listener; u = utterance; C = constellation of expressed propositions $E_1 \dots E_n$; O = opinion; AP = associated perlocution; EC = essential condition; PC = preparatory condition; SC = sincerity condition.

conflicts with the point of view earlier endorsed by him.

The relationships between the illocutionary act complex of arguing and the two associated perlocutions are shown diagrammatically in table 2.

5. The conventionality of perlocutions

We shall now try to answer the question of whether the perlocutions associated with illocutionary acts or act complexes are *conventional*. No one disputes the conventionality of illocutionary acts, but opinions differ when it comes to the conventionality of perlocutionary acts, of which *convincing* is an example. Austin and Searle take the standpoint that perlocutionary acts are *never* conventional, while Cohen in 'Illocutions and perlocutions' allows for the possibility that perlocutionary acts may have just as good a claim to conventionality as illocutionary acts.

Austin and Cohen have followed, as Morgan (1978: 279) puts it "hallowed linguistic tradition" in carefully not saying what they mean by 'convention', and Searle is apparently using this term in a different way. Let us therefore begin by stating as precisely as possible what we mean by *conventionality*, before we go into the question of the conventionality of the associated perlocution of the illocutionary act complex of arguing. We shall start from a definition proposed by Lewis in *Convention*:

A regularity *R* in the behavior of members of a population *P* when they are agents in a recurrent situation *S* is a *convention* if and only if, in any instance of *S* among the members of *P*,

- (1) everyone conforms to *R*;
- (2) everyone expects everyone else to conform to *R*;
- (3) everyone prefers to conform to *R* on condition that the others do, since *S* is a coordination problem and uniform conformity to *R* is a coordination equilibrium in *S* (1977: 42).

Lewis takes a game theory approach to conventionality, but his findings, as he himself observes, are not bound to a game theory approach.

The nucleus of Lewis's view is that a convention is a regularity in the behavior of people brought about by a system of expectations. What is the significance of this view for the relationship between the illocutionary act complex of arguing and its associated minimal and optimal perlocutions? In the first place, if we are to call this relation *conventional* in the Lewis sense it is necessary that a happy performance of the illocutionary act complex of arguing by the speaker *regularly* be followed by the occurrence of the minimal or optimal associated perlocutions on the part of the listener and in the second place it is necessary that the speaker *expect* that this will happen. To what extent is this the case?

If *regularity* is the decisive criterion of conventionality, it is clear that the associated perlocution of the illocutionary act complex of arguing does *not*

have much chance of being capable of being called *conventional*, since there is no question of a regular occurrence of the minimal or optimal associated perlocution: one does not have to be a dyed-in-the-wool pessimist to dare assert that in practice an argument fails to be accepted (ineffective minimal perlocution) just as often as it is accepted, and that the listener *fails to be convinced* by the argumentation (ineffective optimal perlocution) at least as often as he is convinced.

Does this also hold for the speaker's *expectation*? We believe not. The illocutionary act complex of arguing and the perlocutionary act of convincing maintain, as we have already seen, a bilateral relationship: arguing is an attempt to convince and for the performance of an attempt to convince the speaker must argue. If the speaker had no confidence in his succeeding in convincing the listener with his argumentation, he would not have to argue. By arguing with the listener, instead of, for instance, giving him an order, the speaker indicates that he regards the listener as a *reasonable judge* who keeps up to the same standards for correct arguing as he does himself. These standards of correctness relate, *inter alia*, to the *justification function* (or *refutation function*) of $C(E_1, \dots, E_n)$ for O and the combination of the third preparatory condition and the sincerity condition of the illocutionary act complex of arguing implies that the speaker may be regarded as assuming that the listener has the same standards of judgment as he has himself.

If speaker and listener have elected jointly to seek a solution of the conflict regarding the opinion to which the argumentation relates, then it is in their interest to co-operate with one another and act in co-ordination as far as possible. This means that as far as possible they must apply the same standards of judgment and that they must hold one another to these standards of judgment. If he wishes to fulfil the conditions for a happy performance of the illocutionary act complex of arguing, the speaker will therefore *prefer* in his attempt to convince the listener to observe the same standards as the listener applies (or as the speaker thinks the listener applies) when making his judgment.

The speaker's expectation that the listener will judge the argumentation by the same standards as himself, the fact that the listener may infer from the speaker's decision or argue with him that the speaker expects him to apply the same standards, and the fact that the speaker prefers to apply the same standards as the listener, indicates that the performance of the illocutionary act complex of arguing is *founded on the expectation that common standards are available for judging the argumentation and that these standards will be applied by the listener*. This means that the occurrence of the associated perlocution of argumentation *may from the point of view of the speaker be called conventional* in the sense in which Lewis uses the term.

6. The conventions of the perlocutionary act of convincing

The question which immediately has to be asked, of course, is to what extent the speaker's expectation that the listener will apply the same standards of judgment is *realistic*. In other words: to what extent may it reasonably be expected that the listener will apply the same standards of judgment as the speaker? If we follow Grice (1975) in assuming that in conversations a general *co-operative principle* operates (and *must* operate to enable serious participants in a conversation to reach their objective), then it seems to us that ordinarily speaking the speaker may assume, precisely in the case of argumentation calculated to find a common solution to a conflict relating to an opinion, that the listener is taking a co-operative attitude and will indeed as far as possible try to judge the argumentation by common standards. That is, *in so far as reasonable common standards are available*.

In so far as the speaker's expectation that the listener will judge the argumentation by common standards is realistic, we may call the relationship between the illocutionary act complex of arguing and the associated perlocution *conventional* (in the sense indicated). The conventions observed by speaker and listener will in practice not be based on an *explicit accord* between the participants in the conversation. According to Lewis, however, this is no reason for not referring to *conventionality* (1977: 83–88). Even so, we might express the distinction from explicitly agreed conventions terminologically by following Barth and distinguishing between *conventions* and *semi-conventions*, which are *tacitly* ('implicitly') accepted by the participants in the conversation (1972: 16).

The speaker's expectations regarding the way the listener will proceed are founded on the general principle of co-operation operating in conversations. We therefore propose to call the conventions of the perlocutionary act of convincing *conversational conventions*. The semiconventional status of these conversational conventions means that they were not arrived at through an explicit agreement, but that they are implicit accords which have come into being by degrees and are tacitly observed by speaker and listener (see Wunderlich 1972: 12). In principle, however, it is always possible to *make explicit* these tacitly functioning conventions, so that speaker and listener can still enter into a 'contract' if that offers advantages, such that they undertake to adhere to these conventions.

Naturally, such agreements can only be made with regard to *behavior of the language users which they themselves can consciously control*. In his definition of *convention* Lewis speaks of 'a regularity R in the behavior of members of a population P '. However, uncontrolled or even uncontrollable behavior (such as an automatic reflex) is beyond the reach of conventions, and to some extent this also applies to certain forms of 'inner behavior' – such as 'considering' and 'feeling' – which are important for the achievement of the *mental state* of being

convinced. The *conventions* of convincing can therefore be no more (and no less!) than *act conventions* relating to the achievement of (in the form of accepting, or not accepting, opinions) *externalized*, i.e. *publicly stated*, beliefs.

The conversational act conventions for the conduct of discussions determine which (speech) acts are permitted to the participants in this text genre in the course of arguing and convincing. They regulate not the language users' behavior which is governed by language-variant conventions of 'meaning' and 'usage' (Searle 1979a: 49), but their deliberate acting in language-invariant (though not language-independent) verbal *actions* [20]. The conventions determine what the participants in a discussion may *say* (verbal acts) and *do* in order to resolve a conflict about an opinion. This means that as regards argumentation only the *minimal* associated perlocution may be regarded as an effect to be achieved *conventionally*. It will be recalled that the minimal perlocution implies that the listener performs the (illocutionary) act of *acceptance*, whereas the optimal perlocution relates to a mental state (in a psychological sense), in the listener, of being convinced.

7. Speech acts and rules for rational discussions

If speaker and listener have entered into no 'contract' whatsoever with regard to the standards to be applied in the judgment of argumentation, it becomes extremely difficult to achieve a resolution of a conflict about an opinion which will be satisfactory to both parties. Continuing for a moment our use of language appropriate to a monological interpretation of the conversation situation, we might say that the 'listener' can still escape the occurrence of the perlocutionary effect. If speaker and listener have explicitly agreed upon the standards of judgment for argumentation, however, then by the nature of this agreement the listener is obliged, as long as the speaker has observed the agreed conventions, to endorse the point of view of the speaker and thus to allow the minimal perlocutionary effect aimed at by the speaker to occur. He does this by performing the illocutionary act of *acceptance*.

In this case we may say that the listener now *may be deemed* to believe the opinion defended by the speaker, or, in the case of a contra-argumentation, to not (or no longer) believe the opinion attacked by the speaker. However, in view of the 'contract' that has been entered into, it does not in this context matter whether he 'actually' believes (or does not believe) the opinion concerned. The listener cannot, after all, *be obliged* 'actually' to believe (or not believe) the opinion, and for this reason the relationship between the illocutionary act complex of arguing and the *optimal* associated perlocution can never be conventional either.

[20] Here we endorse a fairly well established convention in the social sciences by which *act* is regarded as a conscious, intentional and controllable form of *behavior*.

In colloquial speech the word *convince* is almost always used in the wider sense of what we here call the striving after an *optimal* perlocutionary effect. It will be evident that in this wide sense the perlocutionary act of convincing is *not* conventional. We use the term *convince* in the more limited sense of what we call the striving after the *minimal* perlocutionary effect of *acceptance*. In this specific sense, which does not conflict with the meaning of *convince* in colloquial speech, the perlocutionary act of convincing *is* conventional.

If an argumentation theory is considered to be a system of rules (descriptive or normative) for the performance of the illocutionary act complex of arguing and the illocutionary act of acceptance, then, in our view, a *dialogical design* will be the most appropriate for that theory. The speaker who performs the illocutionary act complex of arguing is the *listener* in the case of the performance of the illocutionary act of acceptance, while conversely the language user who acts as listener in the illocutionary act complex of arguing is the *speaker* in the performance of the illocutionary act of acceptance. Moreover the illocutionary act complex of arguing, which is itself *qualitate qua* always a *reaction* to a particular utterance (or other sign) of doubt on the part of the listener, is always calculated to bring about in the listener the perlocutionary effect that he *react* to the argumentation by performing the illocutionary act of acceptance. The smallest unit in the performance of argumentative illocutionary act complexes with effective minimal perlocutions is a completed *dialogue* in which the roles of speaker and listener are exchanged once and once only. This dialogue situation is shown diagrammatically in table 3.

As we have already argued in the foregoing, it is only possible to regard arguing as an illocutionary act complex if this speech act is situated at a *textual level*. In fact, of course, the same applies to acceptance, for the illocutionary act of acceptance maintains a direct relationship at the textual level with the illocutionary act complex of arguing. Both acts are performed by means of other illocutionary acts situated at *sentence level*, such as assertions, suppositions, statements, affirmations, admissions, and denials.

If arguing is to be regarded as an illocutionary act complex at textual level, explanatory and normative argumentation theories must specify the rules

Table 3
The smallest unit of argumentation with a happy minimal perlocution.

Note: A, B=participants in the dialogue; S, L=communicative roles of speaker and listener; ARG=illocutionary act complex of arguing; ACC=illocutionary act of acceptance.

determining the manner in which the (elementary) illocutionary acts performed by the speaker at sentence level further or hinder, or ought to further or hinder, the occurrence of the illocutionary act of *acceptance*. An argumentation theory must provide the answer to the question in which cases particular (elementary) illocutionary acts are (or ought to be) permissible in an argumentative dialogue and the question in which cases the associated acceptance perlocution will (or ought to) occur. Only when this happens may we say that in the argumentation theory the 'rules of the game' are formulated for the performance of argumentative speech acts in discussions and that this theory links up with the study of language use as it takes place in (descriptive and normative) pragmatics.

8. Conclusion

At the beginning of this article we stated that it was our aim to provide an analysis of the argumentative function of language use. In our analysis we have made use of the conceptual and terminological apparatus provided by the speech act theory. Having characterized argumentation as an illocutionary act complex at the textual level we formulated conditions which a complete whole of speech utterances must fulfil in order in practice to count as *argumentation* for the language user.

We then tried to demonstrate that argumentation is connected by convention with the striving after the perlocutionary effect that the listener is convinced of the acceptability or (in the case of contra-argumentation) unacceptability of a particular opinion. Here we distinguished between an 'optimal' perlocutionary effect, which consists of a particular state of mind in the listener, and a 'minimal' perlocutionary effect, consisting of the acceptance or non-acceptance of the opinion which was the subject of the discussion and expressed in externalized discussions by the performance by the listener ('I (do not) accept the expressed opinion') of the illocutionary act of 'acceptance' (positive or negative). Only this minimal (and not the optimal) perlocutionary effect can be connected in conventional manner with the performance (in an externalized discussion) of the illocutionary act complex of argumentation.

Language users normally tacitly assume that there are common rules for argumentation and that their partners in the discussion will adhere to those rules. A speaker who adheres strictly to the rules derives from that fact the right to claim that an interlocutor who is prepared to act according to the rules is obliged to perform the illocutionary act of *acceptance or non-acceptance* (depending on the speaker's standpoint) of the opinion that was the subject of discussion. With the help of examples it is easy to demonstrate that in practice there are common conventional rules for argumentation, but also that interlocutors by no means always adhere to the same set of rules. Empirical research will have to show the extent of agreement and where the differences lie.

Defective argumentative language use can have important intellectual, ethical and social disadvantages (both for interlocutors and for third parties), and the defects may, as in the case of fallacies, remain concealed from the language users involved in the argumentation, and may continue to go unnoticed even in empirical research. Moreover the rules for correct arguing which are commonly accepted in practice may not only display serious defects when tested against a particular ideal, but may also in some respects prove insufficient. For this reason a descriptive approach is not enough in argumentation theory. What is needed is a normative theory of argumentation which will indicate which argumentative moves are and are not admissible in the various stages of a discussion if the interlocutors wish to have a rational discussion.

In the requisite normative theory of argumentation, in our view, argumentation will have to be regarded as part of a *discussion* between two parties assuming different positions with regard to the opinion that is the subject of discussion and each attempting by means of a deliberate exchange of attacking and defending moves to convince the other of the acceptability or unacceptability of that opinion and hence of the soundness of his own point of view. This means that in our view an adequate theory of argumentation will have to be a dialectical theory in which it is indicated which speech acts may be allowed the respective parties at the various stages of the discussion in order to make possible a *reasonable* resolution of the conflict and what conditions will have to be satisfied (cf. Barth 1972: 17). Perhaps the 'formal dialectics' which Barth and Krabbe (1978) – inspired by insights of Lorenzen and other members of the *Erlanger Schule* – have formulated may be the starting-point of the development of such an argumentation theory.

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DISCOURSE PROCESSES IN DYADIC COMMUNICATION *

ERLAND HJELMQUIST

This article reviews and discusses the behavioral sciences' principal approaches to the production and understanding of discourse, especially that of spoken discourse.

Within psychology, models for discourse processes have been mainly developed by memory researchers. Furthermore, empirical research has focused on written text, even though the models sometimes are claimed to be relevant for spoken discourse as well. This claim is misleading; in particular, it runs the risk of contributing to a neglect of the characteristics of spoken discourse.

Nearly the opposite approach is represented by the ethnomethodological study of conversation within sociology. Here we find extreme attention to the data itself (consisting mostly of transcriptions of taped conversations). The implicit purpose is to explain the flow of conversations in terms of structural relations between utterances, while the intentional aspects of spoken discourse are ignored. This has been shown to create serious descriptive and explanatory problems.

Finally, Labov and Fanshel's approach (1977), which is closely related to the sociological paradigm is discussed. Although this model explicitly takes intentions and motives into account, its explanatory power seems limited. The general conclusion is that a theory of the relation between thought and language should be a central component in a theory of spoken discourse. Some suggestions for the development of such a theory are given.

A critical question for the study of discourse processes is to what extent different types of discourses could be regarded as being equivalent with respect to structure and semantic-pragmatic aspects, and to what extent the same psychological processes are involved in producing and understanding them. The two main types of discourses, produced and understood by human beings, are connected sequences of spoken and written verbal messages respectively where written discourse can be viewed as a way of codifying spoken discourse. Our interest will be focused on

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