

ARGUMENTATION AS A TYPE OF PERSUASIVE DISCOURSE

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Abstract:

This article provides a detailed exploration of argumentation as a structured form of persuasive discourse focused on logic and evidence. It explores the key components including claims, evidence, warrants, and counterarguments, distinguishing argumentation from emotional persuasion. Furthermore, it covers different types of models, such as the classical, Toulmin and Rogerian by offering the frameworks for crafting reasoned arguments across various contexts. It also includes some examples from media illustrating its application in influencing public opinion. This work has academic perspectives, from Aristotle to critical discourse analysis emphasizing the role in shaping discourse. Argumentation fosters critical thinking, making it essential for effective communication and decision-making.

Key words: Argumentation, claim, evidence, warrant, counterargument, persuasion, ethos, logos, pathos, Toulmin model, Rogerian argument, classical argument, rhetoric.

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Argumentation involves employing logical reasoning and evidence to influence or convince an audience regarding a specific issue. Persuasive discourse can be categorized into several types based on the context, purpose, and techniques used to influence an audience. There are the several types of persuasive discourse involving media discourse which can be in the means of:

- persuasive content in news articles, opinion pieces, and broadcasts designed to shape public perceptions;
- often involves framing issues in particular ways to align with ideological or corporate interests. For example: editorials in newspapers or news outlets promoting certain viewpoints on social or political issues.

Another type of discourse including advertising and commercial discourse can be:

- used to influence consumer behavior by promoting products, services, or brands;
- relies heavily on emotional appeals (pathos), but also utilizes logical reasoning and expert endorsements (ethos). For example: television commercials or online ads aiming to persuade people to buy a specific product.

These types of persuasive discourse are adapted to their specific contexts, employing a range of rhetorical strategies to achieve their goals of convincing and influencing the intended audience. Unlike general persuasion, which often relies on emotional appeals or rhetorical strategies, argumentation follows a more systematic approach[2; 1-2]. It is composed of key elements such as claims, evidence, counterarguments and reasoning, which explains the logical relationship between the claim and the evidence. These key concepts of argumentation are the essential points which was needed to be considered in discourse, starting with the notion claim, this is especially crucial in the central assertion or proposition that the writer or speaker seeks to validate. It serves as the foundation of the argument. Claim is the central idea or thesis that a speaker or writer seeks to establish and prove in an

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argument. It serves as the foundation of the argumentation process, providing a clear statement or position on an issue. The claim is typically supported by evidence and reasoning to persuade the audience of its validity. Without a claim, the argument lacks direction and purpose, as it is the primary assertion that everything else in the argument is designed to support or defend. Second vital aspect is the evidence which refers to the data, facts, statistics, or expert opinions used to substantiate the claim. It forms the empirical backbone of the argument, ensuring that the claim is grounded in reality. Evidence can refer to the information or material used to substantiate and support a claim in an argument. This can include data, facts, statistics, research findings, or expert testimony that provides credibility and strengthens the argument. By presenting clear and relevant evidence, a speaker or writer can make their claim more convincing and reliable, helping to persuade the audience that the argument is grounded in reality. Evidence is critical because it transforms a mere opinion into a well-supported position that can stand up to scrutiny and debate. The third one is warrant that can be seen in the reasoning or logic linking the evidence to the claim. It provides the justification that the evidence indeed supports the claim. Warrant is the logical reasoning or assumption that connects the evidence to the claim in an argument. It explains why or how the presented evidence supports the claim, acting as a bridge between the two. Warrants are often implicit, but they are essential for the argument to make sense. Without a warrant, the relationship between the claim and the evidence may be unclear or unconvincing. A strong warrant ensures that the argument is coherent and logically sound, making the connection between the evidence and the claim more explicit and persuasive. The last concept is counterargument involving the process of acknowledging opposing perspectives and systematically refuting them to reinforce the original argument, thereby demonstrating a comprehensive understanding of the issue. Counterargument involves recognizing and addressing opposing viewpoints in an argument. By acknowledging alternative perspectives, the speaker or writer demonstrates a thorough understanding of the issue at hand. After presenting the counterargument, the next step is to refute it, typically by providing evidence or reasoning that weakens or disproves the opposing view. This process strengthens the original argument, as it shows that the speaker or writer can not only defend their claim but also effectively challenge and overcome opposition, making their overall position more convincing and resilient.

Reinforcing the argument involves strengthening the central claim by summarizing key points, emphasizing the significance of the evidence, and addressing any remaining concerns or counterarguments[5; 93-99]. This step is crucial in persuading the audience, as it ties together the logical flow of the argument and leaves a lasting impression. By restating the claim clearly and highlighting the strongest aspects of the reasoning and evidence, the speaker or writer reassures the audience of the argument's validity, encouraging them to adopt or agree with the presented viewpoint. Argumentation plays a crucial role in academic, legal, political, and public discourse as it encourages deeper critical thinking and more informed decision-making. By facilitating structured exchanges of ideas, argumentation fosters reasoned debate and the examination of multiple perspectives. This process leads to more thoroughly developed conclusions and enhances communication by focusing on rational analysis rather than emotional manipulation. Ultimately, argumentation contributes to solving complex issues by promoting logical and evidence-based discussions in society.

There are several types of argumentation, initial one is classical argument which is the traditional model of argumentation that relies on three key rhetorical appeals comprising ethos, logos, and pathos[4; 9-13]. These appeals work together to build a persuasive and balanced argument. Pointing them out one by one, ethos and credibility refers to the speaker's or writer's credibility, authority, or trustworthiness. Establishing ethos helps convince the audience that the speaker is knowledgeable and has good intentions, making the argument more convincing. The next one is logos which connected with logic focusing

on the use of reasoning, evidence, and logical structure to support the argument. Logos appeals to the audience's rationality by presenting facts, statistics, data, and sound reasoning to prove the claim. While pathos involves appealing to the audience's emotions to engage them on a deeper level. By connecting with their feelings, values, or beliefs, the speaker can create empathy or passion for the argument, motivating the audience to accept the claim. In the Classical Argument, these appeals are often used together to create a comprehensive, persuasive case that resonates with the audience's intellect, emotions, and trust.

The Toulmin argument model is a framework for analyzing and constructing arguments, created by philosopher Stephen Toulmin [5; 87-100]. This method breaks down an argument into essential components to clarify its structure and logic, helping to evaluate its strength. By identifying these parts, such as the claim, evidence, and warrant, the Toulmin model allows for a more detailed analysis of how well the argument is constructed and whether its reasoning holds up. This approach is particularly useful in assessing the soundness and persuasiveness of complex arguments in various fields. The three primary elements of this model composing the main assertion or conclusion the speaker or writer is trying to prove as a claim. It is the position or statement that the argument supports. The facts, data, or information that provide support for the claim with the specific term evidence. Grounds form the foundation of the argument and offer justification for why the claim should be accepted. Lastly, the warrant which is the reasoning or logic that connects the grounds (evidence) to the claim [6; 45-48]. The warrant explains why the evidence supports the claim and bridges the gap between them. It often relies on assumptions that the audience is expected to accept. The Toulmin model is useful for dissecting arguments to ensure that they are logically sound and well-supported, particularly by focusing on the explicit connection between evidence and the claim.

The Rogerian argument is especially considered as a style of argumentation that focuses on building consensus and finding common ground between opposing sides. Unlike more adversarial approaches, the Rogerian model seeks to promote mutual understanding and cooperation by acknowledging the validity of opposing viewpoints. It emphasizes empathy and encourages both sides to move toward a compromise or solution that benefits all parties. There are a plethora of aspects of the Rogerian argument which including presenting the opposing viewpoint in a fair and respectful manner; identifying areas of agreement or shared concerns; proposing a solution that accommodates both perspectives, rather than pushing for a win-lose outcome. This approach is particularly useful in situations where emotions run high or conflicts are deeply entrenched, as it fosters dialogue and collaboration instead of confrontation.

Argumentation is prominently observed in political debates, where candidates utilize evidence, logic, and counterarguments to convince voters. For instance, in U.S. presidential debates, candidates engage in discussions on policies such as healthcare or immigration by presenting claims, offering supporting evidence, and refuting their opponent's positions. These structured arguments aim to strengthen their stance while undermining opposing viewpoints, ultimately persuading the audience of the validity of their proposed solutions. This type of argumentation relies heavily on logical reasoning and factual support to influence public opinion.

In news outlets such as 'The New York Times' and 'BBC' opinion writers frequently employ argumentation to convince readers on topics like social issues, climate change, or political reforms. They typically integrate data, expert opinions, and ethical considerations to support their claims. This approach not only strengthens their arguments but also appeals to both the logical and moral sensibilities of their audience, aiming to foster a more informed and engaged public response to critical issues.

Rhetorical tradition was started with Aristotle's works, he classified persuasive discourse into three modes involving credibility, logic and emotion [1; 37-38]. While

argumentation predominantly depends on logos, or logical reasoning and evidence, ethos and pathos also contribute to making arguments more compelling. Ethos establishes the trustworthiness of the speaker or writer, while pathos appeals to the audience's emotions, helping to engage and persuade them on a deeper level. The effective integration of all three modes can significantly enhance the overall impact of an argument.

Toulmin's argumentation model highlights the practical organization of arguments, with a particular emphasis on claims, grounds and warrants. This approach provides a clearer framework for analyzing and constructing arguments across various disciplines. By breaking down the components of an argument, the Toulmin model helps to explain how evidence (grounds) supports the main point (claim) through logical connections (warrants), offering a deeper understanding of the argument's structure and effectiveness in both academic and real-world contexts.

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) investigates how argumentation in media and politics serves to reflect and perpetuate power relations and ideological control. Discourse analysts, particularly those in fields such as linguistics, sociology, and political science, study how language is strategically crafted to shape public opinion and maintain or challenge societal hierarchies [3; 33-36]. In media, for example, certain arguments may subtly reinforce dominant ideologies by framing issues in ways that support existing power structures, often privileging the interests of elites or specific social groups. On the other hand, arguments that challenge prevailing norms or question authority may seek to subvert these power structures by offering alternative viewpoints or exposing contradictions within dominant discourses. This analysis also delves into how rhetorical strategies, such as word choice, framing, and metaphor, are used to control narratives, legitimize authority, or marginalize dissenting voices. By understanding the ways argumentation influences social and political realities, discourse analysts can reveal hidden mechanisms of power, manipulation, and resistance in everyday communication, particularly in media, politics, and public discourse.

Argumentation plays a crucial role in many aspects of life, including academic discourse, media, and politics. Moreover, developing strong argumentative skills allows individuals to critically analyze societal issues, make well-informed decisions, and actively participate in public discussions. For instance, structured argumentation enables people to present persuasive, evidence-based cases that not only aim to convince others but also encourage productive debate and the exchange of ideas. This capacity for reasoned dialogue is key to fostering a more informed and engaged society.

In conclusion, mastering argumentation is vital for engaging with the complexities of modern life. Additionally, it empowers individuals to think critically, articulate their views clearly, and engage constructively with others, making it a cornerstone of democratic participation and informed decision-making.

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