Chapter 1
Argumentation Theory as a Discipline

1.1 Argumentation

Cultural, social and intellectual progress require a continual flux of opinions. Standpoints need to be brought to the fore and confronted with the doubt and criticism of those concerned to test their acceptability. This means that differences of opinion come into being and are reflected upon and as far as possible discussed by the parties concerned. These differences may be overt and expressed explicitly but they can also remain implicit. However, in order to resolve the differences in a reasonable way, in all cases argumentation is to be advanced to overcome the pertinent doubts and criticisms. Even if a resolution is reached, this resolution is often only temporary and new differences of opinion are bound to arise.

Argumentation comes into being in response to, or in anticipation of, a difference of opinion, whether this difference of opinion is real or merely imagined by the arguer. Argumentation is advanced when people assume a standpoint not to be shared by others so that there is a difference of opinion. More often than not the difference of opinion does not take the shape of a full disagreement involving two opposed standpoints, but remains basic. In that case, the one party has an opinion about something and the other party does not yet share this opinion but is in doubt as to whether to accept it. It only makes sense to put forward argumentation when it is presumed that the addressee is not yet convinced of the acceptability of the standpoint at issue. Otherwise doing so would be pointless.

Argumentation always consists of a constellation of *propositions* advanced in defence of the standpoint at issue. Such propositions can be of various kinds and degrees of complexity. In the simplest propositions a connection is made between

This chapter is primarily based on van Eemeren et al. (2014: 1–49) and van Eemeren (2015: 81–109).

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something talked about (the "subject") and a property assigned to it (the "predicate"). In the proposition *Young kittens are cute*, for instance, the property of being cute is assigned to young kittens. When a positive position regarding a proposition is expressed in the standpoint that is defended, the constellation of propositions constituting the "pro-argumentation" is to increase the acceptability of the standpoint by justifying the proposition involved in the standpoint: "It would be good to give Elsie a young kitten, because young kittens are cute". When a negative position regarding a proposition is expressed, the standpoint is negative and the constellation of propositions constituting the "contra-argumentation" is to increase the acceptability of this negative standpoint by refuting the proposition involved: "I think it is wrong to give Elsie a young kitten, because usually children are not capable of taking good care of animals".

In order to create a suitable basis for discussing the various kinds of problems that are dealt with in argumentation theory, an adequate definition of argumentation needs to be provided first. As is customary in argumentation theory,[1] we start our definition from the lexical meaning of the equivalents of the crucial word "argumentation" in a great many languages. Although (unfortunately) English usage tends to deviate,[2] the words used for *argumentation* in most western languages denote a phenomenon that is primarily characterized by being a process ("I am in the middle of my argumentation") and at the same time a product ("Your argumentation does not look very strong"), by being associated with the defence of a standpoint (which is itself not part of the argumentation) and by being instrumental in maintaining reasonableness (rather than in engaging in such negatively charged activities as quarrelling or fighting).

Some general characteristics pertinent to defining argumentation more precisely in argumentation theory are independent of the way in which this word is used in ordinary language. One of them is that argumentation always consists of a functional combination of communicative acts which constitute together the communicative act complex of argumentation. Although the constitutive communicative acts are usually speech acts (presented orally or in writing), they can also be wholly or partly non-verbal, e.g. visual. Another general characteristic is that argumentation is directed at eliciting a response from the addressee that indicates acceptance of the standpoint that is defended. This means that, rather than being just a monologue, argumentation is in principle part of a dialogue, so that it is not only a communicative act complex aimed at understanding but also an interactional act complex aimed at achieving the interactional effect of acceptance. When argumentation is advanced in a full-blown discussion, the dialogue that takes place is explicit. When it is directed at a non-interactive audience or readership, the dialogue will remain implicit. Still another general characteristic of argumentation is that it is a rational activity of reason, so that the arguer concerned can be held accountable

[1]See, for example, the *Handbook of argumentation theory* (van Eemeren et al. 2014: 1–7), on which this chapter is largely based.

[2]See van Eemeren et al. (2014: 3–6).

for the constellations of propositions that is advanced. The commitments thus created for the arguer depend on the communicative and interactional acts that have been performed and the way in which they are linked with the standpoint that is defended. A last general characteristic that is to be mentioned is that argumentation always involves an appeal to the addressee as a rational judge who judges reasonably. Rather than playing on the audience's basic instincts and emotional prejudices, argumentation is aimed at convincing the addressee of the acceptability of the standpoint at issue by making clear that it meets mutually shared critical standards of reasonableness.[3]

By combining the general characteristics just mentioned with the lexical characteristics mentioned earlier, argumentation is in argumentation theory defined in the following way:

> Argumentation is a communicative and interactional act complex aimed at resolving a difference of opinion with the addressee by putting forward a constellation of propositions for which the arguer can be held accountable in order to make the standpoint at issue acceptable to a rational judge who judges reasonably.

1.2 Argumentation Theory

The academic discipline that examines argumentation in all its varieties and manifestations is called *argumentation theory*. This is a general label designating the study of argumentation as a whole, irrespective of the particular angle of approach that is chosen by the theorists and their specific interests and intellectual backgrounds. Some theorists may have a background in philosophy and logic and concentrate in the first place on problems of validity and soundness. Other theorists will stem from communication studies, linguistics or rhetoric and focus on issues such as the presentational characteristics and effectiveness of argumentation. Still others were educated in law or psychology and put an emphasis on procedural rules or appropriateness.

Depending on the kind of background of the theorists, labels different from argumentation theory may be used, such as *logic*, *informal logic*, *rhetoric* and *discourse analysis*. However, all these names refer to a specific kind of approach or attitude to argumentation and they usually cover a broader scope of interest than just argumentation. The labels "logic" and "informal logic", for instance, indicate a focus on reasoning and include also a concern for other uses of reasoning. Similarly, the labels "rhetoric" and "discourse analysis" put an emphasis on verbal persuasion and cover, next to the argumentative use, also other uses of language.

[3]The terms *rational* and *reasonable* often seem to be used interchangeably, but we think that it is useful to make a distinction between acting rationally in the sense of using one's faculty of reason and acting reasonably in the sense of utilizing one's faculty of reason in an appropriate way.

This is why, in our view, *argumentation theory* is the most appropriate umbrella term to denominate the discipline.

Since argumentation may pertain to standpoints and differences of opinion relating to all kinds of subjects, coming to the fore in all kinds of communicative domains, argumentation theory applies to a broad range of problem areas and the scope of the theorizing is very wide. Argumentation theory deals with argumentative discourse in the professional (or "technical") sphere, the public sphere and the personal (or "private") sphere. The types of standpoints discussed in the discourse can vary from evaluative standpoints ("*Old Filth* is the best British novel recently published") to prescriptive standpoints ("This proposal should be carried out immediately") and descriptive standpoints ("Boxing Day will be on a Thursday this year"). All these standpoints involve a claim to acceptability that can be at issue in a difference of opinion. This means that argumentation is used not only for getting claims to truth accepted, but also for gaining approval with ethical or aesthetic judgments and for securing endorsement of policy proposals or other practical measures. However, when the truth of a claim is to be established, if this is an option, rather than taking refuge in argumentation, most people will prefer to go by empirical evidence or logical proof (but may next to that bring the empirical evidence or logical proof to bear argumentatively in justifying the truth of the claim to others).

When it is clear from the start that fundamental prerequisites for reasonable argumentative discourse have not been fulfilled, taking refuge to argumentation to resolve the difference of opinion is no use. This situation occurs when the participants in the discourse are in a state of mind that somehow prevents them from having a reasonable exchange. That happens, for instance, when they are completely drunk or so emotionally excited that they are no longer capable of thinking rationally. Another kind of situation in which fundamental prerequisites for argumentative discourse have not been fulfilled occurs when the circumstances in which the discourse takes place make having a reasonable exchange impossible. This happens, for instance, when the participants in the discourse are not allowed to speak their minds freely because negative sanctions will follow if they do so. In both unsuitable situations the participants cannot be held accountable for trying to resolve the difference of opinion at issue by argumentative discourse due to causes beyond their control.[4]

Studying argumentative discourse aimed at resolving a difference of opinion in a reasonable way has a normative critical dimension and a descriptive empirical

[4]Following Barth and Krabbe (1982: 75), we call the prerequisites for reasonable argumentative discourse *higher order conditions*. The conditions pertaining to the participants' state of mind are *second order conditions* and the conditions pertaining to the circumstances *third order conditions* (van Eemeren and Grootendorst 2004: 189).

dimension.[5] In argumentation theory both dimensions need to be fully taken into account. In order to pursue their interest in improving the quality of argumentative discourse where this is called for, scholars of argumentation have to combine an empirical orientation towards how argumentative discourse is actually conducted with a critical orientation towards how it should be conducted. To give substance to this challenging combination, they need to ensure that they not only examine argumentative discourse descriptively as a specimen of verbal communication and interaction but also measure its quality against normative standards of reasonableness.

The general objective of argumentation theory as a discipline is to provide theoretical instruments for analysing, evaluating and producing argumentative discourse in an adequate way. The analysis, evaluation and production of argumentative discourse pertain, first, to the "point of departure" of argumentation, which consists of the explicit and implicit material and procedural premises that serve as the starting point of the argumentation. Second, they pertain to the "layout of argumentation": the justificatory design of the constellation of propositions explicitly or implicitly advanced in support of the standpoint at issue in the difference of opinion. Both the point of departure and the layout of the argumentation are to be judged by appropriate standards of evaluation that are in agreement with all requirements imposed by a rational judge who judges reasonably. The descriptive and normative aims that need to be pursued in realizing the general objective of argumentation theory can be specified as follows[6]:

(1) Giving a descriptive account of the components of argumentative discourse which constitute together the point of departure of argumentation;
(2) Giving a normative account of the standards for evaluating the point of departure of argumentation which are appropriate to a rational judge who judges reasonably;
(3) Giving a descriptive account of the components of argumentative discourse which constitute together the layout of argumentation;
(4) Giving a normative account of the standards for evaluating argumentation as it is laid out in argumentative discourse which are appropriate to a rational judge who judges reasonably.

[5]These two dimensions are reflected in the dual reasonableness standard for argumentative discourse: adequacy for resolving a difference of opinion ("problem-validity") and intersubjectively acceptability ("conventional validity") (Barth 1972; Barth and Krabbe 1982: 21–22). Whereas problem-validity is basically a theoretical matter, conventional validity can only be established empirically.

[6]The descriptive aims of argumentation theory are often associated with the "emic" study of what is involved in justifying claims and what are to be considered good reasons for accepting a claim viewed from the "internal" perspective of the arguers while the normative aims are associated with the "etic" study of both matters from the "external" perspective of a critical theorist.

1.3 Crucial Concepts in Argumentation Theory

Certain theoretical concepts play a crucial role in the descriptive and normative research concerning the point of departure and the layout of argumentation carried out in argumentation theory. These concepts are indispensable in developing adequate theoretical instruments for methodically improving the quality of the analysis, evaluation and production of argumentative discourse. The most prominent of them are the following: "standpoint", "unexpressed premise", "argument scheme", "argumentation structure" and "fallacy". We will introduce all of them briefly.[7]

The term *standpoint* refers to what is at issue in an argumentative discourse, i.e. what is argued about by the parties. In advancing a standpoint, a positive or negative position regarding a proposition is assumed by a speaker or writer ("Chinese food is delicious"). Because advancing a standpoint implies undertaking a positive or negative commitment with regard to a proposition, whoever advances a standpoint is obliged to defend this standpoint if challenged to do so. Whether the standpoint is descriptive, evaluative or prescriptive, in all cases it involves a claim to (un)acceptability of the proposition to which the standpoint pertains. This is even the case when the standpoint is expressed implicitly or in an indirect and non-asserting way ("Do we really want to do without a salary?"). A communicative act expresses a standpoint if it involves a claim to acceptability in a context in which the addressee may be expected to be in doubt about this.[8]

Besides the term *standpoint*, a number of other terms are in use that refer to similar concepts. On the one hand, there are terms which refer from different theoretical angles to virtually the same concept, such as *claim*, *conclusion*, *thesis* and *debate proposition*. The concepts these terms denote are utilized in the studies of Toulmin and his followers ("claim"), various kinds of logicians ("conclusion"), dialecticians connecting with the tradition introduced in Aristotle's *Topics* ("thesis") and communication scholars interested in American academic debate ("debate proposition"). On the other hand, there are terms which refer to psychological concepts related to but also in relevant ways different from a standpoint, such as *belief*, *opinion* and *attitude*. The concepts involved are implemented in cognitive research and epistemology ("belief"), conversation-oriented discourse analysis ("opinion"), and social psychology and cognitive studies ("attitude").

If certain elements that are implicit in an argumentative discourse are not taken into account, it is usually hard to tell how exactly the discourse may serve to resolve a difference of opinion. This applies, for instance, to starting points that have been left implicit, but also to unexpressed standpoints and more in particular to *unexpressed premises* in the argumentation that is advanced. Leaving argumentation in this way partly implicit ("Bart will love cheese, because he is Dutch") is

[7]For a detailed discussion of these concepts, see van Eemeren (Ed. 2001) and, more succinctly, van Eemeren et al. (2014: 13–27).

[8]For a definition of the notion of a standpoint in terms of the identity and correctness conditions of the speech act of advancing a standpoint, see Houtlosser (2001: 32).

traditionally called *enthymematic* and it is quite usual in ordinary argumentative discourse. Premises that are left unexpressed in enthymematic argumentation need to be identified because they are often pivotal in the transfer of acceptance from the premises that are made explicit in the argumentation to the standpoint that is defended.

In practice (as, for instance, in "Bart will love cheese, because he is Dutch"), the identification of implicit elements is often unproblematic because it is obvious what has been left unexpressed. If desired, the reasoning underlying the argumentation could easily be reconstructed to make it logically valid by adding the premise "If the explicit premise, then the standpoint". Such a logical analysis, however, is generally unsatisfactory because it just repeats what has been said and therefore fails to provide any new information ("If Bart is Dutch, then he will love cheese"). Since argumentation is always put forward in some kind of specific contextual environment, there are as a rule various pragmatic resources for completing the argumentation in a more informative way ("Dutchmen love cheese"). Contextual clues for the identification of unexpressed premises may be provided by the linguistic, the situational, the institutional and the intertextual context of the speech event concerned, while the pragmatic inferences that can be made (e.g. "conversational implicatures") and the general or specific background information pertinent to the case concerned may provide additional pragmatic clues.[9]

Depending on the theoretical background of the theorists, different terms may be used to refer to unexpressed premises: next to *implicit*, *suppressed*, *tacit*, *missing premise/reason/argument* also *warrant*, *implicature*, *supposition* and even *assumption*, *inference* and *implication*. Among the theoretical perspectives exemplifying the various views of unexpressed premises are the "traditional logical" approach, modern "deductivism" and the "pluralist logical view", but also the "warrant view" (inspired by the dominant interpretation of this Toulminian notion), the "traditional rhetorical" approach focusing on the enthymeme, the "modern rhetorical" approaches concentrating on the relationship between text, context and effect, the "interactional" discourse analysis approach and the pragma-dialectical approach prevalent in this volume.

It is hard to determine whether argumentation contributes to the defence of a standpoint if the type of argumentation that is put forward cannot be identified. Then it is difficult to determine exactly which "critical questions" are associated with the "argument scheme" on which the argumentation is based. An *argument scheme* (also called *argumentation scheme*) characterizes the way in which the reason given in support of a standpoint is supposed to bring about a transfer of acceptance to the standpoint in a particular type of argumentation (e.g. "Bart will love cheese because he is Dutch and it is characteristic of Dutch people that they love cheese"). Depending on the kind of relationship established by the argument scheme, specific kinds of critical questions are appropriate in judging the

[9]For the pragmatic resources that can be used in accounting for the reconstruction of unexpressed elements in argumentative discourse, see van Eemeren (2010: 16–19).

argumentation. These critical questions capture the pragmatic rationale that is brought to bear in the argumentation in order to bring about a transition of acceptance from the reason that is advanced to the standpoint.

Since Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969) introduced the notion of argument schemes (which was implicitly already underlying the types of argumentation discussed in American handbooks for debate) in their "new rhetoric",[10] argument schemes have been a crucial concept in argumentation theory. In a great many approaches the checking of the soundness of these argument schemes complements, if not replaces, the formal validity test of logic. This explains why the theoretical definition of argument schemes, their categorization, the way in which they can be identified and their connection with unexpressed premises and *topoi* have become prominent topics of research. Some argumentation theorists remain in their treatment of argument schemes close to the classical topical tradition. In the new rhetoric they are distinguished on the basis of principles of "association" that bring about a persuasive transfer of acceptance from reason standpoint.[11] Other theorists start their categorization of argument schemes from Toulmin's warrants. Still other argumentation scholars turn for their typology to distinctions made by ordinary language users in argumentative practice. In pragma-dialectics the distinction between argument schemes is based on pragmatic principles that have a dialectical function in conducting argumentative discourse. In the modern dialectical approaches the dialectical function of argument schemes also seems to be the point of departure.

If it is unclear how exactly the various reasons advanced in defending a standpoint relate to each other in supporting the standpoint ("I should not attend the ceremony because I hate such public occasions; in addition, this ceremony is not even officially recognized and on the day it is held I will not be in town"), it cannot be determined whether the argumentation as a whole constitutes an adequate defence. For this purpose it is necessary to lay bare the *argumentation structure* of the argumentation. In argumentation theory, various ways of combining reasons have been distinguished in characterizing different kinds of argumentation structures that can be instrumental in defending a standpoint. Confusingly, argumentation theorists do not fully agree on what is to be the rationale for making the necessary distinctions and different terminological conventions have been developed for dealing with argumentation structures.

Some argumentation theorists see the argumentation structure as determined by the reasoning processes underlying the argumentation and start from a logical perspective on the way in which combinations of reasons manifest themselves. Other argumentation theorists concentrate on the various kinds of functions that the combinations of reasons fulfil in the argumentative process and opt for a pragmatic

[10]Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1958) spoke of *schèmes argumentatifs—argumentation schemes* in the English translation (1969) of their study.

[11]The principle of "dissociation", which Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca also discuss, is not related to argument schemes (van Rees 2009).

perspective. When it comes to analysing the argumentation structure, logic-oriented theorists are out to diagram the logical patterns while pragmatically-oriented theorists diagram the various functional ways in which the reasons advanced in the argumentative exchange support the standpoint at issue.

Both formal and informal logicians opt as a rule for a "logical" or "logico-epistemic" perspective.[12] They aim to make clear how a combination of premises constituting an argumentation lends logical or logico-epistemic support to a conclusion. In the process, they generally distinguish between *linked argumentation*, consisting of reasons that support the standpoint interdependently, and *convergent argumentation,* in which the reasons supply independent support to the standpoint. Usually informal logicians also distinguish *serial argumentation*, in which a reason that is advanced is in its turn supported by another reason (a process that may be continued). The distinctions made in informal logic are similar to the pragma-dialectical division according to the ways in which the various arguments function as responses to doubt or criticism: *coordinative*, *multiple* and *subordinative argumentation*.[13]

In argumentative discourse the difference of opinion at issue will not be resolved adequately if "fallacies" that occur in the discourse ("What do you know? You are only a student") are not detected. In argumentation theory various kinds of views of the fallacies have been developed and also different approaches for distinguishing between fallacies and different methods for their identification. Characteristically, Aristotle, who started the study of the fallacies, put them in the context of a dialogue in which one person attacks a thesis and another person defends it. His view of fallacies as cases of seemingly valid reasoning that are in fact invalid has remained authoritative for a long time. The most striking addition to Aristotle's list of fallacies consists of the *ad fallacies* (e.g. *argumentum ad hominem*), a category of arguments that was first distinguished by Locke. In logic textbooks the Aristotelian dialectical perspective has later shifted to the perspective of a monologue. Fallacies have then become errors in reasoning instead of deceptive manoeuvres of a party trying to outwit the other party.

After Hamblin (1970) had severely criticized the "Standard Treatment" of fallacies in logical textbooks as arguments that seem valid but are not valid, several new approaches were developed. One new starting-point consists of approaching the fallacies from a formal perspective and calling on more sophisticated modern logics than just syllogistic, propositional and predicate logics. Instead of giving all fallacies a common analysis, this approach is pluralistic because each fallacy is given its own treatment (Woods and Walton 1989). Inspired by Hamblin's proposal

[12]In informal logic there is also an approach based on the Toulmin model (Freeman 1991).

[13]A one-to-one translation of the pragma-dialectical argumentation structures in terms of those distinguished in informal logic is, in spite of clear similarities, complicated by the different conceptualizations.

for an alternative to the Standard Treatment, in approaches that are "formal dialectic" another approach is chosen by viewing fallacies as argumentative moves that cannot be generated by the production rules for rational arguments (Barth and Krabbe 1982). Later the two formal perspectives were combined by involving the types of dialogue in which an argumentative discourse takes place explicitly in the theorizing about the fallacies (Walton and Krabbe 1995). The pragma-dialectical view of fallacies as "derailments of strategic manoeuvring" involving violations of the rules for having a reasonable discussion will be explained in Chap. 4 of this volume.

1.4 The Research Program of Argumentation Theory

Because studying argumentative discourse aimed at resolving a difference of opinion in a reasonable way has a normative critical dimension as well as a descriptive empirical dimension, in argumentation theory both dimensions need to be duly taken into account. To connect the normative dimension of the study of argumentation systematically with the descriptive dimension, a complex research program must be carried out, encompassing five interrelated components.[14] First, a philosophical component is required in which a coherent and appropriate conception of reasonableness is set out. Second, guided by this philosophical reasonableness conception, in the theoretical component of the research program a model for reasonable argumentative discourse is to be developed. Third, in the empirical component argumentative reality needs to be examined methodically in order to acquire an accurate understanding of the actual conduct of argumentative discourse. Fourth, starting from the results of the philosophical, theoretical and empirical research, in the analytical component of the research program suitable tools must be created for reconstructing actual argumentative discourse from the perspective of the theoretical model. Fifth, starting from a solid analysis utilizing the insights gained in the other components, in the practical component the problems involved in dealing adequately with the exigencies of the various kinds of argumentative practices are to be tackled (Fig. 1.1).

In the *philosophical component* of the research program the central question is what it means to be reasonable in argumentative discourse. In argumentation theory this issue needs to be the subject of permanent systematic reflection. As it happens, there is no general agreement among argumentation theorists as to what reasonableness involves. Going by the conceptions of reasonableness distinguished by Toulmin (1976), it can be observed that some (rhetorically-oriented) argumentation theorists seem to adopt an "anthropological" philosophy of reasonableness, in which reasonableness primarily depends on agreement among members of a certain community, whereas other (dialectically-oriented) argumentation theorist are in

[14]For a more elaborate description of this research program, see van Eemeren (2015: Chap. 5).

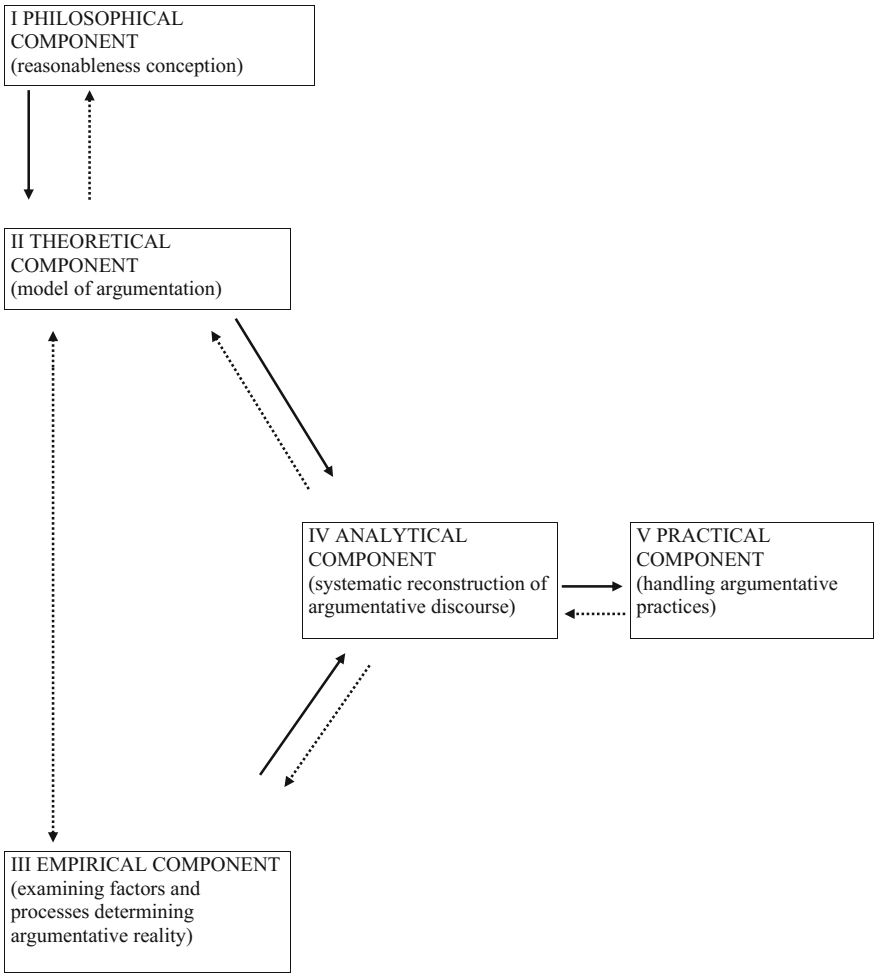

Fig. 1.1 Components of the research program of argumentation theory

favour a "critical" philosophy of reasonableness, in which reasonableness depends in the first place on compliance with critical testing procedures.

The central aim of the *theoretical component* is to develop a model of argumentative discourse that can serve as a conceptual and terminological framework for the study of argumentation. The theoretical model gives shape to the favoured philosophical conception of reasonableness by specifying what pursuing this conception of reasonableness amounts to in terms of argumentative moves that can be made, stages in the argumentative procedure and soundness conditions. If it serves

its purposes properly, the model has a heuristic, an analytical and a critical function in dealing with the production, analysis and evaluation of argumentative discourse.

In the *empirical component*, concentrating particularly on factors that are relevant from the perspective of the theoretical model, the production, interpretation and assessment of actual argumentative discourse are examined. Qualitative empirical research relying on introspection and observation is required for case studies and identifying specific traits of argumentative discourse. Quantitative research based on numerical data and statistics is called for when general hypotheses concerning the production, interpretation or assessment of argumentative discourse are to be tested. Since each to these two types of empirical research has a specific function in gaining a better understanding of argumentative reality, both have their own place in carrying out the research program of argumentation theory—quantitative research generally being preceded by preparatory qualitative research.

In the *analytical component* of the research program of argumentation theory analytical instruments are developed that can serve as tools for a systematic reconstruction of argumentative discourse. In such a reconstruction the way in which a certain argumentative discourse manifests itself in argumentative reality is viewed from the perspective of the theoretical model. This is to result in an "analytic overview" of all elements in the discourse (standpoints, arguments, etc.) that are pertinent to its evaluation as an effort to resolve a difference of opinion in a reasonable way. The analytical component is pivotal in the research program because it is instrumental in achieving a well-founded integration of the descriptive dimension and the normative dimension of the study of argumentation.

The *practical component* of the research program, finally, focuses on the conduct of argumentative discourse in the great variety of specific argumentative practices that have evolved in argumentative reality, varying from parliamentary debates in the political domain and medical consultations in the medical domain to multimodal advertising in the commercial domain. More often than not it is an interest in the shortcomings of the conduct of argumentative discourse in particular argumentative practices that motivates scholars to engage in argumentation theory and makes them return to these practices with the research results. In the practical component of the research program it is to be determined which productive, analytic and evaluative competencies arguers need to have in order to participate adequately in such more or less institutionalized contexts. Adequate methods need to be developed to bring them, where necessary, up to scratch. Another kind of praxiological intervention consists of proposing new or revised procedural "formats" or "designs" for conducting a specific type of argumentative discourse. In the practical component all relevant philosophical, theoretical, empirical and analytical insights gained in the other components are to be put to good use.

1.5 Dialectical and Rhetorical Perspectives

The forbears of modern argumentation theory in Antiquity are ancient dialectic (in combination with syllogistic logic[15]) and ancient rhetoric. These different perspectives on argumentative discourse are nowadays known as *classical dialectic* and *classical rhetoric*. Although we often speak of classical dialectic and classical rhetoric as if each of them constituted a well-articulated unified whole, in Greek and Roman Antiquity and the post-classical period they never were. Various scholars have made their own contributions to the development of the dialectical and the rhetorical perspective and their views were by no means in complete harmony with each other.

Aristotle's dialectic initiated a long tradition to which argumentation theory is strongly indebted.[16] The Aristotelian concept of dialectic is best understood as the art of inquiry through critical dialogue. In such a critical dialogue a thesis is put to the test by making the party who makes the claim respond to sceptical questions from the other party aimed at exposing contradictions in maintaining the claim involved. In a dialectical dialogue in the Aristotelian sense the adequacy of a claim is supposed to be assessed cooperatively by the parties involved by eliciting commonly accepted starting points, then drawing out implications from these premises and next determining their compatibility with the claim. Where in a dialogue like this contradictions emerge, revised claims can be put forward to avoid such problems. This method of regimented opposition amounts to a collaborative method of putting logic to good use in moving from opinion and conjecture to more secure belief.

In Aristotle's concept of rhetoric, the emphasis is on the production of effective argumentation for an audience in a monologue. Rhetoric in the Aristotelian sense deals with principles of effective persuasion which are instrumental in achieving assent or consensus when the subject matter at issue does not lend itself to a logical demonstration of certainty. Aristotelian rhetoric focuses on persuasive effects that arguers are as it were entitled to achieve on the basis of the quality of their argumentative discourse rather than on persuasive effects that are actually realized. The most prominent argumentative tool of classical rhetoric is the enthymeme, an incomplete syllogism with premises that are supposed to be acceptable to the audience and that is thought to be effective through the audience's completion of the syllogism. Aristotelian rhetoric bears little resemblance to modern-day "persuasion theories" concentrating on the analysis of attitude formation and attitude change and dealing with persuasive effects brought about in some way or other.[17]

Both the dialectical perspective (combined with the logic of the syllogism) and the rhetorical perspective have remained prominent in post-classical argumentation

[15]Until the 17th century, *dialectica* was generally the usual name for logic (Scholz 1967: 8).

[16]For Aristotle's syllogistic logic, dialectic and rhetoric we refer to his collected works (Aristotle 1984).

[17]See O'Keefe (2002).

scholarship. The ways in which they were defined, however, has changed considerably over time. In modern rhetoric, the classical divisions of the tasks of the orator and the parts of the oration, which were developed independently in Antiquity, are put together in what is generally known as "the system of antique rhetoric". Over time the division of labour between dialectic and rhetoric suggested by Aristotle (and referred to by the term *antistrophos*) developed in the treatment by others into a more competitive relationship. Cicero, for one, put rhetoric first; Boethius on the other hand considered dialectic most important. The competition led in the end to the transfer of the treatment of two vital tasks of the orator from rhetoric to dialectic: the selection of the material for a speech (*inventio*) and the ordering the speech (*dispositio*)—thus leaving only the task of putting the speech into words (*elocutio*) to rhetoric. This development culminated in a complete division of dialectic and rhetoric, which came to be seen as two separate and incompatible paradigms.

At the birth of modern argumentation theory after the second world war, as a consequence of its incorporation in logic and the subsequent formalization of logic, dialectic had been invisible for a long time and the division between dialectic and rhetoric was a clear and easily discernible fact. Separately from dialectic, formal logic had by then become the dominant perspective on argumentative discourse and was heavily contested by the most influential protagonists of modern argumentation theory, Toulmin (2003) and Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969). More recently other argumentation theorists, such as the rhetoricians, the informal logicians and the pragma-dialecticians, have also declared formal logic lacking in theoretical power for dealing with argumentation. One could even say that the revival of modern argumentation theory is characterized by the replacement of formal logic by other kinds of approaches. Most of these approaches adopt a dialectical or a rhetorical perspective in their theorizing.

The dialectical approaches that have been developed in modern argumentation theory all concentrate upon the preservation of reasonableness in argumentative discourse. They are to a large extent inspired by Naess's (1966) dialectical views of argumentative discourse, the proposals for a dialogue logic of Lorenzen and the Erlangen School (Lorenzen and Lorenz 1978) and the formal dialectic alternative offered by Hamblin (1970) to the failing logical treatment of the fallacies. This is certainly true for the systems of formal dialectic proposed by Barth and Krabbe (1982) and their pragmatic extension with dialogue types by Walton and Krabbe (1995), but it also applies to the pragma-dialectical approach to argumentative discourse presented in this volume.

The rhetorical approaches developed in modern argumentation theory all centre around the effectiveness of argumentative discourse, albeit that the rhetorical perspective has been constantly redefined over time. Classical rhetoric has remained a major source of inspiration to modern rhetoricians, not only because they appreciate the antique theories of rhetoric but also owing to specific classical rhetoricians or theoretical insights they feel attracted to. However, in Big Rhetoric as it is nowadays practised in the United States, an abundance of additional influences from other sources can be noticed, varying from the social theory of communicative

action of Habermas to postmodern ideas. In the American communication and debate tradition rhetorical approaches to argumentation are prevalent, but to some extent also in branches of linguistics such as discourse and conversation analysis. Some rhetorically-oriented argumentation theorists have succeeded in identifying characteristic features of specific kinds of argumentative discourse or provided illuminating case studies of argumentative discourses.[18]

Although this is not always explicitly acknowledged, not only certain logical approaches, but also most other modern approaches to argumentation are strongly affected by the dialectical or the rhetorical perspective on argumentation developed in Antiquity. Identifying the modern approaches without any further ado with either doing logic or dialectic or rhetoric would be too simple, but the scope and range of a great many of them are in practice often determined, if not limited, by adopting exclusively one of these perspectives. Treating argumentation theory as a branch of formal logic, as some argumentation scholars do, is not an illegitimate alternative, but it diverts the attention in an unproductive way from the pragmatic dimension of reconstructing unexpressed premises, assessing argumentative justifications and identifying argumentative patterns in verbal communication and interaction. In its turn, viewing argumentation theory just as doing dialectic runs the risk that the various kinds of contextual and other pragmatic factors influencing the effectiveness of argumentative discourse will be ignored, whereas in viewing argumentation theory as merely doing rhetoric the critical dimension involved in maintaining reasonableness is not fully explored.

The current state of the art in argumentation theory is characterized by the co-existence of a variety of theoretical approaches, which differ considerably in conceptualization, scope and theoretical refinement. Some of them, especially those developed by scholars with a background in linguistics, discourse analysis and rhetoric, are largely (or sometimes even completely) descriptive. These theorists are usually primarily interested in finding out how speakers and writers try to convince or persuade others in argumentative discourse by making use of certain linguistic devices or other persuasive means. Other scholars, who are often inspired by insights from philosophy, logic or law, approach argumentation normatively in order to develop soundness criteria that must be satisfied in argumentation that can be qualified as rational and reasonable. These theorists concentrate, for instance, on the epistemic function of argumentation or on the fallacies that may occur in argumentative discourse.

This volume has as its point of departure that argumentation theory serves its purposes best if it includes both descriptive and normative research and the logical, dialectical and rhetorical dimensions of argumentative discourse are all incorporated in the research. Putting the different kinds of insights gained from a systematic combination of all these perspectives to good use, will lead to a better and more complete understanding of argumentative discourse. In the following chapters we will make clear how this understanding can be achieved by creating an

[18]See, for example, Leff and Mohrmann (1993), Zarefsky (1986, 1990) and Fahnestock (1999).

interdisciplinary pragma-dialectical perspective in which insights from the dialectical and the rhetorical perspective are integrated and where necessary supported by insights from logic and philosophy, linguistics and discourse analysis, psychology, sociology and law, and the study of communication and debate.

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