

7 January 2023

ADAB's responses to Dr. Mohammed's Responses

1- I agree that we do not want the analysis and/or evaluation of argumentation to be based on speculation—the unfounded attribution of mental states or intentions to the arguer. I can see how the externalization principle can guard against speculations, and that is a good thing. The question, or my worry, is whether the externalization principle ends up, in effect, “guarding too much”—that the application of the principle leads to excluding not only speculations, but also other “things” that are important for the analysis and/or evaluation of argumentation. I will try to reflect upon the thin line between *speculation* and *interpretation*, which maybe a way to develop this debate. Of course, interpretation is involved in all analysis as well as evaluative judgments, so that's where I move from.

I think we can agree that there are clear cases of “obvious speculations”, cases where the attribution of, say, intentions cannot in any apparent way be “traced” or justified by reference to the “(speech) acts of the arguers.” We can also agree that in other cases, the arguer's externalized commitments clearly and un-controversially indicate intentions. My worry, to put it differently, is that in both cases (unjustified and justified attribution of intentions) some degree of interpretation on our side (the one attributing intentions to the arguer) is taking place. Consider the following example from Miranda Fricker's seminal work on epistemic injustice:

In Anthony Minghella's screenplay of *The Talented Mr Ripley*, Herbert Greenleaf uses a familiar put-down to silence Marge Sherwood, the young woman who, but for the sinister disappearance of his son, Dickie, was soon to have become his daughter-in-law: ‘Marge, there's female intuition, and then there are facts.’ Greenleaf is responding to Marge's expressed suspicion that Tom Ripley—a supposed friend of Dickie and Marge, who has curried much favour with Greenleaf senior—is in fact Dickie's murderer.
Fricker 2007, *Epistemic Injustice*, 9

Fricker convincingly argues that “‘Marge, there's female intuition, and then there are facts’” constitutes a case of epistemic injustice (testimonial injustice, more specifically). I think this is a clear case of justified attribution of intention—that Greenleaf intention is to silence Marge. But such (justified) attribution depends on some interpretive work from our side, one that involves the meaning of contrasting “female intuition” to “facts” in this particular social context. In short, without “interpretation” how are we to “trace” from acts to states of mind, or identify speech acts as “evidence”? My point is neither to dismiss nor to accept all “tracing” on the grounds that “interpretation” is involved. Instead, my point is that unless we have a differentiated evaluative understanding of interpretation (say, acceptable vs unacceptable interpretations), then the mere reference to “externalization” as a sufficient (not only necessary) condition for the analysis and/or evaluation of argumentation is in the least problematic (it can even become a tool for oppressing marginalized groups in the hands of the hegemonic interpretive community).

Two final and related points. I find your concern with “discursive hypocrisy” and “implicit communicated meaning” are instances of the worry I am trying to express. And to try to address this worry by adding nuance to “externalization” is misguided. Some form of verbal externalization can be necessary, but we should not treat it as sufficient. Second, we should treat “analysis” and “evaluation” differently. The defense of the externalization principle (even when considered as necessary but not sufficient) is strongest in the case of argument analysis. I think it is less so in the case of argument evaluation. On the one hand, we should be more careful when evaluating arguments and the standards on the “externalized-discursive-component” of argumentation should be more stringent. On the other hand, if we only account for the “externalized-discursive-component” we might be missing on important resources for the evaluation of argumentation. Resources such as “when” (relates to sequencing) and “how” (relates to non-verbal communication) an arguer delivers the “externalized-discursive-component.” (Dr. Sadek)

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We are not sure how much the “mental states” of arguers will be at the foci of our conversation at the Symposium. If so, I guess it will mostly be in relation to the authenticity of virtuous behavior, the intentions of the arguer, and whether some rules can regulate them. As you know, Pragma-Dialectics holds that a critical discussion, in settling a difference of opinion, entails three sets of conditions. The first-order conditions relate to the rules, norms, and overall machinery of argument. The second-order conditions are related to the state of mind of the arguing parties, and third-order conditions to the institutional context within which argumentation takes place (van Eemeren and Grootendorst 2004, p. 36). We are inclined to read these conditions with regards to the procedure, the agent, and the institutional context. While your work has mostly focused on the third (the social and institutional context), the ADAB project is oriented more towards the second, agential aspects. I personally think, rather than intentions, and on the other hand, the interests, of the arguer, some midway construct such as “concerns” could perhaps be helpful to open the discussion towards a less person-centric perspective. Or better, it can perhaps help us broker a way between person focusing (only) on persons or contexts? The second reflection below comes (mostly) from Dr. Uzelgun (as does this voice-over between the responses).

2- With its recourse to the triad of logic, rhetoric and dialectic, your response to the second question clarifies the grounds of the sequencing discussion. As you concluded, “what is at stake here is a normative dialectical consideration on sequencing”. We could add that such normativity involves – or presupposes – the interdependence of procedural and agential norms (Oruç, Üzelgün, and Sadek, in print). That is, the values embedded in a particular debate design are both coded in the procedure and serve as a code (in the sense of manners) of a virtuous arguer. Below is what one of our Expert Consultants Dr. Young wrote about the argumentative vice identified as *ghaṣb*:

... the importance of *tartīb* for ethical procedure should be self-evident. Among other places, it is pointed out in the *qiyās*-oriented objections chapters of many *uṣūl al-fiqh* texts, and of course *jadal* manuals, that Q’s adherence to a strict order of questions / objections is absolutely essential to a constructive disputation. *Mu’āraḍa*, for example, comes at the end of most order-systems, since launching it earlier will have disallowed R the full testing and expression of supporting indicants for his thesis, and the move will thus constitute not counter-indication (*mu’āraḍa*) but usurpation (*ghaṣb*) of R’s role.

After this short reminder of the agential aspects of normative dialectical consideration, I’d like to raise two issues. The first is about the link between sequencing and topical potential: I see topical selection as the most relevant in this regard among the three aspects of strategic maneuvering. While in your response you wrote “sequencing may be part of the strategic choices made in them all”, perhaps we could explore topical potential as primarily agent-relevant, audience adaptation as primarily other-relevant, and stylistic devices as primarily language-relevant. Of course, the three aspects of strategic maneuvering being defined upon the joint pursuit of dialectical and rhetorical aims can always be used to note the balance of pursuits in all three. Still, van Eemeren (2018) introduces topical potential as a collection of possible moves, as it were, “available to be made” at a particular point in a debate:

When an argumentative move is made, irrespective of whether it concerns a standpoint, a starting point or another argumentative move, a choice has been made from a number of options. The selection from the topical potential may, for instance, involve a choice of particular starting points, rather than other optional starting points as the point of departure of the resolution process (van Eemeren, 2018, p. 112).

I am not quite sure whether the topical choice for van Eemeren is “irrespective of” the type of move as in objection, refutation, and counter-argument. It seems that certain moves, such as objection, by definition afford a limited scope of topical choices, i.e., whatever the foregoing move of the proponent employed as premise(s). It is more certain that Pragma-Dialectics (PD) is not directly interested in the agent-relevant (or virtuous) aspects of topical selection. One way to reflect upon such a selection besides regarding it as a balancing act may be to consider what exploring a particular disagreement space in a particular way would *mean* for the person of the

arguer. Here, let me note that your mention of argumentative potential would squarely place the implicit argumentative meaning as embedded in the context – which is just fine. And our invitation – in the Symposium panel you’re invited – is to look, as it were, across contexts, to the continuity of the person of the arguer, or the personal choices of the arguer, as more or less conscious or habitual choices. Is that too far away from topical choices, and the exploration the argumentative potential? Are there any links that we could explore?

The second issue I’d like to raise is about merely following, where you left in your response, namely the relevance of dialogue types for the (both normative and strategic) perspectives on sequencing. Defining dialogue as a normative framework, Walton (1998) identifies six types: persuasion, inquiry, deliberation, negotiation, eristic, and information-seeking. For the purposes of ADAB, we could eliminate the last two immediately, as eristic is debate is exactly what our design aims to move away from, and informative dialogues entail a too-limited role assignment to parties. Next, we can also drop negotiation too, at least for the moment, for the rationality involved does not seem fit for our purposes¹. So, of Walton’s dialogue types we have persuasion, inquiry, and deliberation, to consider.

That *Ādāb al-Baḥṭh wa-l Munāzara* was in its proper context of use also, and perhaps even primarily, a means of inquiry, will certainly occupy some space in our conversation. Yet, as inquiry means “to draw conclusions only from premises that can definitely be established as true or false so that there will be no need to go back and retract these premises” (Walton, 1988, p. 70), and the goal of inquiry is to “prove” truth or falsity of a claim, it is of lesser interest for argumentative encounters today, seems to me at least. However, it is crucial to recognize that, truth (or the seeking – testing of true knowledge) was – and still could be – sort of a guiding light that stabilizes the argumentative procedure and the code of arguers. In his response to our Expert consultation, S. Jacobs writes:

...truth is absent in so many informal logic discussions of good reasoning. Take pragma-dialectics. Nowhere in the rules or in the specification of the felicity conditions for the speech act of making an argument is there a mention of truth. Why assertives (which Searle defines as undertakings to represent the truth of a proposition) should enjoy any special place in the argumentation stage comes off as a real mystery. And the replacement of truth for acceptability to the proponent and opponent begs the question of what are the felicity conditions for acceptance.

So, although truth as a goal of critical discussion could constitute a conundrum (which I wish to neither here nor at the Symposium delve), one possible modality - or motion type - of modern munazara probably would main inquiry. That is, for those who share sufficient common ground to build upon a reasonable discussion in those terms, they can jointly extend the horizons of their knowledge in such an encounter.

¹ While this is our position at least for the moment, I’d like to remain considering its relevance, at least for some contexts of debate.

So, for another munazara motion type, let's have a reflection on the finalists: persuasion and deliberation. I place here below the famous Table from Walton (2007, p. 23), which usefully distinguishes the goal of the dialogue, and the goal of the parties.

Table 1.2 Six basic types of dialog

TYPE OF DIALOG	INITIAL SITUATION	PARTICIPANT'S GOAL	GOAL OF DIALOG
Persuasion	Conflict of Opinions	Persuade Other Party	Resolve or Clarify Issue
Inquiry	Need to Have Proof	Find and Verify Evidence	Prove (Disprove) Hypothesis
Negotiation	Conflict of Interests	Get What You Most Want	Reasonable Settlement Both Can Live With
Information-Seeking	Need Information	Acquire or Give Information	Exchange Information
Deliberation	Dilemma or Practical Choice	Co-ordinate Goals and Actions	Decide Best Available Course of Action
Eristic	Personal Conflict	Verbally Hit Out at Opponent	Reveal Deeper Basis of Conflict

Looking at the table for the goals in persuasion and deliberation, traditional munazara may be categorized under persuasion dialogue (besides that dialogue being ultimately oriented to the manifestation of truth, *izhar-ul hakk*). As the most likely modern-day counterpart of munazara, in this framework, PD seems also to fall under persuasion dialogue. Yet, its links to deliberative discourse is also well established. We would like to ponder over the possibility of a new design based on munazara's basic insight (that regards procedure and agent together in a strict sequence of moves) and with the goals of deliberation dialogue. What would be the strengths and weaknesses of such a design, or for such a munazara motion type? In such a "policy-munazara" what sequencing options would be more useful for achieving the (joint) goal of deliberation and our higher-level goal of nurturing argumentative virtues (or, curbing argumentative vices)?

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The short answer to your third Expert consultation response also comes from Dr. Uzelgun. I will try to continue the reflection on paths to innovation in the munazara procedure. What goes below could perhaps also be regarded in a double-folded manner for epistemic and practical/policy motion types.

3- As I understand, the aim in focusing on doubts in this question was to probe into the possibilities to learn and distinguish anew the forms objection (in the objection – refutation – counter-argument triad). *Man'* (or *mumāna'a*?) in the munazara tradition was only envisaged to be done with or without *sanad*.

The question was built on an anticipation that arguers may “sneak in” implicit forms of criticism where they are expected to carry out a particular move, such as objection – objection here referring to merely test the proponent’s premise. The new munazara protocol is an attempt to habituate arguers to refrain from such “vices”: we can include in that long – and perhaps even everlasting – list other procedural breaches / argumentative vices, such as insinuations, targeting standing standpoints, involving argumentative associates, etc. And we think we could learn from you in that.

We well understand that most of the “innovations” we could offer for a new munazara design from the contemporary argumentation theory are context-dependent, involving quite detailed and complex analyses, and have “to be evaluated case by case”. Take the example of refutation, which, to my understanding (and we are going to learn more about this at the Symposium), was mainly about inconsistency in the traditional munazara. If we would like to include more detail from the present-day insights concerning the rational architecture of an (proponent’s) argument, we face the difficulty of introducing argument schemes and the associated critical questions into debate design. And with tournament-like structures (time limitations, judges, etc.) such “innovations” lose most practical value, as they require to be examined in detail case by case.

So, our task of offering insights from contemporary theories must balance between detail and practicality. With that in mind, we will be seeking and discussing practicable or simplified proposals that could steer debaters of a munazara protocol towards critical and virtuous moves.

Oruç, Üzelgün, and Sadek, in print. *Sequencing critical moves for an ethical argumentation practice: Munāzara and the interdependence of procedure and agent*. Informal Logic.

van Eemeren, F. H. (2018). *Argumentation Theory: A Pragma-Dialectical Perspective*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Walton, D. N. (1998). *The New Dialectic: Conversational Contexts of Arguments*. University of Toronto Press.

Walton, D. N. (2007). Dialog theory for critical argumentation. *Dialog Theory for Critical Argumentation*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins.