

# Personal and Social Contexts for Arguing

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# What Do Personal and Social Contexts Have to Do with Argumentation?

You cannot

believe in God, or

fall in love, or

change your belief

unless you are open to the possibility in the first place

# Being Open

- This is commonly a psychological condition – some people are chronically open or closed
- This can be a social condition – you might be closed to most people, but open to this person; or the reverse. Circumstances might also make a difference.
- It can also be a momentary condition:
  - “If you’re talking, you’re not listening”
- We have the most to say about psychological conditions.

# Global Arguing Orientations Project

- We have been involved in gathering people's self-reports about interpersonal arguing in many countries
  - Ukraine, Chile, Poland, USA and many others
- The instruments are in several classes:
  - General motivations to argue
  - Understandings about the nature of interpersonal arguing
  - Emotional reactions to the possibility of arguing
  - Most recently: arguing at work and tolerance for status inequality in society

# General Motivations

- Argumentativeness: the impulse to argue on the merits; make a controversial case or critique the other person's; but always focused on reasons and evidence
  - Argument Approach: the impulse to do this
  - Argument Avoid: the impulse to refuse to do this
- Verbal Aggressiveness: the impulse to attack the other arguer, to engage in *ad hominem* aggression
  - VA-Antisocial: the impulse to be nasty to the other person
  - VA-Prosocial: the impulse to be nice to the other person, even when you are tempted to be nasty

# Understandings of Interpersonal Argument

- Goals – why do people argue at all?
  - **Utility** (get something done), **dominance assertion** (to show that you're more powerful), **identity display** (to show off some feature of self you're proud of), and **play** (argue for entertainment)
- Engagement with the other person – how is arguing done?
  - **Blurting** (not taking the other person into account at all), **cooperation** (versus competition), and **civility** (versus rudeness or nastiness)
- Philosophical reflection – agree with the judgments of argumentation scholars
  - **Professional contrast**

# Professional Contrast, continued

We offer respondents seven contrasts and ask them to show which choice is most accurate:

competition === cooperation  
aggression === assertiveness  
uncontrolled emotionality === reason giving  
violence === pacifism  
dominance === issue resolution  
personally punishing === personally satisfying  
relationally damaging === relationally developmental

The yellow choices are the “good” ones, and high scores reflect more of these choices

Notice how many of the yellow choices are relevant to the theme Logic4Peace

# Emotional Reactions to Conflict

- Seven scales (two of them are actually cognitive projections, not emotions)
  - Direct personalization (I take conflicts personally)
  - Stress reactions (Conflicts make my stomach hurt)
  - Persecution feelings (People start conflicts just to hurt me)
  - Positive relational effects (Conflicts can clear the air and improve a relationship)
  - Negative relational effects (Disagreements can poison a friendship)
  - Positive valence (I enjoy being in conflicts)

# Power Distance

- Tolerance for status inequalities in society
  - Original idea was Hofstede's, but we have adopted individual measures instead of his national descriptions
  - High score means very tolerant of inequality
- Example items:
  - People in higher positions should not ask the opinions of people in lower positions too frequently.
  - People in higher positions should avoid social interaction with people in lower positions.
  - People in lower positions should not disagree with decisions by people in higher positions.

# Arguing at Work

Willingness to argue at work, either with your boss or with a coworker. Here are examples of items for arguing with your boss:

Imagine that you are employed full-time in a good job, and that you are at work. The person who has been your boss for about a year comes to you and says that he or she wants you to do some part of your job in a different way. You think this is a terrible idea.

I would express my criticism about the new idea to my supervisor.

I would not hesitate to express my disagreement to my supervisor.

I would tell my supervisor when I disagree with the recommended idea.

I would feel free to express my disagreement.

# Global Project

- Some of the scales were used from the beginning, and others have been more recently added
- USA
- Chile, Immigrants into Chile, Chilean elderly, Mexico, Argentina
- Cameroun
- Poland, Ukraine, Portugal, France, Netherlands
- Turkey, United Arab Emirates
- China, South Korea, Malaysia

# One Illustration, Professional Contrast

Instruments were translated, so be careful about small differences

Mean (1-10 scale)

Poland (age = 20.6)	6.48
Ukraine (age = 32.7)	5.62
Chilean seniors (age = 72.2)	7.95
Chilean immigrants (age = 31.4)	6.90
USA adults (age = 35.8)	6.69
USA undergrads (age = 20.3)	6.29

# Sex Differences

Across our common measurements, on what percentage do men and women differ? (If there's a pattern, it will be that men are more aggressive)

Ukraine (age = 32.7)	78%
Chilean seniors (age = 72.2)	12%
Chile Immigrants (age = 31.4)	65%
Poland (age = 20.6)	61%
USA (age = 35.8)	67%
USA (age = 20.3)	83%

**Nations with less than 50%:** India, China, Malaysia, Portugal, France, UAE, Argentina

# Correlations Between “Opposites”

Argument-approach is supposed to be the “opposite” of argument-avoid, and VA-antisocial is supposed to be “opposite” to VA-prosocial

	App-avoid	Anti-prosocial
Ukraine (age = 32.7)	-.57	-.39
Chilean seniors (age = 72.2)	-.10	-----
Chile Immigrants (age = 31.4)	.08	-----
Poland (age = 20.6)	-.52	-.45
USA (age = 35.8)	-.54	-.43
USA (age = 20.3)	-.35	-.31

**Nations with positive or nearly zero correlations:** UAE, Malaysia, India, Mexico, South Korea

# To see the actual scales in English:

## General motivations:

Infante, D. A., and A. S. Rancer. 1982. A conceptualization and measure of argumentativeness. *Journal of Personality Assessment* 46: 72-80.

Infante, D. A., and C. J. Wigley. 1986. Verbal aggressiveness: An interpersonal model and measure. *Communication Monographs* 53: 61-69.

## Understanding interpersonal arguing:

Hample D. 2018. *Interpersonal arguing*. New York: Peter Lang. (Appendix)

## Emotional reactions to conflict:

Hample, D., and J. M. Dallinger. 1995. A Lewinian perspective on taking conflict personally: Revision, refinement, and validation of the instrument. *Communication Quarterly* 43: 297-319.

## Power Distance:

Yoo, B., Donthu, N., and T. Lenartowicz. 2011. Measuring Hofstede's five dimensions of cultural values at the individual level: Development and validation of CVSCALE. *Journal of International Consumer Marketing* 23: 193-210.

Arguing at Work: brand new, send us a note

# Citations to Some of the Data Mentioned

Debowska-Kozłowska, K., & Hample, D. (in press). Agreement builds and disagreement destroys: How Polish undergraduates and graduates understand interpersonal arguing. *Argumentation*.

Santibáñez, C., Hample, D., & Hample, J. (2021). How do Chilean seniors think about arguing? *Journal of Argumentation in Context*, 10(2), 202-225.

Khomenko, I., & Hample, D. (2019). Comparative analysis of arguing in Ukraine and the USA. In B. Garssen, D. Godden, G. R. Mitchell, & J. H. M. Wagemans (Eds.), *Proceedings of the ninth conference of the International Society for the Study of Argumentation* (pp. 628-639). Amsterdam: Sic Sat.

Hample, D., & Irions, A. (2015). Arguing to display identity. *Argumentation*, 29, 389-416.

Hample, D., & Anagondahalli, D. (2015). Understandings of arguing in India and the United States: Argument frames, personalization of conflict, argumentativeness, and verbal aggressiveness. *Journal of Intercultural Communication Research*, 44, 1-26.

New Ukraine study and immigrants to Chile study have been submitted to European Conference on Argumentation

# Thank you

# We welcome conversation

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