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ABSTRACT: Theorists' conceptions of argument inevitably color their interpretations of argumentative discourse. In this paper, I will try to reach past our theories and capture a conception of argument held by practitioners. Using methodologies from corpus linguistics, I will identify what participants in the U.S. congressional debate over entry into the first Gulf War took to be "an argument."

KEYWORDS: argument; argumentation; corpus linguistics; computer assisted methodologies; corpus linguistics; disagreement; debate; informal logic; pragmatics.

1. INTRODUCTION

Argumentation theorists are very good at argument, and at theory. This fact is hindering the further development of argumentation theory.

A celebrated series of experiments in cognitive psychology may help make this clear (e.g., Ross, 2006). Images of pieces arranged on chess boards were briefly displayed to chess novices and experts. When the pieces were set up as they might be in the midst of a game, chess experts were substantially better than novices at remembering the arrangement. When the pieces were spread out at random, however, the experts' memories were no better than the novices.

Why the difference in performance? It's thought that when experts look at a situation, they actually *see* something different than novices. They do not take in more bits of information, or remember it better. Rather, the experts directly perceive meaningful configurations that novices can't: entire gestalts of items that have a likely history, and are pregnant with possibilities for future action. Where the novice might notice a tall piece to the right of a short piece, the expert sees a "blockaded king's-Indian-style pawn chain," and knows what he could do next.

Argumentation theorists, I want to suggest, are also experts of a sort. They are experts, first of all, in the argumentation theory they propound. They are also likely experts in arguing, specifically in the arguing that goes on in theory construction and in their discipline.

So when argumentation theorists look at a stretch of discourse, they likely see the meaningful configurations—the arguments—in it that their theoretical and disciplinary expertise primes them to see. And they know what to do next: diagram them, say, or ask about premise adequacy.

This would of course be an advantage, provided that their theories are sound, and the argumentative practices typical of their disciplines, transferable to new contexts.

Consider the dangers, though, if one of these two conditions are not met. Then the theorist may end up projecting an inadequate theory onto the discourse he studies. Seeing only the configurations he is primed to see, his theory becomes unfalsifiable. That's not good. Or if argumentative practices are diverse—if there are different "fields" or "spheres" or "registers" of arguing—he runs the risk of imposing the expectations and structures of his discipline where they are alien, and of missing the ways of argument native to another place. Either way, he lives in a solipsistic world, one in which he can never learn anything new.

So we may be too smart for our own good. To avoid importing the preconceptions of our theories or disciplines into the discourse we study and to remain open to learning something from the rich argumentative practices in the world around us, we need, at least occasionally, to become dumber.

Aha!—I thought—what could be dumber than a computer?

The past decade has seen the rapid development of corpus linguistics, which uses computer-assisted methodologies to study bodies of discourse (corpora). Corpus linguistics aims to give a much more empirical base to linguistic theory than that provided by previous methodologies, in which linguists would use their intuitions as native speakers to judge whether an expression—often an invented example—was well formed or typical. The ever-increasing processing power and memory cheaply available allows for large amounts of real-world data to be efficiently "crunched" and patterns extracted. As three leaders in the field comment,

the corpus-based approach for studying how speakers and writers use the linguistic resources available to them in their language. . . . takes advantage of: computers' capacity for fast, accurate, and complex analyses; the extensive information about language use found in large collections of natural texts from multiple registers; and the rich descriptions that result from integrating quantitative findings and functional interpretations. For these reasons, the corpus-based approach has made it possible to conduct new kinds of investigations into language use and to expand the scope of earlier investigations (Biber, Conrad and Reppen 1998, p. 223).

The study I attempt here should be taken as an experiment in how much the "dumb" methods of corpus linguistics, developed to examine word meanings, grammatical structures and other strictly linguistic regularities, can be used to examine the more diffuse and complex structures of the normative pragmatics of naturally occurring argumentative talk.

As the corpus of discourse to be studied, I will use the U.S. Congressional debate over initiating hostilities in the first Gulf War. As the reader will recall, after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in the summer of 1990, an international coalition had imposed economic sanctions and assembled a force at the Saudi border. As diplomatic efforts failed, President Bush (the First) hinted that he would begin an attack on 15 January, with or without Congressional authorization. As I have documented in previous work (1999), the debate in Congress in the first weeks of 1991, following up on months of debate throughout the country, was widely viewed as exemplary of its kind—as best practice. Further, I presume that the discourse of this debate is at least in part argumentative; indeed, that civic discourse on the great questions of war and peace is one of the central uses of argument that we aspire to account for and even improve by theorizing argument at all. What we can learn from studying this material may not constitute *the* theory of

argument—as above, I doubt that there is such a thing—but it should give us a new understanding to help us develop better theories of argument in civic contexts.

To study the roughly 800,000 words in this Congressional debate, I will be borrowing from corpus linguistics a tool called a concordancer. A concordancer is a computer application allowing complex searches of a large body of discourse; essentially, it is a very sophisticated version of a word processor's basic "find" function. The freeware concordancer I use here, Antconc (Anthony, 2007) can collect and display all uses of a simple or complex expression: e.g., in the following screenshot (Figure 1), all uses of the word "and" within five words to the right of the word "argument" or "arguments," displaying the expression within a context of 100 characters on each side.

Figure 1.1
A concordance search using AntConc
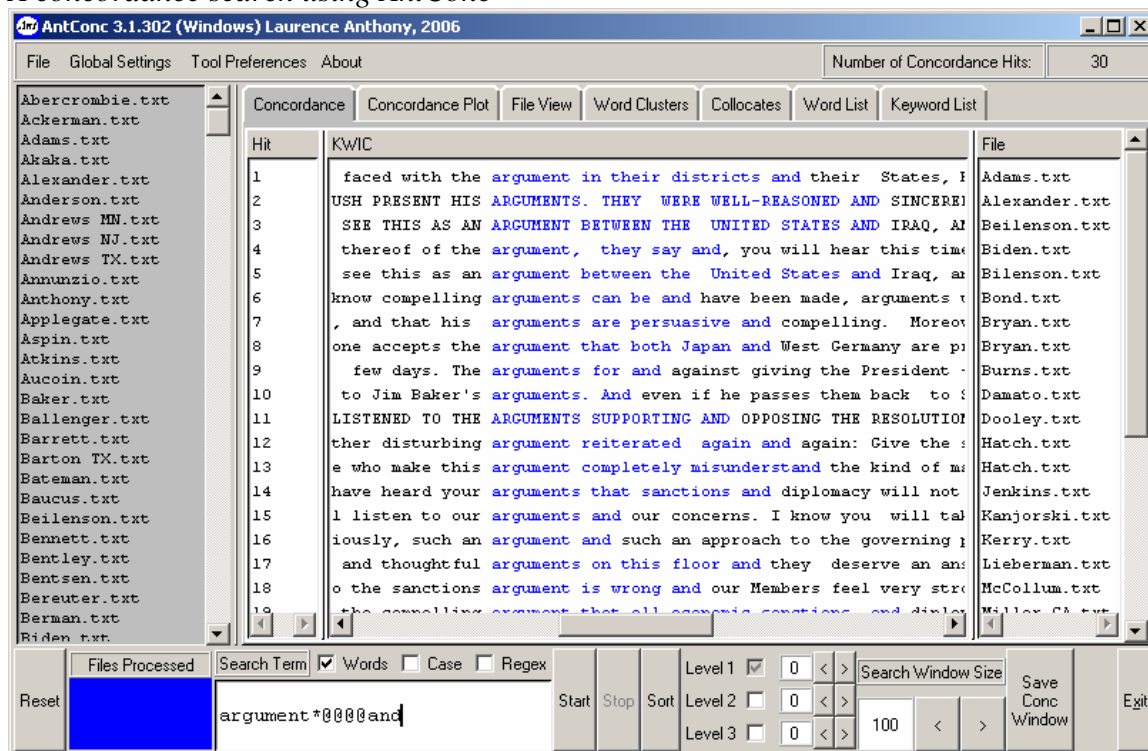
In addition, Antconc can identify and count all the collocates (neighbors) of a given word within a given range (e.g., listing all the words that appear within 5 words to the right of either of the words "argument" or "arguments," with the number of times each such word appears), and list in rank order all the words that appear in the corpus, with their frequencies.

I focus this study on the *conception of argument* held by participants in the Congressional debate, as evident in the meaning, usage, and features of the word "argu-" (i.e., all the noun and verb forms derived from the root ARGU) in the corpus. There are many other things that corpus methods could help us ferret out of discourse; I selected this as a good starting point, since it is especially likely to bring to our attention the differences between our expert (disciplinary and argument-theoretical) conceptions and the equally expert conceptions of those skilled in a rather different argumentative

practice. The specific questions I will be posing are less theoretically driven than opportunistic attempts to make full use of what the concordancer can do. I will be asking:

1. What are the *meanings* of the words "argument" and "arguing"? Studying the word meanings evident in large corpora has been one of primary thrusts of corpus linguistics (see Biber, Conrad and Reppen 1998 for an overview of the various strands of research within the field). I want to build here on the work of Daniel O'Keefe (1982), and see what the corpus can tell us about the differences—and links—between argument-1 (reason-claim complexes) and argument-2 (fights).

2. What is the *usage* of the word "argument"? –usage again being one of the investigations corpora support well. In this section, I will see what we can learn about argument from the words that typically go with the word "argument" in the corpus.

3. What is the *frequency* of the word "argument"? This information, easily recoverable using the concordancer, may suggest how salient arguments are, as opposed to all the other things participants in the Congressional debate do in their talk.

4. What *attitude* do speakers have towards the items they explicit identify as arguments—i.e., towards the things they call "arguments" or instances of "arguing"? Identifying all uses of the word "argu-" allows us to see whether negative attitudes toward argument, documented in other studies (see Goodwin, 2005 for a review) hold in the Congressional context as well.

Finally: what, in practice, is *an* argument? This, the central question of the paper, asks how participants in the Congressional debate determine if two arguments are in fact *one and the same*, or if by contrast they are *different*. I will examine the contents participants assign to the arguments they explicitly identify using the word "argu-" to see:

5. What (if anything) makes two explicitly identified arguments the same? Do participants show a sense that an argument can be made more than once without changing what it is? If so, how much variation in content is possible for the argument to stay the same?

6. What makes two explicitly identified arguments different? What features of the content of the argument do speakers use to pick out for their hearers the specific argument they are referring to with the word "argu-"?

It should be noted that the results reported here are preliminary; they are driven, again, not by a need for theoretical completeness, but by a desire to exploit this new (to argumentation theorists) tool. For example, concordance searches reveal that while adjectives turn up among the close collocates of "argument/s," adverbs do not show up among the collocates of "argue/argues/argued/ arguing." Undoubtedly, speakers are modifying these verbs in some manner; that manner, however, is not one that a concordancer can easily detect. Therefore in examining the pattern of usage of "argu-", I focus only on the noun forms "argument/s," and largely leaves the related verb forms aside. It would of course be possible to use that even more sophisticated research tool— the human mind—to read through all uses of the verb forms and identify and classify the ways they are modified. That and similar tasks were not attempted here, however, as requiring too much effort; and further because they would be "smart," not "dumb." This means that as the sophistication of the available software grows—and our ability to use it—there will be much more to study in this and other corpora of argumentative discourse.

2. METHODS AND PRELIMINARY RESULTS

To allow the humanist reader to skip the methodology section, I start here with a general overview of how I set about *preparing the corpus*, answering the above questions about the *meaning of, usage of, frequencies of,* and *features of* the word "argu-," and how in addition I isolated *comparable* words.

The *corpus was prepared* by taking electronic files of the *Congressional Record* for the week of the debate, eliminating irrelevant material (e.g., discussion of issues other than Iraq, page numbers) and collating the remaining text into one file for each speaker.

To determine *frequency of the words "argu-"* in this corpus, I ran concordance searches on all terms formed from the root "argu-."

To determine the *meaning and features of "argument*," I prepared a concordance of all uses of the word "argu-." I then coded each use for all the features I could think of: for whether the argument was argument-1 or argument-2; for the attitude the speaker expressed towards the argument (pro/con); for the grammatical structure the speaker was using to identify the argument (e.g. "an argument for sanctions" is a prepositional phrase with the preposition "for"); and finally for the content and grammatical form of the argument itself (e.g., in the above example, "sanctions," a noun phrase).

To examine the *usage of "argument/s,"* I isolated all the adjectives and verbs that appeared near to (collocate with) uses of the word "argument/s."

Now, all of this data about the use of the word "argu-" could easily be misleading. For example, concordancing the noun forms "argument" and "arguments" reveals that they is used 210 times in this roughly 810,000 word corpus (see Table 2.2.1). Is that a lot, or a little? Some sort of basis for comparison is needed in order to see what the concordancer results might mean. A final task was therefore to isolate a set of words that participants use like they use "argument/s," in order to provide a basis for comparison. To put it technically, the syntagmatic relations of the word "argument/s" will be elucidated by comparing them with those of paradigmatically related words.

To isolate these *comparables of "argument/s"*, I proceeded backwards. I used the concordancer to locate all "deliberation nouns" (nouns plausibly referring to some thing within the deliberative process itself, as opposed to the world) with the same patterns of usage as the word "argument/s." These I took as comparable to "argument/s," and gathered for them the same data about frequency, attitude and usage that I had for "argument/s."

So much for the methodological overview; the following sections contain the methodological small print.

2.1 *Preparation of the corpus*

Electronic files of the *Congressional Record* from the beginning of the Congressional session through the vote on the competing resolutions (4-12 January 1991) were downloaded from the LexisNexis Congressional database. LexisNexis contains the "daily edition" of the *Record,* which includes a verbatim transcript of floor debates (subject to "non-substantive" corrections by members of Congress before publication), together with any extensions of remarks permitted by the members' Chamber.

From these files were stripped: page numbers; speakers' names; all interventions by the presiding officer; floor debate on subjects other than the situation in the Persian Gulf; procedural and scheduling matters; and insertions of outside documents. Quotations made by members in the course of their remarks, however long, were not excised. If there were doubts about whether a passage was indeed related to the Gulf War debate, it was left in.

All of the remarks made by a member were then collected into one file, to enable idiosyncratic uses to be spotted. Finally, the resulting files were converted into a format readable by the concordancer.

2.2. *Forms and frequencies*

To determine what words from the root "argu-" were in the corpus, and how frequently, I used the concordancer's "word list" function to produce a list of all the words in the corpus, with number of appearances and frequency rank. I then searched this list to locate all words containing the root "argu-." Finally, I used the concordancer to search the corpus for each word individually, and counted the number of different speakers using it. The results appear in Table 1.

Table 2.2.1
Frequencies of words derived from the root "argu-"

Word	Total uses in corpus	Rank in corpus	Number of speakers using word(s)
all forms	390	---	147
nouns	210	---	97
argument	124	685	65
arguments	86	913	58
verbs	171	---	95
argue	76	1024	55
argued	69	1093	44
arguing	17	2904	14
argues	9	4168	9
adjectives/adverbs	9	---	7
arguably	6	5089	4
arguable	1	10994	1
inarguably	1	13301	1
unarguably	1	16078	1

Whole corpus	ca. 810,000 total words	ca 16,500 distinct words	490 speakers

Note that this Table includes both argument-1s and argument-2s (see section 2.3). The adjective and adverb forms appeared so infrequently that they were ignored in the remainder of this study.

2.3. *Meaning and features of "argument"*

I prepared concordances for the noun forms "argument" and "arguments" (henceforth, "argument/s"), and for the verb forms "argue, argues, argued" and "arguing" (henceforth "argue-"), locating every use of each word in the corpus, displayed within a large, 200-character context on each side. Next I began the work of coding key features of each use.

I began by determining the speaker's attitude towards the argument he/she was referring to—whether it was "PRO" (approval or endorsement, e.g., his/her own argument), "CON" (disapproval, rejection, e.g., a report of another's argument as one step in refuting it), or "0" (neutral, ambivalent or indeterminable; for example, a report of having listened to arguments on both sides). I next made an initial judgment of whether the argument referred to was an argument-1 (something made, a reason) or an argument-2 (something had, a fight).

Here and throughout this study this kind of "smart" use of my brain as a research tool was necessary to identify features and to eliminate non-meaningful results. In general, what I did did not require significant judgment—in other words, it was not an opportunity for me to project my semantic or argument-theoretical intuitions into the corpus. I will try to make this clear by displaying the coding schemes I used and by being explicit about every choice I made. In the longer run, of course, it would be useful for me to verify this claim of judgment-independence by showing that the choices I made had "inter-rater reliability," using statistical methods well established in the social sciences.

I will note in the following discussions any judgments I found more tricky. Distinguishing argument-1s from argument-2s is such a case, since the distinction is theoretically founded (not directly obvious from ordinary language), and there were uses of "argu-" that were difficult to assign to one category or the other. I therefore took the coding as argument-1 or –2 as only preliminary, and will return to the challenge of fine-tuning the argument-1 v. argument-2 distinction in section 3.1.

As will be seen, about 10% of the uses of "argu-" are argument-2s. Since the focus of this study is on participants' conception of argument-1, the uses I finally identified as argument-2s were removed from the corpus for this study, unless otherwise specified.

Finally and most significantly, for each remaining use of "argu-" in the corpus, I separated out what I will be calling the "content" of the argument referred to from the grammatical structures within which that content was embedded. What is "content"? Any modifier of the word "argu-" picks out some feature that indicates *which* of all the arguments in the world the speaker is talking about, when she uses the word "argument"; e.g., the argument *made yesterday, by Senator Dodd, that was fallacious.* Only some modifiers, however, pick out the argument by identifying *what* the argument is—i.e., by its content; e.g. the argument *that because sanctions are working, we should not go to*

war. Put another way, the word "argument," like other words, has an "aboutness;" the word "argument" is about some argument. But arguments themselves also have an "aboutness;" an argument is about, e.g., why the policy of sanctions should be continued. In using the word "argument," speakers not atypically mention, describe or state this second "aboutness." I attempt to capture just that by speaking of an argument's "content."

So for each use of the word, I asked "what?"—what was the content of the argument it referred to—and "from what?"—from what grammatical structure I could figure that out . If necessary, I referred back to the full text within which the word "argu-" occurred. I then recorded the results.

On the "from what" question, I first coded the grammatical/structural choices the speaker made to pick out the argumentative content he/she was referring to. Basically, the content could be identified within the clause in which the word "argu-" appeared; it could be identified in a previous or following clause, somehow pointed to by the clause in which the word "argu-" appeared; or it could be unidentifiable anywhere within the text itself. The possibilities are summarized in Table 1.

Table 2.3.1
Coding scheme for grammatical structures used to identify arguments

Structure Coding	Definition	Examples (content in *italics*)
SIMPLE CLAUSE CONSTITUENT	The argument's content appears as a constituent of one structure in the clause in which the word "argu-" appears.	This is an *economic* ARGUMENT (adjective)
		ARGUMENTS *for extending the economic sanctions for a long period* (prepositional phrase)
		This ARGUMENT *that we do not have time to debate this issue* (noun complement)
		Others before me have ARGUED for *more time for the sanctions and for diplomac*y (direct object)
		Others have ARGUED that *no one and nothing in Kuwait are worth the life of even one American soldier* (verb complement)
		the ARGUMENT that says … *the military capability of Saddam Hussein must be destroyed if he does not get out of Kuwait* (verb complement)
COMPLEX CLAUSE CONSTITUENT	The argument's content appears as a constituent of multiple structures within the clause in which the word "argu-" appears.	Do *our goals* sufficiently ARGUE for *the use of strong economic sanctions*

ANAPHORIC REFERENCE	The argument's content appears in the text before the clause in which the word "argu-" appears.	It is said that *whatever the past, we are where we are*. I have weighed that ARGUMENT carefully.
CATAPHORIC REFERENCE	The argument's content appears in the text after the clause in which the word "argu-" appears.	I like this ARGUMENT, "*We will hold your coat while you do the fighting.*"
INDETERMIN-ABLE	The argument's content is identifiable (to me), but the grammatical means are either too complex to account for, or indeterminable.	He [Stalin] was terrible, as terrible as Saddam Hussein is in Kuwait, but it does not necessarily prove the ARGUMENT [that force is justifiable against a horrible dictator].
EXOPHORIC REFERENCE	The argument is not identified in the text; either recipients are expected to be able to sufficiently identify the argument based on their knowledge of the context, or no specific argument is being referred to.	I commend the very able Senator from Tennessee for a very powerfully reasoned and cogently ARGUED statement.

  Having isolated the content (if any) for each use of the word "argu-," I next stripped out and recorded the "argument identifier," if there was one. I take an "argument identifier" to be the signalling word(s) with which a speaker points to the content she is going to report for the argument she is explicitly mentioning with the word "argument." For example, the preposition "for" in "an ARGUMENT *for* extending the economic sanctions" is an argument identifier, or the subordinating conjunction "that" in "argued *that* no one and nothing in Kuwait are worth the life of even one American soldier."

  What was left after the structure was coded and the identifier stripped out was the "what"—the content of the argument referred to by the use of the word "argu-." This content was recorded, and its grammatical form noted (e.g., NOUN PHRASE, ADJECTIVE, GERUND PHRASE, CLAUSE). Content expressed in more than two grammatical clauses was coded as a PASSAGE.

  The resulting database thus contained the text surrounding each use of the word "argu-," decomposed into its constituent parts. This is most easily understood through examples. Consider the following concordance item:

(2.3.1) ed sanctions. And after the invasion, when the President persuaded most of the world to support sanctions and an embargo, I think we began a policy that offers a model for a new world order. Some ARGUE that we must go to war now to prevent the coalition from falling apart. I disagree. The use of the American military should not be a substitute for the weakness of any coalition. America is not 911 (Mikulski)

This was recorded as:

(2.3.2) *Arg 1/Arg 2*: 1
Attitude: CON
Structure: SIMPLE CLAUSE CONSTITUENT
Identifier: that (subordinating conjunction)
Content: we must go to war now to prevent the coalition from falling apart
Content structure: CLAUSE

Or again, the following item and coding:

(2.3.3) fact, there is a good percentage of the American public who feel that somehow, if we wait a little longer, the sanctions, in and of themselves, will do the trick. I would also observe that such an ARGUMENT is also politically the line of least resistance for the present, but, in my opinion, that reasoning is little more than wishful thinking. my opinion from the outset in this situation has been that (Martin)

(2.3.4) *Arg 1/Arg 2*: 1
Attitude: CON
Structure: ANAPHORIC REFERENCE
Identifier: such an
Content: somehow, if we wait a little longer, the sanctions in and of themselves, will do the trick
Content structure: CLAUSE

If the speaker was referring to several arguments with one use of the word "argu-" (e.g., where word appeared in a preview of a long passage containing several points), I recorded the content of each argument separately, but the structure only once. Likewise, when a series of uses of the word "argu-" all referred to the same content, I recorded the structural information for each, but the content only once.

Arguments identified through COMPLEX grammatical constructions resisted such decomposition; the content referred to by the word "argu-," being spread out through multiple parts of the clause, could not be isolated straightforwardly. (This is in itself an interesting finding, one to which I will return in Section 3.6.) Consider the following example:

(2.3.5) It has been said in ARGUMENTS for extending the economic sanctions for a long period that "patience is a virtue." (Bereuter)

I could have decomposed this into references to two separate arguments, grammatically expressed by two SIMPLE CLAUSE CONSTITUENTS—one "for extending the sanctions," the other "that 'patience is a virtue'." But this would have failed to represent accurately the connection the text makes between the two ideas—the way that "patience is a virtue" presented as a reason for extending sanctions. Alternately, I could have reconstructed the content referred to as something like "Patience is a virtue; therefore, sanctions should be extended." If I did so, however, I would *reconstructing* the argument, projecting my own "smart" sense of argument structure into the text, which is precisely what this study is designed to avoid. I therefore simply recorded the entire sentence containing "argu-" as the content of structures coded as COMPLEX.

Finally, in the process of marking up the concordance I noticed that there were a handful of references to arguments outside of the debate in the U.S. over initiating hostilities in Kuwait, however broadly conceived. For example:

(2.3.6) But Saddam's flunky, Mr. Aziz, is not going to listen to Jim Baker's ARGUMENTS. (Damato)

There were six of these, and since they were about something else I eliminated them from the corpus. On the other hand, there were also several references to "outside" arguments (e.g., from the Vietnam period, from around the time of the writing of the Constitution,

and even from the Peloponnesian War) which the speakers treated as somehow relevant to the debate; I did not remove these.

2.4 *Pattern of usage of "argument/s"*

To see how the word "argument/s" was used in this corpus, I began by employing the concordancer's collocation function to produce a list of all words that appeared at least twice within five words (henceforth, a "narrow" context) of "argument/s." I chose to use a five word or 35 character context throughout the study of usage to balance the need for completeness (requiring a large context) with the need for efficiency (demanding a small context). This means that the results here will underreport actual usage; for example, the adjective "specific" in the following instance modifies "argument/s," but does not appear near enough to it to be picked up as a narrow collocate:

(2.4.1) The ARGUMENTS for Presidential power fall into two categories: general and *specific*. (Biden)

One the list of narrow collocates was prepared, I scanned it for adjectives and verbs, eliminating all other words.

Next, I concordanced the word "argument/s," and produced a list of all uses of the word, displaying them within a narrow context. From this list, I eliminated instances of argument-2. I then searched this list for each of the adjectives and verbs that had been found on the collocate list. I recorded instances where the adjective or verb did in fact modify "argument/s," and eliminated instances where the words were collocate, but not syntactically connected. In the following instance, for example, the adjective "powerful" indeed modifies "argument/s;" the adjective "good" does not:

(2.4.2.) of crisis, and that is a *powerful* argument. However, in *good* conscience, I ca

The results—the adjectives and verbs which are narrowly collocate with "argument/s" at least two times—are summarized in Tables 1 and 2. "Compelling" among adjectives and "make" among verbs are the most frequent, but nine other adjectives were also found, and ten verbs.

Table 2.4.1
Adjectives narrowly collocate with "argument/s"

Adjective	Number of uses
compelling argument/s	6
powerful arguments	3
central argument/s	2
credible argument/s	2
excellent argument/s	2
good argument/s	2
(well) reasoned argument/s	2
serious argument/s	2
specific argument/s	2
valid argument/s	2

Table 2.4.2
Verbs narrowly collocate with "argument/s"

Verb	Number of uses
make argument/s	37
hear argument/s	11
listen to argument/s	7
argument/s say/s	5
reject argument/s	3
understand argument/s	3
argument/s deserve/s	2
accept argument/s	2
address argument/s	2
offer argument/s	2
raise argument/s	2

Finally, I undertook a similar process again to isolate the identifiers of argument narrowly collocate with "argument/s." The encoding done while isolating the content of the arguments (see section 2.3) had also isolated the identifiers speakers were using to

pick out that content. Five of these were single terms likely to show up within a narrow range of "argument/s": "that, about, against, for, of" I prepared individual concordances of each of these within five words to the right of "argument/s." I scanned these lists to select instances where "that" or the preposition was in fact functioning as argument identifiers. I summarize the results in Table 3.

Table 2.4.3
Identifiers of argument narrowly collocate with "argument/s"

Identifier	Frequency	Examples	
that	35	the argument that we do not have time	argument is made that even if
for	14	the argument for extending sanctions	arguments for why people should
against	7	argument against war	arguments for and against giving
about	4	arguments about giving a blank check to	
of	1	argument of a coalition fragility	

2.5 *Comparables of "argument/s"*

The final step was to isolate a set of words to be used as bases for comparison with "argument/s" The most straightforward test of comparability was to look form words joined with "argument/s" by conjunctions, i.e., used in the phrases "X and argument/s" or "X or argument/s." I performed a concordance search of the conjunctions "and" or "or" within five words of "argument," eliminated instances of argument-2, and then scanned through the results to identify the target phrases. Five words emerged, each linked with "argument/s" once: concern, approach, claim, issue, emotion.

Conjunctions can be used to link contrasting words as well as similar ones, so this first test was supplemented by two additional ones, looking for words that were modified by the same adjectives ("adjective test"), or subjects or objects of the same verbs ("verb test"), as "argument/s." Essentially, I worked backwards. For the adjective test, for example, I proceeded as follows:

I began by using the concordancer to list all the words narrowly collocate with each adjective. I scanned these collocate lists for nouns which plausibly referred to anything within the deliberative process ("deliberation nouns"). I attempted to be very catholic when classifying a noun as potentially referring to something in the deliberative process, including both words referring more to speech activities (e.g., "proposal") and those referring more to mental or logical activities (e.g., "principle"). I aimed to exclude only nouns referring to the world at large. For the adjective "central," for example, I classified "issue, question, stand, principle, briefing" as potential deliberation nouns, while excluding "director, agency, America, war, Europe, Africa, sanctions, people, Kuwait, head, bank, Vietnam, summer, president." In addition, I excluded "resolution/s;" although a certainly deliberation noun, in this context it referred only to the resolutions pending before Congress, and was too frequent to be scanned easily.

Any deliberation noun that appeared at least twice for any one adjective was checked against a concordance of uses of that adjective in a narrow context, to verify that

the adjective indeed modified the deliberation noun at least twice. Any deliberation noun that met this test for one adjective was then searched for in the concordances of each of the other adjectives. Twelve deliberation nouns were found modified by at least two of the adjectives which also modify "argument/s:" "point, reasoning, issue, policy, question, statement, case, decision, debate, example, principle" and "testimony." I deemed that these deliberation nouns passed the adjective test.

The process was the same for the "verb test." First, deliberation nouns narrowly collocate with any form of each verb associated with "argument/s" were isolated, and then each deliberation noun checked against all the verbs. The verb "[argument] says" was excluded; with over 2,500 uses in the corpus, it was too frequent to be easily searchable. The twenty deliberation nouns that pass the verb test were: "decision, view, concern, debate, issue, justification, opinion, point, comments, position, question, reason/ing, remarks, speech, testimony, assertion, case, evidence, logic" and "notion."

One deliberation nouns—"issue"—passed all three tests. Eight other deliberation nouns—"case, concern, debate, decision, point, question, reason/ing, testimony"—passed at least two. I will therefore use them (henceforth, "'argument/s' comparables") as the basis for comparison with the word "argument/s." To make this possible, I used the concordancer to collect some of the same data for each comparable as I had for "argument/s," finding the frequency of the comparables in the corpus and the frequencies with which the identifiers "that, for, against, about" and "of" were used with the comparables. Finally, I coded uses of each comparable for the attitude (PRO/CON/0) the speaker was taking towards it. To limit the effort this involved and to focus on uses of the comparables that refer to the deliberative process, I examined only comparable terms narrowly collocate with the identifiers "that, for" and "against," since these were the most likely to identify uses with enough content for me to judge the speaker's attitude towards them.

3. DISCUSSION

3.1 *The meaning of "argument": distinguishing argument-1 from argument-2*

In a key essay over a quarter century ago, Dan O'Keefe (1982) distinguished two meanings of the word "argument": the sort of arguments which seem akin to fights (argument-2s) and the sort of arguments that seem akin to reasons (argument-1s). He proceeded by carefully deploying his native speaker's intuitions about the ordinary usage of the word, and the clearest cases of its referents, imagining himself, for example, explaining its meaning to a non-native speaker. In this section, I want to ask: How does the argument-1 v. argument-2 distinction hold up in the Congressional corpus? Can these native speaker intuitions be verified or extended through "dumber," but more empirical, methods?

O'Keefe sketches three syntactical tests for distinguishing between argument-1 and argument-2: the "have/make" test, the "about" test, and the "with" test. Each, if applied cautiously, successfully identifies argument-2s, and only argument-2s.

Regarding the first test, O'Keefe says: "one sense of the term ["argument"] is that found in sentences such as 'he made an argument.' . . . A second sense of "argument" is found in sentences such as 'we had an argument'" (1982, 3). There are indeed many

examples in the corpus of the verb "make" with the noun "argument," and one use with the verb "have," all used as O'Keefe suggests. For example:

(3.1.1a) The ARGUMENT *has been made* that somehow the Congress is going to blink in this situation. (Wirth)
(b) In light of this, Mr. President, it seems almost impossible to believe we are *having* a serious ARGUMENT in this country today about whether, under the Constitution, the President alone can take the Nation to war. (Biden)

The "have/make" test thus seems to work.

O'Keefe's second test focuses on the verb "argue," noting "the difference between 'arguing about' and 'arguing that'" (1982, 4). Again, there are very many examples of the verb with "that" in the corpus, and a few with "about." For example:

(3.1.2a) You ARGUE *that* if we do go to war now, we will win a quick and swift victory. (Mink)
(b) We do not want to ARGUE *about* process. (Adams)
(c) If we do, for a long time, people will ARGUE in America *about* whether this vote made it possible. (Kerry)

Applied to verbs, the "about/that" test appears to work well. But the corpus also makes clear that the test does not work when applied to nouns. "Arguments that" do seem to all be argument-1s. And in example (1b), an "argument about" was indeed an argument-2. But consider the following:

(3.1.3a) People say, This is a hopelessly emotional ARGUMENT you are making here *about* people dying. (Downey)
(b) I do not rely on procedural issues by congressional authority or ARGUMENTS *about* giving a blank check to the President. (Levin)

Both of these uses of "argument" refer to argument-1s: the first passes the "make" test, and in the second, the arguments referred to are something that the speaker is "rely[ing]" on—i.e., roughly as reasons supporting a conclusion. This suggests that the "about/that" test should be limited to the verb "argue-."

Finally, O'Keefe notes that it takes two to have an argument-2, and thus that the verb form will ordinarily have a plural subject, or if a singular subject, "a 'with' clause is typically appended or inserted" (1982, 5). Although argument-2s may ordinarily have a plural subject, not all plural uses of the verb "argue-" refer to argument-2s; for example:

(3.1.4) Many *Members* expressed complacence about this threat, ARGUING this danger lies in the distant future and should not be part of our current calculus. (Hatch)

Making an argument is also something that can be done together. By contrast, in this corpus "with" does identify argument-2s, and there is another related marker: "between."

(3.1.5a) I see that my colleagues here do not want to ARGUE *with* other Senators. (Mikulski)
(b) ..the Iraqi people *with* whom we have no ARGUMENT. (Walsh)
(c) It meant that the world would increasingly see this as an ARGUMENT *between* the United States and Iraq, and not as one between the entire world and Iraq, (Beilenson)
(d) Some will portray this as an ARGUMENT or a debate *between* using force now and never using force. (Bingaman)

Like "with," "between" identifies argument-2s by the multiple people involved (or positions, as in (d)). Neither "with" nor "between" is found with any mention of argument-1s, and so the "with [between]" test appears to work.

In addition to these three tests, O'Keefe proposes that argument-2s are paradigmatically interactions characterized by "extended overt disagreement" (1982, 9). This conception also helps distinguish the different meanings of "argu-" in the corpus. For one thing, several passages seem intuitively to refer to argument-2s largely because they present argument as something *extended* through time. For example:

(3.1.6a) Two of my Jewish colleagues *get into* loud ARGUMENTS with the Palestinians. (Richardson)
(b) The only ARGUMENT that is *going on* today is whether to continue our attempts to dislodge him by embargos and diplomacy or use military force. (Kennelly)
(c) it has always been easier to *settle* an ARGUMENT with a gun. (Sanford)
(d) And yes, there are serious questions, but they need not be ARGUED and *resolved* now. (Rohrbacher)

These all seem to be argument-2s: things which start ("get into," (a)), proceed ("going on," (b)) and end ("settle, resolve" (c), (d)). Other mentions of argument-2s seem identifiable by their focus on *disagreement*. Thus the singular noun "argument," in a context that emphasizes that the content of the argument is a disagreement, refers to an argument-2:

(3.1.7a) There are merits *on both sides* in this ARGUMENT. (Lehman, CA)
(b) Mr. President, for two centuries Americans have debated *the relative powers of the President and Congress*. Often is has been an abstract ARGUMENT.

In the first of these examples, the singular "argument" has two sides; in the second, the argument is about "*relative powers*"—again, a topic with two sides (cf. (5d) as well). Similarly, an argument-2 is present when singular noun is accompanied by the preposition "over," as in these examples:

(3.1.8a) The heart of this ARGUMENT really is not a denial that military force may be necessary; we all concede that. The ARGUMENT is *over when*—now or later—should that authority be given? (Hyde)
As the Constitution was being framed, the ARGUMENT was *over whether* the country required a standing army and whether it might be a threat to democracy. (Grandison)

This preposition seems to stress that the argument-2 occurs "over" a terrain of multiple competing positions, not, as with argument-1 "for" or "against" a single point. And finally, in many passages the word "argu-" appears to refer to an argument-2 when it is being used interchangeably with the word "debate." Thus we find "an argument or a debate" in (5d) above, or "debate" in one sentence being used in alternation with "argument" in the next in (7b). Or consider the following extended extract, in which the singular "argument," in addition to being temporally extended ("get into") and involving disagreement ("difference"), apparently stands for a particularly unsavoury kind of debate:

(3.1.9) Mr. President, there are those now watching this *debate* on TV who are not friendly to the United States or to its interests. There are Americans who are mesmerized by this discussion, who are also watching these great processes unfold. . . . I want those who are watching this *debate* who are not friendly

to us to understand that: where there is *difference*, there is not division. Then there are those saying: Where is the *debate*? When are they going to *get into* the ARGUMENT? When are we going to see "Geraldo goes to the United States Senate?" Mr. President, that is not the way this body is conducting itself. I am proud to have been part of this discussion that I have heard. I see that my colleagues here do not want to ARGUE with other Senators. The Senators getting up here today are giving their thoughts, their views, and their conclusions, arrived at in very responsible ways. We are not here to be glib, to be facile, to engage in a kind of *debate* that we would do on some other issues. (Mikulski)

In sum, the evidence of the corpus largely bears out O'Keefe's basic conception of argument-2s as overt, extended disagreements, and his "have/make," "argue about/that" and "with [between]" tests. There is, however, some additional evidence that throws other aspects of his distinction into doubt. According to O'Keefe, care must be taken to distinguish *argument-1s* from their *makings*. An *argument-1* is paradigmatically a complex of claim and reasons, "describable apart from the particulars of their occurrence" (1982, 18). By contrast, the *making* of an argument-1 is an utterance with all sorts of particular features—for example, an utterance in which one or more parts of the argument-1 being conveyed are left implicit or "missing." But O'Keefe draws no such distinction between an *argument-2* and the *having* of an argument-2; in his view, an argument-2 is paradigmatically a fully realized interaction, not the abstracted "content" of an interaction. Thus he claims that "one can overhear a conversation being conducted in a foreign tongue and have no difficulty concluding that the interactants are having an argument-2" (1982, 10).

But even O'Keefe's own evidence suggests that when an argument-2 is "had," it does possess an abstractable content: that is what the participants are arguing *about* or, I would add, *over.* In fact, in the Congressional corpus the word "argu-" in the argument-2 sense is frequently used as part of an effort to define the content of the debate. For example:

(3.1.10a) The only ARGUMENT that is going on today is whether to continue our attempts to dislodge him by embargos and diplomacy or use military force. (Kennelly)
(b) But that is not really, now, what the ARGUMENT is about I am afraid. (Sanford)
(c) Mr. President, let it never be said that the debate and the ARGUMENT here today is one of not supporting our troops in the field. (Kanjorski)
(d) We are not ARGUING whether Iraq will attain nuclear weapons. We are arguing as to when. (McCain)
(e) The President has heard it mentioned already by some of the speakers: Support our boys and girls over there. That is not the ARGUMENT. The ARGUMENT is whether or not their lives should be put at risk, in the first place.

Each of these speakers is attempting to specify what the argument-2 *is* about (a), what it is *not* about (b, c) or both (d, e). Some speak of seeking to articulate the "heart" of the argument-2 (8a), others in terms of "framing," "defining," or "focusing":

(3.1.11a) I cannot think of a better way to *frame* this ARGUMENT than one that was made to me in the chow line at the base we were visiting. (Grandy)
(b) Since August 2, we have struggled to *define the question* we should debate. Some ARGUE congressional versus Presidential constitutional responsibilities are at stake. Others have *focused* on whether clear enough goals have been defined by the President to compel us into war. And still others have said that while we share the goals, the means to achieve them are the *crucial matter*. (McConnell)

Often, the "heart" of the argument-2 is explicated in a WH-clause with "whether" (as in (1b), (2c), (6b), (8b), (10d)) or "when" (8a, 10d)—i.e., as the speaker in (11b) says, a *question.* (Indeed, in the Congressional corpus, this can function as an additional test for argument-2s: any verb form of "argue-," and any singular noun "argument," is an argument-2 when it takes a "whether" or "when" complement clause.[1]) To adopt O'Keefe's terminology, even as the argument-1s that we make have as their abstractable content linguistically explicable claim/reason complexes, it appears in these passages that the argument-2s that we have have as their abstractable content—at least ideally— linguistically explicable *questions.*[2]

Several odd uses of "argu-" in the corpus may point in a similar direction. Consider the following:

(3.1.12a) No one would ARGUE that perhaps the sanctions have cut the GNP, the gross national product, of Iraq, that the sanctions have lengthened bread lines, that the sanctions have driven up the cost of bread, (Bond)
(b) No one ARGUES that we must reverse Saddam Hussein's aggression. (Kennedy)

Applying the "that/about" test, both of these uses of "argu-" would seem to refer to argument-1s. On closer examination, however, they are in fact *inverted* from the ordinary usage. Ordinarily, to say that "no one argues that p" means that no one claims, p. In these two passages, however, it is clear that "no one argues that p" means that *everyone* claims, p: everyone agrees that sanctions have some effect, and everyone agrees that Iraq must pull out of Kuwait. In other words, (12b) actually means the same thing as

(3.1.13) I have not heard a single Senator arguing that we should ignore Iraq's aggression. (Kerry)

"Argument" in the examples in (12) appears to be interchangeable with "denial" (see example (8a) above) or "rebuttal," as in the following:

(3.1.14) Those of us that support that I think have the burden of proof to ARGUE, *to rebut* the proposition that the sanctions are not working, and that diplomacy will not work. (Moody)

In the examples in (12), "to argue" means to dispute, to render a disagreement open and overt, to make an issue of something—in short, to start an argument-2. "No one argues/would argue(-1) that" here is thus equivalent to "there is no argument(-2)" about it, as in the following:

(3.1.14) Certainly the Solarz approach, as everyone has said, will potentially get Iraq out of Kuwait. *There is no* ARGUMENT. (Hochbrueckner)

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[1] In fact, the presence of any wh-complement clause with "argue-" or "argument" appears to indicate an argument-2, with the exception that in some cases "why" seems to be short for "the reason why"—not a question, but an explanation.
[2] It is not necessary, as O'Keefe implies, for an observer to know *what* the content is in order to judge *that* an argument-1 or argument-2 exists. As he says, we can observe an interaction and hypothesize that an argument-2 is being had without knowing at all what it is about; but we can also hear or read a discourse and hypothesize that an argument-1 is being made, without knowing at all what it is. Our sense of "abstractable content" in both cases is manifest in that we ignorant observers know that we're missing out somehow—that the argument-1 or -2 is about *something.*

How should these odd uses be handled? I doubt if a new "argument-3" should be hypothesized just on the basis of this small body of evidence. Instead, they may be seen as "half-way" between argument-1 and argument-2: they refer to the insertion of specific claim-reason complexes into an interaction ("argue *that*"), but also to the way that doing so will raise a question. This usage reinforces the idea that the various meanings of "argument" have more in common than a strong distinction between argument-1 and argument-2 might suggest. In all its meanings, the word "argu-" is related to using speech to manage disagreement. Speakers can use the word to refer to the claims staked on the disagreement (argument-1), and the speech that makes those claims manifest (making an argument-1). Or speakers can use the word to refer to the question at the heart of the disagreement (argument-2), the speech that makes that question manifest (these odd uses), and the speech necessary to manage the relationship of those who disagree (having an argument-2).

In this section, the evidence from the Congressional corpus has largely confirmed the contours of O'Keefe's original distinction, while also suggesting the centrality of disagreement to the conception of either argument-1 or argument-2. In particular, the evidence has revealed several other tests which help distinguish instances of argument-1 from argument-2. The full list of tests now includes:

the "have" test: "have an argument" (v. "make [an] argument/s")
the "about" test: "argue- about" or "an argument about" (v. "argue- that")
the "whether/when" test: "argue-/argument/s whether/when"
the "over" test: "argue-/argument/s over" (v. "argue-/argument/s for/against")
the "extended disagreement needing definition" judgment, a/k/a "other"; in context, the use of "argu-" stresses duration in time, disagreement or debate, and/or an attempt to define an issue.

Table 1 summarizes the results of these five objective ("dumb") tests when applied to this corpus (note that passages could qualify under more than one test). Only a third of the argument-2 identifications required the "extended disagreement needing definition" judgment. Argument-1 definitely predominates, with less than 10% of the explicit uses of "argu-" in the corpus overall referring to argument-2s. As stated in Section 2.3 above, unless otherwise noted these uses will be excluded in the remainder of this study.

Table 3.1.1
Results of tests for argument-2 on mentions of "argu-"

Form	"have" test	"about" test	"with/ between" test	"whether/ when" test	"over" test	"extended disagreement needing definition"	Total argument-2	% of corpus
"argument/s"	1	1	6	7	3	9	25	12%
"argue-"	0	4	1	3	0	5	12	7%
total	1	5	7	10	3	14	37	10%

3.2 *Usage patterns of "argument/s"*

I presume that the words used with any given word tell us something of the speakers' conception of it; for example, a corpus of spoken English would undoubtedly show that cars are things which one can "drive," but not "eat." To capture participants' understandings of argument, I therefore isolated the adjectives and verbs that speakers used with the word "argument/s."

The concordance searches described in section 2.4 picked out ten adjectives (Table 2.4.1), eleven verbs (Table 2.4.2) and four one-word identifiers ("that, for, against, about") as associated with "argument/s" at a minimum level of frequency. What do these words tell us about the participants' conception of argument?

Among the adjectives, "good" and "excellent" are words indicating that arguments are things which can be evaluated, without specifying further the basis for evaluation. The remaining adjectives suggest that participants are using three distinct bases. "Compelling" and "powerful" characterize arguments by the motivating *force* they exert on audiences. "Central" and "serious" characterize arguments by the weight or *importance* they have relative to deliberative process as a whole. "Valid, [well] reasoned" and "credible" characterize arguments by their internal, logical *soundness*. The adjective "specific" seems hard to interpret, although it may be that a specific argument is deemed more important in deliberation than a general one. Both uses of "specific argument/s" were made by one speaker, however, so the use of this adjective with "argument/s" may simply be an idiosyncrasy.

The verbs found with argument can be clustered in a similar manner. Most of the verbs pick out ways arguments enter into the discursive practices of deliberation. Arguments are things *produced* ("make, offer, raise"), things *received* ("hear, listen to, understand") and things *responded to* ("address") during deliberations. Two verbs, however—"reject" and "accept"—indicate that arguments are things which are evaluated or *judged* on their epistemic merits.

Considering the identifiers of argument, one—"that"—begins a clause that specifies the *proposition* argued. "About" and "of" are prepositions governing phrases that indicate the argument's *topic*. The remaining two—"for, against"—appear not merely to identify the topic but to suggest that the argument functions to increase the logical *support* the topic possesses, or to decrease it.

Considering the usage of the argument comparables can help us sharpen these observations. As developed in section 2.5, there are nine words in the corpus that have patterns of usage similar to "argument/": "case, reason/ing, concern, decision, question, issue, point, testimony and debate." Tables 1, 2 and 3 display the frequency of use of each of these comparable word with each of the clusters of adjectives, verbs and identifiers discussed above. In each table, words sharing an important characteristic are emphasized with boxes.

Table 3.2.1
"Argument/s" and comparables: By adjective cluster and frequency

Word	Adjective cluster			
	force	*importance*	*soundness*	*other*
argument	compelling powerful	central serious	valid (well) reasoned credible	excellent good specific
reason/ing	compelling		valid [reasoned]*	good specific
case	compelling			
testimony	powerful			excellent
point			valid	excellent good
issue		central serious	valid	
question		central serious		
decision		serious		
debate		serious		

*"reason/ing" was counted as "reasoned"
Greater than seven uses/Two to seven uses/One use—not represented

Table 3.2.2
"Argument/s" and comparables: By verb cluster and frequency

Word	Verb cluster			
	produce	*receive*	*respond*	*judge*
argument	make offer raise	hear listen to understand	address	reject accept
point	make raise	understand	address	
issue	raise	understand	address	
concern	raise	listen to	address	
decision	make	understand		reject
question	raise		address	
case	make			
debate		hear listen to		
testimony		hear listen to		
reason/ing		listen to		accept

Greater than six uses/Two to five uses/One use—not represented

Table 3.2.3
"Argument/s" and comparables: By identifier cluster and frequency

	Identifier cluster		
Word	*propositional*	*support*	*topics*
argument	that	for against	about
case	that	for against	
reason/ing	that	for	about of
concern	that	for	about
decision	that	for	about of
question	that		about of
issue	that		about of
point	that		about of
testimony	that		about
debate			about of

Ten or more uses/Two to nine uses/One use—not represented

       Examining this data, it appears that the comparables "question" and "reason" have the most divergent patterns of usage. The word "question" appears with frequency only with adjectives suggesting *importance* to the deliberative process, only with verbs suggesting how it is *produced* or *responded to* within the deliberative process, and never with identifiers suggesting that it lends logical *support* to a conclusion. The word "reason," by contrast, appears with adjectives suggesting logical *soundness*, with verbs suggesting that this soundness is being *judged*, and with identifiers suggesting that what it refers to is deemed to *support* (or undermine) a conclusion.

       This suggests that there is something like a spectrum of meanings underlying this data, running from *interactional* to *logical*. Questions are primarily *interactional* (important, produced, responded to); reasons are primarily *logical* (sound, judged, supporting). But both "question" and "reason" are comparable to "argument/s." Participants, then, seem to be conceiving arguments as *both*: arguments are items which are interactionally significant and also logically assessable.

3.3 *Frequency of "argument/s"*

As seen in Table 2.2.1, some word derived from the root "-argu-" occurs about once every 4,000 words, and is used by about one out of every three speakers. How frequent is this? Consider the comparison in Table 1 of the singular "argument" with the singulars of the "argument comparables."

Table 3.3.1
Frequencies of "argument" and comparables in the singular

Word	Total uses in corpus	Rank in corpus
debate	1195	95
question	820	144
decision	731	154
issue	670	165
point	577	190
reason	271	356
concern	144	610
argument	124	685
testimony	95	856

"Argument" is here the second least frequent word, appearing only about one tenth of the times as the most frequent—"debate." It should be noted, however, that several of the comparable nouns ("debate, question, issue, point, reason, concern") can also function as verbs, likely distorting these results. But when the frequencies of both noun and verb forms of "argument" and the comparables are tabulated (Table 2), the result is the same: argument is the third least frequent, with less than one third the frequency of the most frequent word—again, "debate."

Table 3.3.2
Frequencies of "argument" and comparables in all forms

Word	Total uses in corpus	Rank in corpus
[debate]	1358	
debate	1195	95
debates	27	2160
debated	41	1634
debating	95	853
[decision]	1163	
decision	731	154
decisions	128	669
decide	174	520
decides	25	2272
decided	70	1083
deciding	35	1816
[question]	1035	
question	820	144
questions	197	453

questioned	12	3674
questioning	6	5442
[issue]	872	
issue	670	165
issues	187	485
issued	14	3313
issuing	1	13531
[point]	697	
point	577	190
points	73	1052
pointed	42	1614
pointing	5	5411
[reason]	464	
reason	271	356
reasons	170	534
reasoned	14	3345
reasoning	9	4349
[argument]	381	
argument	124	685
arguments	86	913
argue	76	1024
argued	69	1093
arguing	17	2904
argues	9	4168
[concern]	390	
concern	144	610
concerns	80	978
concerned	135	641
concerning	31	1972
[testimony]	179	
testimony	95	856
testimonies	1	15869
testify	10	4131
testifies	0	-
testified	68	1112
testifying	5	6149
Total words in corpus	ca. 810,000	ca 16,500 distinct words

Even this comparison runs into difficulties, however, since several of the comparables have frequent uses other than as a "deliberation noun." For example, "point" frequently occurs in expressions like "at/to this point [in time]," which refer to the world, not the deliberative process. As a final method for establishing a legitimate comparison, consider the frequencies in Table 3 of "argument/s" and comparables when accompanied by the identifiers "that, for, against, about" and "of." These uses of the words likely pick out something with a propositional or topical content; an "argument for" something, a "decision about" something, or a "concern that" something. By this measure, "argument/s" is a moderately frequent term. Although it appears with identifiers significantly less than the most frequent words ("question/s, issues/s "), it is in about the same range as " concern/s," and "reason/s."

Table 3.3.3
Frequency of "Argument/s" and comparables with identifiers

Word	Frequency
question/s	189
issue/s	95
debate/s	83
argument/s	63
concern/s	61
reason/ing/s	57
decision/s	42
point/s	40
case/s	33
testimony/s	6

We can conclude that there is no evidence that any word derived from the root "argu-" is particularly salient for participants in this Congressional debate. At best, it appears to be about as frequent as some of comparable words, including one that appears intuitively to be its closest synonyms ("reason/s "). This raises the interesting question of why we should be pursuing *argumentation* theory at all, instead of a theory of *reasons,* say, or perhaps a "*point-ation"* theory.

3.4 *Participants' attitude towards arguments*

I examined each use of the word "argu-" in the concordance list (with argument-2s excluded) to see whether the speaker was endorsing the argument he/she was referring to, rejecting it, or taking a neutral, ambiguous or indeterminable attitude towards it. Table 1 summarizes the results of this study.

Table 3.4.1
Participants' attitudes towards all explicitly identified arguments

Form	PRO	CON	NEUTRAL	Total	% CON
"argument/s"	30	134	18	182	74%
"argue-"	42	115	1	158	73%
Total	72	249	19	340	73%

The relatively high proportion of NEUTRAL references for the noun "argument/s" is due to the use of the word in phrases like "I have tried to listen to all the ARGUMENTS" (Kohl), or the arguments "on both sides" and so on. (Note that if the speaker assessed "the arguments on both sides" as good, the reference was coded as PRO.)

Of course, what is really striking about this data is the uniformly high proportion of CON attitudes. It appears that to label something "an argument" is to reject it. Indeed, constructions along the lines of "X has argued, but in fact" are frequent in the Congressional corpus. For example:

(3.4.1a) The administration justifies its loss of patience by ARGUING that a sustained sanctions policy is infeasible because the coalition cannot hold. But this assertion does not stand the test of scrutiny. (Biden)
(b) Some have ARGUED that if we do not declare war now, that our fragile alliance will break down. If it is so weak that it would disintegrate during peacetime, surely it could never endure the strains of war. (Long)
(c) They will ARGUE that the United States cannot afford to maintain the 100,000 or 200,000 troops in Saudi Arabia to preserve the option of force. Mr. President, I do not accept these ARGUMENTS. (Leahy)

In a related pattern, an argument is first stated and then referred back to by the noun "argument/s" as part of rejecting it, as in (1c). At times, a concession buffers the argument from the refutation:

(3.4.2a) Some have ARGUED that sanctions will do the job. It is still possible that they may damage Iraq's economy. However, Iraq was able to suffer through 8 years of war with Iran and endure the chronic shortages and sacrifices that the effort entailed. We are fooling ourselves if we believe that 6 months or a year of sanctions alone would compel Saddam to give up his newly won prize. (Dreier)
(b) The sanctions approach, as I understand it, pleads for time, and I am sympathetic with that ARGUMENT. I would like to see them work. I come from a world where even a moderate economic squeeze can be brutal on the lives of people. But…

Even with a concession, however, the usage of "argu-" is the same: if a speaker names an argument, it is likely he/she is about to reject it.

It could be, however, that *anything* entered into the deliberative process becomes most noticeable, and thus most likely to be named, when it is thought to be wrong. Therefore consider the relatively frequencies of negative attitudes for both "argument/s" and the comparable words, when appearing within five words of the identifiers "that, for" and "against" (Table 2).

Table 3.4.2
Participants' attitudes towards "argument/s" and comparables narrowly collocate with "that, for, against"

Word	PRO	CON	NEUTRAL	Total	con percent
question/s	0	36	1	37	97%
argument/s	7	45	0	52	87%
case/s	9	22	1	32	69%
decision/s	5	6	0	11	55%
reason/s	25	21	0	46	46%
concern/s	18	4	2	24	17%
point/s	33	4	1	38	11%

       Here, only "question/s" appears to be used more negatively than "argument/s." Almost every use of "question/s" was in phrases equivalent to "there is no question that;" a glance over a full concordance of the word suggests that the word is often used negatively, although perhaps not *this* often. Likewise, "case" often used in declaring that the administration had not made a case—a negative attitude. "Argument/s" here to be even more negative in this set of uses because few of the NEUTRAL or PRO references to both sides of the argument are accompanied by the identifiers "that/for/against," thus excluding them from this Table. By contrast, references to "decision/s" and "reason/s" are used roughly equally with PRO and CON attitudes; they appear to be relatively neutral words, able to take on whatever coloration the passage requires. And "concern/s" and "point/s" are used largely positively; to speak of something as either signals an endorsement of it.

       Thus the negativity of the participants' attitudes towards the "argument/s" they explicitly pick out seems unusual in comparison with these other "deliberation nouns." This negativity is not part of the meaning of the word "argu-" itself; speakers are able to refer to their own arguments using "argu-." But that usage is relatively rare. What then are the words speakers use to talk about what they themselves are doing? As a first try at finding out, I used the concordancer to identify all the words that appeared within five words to the right of "second, third, fourth" and "fifth" at least twice ("first" was excluded as too frequent), and scanned the list for "deliberation nouns." Although only a minority of speakers uses these terms to mark sections of their speeches, those that do give us a valuable clue about how they categorize their own speaking, by telling us, for example, that this is the fifth *what*. The results are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3.4.3
Participants' attitudes towards "argument/s" and comparables narrowly right collocate with "second, third, fourth" and "fifth"

Word	*second…*	*third…*	*fourth…*	*fifth…*
argument/s	3	2	0	0
assertion/s	0	0	1	0
assumption/s	0	1	0	0
case/s	0	1	0	0
concern/s	1	2	1	0
conclusion	1	0	0	0
consideration/s	1	0	0	0
decision/s	0	0	0	0
factor/s	1	1	1	1
issue/s	0	2	0	0
point/s	3	4	1	1
question/s	16	3	0	0
rationale/s	2	1	2	0
reason/s	7	5	2	2
thing/s	7	1	1	0

The instances of "factor/s" all come from the same speaker, and so may be an idiosyncrasy. Assuming that the speakers are largely referring to aspects of their own discourse by enumerating "first, second, third…," it would appear that they conceive of what they are doing as primarily consisting of "reasons," "points" and "things."

In summary, "argu-" is used with a predominantly negative attitude in this corpus. To sum this up, one might say that for the participants, "We make points, they make arguments."

3.5 *Identity conditions for argument*

It would be nice if the participants in the Congressional debate occasionally talked like analytic philosophers, saying things such as "that's not an argument, it's a…" fallacy, perhaps, or narrative. That way we could use a "dumb" corpus study of the uses of the word "argu-" to fill out our smart, native-speaker intuitions about what an argument is and is not. As we've seen above, there are several words that speakers link with "argu-," using the words as if they were nearly interchangeable (e.g., "question, reason, debate, point"). And there are many contrastive constructions including the word "argu-" (e.g., for argument-2s, "the argument is not about… it's about…"). But unfortunately there are no instances in the corpus of a speaker doing both: drawing a contrast between "argu-" and another word. The evidence from this corpus is therefore not going to help us advance on a topic dear to the hearts of argumentation theorists, viz. distinguishing arguments from non-arguments.

WHAT, IN PRACTICE, IS AN ARGUMENT?

The corpus will help us, however, on a less noticed problem: that of distinguishing *this* argument from *that* one. Under what conditions can we say that two speakers have made *the same* argument, as opposed to different ones? How do we know when one speaker has completed *one* argument, and turned to *another*? What allows participants to pick out *what* argument is being made, as opposed to *what other* ones? What, in short, gives an argument an *integrity* and an *identity*? (I will be treating these questions as presenting roughly the same challenge to argumentation theorists.)

Clearly, for two speakers to make the same argument it is not required that they use the exact same words; as Ralph Johnson (2006) points out, shifts from active to passive voice in expressing an argument do not change its identity. So how much change is allowed before *the* argument becomes *another*? Is it, as Wreen (1999) proposes, the inference that defines the argument? Are slight variations of propositional content allowed, as Johnson suggests? Or is Freeman (1996) right, that one argument may incorporate any set of reasons, as long as they support one conclusion?

In the following discussion, I explore how the evidence of the Congressional corpus allows us to advance on the question of argument identity and integrity. In section 3.6, I will focus on how speakers *differentiate* (or "individuate") arguments; in this section, I will focus on the closely related question of participants' sense of what it means for an argument to stay *one and the same*. First, I'll note the way in which participants treat diverse makings of argument as somehow expressing the same argument; this establishes that participants have a robust sense of argument identity. Then I will go on to examine what speakers identify as *the* argument they are referring to with the word "argu-." In themselves expressing the content of the argument to which they are referring, the speakers presumably make available enough information for their auditors to identify *what* the argument is. Examining the content assigned to uses of the word "argu-" thus gives us a window onto the "whatness" of argument in participants' conceptions.

So on to the first point (or argument). There are several signs that participants in the Congressional debate perceive themselves as inhabiting a finite "space" of identifiable and repeatable arguments. Slightly over half of the uses of the verb form "argue-," for example, assign the action to an unspecified group, all of whom are presumably arguing the same thing:

(3.5.1a) *Some* have ARGUED that our role as the leader of a military coalition aligned against an Arab country threatens to damage our relations in the Middle East. (Coats)
(b) *Many* have ARGUED, most notably in testimony before Chairman Nunn's committee, that sanctions are taking a severe toll on the Iraqis. (Bryan)
(c) *Others* have ARGUED that no one and nothing in Kuwait are worth the life of even one American soldier. (Hatch)
(d) *Those* who ARGUE that we must go to war now, because if we delay we might lose our fragile coalition cannot seriously believe that this coalition will stick with us after the onset of war. (Mink)

Variations on "some have argued" are particularly frequent, appearing 30 times in the concordance of verb forms of "argue-" (19%). There are also instances where no proponents of the argument are identified at all—where the argument is spoken of in the passive voice, as if it were just "out there." For example:

(3.5.2) *It has* also *been* ARGUED that Iraq will only grow stronger over time. (Long)

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Now, it could be that these expressions using the verb form "argue-" refer not to repeated makings of a single, identifiable argument, but to the general activity of making diverse arguments for a single claim. The "argue- *that*" construction, however, suggests that "some/many/other/those" unnamed speakers are in fact seen as presenting specifiable arguments. Further, similar constructions turn up with the noun "argument/s":

(3.5.3a) *Some* have said that we must rally around our President at this time of crisis, and that is a powerful ARGUMENT. (Glenn)
(b) Now, I cannot be sure and nobody can be sure that those sanctions will oust him from Kuwait or oust him from power, as *many* of our colleagues have asked and which seems to drive their ARGUMENT. (Sharp)
(c) I believe it is *those* who make that ARGUMENT who do a disservice to country and to Constitution, and perhaps even to the troops. (Kerry)
(d) The quite glib political ARGUMENT *is made* that "the Democratically controlled Congress should have had this debate before now." (Wirth)

In these examples, "the argument" (singular) is represented as one that has been made by a group of "some, many," or "those," or in the case of the passive form (3d), no one in particular.

These passages are representative instances of participants in the Congressional debate speaking *as if* many people were making one and the same argument. In other cases, participants speak of this fact directly, generally to express exasperation that bad arguments have been repeatedly made, or good arguments repeatedly ignored:

(3.5.4a) Mr. President, let us be done with this disingenuous ARGUMENT we *constantly have been hearing* this week to the effect that the best way to preserve the peace is to give the President authority to go to war next week. (Hollings)
(b) In listening to this debate, I have heard another disturbing ARGUMENT *reiterated again and again*: Give the sanctions more time. (Hatch)
(c) The ARGUMENT has been made *over and over again* that we have to restore the legitimate Government of Kuwait. (Wirth)
(d) The ARGUMENTS have been laid out *time and time again.* (Kennelly)

In these passages, "this" (4a) or "the" (4c, d) same argument/s are referred to as an item which can been "reiterated" (4b) "constantly" (4a) and "again" (4b, c, d). Another speaker even promises not to become one of the "others" who have been piling up the same arguments:

(3.5.5) Mr. Speaker, others before me have argued for more time for the sanctions and for diplomacy. I will not repeat those ARGUMENTS again. (Kostmayer)

Speakers also recognize that the "same" arguments can not only appear repeatedly in the present debate, but can be repeated from previous debates over war and peace:

(3.5.6a) As Professor Schlesinger points out, *these same* ARGUMENTS were heard in this Chamber at various points in the cold war to urge a preventive war against the Soviet Union and China. (Biden)
(b) During the 1960's, some argued that we should not have troops in Southeast Asia. Others argued that we should do what was necessary to win the war. *The very same* ARGUMENTS are being made today about the Middle East. (McCandless)

Another participant (Fowler), in addition to quoting at length from the debate over a Vietnam-era resolution, read a long passage of the arguments Thucydides recounted for and against the ancient Athenian invasion of Sicily! So it appears that to participants in the Congressional Gulf War debate, the same argument could not only be repeated by different people now, it could be carried forward over long time spans without changing its identity.

What then is "the argument" that can thus maintain its identity? Let us turn then to the second point, and examine the content participants assign to the arguments that they explicitly label with the word "argu-." Consider the following series of passages:

(3.5.7a) Any ARGUMENT that *the coalition will not hold in peacetime* becomes an even more powerful ARGUMENT that the coalition would collapse in war. (Biden)

(b) I have heard Senators and others ARGUE that *coalition is weak or fragile and that we must move now before it falls apart.* (Kerry)

(c) Some ARGUE *we cannot keep the international coalition together long enough for the sanctions to work.* (Conrad)

(d) T*he multinational coalition arrayed against Iraq is disparate. It would be hard to hold together such a diverse group of nations pursuing many different objectives and interests. Nor can we discount the difficulties and costs of maintaining comprehensive sanctions for many months and perhaps even years. There is going to be increasing temptations to violate the sanctions. Leakages will occur. Sanctions are very burdensome to many nations now participating in the coalition against Iraq and many privately, and sometimes publicly, have expressed a concern about those burdens. Finally, we have to frankly recognize the many political, military, and financial costs of keeping a strong deterrent force in Saudi Arabia to buttress sanctions and also to make credible the threat of force if sanctions prove insufficient to achieve our aims.* Despite these serious ARGUMENTS, many of us in Congress continue to believe the President was on the right course prior to November 8, and that he has moved in the wrong direction since that time. (Leahy)

(e) So I would put to rest this ARGUMENT of *a coalition fragility* based on the facts. (Downey)

(f) I would ARGUE that *were we to continue the sanctions for a year, we might find ourselves in the very same position we are in today. But by then, cynical Iraqi offers of all manner of solutions -- other than total withdrawal -- the expense of keeping such a massive force in the dessert and time will have eroded international resolve. Time is on Saddam Hussein's side, and he knows it.* (Faschell)

In each of these passages, participants use the word "argu-" and identify the content of the argument (in italics) as being about the liability to breakdown of the coalition assembled against Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. In all, there are 21 passages with similar content; in other words, one out of every 14 explicitly mentioned arguments that are assigned a content at all are on this theme. In one instance, the speaker himself is making the argument (7f); in four cases, the argument is said to have been made by "the administration;" in the remaining 16, the maker is an anonymous group (e.g., "Senators and others," (7c)) or no one at all—this is an argument which, as above, is just "out there." What we have here, therefore, appears to be one and the same argument in the participants' view—an argument that can be identified by a phrase as short as "this argument of a coalition fragility" (7e).

What's worth noting in this group of passages is the extent to which the content can vary without apparently making the argument a different one. All 20 passages speak of the "coalition" (or, once each, "alliance," and "international resolve") being "fragile," liable to "crumble, fracture, break down, not hold together, come apart, erode" Nineteen go on to stress a time element—that the sanctions cannot be "sustained" for "months and

years," and/or that it's necessary to "go to war now" or "move now" (e.g., (7b)). This suggests a reconstruction of "the" argument something like the following:

(3.5.8) [Whether now or later, removing Iraq from Kuwait is likely to require force. But the coalition is on the verge of collapse. Therefore, we must go to war now.]

Seven passages, however, include a mention of the workability of the sanctions policy (sometimes including a time reference as well; e.g., (7(c)). This suggests a reconstruction of "the" argument something like this:

(3.5.9) [We must choose between continued sanctions and immediate war. The coalition behind sanctions, however, is on the verge of collapse. So the sanctions policy won't work. Therefore, we must go to war now.]

The longest passage goes on to state reasons for believing that the coalition is fragile: because it is made up of "disparate" nations with "different interests," because the temptations to violate the sanctions are great, because the blockade is expensive (7d).[3] And the one passage in which the speaker is actually *endorsing* the argument, as opposed to setting up a refutation of it (7f), adds yet a further detail: that Iraqi manipulation will play a part in the coalition's demise. These reasons, too, would require yet a different reconstruction than (8) or (9).

Nevertheless, participants apparently perceive this to be one argument—the same one, despite this variability. This suggests that participants have an "accordion-like" (or perhaps even "amoeba-like") conception of argument, in which an argument can contract down to a phrase ("coalition fragility", (7e)) or expand out to a long account (7(d)), without changing what it is. Is the "coalition fragility" argument typical? Consider another example:

(3.5.10a) Thus, the so-called *U.N.* ARGUMENT for Presidential power can be dismissed in this way. (Biden)
(b) Let us dismiss the ARGUMENTS that we cannot back down or that *the United Nation has authorized us to go to war.* (Murphy)
(c) First of all, the ARGUMENT is made that *if the Congress ratifies the U.N. resolution, it is simply putting the stamp of approval on an action taken by the United Nations, which had been promoted by the United States.* (Obey)
(d) Let me now briefly move to the specific ARGUMENTS that are being made, relating to the current crisis, or which the advocates of Presidential power also rely. Noting *the U.N. resolutions on the gulf crisis, and particularly U.N. Resolution 678,* advocates of Presidential power ARGUE that *U.S. ratification of the U.N. Charter binds us to adhere to these resolutions, and provides the President with an independent authority to act under U.N. auspices. In fact, Prof. Eugene Rostow ARGUED to the committee that the President's constitutional obligation to "take care that the Laws [of the United States] be faithfully executed" -- including treaties -- encompasses a constitutional duty of the President to implement the U.N. resolutions, and gives him the power to do so without congressional assent.* (Biden)
(e) The legal ARGUMENT is made as follows: *The U.N. Charter is a treaty of the United States. It is therefore law of the United States. Under the Constitution, it is the President's duty to take care that the laws be faithfully executed. By that treaty,* it is ARGUED, *the United States undertook to carry out decisions of the Security Council under chapter VII of the U.N. Charter. The charter contemplated that*

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[3] The speaker in (7d) refers to the long passage of reason-giving as "arguments" in the plural, and it is difficult to tell where he thinks one stops and the next starts. At least the first (several?), however, appears to relate to "coalition fragility," and to offer a reason not found in any of the other passages.

U.N. military action would be taken with forces provided by member states pursuant to article 43 agreements concluded in advance, but nothing in the charter prevents the Security Council from calling for, or authorizing, the use of force by states under other arrangements. This is what happened in Korea in 1950 and this is also true of Security Council resolutions adopted concerning Kuwait in 1990. Today, we again have the Security Council using chapter VII of the U.N. Charter as the basis for authorizing "all necessary means" to restore the legitimate government of Kuwait and to restore international peace and security to the entire gulf region. The most recent U.N. resolution numbered 678, adopted by the Security Council on November 29, states that on or after January 15, the cooperating members' states "can use all necessary means" to expel Iraq from Kuwait. It has been ARGUED by some that *this is a sufficient basis under international law for the President to take such military actions as he determines necessary, without congressional concurrence.* (Fish)

In each of these passages, the word "argument/s" refers to an argument with no specification of who made it or when; as discussed above, the argument appears to be just "out there." Are these all the same argument? Passage (10a) and (10d) are from the same speaker, and in context (10a)—part of the summary of a refutation—refers back to (10d)—the statement of the argument to be rejected with which the refutation opened. So these two expressions refer to the same argument. Note, furthermore, how in (10a) the argument is referred to as the "so-called U.N. argument;" since the speaker had not called it so himself, he is apparently acknowledging that it has been called so by others. Those others would seem to include the speakers in (10b) and (10c), who also want to reject an argument that the U.N. has already authorized the Gulf War. That is a fair summary not only of the long passage in (d), but of the argument reported at length in (10e).

All of these contents are thus apparently perceived of as "the same argument" by participants in the Congressional debates. This again suggests that participants hold what could be called an "accordion conception of argument," one that allows one and the same argument to expand and contract. Even the longest versions of the argument here vary substantially in what premises get expressed. For example, the note in passing in (d) that the President must faithfully execute laws "including treaties" is expanded in (e) to full propositions that "the U.N. Charter is a treaty of the United States. It is therefore law of the United States." I suspect that theorists would reconstruct these two expressions differently, incorporating the single statement of (d) into one premise-bubble, but diagramming the two in (e) as an inference. Similarly, (e) gives reasons (the U.N. charter, the example of Korea) why the unusual U.N. authorization of direct action by member states is legitimate, a topic (d) does not include. And obviously the briefer version in (b) leaves out all of these matters, specifying only that "the U.N. has authorized" action, an authorization towards which the shortest content specified—"U.N." (a)—also gestures.

Thus as one participant notes, an argument can be "developed" more or less, but still remain "the" argument:

(3.5.11) It is true he may be a Hitler's twin in his brutality and in his ambition. But this is not Europe of the 1930's. If we had time to develop the ARGUMENT, I think we could document that. (Sharp)

Examining the series of passages presented in examples (7) and (10), one is tempted to say that the speakers are all trying to articulate the same "line of argument." A line can be longer or shorter, but it remains the same line as long as incorporates some set points and extends in the same general direction. But the phrase "line of argument" appears nowhere in the corpus. Instead, participants call this "accordion"-like thing, "argument."

The participants' referential practices thus indicate that they conceive of *an* argument as a thing that can remain the same across diverse makings of it. This conception allows for substantially more variability than Wreen's one inference-one argument rule, and even Johnson's more flexible notion of "minor" change. What are the limits of variability? What changes in an expression are so great that they will cause participants to say that one argument is now another? I turn to explore that issue in the next section.

3.6 *Differentiating arguments*

When referring to a particular argument, speakers presumably want their auditors to "get" the reference. It is likely, therefore, that they attempt to pick that argument out by pointing to some salient feature of it. For example, in this passage:

(3.6.1) As I ARGUED at the outset of this debate, responsibility for this decision falls upon Congress. (Biden)

The speaker identifies *which* argument he wants to discuss, among all the possible arguments, as the one *he* made, *at the outset of this debate*. He goes on, however, to further identify *what* the argument was, by referring to an aspect of its content—i.e., that *responsibility for this decision falls upon Congress*. (For a definition of "content," refer back to section 2.3.) Nor is this unusual. Of the 312 uses of the word "argu-" (excluding argument-2s), only 23 (7%) contain no expression of content at all. This suggests that what the argument is is a more prominent feature of an argument than, say, its time or place or even person of making.

In this section, I want to go on to inquire about what features of that content speakers in the Congressional debate commonly used to identify their argument. This will not tell us what argument *is*, since it is not necessary to convey *all* an argument's features in order to successfully refer to it. But it should tell us what features a speaker typically expects her auditors to find most salient when figuring out what argument is being spoken of, from among all the possibilities. In other words, in this section I will be presuming that the contents speakers articulate for the arguments they expressly mention include the key features which differentiate arguments from each other. Whereas in the last section I looked at content "deeply," collecting a few contents that appeared to be the same, here I will look over content "broadly," examining all the contents expressed in the corpus to see their variations.

Argumentation theory proposes a variety of vocabularies for differentiating arguments. For example, some have proposed that arguments fall into regular patterns or "schemes" (e.g., Walton 1996). If an argument has a scheme, we would expect speakers to mention it in referring to the argument; to say something like "the *example* of Vietnam," perhaps, or "the *consequences,* casualties." Indeed, a concordance of "analogy/s" turns up 37 uses of the word, many of which refer to an analogy between the situation in the Gulf in 1990 and that in Europe in the 1930s. Only once, however, is this sort of terminology used to express the content of an explicitly identified argument:

(3.6.2) What I would like to do is simply to take some of the ARGUMENTS which we have heard being made by those who are suggesting that we ought to pass the resolution requested by the President this weekend. . . . Fifth, *the comparison with Hitler*. (Obey)

A corpus-based study of participants' vocabulary for argument schemes might be interesting and useful. But it appears to be beyond the scope of the inquiry here. Scheme-like language does not show up frequently in the expressed contents of the things participants call "arguments."

A more common, if generally implicit, view among argumentation theorists is that arguments differ from one another in (speaking loosely) the inference they express (thus Wreen 1999).. This makes sense: if an argument is essentially a complex of reasons for a claim (or premises which support a conclusion, etc.), then what makes it unique is just that particular relationship between its parts.[4] If this is the case, then we would expect speakers to frequently express that inference, in order to help their auditors pick out the specific argument they are referring to.

Let us explore this hypothesis by examining the corpus to discover the ways participants actually express the contents of arguments. For the 312 uses of "argu-" (in the sense of argument-1) the method outlined in section 2.3 identified 347 distinct contents. (Twenty five arguments had no associated content; some, by contrast, had several—for example, when the word "argument" previewed a list of three or five points.) These contents were expressed in a variety of grammatical forms, summarized in Table 1.

Table 3.6.1
Grammatical forms of argument contents

	PASSAGE	CLAUSE	COMPLEX	all noun phrases	all non-finite verb phrases	Total contents
argument/s	22	106	20	22	16	186
argue-	8	109	28	14	2	161
Total	30	215	48	36	18	347

As a reminder: any content expression consisting of more than two clauses was coded as a PASSAGE (e.g., examples (3.5.7d) and (3.5.10d, e)). Any content with one or two full clauses was coded as CLAUSE (e.g. most of the passages above, such as (3.5.7a)) or COMPLEX (a distinction to be examined further below); contents less than a clause were coded by their specific grammatical form (e.g., (3.5.7e), a NOUN PHRASE).

How many of these grammatical forms can express the support relationship between reasons and claim—what I will, for purposes of convenience, be calling an inference? I will assume that any PASSAGE can be reconstructed fairly readily as containing an inference, whether or not the inference is explicitly signalled. Consider this content assigned to one of three items explicitly identified as "arguments":

(3.6.3) It [the policy of sanctions] has produced results. Iraq has been isolated; hostages have been released; Saudi Arabia is safe; and oil continues to flow. Economic sanctions have begun to bite. They are seriously damaging the Iraqi economy. They will inflict further pain in all sectors. There is a reasonable expectation that this strategy will succeed.

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[4] This was brought to my attention forcibly when an informal-logician colleague corrected me sternly when I referred to a conclusion as "an argument."

The conclusion here appears to be "this strategy will succeed;" this is supported by the reason given that "it has produced results," which is itself supported by the reasons "Iraq has been isolated; hostages have been released" and so on.

PASSAGES account for less than 10% of total contents, however, so we have to ask whether the remaining 90% also have an inferential structure. Phrases and single words probably cannot; they do not even convey a complete proposition, much less a relationship between two or more propositions. A CLAUSE, on the other hand, might express an inference if it contained two ideas linked by what the textbooks call an "indicator device," such as "therefore." For example:

(3.6.4a) Iraq didn't quit when it suffered economic hardships during its war with Iran, and *therefore* it won't back off in the face of these sanctions.
(b) Saddam cannot be allowed to control 50 percent of the world's oil reserves *because* he might ratchet up the price and squeeze down the world's oil production.
(c) Delay will allow Iraq to strengthen its defensive positions in Kuwait, *thereby* adding to the eventual cost of forcing Iraq out of Kuwait.

CLAUSES containing an express inference, however, are rare in the corpus. I scanned all the contents looking for "indicator devices," and backed up my efforts by a search for the words "because, since" and "therefore"—three commonly noted devices. I found a total of ten CLAUSES containing explicitly signalled inferences.

There remains a further possibility: an inference expressed without an explicit logical indicator devices. As discussed in section 2.3, I coded as COMPLEX constructions in which the argument's content appeared in more than one grammatical structure in the discourse, since coding the structures separately would have distorted the argument being conveyed. For example:

(3.6.5a) I urge the Senate to reject the Orwellian ARGUMENT that *the only real hope for peace is for Congress to threaten war.* (Kennedy)
(b) Many Members will get on the floor and ARGUE in favor of *it* [the war resolution] and state that *it is really not [war], we are going on with the negotiations.* (Murphy)

In (5a), the content assigned to the argument is a full clause, not expressing an inference. In (b), there is a similar inference-less clause ("it is really not [war]"), but there is also a related statement of the content: that the argument is for "it." In other words, (b) expresses the fact that "it is really not [war]" supports "it"—(b) expresses an inference.[5]

Most if not all the passages coded as COMPLEX serve in some fashion to express inferences. One common pattern is similar to that in (5b).

(3.6.6a) Another ARGUMENT offered by interventionists *to engage in conflicts such as the Persian Gulf* is that *the United States is obliged to help others in need -- that we are such a prosperous nation and that we*

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[5] Of course, every content expression in the corpus could be reconstructed by the clever argumentation theorist to express the sort of premise/conclusion (reason/claim, etc.) relationship his theory would like to see. All he has to do is add whatever he thinks is missing, claiming it was "implicit." The point of the exercise undertaken here, however, is to avoid such reconstruction and to rely on the evidence of the corpus. In the clauses I've coded as COMPLEX, the speaker makes explicit both reason and claim, and uses grammatical means to relate them.

should spread our prosperity with others, even if that means fighting and dying to give them what we have, assuming they want what we have. (Dannemeyer)
(b) I understand the ARGUMENT of those who support *that resolution*, that they hope i*ts passage prevents war.* (Mitchell)

In each of these, the conclusion of the argument is expressed as the position of the people making the argument (to engage in war, to support that resolution), while the reason(s) is expressed as the content of their thinking or speaking (what they hope, what they argue). But there are other patterns as well; for example, the reasons can turn up in the noun phrase, and the conclusion in the

(3.6.7) The *nuclear* ARGUMENT as the reason that *we ought to go into war with Iraq.* (Harkin)

Although it would be interesting to examine further the grammatical means speakers employ for encoding inferences, that question is beyond the scope of this inquiry. For now, I will presume that every passage I coded as COMPLEX indeed expresses an inference.

To sum up: in the corpus we can find inferential content assigned to explicit mentions of argument in longer PASSAGES (30 instances), in COMPLEX expressions (48 instances) and in a handful of CLAUSES marked with "indicator devices" (10 instances), for a total of 88 distinct contents, or 25% of the total. This suggests that an argument's inference—the support relationship between its premises and conclusion—is indeed a salient feature speakers rely on to help differentiate the argument they are referring to from all the other possibilities. Indeed, speakers seem sometimes to go out of their way to make the inference express in a long report (like (3.5.10d) or (e)) or grammatically intricate "complex" sentence.

We are still faced with the question, however: what about the other 75% of the contents? These are expressed in grammatical forms too short to be inferential. Nevertheless, the forms must convey *some* salient features of the argument which differentiate it from all the others. What features are these?

Let us begin by looking at the shortest contents—those expressed in phrases or even single words. Of the 54 total instances, slightly more than half refer in various ways to the ultimate issue in the debate: whether to continue sanctions and diplomatic efforts to induce Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait, or whether to use force to drive Iraq out. Table 2 summarizes the data.[6]

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[6] The reader should recall that the majority of these argument contents were reported by speakers opposed to the argument they were mentioning, and the rest by speakers advocating it. So it's not surprising that some of the contents are tendentiously worded. Even an advocate's tendentious reference to an argument, however, needs to direct the auditor to the argument being refuted. So however slanted the wording, the content must include some salient feature identifying what the argument is.

Table 3.6.2
Contents expressed in phrases expressing a position on the central issue

Position	Content phrases
For force	(a) war/action/the urgency of war/a resolution that may lead to war (b) Presidential power/authorizing the use of force/authorizing the President to use force/Presidential authority to initiate war/giving a blank check to the President (c) his policy/this policy/presidential loyalty/the President's position/supporting the President here/giving the President -- my President/your President -- of these United States of America the kind of support he needs to bring the Middle East situation to resolve
For sanctions	(d) sanctions/sanctions/sanctions/sanctions/sanctions/diplomacy (e) time/the time/more time for the sanctions/more time for the sanctions and for diplomacy/delay in implementing a battle plan which may result in a rapid decline of political support staying the course/staying the course with current policy
Both	(f) each of the options now before us/stick with the President's first policy, or accept his second/supporting and opposing the resolutions before this body

Some of these contents are relatively bland, simply identifying the policy the argument being referred to was for, whether "sanctions" or "war" (a, d). Others give an interesting "spin" in pointing to the policy being supported, and suggest the general line the argument might be expected to follow. For example, an "argument for time" (e) might be expected to stress the importance of patience in international affairs in supporting the conclusion that sanctions are the best policy. An "argument for authorizing the use of force" (b) might be expected to defend Congress' responsibility under the Constitution to authorize presidential action. In contrast, a "presidential loyalty argument" (c) might be expected to insist that the President had the power to use force, with or without Congressional consent. Whatever the particular "spin," however, all these contents pick out the argument being referred to by its ultimate conclusion, supporting one side or the other of central issue being debated.

It would be useful to do a similar ordering for the contents expressed as full clauses, but with almost two-thirds of all contents falling in that category, there are too many to do this easily. Instead, I randomly sampled one out of every five CLAUSE contents, and sorted through them to determine what feature of the argument they were expressing.

Four of the forty two selected content CLAUSES were expressions of a position on the central issue in the debate (Table 3).

Table 3.6.3
Contents expressed in CLAUSES expressing a position on the central issue

Position	Content CLAUSES
For force	now is the time to give the President the authority to go to war
For sanctions	the military option should be denied the President and . . . economic sanctions and diplomacy should be continued/economic sanctions, accompanied by genuine efforts of diplomacy, should be given ample opportunity to work/what's the rush...let's continue to squeeze and squeeze some more while simultaneously exploring every possible diplomatic option

These contents continue the same themes as were evident in the content phrases (Table 2), in much the same words, stressing "time," "authority" and a "continued" policy.

A second group of 14 contents mentioned a policy of sanctions or force using the same set of terms, but went beyond simply endorsing it to actually assert something positive or negative about it (Table 4).

Table 3.6.4
Contents expressed in CLAUSES expressing a reason explicitly for or against a position on the central issue

Position	Content CLAUSES
For force	(a) the President has made the decision. now, we may not agree with that decision, but he has made that decision; we have to support it (b) the President has the constitutional power to launch a military attack without congressional authorization under almost every conceivable circumstance, including this one
Against force	(c) supporting the resolution constitutes casting a vote. . . for the destruction of American lives, not the triumphant return of our men and women (d) the United States should never take military action (e) supporting the resolution constitutes casting a vote for war, not peace, for impatience, not measured tolerance
For sanctions	(f) somehow, if we wait a little longer, the sanctions, in and of themselves, will do the trick/give the sanctions more time, bring Hussein to his knees by depriving him of hard currency and spare parts, and squeeze the Iraqi economy for 1 year, 2 years, or even longer (g) they [sanctions] are taking their toll/these sanctions are working. they are working and are eroding the ability of Iraq to conduct its war and are having an effect on destabilizing the internal politics of Iraq.
Against sanctions	(h) sanctions alone will not do the job (i) the sanctions are not working/all economic sanctions and diplomatic efforts have failed (j) this vote [for sanctions] will somehow send Saddam Hussein a different message [than get out of Kuwait]/we are undermining the president's diplomacy to make such a credible threat of war that Saddam Hussein will be frightened into withdrawing from Kuwait

On one hand, these contents seem to function as *reasons* for taking a side on the central issue. Several of them expand on the "spin" implicit when the central issue is framed as one of "time" (f) or "authorization" (b); others express vital concerns about whether the proposed policy will work or not (g, i), or whether or not it violates basic moral principles (d). At the same time, these contents seem to function as *claims*—they express non-obvious propositions in need of much more detailed support. The controversial nature of

these contents is suggested by the fact that even this relatively small selection of argument contents includes some pairs expressing opposite views: "these sanctions are working" (g) versus "the sanctions are not working" (i); an authorization of force will "make such a credible threat of force that Saddam Hussein will be frightened into withdrawing from Kuwait" (j) versus "supporting the resolution constitutes casting a vote for war, not peace" (e). If we imagine the central issue of the debate as the "top level" of an argument diagram, contents in this group could be called "penultimate" statements.

A third group of fifteen contents, although not expressly mentioning either policy, seem to have the same "penultimate" function (Table 5)

Table 3.6.5
Contents expressed in CLAUSES expressing a reason implicitly for or against a position on the central issue

Position	Content CLAUSES
For force	(a) we must reverse Saddam Hussein's aggression/Kuwait is being denied its self-determination by Iraq/there are greater consequences to rewarding Saddam Hussein for his naked aggression, his brutal atrocities (b) if we do not act now, Iraq may obtain a nuclear capability that would one day even threaten the United States (c) only by making Saddam Hussein believe we will use force will Saddam Hussein understand we are serious (d) we must rally around our President at this time of crisis (e) we must support the troops by voting for war/you are not supporting our boys overseas
Against force	(f) Hussein's aggression does not matter, . . . its effects are inconsequential (g) Saddam Hussein is no Hitler; that the desert wastes of Iraq are not industrial Germany; . . . this petty aggressor does not warrant the full measure of our response
For sanctions	---
Against sanctions	(h) there is no guarantee that economic hardships will in the end compel Saddam Hussein to withdraw from Kuwait (i) we have made no progress up to this point/Saddam is winning and being rewarded (j) we should have gone before [debated earlier--now it's too late]

Several of these appear to be equivalent to contents included in Table 4, only lacking an explicit mention of the policies at the center of the debate. Content (5b), for example, echoes the emphasis in (4j) on the need to make a "credible threat" in order to gain Iraq's voluntary withdrawal; content (5d) seems to be the same "presidential loyalty" consideration that we've seen in (4a); and (5i) reiterates in different terms the idea that "sanctions are not working" (4i). Others in this group provide necessary support for the central policy positions, like (5a) and (b), which articulate a *casus belli* to justify the use of force, or (5f) and (g) which deny it.

It is worth pausing to note that several of the content *phrases* also encapsulate considerations at this "penultimate" level. Among the phrasal contents we find a "legal argument," like the consideration about presidential power mentioned in (4b); an argument about "people dying," like (4c); "the comparison with Hitler," like (5g); and "the aggression of Iraq," like (5a)—among others. There are also references to contents that did not make it into the randomly selected set of clauses, including another *casus belli*: the "economic," "counter economic' and "energy saving arguments" about whether threats to the U.S. oil supply justify war.

Table 6 includes the remaining nine contents in the randomly selected set of clauses.

Table 3.6.6
Miscellaneous contents expressed in CLAUSES

Position	Content CLAUSES
For force	(a) they can conceive of a set of facts where some President in the future faced with extraordinary circumstances might not be able to seek congressional authorization
Against force	---
For sanctions	(b) if you wait 6 months the Air Force of Saddam Hussein will be 40 percent less effective, his mechanized divisions would be 20 to 25 percent less effective as spare parts do not get through the embargo and the blockade. (c) yes [terrorists might attack], but only in response to an attack upon Iraq
Against sanctions	(d) coalition is weak or fragile and that we must move now before it falls apart/if we do not declare war now, that our fragile alliance will break down (e) time was not on our side, that the Iraqi military would be able to strengthen its position in Kuwait (f) while many nations have done something, few nations have done enough. (g) we do not have the patience in the United States to persevere with a sanctions strategy (h) you are giving aid and comfort to Ho Chi Minh

Several of these seem to be reasons which would support the "penultimate" claims just described. Content (6b) thus gives some evidence why sanctions would work (4f), while (6d, f) and (g)—including the "coalition fragility" argument examined in detail in section 3.5—give reasons for thinking that they would not (4h). Content (a) appears to be a claim in a larger stretch of reasoning about the constitutional powers of the president, providing support for (4b). The rest make what could be thought of as "smaller" and more detailed claims, on matters likely buried deeper in the debate.

Let us step back from this discussion of the data to remind ourselves of the question the data is supposed to be answering. Speakers who use the word "argu-" to refer to specific arguments must help their auditors pick out the argument is being referred to, among all the possibilities. One way to do this—very frequent in this corpus—is to convey some salient feature of the content of the argument: to say not *which* it is, but *what* it is. Examining the actual contents expressed for the explicitly mentioned arguments in the corpus should thus give us a sense of the features speakers are relying on to differentiate *this* argument from *those other* ones. What features have we found? The results are summarized in Table 7; note that these figures are approximations, based on the sampling of content clauses.

Table 3.6.7
Features of arguments expressed in argument contents, by grammatical form (approx.)

Feature	Content phrases	Content CLAUSES	Content PASSAGES & COMPLEX expressions	All contents
Inferences	0%	5%	100%	25%
Claim on ultimate issue	50%	10%	0%	15%
"Penultimate" reason/claims	20%	70%	0%	45%
Other	30%	25%	0%	15%

Speakers in the Congressional debate do express inferences in order to identify the argument they are referring to; indeed, they take the time to craft quite intricate and lengthy discourse to do so. More commonly, however, speakers identify an argument by expressing the claim it makes. At times, it is enough for the speaker to simply identify the argument's claim on the central or ultimate issue of the debate, speaking of an argument for or against war or sanctions. Speakers do this efficiently, generally with a word or short phrase. More commonly, speakers identify an argument by expressing in a full clause the claim it makes at the "penultimate" level, a claim that serves as a reason for the stand on the central issue.[7]

In the previous section, I developed evidence showing that participants in the Congressional debate have a flexible conception of argument integrity, one that allows an argument to accommodate more or less material while still remaining the same. What are the limits of stretch of the "accordion"? The results of this section suggest that as Freeman (1996) argued, one argument won't be seen as changing into another, as long as it "ends up" making the same claim.

Notice, however, that what claim an argument is seen as making depends in part on where attention is directed. All of the arguments identified by "penultimate" claims are also, of course, reasons for claims on an ultimate issue. Thus an argument "of coalition fragility" is part of a—singular—argument "that sanctions alone will not do the job," which in turn is part of a—still singular—argument "for the urgency of war." Which one counts as *the* argument depends on what the person making or reporting it takes as *the* issue—the one on which he finds it worthwhile make a claim. Similarly, I suspect that what is taken to be one argument can divide into several, if assertions speakers make when making it are "called out" by others—made issues of. If so, this means that an argument's integrity or identity is pragmatically defined: it is context-dependent, in particular, dependent on the issues that participants make, or want to make.

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[7] These "penultimate" claims resemble the "stock issues" of U.S. forensic debate lore, and possibly some versions of the *topoi* or commonplaces of classical rhetoric—a resemblance which would be a good subject for further inquiry.

4. CONCLUSION

In noting that ordinary folk often use the word "argument" in the singular to refer to a whole batch of inferences, Michael Wreen (1999) distinguishes such "loose" usage from the "strict sense" of argument identity he defends in his theory. Without necessarily challenging Wreen's theoretical views, I do want to question the invidiousness of his distinction between "strict" and "loose" talk about argument. "Strict" talk, I presume, articulates the conceptions of argument of those of us expert in disciplinary and argumentation-theoretical ways of arguing. But "loose" talk, too, is the talk of experts; it articulates the sophisticated conceptions of argument of practitioners skilled in other significant ways of arguing. Importing "strict" talk into contexts where "loose" talk is precise and accurate is just as big a mistake as speaking "loosely" where "strictness" provides the best description. Let me give several examples, suggested by the results of this study, of the way our expertise as argumentation theorists may fail us when dealing with Congressional argumentative practice.

Many textbooks encourage students to look for "indicators" such as "because, since" and "therefore" in order to identify arguments. It may be that such indicators, or other devices, exist in the corpus in arguments not explicitly identified as "arguments;" that would be an interesting corpus study. Judging from the evidence of the explicitly mentioned arguments, however, it seems likely that argumentation theorists looking for indicators in the Congressional debate will be disappointed.

Those trying to diagram arguments—another tactic in our disciplinary repertoire—may also face frustration. The diagramming process seems to require there be a determinant argument "out there" to be reconstructed; some premises may be implicit, but at the end they either are or are not on the chart. How then will the argument theorist diagram something like "the U.N. argument" for presidential authority examined in section 3.5—an argument which retains its integrity, though it includes different premises each time it is made? The rigidity of current diagramming schemes seems ill-adapted to capture the flexible structures we have seen in some arguments in the Congressional debate.

Finally, argumentation theorists bringing to this debate an interest in premise adequacy may feel baffled. At least in the items participants call "arguments," no particular piece of evidence seems to be necessary, and evidence goes almost unmarked. Based on where they spend their energies, participants appear to be much less interested in examining evidence than in defining issues and making claims on them.

Do these disappointments, frustrations and bafflements mean that the members of Congress are bad arguers, or worse that Congressional argumentative practice is corrupt? Or are they indications that we may be projecting our disciplinary and theoretical conceptions onto an argumentative practice not our own, thus missing the wisdom native to it?

We should not, of course, give up on our own expertise; the challenge instead is to "dumb" down for long enough to be able to learn from others' ways. At the most general level, what this debate has to teach us appears to be the centrality of disagreement. To review: "argument" is not a particularly frequent word in this corpus; what participants do talk a lot about are "questions," "issues" and the "debate" itself. All the senses of argument—argument-1, argument-2, and ambiguous cases—appear to revolve around

disagreement; "argument" in the argument-2 sense, for example, is commonly used in an effort to determine exactly what the disagreement is *about*. Participants in the Congressional debate take notice of items *as* argument-1s when they want to disagree with them. And what typically makes *an* argument the precise argument it is, is the claim it makes on the ultimate or a penultimate issue in the debate.

If any of this is true, then argumentation theorists had better start theorizing disagreement. But if nothing else, I hope this study has shown that the computer-assisted methodologies of corpus linguistics can help relieve us of our excessive "smartness" for a while, and produce provocative results for argumentation theory.

link to commentary

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