

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Project

The book "Giving Reasons A Linguistic Pragmatic Approach to Argumentation" emerged as a response to the urgent need to understand the role and relevance of giving reasons in a linguistic context. Providing reasons or justification has become an important aspect of linguistic analysis, helping to explain language phenomena and providing a solid foundation for linguistic theory and research.

The importance of providing reasons in linguistic studies is not only related to theoretical investigations, but also in the context of practical applications. Linguistic researchers are often faced with the task of detailing and explaining their findings, and reasoning is a key element in building a convincing argument.

This book attempts to bridge the gap in the literature exploring specifically the role of reasoning in linguistic contexts. By detailing case studies, theoretical reviews, and practical applications, this book seeks to provide a comprehensive view of how reasoning can enhance our understanding of language structure, linguistic change, and social interaction through language.

Toulmin says that arguments of this kind are crucial, in the sense that validity depends on things being true in the world, not on formal relations. the relationship between their premises and conclusions. His goal in *The Uses of Argument* is to show that these important arguments are valid, that they can justify conclusions and that formal conclusions do. (In fact, as we will see in detail in Chapter 4, deductivism would find primary support in the dominant conception of Logic which stipulates that the normativity of inference is a formal matter. For deductivists, we have seen, most everyday arguments are problematic, because their premises do not "cover" their conclusions, unless we interpret and reconstruct them in a circle. In Toulmin's *So*, the history of epistemology is the history of attempts to resolve the skeptical problems that the traditional deductivist conception of "justification" has created. Specifically, he outlines three kinds of substantive redemptive arguments: transcendentalism, phenomenism, and skepticism/pragmaticism:

The transcendentalist Locke was answered by the phenomenal Berkeley, only to have both of their conclusions dismissed by the skeptical Hume. For all three, the logical gap between the "impression" or "idea" and the material object is a source of difficulty. (...) In moral philosophy, again, G. E. Moore rescues ethical conclusions, which are based on first seeing completely unethical data, by treating them as underwritten by intuitions of "unnatural" ethical qualities; I. A. Richards and C. L. Stevenson provide a phenomenal answer, analyzing ethical statements in terms of non-ethical ideas alone, so that the gap between feelings and values is ignored; while A. J. Ayer, in turn, plays Hume to Stevenson's Berkeley and Moore's Locke, thereby avoiding or sidestepping the problems his predecessors were confronting (1958: 233).

All of these responses have a common erroneous assumption, namely: the deductivist idealism of justification. Modern Argumentation Theory can be seen as an attempt to reject this ideal as erroneous and propose an alternative account of argumentative goodness.

According to Johnson's explanation in *Manifest Rationality* (2000), rationality and not universality determines the normative limits that allow us to do so, avoiding the relativist consequences of an instrumentalist conception of good argumentation. Johnson is concerned with arguments understood as “the distilled result of argumentation” and “the product of the practice of arguing” (2000: 209). So, he is interested in the requirements that arguments must satisfy when used for the purpose of rational persuasion. In Johnson's view, rational persuasion is the most important intrinsic goal of the use of argument, and, for this reason

(argument) goodness consists of the qualities necessary for the argument to achieve the goal of rational persuasion. The basic intuition I maintain is that a good argument is one that achieves the goal of rational persuasion (Johnson 2000: 189)

According to Johnson, argumentation has a natural core “consisting of the reasons given for the conclusion” (2000: 190) and a dialectical level related to the pragmatic conditions and consequences of using arguments to rationally persuade recipients (2000: 160). Both the illative core and the dialectical level of argumentation are subject to their own types of criteria, which together determine the goodness of the argumentation as a whole; thus, this proposal does not require rational persuasion as a criterion for determining whether an argument is good, but rather as the goal in terms of which argumentative value is defined. However, my intention here is to criticize such argumentative instrumentalist conceptions of value, not merely to show that instrumentalism cannot produce results that meet the criteria for determining whether an argument is good. In criticizing Johnson I want to show that instrumentalism cannot be redeemed by limiting its relativist consequences through normative constraints – such as demanding that persuasion be achieved by “rational” means.

In Walton's view (1996: 215), to reach the Govier standard of charitable interpretation, we must find out the burden of each evidentiary argument, that is, what the arguer really needs to establish in order for the argument to be successful. Walton considers that every argument should be analyzed as a particular type of movement in the context of dialogue, best thought of as dialogue of persuasion. In line with this, Walton argues that every argument faces a burden of proof, defined as

allocation of the weight of evidence needed for a participant to succeed in persuading his opponent, that is, to prove the proposition he wants to prove as his goal in the dialogue. (Walton 1996: 171)

Walton argues that sometimes we need strong arguments that provide strong support for reaching a conclusion, but other times it may be sufficient to simply present reasonable reasons for a tentative conclusion.

The author of this book has a strong background in linguistic research and has gained recognition in this field of study. By detailing basic concepts and combining diverse theoretical approaches, it is hoped that this book will be a valuable resource for students, researchers and linguistic practitioners.

Additionally, the book not only focuses on the academic level, but also tries to present the material in a way that is accessible to readers who do not have a formal linguistics background. Therefore, it is hoped that this book can open the door for those who want to understand linguistic concepts by providing clear and concrete reasons.

1.2 The Purpose of the Project

The Giving Reasons book can be seen from the objectives in a linguistic context which can vary depending on the author's focus and approach. Some general objectives that might be presented in the book could involve:

1. Exploring the role of reasoning in Linguistics, this book may aim to investigate and explain the role of reasoning in a linguistic context. This may include an analysis of why and how reasoning becomes an important instrument in understanding various aspects of language.
2. Highlighting the importance of Justification in Linguistic research. This book may want to show the importance of providing reasons or justifications in linguistic research. This may include applying compelling analytical methods and outlining reasoning steps that can increase the validity of the findings.
3. Explain the relationship between language and justification, perhaps also involving a discussion of how language and justification are related. How language is used as a tool for providing reasons, and conversely, how providing reasons influences the structure and evolution of language.
4. Providing a deeper understanding of linguistic phenomena, aims to provide a deeper understanding of various linguistic phenomena through providing reasons. This can include aspects such as syntax, semantics, phonology, and how reasoning can provide insight into language patterns.
5. Providing practical guidance, aims to provide practical guidance for applying reasoning in everyday linguistic analysis. It can be useful both for students studying linguistics and researchers who want to deepen their analytical methods.
6. Encourages reflection and discussion, designed to encourage readers to reflect on and participate in discussions about the role of reasoning in linguistic contexts. This can create space for the exchange of ideas and thoughts among linguistic communities.