

Indicators of Argumentational Integrity in Everyday Communication

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0. INTRODUCTION

Imagine the following situation: Ann, age 17, tells her mother that she wants to go out in the evening. Moreover, she doesn't want to give a time when she will be back; nor does she know yet which of her friends will be seeing her home.

Her mother is anything but pleased: While she does not in principle object to her daughter going out in the evenings, she most decidedly does object today, considering that Ann will have to get up early for school the next morning. Besides, it is completely out of the question that Ann goes out without telling her parents when she will be back and who will be taking her home. This is not to spite Ann; it's just that otherwise her parents would be lying awake half the night, worrying. No, Ann must always say when she will be back – and if for some good reason she really cannot make it back on time, she can always phone.

Ann half agrees: of course she does not want her parents to worry; on the other hand she does not want to leave a good party when it's in full swing. And phoning – in the first place she doesn't like waking up her parents; secondly, she suspects that her own and her mother's idea of a good reason for staying away longer than agreed will differ somewhat. The party is fun – would her mother consider that a good reason? Well, the mother replies – that would depend. Even if Ann didn't have to attend school the next day – she would still have to know where Ann is, how she will be getting home, and so on.

At this point the argumentation seems to have come to a dead end of sorts. This is quite irrelevant, Ann says. On the contrary, it is highly relevant, her mother replies. Why, Ann asks. The argumentation, which is taken from a pool of argumentative discussions between mothers and daughters recorded by Hofer *et al.*, goes on verbatim (in translation from the German transcript) as follows:¹

(39) M: because the longer you stay away everyone knows how much people drink you drink

(40) M: In general I've never noticed that you had a problem or something – but it is -- it gets difficult you know

(41) M: and in addition I can always refer you to the law dear Ann – I don't know exactly how it goes – but something about minors being about on their own

- (42) M: we are – eighteen – I think eighteen – after all we are responsible for you so that nothing happens to you
- (43) A: ah – so when I'm eighteen I can come home as late or early as I please right
- (44) M: you'd like that wouldn't you – no way – you must
- (45) A: I can always refer you to the law – ha ha ha ha (laughs)
- (46) M: but – I am – I have – I am a higher law – I must – I am responsible for my child – and that's what you are and that's what you'll always be and you had better get that straight once and for all
- (47) A: yes but – but why – when I go out evenings I really can't tell in advance who will take me home right I mean I don't know who'll take me home and who with a car
- (48) M: you must know who'll be there – you find out in advance that's what you'll do – I demand that you do that's not too much to demand
- (49) A: and how about when I know how to drive – I won't need anyone to take me home then will I – I mean I would be able to drive my own car wouldn't I
- (50) M: no it would be better
- (51) M: YOUR OWN car – when will you have your own car – the assumptions you're making...

Shortly following this heated exchange, the two reach an agreement on a hypothetical level: If in ten years' time Ann does drive her own car, her mother will of course permit her to come home on her own. When reading this argumentation, we were feeling increasingly uncomfortable. While at first the mother seems willing enough to engage in an argumentation with her daughter on the issue of "going out", from the point of the "dead end" onwards something appears to be going wrong: In the first place, the mother no longer explains to her daughter what she would like her to do for what reason, but plainly orders her to do or not to do something on the basis of her superior position. Secondly, she appears to make the basis of that superior position suit the needs of the moment: First it is the law; next it is the "higher law" of parenthood. Of course discussions between mothers and daughters of this kind always have their own history. Still, somehow this doesn't seem fair: If the mother is going to insist on her power over her daughter's actions (on whatever basis), surely she might as well have done so from the beginning, without first giving the impression of being amenable to good reasons?

It is in order to specify as well as elaborate this intuition of "something going wrong" in argumentative discussions that we have introduced a concept named 'integrity in argumentative discussions' – or, in short (as this gets cumbersome), 'argumentational integrity' (cf. Groeben, Schreier, and Christmann, 1993). In the following, we shall first – with reference to the above example – explain in greater detail what we mean by 'argumentational integrity' (see Section 1 below). Next, we will turn to the question how people in everyday argumentative interaction arrive at the conclusion that their partner is lacking in argumentational integrity; specific hypotheses are derived from the theoretical conceptions developed above, and the results of a first empirical testing of these hypotheses will be presented (see Section 2 below). In the final section, we will then apply part of these results to the above exchange between mother and daughter, namely those relating to the role that attributed intentionality plays in regarding a speaker as lacking in argumentational integrity: Taking the stance of the

mother's interaction partner, we attempt by means of pragmalinguistic analysis to point out such indicators in the course of the mother's argumentation, which lend support to the conclusion that the mother is in fact quite aware of what she is doing – tricking her daughter into submission (see Section 3 below).²

1. THE CONCEPT OF ARGUMENTATIONAL INTEGRITY

The concept of argumentational integrity is meant by us as a starting point towards formulating explicit criteria for evaluating speech acts in argumentative discussions. In deriving the concept, we start out from argumentation (cf. Groeben *et al.*, 1993), which we consider a conversation type with four defining characteristics:

- In an argumentation, the participants attempt to find a solution
- to a controversial issue (premise)
- by means of a partner-/listener-oriented exchange of views (process)
- which is well-founded (*on good reasons*) (goal)
- and made acceptable to all participants (*in a cooperative manner*) (goal)

This definition is based on the assumption that 'argumentation' can be used in a primarily descriptive as well as in a normative manner. While both uses are possible, we do, however, assume that the normative is also the more common use. In the above definition, the prescriptive characteristics (printed in italics) are conceptualized as specifications of the two goal characteristics of argumentation.

The first defining characteristic specifies a basic premise for argumentation to take place: There must be a controversy which is also of some importance to the participants (cf. Klein, 1980, 1981). The second characteristic relates to the argumentation process which we conceptualize as essentially dialogical in the sense of being oriented towards another person (cf. Frixen, 1987), who may be another participant or a potential listener. The third and fourth characteristics both concern the goals of the argumentative exchange. In the literature on argumentation, this goal is frequently conceptualized as "persuasion of the other" (cf. Maas and Wunderlich, 1972; Pander Maat, 1985), which in turn is thought to comprise two subgoals: First, finding a solution to the matter of dispute, and second, convincing the others that oneself is right and they are wrong (see also Klein's distinction between the logics and pragmatics of argumentation; 1980, 1981). 'Attempting to find a solution that is well-founded' relates to the first subgoal and is taken to manifest itself in giving reasons for a particular point of view; 'making it acceptable to all participants' relates to the second subgoal and is assumed to become manifest in the rhetorical and persuasive forcefulness of the argumentation.

Within a primarily descriptive framework, neither the validity of the reasons given nor the means used towards persuasion are of further interest. Within a more normative framework, however, each of the two subgoals can be further specified so as to exclude the use of certain "reasons" and "persuasive means".

Thus, the normative specification of the first subgoal demands that the solution be founded on good reasons only – i.e. reasons which are both relevant to the matter at hand and valid within the context of argumentation (cf. for instance Naess, 1975); the underlying criterial dimension is that of rationality. The normative specification of the second subgoal demands that the means used towards making a position or solution acceptable to the other participants be cooperative – that is, that the means used be compatible with the legitimate interests of all concerned (cf. for instance Völzing, 1979). A solution which satisfies both normative criteria, rationality as well as cooperation, can be considered “generalizable”, i.e. applicable beyond the immediate argumentative context (cf. Huth, 1975; Perelman, 1979; Völzing, 1979).

In order to make such a broadly applicable solution possible, contributions to argumentative discussions must satisfy certain conditions. We have derived four such conditions as specifications of the underlying normative criteria of rationality and cooperation (cf. Groeben *et al.*, 1993):

- I. formal validity: Arguments must be formally valid.
- II. sincerity: Participants must be sincere.
- III. justice on the content-level: Arguments must be just.
- IV. justice on the procedural level: The procedure must be just.

In deriving the concept of argumentational integrity, we assume that participants in an argumentation generally have an at least intuitive knowledge of these four conditions and – in the ideal case – furthermore raise a claim to rationality and cooperation in entering an argumentation. This claim inherent in the normative use of ‘argumentation’ may be reconstructed as an implicit, reciprocal expectation on the participants’ side, which mutually obliges them to not knowingly endanger that claim. And this is in fact precisely the meaning of ‘fulfilling the requirements of argumentational integrity’: To not endanger the mutual claim to rationality and cooperation by knowingly violating the above conditions. Correspondingly, lack of argumentational integrity is defined as the conscious violation of those conditions.

Hence we assume that the concept of argumentational integrity is “subjectively” represented (i.e. by the participants) in the form of value-standards; these are thought to act as the basis of the reciprocal expectation to not knowingly violate the requirements of argumentational integrity. The value-standards do, however, become salient only in case of violation; violation in turn is supposed to lead to feelings of disappointment, indignation, and even outrage (for a first empirical confirmation cf. Blickle and Groeben, 1990; Schreier and Groeben, 1992).

As the above conceptualization of offences against argumentational integrity (to not *consciously* violate...) indicates, diagnosis of lack of argumentational integrity largely hinges upon the respective speaker’s (i.e. the speaker committing the offence) state of mind. In order to adequately take into account the relevance of this aspect of the participants’ knowledge, we have conceptualized the diagnosis of violations of argumentational integrity under recourse to the

German criminal law, which distinguishes between two types of “facts”: “Objective facts” (which approximately correspond to ‘*actus reus*’ in the English law) relate to rule violations which are mostly accessible to external observation; these correspond to violations of the argumentative conditions. “Subjective facts” (which approximately correspond to ‘*mens rea*’ in the English law; cf. Fincham and Jaspars, 1980) refer to the speaker’s state of consciousness in bringing about the objective facts; they in turn correspond to the degree to which the speaker is aware that his or her contribution constitutes a violation of the argumentative conditions (namely, whether he/she is acting intentionally, by negligence, or unknowingly³). Taken together, we regard a speaker as lacking in argumentational integrity if he or she violates the argumentative conditions with at least some awareness of the respective contribution constituting such a violation (i.e. intentionally or by negligence).

In order to be applicable to everyday argumentation, this general conceptualization of argumentational integrity has to be further elaborated and rendered in more concrete terms. We have done this in two steps. In a first step we have specified four characteristics of offences against argumentational integrity, which can be regarded as the “negative” of the above argumentational conditions: I. faulty arguments; II. insincere contributions; III. unjust arguments; IV. unjust interaction procedures. These characteristics constitute four broad classes of “objective facts” on a rather abstract level. In a second step we have combined such argumentational strategies that may be considered offences against argumentational integrity in 8 (or 10, including subgroups) inductively derived and empirically confirmed categories; these categories we have called ‘standards of argumentational integrity’ (cf. Schreier and Groeben, 1990).⁴ The standards, thus (like the four characteristics) also specify classes of “objective facts”, but on a level sufficiently concrete to be applicable to argumentative exchanges. The exact wording of the standards and their distribution across the four characteristics is given below.

Standards of argumentational integrity

I. faulty arguments

1. violation of stringency: Do not intentionally present your arguments in a non-stringent fashion.
2. refusal of justification: Do not intentionally avoid giving any or intentionally give insufficient grounds to found your assertions.

II. insincere contributions

3. distortion of validity: Do not argue in favor of anything whose validity you yourself are not in this form convinced of.
 - 3.a. pretence of consistency: Do not consciously present any arguments which are not or are only seemingly congruent with what you otherwise do or say.
 - 3.b. denial of responsibility: Do not intentionally deny your own responsibility or transfer it to others (persons or institutions) without justification.
 - 3.c. pretence of truth: Do not make such assertions out to be objectively true which you know to be either wrong or merely subjective.
4. distortion of meaning: Do not repeat your own contribution, contributions made by others or facts in such a way as to intentionally distort their original meaning.

III. unjust arguments

5. impossibility of compliance: Do not, and be it only by negligence, demand anything of others which you know they will not be able to do.

6. discrediting of others: Do not, and be it only by negligence, discredit other participants.

IV. unjust interaction procedures

7. expression of hostility: Do not intentionally act towards your adversary in the matter at hand as though he/she were your personal enemy.

8. hindrance of participation: Do not intentionally interact with others in such a way as to either hinder them in participating or to prevent them altogether from contributing towards a solution.

On the background of this explication of ‘argumentational integrity’ it should now be possible to specify our intuition of “something going wrong” in the course of the above argumentative exchange between mother and daughter.⁵

We have already pointed out (see 0. above) what made us feel most uncomfortable at a first reading: That the mother suddenly resorts to the law, telling her daughter what to do from her position of (legal) authority. This seems to us equivalent to breaking off the argumentation – there is little the daughter can add or dispute in the form of arguments; she simply has to obey. The mother thus prevents her daughter from contributing anything further towards a solution, which is why we have coded the mother’s appeal to the law as a potential violation of standard no. 8, ‘hindrance of participation’. Moreover, the mother changes her criteria from the first appeal to the second, depending on her daughter’s age: First, her daughter not yet having reached the age of 18, she appeals to the actual wording of the law which does in fact provide her with the grounds for keeping her daughter at home in the evenings. But once her daughter has drawn the correct conclusion that this same law will in turn provide her with the grounds for going out and coming home as late as she pleases once she has reached the age of 18, the mother abandons the earlier support by the law and refers instead to her own opinion as the higher authority. We consider such a change of criteria to constitute a potential violation of standard no. 3.a., ‘pretence of consistency’, the mother’s second appeal to authority being clearly inconsistent with her previous one.⁶ As a matter of fact – and this is probably less obvious – the mother in 41 might even violate a further standard: no. 2, ‘refusal of justification’: Ann had asked her mother for a reason; in this case, however, reference to the law is not a reason; instead it frees the mother from the necessity to give any further reasons: The law does not need to justify itself. And finally, we consider the mother’s reply to Ann’s question in 51 to constitute a potential violation of standard no. 6, ‘discrediting of others’. The mother makes it very clear that she thinks it will take rather a long time till Ann will be driving her own car. This and the mother more or less calling her daughter presumptuous for merely mentioning the possibility is a way of putting Ann down, making her feel insignificant and highly dependent on her parents.

Thus, the mother in the course of this short verbatim exchange *might* well be violating four different standards of argumentational integrity. So far we have, however, only been pointing out “objective facts”; it still remains to be seen whether indicators of “subjective facticity”⁷ can also be found (see section 3 below). But before analyzing the discussion for such indicators we will explain in greater detail how we conceptualize the interplay between objective and subjective facts in constituting a violation of argumentational integrity.

2. DIAGNOSIS OF LACK OF ARGUMENTATIONAL INTEGRITY

As we have already described above (see Section 1), we conceptualize the diagnosis of lack of argumentational integrity under recourse to the German criminal law, speaking of lack of argumentational integrity only if there is evidence of objective (violation of argumentative conditions) as well as subjective facticity (speaker's subjective state of consciousness: intentionally, by negligence). We further assume that (unlike in court) people in everyday interactions will generally (by default, so to speak) consider objective and subjective facticity as sufficient evidence for regarding the respective speaker as "guilty" in the sense of holding him or her personally responsible for his or her actions. If, however, there is any evidence of justifications, excuses, mitigating circumstances being operative, this can result in a less severe evaluation of the speaker by other participants – for instance, considering the utterance to be unlawful, but not culpable, and hence not personally reproaching the speaker (for a discussion of the hierarchical levels of evaluation in moral judgements cf. Groeben, Nüse, and Gauler, 1992; Shaver, 1985; Darley and Shultz, 1990).

These basic assumptions must, however, be further differentiated. In the area of criminal acts, for instance, not all objective facts are regarded as equally severe: Taking along an umbrella that doesn't belong to you and severely harming another human being are both objective facts; yet, differing in severity, they are in turn judged and evaluated rather differently. Furthermore, there is clearly an interaction between the severity of the objective fact and the degree of subjective facticity: While you will most certainly be punished in some way if you intentionally take the umbrella, knowing quite well that it doesn't belong to you (in short: if you steal it), you might, however, get away with being reprimanded if you take it by mere negligence, not "meaning" to thus illegally enrich yourself. But if you severely harm another person, and be it by negligence only, you will most likely be punished, although not as harshly as you would be if you inflicted that harm intentionally.

Our hypothesis is that this line of reasoning can, within bounds, also be applied to the area of argumentational integrity (cf. Groeben *et al.*, 1992): Just as only some combinations of objective and subjective facts become criminally relevant, it would appear plausible that only some combinations of objective and subjective facts are considered to be lacking in argumentational integrity. Hence we postulate an interaction between (1) the severity of the objective facts and (2) the degree of subjective facticity in the diagnosis of lack of argumentational integrity to the effect that: Diagnosis of offences against argumentational integrity is the more likely, the higher the severity of the objective facts and the degree of subjective facticity (which, taken together, constitute the seriousness of the offence).

In order to empirically test this hypothesis (cf. Groeben *et al.*, 1992) we employed a 3×3 factorial design containing as independent variables the above two factors: (1) severity of the objective facts (high, medium, low) and (2) degree of subjective facticity (intentionally, by negligence, unknowingly), the

main dependent variable being the negative vs. neutral evaluation of the respective contribution.⁸ The design is given in Figure 1. On this basis the above general hypothesis was specified as follows:

H1: For the cells 'high/intentional', 'high/by negligence', and 'medium/intentional' there will result more negative than neutral evaluations (dark grey cells).

H2: For the cells 'medium/unknowingly', 'low/unknowingly', and 'low/by negligence' there will result more neutral than negative evaluations (light grey cells).

For the remaining cells ('high/unknowingly', 'medium/by negligence', and 'low/intentionally') no hypotheses were formulated.

subjective facticity			
intentionally			
by negligence			
unknowingly			
	low	medium	high
	severity of objective facts		

Fig. 1. Expected interactions between the factors 'severity of objective facts' and 'subjective facticity'.

The first independent variable 'severity of the objective facts' was realized by presenting 12 scenarios in the form of short excerpts from original argumentative discussions on television which were taken from our sample pool. Ten of these scenarios contained one objective fact each in the form of a typical violation of one of the 10 standards given above (see Section 1 above); the remaining 2 constituted realizations of argumentative strategies of (in our opinion) very low severity which were not contained within the system of standards. The second independent variable 'degree of the subjective facts' was manipulated by providing additional information about the relevant speaker: The subjects were given a description of his or her intentions and state of consciousness.

Sixty-two subjects, aged between 20 and 53 (mostly with high school diploma), participated in the study. Subjects were randomly assigned to 3 groups (conditions differing as to the respective degree of subjective facticity), each subject being presented with all 12 scenarios under one of the 3 degrees of subjective facticity. Subjects were thus equally distributed across the 9 cells.

The following dependent variables were collected: (1) a treatment check as to

whether the subjects had in fact identified the “objective fact” in the scenario; (2) a rating of the severity of the objective facts: Subjects were asked to indicate on a 5-point rating-scale to what extent they thought the speaker’s respective strategy would impede further argumentation; (3) an evaluation of the violation of the respective standard: After the information concerning the subjective facts had been presented, subjects were asked for their evaluation of the relevant speaker’s contribution in the light of this additional information (negative vs. neutral evaluation); (4) free response: Following this evaluation, subjects were asked to write down additional factors not mentioned in the scenario which they considered relevant for forming an opinion on the violation of the standard: If they had previously given a negative evaluation, their task was to write down such factors as would in their opinion provide an excuse or justification for the speaker; if they had given a neutral evaluation, they were asked to write down potentially aggravating circumstances.⁹

The treatment check was positive in 86% of all cases; this shows that for the most part subjects had correctly identified the respective objective facts contained in the scenarios. For further analysis, the severity ratings (in those 86% of all cases) were transformed into ipsative data. Thus, we did not employ an a priori categorization of the objective facts as to severity; instead we tested our hypotheses on the basis of the subjects’ individual severity ratings of the various objective facts presented in the scenarios. After transformation, 62 individual 9-cell-drawings result which may be compared directly. The number of negative and neutral evaluations for each cell were added up across all subjects. The resulting frequencies for each of the 9 cells are shown in Figure 2.

subjective facticity	severity of objective facts					
	low		medium		high	
	+	-	+	-	+	-
intentionally	10	40	28	9	119	3
	$\chi^2=18.00, df=1, p<.00002$		$\chi^2=9.76, df=1, p<.00178$		$\chi^2=110.30, df=1, p<.00001$	
by negligence	11	42	25	23	93	15
	$\chi^2=18.13, df=1, p<.00002$		$\chi^2=0.08, df=1, p<.77327$		$\chi^2=56.33, df=1, p<.00001$	
unknowingly	3	47	7	25	76	47
	$\chi^2=38.72, df=1, p<.00001$		$\chi^2=10.13, df=1, p<.00146$		$\chi^2=6.84, df=1, p<.00891$	

Fig. 2. Neutral (-) and negative (+; i.e. diagnosis of lack of argumentational integrity) evaluations for all factor combinations on the basis of ipsative data.

Chi-square-analysis of the frequency distributions of neutral and negative evaluations per cell against equal distribution shows that the specific hypotheses 1 and 2 could both be confirmed: If objective facts of high and medium severity are brought about intentionally, the resulting violations of standards are more often evaluated as “negative” rather than “neutral”; the same holds for highly severe objective facts brought about by negligence (hypothesis 1; dark grey cells). If, on the other hand, realisation of objective facts counting as either “low” or “medium” in severity occurs unknowingly, these realisations are more often evaluated as “neutral” than “negative”; the same holds for objective facts low in severity which are brought about by negligence (hypothesis 2; light grey cells). For these six factor combinations, severity of the objective facts and degree of subjective facticity can thus be regarded as both relevant and sufficient for a negative or a neutral evaluation respectively.

For the remaining cells (for which no hypotheses were formulated) an interesting trend can be seen to emerge. The realisation of objective facts judged as low in severity is more often evaluated as “neutral”, even if the realisation is intentional; bringing about an objective fact regarded as high in severity, however, is more often evaluated as “negative”, even if done unknowingly. The cell for the remaining combination ‘medium/by negligence’ contains about as many negative as neutral evaluations.

This seems to indicate that on the whole the severity of the objective facts may be of higher relevance for the diagnosis of argumentational integrity than the degree of subjective facticity: As the severity of the objective facts increases, so does the severity of subjects’ evaluations.

3. (PRAGMA-)LINGUISTIC INDICATORS OF INTENTIONALITY

While possibly not quite as important as the objective facts, the above results show that subjective facts can nevertheless be assumed to also play an important role in the diagnosis of lack of argumentational integrity. So far we have only tested their influence by providing the relevant information about the speaker’s state of consciousness in an explicit description (cf. Section 2 above); in everyday interaction, however, subjective facticity is presumably inferred by the participants on the basis of language characteristics which thus act as indicators of, for instance, intentionality.

In order to identify such indicators, we have carried out a pragmalinguistic analysis of the entire argumentative exchange between mother and daughter that was summarized above (see section 0. above).¹⁰ This analysis is of course more encompassing and carried out in a more systematic manner than can be demonstrated below, comprising among others the following steps: analysis of situation, thematic development, interactional, propositional and argumentative manifestations of objective facts as well as potential mitigating circumstances (cf. in detail Sachtleber and Schreier, 1990). From this analysis only those parts will be given below which relate to the identification of indicators of inten-

tionality on the mother's side.¹¹

The first potential violation is that of standard no. 2, refusal of justification, in 40/41. Shortly before, in 39/40, the mother had in fact proceeded to give a reason in reply to Ann's question of relevance (as is indicated by her starting her contribution with 'because'); however, the "reasons" she does in fact give can hardly be called good ones. Thus finding herself at a loss, appealing to the law serves a strategic purpose insofar as this puts the mother in a position where she does no longer need to justify her point of view. We regard this strategic purpose as it emerges from the course of the argumentation as a first indicator to the effect that the mother may be quite aware of what she is doing. This interpretation is further supported by the mother's ungrammatical, disjointed manner of speech. When asked by Ann to give a reason earlier during the argumentation, she does, however, speak quite coherently. Her disjointed speech (in this strategic context) hence indicates that she is searching for reasons – and such a search is generally only necessary when there are no good reasons immediately at hand.

As the potential violation of standard no. 8, hindrance of participation, coincides with that of standard no. 2 (refusal of justification; both being located in 41), the indicators given so far relating to standard no. 2 may be taken to equally apply to the potential violation of standard no. 8. In addition, the assumption that the mother does in fact intend to break off the argumentation is supported by the sheer frequency of such attempts: She does so in 41 by appealing to the law, again in 46 by claiming that she herself constitutes a higher law, and again towards the end of the discussion by suggesting that she and her daughter postpone this argumentation until the time when Ann does in fact own a car.¹² Furthermore, her meaning in 46 (that Ann had better get it straight once and for all that – in effect – she has to obey her mother) hardly allows for any further argumentation – which Ann implicitly recognizes by continuing the argumentation in 49 on a hypothetical level only. Finally, from 41 onwards the mother no longer reasons; instead, she gives her daughter orders (see for instance 48). Taken together, this constitutes strong evidence that the mother is deliberately attempting to cut the argumentation short.

Regarding the potential violation of standard no. 3.a., pretence of consistency, in 46, it seems to us that there really is not much of a question as to whether the mother is aware of being inconsistent. The two appeals follow each other so closely, both mention "the law" explicitly (though it is a different law each time), that the mother must of necessity be aware of what she is doing.

As for the potential violation of standard no. 6, discrediting of others, a first indicator of intentionality is found on the level of intonation: While intonation throughout the argumentation is normal (with one exception at the beginning¹²), in 51 the mother perceptibly raises her voice, which acts so as to stress the content of what is being said. Secondly, Ann's question is in a way a rhetorical one: It would be somewhat absurd if a mother, at the end of the 20th century, insisted that her daughter be taken home by a friend at night – the daughter being 28 years old and driving her own car. Something like 'yes, of course'

would be the appropriate answer. The mother is also aware of this, as becomes apparent at the very end of the discussion,¹² when she replies to her daughter's renewed question in exactly those words. This indicates that in 51 the mother deliberately chooses another than the conversationally appropriate reply.

On the whole, the hypothesis that the mother does in fact repeatedly violate the standards of argumentational integrity can thus be well supported. There might, however, be additional factors operating which more or less excuse the mother: such as her obvious worry about her daughter, potential exhaustion, or previous discussions of the same subject. Lack of space does not permit us to here discuss the relevance of these factors in detail. We would, however, like to point out that in one case – the violation of standard no. 2 (refusal of justification) – consideration of mitigating circumstances had led us to the conclusion that the mother might not be violating this standard: If, for instance, the mother is very exhausted, she might not even be aware of the fact that she is repeating herself, that her reasons cannot be considered “good” ones. Alternatively, if the subject has been discussed many times before, the mother's arguments in the course of the present exchange might constitute abbreviations of previous arguments given at full length, perfectly meaningful to the daughter but not to the outsider. From this perspective there would be no objective facts and hence no violation of standard no. 2 (refusal of justification). The conclusions drawn above as to the violation of the other three standards do, however, remain unchanged when taking potential mitigating circumstances into account.

To summarize: Looking at the argumentative exchange more closely, we had found that strategic purpose and disjointed speech indicate that the mother does quite consciously avoid giving a rational justification of her position; this evidence is, however, counterbalanced by alternative interpretations on the basis of the assumption that the mother is either very exhausted or that the subject has been discussed numerous times before. As a consequence, we suspend judgement on whether the mother does in fact or does not violate standard no. 2 (refusal of justification). As for the violation of standards no. 8 (hindrance of participation), 3.a. (pretence of consistency), and 6 (discrediting of others), potential excuses cannot outweigh the strong evidence of awareness and intentionality in all three cases. Strategic purpose, frequency of attempts to cut the discussion short, statements that explicitly do not permit any further discussion, demands instead of reasons, the daughter's acquiescence all indicate that the mother does have the intention of breaking off the argumentation. The interpretation that the mother is aware of arguing in a manner inconsistent with her previous statements is supported by the close contiguity of the relevant contributions. Finally, intonation and inappropriateness of the reply again support the interpretation that the mother has the intention of discrediting her daughter. Thus, the mother in all probability can be said to violate standards no. 3.a. (pretence of consistency), 6 (discrediting of others), and 8 (hindrance of participation).

As the result of such an analysis one can, of course, never be certain that a particular speaker did indeed or did not violate the standards of argumentational integrity; one of the interpretations will merely seem more plausible. On the other hand, it is not the point of such an analysis to condemn or exculpate individual speakers (in this case: the mother). What we want to accomplish in the long run (by analyzing a large number of argumentative discussions) is to in

the first place identify typical forms of offences against argumentational integrity as they manifest themselves in spoken language. Secondly, we hope to succeed in identifying such characteristics in argumentative exchanges which are taken as indicators of for instance intentionality by other participants and to empirically test the relative impact of such indicators on diagnosis of lack of argumentational integrity. Some such indicators have in fact been spontaneously given in the course of the reconstruction of Subjective Theories on argumentational integrity (cf. Christmann and Groeben, 1991); these included for instance the frequency of potential or actual violations of argumentational integrity by the respective speaker and discrepancy between professed opinions and future actions.

NOTES

¹ For purposes of pragmalinguistic analysis the argumentation has been divided into functional units; for easier reference the respective numbers will be given in advance of each unit. Because earlier units were summarized, the translation begins with unit no. 39, 'M' is an abbreviation for 'mother', 'A' for 'Ann'.

² In specifying our intuition of "something going wrong" in the above exchange (as in the analysis of all argumentative exchanges between mothers and daughters reported by Hofer *et al.*), we will thus rely heavily on analyzing the course of the mother's argumentation – the reason being that the mostly adolescent daughters' argumentative competence cannot yet be regarded as fully developed (cf. Miller, 1982; Völzing, 1981). This does, however, by no means imply that the daughters' argumentation is always faultless. This does not imply either, that we disregard the importance of the interactive component; lack of space does, however, not permit a more extensive discussion of this issue in the present paper.

³ The law distinguishes between more than these three categories of subjective facts (cf. Nüse, Groeben, Christmann, and Gauler, 1993); for our purpose, these three categories are, however, sufficient.

⁴ To arrive at the standards, 86 relevant strategies were chosen from the rhetorical literature. These were presented to experts for rating and free-sorting. Cluster analysis yielded the 8 categories which were then summarized as 'standards of argumentational integrity'. As one of the categories comprises 3 distinct subgroups, which, including these subgroups, makes for 10 categories altogether, we also refer to the categories as a 'system of 8/10 standards'.

⁵ In referring back to the text, we will use the numbering of the units.

⁶ As a matter of fact, demonstrating a change of the mother's criteria is somewhat more complicated. At first sight, the change appears obvious. At second sight, one might wonder whether the mother's criteria do not in fact remain constant, as she seems to further support both criteria (law and parenthood) by reference to her responsibility for her daughter's well-being. However, looking at the argumentational structure more closely reveals that this is not the case. Rather, she first uses the reference to the law to support her claim to responsibility; next, she uses her claim to responsibility as a support towards disregarding the law. Or, putting it in more simple terms: The law criterion implies that the mother's responsibility ends when the daughter has reached the age of 18. The mother thus does change her criteria; and the first impression is in fact correct.

⁷ The term 'facticity' is used to refer to the presence of objective or subjective facts constituting a specific offence.

⁸ 'Negative evaluation' was conceptualized and worded as a "sentence of guilt" in the

sense of holding the respective speaker responsible for his/her action; 'neutral evaluation' was conceptualized and worded as a "not culpable act" (for instance in the sense of recognizing the respective objective fact, but not considering it to be of any further importance).

⁹ These latter responses were content-analysed and compared to a hierarchical model of the influence of (among others) justifications and excuses on the evaluation of lack of argumentational integrity; the results are, however, not relevant in the context of this paper.

¹⁰ Relevant linguistic information is of course lost through translation. Consequently we can here present only results which can be considered language-independent, such as results based on content, interactional development, etc.

¹¹ In referring back to the text, we will again use the numbering of the units.

¹² This part of the discussion has only been summarized, not translated.

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