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Sincere and Insincere Arguing

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Article abstract

In this paper, we contend that there are two ways of arguing, namely sincere and insincere arguing. We draw such a distinction, based on the felicity conditions of the complex speech act of arguing as modelled in van Eemeren and Grootendorst's pragma-dialectical approach. We introduce a conversational setting, which contains a speech act of arguing that does not count as insincere arguing, while being a sui generis form of sincere arguing. We designate it as "cooperative inquiry". Finally, we show that argument evaluation plays a key role in determining whether an instance of arguing counts as either arguing sincerely or insincerely.

Sincere and Insincere Arguing

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Abstract: In this paper, we contend that there are two ways of arguing, namely sincere and insincere arguing. We draw such a distinction, based on the felicity conditions of the complex speech act of arguing as modelled in van Eemeren and Grootendorst's pragma-dialectical approach. We introduce a conversational setting, which contains a speech act of arguing that does not count as insincere arguing, while being a *sui generis* form of sincere arguing. We designate it as "cooperative inquiry". Finally, we show that argument evaluation plays a key role in determining whether an instance of arguing counts as either arguing sincerely or insincerely.

Résumé: Dans cet article, nous affirmons qu'il existe deux manières d'argumenter, à savoir l'argumentation sincère et l'argumentation non sincère. Nous établissons une telle distinction, basée sur les conditions de félicité de l'acte de parole complexe consistant à argumenter, tel que modélisé dans l'approche pragma-dialectique de van Eemeren et Grootendorst. Nous introduisons un cadre conversationnel, qui contient un acte de parole d'argumentation qui n'est pas considéré comme une argumentation non sincère, tout en étant une forme sui generis d'argumentation sincère. Nous la désignons comme « enquête coopérative ». Enfin, nous montrons que l'évaluation des arguments joue un rôle clé pour déterminer si un cas d'argumentation compte comme une argumentation sincère ou non.

Keywords: argument evaluation, complex speech act of arguing, cooperative inquiry, sincere and insincere arguing

1. Introduction

Argumentation is a multifaceted phenomenon that can be conceptually analysed in two primary ways. On the one hand, arguing is a linguistic practice that occurs in everyday conversational settings and cannot be

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divorced from the individuals who engage in it. Arguing is a social activity, in which interactions between individuals adhere to specific rules. On the other hand, arguments can be considered in their own right and evaluated objectively in terms of both content and structure, according to parameters and rules set by logic and probability theory.

Even though these two levels of analysis are conceptually distinct, it is essential to integrate them to comprehensively understand argumentation. Our objective in this paper is to elucidate their interplay. Specifically, we intend to substantiate the following claims: i) Arguing is a complex speech act that can be performed either sincerely or insincerely, depending on the outcome of the speaker's evaluation (if any) of the arguments she uses, and regardless of their inherent properties. ii) Arguments can be contained in different conversational settings. We describe one of them in particular, which we name "cooperative inquiry". iii) Correct argument evaluation makes a difference in the overall characterization of the complex speech acts of arguing as both sincere and insincere. While it does not directly impact the felicity conditions of the speech act of arguing, it is important particularly from the listener's perspective, and establishes normative constraints for sincere arguing.

This paper is structured as follows. In Section 1, we provide a characterisation of argumentation that identifies it with the complex illocutionary act of arguing within the pragma-dialectical approach introduced by van Eemeren and Grootendorst. In Section 2, we propose to apply the distinction between sincere and insincere promising (Searle 1970) to the complex illocutionary act of arguing. We contend that the speech act of arguing can be exhaustively categorized into sincere and insincere arguing, with this distinction based on a more refined analysis of the felicity conditions of the act. In Section 3, we discuss the problem of the use of arguments without arguing, following Blair (2011). We extend Blair’s remarks on inquiry by analysing cooperative inquiry and describe how insincere arguing differs from the speech act of arguing involved in cooperative inquiry. Cooperative inquiry includes an instance of the speech act of arguing, which partially differs from the act of sincere arguing, while not coinciding with a form of insincere arguing. In Section 4, we explore in more details how the speaker's argument

evaluation impacts on the distinction between sincere and insincere arguing and show that such an evaluation allows for the consideration of normative aspects within the act of arguing.

2. Argumentation as a Complex Illocutionary Act

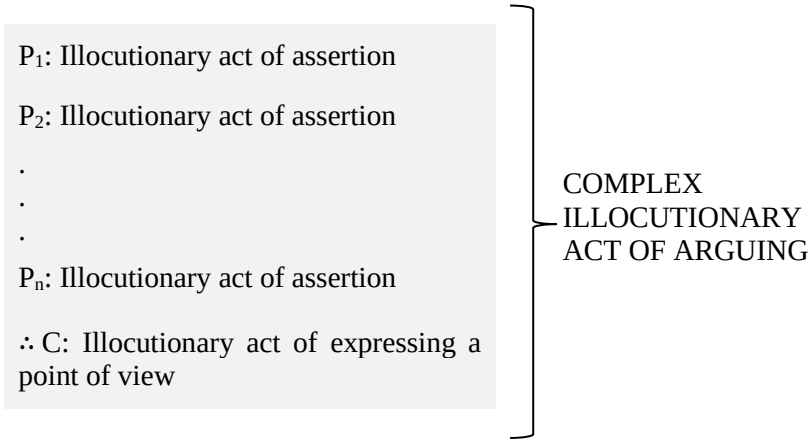
Our starting point to characterise sincere and insincere arguing is to provide a satisfactory account of argumentation. Now, it should be recognised that "there is no correct (or universally-endorsed) definition of […] 'argumentation'" (O'Keefe 2012, p. 20). But we suggest identifying argumentation with the speech act of arguing, as developed by van Eemeren and Grootendorst (1982; 1984; 2004).

Building upon Austin's (1962) and especially Searle's (1970; 1979) accounts of speech acts, van Eemeren and Grootendorst distinguish between elementary and complex illocutionary acts, and define arguing as a specific case of the latter. Complex illocutionary acts are typically composed of elementary illocutionary acts that are placed at the sentence level: in the case of arguing, the building blocks are typically assertions, which possess their own assertoric force at the sentence level, but that jointly acquire a different illocutionary force at the textual level. What is crucial is how these elementary illocutionary acts of assertion relate to each other.

> The uttering together of particular sentences can only be a performance of the speech act of arguing if those sentences are linked in a specific manner to the uttering of another sentence: the expressed opinion to which the argumentation refers. (van Eemeren and Grootendorst 1982, p. 5)

In other words, "the speech act of argumentation cannot stand by itself but can only be regarded as argumentation if it is linked to another speech act which expresses a standpoint" (Henkemans 2014). Within the complex illocutionary act of arguing, one can observe a peculiar structure through which the elementary illocutionary acts of asserting are linked together to provide rational support to the content of the illocutionary act of expressing an opinion or a standpoint (see also Henkemans 2014, p. 43). The link between these utterances is grounded on a relation of justification, which is not further investigated in van Eemeren and Grootendorst's framework.

This account of arguing can be represented schematically as follows:



As an illocutionary act, the complex illocutionary act of arguing requires some specific felicity conditions (van Eemeren and Grootendorst 1984, pp. 31-33):

1. *Propositional content condition:* utterances 1, 2, …, n constitute the elementary speech acts 1, 2, …, n, in which a commitment is undertaken to the propositions expressed.

2. *Essential condition:* the performance of the constellation of speech acts that consists of the elementary speech acts 1, 2, …, n counts as an attempt by the speaker to justify p, that is to convince the listener of the acceptability of his standpoint with respect to p.

3. *Preparatory conditions:*

    a. The speaker believes that the listener does not accept (or at least does not automatically or wholly accept) their standpoint with respect to p.
    b. The speaker believes that the listener is prepared to accept the propositions expressed in the elementary speech acts 1, 2, …, n.
    c. The speaker believes that the listener is prepared to accept the constellation of elementary speech acts 1, 2, …, n as an acceptable justification of p.

4. *Responsibility* [or sincerity] *conditions:*

    a. The speaker believes that his standpoint with respect to p is acceptable.
    b. The speaker believes that the propositions expressed in the elementary speech acts 1, 2, …, n are acceptable.
    c. The speaker believes that the constellation of the elementary speech acts 1, 2, …, n is an acceptable justification of p.

In case all these conditions are met, the performance of the illocutionary complex act of arguing is felicitous, and it "will be recognized as such by the listener" (van Eemeren and Grootendorst 1982, p. 8). On the contrary, depending on the conditions that are not fulfilled, there are four different occurrences of infelicitous complex illocutionary acts of arguing. If the propositional content condition is not fulfilled, the speech act is *void*; if the first preparatory condition is not fulfilled, the speech act is *superfluous*, whereas if the second and/or the third conditions are not fulfilled, the speech act is *pointless*. Finally, if the sincerity conditions are not met, the speech act is an *attempt to manipulate* the listener (van Eemeren and Grootendorst 1982, pp. 10-11).

Now, according to van Eemeren and Grootendorst, if the complex illocutionary act is felicitous, it must be constitutively accompanied to the associated perlocution of convincing. In the essential condition, they lay down the relation between convincing and arguing: convincing is the perlocutionary act that is always pursued by the speaker performing the complex illocutionary act of arguing. That is, if the speaker performs a speech act of arguing, that implies an attempt at convincing the listener. But for the listener to be convinced, it is not sufficient that the act of arguing is felicitous. After all, "the attempt to convince may fail, even though the listener has recognized the speech utterances as argumentation" (van Eemeren and Grootendorst 1982, p. 12). In other words, the felicity conditions for arguing are different from those of convincing, the main difference being the point of view from which they are defined: the conditions for a successful complex illocutionary act of arguing are formulated from the speaker's viewpoint, whereas those for an effective perlocutionary act of convincing are based on the listener's perspective. Thus, despite the act of arguing being felicitous,

that of convincing may fail. However: "[a]lthough arguing and convincing are two clearly distinct acts, there is [...] nevertheless a specific relationship between them: the one act (arguing) is the *means* whereby the *end*, i.e. that the other act (convincing) is effective, is achieved" (van Eemeren and Grootendorst 1982, p. 13). Indeed, the two acts so connected relate essentially to different aspects of the same complete speech act (see Table 1 below): on the one hand, arguing relates to the communicative aspects of the performance of the complex speech act, whereas convincing relates to the interactional aspects that stem from said performance (van Eemeren and Grootendorst 1984, pp. 49-50).

For van Eemeren and Grootendorst (1982; 1984), the perlocutionary effect of convincing and its interactional aspects rely on some conventions essentially tied to the use of some argumentative schemes that are taken to be rationally reliable within the linguistic community, in which the complex speech act of arguing is performed. Specifically, these conventional features are the ones that ground the means-end relationship that gives rise to what they call the "associated perlocution" between arguing and convincing.

Finally, the perlocutionary effect of convincing is not regarded as an internal cognitive state of mind, but rather it must elicit an externalised linguistic behaviour that is analysable in terms of a further illocutionary act of acceptance performed by the listener (see van Eemeren and Grootendorst 1984, p. 73, Fig. 3.2).

The overall account of arguing and its perlocutionary associated act of convincing given by van Eemeren and Grootendorst is summarised in the Table 1 below. Here, S_1 and L_1 are the speaker who performs the act of arguing and the listener, respectively. S_2 and L_2 are the very same agents, but they take opposite roles as before when they are involved in the perlocutionary effect stage, specifically when S_2 makes her possible change of belief explicit. U_1, U_2 (, …, U_n) are the utterances 1, 2, …, n, which constitute the elementary speech acts (i.e., assertions) of arguing. *O* is the conclusion of the	perlocutionary effect

argument, which is the proposition S_1 is trying to support.[1] associated perlocution		
illocution	perlocution	illocution
arguing	**convincing**	accepting
S_1	L_1	S_2 (=L_1)
preparatory conditions		*preparatory conditions*
S_1 believes that L_1: - does not accept *O* - will accept the propositions expressed in U_1, U_2 (, …, U_n) - will accept the constellation U_1, U_2 (, . . . , U_n) as a justification of *O*	L_1 accepts: - *O* - the propositions of U_1, U_2 (, …, U_n) - the constellation U_1, U_2 (, . . . , U_n) as a justification of *O*	S_2 believes that L_2: - has made an attempt to convince them of the acceptability of *O*
sincerity conditions		*sincerity conditions*
S_1 believes that: - *O* is acceptable - the propositions of U_1, U_2 (, …, U_n) are acceptable -the constellation U_1, U_2 (, …, U_n) is an acceptable justification of *O* - L_2 (=S_1)		S_2 believes that: - *O* is acceptable - the propositions of U_1, U_2 (, …, U_n) are acceptable - the constellation U_1, U_2 (, …, U_n) is an acceptable justification of *O*

TABLE 1: Arguing (van Eemeren and Grootendorst)

[1] One should note that, differently from van Eemeren and Grootendorst's table, our Table 1 does not include both pro-argumentation and contra-argumentation as distinct ways of arguing. We believe that our account can successfully contribute to explaining cases of contra-argumentation, but nonetheless also believe that its intrinsic complexity requires a separate analysis, which we postpone to another contribution.

This concludes our discussion of the complex illocutionary act of arguing and its associated perlocution of convincing as theorised by van Eemeren and Grootendorst. The issue we now face is as follows: does van Eemeren and Grootendorst's account capture all possible types of arguing?

2. Sincere and insincere arguing

The aim of this section is to further refine van Eemeren and Grootendorst's account to differentiate between two distinct ways of arguing: *sincere* and *insincere* arguing. The sincerity conditions of the complex illocutionary act of arguing, as presented previously, force the speaker S_1 to be sincere in order for the speech act to be felicitous: S_1 is required to believe (a) what she is arguing for, *O*, (b) the premises of her argument, and (c) that these support the conclusion. Consequently, the corresponding act of arguing cannot be anything but sincere. However, we believe that sincere arguing does not exhaust the full spectrum of possibilities with respect to such a complex illocutionary act. For S_1 can legitimately perform argumentation insincerely. This too – we claim – qualifies as arguing, although insincere.

Insincere arguing corresponds to the attempt at manipulation we mentioned in §1, as it is discussed by van Eemeren and Grootendorst (1982).[2] The point we wish to emphasise is that such an illocutionary act should qualify as arguing as well. The reason is that, even if sincere and insincere arguing have different felicity conditions – as we will discuss it in a moment – they nonetheless (1) are composed by the same simple illocutionary acts – i.e., assertions and the act of expressing a point of view –, and (2) aim to the same perlocutionary effect – i.e., convincing the listener about *O*. Thus, (1) and (2) suggest that sincere and insincere arguing are strictly related, and that it might be possible to subsume both under one theory.

Our idea to include both and distinguish between sincere and insincere arguing in our framework was inspired by Searle's remarks on sincere and insincere promising (Searle 1970, p. 62):

[2] However, for the sake of clarity, it should be noted that arguing insincerely is just one way to try to manipulate some interlocutor, as there are others having nothing to do with argumentation – i.e., not making use of arguments.

> A promise involves an expression of intention, whether sincere or insincere. So to allow for insincere promises, we need only to revise our conditions to state that the speaker takes responsibility for having the intention rather than stating that he actually has it [...] To allow for the possibility of an insincere promise, then we have only to revise condition 6 so that it states not that the speaker intends to do A, but that he takes responsibility for intending to do A

Then, just as "insincere promises are promises nonetheless" (*ibidem*), we claim that in a certain respect insincere arguing is also arguing nonetheless. In fact, analogous to the case of promises, speech acts of arguing can be defined in terms that are so general that they do not include the sincerity conditions that are normally associated with them (those stated in 4). In the case of promises, Searle argues, despite their being sincere or insincere, it is sufficient (provided the other conditions are satisfied) to require that the speaker possesses only the intention of being held responsible for having the intention to realise *p* for the corresponding speech act of promising. Accordingly, we can weaken the sincerity conditions of the speech act of arguing as follows:

4. Responsibility conditions:* S_1 intends that the utterance of 1, 2, …, n and *O* will make them responsible for believing that:

a. *O* is acceptable;
b. the propositions of U_1, U_2 (, …, U_n) are acceptable;
c. the constellation U_1, U_2 (, or …, U_n) is an acceptable justification of *O*.

To avoid confusion, we name the conditions in 4* as responsibility conditions, instead of sincerity conditions. By replacing 4 with 4*, and keeping all other conditions unchanged, a broader and more comprehensive complex illocutionary act of arguing – that includes both sincere and insincere arguing as sub-cases, as we will see in a moment – results. Such a general act of arguing does not include any clause about S_1 actual beliefs about *O*, the propositions of U_1, U_2 (, …, U_n), and whether the latter can serve as a justification of the former. This allows us to classify a speech act as arguing even if the belief-state of S_1 is not

fully transparent, that is, even in case we do not know whether 4a, 4b and 4c hold. The rationale here is that it seems to be very plausible, at least *prima facie*, to say of someone that she is arguing – without further specification –, even when we do not know whether she actually believes all the premises, the conclusion, and that the premises justify the conclusion. On the other hand, it is only when we examine whether or not 4a, 4b and 4c hold that we can further distinguish between sincere and insincere arguing. To sum up, the act of arguing can be represented as follows:

associated perlocution		perlocutionary effect
illocution	perlocution	illocution
arguing	**convincing**	accepting
S_1	L_1	S_2 (=L_1)
preparatory conditions		*preparatory conditions*
S_1 believes that L_1: - does not accept *O* - will accept the propositions expressed in U_1, U_2 (, …, U_n) - will accept the constellation U_1, U_2 (, . . . , U_n) as a justification of *O*	L_1 accepts: - *O* - the propositions of U_1, U_2 (, …, U_n) - the constellation U_1, U_2 (, . . . , U_n) as a justification of *O*	S_2 believes that L_2: - has made an attempt to convince them of the acceptability of *O*
responsibility conditions		*sincerity conditions*
S_1 intends that the utterance U_1, U_2 (, …, U_n) and of *O* will make their responsible for believing that: - *O* is acceptable		S_2 believes that: - *O* is acceptable - the propositions of U_1, U_2 (, …, U_n) are

- the propositions of U_1, U_2 (, …, U_n) are acceptable the constellation U_1, U_2 (, or …, U_n) is an acceptable justification of *O*	acceptable the constellation U_1, U_2 (, …, U_n) is an acceptable justification of *O*
L_2 (=S_1)	

TABLE 2: Arguing

The next move is to define *sincere arguing* as the complex illocutionary act theorized by van Eemeren and Grootendorst (Table 3), whose sincerity conditions are given in 4, and show that sincere arguing is a specific case of arguing. To do that, we need only to prove that the sincerity conditions (4) imply the responsibility conditions (4*). And, crucially, this is exactly the case. If we suppose that someone believes *x* and asserts *x* by means of U, but does not thereby intend to be held responsible for believing it, then S_1 would violate the commitment to *x* that they have taken out through the assertion of *x*, since the commitment is the only necessary component of the belief *x* that S_1 has expressed through the assertion of *x* by means of the utterance U.[3]

associated perlocution		perlocutionary effect
illocution	perlocution	illocution
sincere arguing	**convincing**	accept
S_1	L_1	S_2 (=L_1)
preparatory conditions		*preparatory conditions*
S_1 believes that L_1:		L_1 accepts:
- does not accept *O* will accept the propositions expressed in U_1, U_2		- *O* - the propositions of

[3] On the difference between belief as commitment and belief as internal mental state, see Walton (2007, pp. 51-52).

(,		U_1, U_2 (, …, U_n)
- …, U_n) - will accept the constellation U_1, U_2 (, . . . , U_n) as a justification of *O*	- the constellation U_1, U_2 (, . . . , U_n) as a justification of *O*	S_2 believes that L_2: - has made an attempt to convince them of the acceptability of *O*
Sincerity conditions		*Sincerity conditions*
S_1 believes that: - *O* is acceptable - the propositions of U_1, U_2 (, …, U_n) are acceptable - the constellation U_1, U_2 (, …, U_n) is an acceptable justification of *O*		S_2 believes that: - *O* is acceptable - the propositions of U_1, U_2 (, …, U_n) are acceptable - the constellation U_1, U_2 (, …, U_n) is an acceptable justification of *O*
L_2 (=S_1)		

TABLE 3: Sincere Arguing

One way to make the difference between 4 and 4* (and therefore the one between arguing and sincere arguing) more evident is to introduce the usual distinction between beliefs and commitments. Other than Walton (2007), who distinguishes sharply between commitments that are implied by a speech act of assertion and beliefs conceived as unobservable and private mental states, and thinks that only the former are relevant for the speech act of arguing, we think that a proper characterisation of sincere (and insincere) arguing can only be given on the basis of the notion of belief instead of commitment. Thus, let B be the set of beliefs that S_1 endorses, and C be the set of commitments that S_1 takes responsibility for believing in asserting U_1, U_2 (, …, U_n) and *O* in a complex illocutionary act of arguing within a specific conversational

setting: B = {b_1, b_2… b_n} and C = {c_1, c_2… c_m}. In the case of arguing (Table 2), the only relevant set for the assessment of the fulfilment of the sincerity condition (4) is C. In other words, the speech act of arguing in general is felicitous regardless of the elements of which B is composed. In the cases of sincere (but also insincere, as we will see in a moment) arguing, though, one needs to examine the correspondence between the commitments put forward in the complex speech act of arguing and the corresponding members of the belief set B.

Finally, *insincere arguing*. As for its sincerity conditions, that we will name insincerity conditions for the sake of consistency, we need to impose 4*, and that S_1 does not believe at least one of 4a, 4b and 4c, to which she is nonetheless committed in performing the speech act of arguing. In other words, we need to introduce the following:

*4***. *Insincerity conditions:* S_1 does not believe that:

a. either *O* is acceptable;
b. or propositions of U_1, U_2 (, …, U_n) are acceptable;
c. or the constellation U_1, U_2 (, …, U_n) is an acceptable justification of *O;*

and S_1 intends that the utterance of 1, 2, …, n and *O* will make them responsible for believing that:

d. *O* is acceptable;
e. the propositions of U_1, U_2 (, …, U_n) are acceptable;
f. the constellation U_1, U_2 (, or …, U_n) is an acceptable justification of *O.*

Of course, *4*** implies 4* since the latter is embedded in the former. Thus, insincere arguing is a sub-case of arguing. Also, from *4*** it follows that in case of insincere arguing there is at least one member of the set of commitments, C, that does not correspond to any member of the set of beliefs, B. We can then represent insincere arguing as follows:

associated perlocution		perlocutionary effect
illocution	perlocution	illocution
insincere arguing	**convincing**	accept
S_1	L_1	S_2 (=L_1)
preparatory conditions		*preparatory conditions*
S_1 believes that L_1: - does not accept *O* - will accept the propositions expressed in U_1, U_2 (, …, U_n) - will accept the constellation U_1, U_2 (, . . . , U_n) as a justification of *O*	L_1 accepts: - *O* - the propositions of U_1, U_2 (, …, U_n) - the constellation U_1, U_2 (, . . . , U_n) as a justification of *O*	S_2 believes that L_2: - has made an attempt to convince them of the acceptability of *O*
Insincerity conditions		*Sincerity conditions*
S_1 intends that the utterance U_1, U_2 (, …, U_n) and of *O* will make them responsible for believing that: - *O* is acceptable - the propositions of U_1, U_2 (, …, U_n) are acceptable - the constellation U_1, U_2 (, or …, U_n) is an acceptable justification of *O* and S_1 does not believe that: - either *O* is acceptable - or propositions of U_1, U_2 (, …, U_n) are acceptable		S_2 believes that: -*O* is acceptable -the propositions of U_1, U_2 (, …, U_n) are acceptable the constellation U_1, U_2 (, …, U_n) is an acceptable justification of *O*

or the constellation U_1, U_2 (, …, U_n) is an acceptable justification of *0*
L_2 (=S_1)

TABLE 4: Insincere Arguing

Insincere arguing requires further discussion. We assume the standard epistemic view according to which there are three exclusive and exhaustive propositional attitudes that rational agents can experience with respect to propositions: one can either believe (or accept) *p*, disbelieve (or reject) *p*, or be agnostic (or doxastic neutral) about *p*. Therefore, since to say that "S_1 does not believe that" means that "S_1 either disbelieves that or is agnostic about", the insincerity conditions can be met in multiple ways. For example, S_1 might reject at least one of the premises, say the proposition of U_1; or, she could simply be agnostic about it. Nonetheless, according to our analysis, provided all the remaining felicity conditions are met, both cases result in the same kind of arguing: i.e., insincere arguing. Similarly, S_1 may argue insincerely both in case she rejects that the premises justify the conclusion, and in case she is agnostic about that. Now, this – we argue – should not come as a surprise. For the fault of S_1, which is the reason why the speech act she performs deserves the label 'insincere', is the same in both cases: she makes use of a means of persuasion – i.e., an argument – she herself does not consider reliable. S_1 is in bad faith, and this is precisely what makes her insincere. In other words, whenever S_1's commitments do not match her own beliefs, she is acting insincerely.

As an example, consider the following. Suppose that Sara (S_1) wants to convince Michael (L_1) that *O* is true. Sara has a good inductive argument in support of *O*, so that she finds all its premises acceptable, and believes that they do support *O*. Then, Sara offers such an argument to Michael, and he ends up believing *O*. However, Sara has a second stronger inductive argument against *O* (i.e., which supports the negation of *O*), whose premises she finds all acceptable. Since stronger than the first one, this second argument makes Sara rejects *O*. But she is very careful not to tell Michael anything about it. Then, what kind of act are we facing in this case? Our framework qualifies Sara's arguing as insincere. For despite she believes all the premises and that they support *O*,

she does not believe *O*. Therefore, the insincerity conditions are fulfilled, which makes Sara's speech act of arguing insincere. This, we claim, corresponds to the intuitive evaluation we would give, since Sara deliberately conceals a relevant part of the information she has to achieve her purpose, and makes a commitment on *O* to which there is no corresponding belief.

This concludes the presentation of our framework. If we are right, no use of arguments for convincing others falls outside sincere and insincere arguing, as outlined in our theory. The next step we want to address is to find out whether there are speech acts other than arguing which also includes arguments.

3. Cooperative inquiry: something more than merely arguing

We analysed in detail the complex illocutionary act of arguing and mapped its different sub-cases. We can now turn to the analysis of conversational settings where arguments are put forward, but in which it is not clear whether the complex speech act of arguing is involved, since the associated perlocution between arguing and convincing appears to be missing. We show that a potentially counterintuitive case of insincere arguing (Example 2 below) that could be pointed out to weaken our account of arguing is not a case of insincere arguing, but rather is a case of a broader conversational setting we name cooperative inquiry. We also show that cooperative inquiry does indeed relate to arguing, in that it involves sincere arguing.

Cases in which arguments are used outside the complex speech act of arguing are singled out in Blair (2011, pp. 75-79), and involve the use of arguments in inquiry, problem solving and decision-making. We will focus on inquiry and will analyse cooperative inquiry, i.e. a conversational setting in which more than one individual is involved, with which Blair (2011) does not deal in his paper.

To begin, compare the following two examples:

Example 1: Two math students, Steven and Alice, are preparing for the differential geometry exam. Two days before the test they meet to study together. Steven has covered the entire syllabus, except for Stokes' theorem, which Alice has already studied instead. Since he does not want

to waste time reviewing topics he has already studied, he says: "Presumably, the test will be prepared by professor Smullyan. Most of the tests he prepared in the past were centered on Stokes' theorem. After all, you know how much he insisted on this theorem during his lectures. Therefore, it is very likely that we will find some exercises based on it. So, it is better to go over the Stokes' theorem today". Then Alice replies: "Let's do that, Steven! You have convinced me!". Need to know, although it is true that most of the tests prepared in the past by professor Smullyan were centered on Stokes' theorem, Steven really has no clue about whether the test will be prepared by him this time. That is, he is doxastic neutral about the first premise of his argument.

Example 2: Two mathematicians, Mary and Bob, are working hard to find the proof of a mathematical conjecture, ϕ. They do not know whether ϕ is true or false, since none has been able to prove it yet. After a few hours, Mary says: "I might have something, Bob! Listen to me!". Then, Mary goes through each step of her proof, and once she has finished, she says: "What do you think, Bob? I myself am not entirely convinced that it works, but maybe it does!". Bob replies: "I find your proof sound, Mary! You have convinced me that ϕ is true!".

Consider Example 1 first. As should be clear, Steven performs insincere arguing. For he believes that, in the beginning, Alice would not be willing to go over Stokes' theorem, as she has already spent a lot of time on it and has no reason to do it again. This is why Steven attempts to convince her by using an argument (that is, his speech act is not superfluous). However, even if he makes all the commitments required by the preparatory conditions (4*), he does not believe the first premise of the argument he offers to Alice – i.e., that the test will be presumably prepared by professor Smullyan. Thus, the insincerity conditions (4**) are fulfilled, and these, together with the other felicity conditions, qualify Steven's complex speech act as insincere arguing.

Now, consider Example 2. Like Steven, Mary has some concerns about her proof. Likely, she doubts its validity, that is whether the truth of its premises (i.e., the axioms of the mathematical theory she is working with) guarantees the truth of ϕ. Yet, she offers it to Bob. Is then Mary arguing insincerely? We argue that she is not. For our framework allows us to exclude this possibility based on two reasons. First, unlike

Steven, Mary is not trying to convince Bob. Better: the aim of Mary is not merely to convince Bob that ϕ is true, but rather to investigate whether ϕ is true together with him. This means that the essential condition of the complex illocutionary act of arguing must be integrated: the associated perlocutionary act of convincing is just one aspect of the process of cooperative inquiry. Second, and related to that, Mary does not intend to be held entirely responsible for believing all the elements of the proof she has developed. She makes explicit that her beliefs do not match entirely the commitments she will make in proving ϕ: "I *might* have something [...] I myself *am not entirely convinced that it works*, but *maybe* it does". Thus, in a sense, not only the essential condition seems to be not fulfilled, but also the responsibility conditions are seemingly violated. Therefore, Mary's complex speech act appears to be not simply sincere arguing, let alone insincere arguing. But then, what kind of conversational setting is the one in which Mary and Bob are involved?

Blair (2011, p. 77) argues that argumentation can serve purposes other than convincing others: "Can argumentation have other functions besides attempted rational persuasion?[4] Argumentation can be used to inquire into the truth of a proposition or tenability of a prescription, evaluation or injunction and it can be used to arrive at a decision or a solution to a problem". Blair mentions three situations other than arguing in which argumentation may be involved: inquiry, decision-making and problem solving. While decision-making and problem solving take place when there is a choice to be made among a range of possible actions or among alternative means to achieve some given end, respectively, inquiry occurs when we "are faced with the question of whether to believe some proposition" (*ibidem*). These should be intended as processes which can possibly involve more than one kind of speech acts. For instance, in solving a problem one agent may want to convince the others that some intermediate result is true, and therefore she performs a speech act of sincere arguing. However, not every argument that is put forward in a problem-solving situation is bound to serve a persuasive purpose. For example, one agent may propose an argument without endorsing either the conclusion or claiming that it is a good argument,

[4] Modulo some unimportant differences, Blair´s attempted rational persuasion corresponds to our illocutionary complex speech act of arguing.

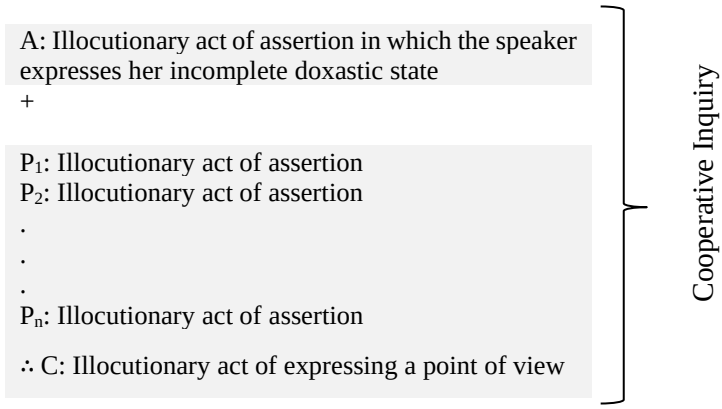
but only for the purpose of evaluating it with her collaborators (as in Example 2). But again, this does not answer the question of what conversational situation is described in Example 2. In this regard, we claim that the situation in which Mary and Bob are involved is very similar to the inquiry described in Blair (2011). The only differences are that Blair does not model inquiry as involving a speech act of arguing, and that his inquiry is carried out by one single rational agent.

Now, to supplement Blair's view on inquiry, there should be no question that there are indeed cooperative inquiries. These are situations in which two or more agents are confronted with the question of whether to believe some proposition and work together to find out. We argue, in line with Blair (2011), that even in cooperative inquiry, argumentation cannot be plausibly modelled as merely having persuasion as its core objective. Crucially, what makes sincere arguing in cooperative inquiry different from mere sincere arguing, is the inclusion of a further speech acts of assertion, in which the speaker makes clear her incomplete doxastic state – as in the Example 2 – so that both the essential and the responsibility conditions of the speech act of sincere arguing are weakened[5]. In other words, when rational agents take part in cooperative inquiry their doxastic states must be fully transparent – that is, they must be intellectually honest to each other –, so that their beliefs match their commitments entirely. Yet, Mary puts forward an argument within a complex speech act of arguing, which she desires, if taken out of context, to be interpreted as an argument in which Mary´s beliefs match her commitments.

In Example 2, in which Mary does not fully believe (yet) that the proof she has found is sound, and for that very reason she commits herself to not being held fully responsible to believe that her proof is sound. Despite of this, in a sense, Mary still wants to convince Bob that the proof is sound, even in a contextually based sense.

Thus, we can represent the structure of the process of cooperative inquiry as follows:

[5] To be noted, the speech act of assertion that expresses the incomplete doxastic state of the speaker can be either left implicit or made explicit, given the specific features of the conversational settings. For explanatory purposes, it is nevertheless useful to have it expressed.



To sum up, Example 2 involves a complex speech act of arguing, since its felicity conditions, even if a weakened from, are met, but it does not merely intend to produce the same perlocutionary effect. This is because the true aim of Mary is not to convince Bob, but instead to find out, together with him, whether or not ϕ is true. As suggested, such a different kind of use of sincere arguing is specific to cooperative inquiry.

We believe that cooperative inquiry is the closest – but distinct, as we have tried to show – case of rational process involving the speech act of arguing that does not seem to be fully captured by our account of sincere and insincere arguing. But at least another example of argumentation that is not employed in a speech act of arguing is possible: arguments can be used to serve explanatory purposes. This happens when all the agents involved agree in advance that some proposition *p* is true, since somehow already justified, but some of them does not understand why is so.[6] Then, one of them (the speaker) explains why *p* is true by means of an argument whose conclusion is *p* itself. These cases deserve a separate investigation, and we cannot enter such a discussion here. But it should be clear that they do not qualify as speech acts of arguing for one precise reason: in order for the speaker to explain to the listener why *p* by using an argument, both of them have to believe *p* from the beginning. But this violates the preparatory conditions of the speech act of arguing, which excludes that they are instances of such speech act.

[6] See e.g. Dummett (1974) and Haack (1982) who distinguishes two kinds of arguments, suasive and explanatory arguments.

As we have shown, arguments are essential when arguing, but they can also play important roles in other conversational settings. We conclude our investigation by further examining the role of argument evaluation in the complex illocutionary act of arguing.

4. The speech act of arguing and argument evaluation

One significant aspect of the distinction between sincere and insincere arguing is that it is drawn from the speaker's perspective. For it is based on the correspondence between S_1's commitments and beliefs, and the latter are transparent only to S_1 herself. Interestingly, there may be also another way to draw such a distinction that is based on the argument evaluation performed by S_1.[7] The idea is very simple: S_1 argues sincerely just in case she makes use of arguments that are good according to her argument evaluation. Instead, either if S_1 employs arguments that she judges as bad, or if she makes use of arguments that she does not know whether they are good or bad – maybe because she has never performed a proper evaluation – then she is arguing insincerely[8].

However, things are slightly more complicated than that. When the illocutionary act of arguing only involves deductive arguments, the previous characterization of sincere and insincere arguing based on S_1's

[7] See Varzi, A., & Rohatyn, D. & Nolt, J. (1998, pp. 1-46). As an anonymous reviewer suggests, it is worth to point out that we intend argument evaluation as strictly dependent on the evaluation of the intrinsic properties of arguments, avoiding thereby any reference to the internal states or rational skills of the speaker. The reference to such a form of self-evaluation may be interesting on different levels when it comes to the speech act of arguing, i.e. from a psychological point of view and potentially from the point of view of virtue theories of argumentation (see below), although this exceeds the scope of our analysis.

[8] The distinction between good and bad arguments does not perfectly match our distinction between sincere and insincere arguing. Leaving aside potential complications stemming from an inaccurate evaluation of the properties of an argument (see Section 4 of this paper), there is clearly a form of arbitrariness in place concerning the sincerity with which the speaker performs an act of arguing as a result of the evaluation of the intrinsic properties of an argument. It seems reasonable to think that the speaker must be in a sense epistemically virtuous, to make follow from her evaluation of the argument a corresponding speech act of sincere arguing (same goes for the insincere arguing case, in which the speaker may be thought as epistemically vicious). On the connection between epistemic virtues and vices and argumentation, one could refer to the so-called "virtue-based theories of argumentation". A comprehensive bibliographical overview is provided in Aberdein (2015).

argument evaluation works correctly. After all, the soundness of deductive arguments guarantees the truth of their conclusions. This means that, if S_1 performs an illocutionary act of arguing involving only deductive arguments that she evaluates as good (i.e., sound), then its sincerity conditions are necessarily met. For to evaluate a deductive argument as good means to believe that all its premises are acceptable and that they necessarily imply the conclusion, which makes the conditions 4b and 4c fulfilled. Then, given the "necessary" nature of the logical consequence relation, the condition 4a is also met, and the act of arguing turns out to be sincere.

However, when non-deductive arguments – i.e., non-monotonic arguments – are employed, the situation is more complicated. In this case, the evaluation of the arguments alone is not sufficient to draw the distinction between sincere and insincere arguing.

To see that, let us consider again the above example where Sara wants to convince Michael that *O* is true. Here, Sara makes use of an inductive argument that she evaluates as a good one. Nonetheless, she does not accept its conclusion – which is admissible since the argument is non-deductive –, and therefore she argues insincerely. This apparent discrepancy is solved by requiring that the argument evaluation includes also a comparative assessment with other possible arguments in support of the same conclusion or in support of its negation (i.e., counterarguments). In other words, S_1's argument evaluation must meet the requirement of total evidence. To better understand this point, let us be more precise and call $\mathcal{A}$ the argument that S_1 uses to convince L_1 about *O* – so that *O* is the conclusion of $\mathcal{A}$. Then, suppose that S_1 evaluates $\mathcal{A}$ as good. As said, this is not sufficient for S_1's arguing to be sincere. For in order for S_1's arguing to be sincere, it is also necessary that S_1 accepts *O*, which in turn requires that $\mathcal{A}$ is, together with the other evidence supporting *O*, overall *stronger* than the evidence supporting its negation. In general, and more precisely, we must require the fulfilment of the following condition for S_1´s argument evaluation to provide the ground for distinguishing between sincere and insincere arguing: for S_1 to perform sincere arguing by means of an argument it is necessary that the argument is a good one according to her evaluation. Said evaluation must include the entire evidence she is aware of, as well as a documentable procedure aligned with argumentation theory standards**.** In other words, in the case of sincere arguing with non-deductive arguments this

amounts to requiring that the speaker does not voluntarily omit a relevant part of her evaluation – i.e., the comparative assessment – so that she employs only good arguments that support a conclusion that she actually believes – as it is guaranteed by the sincerity conditions of the act.

Finally, it should be noted that the distinction between sincere and insincere arguing disregards the actual intrinsic features of the argument that S_1 employs. More clearly, the distinction depends on the argument evaluation performed by S_1, but the evaluation may simply be wrong. This gives rise to several possible cases. For example, suppose that, in arguing with L_1, S_1 makes use of an argument $\mathcal{A}_1$ that she evaluates as bad. Therefore, S_1 is arguing insincerely. However, S_1 performed a wrong argument evaluation, since actually $\mathcal{A}_1$ is a good argument. Thus, S_1 acts insincerely even if she uses a reliable means of persuasion – i.e., a good argument. On the other hand, suppose that S_1 makes use of an argument $\mathcal{A}_2$ that she evaluates as good, but in fact is not. In this case, S_1 is performing a sincere act of arguing even though she is using an unreliable means of persuasion.

In light of our previous remarks in this final section, the felicity conditions or the speech act of sincere and insincere arguing (specifically the sincerity/insincerity conditions) can be rephrased in terms of the process of argument evaluation performed by the speaker S_1:

	Sincerity conditions	Insincerity conditions
Original Formulation	S_1 believes that: - *O* is acceptable - the propositions of U_1, U_2 (, …, U_n) are acceptable - the constellation U_1, U_2 (, …, U_n) is an acceptable justification of *O*	S_1 does not believe that: - either *O* is acceptable - or propositions of U_1, U_2 (, …, U_n) are acceptable - or the constellation U_1, U_2 (, …, U_n) is an acceptable justification of *O*

Alternative Formulation	The argument composed of the sentences uttered in the constellation U_1, U_2 (, …, U_n) and in the conclusion *O* is a good argument according to S_1´s evaluation based on logical and probabilistic criteria.	The argument composed of the sentences uttered in constellation U_1, U_2 (, …, U_n) and in the conclusion *O* is a bad argument according to S_1´s evaluation based on logical and probabilistic criteria.

To conclude, and related to that, a further point to be emphasized is that also the normative role played by logic (and probability theory) can help distinguishing between sincere and insincere arguing. To say that logic is normative means that it exerts a normative force on the execution of certain processes by a cognitive subject. According to the standard conception, logic is normative for reasoning.[9] In this case, logic would make some constraints trough some so-called *bridge principles* on the doxastic attitudes the agent can have.[10] However, logic could be normative not only for "internal activities", such as reasoning, but also for the external manifestations of these internal processes.[11] For instance, logic may codify the standards to which we hold ourselves in our practices of assertion, argumentation, and possibly others. We take logic (and probability theory) to be normative in both these two senses, and we argue that both play an important role in the complex speech act of arguing. On the one hand, when S_1 evaluates the argument she intends to use to convince L_1 about *O*, she should adhere to the dictates of logic to determine if such arguments are good or bad. Here, normativity of logic in the first sense is at play. If S_1 aligns her evaluation according to logic, then such an evaluation will be correct; if not, it will be incorrect. But crucially, this sense of normativity of logic is not relevant for S_1 to

[9] About this first sense of normativity, see Section 2.1 of Steinberger, Florian, "The Normative Status of Logic", The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Winter 2022 Edition)

[10] As an example, even though a problematic one, consider the following proposed principle: If S 's beliefs logically imply A, then S ought to believe that A.

[11] About this second sense of normativity, see Section 2.3 of Steinberger, Florian, "The Normative Status of Logic" in The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Winter 2022 Edition),

argue sincerely: S_1 can argue sincerely even though her argument evaluation is incorrect, i.e. if she takes a bad argument to be a good one. Instead, when S_1 performs the speech act of arguing, it is normativity of logic in the second sense which is relevant. Indeed, plausibly logic dictates the performance of a speech act of arguing that employs only good arguments. While this constraint is respected in the case of sincere arguing, it is completely circumvented in insincere arguing. Therefore, the distinction between sincere and insincere arguing can be drawn based on whether S_1 respects or evades the normativity of logic in the second of the two senses mentioned.

5. Conclusion

In this paper, we have extended and refined van Eemeren and Grootendorst's theory of the speech act of arguing to account also for insincere arguing. To achieve this goal, we set some specific felicity conditions for both sincere and insincere arguing and showed that this distinction can be also explained in terms of the correspondence between the beliefs and commitments of the speaker, or in terms of the outcome of her argument evaluation, provided we include in such an evaluation process also a comparative assessment with other arguments and counterarguments for the same conclusion. Furthermore, we argued that the speech act of sincere arguing can be contained in the conversational setting we designate as cooperative inquiry. Whether there are other speech acts containing arguments, as for example the speech act of explaining, and how they differ from the speech acts of arguing in light of the distinction between sincere and insincere arguing, will be a matter for future investigation.

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