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In the context of a critical discussion the arguer bases his choice of arguments on the type of critical reactions that the other party has put forward with regard to the arguer's standpoint. In the context of a monologue, however, the arguer should determine in advance whether to simply mention supporting arguments or, in addition to doing so, mention and refute possible counterarguments. The aim of this study is to examine theoretically and empirically which of these two options is more persuasive. Relying on the pragma-dialectical concept of strategic manoeuvring, it is argued that mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument is more persuasive than mentioning only supporting arguments. This theoretical claim is tested empirically. Results have shown that ordinary arguers find argumentative messages in which, in addition to a supporting argument, a counterargument is mentioned and then refuted more persuasive than messages in which only supporting arguments are mentioned.

Mentioning and Then Refuting an Anticipated Counterargument

Bilal Amjarso

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SicSat
International Centre for the Study of Argumentation
Postbus 3267
1001 AB Amsterdam
The Netherlands

(+) 31 (0) 20 525 47 12

sicsat-fgw@uva.nl
www.sicsat.nl

In cooperation with:

Rozenberg Publishers
Lindengracht 302 d+e
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(+) 31 (0) 20 625 54 29

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A conceptual and empirical study of the persuasiveness of a mode of strategic manoeuvring

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Promotor:	Prof. dr. F.H. van Eemeren
Co-promotores:	Dr. E.T. Feteris
	Dr. H.L.M. Meuffels
Overige Leden:	Dr. B.J. Garssen
	Prof. dr. T. van Haaften
	Prof. dr. mr. P.J. van den Hoven
	Prof. dr. E.C.W. Krabbe

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To my niece, Nihal

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1 Object and aims of the study

Mentioning and then refuting anticipated counterarguments against the standpoint is a commonplace technique in argumentative monologues.[1] A writer addressing an audience of readers can make it clear to his readers that he does not expect them to take his views uncritically and point out and then refute the counterarguments that he anticipates from them. To give a clearer view of what this way of arguing consists of, I will analyse two examples taken from two different forms of argumentative monologues in which arguers address counterarguments anticipated from their addressees.[2]

The first example is an advertisement published on January the 2nd , 2005, in the Dutch newspaper *De Telegraaf*:

Surprise

The Bible has, during the past few weeks, proven to be a bestseller. The sale success has surpassed all expectations. How did that happen? Research has shown that almost 70%

[1] An argumentative monologue can be spoken or written. In this study I focus on written argumentative monologues. By "anticipated counterarguments" I mean here and in what follows arguments anticipated by the arguer who defends the standpoint.

[2] Both examples are translated from Dutch. The complete original texts are provided in the appendix.

of the Dutch consider the Bible a book of and for everyone. And: in these turbulent and dark days people look for peace and enlightenment.

But not everyone sees the Bible as a book of peace and enlightenment. For some people the word 'Bible' evokes unpleasant feelings. That's truly a pity, for the Bible is indeed of and for everyone!

Whoever reads the Bible recalls timeless feelings and insights and discovers why after thousands of years the Bible is still relevant.

Even in 2005 the Bible still has much to tell and through the new translation is more comfortable to read than ever.

Find out for yourself and experience the surprise.

In this text, the arguer defends the prescriptive standpoint that *You should buy the Bible Translation*. To support this standpoint, he provides the arguments *that research has shown that almost 70% of the Dutch consider the Bible a book of and for everyone* and that *in these turbulent and dark days people look for peace and enlightenment.* He then acknowledges something that is against the acceptability of his standpoint, namely the counterargument that *not everyone sees the Bible as a book of peace and enlightenment.* The arguer goes on to mention what appears to be an argument supporting this counterargument, namely that *for some people the word 'Bible' evokes unpleasant feelings.* The arguer eventually responds to the counterargument by stating that *the Bible is indeed of and for everyone.*

Another form of argumentative monologue in which arguers address anticipated counterarguments can also be found in newspapers, namely opinion pieces. The second example is an article that appeared on February 9th, 2007, in the opinion column of the Dutch newspaper *Nrc.next*:

No invasion, no occupation and no mistreatment

…

The Dutch media give a largely one-sided image of the Tibetan issue. It is claimed time and time again that Tibet was invaded. Tibet has been part of China since the Qing-dynasty (1644-1911)…

... During the civil war [between the nationalists led by Tsjang Kai Tsjek and the communists] the army was positioned where communists were…. After the fall of nationalism, the communist army replaced the nationalist army in the areas that were

> *left behind [by the nationalists]. This return of communist armies has always been confused with an occupation of Tibet….*
>
> *The Dutch media broadcast mainly on poor and humiliated Tibetans being toughly dealt with by the Chinese policemen. That the Han-Chinese are just as well the victim of Tibetans is not shown.*
>
> *Yes, it all began with a peaceful protest, but if this is not authorised, then it is against the law. That's why it is also not strange that the protesting Tibetans were arrested. If I organised a protest in Holland without authorisation, then I would also be arrested. If I resisted arrest, the Dutch officers would move on to violence…*
>
> *Finally I want to focus attention on human rights. The Tibetans keep harping on about the fact that they are being ill-treated by the Chinese government. That's not true. The Chinese authorities treat the Tibetans no worse than the Han-Chinese ….*
>
> *It is true that China is not up to the mark as regards human rights. The Chinese people are doing their best to overcome this shortcoming. They have been fighting for more freedom against the authorities. Changes ought to be made gradually. China has no need for 'help' from outside. The problem of Tibet is something that China should solve on its own, just as it did with the problem of Taiwan.*

The writer of this text defends the descriptive standpoint that *the Dutch media give a one-sided representation of the Tibetan issue and forget that Tibet simply is part of China*. He starts his article with an account of the recent history of the region of Tibet. This historical account serves to support the sub-standpoint that *the return of the communist armies after the defeat of the nationalist armies around 1945 has always been confused with an occupation of Tibet.* This sub-standpoint is in turn an argument for another sub-standpoint, namely that *Tibet has been part of China since the Qing-dynasty (1644-1911)*, which in turn is an argument for the main standpoint.

In the text at hand, the writer does not seem to hesitate about mentioning counterarguments. On the contrary, he discusses what can be regarded as strong counterarguments because all these counterarguments relate to issues that are commonly known to be sensitive with respect to the image of China in the international community, such as the use of violence against protesters and the overall situation of human rights in China.

The first explicit mention of a counterargument in the article occurs when the arguer states that the Dutch media show only images of Tibetans being dealt with in a hard-handed manner by the Chinese police and that non-Tibetan Chinese living in Tibet (the so-called Han-Chinese) are actually the victims of the protests started by Tibetans. The issue of violence seems to present a challenge to the writer's standpoint that the media give a one-sided representation of the events in Tibet. This is why the writer immediately

concedes the counterargument that *it all began with a peaceful protest.* He proceeds to refute this counterargument by stating that *if these protests are not authorised, then they are against the law.* To further support his refutation, he draws an analogy with the Netherlands by arguing that the same would happen in Holland were he to start a protest with no permission from the authorities.

The second counterargument that the writer addresses in his article is that *Tibetans keep harping on about the fact that they are being ill-treated by the Chinese government*. He directly attacks this counterargument by denying that such is the case: *That's not true*. To justify his denial the writer returns to an issue he has already exploited in the article, namely that of the existence of Han-Chinese in Tibet. He justifies his denial of the fact that Tibetans are being mistreated by the Chinese government by stating that *the Chinese authorities treat the Tibetans no worse than the Han-Chinese.*

The last counterargument that the writer addresses in the text also relates to China's well-known human rights record. The writer concedes the counterargument that *China does not come up to the mark as regards human rights*, but refutes it by stating that the Chinese people are all fighting the authorities for their freedom and that changes ought to be affected gradually and without external help.

If the arguers in the two examples above are interested in achieving a maximum persuasive effect on their recipients, there is no doubt as to why they have advanced arguments in support of their standpoints – after all they want to provide reasons for which they want their recipients to accept their standpoint. What makes these examples interesting from an argumentation theoretical perspective is the fact that they contain, in addition to supporting arguments, counterarguments that by definition are not meant to provide reasons for accepting the standpoint. As the analysis of the examples has shown, the writers do not simply mention the counterarguments because they want to inform the addressee of the existence of counter-standpoints or because they want to give the addressee an opportunity to choose the position that best appeals to him. It is obvious from the way the arguers in both examples have gone about addressing the anticipated counterarguments that they do not accept these counterarguments as strong attacks on their standpoint. This is apparent in that for each counterargument they have shown why that counterargument does not present a strong attack on their positions. They have done so through refuting the counterarguments.

The question that this brief analysis raises is in what way mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument contributes to the arguer's aim of getting his standpoint accepted and whether this way of arguing is indeed more conductive to a persuasive outcome than putting forward only those arguments that support the standpoint.

The aim of this study is to provide an answer to these two questions. The two research questions can then be formulated as follows:

How does mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument against a standpoint function as a persuasive way of arguing?

Is an argumentative text in which an arguer mentions and then refutes an anticipated counterargument against his standpoint more persuasive than an argumentative text in which the arguer does not?

Before I embark on addressing these research questions, I should first note that mentioning and then refuting counterarguments occurs in virtually all forms of argumentative monologues. This is why for the sake of achieving a coherent theoretical account of the functioning of this way of arguing some specification with regard to the type of argumentative texts to be studied here is necessary. In this study I will focus on cases of argumentative texts in which an arguer mentions and then refutes an anticipated counterargument against a *prescriptive standpoint*, i.e. a standpoint through which an arguer incites the addressee to take a certain course of action or to abstain from taking a certain course of action. Prescriptive standpoints are central to a genre of argumentative monologues that play an important role in modern life. Health brochures and policy documents, in which prescriptive standpoints with regard to health-risking behaviour and policy issues are defended are prototypical examples of this genre. Addressing anticipated counterarguments in this genre of argumentative monologues acquires special significance because the standpoint that is defended usually concerns issues that affect the individuals' lives. Consequently, if this study will shed light on the function of one's mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument against a prescriptive standpoint, it will indirectly contribute to our understanding of the role of argumentation in these important genres.

1.2 Theoretical approach of the study

The practice of mentioning and then refuting anticipated counterarguments has received considerable attention both from argumentation theorists, particularly rhetoricians, and from persuasion researchers. Scholars from both disciplines have tried to find explanations for why and how an arguer seeking to persuade another party would mention and then refute the other party's counterarguments.

Within argumentation theory, rhetoricians have been concerned with how addressing anticipated counterarguments can be instrumental in persuading an audience. This technique has generally been studied in terms of *prolepsis*, a figure of speech by which the speaker points out and deals with the anticipated objections against his position in order to attain a maximum persuasive effect on the audience. The persuasiveness of argumentation being their main concern, rhetoricians have sought to identify the most effective ways of dealing with anticipated objections (Quintilianus, IX. 2.13-19; Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969). Dialecticians have also studied this way of arguing, albeit that they did not pay attention to its persuasiveness. Snoeck Henkemans (1992, 1995) has shown from a dialectical perspective how mentioning and then refuting anticipated counterarguments can be integrated into a structural analysis of argumentative discourse. Johnson (2000) has argued that responding to anticipated objections is crucial for attaining manifest rationality.

Persuasion researchers [3] have studied the technique of addressing anticipated counterarguments in terms of 'message-sidedness' (Dipboye, 1977, Earl & Pride, 1980, Etgar & Goodwin, 1982, Golden & Alpert, 1987, Hovland, Lumsdaine & Sheffield, 1967, Kamins & Assael, 1987). They classify a message in which the communicator points out an anticipated counterargument as a two-sided message, as opposed to a one-sided message, in which no such argument is addressed. They divide two-sided messages into two types: non-refutational and refutational. In this line of research, the question of whether mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument is more persuasive than simply advancing supporting arguments has been addressed explicitly by investigating empirically whether there is a difference in persuasiveness between these message forms and under which conditions two-sided messages are (more) persuasive (O'Keefe, 1999).

In studying the technique of addressing anticipated counterarguments, rhetoricians and persuasion scholars have had one general objective in common: they are out to account for the rhetorical dimension of these messages. Nonetheless, the two groups of scholars have differed considerably in the methods through which they draw their conclusions regarding the persuasiveness of addressing anticipated counterarguments. Rhetoricians base their claims on common sense and insights into oratorical practice, while persuasion scholars base their claims on findings of experimental research. It can be observed, however, that both groups have overlooked the dialectical dimension of this way of arguing, i.e. its contribution to reasonable resolution of a difference of opinion. As a consequence, they have not addressed the possibility of dialectical success contributing to persuasiveness.

[3] Persuasion research is a branch of quantitative research within marketing and communication and social psychology which investigates the persuasive effects of various types of messages.

In this study it will be shown that the dialectical dimension of argumentation is crucial for determining whether mentioning and refuting anticipated counterarguments is more conductive to a persuasive outcome than mentioning only those arguments that support the standpoint. Relying on the pragma-dialectical theory of argumentation I will place the technique of addressing anticipated counterarguments within the context of the ideal model of critical discussion developed by van Eemeren and Grootendorst (1984, 1992, 2004). In this perspective, the arguer is regarded as a participant in a critical discussion in which he defends his standpoint against another party's criticism.

This study is not the first one to approach this technique from a pragma-dialectical perspective. As pointed out above, Snoeck Henkemans (1992, 1995) has shown that taking the pragma-dialectical theory as a starting point makes it possible to determine how refuting anticipated counterarguments against the arguer's standpoint (or argument) can be integrated into a structural analysis of the arguer's defence of the standpoint. Recent developments in the pragma-dialectical theory, consisting of the introduction of the concept of strategic manoeuvring, have made it possible to study, not only the dialectical dimension, but also the rhetorical dimension of argumentative discourse (van Eemeren & Houtlosser, 2002, 2003) as well as the way in which the two dimensions can complement each other. In particular, the concept of strategic manoeuvring has enabled us to see how aiming to be persuasive and being persuasive are perfectly compatible with being reasonable. This is why the extended pragma-dialectical theory has been helpful in understanding how different argumentative techniques traditionally studied by rhetorical scholars, like *rhetorical questions* and *praeteritio*, can be used within the boundaries of critical discussion (see e.g. Snoeck Henkemans, 2007a, 2007b).

1.3 Method and organisation of the study

Methodologically, this study combines the conceptual apparatus of extant pragma-dialectical theorising with experimental research. The conceptual apparatus will be used to justify hypotheses regarding the persuasiveness of mentioning and then refuting anticipated counterarguments against the standpoint. To test these hypotheses, I will make use of the experimental method.

Because an argumentative text in which an anticipated counterargument against a prescriptive standpoint is mentioned and then refuted will be reconstructed as a part of a critical discussion, it is important to first show how counterarguments occur in the context of a critical discussion and what function they fulfil. By identifying the types of countermove by which an arguer may be confronted in the discussion, it will be possible to show clearly what kind of status counterarguments have in the dialectical process and what

type of commitments they entail for the arguer and for the other party. These commitments will help us to understand the dialectical options that an arguer has for dealing with a counterargument against his standpoint if he is to defend his standpoint in a reasonable way. Particularly, refutations will be shown to form a special type of reaction in this process.

Having identified the various forms of counterarguments that can occur as well as the ways in which these counterarguments can be dealt with within a pragma-dialectical framework, I will proceed to explain how addressing anticipated counterarguments functions as a mode of strategic manoeuvring. This step amounts to identifying the ways in which the dialectical and rhetorical dimensions of mentioning and then refuting anticipated counterarguments are reconciled. The dialectical dimension of this anticipatory way of arguing is to be understood in light of the role assigned to participants in a critical discussion, which is to subject the standpoints in question (and the arguments brought forward in support of these standpoints) to critical testing, so that a reasonable resolution is attained. The rhetorical dimension is manifested in the arguer's endeavour to present his position in the discussion in the strongest way possible so that the aim of winning the discussion can be achieved.

Showing how the dialectical dimension and the rhetorical dimension of mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument can be reconciled can help to understand how this way of arguing can function as a persuasive mode of strategic manoeuvring, but it cannot help us to determine if it is more persuasive than mentioning only supporting arguments. To be able to draw theoretically justified claims regarding this question, the type of dialectical contribution that each of these strategic manoeuvres makes to defending the standpoint at issue on the merits will be specified. It will be shown in what way both addressing anticipated counterarguments and mentioning only supporting arguments can be characterised as perfectly reasonable and potentially persuasive modes of strategic manoeuvring and why the former mode can be regarded to possess more dialectical strength than the latter. This dialectical strength, I will argue, is crucial to showing whether an instance of strategic manoeuvring in which an anticipated counterargument is mentioned and then refuted is more persuasive than an instance of strategic manoeuvring in which the standpoint is defended simply through supporting arguments. In order to find empirical support for my theoretical claim, two experimental studies will be conducted to test, using a multiple message design, if an instance of strategic manoeuvring in which the arguer anticipates and then refutes a counterargument against his prescriptive standpoint is more persuasive than an instance of strategic manoeuvring in which the arguer simply advances arguments supporting this standpoint.

In order to answer the two research questions of this project, the remainder of this study will be divided into five chapters, apart from this chapter. Chapters 2 to 5 constitute the conceptual part of the study, Chapter 6 the experimental part. In Chapter 2, I provide an account of the way argumentation theorists and persuasion researchers have gone about dealing with the rhetorical and dialectical dimensions of argumentation in studying the persuasive functioning of mentioning and then refuting anticipated counterarguments. In Chapter 3, I explain, starting from the ideal model of a critical discussion developed by van Eemeren and Grootendorst, how counterarguments occur in the context of critical discussion and how they differ from other types of countermoves that an arguer can be confronted with when advancing a standpoint. In Chapter 4 I describe the various ways in which an arguer can react to these countermoves, emphasising the dialectical commitments involved in refutations of counterarguments. In Chapter 5, I investigate the way in which mentioning and then refuting anticipated counterarguments can be regarded as a persuasive mode of strategic manoeuvring. I then investigate whether this anticipatory way of arguing is dialectically stronger than putting forward only supporting arguments and in what way dialectical strength can, at least theoretically, enhance persuasiveness. In chapter 6, I will report on the findings of two experiments conducted with the aim of showing whether an argumentative text in which an anticipated counterargument against a standpoint is mentioned and then refuted is more persuasive than an argumentative text in which only supporting arguments are put forward. In chapter 7, I summarise the findings reported in the previous five chapters and point out certain limitations of the research, emphasising at the same time how these limitations can open up new perspectives for conducting theoretically informed empirical research into the persuasiveness of addressing other countermoves that can be anticipated.

CHAPTER 2

Dialectical and rhetorical insights concerning the persuasiveness of addressing anticipated counterarguments

2.1. Introduction

Whether or not it is more persuasive to mention and refute a counterargument that the arguer may anticipate with regard to his standpoint has been an intriguing subject of inquiry for argumentation and persuasion scholars. Depending on their theoretical starting points and respective aims, these scholars have differed in opinion as to what makes mentioning and then refuting anticipated counterarguments a persuasive way of arguing. Starting from the assumption that accounting for the rhetorical and dialectical dimensions of argumentation can contribute to our understanding of the persuasiveness of argumentative texts in which counterarguments are mentioned and then refuted, I will in this chapter investigate how these two dimensions of argumentation have shaped the explanations argumentation theorists have provided for the persuasive functioning of this way of arguing and how these two dimensions have been integrated.

It is necessary to start by delimiting the dialectical and the rhetorical dimensions of argumentation and identifying what a dialectical or rhetorical explanation of the persuasiveness of addressing anticipated counterarguments amounts to. A dialectical understanding of argumentation emphasises its function in resolving a difference of opinion by subjecting the standpoints in question to a rule-governed critical testing

procedure (van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 2004). A rhetorical understanding of argumentation stresses the role of argumentation in getting a particular audience to accept the standpoint (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969). While in the case of a dialectical understanding of argumentation the rules governing the argumentation are derived from an ideal model for conducting argumentative exchanges, such as exemplified in the pragma-dialectical theory, in the case of a rhetorical understanding the rules are based on the audience's values and assumptions (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969).

The kind of explanation that an author gives for the persuasive functioning of the technique of addressing anticipated counterarguments is necessarily influenced by the kind of understanding the author has of argumentation, i.e. whether dialectical, rhetorical, or both. For an author following a rhetorical perspective on argumentation, addressing anticipated counterarguments is persuasive in certain situations but not in others, i.e. depending on the audience being addressed and the occasion of the address. For an author following a dialectical perspective, addressing anticipated counterarguments is persuasive in as far as it contributes to the critical testing necessary for the argumentation to convince a reasonable party. Other authors, however, recognise the importance of both dimensions of argumentation when explaining the persuasiveness of addressing anticipated counterarguments. The questions that are to be answered are: how, according to these authors, does the technique of mentioning and then refuting anticipated counterarguments function persuasively? And how have the dialectical and/or rhetorical views of argumentation been applied in their analyses of the functioning of this argumentative technique?

2.2. Classical approaches

In classical rhetoric, the practice of addressing anticipated counterarguments is mainly studied under the rubric of *prolepsis*.[4] Greek scholars have considered the arguer's ability to address anticipated objections as a sign of argumentative competence. They understood that this way of arguing, if carried out correctly, can have a powerful effect on the listener, be it an audience or an opposing party.

In their practice and instruction of public oratory the sophists made use of various argumentative strategies and forms of argument, some of which have received considerable attention from argumentation scholars over the centuries. One of these strategies is addressing anticipated objections in one's speeches to get one's position accepted, and at the same time to rebut an opponent's position. Protagoras, to start with, talked of setting

[4] Lanham (1991) also lists the following names for "[f]orseeing and forestalling objections in advance: *anticipation, praeceptio, praeoccupatio, praesumptio and procatalepsis* (p. 120).

opposing arguments against each other in the discourse, on the assumption that for any position that the orator can express some opposing argument can be found that is equally compelling and therefore worth refuting (Tindale, 2004). In his *Tetralogies*, where he provides various model speeches aimed at instructing orators to solve legal problems, Antiphon, another eminent representative of the sophist school, includes arguments belonging to both sides of the issue. By doing this, Antiphon wants to show how a defendant can address opposing arguments in his introductory speech (Tindale, 2004, p. 53).

The addressing of opposing arguments has, at least in the case of the above orators, been studied as a rhetorical technique, i.e. as a means to persuade a specific audience. In the case of Protagoras and Antiphon it is for instance the jury or judges present at a court trial, but an awareness of the dialectical nature of this way of arguing is not completely absent. Protagoras' idea that for any position one can think of there will be a corresponding opposing argument reveals an acknowledgement of the importance of considering the audience as an opposing party that should be taken seriously. This way of constructing the audience betrays, in my view, an implicit dialectical understanding of argumentation. Through encouraging people to pay attention to opposition, the Sophists aimed to achieve, as Tindale (2004) explains, 'understanding, to open up perspectives, and to explore an issue' (p. 46). According to Tindale, the inclusion of opposing arguments in their speeches exhibits an 'invitational rhetoric': a rhetoric that assumes the audience as an active participant in the discourse and encourages the audience to think for itself, something that at first sight might seem inconsistent with the prevalent view that we have of the Sophists today.

The importance of the role of the other party has been more elaborately considered by Quintilian in his *Institute of Oratory* (*Books IV, VI, VII & IX of the Institute of Oratory*), where he discusses the technique of addressing anticipated counterarguments in terms of 'prolepsis'. As the following passage taken from Book IV shows, Quintilian considers it as an effective strategy:

> It will also be found advantageous to anticipate the objections that may be raised by our opponent, as Cicero does when he says "I know that some persons are surprised that one, who for such a number of years has defended so many and attacked none, should have come forward as the accuser of Verres," he then goes on to show that the accusation which he has undertaken is really a defence of the allies, an artifice known as πρόληψις or anticipation. (Book IV, i, 49)

In his treatment, Quintilian focuses on the legal context in which the given argumentation takes place. In a court trial, a defendant is advised to start by refuting the accusations that have raised suspicion as to the moral integrity of the defendant so as to discredit the prosecution by demonstrating the falsity of the accusation (Quintilian, VII, i, 11, 12.). Refuting accusations in advance requires that these accusations be stated first, whereby the defendant runs the risk of attributing to the prosecution accusations the prosecution may not have dared to express, and they can even be ones that the prosecution may not have thought about. Quintilian, therefore, notes that anticipatory refutation, if incautiously used, can subject the speaker to ridicule, as this example, mentioned in Book VI, shows: "Fulvius Prophiquus, when asked by the representative of the emperor whether the documents he produced were signed, replied, "Yes, Sir, and the signature is genuine" (cited in Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca 1969, p. 501) Here, the speaker anticipates that the representative will doubt the authenticity of the signature, even though it was clear that that was not what the representative asked about.

Although Quintilian's account of prolepsis is restricted to argumentation that occurs during court proceedings, the insights that he provides shed some important light on the persuasiveness of prolepsis that could be used in the analysis of this rhetorical technique in other contexts as well. It goes without saying that his account of prolepsis does not stem from an interest in developing a systematic theory of persuasion, but rather in providing an exhaustive list of all the possible argumentative strategies that one can employ in order to get the adherence of one's audience. Dealing with anticipated counterarguments, objections or accusations just happens to be one of these strategies. Still, from examining his account, one is left with no doubt that Quintilian is aware of the dialectical aspect of the argumentative context and of the necessity of taking into account the audience as a critical party when the speaker decides to address an objection. As mentioned above, Quintilian has described situations in which the arguer's persuasiveness can be harmed if one is not sensitive to what the other party actually thinks. Putting into the opponent's mouth accusations or objections the opponent did not think of is one such situation.

References to and remarks about addressing anticipated counterarguments within classical argumentation theory were made within what we now classify as classical rhetoric, i.e. by scholars interested in teaching people how to speak eloquently in public. It is thus not surprising that the dialectical significance of this anticipatory way of arguing remained absent or, at least implicit. It is only by studying these references and remarks from the perspective of modern dialectical theory that one can discover insights that can be described as dialectical.

2.3. Modern approaches

Classical rhetoricians may have studied addressing anticipated counterarguments exclusively for its function in persuading an audience, but modern scholars have exhibited a more diverse and complex approach to the persuasiveness of this anticipatory way of arguing. Characteristic of modern approaches is a more systematic and more conscious combination of dialectical and rhetorical insights. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969), Forget (1994), Vincent and Heisler (1999), Tindale (2004) and Clauss (2007) adopt a modern rhetorical perspective when looking into the functioning of addressing anticipated counterarguments. Authors such as Snoeck Henkemans (1992) and Johnson (2000) have adopted a clearly dialectical perspective, whereas others have taken both the dialectical and rhetorical into account in their studies. Such authors are Leff (2003) and Snoeck Henkemans (2007a). A dialectical perspective is also present in studies that have a more informal logical or critical thinking perspective, such as Govier (1992).

Modern argumentation theorists have focussed on questions like whether an arguer should deal with all possible counterarguments or objections and which objections should be dealt with. Johnstone (1978), for one, remarked, “anyone who makes a philosophical statement is under some obligation to respond to the criticisms of those to whom the statement is addressed” (p. 14). Hitchcock suggested in a discussion in 1996 that an arguer is “expected to deal with any objection which would reasonably be expected to raise a serious doubt about the cogency of the argument” (as cited in Johnson 2000, p. 333). Johnstone (1978) and Hitchcock did not concern themselves with whether this obligation is dialectical or rhetorical, but, as it will become clear, scholars like Johnson (2000) certainly did.

2.3.1. Modern rhetorical treatments

Inspired by classical rhetoric, modern rhetoricians have shown a strong interest in the technique of addressing anticipated counterarguments as a means by which one can enhance one’s persuasiveness. In what van Eemeren and Grootendorst (2004) classify as an epistemo-rhetorical approach to argumentation, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969) relate the persuasiveness of argumentation to a complex notion of audience. In light of such an audience-based view of argumentation, these authors analyse the persuasiveness of addressing anticipated counterarguments. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca identify two main issues that the arguer has to be aware of when deciding to address an anticipated objection: the nature of the objection anticipated and the order of the arguments.

Regarding the nature of the objections to be anticipated, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca distinguish between real and imaginary objections. This distinction, however, does not appear to be of great importance for the arguer's persuasiveness. What is important, according to Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, is that the arguer can show that he has been able to anticipate objections from the other party. The authors explain that the technique performs an argumentative function when used as an attempt to obtain adherence from the audience, and merely an embellishment of the speech, or even a feint, when used to create a dramatic situation or confer more life or emotions on the speech – this is usually the case when the speaker draws upon imaginary objections.

In their discussion of the order of arguments in speech, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969) emphasise that the speaker has to be careful about the order in which he places his pro- and counterarguments in the presentation. They explain that the speaker need not start by committing himself to a proposition, but may do so in the course of the speech. This allows him to take the objections of the audience into account and to eventually come to a proposition that is very likely to meet with acceptance on the part of this audience. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca further stress that the strength of one's arguments can be an important factor in determining in which order the arguer should place his arguments if he is to secure adherence for his position. They recognise that one's arguments can be so connected to one another that refuting them (with a counterargument) may not demand so much effort from the opponent. In order for the arguer to prevent this from happening, they recommend that the speaker should better get rid of this counterargument before presenting his own arguments. In this way he is able "to leave the field open for more favourable interpretations" of his arguments (p. 500).

Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca recognise the concessive effect of the strategy of addressing anticipated counterarguments. They argue that refuting objections by anticipation can come in the form of a concession (p. 501). Concession is defined here as an 'in advance defence against the charge of having overlooked a value or a fact of importance' (p. 501). The making of a concession may concern a weak argument made by the speaker; such a concession contributes to presenting the speaker as a good person. However, this quality of concession makes it, according to the authors, similar to the anticipatory refutation earlier discussed by Quintilian and, therefore, may have both advantages and disadvantages.

It is obvious from what Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca had to say about the addressing of anticipated counterarguments that the persuasiveness of this way of arguing stems from its effect of presenting the speaker as a fair arguer in the eyes of the audience. They argue that the arguer does not have to bother as to whether the other party actually

adheres to the objection the speaker anticipates or not, as long as the speaker is able to show that he is strong enough to anticipate and deal with objections.

Another significant rhetorical discussion of addressing anticipated counterarguments or objections can be found in Tindale (2004) where he describes this argumentative technique in terms of 'prolepsis' and defines it as "the anticipation of objections to one's position and a preemptive response to those objections" (p. 83). Tindale argues for a largely rhetorical explanation of what makes dealing with anticipated counterarguments persuasive. At the same time, he leaves room for a dialectical explanation as well. Tindale states that:

> Significance of [prolepsis] lies in its importance to dialectical argumentation, models of which will often require something very like *prolepsis* in the procedural rules (or dialectical obligations) it proposes for good argumentation. (p. 83)

Tindale does not elaborate much on the dialectical aspect of prolepsis, since he believes that rhetoric itself is sufficient to do the job. This is because, as he argues, rhetoric is invitational and seeks to 'create insight and understanding, and to provide an invitation to modify one's views' (p. 54). Tindale shows that by anticipating objections and dealing with them in advance, the author creates the atmosphere of an exchange with the audience. The success of the anticipatory way of arguing, he argues, is dependent on the appropriateness of the objections that are anticipated. Furthermore, like other authors before him, Tindale recommends prolepsis for its 'ethotic payoff', since by anticipating objections the author confers objectivity on his presentation (pp. 84-85). In this way prolepsis 'shows the arguer trying to conceive things from the other point of view and treating that point of view in a reasonable fashion' (pp. 84-85). This objectivity can help in achieving a persuasive result on the audience. The importance of appearing objective by dealing with anticipated objections is also stressed by Trail (2000) who states that "[i]n writing it [i.e. prolepsis] is less impressive than in a live situation, but it remains a powerful tool if it can be handled in such a way as to appear to be a fair representation of an opposing position" (p. 144).

More recently, the study of addressing anticipated counterarguments within rhetoric has been enriched by insights from social psychology. Clauss (2007) has tried to shed light on the persuasiveness of prolepsis by combining insights from the rhetorical and the social psychological traditions. He distinguishes between two main categories of prolepsis. The first category consists of anticipating an objection regarding the weakness of one's own position. According to Clauss's analysis, this is exactly what happens in this sentence taken from an advertisement of Lipoduction Body Perfecting Cream:

> Sure, it might be the most expensive cellulite cream. But it works 700% better (2007, p. 6).

The fact that the cream *might be the most expensive* counts as a weak argument in light of the aim of the arguer here, which is to promote the product. The second category of prolepsis consists of anticipating objections regarding the strength of the other party's position vis-à-vis one's own position (Clauss, 2007).

Clauss discusses two ways in which prolepsis functions as an effective way of arguing. The first of these ways is reframing. By anticipating an objection and reacting to it in a certain way the arguer reframes the issue under discussion in a different perspective, namely his own (Clauss, 2007). Further, by acknowledging the strength of the other party's position the arguer appeals to the so-called principle of reciprocity[5] – borrowed from Levine (2003) – whereby the addressed party feels the obligation to give the arguer something in return for the latter's acknowledgement of the strength of the other party's position; in this case this would be acknowledging the arguer's subsequent argument or larger thesis (Clauss, 2007).

Compared with classical rhetoric, modern rhetorical theory has indeed gone beyond simply encouraging arguers to anticipate and respond to counterarguments; it has shed light on important complexities of this particular way of arguing. Notably, some rhetoricians have shown awareness of the dialectical underpinning of addressing an anticipated counterargument without trying to integrate this dimension into their theoretical frameworks.

2.3.2 Modern dialectical treatments

While rhetoricians tend to study the argumentative technique of addressing anticipated counterarguments primarily as a means of persuasion by focusing on its various merits in actual argumentative situations, dialecticians have linked this technique to the role of argumentation in providing the critical testing necessary for a rational resolution of a difference of opinion between two parties. Thus, characteristically, studies of addressing anticipated counterarguments from a dialectical perspective emphasise the concept of rationality or reasonableness, rather than effectiveness or persuasiveness.

From a pragma-dialectical perspective, Snoeck Henkemans (1992, 1995) has stressed the dialogical nature of argumentation in analysing argumentation exhibiting

[5] Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969) also refer to this principle in their treatment, but not in connection to prolepsis.

complex argumentative structures. In her view, argumentative structures are the result of various ways of responding to criticism. The mentioning and then refuting of an anticipated counterargument, which would constitute a type of prolepsis, is simply a representation of this dialogical structure. In light of the ideal model of critical discussion developed by van Eemeren and Grootendorst (1984, 1992), Snoeck Henkemans (1992) investigates the forms that addressing anticipated counterarguments can have in the various stages of the discussion. She notes that an arguer can anticipate a counter-standpoint or a counterargument against his standpoint and that he may also anticipate a counterargument against his argument (Snoeck Henkemans 1992, p. 131). Such a counterargument can attack the acceptability of the propositional content of the argument or its potential to justify the standpoint (Snoeck Henkemans 1992, p. 131). Snoeck Henkemans also specifies the various ways in which the arguer can respond to the counterargument that he anticipates. The type of refutation provided determines the overall structure of his argumentation.

Snoeck Henkemans' study makes it clear that starting from a well-defined model of argumentation allows for a more precise analysis of the technique of addressing anticipated counterarguments. The analyst is then not only able to recognise the different types of counterarguments that one can anticipate, but he is also able to distinguish the specific effects that refuting a counterargument in one way or another can have on one's defence of the standpoint. What this approach also shows is that the aim of subjecting one's standpoint (and arguments) to critical testing so that the standpoint can be accepted on reasonable grounds provides a theoretically motivated justification for using this technique.

The link between responding to anticipated criticism and rationality constitutes the thrust of Johnson's (2000) dialectical approach to argumentation. Johnson studies anticipating and reacting to criticism and objections as part of what he dubs the *dialectical tier* of argumentation, which is distinct from its *illative tier*. Johnson emphasises the aim of argumentation of achieving rational persuasion and argues that this aim cannot be achieved by just arguing rationally but by also manifesting this rationality in the argumentation. This manifest rationality is realised not so much when the arguer provides arguments supporting his own position, as when he, in addition to doing so, reacts to the objections and criticism that could be raised against his position.

Johnson distinguishes between two functions of objections: 1) objections can attack an undefended premise as unacceptable, or 2) they can attack the argument-conclusion connection, either because one or more of the premises is irrelevant or because the premises do not provide sufficient support for the conclusion. When confronted with any of such objections, the arguer is obliged to show that the objection is either irrelevant or ill-

considered. He regards as a cogent argument one that in its dialectical tier deals with all possible counterarguments against the argument in question.

For Johnson, responding to objections is both a dialectical and a pragmatic obligation. While it is obvious why answering objections is a matter of dialectics for Johnson (in the sense that it manifests the dialogue inherent in argumentation), it is not clear in what sense it is pragmatic. According to Johnson, the arguer has the duty of responding to all objections, whereas I would agree with van Rees that "in a truly pragmatic conception of dialectic, what the arguer needs to answer are nothing more (but also nothing less) than the actual or anticipated objections of the opponent that he tries to convince" (van Rees 2001, p. 234). By stating that an arguer is obliged to deal with all possible objections, his concept of objections seems far too abstract to be part of a truly pragmatic and empirically supported dialectical concept of argument.

Johnson makes a distinction between a rhetorical context (where the aim is to persuade) and a dialectical context (where the aim is to seek the truth). Johnson (2000) addressed this point quite elaborately in developing his dialectical tier. He identified four options that an arguer may need to consider as regards objections to his argumentation:

> ***Option 1.*** The arguer must address all possible and actual objections and criticisms.
>
> ***Option 2.*** The arguer should address all and only those objections that he or she knows how to defuse.
>
> ***Option 3.*** The arguer should address all those objections that the audience will want to see addressed. (p. 328)

Which option the arguer should take apparently depends on the type of context in which the arguer is engaged, which in turn depends on what the aim of the arguer is. Option 2 and 3 clearly would not serve what Johnson takes to be the aim of arguing in a dialectical context, i.e. seeking the truth. Option 2 is arguer-oriented because it relates addressing objections to the arguer's abilities, and option 3 is audience-oriented because addressing objections is related to the audience's demands.

Johnson's (2000) theory is remarkable in its emphasis on dealing with anticipated objections; it remains rather ambiguous regarding the question as to which part of his theory is concerned with the issue of objections. Johnson announces that his theory of argumentation is dialectical because it contains, in addition to an illative core, a dialectical tier. This dialectical tier is where the arguer should deal with the anticipated objections to his argument. Johnson also explains that some objections are directed at the illative core and some are directed at the dialectical tier (p. 327).

Another contribution to the study of addressing anticipated counterarguments within dialectical theory is that of Walton (2009). In defining prolepsis, Walton identifies two meanings for prolepsis as an argumentative technique.[6] The first is 'the anticipation and answering of an objection of or argument before one's opponent has put it forward'. The second is a specification of the first, which he calls 'proleptic argumentation'. It refers to any move in argumentation that contains a response to a possible objection to the argument 'that might undermine or attack it or at least raise doubts about the acceptability of the argument (pp. 87-88).[7]

Walton's aim is to develop tools to teach students of critical thinking the art of anticipating objections. What makes proleptic argumentation an effective way of arguing does not seem to be something Walton is interested in unravelling. The significance of Walton's endeavour lies mainly in its systematic employment of dialectical theory. Walton (2007) views argumentation as a form of persuasion dialog where 'the aim of the one party is to rationally persuade the other party to come to accept a proposition as true' (p. 89)[8]. An arguer who takes his role to be that of a party in a persuasion dialog will try to gain insight into all the possible critical questions associated with the argument scheme used in the given argument. Walton calls this the primary method. The secondary method consists of identifying the counterarguments that are commonly raised against the given argument; this requires mainly looking into the context of the given debate.

Walton's approach to proleptic argumentation is essentially dialectical. He does refer to proleptic argumentation as a 'legitimate kind of strategic manoeuvring' (p. 87), which should imply that proleptic argumentation is a way by which dialectical and rhetorical aims are balanced. Walton never elucidates in what sense proleptic

[6] The other, non-argumentative, meanings of the word prolepsis which Walton (2009) mentions are: 'a figure of speech in which a future event is referred to before it happens', 'the use of a word in anticipation of the circumstances that would make it applicable', 'the philosophical concept used in ancient epistemology by Epicurus and the Stoics to indicate a preconception, a pre-theoretical notion that can lead to true knowledge of the world', 'any figure of speech or text of discourse that anticipates some response, and that incorporates some attempt to reply to the response in advance of its being explicitly made' (2009, pp. 87-88).

[7] For argumentation to be proleptic, the arguer need not mention the objection itself; it suffices that the argument is by some token a response to an objection. In this sense, any type of argumentation can be called proleptic. An argument brought in support of a standpoint is proleptic in the sense that it answers a possible objection raised about the standpoint; a second argument brought in support of a standpoint after another argument has already been given can be a response to an anticipated rejection of the first argument – in pragma-dialectical terms such anticipation would result in multiple argumentation; an argument brought in support of an argument can be a response to doubt or an anticipated counterargument against the first argument – in pragma-dialectical terms such anticipation would result in either coordinative or subordinative argumentation (cf. Van Eemeren & Grootendorst 1984, 1992, Snoeck Henkemans, 1992). In this study an instance of argumentative discourse is regarded as proleptic if the counterargument is explicitly mentioned and refuted.

[8] Walton views a critical discussion as a type of persuasion dialog (2007, p. 253).

argumentation is a form of strategic manoeuvring and instead focuses on the question of just how an arguer can get hold of the most powerful objections. In any case, with the primary and secondary methods, Walton does not claim to have answered this question.

Walton's analysis might be considered to combine dialectical and rhetorical insights. The primary method might be called dialectical, as it draws purely on what participants in a dialectical exchange do – forward arguments and ask critical questions – and requires the arguer to assume the position of the opponent and identify possible critical questions. The secondary method might be described as being rhetorical because it consists of delving into the context of the argument itself to find the most powerful counterarguments. Furthermore, by taking into account Walton's aim, which is to teach students of critical thinking the art of anticipating objections, and his use of the term 'prolepsis' to designate this practice, one may observe that Walton has tried to explore to what extent dialectical models of argumentation can be instrumental for understanding the rhetorical functioning of addressing anticipated counterarguments.

In addition to emphasising the dialogical nature of the argumentation, the three dialectical approaches discussed in this section distinguish themselves from the rhetorical approaches discussed in the previous section in their attention to the different types of counterarguments and objections that can be responded to in anticipation. Snoeck Henkemans talks of counterarguments against one's standpoint or argument; Johnson identifies several types of objections, and Walton distinguishes between critical questions and counterarguments.

2.3.3 Other treatments

While the authors discussed in sections 2.3.1 and 2.3.2 have taken either a clearly dialectical or a clearly rhetorical approach to the study of addressing anticipated counterarguments, other authors have taken approaches that cannot be classified as either dialectical or rhetorical.

Govier (1992), from a critical thinking perspective, subsumes all that can be anticipated regarding one's position under the concept of 'counter-considerations', which attack the arguer's conclusion, as opposed to pro-considerations, which support it. She argues that despite being negatively relevant to the conclusion, counter-considerations can be useful, especially for testing different arguments for or interpretations of actions, for thinking a matter through, or for criticizing an argument. According to Govier, whether the defence of a claim is successful or not depends largely on one's ability to recognise counter-considerations to that claim. Like Johnson (2000), she maintains that when the arguer is aware of the existence of counter-considerations to his conclusion, he is

committed to showing that the pro-arguments he is using outweigh the counter-considerations. If it turns out that the counterarguments are more forceful than the pro-arguments, the negative conclusion follows and the claim can no longer be maintained. Govier takes it to be the creative task of the arguer to think of counter-considerations and to determine how much of an obstacle they are to the conclusion and how the arguer's own arguments can overcome them.

Govier does not show in what way these counter-considerations connect to the act of persuasion and how they are generated in the process. Counter-considerations remain external to the act of arguing itself and their occurrence is only discussed in the context of the evaluation of arguments. For Govier, the evaluation is a process for which no specific guidelines can be given: it remains a matter of the arguer's creativity. Furthermore, Govier speaks of the commitment of the arguer to deal with counter-considerations once he is able to recognise them, but she does not explicate by virtue of what principle the arguer should be held committed to responding to counter-considerations.

From a different perspective, argumentation theorists concerned with improving argumentative writing methods have likewise emphasised the importance of considering objections and alternative considerations. In considering objections and alternatives, Weston (1987) recommends that writers not only fully develop arguments for their proposals and claims but also anticipate sceptical questions, and admit that there are disadvantages of one's proposals but that the advantages outweigh them. Importantly, writers are required, in addition to admitting objections, to also respond to them (pp. 70-72). Weston not only emphasises the value of anticipating objections but also of supporting objections with arguments. Unravelling the arguments for the objections is not done for its own sake but for the sake of responding more effectively to the objections.

From a debate theory perspective, Freeley and Steinberg (2005) have also stressed the importance of refuting anticipated objections. They have shown that academic debates are structured in such a way that the debater may only refute the opponent's counterarguments at his second speech turn.

> The process of refutation has to be included in every speech of the debate. Obviously the first affirmative speech, which opens the debate, cannot include direct refutation because no opposition has preceded it. But even this speech may include a certain amount of anticipatory refutation. However, this anticipatory refutation should be directed to issues that the negative must inevitably support and not against "straw arguments" that the affirmative hopes the negative will advance. (p. 256)

Through warning against "straw arguments" Freeley and Steinberg make it clear that addressing anticipated counterarguments can be inopportune. The authors further stress that what an arguer in a debate should anticipate is not any type of opposition that he can think of – but only the specific opposition the opponents are likely to confront him with.

2.3.4 Persuasion research

Like rhetoricians, marketing and communication scholars and social psychologists, referred to here as *persuasion scholars*, have concerned themselves with the persuasiveness of addressing anticipated counterarguments. They have done so from a different perspective, however: persuasion researchers have taken an empirical stance to the issue of persuasiveness. While rhetoricians' attempt to explain the persuasiveness of addressing anticipated counterarguments theoretically, persuasion researchers seek to find empirical evidence for the actual persuasiveness of this argumentative technique. The main question in this line of research has been if and when addressing anticipated counterarguments leads to more persuasiveness than comparable forms of arguing.

Within the framework of persuasion research, the empirical research of the argumentative technique of addressing anticipated counterarguments has been carried out in terms of what is called *message-sidedness*. Persuasion scholars divide messages into three main types of sidedness: a *one-sided* message, in which only arguments supporting the point of view defended in the message are mentioned and a *two-sided* message in which also arguments opposing the point of view defended are addressed. A two-sided message is divided into two types: *non-refutational* and *refutational*. A non-refutational two-sided message is one in which the speaker or writer mentions a counterargument but does not refute it, and a two-sided refutational message is one in which the arguer mentions and then refutes the counterargument (O'Keefe, 1999, Sloan, 2001). Persuasion scholars have sought to find out empirically whether there is a difference in persuasiveness between these different forms of messages (Dipboye, 1977, Earl & Pride, 1980, Etgar & Goodwin, 1982, Golden & Alpert, 1987, Hovland et al., 1967, Kamins & Assael, 1987, among others).

In trying to understand the persuasive functioning of the different forms of message sidedness, persuasion researchers have relied on theories from social psychology. The most prominent of these are the *inoculation theory* developed by McGuire (1961) and the *correspondence theory* (in the literature also referred to as the *attribution theory*) used by Jones and Davis (1965) and Smith and Hunt (1978).

Inoculation theory derives its name from an analogy made by McGuire (1961) between the observed working of two-sided messages and the physiological process of

inoculation which consists of giving a weak form of a disease to a human by way of injection as a protection from that disease. Through a two-sided refutation message, containing an anticipated counterargument that is refuted, the receiver is given a mild form of attack on the standpoint being defended. When the receiver is confronted with further counterarguments in the future, he will know how to refute them himself, as the two-sided refutational message has already provided him with some practice in refuting such forms of attacks (Crowley and Hoyer, 1994). A person who has been subjected to a one-sided message, containing only arguments supporting the standpoint, does not get any practice in refuting counterarguments and thus will not know how to generate refutations for himself when faced with a counterargument in the future.

Correspondence theory assumes that two-sided messages are found more persuasive because receivers regard mentioning counterarguments as an example of honest communication (Jones & Davis, 1965, Smith & Hunt, 1978). In the field of advertising, it has been shown that through mentioning some negative feature of the advertised product, which would amount to a counterargument against purchasing this product, the advertiser displays behaviour that is different from behaviour expected normally of advertisers. This leads receivers to attribute more credibility to the source of the two-sided message than to the source of the one-sided counterpart.

It should be noted that these two theories have been subjected to considerable criticism within this area of research and have either been rejected or modified. Irrespective of which theory provides the strongest explanation, the general finding of message-sidedness research, that two-sided refutational messages are more persuasive than other forms of message sidedness, has been confirmed by O'Keefe's (1999) meta-analysis of over 40 experiments in the field.

The message-sidedness research tradition has developed independently of and is not related to the developments that have taken place within argumentation theory with regard to the study of addressing anticipated counterarguments. Searching for a dialectical or rhetorical analysis of the technique of addressing anticipated counterarguments within this line of research will turn out to be a hopeless endeavour. Still, since persuasion researchers are strictly concerned with persuasiveness, it might be justified to say that the persuasion researchers' concern could be characterised as rhetorical.

Recently, O'Keefe (2003) has tried to match the findings of persuasion researchers regarding message sidedness with the insights of the pragma-dialectical argumentation theory. On the basis of the aforementioned meta-analysis, O'Keefe (2003) concluded that the results of persuasion-effects research into message-sidedness agree to a great extent with the normative perspective of the pragma-dialectical theory. He argues that a refutational two-sided message is more persuasive than its one-sided counterpart because

the former satisfies the dialectical obligation of defending the standpoint against criticism, while the latter ignores such counterarguments. O'Keefe's meta-analytic results provide strong reassurance that the persuasiveness that is based solely on dialectical considerations may after all have some empirical corroboration.

2.3.5 Combining the rhetorical and dialectical perspective

More recently, argumentation theorists have started integrating rhetorical and dialectical insights in their approaches to argumentation. In fact, some authors consider the technique of anticipating opposing arguments and objections as support for a conception of argumentation as both dialectical and rhetorical.

An elaborate analysis of addressing anticipated counterarguments, in which both dialectical and rhetorical insights are integrated, has been carried out by Forget (1994). Forget uses the term 'prolepsis' and argues that the functioning of prolepsis should be studied in light of the aim of argumentation as a whole: to manipulate and affect the intention of the listener. That Forget combines both dialectical and rhetorical dimensions of argumentation becomes clear when he argues that the proleptic effect is derived from the representation of argumentative roles in an argumentative exchange: thesis, anti-thesis, reaffirmation or modification of the thesis (p. 71). Within the exchange, the protagonist advances a thesis and the antagonist challenges it by way of an anti-thesis. Forget explains that each of the two participants has an 'argumentative capital' consisting of the amount of adherence to his conclusion that the participant has managed to accumulate gradually in the course of the exchange (p. 71).

Forget remarks that the presentation of positions made possible through prolepsis is certainly not an objective one: through prolepsis, the speaker chooses to highlight the negative aspect of the contribution of the opponent and exerts pressure on him to give up this position, thereby reducing his argumentative capital. Forget argues that, since the presentation is guided by the aim of making the addressee accept the speaker's thesis, the principle that is called into play is "He who is better should win." Forget argues that the speaker claims the right to win the exchange by exploiting the advantage of taking the initiative to debate since his thesis comes first in the presentation (p. 72). The counter-thesis or counterargument is deprived of this value because it occurs later in the discourse (p. 75).

A similar approach is adopted by Vincent and Heisler (1999), who recognise that prolepsis involves the existence of a tension between two opposing arguments of which only one should eventually triumph. They argue that prolepsis is a technique by which the arguer anticipates a certain reaction from the recipient in order to prevent this opponent

from putting it forward, and by which the arguer protects himself from the dangers of negative evaluation resulting from failing to recognise opposing views (1999, p. 17). Further analysing the rhetorical function of prolepsis, Vincent and Heisler compare it to both refutation and concession. They recognise that prolepsis, refutation and concession share the quality of minimizing or rejecting the argumentative force of potential objections or counterarguments.[9] As a concession, prolepsis allows the speaker to create a discourse in which alternative argumentative positions are considered. It serves to reinforce the speaker's position by allowing him to admit the existence of an argument but not necessarily to adopt it. An explicit concession gives the impression of impartiality: it implicitly shows that the speaker is ready for an overall positive reception of the counterargument, whether it is real or imaginary, albeit that the counterargument is eventually either neglected or removed (p. 18). This confers on the presentation the quality of fair-play. Prolepsis performs the function of refutation when the speaker refutes the counterargument that he has anticipated. Refutative prolepsis is functionally different from concessive prolepsis because through refutative prolepsis the speaker does not maintain a positive reception of the argument.

Forget (1994) and Vincent and Heisler (1999) may not have had the intention to develop a theoretical framework of argumentation that combines dialectics with rhetoric. Other authors, however, have analysed the technique of addressing anticipated counterarguments with the intention to provide more support for a general theoretical conception of argumentation in which the two dimensions of argumentation are integrated. Leff (2003), for instance, has analysed Martin Luther King's famous 'Letter from Birmingham Jail' in which King refutes a number of accusations that he anticipates from eight clergymen in the city of Birmingham. Through this analysis, Leff argues for the importance of a dialectical view of argumentation for rhetorical analysis. Leff considers the ability of the arguer to anticipate and react to objections, something usually associated with dialectical argumentation, a rhetorically powerful technique. He stresses that the rhetorical eloquence that King exhibited in his address to the clergymen stems from a dialectical sensibility characterised in this specific case by the ability to identify and counter objections.

Snoeck Henkemans, who has already provided a standard pragma-dialectical analysis of the argumentative technique of responding to counterarguments in advance of their being put forward by the other party, has recently turned her attention to the way dialectical and rhetorical insights can be put to use in analysing various figures of styles

[9] Burton (2003) classifies the technique of responding to criticism in advance with the figures of *refutation*, while Lausberg (1998) lists *anticipation*, which he calls "proleptic defensive anticipation of the opponent's argument", with *dialectical* figures (383).

employed in argumentation. In light of van Eemeren and Houtlosser's (1999) introduction of the concept of strategic manoeuvring into the pragma-diaectical theory of argumentation, whereby arguers balance their rhetorical aspirations with their dialectical commitments, Snoeck Henkemans has recently studied the figure of *praeteritio*, in which the speaker declares that he will not say something but says it nonetheless (Wilson 1994, p. 213). An example of this technique would be saying, "That person is deceitful, I will not say dangerous." By claiming that he will not say "dangerous," the speaker subtly – and paradoxically – conveys the suggestion that the hearer may object to the person being described as dangerous. According to Snoeck Henkemans (2007a), such a subtle way of arguing allows the arguer to maneuver strategically in such a way that the other party will not be able to criticize him for having advanced the standpoint (or argument) concerned, as the arguer did not make his commitment to it explicit.

Although Snoeck Henkemans is not directly concerned with prolepsis, there are at least two ways in which her analysis of *praeteritio* can be useful for the analysis of addressing anticipated counterarguments. First, the figure of *praeteritio* involves, as I explained above, a subtle reaction to an anticipated objection. Second, Snoeck Henkemans's analysis shows that by regarding rhetorical figures as instrumental in strategic manoeuvring, it is possible to shed light on important aspects of their persuasiveness in ordinary argumentative discourse (see for more details Snoeck Henkemans 2007a). Such an analysis is, in my view, what is needed for a proper understanding of the argumentative technique of addressing anticipated counterarguments.

2.4. Conclusion

The discussion presented in this chapter shows that the study of addressing anticipated counterarguments has been approached from both a dialectical and rhetorical perspective. Rhetoricians, on the one hand, focus on the effectiveness of this way of arguing in getting the audience to accept the speaker's position. When explaining the persuasive functioning of the technique, they, nonetheless, draw upon dialectical insights. Drawing upon these insights does not stem from a theoretically motivated recognition of the dialectical dimension of argumentation on the part of these scholars; attention to the dialectical dimension is probably nothing more than the result of an acknowledgement of the nature of the argumentative technique itself. The fact that this anticipatory way of arguing involves acknowledging the existence of and responding to counterarguments makes it necessary for scholars to invoke dialectical terminology in their analyses.

Dialecticians, on the other hand, focus more on the function of argumentation in resolving differences of opinion in a reasonable way through testing argumentative

positions. As Tindale (2004) has remarked, the technique of addressing anticipated counterarguments lends itself very well to dialectical analysis as it consists of an explicit reference to counterarguments, which dialecticians regard as the manifestation of the dialogue inherent in the act of argumentation. In most cases, however, a dialectical analysis falls short of recognising what accounts for the persuasiveness of this argumentative technique. This drawback is perhaps most notably present in the case of Johnson (2000), who has claimed that manifest rationality requires that arguers respond to each and every possible objection that they can anticipate.

O'Keefe's (1999) remarks concerning the correspondence between the findings of empirical research into message-sidedness and the normative insights of the pragma-dialectical approach have made it clear that – at least in the case of addressing anticipated counterarguments – being persuasive is not at variance with preferred argumentative conduct in a dialectical context. However, since persuasion research itself is not based on the hypothesis that dialectically good argumentative conduct leads to more persuasiveness, the significance of the correspondence between the findings of O'Keefe's meta-analysis of message-sidedness research and the normative insights of the pragma-dialectical theory remains theoretically unclear. Therefore, one is justified to wonder if *starting from* the above hypothesis can lead to new theoretically justified insights regarding the persuasiveness of mentioning and then refuting anticipated counterarguments – insights that support O'Keefe's remarks.

To conclude, it could be claimed that an adequate account of how this anticipatory way of arguing works and how it can be persuasive in which both its rhetorical and its dialectical dimensions are integrated is still lacking. In the remainder of this study I will try to show how the systematic integration of the dialectical and rhetorical dimensions of argumentation within the pragma-dialectical framework can provide an answer to the question of in what way mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument constitutes a persuasive way of arguing.

CHAPTER 3

Countermoves in a critical discussion

3.1 Introduction

For an adequate understanding of the way mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument against a prescriptive standpoint functions, both the dialectical and the rhetorical dimensions of this way of arguing should be identified. In the previous chapter I have shown that, within argumentation theory, a systematic integration of these two dimensions is missing in extant approaches to this argumentative technique. The starting point of this chapter is that the systematic integration of dialectical and rhetorical insights is crucial to understanding how mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument can function as a persuasive technique.

To start with, it should be observed that this anticipatory way of arguing consists of two basic moves: the mentioning of the counterargument that the arguer anticipates with regard to his standpoint and the refutation of the counterargument. Dialectically speaking, it is a way of arguing whereby the arguer, who has initially advanced a standpoint, presents consecutively two positions regarding a counterargument that he anticipates with regard to this standpoint:

a) The position of a party who brings forward a counterargument
b) The position of a party who refutes this counterargument

The following case of an argumentative text in which an anticipated counterargument against the standpoint is mentioned and then refuted illustrates these moves:

> *Turkey should be given the chance to join the EU. Some Europeans fear that the Islamic character of Turkey will lead to problems, but Turkey is a secular country where religion plays no role in political life.*

In this case, the standpoint *Turkey should be given the chance to join the EU* is countered by means of the counterargument *that the Islamic character of Turkey will lead to problems.* This counterargument is refuted through *Turkey is a secular country where religion plays no role in political life.* Understanding the dialectical dimension of this way of arguing requires that these two moves be placed in the context of a dialectical exchange between two reasonable arguers who are trying to resolve the difference of opinion regarding the standpoint in a reasonable way. By placing the two dialectical moves in this context, it will be possible to examine what each move consists of and how each of them contributes to a rational defence of the standpoint in question. The present chapter will be devoted to explaining how a counterargument may arise in the context of critical discussion and what distinguishes it from other types of countermoves.

3.2 Countermoves

The term *countermove* was originally used by Rescher (1977). According to Rescher, the process of disputation, a discursive activity that involves three parties (the proponent, the opponent, and the determiner of the argumentation), proceeds by way of asserting and counter-asserting. Central to this process is the principle of the burden of proof, by which reactions to the countermove are generated[10]. The proponent of the thesis assumes the burden of proof for his thesis and is therefore required to counter the opponent of the thesis in order to maintain it. Rescher (1977) divides the dialectical moves that can be made in the context of disputation into two categories: *fundamental moves* and *countermoves*. A fundamental move is a move in which a proposition is advanced about a certain topic, either as a categorical assertion, or as a provisoed assertion. A countermove is a move in which a fundamental move is challenged. Different types and (sub)types of countermoves are

[10] As Rescher (1977) puts it, "[the burden of proof] embodies the imperative of "advancing the argument" in a meaningful way, carrying the discussion forward beyond a particular stage of its development" (p. 27).

distinguished: *countermoves to categorical assertions* (or *counterassertions*), *countermoves to cautious assertions* (or *denials*), *countermoves to provisoed assertions* or *denials*, and *countermoves to complex moves*. For every fundamental as well as complex assertion initially made in a difference of opinion (i.e. categorical assertion, cautious assertion, and provisoed assertion), there is a number of corresponding countermoves.

Other argumentation scholars who have concerned themselves with identifying the types of countermoves that can occur in an argumentative exchange may not have used the term 'countermove', but they have shed light on some important distinctions between countermoves. Govier (1999) uses the term 'objection'. She differentiates between five types of objections: (1) objections to the conclusion, (2) objections to the argument, (3) objections to the arguer, (4) objections to the arguer's situation: his competence, character and circumstances, and (5) objections to the formulation of the argument or conclusion. Each of these objections can be weak or strong (1999, p. 231). Johnson (2000) has, as mentioned in the previous chapter, emphasised that each argument has a dialectical tier in which the arguer reacts to possible standard objections. Standard objections can, according to Johnson, relate to the premises in the argument, including premises that are left implicit, to the implications or the consequences of a premise, the inference from the premises to the conclusion, and to the ambiguity of a formulation of a proposition (2000, p. 328). In addition to these standard objections, Johnson also talks of an obligation to react to alternative positions.

Krabbe (2007) has recently provided an overview of all the different possibilities that an arguer has for criticising a standpoint or argument. Krabbe's overview contains seven types of critical reactions: requests for clarification, pure challenges, bound challenges, exposures of flaws, rejections, charges of fallacy and personal attacks.[11] Because Krabbe is particularly interested in moves that he thinks are naturally called "objections", he concentrates only on bound challenges and on exposures of flaws (2007, pp. 57, 58). Important critical reactions, such as rejections, are not discussed because these reactions involve, in addition to criticizing a position, commitment to an opposite position.

Walton (2009b) has also provided a taxonomy of the various countermoves in order to clarify the differences between the various terms used in, especially, AI scholarship to refer to such moves. He differentiates between four species: objections, attacks, rebuttals and refutations. An objection, Walton argues, can be merely a question, and is hence not

[11] Krabbe does notice that a request for clarification can be seen as a distinct type of critical reaction. He explains that by requesting the arguer to clarify his standpoint, the opponent implies that the standpoint was not clear enough (2007, p. 56). Besides, requests for clarification can have the same consequence for the acceptability of the arguer's standpoint as any other form of critical reaction: when an opponent makes a request for a clarification concerning the arguer's standpoint, his accepting this standpoint will depend on whether the arguer will be able to respond to the request adequately.

necessarily an argument (p. 2). Here, Walton differs from Govier (1999), who believes that an objection is a counterargument (p. 229). According to her, questions cannot be called objections. In addition, Walton recognises three forms of attack: an attack on the premise, an attack on the conclusion and an attack on the link between the premise and the conclusion (p. 4). A fourth way, as mentioned by Walton, could be to attack the argument as useless in a wider context.

He defines rebuttals in the same way as Toulmin (1958), namely as more or less an argument or claim suggesting that there are (exceptional) conditions under which the claim in question cannot be warranted. Two types of rebuttals emerge: rebutters (rebutting defeaters) and undercutters (undercutting defeaters) (Walton 2009b, p. 9). According to Pollock (1995), a rebutting defeater provides a reason for not accepting a claim, while an undercutting defeater attacks the link between the premise and the conclusion.

Perhaps more interesting is Walton's (2009b) definition of refutation:

> A *refutation* is a species of rebuttal that shows that the argument it is aimed at is untenable. It could be called a knock-down counter-argument. When an argument you've put forward is confronted with a refutation, it has to be given up. An *attack*, in the sense of the word as used in the field of argumentation, is an argument directed against another argument to show that the first argument is somehow defective (p. 9).

It seems that a refutation only differs from a rebuttal or attack in that it is by definition successful. The fact that a refutation is, as Walton puts it, a knock-down counterargument might, in my view, cause some confusion, for some rebuttals, objections and attacks, can also be strong enough to knock the arguer's argument down, especially those attacks and rebuttals that may be directed against the argument itself.[12]

The brief review provided here makes it clear that there have been attempts at identifying the countermoves that occur in argumentative discussions and that, despite differences in theoretical perspectives, the theorists concerned seem to agree on at least one general distinction: countermoves with regard to the standpoint/conclusion versus countermoves with regard to the argument/premise or with regard to the inference. In the remainder of this chapter I will attempt to provide a systematic overview of all possible countermoves that can be expected in the context of a critical discussion with regard to the

[12] In this study, the term "refutation" is used to refer to any attack on a (counter)argument which involves rejecting the (counter)argument and giving a reason for this rejection, regardless of whether it is a knock-down attack or not.

standpoint or argument. The aim of this overview will be to show how counterarguments arise in the argumentation process and how they differ from other types of countermoves.

3.3 Pragma-dialectical framework

In the ideal model of critical discussion two parties aim to resolve a difference of opinion about the acceptability of one or more standpoints by subjecting the standpoint(s) to critical testing (van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 1984, 2004). This critical testing is a rule-governed procedure that aims to guarantee that the resolution would proceed in a reasonable way (van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 2004). The resolution of a difference of opinion consists of four stages each of which is characterised by the performance of certain speech acts. These stages are the confrontation stage, the opening stage, the argumentation stage, and the concluding stage. In the confrontation stage, a difference of opinion arises between the two parties. This can be either mixed or non-mixed. It is non-mixed when one party advances a standpoint and the other merely challenges the standpoint, calling it into doubt, and mixed when one party advances a standpoint and the other adopts an opposing standpoint on the same issue. In the opening stage, the parties assume their roles either as protagonist or as antagonist of the standpoint(s), decide on who should assume the burden of proof (at first), identify their starting points and agree on the rules of discussion. In the argumentation stage, each protagonist provides arguments to defend his standpoint and each antagonist provides criticisms to attack the standpoint of the other party. Finally in the concluding stage, the protagonist maintains his standpoint and the antagonist retracts his doubt about it, or the protagonist retracts his standpoint and the antagonist maintains his doubt.

The pragma-dialectical theory of argumentation is a suitable framework for identifying systematically the different countermoves that occur in argumentative discussions and for understanding how they function. It provides straightforward theoretical distinctions in light of which countermoves can be distinguished systematically. Two such distinctions are relevant to the purpose of this chapter: the distinction pertaining to the type of discussion and the distinction pertaining to the type of difference of opinion (van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 1984). To start with, van Eemeren and Grootendorst (1984) differentiate between the following two types of discussion:

- **Main discussions**, that arise over the initial difference of opinion

- **Sub-discussions**, that arise over the acceptability[13] of the argumentation that the protagonist has put forward in defence of his standpoint in the main discussion

Van Eemeren and Grootendorst (1984) also differentiate between two types of difference of opinion:[14]

- **Non-mixed differences of opinion**
- **Mixed differences of opinion**

These distinctions make it possible to identify the main types of countermoves that are possible in a critical discussion:

- Countermoves against the standpoint: the antagonist shows that he does not accept the protagonist's standpoint (main discussion).
- Countermoves against the argument:[15] the antagonist shows that he does not accept the argument that the protagonist has provided to defend his standpoint (sub-discussion).

The second distinction pertains to the commitments involved in the countermove made by the antagonist:

- Countermoves that are exclusively aimed to challenge the protagonist to defend his standpoint or argument (non-mixed difference of opinion)

[13] In informal logic the term acceptability covers only the acceptability of the propositional content of the argument. Acceptability here covers both the acceptability of the propositional content and the acceptability of the justificatory (or refutatory) potential of the argument.

[14] Besides the distinction between a non-mixed and a mixed difference of opinion, pragma-dialecticians also differentiate between a single and multiple difference of opinion. This distinction, however, pertains to the number of standpoints involved in the difference of opinion (van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 2004, p. 60). In principle, each standpoint can be attacked separately by making new countermoves. Therefore, this distinction has consequences for how many countermoves should be made to attack the standpoints, but not for the type of countermove. For this reason, this distinction is not useful for the purpose of this chapter, which is to discuss the types of countermoves, rather than the number of countermoves that can be made.

[15] In this chapter I focus on countermoves against the standpoint because in this study I am concerned with mentioning and then refuting anticipated counterarguments against the standpoint, not the argument. It goes without saying that in ordinary argumentative discourse it is perfectly possible to address anticipated counterarguments (and other possible countermoves against the argument). For studying this particular way of arguing, it can prove useful to understand how countermoves against the argument function dialectically.

- Countermoves that, besides challenging the protagonist to defend his position, involve the antagonist's commitment to an opposite position with regard to the arguer's standpoint or argument (non-mixed difference of opinion).

In this chapter I am interested in identifying the countermoves that can possibly be anticipated with regard to a standpoint. The countermoves I shall discuss will be illustrated with cases. To make it clear how each countermove differs from the other, I will take the following standpoint as a case in point:

Standpoint: *Turkey should be given the chance to join the EU.*

All countermoves to be discussed will target this standpoint. For the sake of clarity, the arguer who initially advances a standpoint will be referred to as Arguer 1 and the arguer who advances countermoves will be referred to as Arguer 2. I will not refer to them as protagonist and antagonist respectively, as in some cases, e.g. when the countermove advanced is a counter-standpoint, both arguers become protagonists. Using the terms "protagonist" and "antagonist" could then lead to some confusion.

3.4 Countermoves against a standpoint

From a pragma-dialectical point of view, a difference of opinion arises when one party advances a standpoint and the other party doubts it. From this perepective, advancing a standpoint amounts to performing a speech act that, by virtue of its essential identity condition, involves taking responsibility for (a positive or negative) position towards a proposition, i.e., assuming an obligation to defend it if the arguer is asked to do so by the other party (van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 1984).[16] This obligation is related to the preparatory condition that the arguer does not expect the listener to immediately accept this standpoint (van Eemeren & Houtlosser, 2002). The standpoint that a party may advance can be either positive or negative. Someone who has advanced a (negative or positive) standpoint with regard to a proposition will be said to be either positively or negatively committed to that proposition (van Eemeren & Gootendorst, 1992).

[16] By simply externalizing the standpoint, however, the arguer's burden of proof has not yet been incurred. Only after the antagonist challenges the protagonist, in the opening stage, to defend his standpoint is the burden of proof actually incurred (van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 1984).

3.4.1 Doubt about a standpoint

The most elementary form that a countermove against the standpoint *Turkey should be given the chance to join the EU* can have is doubt, as case (1) shows:

1) *What makes you think so?*

By casting doubt on the standpoint, Arguer 2 shows no rejection of Arguer 1's standpoint and takes no commitment to an opposite standpoint either; Arguer 2's doubt simply indicates that he does not agree with the standpoint advanced by Arguer 1 (van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 1992). Expressing this doubt is a challenge to Arguer 1 to justify his commitment to the acceptability of his standpoint by bringing forward arguments in favour of it.

When only doubt is expressed about the standpoint, the difference of opinion regarding the standpoint is non-mixed. This means that only Arguer 1 has advanced a standpoint while Arguer 2 has simply challenged it. The latter party has as yet nothing to defend. Doubt conveys two implications to Arguer 1 which will determine how he will subsequently act: that Arguer 2 does not take the standpoint for granted and that, as a consequence, Arguer 1 has to defend his standpoint by means of arguments if he wants to maintain his standpoint and take Arguer 2 from a state of doubt to a state of acceptance.

3.4.2 Counter-standpoints

Another option that Arguer 2 has in case he wants to challenge the standpoint is advancing a counter-standpoint. By advancing a counter-standpoint, Arguer 2 commits himself negatively to the proposition to which Arguer 1 has committed himself positively (or the other way around). In this way, Arguer 2 assumes the role of protagonist towards his own negative standpoint with regard to this proposition. This places him under the obligation to defend his standpoint (if the other party asks him to do so). His doubt remains embedded in the counter-standpoint. Van Eemeren and Grootendorst (1992) have explained that when the antagonist of a standpoint attacks the standpoint by means of a contradictory or contrary standpoint, he may be assumed to have doubt about that standpoint because adopting a counter-standpoint without having doubt about the other party's standpoint results in two unrelated differences of opinion, instead of one mixed difference of opinion between the two parties. The doubt that is implied in the counter-standpoint is what preserves for the protagonist of the counter-standpoint the right to still challenge the standpoint of the first protagonist.

Two types of counter-standpoints can be distinguished: a contradictory counter-standpoint and a contrary counter-standpoint. Arguer 2 advances a contradictory counter-standpoint when he assumes a negative commitment to the same proposition articulated in Arguer 1's standpoint (presuming that Arguer 1's standpoint was a positive one). A contradictory counter-standpoint is thus propositionally identical to the standpoint but differing in commitment. It is negative when Arguer 1's standpoint is positive, and positive when Arguer 1's standpoint is negative. Therefore, depending on the nature of Arguer 1's commitment to the proposition in his standpoint, a contradictory counter-standpoint constitutes either a denial or a confirmation of the proposition to which the original standpoint is related. The following is a case of a contradictory counter-standpoint against the standpoint *Turkey should be given the chance to join the EU:*

2) *Turkey should not be given the chance to join the EU.*

Advancing a contradictory counter-standpoint (relating to a single proposition) results in a single mixed difference of opinion between Arguer 1 and Arguer 2. Such a mixed difference of opinion is characterised by Arguer 1 and Arguer 2 having a commitment to the acceptability of their respective opposite standpoints with regard to the *same proposition* and their being both obliged to defend their respective standpoints if one of them asks the other to do so. Leaving aside, though provisionally, the issue of who should start defending his standpoint first, the fact that both Arguer 1 and Arguer 2 have advanced a standpoint makes it necessary that two separate non-mixed differences of opinion be conducted about each of the standpoints, resulting in two non-mixed discussions in which one party will act as the protagonist and the other as the antagonist.

A contrary counter-standpoint is a standpoint that is propositionally different from Arguer 1's initial standpoint and implies both doubt and a negative commitment to the proposition about which Arguer 1 has advanced a standpoint. A contrary counter-standpoint against Arguer 1's standpoint implies a contradictory counter-standpoint. The following is a case of a contrary counter-standpoint against Arguer 1's standpoint *Turkey should be given the chance to join the EU*:

3) The EU should cancel Turkey's application for entry.

A difference of opinion in which a standpoint is challenged with a contrary counter-standpoint is multiple-mixed because each party has advanced a standpoint regarding a different proposition while opposing the other party's standpoint (van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 1992). Unlike in the case in which a party has advanced a contradictory

counter-standpoint, in the case of a contrary counter-standpoint there are three related non-mixed differences of opinion regarding three distinct the standpoints – the original standpoint, the contradictory counter-standpoint implied in the contrary counter-standpoint, and the standpoint resulting from the other party's positive commitment to an altogether different proposition. Each of the three non-mixed differences of opinion may result in a separate critical discussion that can be captured precisely by way of a dialectical profile. In practice, however, two non-mixed differences of opinion may suffice to resolve a difference of opinion between two parties who have each advanced a standpoint about a different proposition (van Eemeren et al., 2007, p. 27-28); the difference of opinion regarding the contradictory counter-standpoint (implied by the adoption of a contrary standpoint) remains in this case implicit. This is because, since a party's commitment to a contrary counter-standpoint implies his commitment to a contradictory counter-standpoint, a successful defence of the former implies a successful defence of the latter.

3.4.3 Counterarguments

Another way in which the standpoint advanced by Arguer 1 can be countered is by bringing forward a counterargument to it. The following case is a counterargument that can be brought forward against the standpoint *Turkey should be given the chance to join the EU*:

4) The fact that Turkey is a Muslim country will lead to serious problems within the EU.

The fact that Arguer 2 has advanced a counterargument against Arguer 1's standpoint amounts to advancing a reason for not accepting it. This means that Arguer 2 has committed himself as a protagonist to a contradictory counter-standpoint such that this counterargument will constitute a defence (i.e. an argument) of that contradictory counter-standpoint. This means that the difference of opinion regarding the standpoint can be reconstructed as mixed (Snoeck Henkemans 1992, p. 131). In addition, the fact that Arguer 2 has put forward an argument in support of his counter-standpoint indicates that he has taken the discussion to the argumentation stage. Through putting forward a counterargument against the standpoint, Arguer 2, who is the protagonist of the counter-standpoint, can be said to have made an attempt to discharge the burden of proof for his counter-standpoint by advancing an argument. To be able to defend his standpoint successfully in this case, Arguer 1, the initial protagonist, should at any rate refute this counterargument.

3.5 Overview of possible countermoves against a standpoint

In this section, I provide an overview of the countermoves discussed in this chapter. Figure 1 shows these countermoves classified according to whether they involve a commitment on the part of Arguer 2 to a proposition or not.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="3">Countermoves against a standpoint</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Countermoves involving no commitment to a proposition</td><td>Doubt</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Countermoves involving a commitment to a proposition</td><td rowspan="2">Counter-standpoints</td><td>Contradictory counter-standpoint</td></tr>
<tr><td>Contrary counter-standpoint</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Counterargument</td></tr>
</table>

Figure 1: list of all possible countermoves against a standpoint

Counterarguments are shown to form a category of countermoves that involve commitment to a proposition. Within this category counterarguments form a distinct sub-category because they contain a commitment to a justification of a counter-standpoint.

3.6 Counterarguments as dialectically complex countermoves

Like doubt and counter-standpoints, counterarguments can be brought forward against any argumentative move involving a commitment to a proposition that an arguer may advance in the course of the discussion. I have shown that counterarguments can be advanced against a standpoint. One feature of counterarguments distinguishing them from other types of countermoves is that they only occur in the argumentation stage. A counterargument advanced by Arguer 2 signals more than mere non-acceptance of or opposition to, the Arguer 1's position, as in the case of doubt, and more than committing oneself to a counter-standpoint. A counterargument involves in addition to this the giving of a reason aimed to reject the standpoint under attack and to justify at the same time the Arguer 2's opposition to the standpoint, which, as Snoeck Henkemans (1992), has argued amounts to a counter-standpoint. For this reason, a party who advances a counterargument against another party's standpoint can be said to advance three countermoves at the same time: doubt, a counter-standpoint, and an argument for this standpoint.

This being the case, it could be said that, dialectically speaking, a counterargument provides the most complete attack on the Arguer 1's standpoint. When confronted with a counterargument, Arguer 1, if he wants to defend his standpoint, should do more than just provide arguments supporting the standpoint or immediately refute Arguer 2's counter-standpoint. Arguer 1 needs also to address Arguer 2's argument for his counter-standpoint before he (Arguer 1) can address the other countermoves embedded in the counterargument. Arguer 1's standpoint will only be defended successfully if he has refuted the counterargument successfully (van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 2004).

3.7 Conclusion

The main starting point of this chapter is that a systematic analysis of the argumentative technique of addressing anticipated counterarguments requires that we identify how counterarguments can be generated in the context of an argumentative discussion. In this chapter I have identified systematically the types of countermoves that Arguer 2 may undertake against Arguer 1's standpoint in a dialectical exchange. For this purpose, I have used the pragma-dialectical model of critical discussion as the context in which the argumentative exchange between Arguer 1 and Arguer 2 takes place. From a pragma-dialectical perspective, countermoves are argumentative moves through which Arguer 2 subjects the tenability of Arguer 1's standpoint to critical testing. These countermoves differ in the type of commitments that they involve.

A countermove against the standpoint can come in the form of doubt, of a counter-standpoint (contradictory or contrary) or of a counterargument. As such, a countermove by Arguer 2 has the force of imposing on Arguer 1 the obligation to defend his standpoint. This is because any countermove advanced by Arguer 2 in the course of the discussion, whether a counter-standpoint or a counterargument, implies at least Arguer 2's doubt regarding Arguer 1's standpoint. With some countermoves Arguer 2 also commits himself to a proposition and thereby assumes, next to his role as antagonist of Arguer 1's standpoint, the role of protagonist of his counter-standpoint.

Besides discussing all countermoves possible within a critical discussion, I have made it clear in what way counterarguments that can be anticipated regarding a standpoint constitute a distinctively complex type of countermove, as it involves the giving of a reason for a counter-standpoint. The complex dialectical nature of counterarguments is particularly clear when looking into the consequences that they have on Arguer 1's position and the obligations they incur on him in view of his aim to defend his standpoint against Arguer 2's attack.

CHAPTER 4

Reacting to countermoves against the standpoint

4.1 Introduction

In the preceding chapter, I have set the first step towards clarifying the dialectical dimension of the argumentative technique of mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument against a standpoint. Specifically, I have identified the countermoves that can occur in a critical discussion and have shown that a counterargument against a standpoint is one type of countermove. The overview of types of countermoves provided has allowed us to see clearly how counterarguments differ from other types of countermoves.

In this chapter I will provide a systematic overview of all the possible reactions of an arguer in response to countermoves against his standpoint. The aim of this overview will be to make clear how the dialectical commitments involved in refuting a counterargument against the standpoint differ from the commitments involved in other types of reactions. Identifying these dialectical commitments will in turn be instrumental for understanding the dialectical dimension of the technique of mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument. The chapter will be concluded with a dialectical reconstruction of a case in which an arguer mentions and then refutes an anticipated counterargument.

4.2 Reacting to doubt about the standpoint

I start with doubt as the simplest form of countermove that Arguer 1 may expect from Arguer 2 in the discussion. When the countermove anticipated with regard to the prescriptive standpoint *Turkey should be given the chance to join the EU* takes the form of doubt, for instance, *What makes you think so?*, the difference of opinion created is non-mixed and Arguer 1 is not given any option of further challenging the other Arguer 2's countermove other than providing an argument. This is what case (1) shows:

1) In recent years Turkey has made considerable economic progress.

By providing this argument, Arguer 1 takes a step towards discharging his burden of proof incurred upon him through the expression of doubt.

4.3 Reacting to counter-standpoints

In this section I will show in what ways an arguer may react to a counter-standpoint. As will be made clear, the possibilities that an arguer has when confronted with this type of countermove are broader than when he is confronted with doubt. The possible reactions also differ in the type of dialectical commitments they carry for Arguer 1, with refutations involving more commitments than other reactions.

4.3.1 Reacting to contradictory counter-standpoints

When the countermove anticipated with regard to the standpoint *Turkey should be given the chance to join the EU* takes the form of a contradictory counter-standpoint, i.e. *Turkey should not be given the chance to join the EU*, Arguer 2 commits himself to a standpoint, which means that Arguer 1 is not the only party with the responsibility to defend a standpoint. Arguer 1 has in this case the possibility of challenging Arguer 2 to account for his counter-standpoint.[17] Here is a case of doubt against the contradictory counter-standpoint *Turkey should not be given the chance to join the EU*:

[17] Given that Arguer 1 has already externalised his standpoint, he can be assumed to have doubt as well as a negative commitment to Arguer 2's counter-standpoint. Responding to this counter-standpoint by means of an expression of doubt or a contradictory counter-counter-standpoint will therefore simply result in a repetition of (part of) his original position.

2) Why not?

Arguer 1's expression of doubt regarding Arguer 2's counter-standpoint gives rise to a non-mixed difference opinion alongside the mixed difference of opinion resulting from Arguer 1's initial standpoint (*Turkey should be given the chance to join the EU*) and Arguer 2's counter-standpoint (*Turkey should not be given the chance to join the EU*). In this second difference of opinion, only Arguer 2 has the obligation to defend his counter-standpoint.

Another possibility that Arguer 1 has for responding to Arguer 2's contradictory counter-standpoint (*Turkey should not be given the chance to join the EU*) is advancing a counter-counter-standpoint.[18] The following is a case of this response:

3) Turkey should be given the chance to join the EU.

Responding to Arguer 2's counter-standpoint in this way gives rise to a mixed difference of opinion alongside the first one. Both Arguer 1 and Arguer 2 have the obligation to defend their standpoints.

Another way in which Arguer 1 can respond to Arguer 2's contradictory counter-standpoint is advancing a counter-counter-standpoint that is contrary to it. Such a reaction would certainly not result in a literal repetition of Arguer 1's initial standpoint, as is the case when he responds with a contradictory counter-counter-standpoint, but in the introduction of a new proposition into the discussion. By so responding to the contradictory counter-standpoint, Arguer 1 initiates a multiple mixed difference of opinion in which Arguer 2's counter-standpoint becomes a standpoint that is itself confronted with a counter-standpoint relating to a different proposition.[19] Case (5) illustrates this kind of counter-counter-standpoint against Arguer 2's *Turkey should not be given the chance to join the EU*:

5) The EU should really consider Turkey as a serious membership-candidate.

Even though both Arguer 1's initial standpoint and his counter-counter-standpoint (as opposed to Arguer 2's counter-standpoint) logically imply a negative commitment to Arguer 2's counter-standpoint, the two standpoints are propositionally different. Yet, by

[18] Through responding to Arguer 2's contradictory counter-standpoint by means of a contradictory counter-standpoint, Arguer 1 simply restates his initial standpoint since both this counter-counter-standpoint and his initial standpoint pertain to the same proposition and are contradictory to Arguer 2's counter-standpoint. Arguer 1's move brings nothing new to the discussion.

[19] The difference of opinion is multiple in the sense that more than one proposition (and its negative) is at issue.

adding a new commitment to the overall difference of opinion, Arguer 1 cannot be said to have defended his initial standpoint but must be said to have simply started a multiple mixed difference of opinion alongside the single mixed difference of opinion consisting of Arguer 1's standpoint and Arguer 2's contradictory counter-standpoint.

Arguer 1 may also attack Arguer 2's contradictory counter-standpoint by putting forward a counterargument against it. In case (6), Arguer 1 counters Arguer 2's contradictory counter-standpoint *Turkey should not be given the chance to join the EU* with a counterargument:

6) In recent years Turkey made considerable economic progress.

Given the contradictory relation between the two standpoints, the counterargument may just as well be considered an argument supporting Arguer 1's initial standpoint *Turkey should be given the chance to join the EU*.

4.3.2 Reacting to contrary counter-standpoints

When Arguer 2's countermove takes the form of a contrary counter-standpoint, the difference of opinion becomes multiple mixed. Because this counter-standpoint involves commitment to a standpoint relating to a proposition other than that of the targeted standpoint *Turkey should be given the chance to join the EU*, the options open to Arguer 1 are slightly different. In case (7) Arguer 1 reacts to Arguer 2's contrary counter-standpoint *The EU should cancel Turkey's application for entry* with doubt:

7) Why?

Through reacting by means of doubt to the contrary counter-standpoint *The EU should cancel Turkey's application for entry*, Arguer 1 creates a non-mixed difference of opinion regarding this contrary counter-standpoint. The fact that Arguer 2's counter-standpoint involves a commitment to a different proposition allows Arguer 1 to shift the discussion from his initial standpoint to the contrary counter-standpoint. Arguer 1 may also advance a contradictory counter-counter-standpoint. The following is a case of such a response:

8) The EU should not cancel Turkey's application for entry.

Through this reaction, Arguer 1 opts for initiating a single mixed difference of opinion regarding Arguer 2's contrary counter-standpoint *The EU should cancel Turkey's*

application for entry. Doing so, he again shifts the discussion from his own standpoint to that of Arguer 2.

Arguer 1 has the possibility of advancing a counterargument to Arguer 2's contrary counter-standpoint. Case (9) illustrates this move.

9) Turkey is not far from fulfilling all the requirements of EU membership.

Unlike a counterargument responding to a contradictory counter-standpoint, a counterargument brought forward against a contrary counter-standpoint is not necessarily an argument supporting Arguer 1's initial standpoint because arguing that Arguer 2's contrary counter-standpoint is to be rejected does not imply that Arguer 1's standpoint's acceptance. As contraries the two standpoints may in principle be simultaneously indefensible. Dialectically speaking, *Turkey is not far from fulfilling all the requirements of EU membership* can perfectly be considered an argument supporting Arguer 1's implicit contradictory counter-standpoint *The EU should not cancel Turkey's application for entry*. However, it is not necessarily an argument that support Arguer 1's initial standpoint *Turkey should be given the chance to join the EU*, though in practice it may be used as an argument for this standpoint.

In this section I have made it clear that reacting to a counter-standpoint through a counterargument involves an arguer's commitment to (1) doubt, (2) a counter-counter-standpoint and, most importantly, (3) an argument for this counter-counter-standpoint. Especially the last commitment is important because it shows that the arguer has not only expressed simple non-acceptance or rejection of the counter-standpoint, but has assumed a burden of proof towards a counter-counter-standpoint and provided an argument for it.

4.4 Reacting to counterarguments against the standpoint

In the previous chapter I have shown that a counterargument against the standpoint is more than just a rejection of the arguer's standpoint, but involves Arguer 2's commitment to an argument for a counter-standpoint. In this section I will try to show how Arguer 1, confronted with a counterargument from Arguer 2, can react to it and what each reaction involves.

A counterargument against a standpoint, such as *The fact that Turkey is a Muslim country will lead to serious problems within the EU* is, as mentioned earlier, an argument brought forward by Arguer 2 in defence of a contradictory counter-standpoint, which is *Turkey should not be given the chance to join the EU*. Therefore, Arguer 1 may choose to

attack its propositional content or refutatory force (i.e. either its relevance or sufficiency) (Snoeck Henkemans, 1992, p. 139).

4.4.1 Reacting to the propositional content of the counterarguments

When Arguer 1 attacks the propositional content of Arguer 2's counterargument, this particular aspect of the counterargument becomes a sub-standpoint. Arguer 1 may target this sub-standpoint through an expression of doubt, a counter-standpoint or a counterargument. In case (10), Arguer 1 expresses doubt about the propositional content of Arguer 2's counterargument *The fact that Turkey is a Muslim country will lead to serious problems within the EU*:

10) Why?

Through the expression of doubt, the sub-difference of opinion about the propositional content of Arguer 2's counterargument (*The fact that Turkey is a Muslim country will lead to serious problems within the EU*) is non-mixed. Arguer 1 simply challenges Arguer 2 to defend the propositional content of his counterargument (the argument that he has brought forward in support of his contradictory counter-standpoint). Through reacting to the counterargument in this way, Arguer 1 cannot be said to have taken any step towards defending his own standpoint, the target of the counterargument.

Arguer 1 may address the sub-standpoint (the propositional content of the counterargument) through a contradictory sub-counter-standpoint. Case (11) illustrates this type of response:

11) The fact that Turkey is a Muslim country will not lead to serious problems within the EU.

The sub-difference of opinion over the propositional content of the counterargument is now single mixed. Both Arguer 1 and Arguer 2 have in this case the option of challenging each other to account for their respective commitments.

The third possibility that Arguer 1 has is initiating a multiple mixed sub-difference of opinion through countering the sub-standpoint through a contrary sub-counter-standpoint. Case (12) illustrates this type of response:

12) The fact that Turkey is a Muslim country will contribute to the cultural diversity within the EU.

Through this contrary counter-standpoint, Arguer 1 has shifted the difference of opinion from the original proposition of the counterargument to a new proposition. As yet, he has not provided any defence for his standpoint.

Another possibility for Arguer 1 to attack the propositional content of Arguer 2's counterargument *The fact that Turkey is a Muslim country will lead to serious problems within the EU* against Arguer 1's standpoint is refuting it through advancing a counterargument against it. The following is a case of such a counter-counterargument:

13) Turkey is a secular country where religion does not play any role in political life.

Only by advancing a counterargument against the propositional content of Arguer 2's counterargument can Arguer 1 be said to have provided an argument supporting his sub-counter-standpoint *The fact that Turkey is a Muslim country will not lead to serious problems within the EU*.

4.4.2 Reacting to the refutatory force of the counterarguments

When Arguer 1 attacks the refutatory force of the counterargument *The fact that Turkey is a Muslim country will lead to serious problems within the EU* that Arguer 2 has advanced against Arguer 1's standpoint *Turkey should be given the chance to join the EU*, Arguer 1 simultaneously attacks its justificatory force with regard to the implicit counter-standpoint *Turkey should not be given the chance to join the EU*. In addressing its refutatory force, Arguer 1 may challenge either the relevance or the sufficiency of the counterargument.

Arguer 1 may doubt the relevance of Arguer 2's counterargument by asking a critical question pertaining to this aspect of the counterargument. The relevance of the counterargument to the standpoint becomes then a sub-standpoint, reconstructed as *The fact that Turkey is a Muslim country is relevant for denying it the right to join the EU* . Case (14) illustrates a possible critical question:

14) Is the fact that Turkey is a Muslim country relevant for denying it the right to join the EU?

Through addressing Arguer 2's counterargument in this way, Arguer 1 initiates a non-mixed difference of opinion relating to the relevance of the counterargument to Arguer 1's standpoint. Said differently, through the critical question related to the relevance of the counterargument, Arguer 1 challenges Arguer 2 to defend the implicit premise providing

for the relevance of his counterargument as an argument supporting his implicit contradictory counter-standpoint.

Arguer 1 has also the possibility to advance a sub-counter-standpoint regarding Arguer 2's sub-standpoint expressing the relevance of the counterargument. This sub-standpoint can be *The fact that Turkey is a Muslim country is relevant for denying it the right to join the EU.* Arguer 1's sub-counter-standpoint against this sub-standpoint may be contradictory or contrary. Case (15) illustrates a contradictory sub-counter-standpoint against the relevance of Arguer 2's counterargument:

15) The fact that Turkey is a Muslim country is not relevant for denying it the right to join the EU.

Through this contradictory sub-counter-standpoint pertaining to relevance, Arguer 1 initiates a single mixed difference of opinion regarding the relevance of the counterargument to the implicit counter-standpoint *(Turkey should not be given the chance to join the EU).* In the case of the contradictory sub-counter-standpoint, Arguer 1 simply commits himself negatively to the established linked between the counterargument and the implicit counter-standpoint. Case (16) illustrates a contrary sub-counter-standpoint against the sub-standpoint expressing the relevance of the counterargument:

16) The fact that Turkey is a Muslim country should increase its chances for accession to the EU.

Through the contrary sub-counter-standpoint, Arguer 1 commits himself to a new proposition relating to the relevance of Arguer 2's counterargument *(The fact that Turkey is a Muslim country will lead to problems within the EU)* to his implicit counter-standpoint *(Turkey should not be given the chance to join the EU).* Arguer 1's commitment to this proposition *The fact that Turkey is a Muslim country should increase its chances for accession to the EU* implies his negative commitment to the relevance of Arguer 2's counterargument for his counter-standpoint.

The last possibility that Arguer 1 has with regard to the relevance of Arguer 2's counterargument against his standpoint is refuting it by providing a counterargument against the sub-standpoint pertaining to the relevance of the counterargument. Case (17) illustrates such a counterargument:

17) European accession rules do not associate EU membership with a specific religion.

Through this counter-counterargument, Arguer 1 is at the same time defending the contradictory sub-counter-standpoint that what is stated in Arguer 2's counterargument (*The fact that Turkey is a Muslim country will lead to serious problems within the EU*) is not relevant to what is stated in Arguer 2's main counter-standpoint (*Turkey should not be given the chance to join the EU*).

Arguer 1 may also target the sufficiency of Arguer 2's counterargument. The first possibility in this regard is doubt. Arguer 1 may doubt the sufficiency of the counterargument by asking a critical question relating to whether what is stated in the counterargument provides sufficient grounds to refute the standpoint. The sufficiency of the counterargument to the standpoint becomes then a sub-standpoint, namely *That the Islamic character of Turkey will lead to problems within the EU is enough reason to deny it the chance to join the EU*. Case (18) illustrates a pertinent critical question with regard to this sub-standpoint:

18) Is the fact that Turkey is a Muslim country the only reason why Turkey should not be given the chance to join the EU?

Through this critical question, Arguer 1 challenges Arguer 2 to provide more argumentation in favour of his implicit counter-standpoint that *Turkey should not be given the chance to join the EU*, for which the counterargument is an argument.

Arguer 1 can also react through advancing a sub-counter-standpoint regarding the sufficiency of the counterargument (sub-standpoint). This counter-standpoint can be contradictory as in case (19):

19) That the Islamic character of Turkey will lead to serious problems within the EU is not enough reason to deny it the chance to join the EU.

Through this contradictory sub-counter-standpoint, a single mixed difference of opinion regarding the sufficiency of the counterargument arises, in which Arguer 1 commits himself negatively to the sufficiency of Arguer 2's counterargument as a defence for the implicit counter-standpoint that *Turkey should not be given the chance to join the EU.*

A multiple mixed difference of opinion regarding the sufficiency of the counterargument arises when Arguer 1 advances a contrary sub-counter-standpoint pertaining to the sufficiency of the counterargument, as in case (20):

20) Before we deny Turkey the chance to join the EU other issues should be considered than just religion.

Through advancing a contrary sub-counter-standpoint regarding the sufficiency of the counterargument, Arguer 1 initiates a multiple mixed difference of opinion regarding the sufficiency of the counterargument. Arguer 1 not only commits himself *negatively* to the sub-standpoint *That the Islamic character of Turkey will lead to problems within the EU is enough reason to deny it the chance to join the EU,* but he also commits himself positively to a new proposition that implies the contradictory of this sub-standpoint, namely *Before we deny Turkey the chance to join the EU other issues should be considered than just religion*.

The third reaction that can come from Arguer 1 is a counter-counterargument by which he refutes the sufficiency of Arguer 2's counterargument. Case (21) illustrates this type of response:

21) Turkey's accession to the EU will strengthen EU's geopolitical position.

By putting forward this counter-counterargument, Arguer 1 simultaneously defends the contradictory sub-counter-standpoint *That the Islamic character of Turkey will lead to serious problems within the EU* <u>*is not*</u> *enough reason to deny it the chance to join the EU.*

When an arguer reacts to an aspect of the counterargument, this aspect of the counterargument becomes a sub-standpoint. All possible reactions to this sub-standpoint can be regarded as ways in which the arguer makes explicit in a reasonable way his rejection of the aspect of the counterargument in question. However, as shown above, it is through refuting the counterargument, i.e. through bringing forward a counterargument against the sub-standpoint, that the arguer launches the most complete attack on the counterargument.

4.5 Overview of all reactions to countermoves against the standpoint

The following table gives an overview of all possible reactions to the countermoves discussed in this chapter.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">Countermoves against the standpoint</td><td>Reactions to countermoves involving no commitment to a proposition</td><td colspan="2">Reactions to countermoves involving commitment to a proposition but not to an argument</td><td>Reactions to countermoves involving commitment to an argument in addition to a proposition</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Doubt</td><td>-</td><td colspan="2">-</td><td>Argument</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="4">Counter-standpoint</td><td rowspan="2">Contradictory counter-standpoint</td><td rowspan="2">Doubt</td><td rowspan="2">counter-standpoint</td><td>Contradictory counter-counter-standpoint</td><td rowspan="2">Counterargument</td></tr>
<tr><td>Contrary counter-counter-Standpoint</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Contrary counter-standpoint</td><td rowspan="2">Doubt</td><td rowspan="2">Counter-counter-standpoint</td><td>Contradictory counter-counter-standpoint</td><td rowspan="2">Counterargument</td></tr>
<tr><td>Contrary counter-standpoint</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Counterargument</td><td>Propositional content</td><td>Critical question</td><td rowspan="2">Sub counter-standpoint</td><td>Sub counter-standpoint</td><td>Counterargument</td></tr>
<tr><td>Refutatory force (relevance or sufficiency)</td><td>Critical question</td><td>Sub counter-standpoint</td><td>Counterargument</td></tr>
</table>

Figure 1: reactions to countermoves against a standpoint

Like reacting through a counterarguments in the case of countermoves against the standpoint, reacting to a counter-standpoint or counterargument through a counterargument (a refutation) consists of more than simply showing doubt or rejecting Arguer 2's counter-

standpoint or counterargument; it also consists of providing an argument (a reason) for a counter-counter-standpoint.

4.6 Refuting counterarguments: a dialectically complex reaction

In what preceded have I listed the different types of reactions to countermoves against a standpoint. In this section I will turn my attention to the type of reaction involved in mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument, namely *refuting the counterargument*. It is important to shed light on some important differences that have emerged between the different types of refutation described above.

There are two ways of refuting a counterargument: refuting its propositional content and refuting its refutatory force. In view of the fact that a counterargument is an argument for the contradictory counter-standpoint, refuting its propositional content or refutatory force amounts, respectively, to refuting its propositional content or its *justificatory* force as an *argument* for this counter-standpoint.

When a counterargument against the standpoint is found propositionally unacceptable, the acceptability of its refutatory force with regard to the standpoint (and hence its justificatory force for the counter-standpoint) is made useless at the same time. Therefore, refuting the propositional content of the counterargument can be said to imply also refuting the possibility to use its justificatory/refutatory force. That is to say, when a party has successfully refuted the propositional content of the counterargument, it does not make any sense for the other party to appeal to its refutatory or justificatory force at a later move within the same discussion.

Conversely, refuting the refutatory force of the counterargument amounts only to refuting its relevance or sufficiency, but not to refuting its propositional content. From having successfully refuted the relevance and/or sufficiency of the counterargument, the arguer may not claim that the counterargument is propositionally inacceptable. If necessary, the counterargument may perfectly be adduced again in the discussion, for instance, with respect to another standpoint or sub-standpoint. Therefore, reacting to a counterargument through refuting its propositional content is dialectically speaking more comprehensive than refuting its refutatory force.

There are thus two distinctions that are important from a dialectical perspective. The first distinction concerns the status of refutations as compared to other types of reactions. We have seen in this regard that when the arguer refutes a counterargument with a counter-counterargument, he commits himself to other reactions as well, namely to doubt and to a counter-sub-standpoint. The second distinction is between refuting the acceptability of the propositional content and refuting the refutatory force of the

counterargument. It has been made clear that by refuting the acceptability of the propositional content of a counterargument the arguer implicitly also shows that any refutatory force the counterargument may have is pointless.

4.7 Dialectical reconstruction of mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument against a standpoint

The overview of reactions to countermoves provided in this chapter constitutes the dialectical framework in light of which the technique of mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument against a standpoint can be analysed. To illustrate how this can be done, I will in this section provide a dialectical reconstruction of a text in which the arguer mentions and then refutes a counterargument that he anticipates with regard to his prescriptive standpoint. This reconstruction will project this text as part of a critical discussion between the arguer and a potential party. The aim of the reconstruction is to make explicit all the countermoves and reactions to countermoves that are involved in the act of mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument. The reconstruction shows how by mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument the arguer manages to maintain his standpoint.[20] Arguer 1 refers to the arguer in the text and Arguer 2 refers to the addressed party in the argumentation from whom a counterargument can be anticipated. Explanation will follow the analysis.

> *Turkey should be given the chance to join the EU. Some Europeans fear that the Islamic character of Turkey will lead to problems but Turkey is a secular country where religion plays no role in political life.*

1[21]: Arguer 1 advances a standpoint: *Turkey should be given the chance to join the EU.*
2: Arguer 2 doubts this standpoint: *Why should Turkey be given the chance to join the EU?*
3: Arguer 1 maintains his standpoint: *Turkey should be given the chance to join the EU.*
4 Arguer 2 advances a counter-standpoint (becoming the protagonist): *Turkey should not be given the chance to join the EU.*

[20] The reconstruction projects the arguer to eventually get the addressed party to retract his doubt and counterargument so that the arguer maintains his standpoint at the end of the exchange. This is of course only an assumption based on the fact that reasonable arguers only argue in ways that they think will lead them to get their standpoints accepted. Whether the argumentation is *actually* effective in attaining this goal or not is of course another matter.
[21] The numbers represent discussion turns.

5: Arguer 1 doubts the counter-standpoint: *Why should Turkey not be given the chance to join the EU.*
6: Arguer 2 provides an argument: *The Islamic character of Turkey will lead to problems.*
7: Arguer 2 advances a sub-standpoint: *The Islamic character of Turkey will lead to problems.*
8: Arguer 1 doubts the sub-standpoint: *Why will the Islamic character of Turkey lead to problems?*
9: Arguer 2 maintains his sub-standpoint: *The Islamic character of Turkey will lead to problems.*
10: Arguer 1 advances a negative sub-counter-standpoint: *The Islamic character of Turkey will not lead to problems.*
11: Arguer 2 doubts the sub-counter-standpoint: *Why will the Islamic character of Turkey not lead to problems?*
12: Arguer 1 provides an argument: *Turkey is a secular country where religion plays no role in political life.*
13: Arguer 2 retracts doubt regarding the sub-standpoint: *Why will the Islamic character of Turkey not lead to problems?*
14: Arguer 1 maintains sub-standpoint: *The Islamic character of Turkey will not lead to problems.*
15: Arguer 2 retracts sub-standpoint: *The Islamic character of Turkey will lead to problems.*
16: Arguer 1 maintains doubt on sub-standpoint: *Why will the Islamic character of Turkey to problems?*
17: Arguer 2 retracts argument: ***The Islamic character of Turkey will lead to problems.***
18: Arguer 1 maintains doubt on counter-standpoint of Arguer 2: *Why should Turkey not be given the chance to join the EU?*
19: Arguer 2 retracts counter-standpoint: *Turkey should not be given the chance to join the EU.*
20: Arguer 1 maintains standpoint: *Turkey should be given the chance to join the EU"*
21: Arguer 2 retracts doubt on standpoint: *Why should Turkey be given the chance to join the EU?*

The difference is initiated with Arguer 2 casting doubt on Arguer 1's standpoint. The difference of opinion turns mixed when Arguer 2 advances a contradictory counter-standpoint at 4 and provides an argument in support of it at 6. (This argument supporting the counter-standpoint, is what appears in the text as the counterargument.) Arguer 2's

argument turns into a sub-standpoint at 7, when Arguer 1 challenges the propositional content of this argument at 8, initiating a non-mixed sub-difference of opinion on this aspect of this counterargument. Arguer 2 maintains his sub-standpoint at 9. And Arguer 1 advances a contradictory counter-sub-standpoint at 10, which makes the sub-difference of opinion mixed. Arguer 2 challenges Arguer 1 to support his sub-counter-standpoint at 11. Arguer 1 then provides an argument. (This is what appears in the text as the refutation of the counterargument.) Arguer 2 then retracts his doubt about Arguer 1's negative sub-counter-standpoint at 13, allowing Arguer 1 to maintain his sub-counter-standpoint at 14. Arguer 2 can no longer defend his own sub-standpoint and so retracts it, allowing Arguer 1 to maintain his doubt about it at 16. This retraction also implies a retraction of his argument. This happens at 17.

When Arguer 2 retracts his argument, Arguer 1 maintains his doubt on Arguer 2's counter-standpoint (already advanced at 4). Left with no arguments for this counter-standpoint, Arguer 2 retracts it. This allows Arguer 1 to maintain his prescriptive standpoint at 20. The main discussion is closed when Arguer 2 retracts his doubt on Arguer 1's standpoint at 21.

This reconstruction highlights the dialectical complexity of the act of mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument. Mentioning the anticipated counterargument, the first explicit move in the text, is shown to involve anticipating doubt and a counter-standpoint that is supported with an argument. Refuting the counterargument, the second explicit move, is shown to involve initiating a sub-difference of opinion in which the arguer advances a sub-counter-standpoint and then defends it with an argument.

4.8 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have identified all the possible moves that an arguer may make in reacting to a countermove about his standpoint. It has become clear that reactions to countermoves can, just like countermoves themselves, be classified according to whether they involve propositional commitment on the part of the arguer or simply challenge the other party to account for his countermove.

I have shown how some types of countermoves impose restrictions on how the arguer may react to them. When confronted with an expression of doubt, the arguer has no other option but to provide an argument supporting his (sub) standpoint. In addition, I have argued that reacting to a counter-standpoint or a counterargument through a refutation, i.e. through a counterargument, involves a commitment to other reactions as well. Regarding refutations of a counterargument, I have shown that refuting the propositional content of a

counterargument implies showing the irrelevance of its refutatory force. Finally, by reconstructing a case of mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument as an argumentative exchange between the arguer and a potential opposing arguer, I have shown what this way of arguing amounts to dialectically. The reconstruction has made it particularly clear that addressing an anticipated counterargument consists of a complex configuration of countermoves and reactions to countermoves that remain implicit in the text.

CHAPTER 5

The persuasiveness of strategic manoeuvring by mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument against a prescriptive standpoint

5.1 Aim of the chapter

In order to determine why mentioning and refuting an anticipated counterargument against a prescriptive standpoint can be persuasive in argumentation in a monologue and whether it is indeed persuasive in ordinary argumentative discourse, it is necessary to take into account how the rhetorical dimension of this argumentative technique relates to its dialectical dimension. In showing the way the two dimensions relate, in this chapter I will make use of the concept of strategic manoeuvring. The aim of this chapter is to determine why mentioning and refuting an anticipated counterargument can be conceived of as being more persuasive than merely mentioning supporting arguments. First, I want to indicate how pursuing this aim relates to what I have done in earlier chapters.

In chapter 2 (Dialectical and rhetorical insights concerning the persuasiveness of addressing anticipated counterarguments), I argued that to date the treatment of this form of argumentation by argumentation scholars lacks an explicit systematic integration of its dialectical dimension, epitomised in its contribution to a reasonable resolution of a difference of opinion about a particular standpoint, and its rhetorical dimension,

epitomised in its persuasive function of getting another party to accept the standpoint. While some authors have treated this anticipatory technique independently of its reasonableness, other authors have emphasised its reasonableness irrespective of its persuasive effect.[22] In this chapter the two dimensions will be integrated by focusing on the persuasive working of this way of arguing *within the boundaries of reasonableness* set by the dialectical context.

Having in Chapters 3 and 4 expounded on the dialectical context in which a counterargument arises as a form of countermove, I shall, in this chapter, show how van Eemeren and Houtlosser's integration of rhetorical insights into the pragma-dialectical theory can contribute to enhancing our understanding of the way mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument against a prescriptive standpoint functions as a persuasive way of arguing in a monologue through which the arguer addresses a party that is not necessarily physically present. To show how this anticipatory way of arguing functions, a number of steps need to be taken. First of all, I shall explain how van Eemeren and Houtlosser have gone about integrating rhetorical insights into their dialectical framework of argumentation. Then I shall make clear how this integration can be helpful in explaining the way mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument against the standpoint works as a mode of strategic manoeuvring. Next, showing in what way dealing with anticipated counterarguments works as a mode of strategic manoeuvring will help us to understand how the dialectical and rhetorical dimensions of this strategic manoeuvre can be useful for determining why it may be presumed to be more persuasive than merely mentioning supporting arguments. Finally, the conclusion of this last step will be used as a hypothesis for the empirical research to be discussed in chapter 6.

5.2 Strategic manoeuvring in argumentative discourse

Building on the dialectical perspective of argumentation developed by van Eemeren and Grootendorst (1984, 2004), van Eemeren and Houtlosser (1999, 2000, 2002) have argued that it is perfectly possible to integrate rhetorical insights of argumentation into the dialectical framework. The rationale behind this claim is that (a) pursuing the goal of persuasion and (b) actually being persuasive (in the sense of being rhetorically effective) are not necessarily at odds with trying to be reasonable, which is the requirement that arguers need to abide by in resolving a difference of opinion within the dialectical context of a critical discussion. As van Eemeren and Houtlosser (1999) have put it:

[22] I don't mean to claim here that in studying this argumentative technique authors have argued against considering the other dimension, be it dialectical or rhetorical, when focusing on the dimension of their preference.

> There is no reason to assume that the rhetorical norm of artful persuasion is necessarily in contradiction with the dialectical ideal of reasonableness. In practice, argumentative moves that are considered rhetorically strong by a critical audience will almost certainly be in accordance with the dialectical norms applying to the discussion stage concerned. (p. 383)

According to the authors, ordinary arguers are characteristically oriented towards resolving a difference of opinion in a reasonable way and have the tendency to reject any argumentative attempt that seems to them to be unreasonable. In this sense it is plausible that ordinary arguers try to comply with the ideal standards of reasonableness and expect others to comply with this ideal as well. At the same time, arguers do their best to resolve differences of opinion in their own favour.

Van Eemeren and Houtlosser propose a new and systematic way of explaining how argumentative discourse can absorb the potential tension between the rhetorical and the dialectical. They posit that given their natural commitment to, on the one hand, being reasonable and treating other parties as being reasonable and, on the other hand, resolving differences of opinion in their own favour, ordinary arguers will try to argue in a way that will fulfil both ends. Van Eemeren and Houtlosser state:

> Even when they try their best to have their point of view accepted, they have to maintain the image of people who play the resolution game by the rules… If a given move is not successful, they cannot escape their dialectical responsibility by simply saying 'I was only being rhetorical'. As a rule, they will therefore at least have to pretend to be interested primarily in having the difference of opinion resolved. (1999, p. 481)

Striving to win the discussion in a reasonable way is captured in what van Eemeren and Houtlosser dub 'strategic manoeuvring'. Strategic manoeuvring is conceived of as the "[trying to realise] rhetorical aims while complying with the requirements of reasonable dispute resolution" (1999, p. 481). By manoeuvring strategically an arguer tries to seize the dialectical opportunities that each stage of the dialectical procedure makes available to him in order to steer the discussion in the direction that he takes to be advantageous to him in view of his rhetorical aim to win the discussion.

Whether he is advancing a standpoint, forwarding an argument for his standpoint, or attacking the other party's standpoint or argumentation, in the context of an argumentative exchange, the arguer needs to make certain choices. These choices pertain to every dialectical move that he may want to make: he needs to decide what he should say (as a reaction to what the other party has said), how he should say it, and how he should

adapt what he should say to the requirements and characteristics of the recipient party. Van Eemeren and Houtlosser argue that in making such decisions the arguer manoeuvres strategically. They explain that strategic manoeuvring manifests itself in three aspects: making expedient selections from the topical potential, adapting one's argumentative moves to audience demands, and exploiting suitable presentational devices. Because at every stage arguers are expected to cope with the tension between being reasonable and wanting to win the discussion, arguers will try to seize the opportunities that each stage makes available to them to manoeuvre strategically.

All in all, through integrating rhetorical considerations into the dialectical framework of argumentation, van Eemeren and Houtlosser (1999, 2000, 2002) propose a new and overarching conception of the complex speech act of argumentation whereby all argumentative moves are conceived as strategic manoeuvres. In this way van Eemeren and Houtlosser have contrived a way of systematically combining two seemingly unrelated perspectives on argumentation that links the fulfilment of the dialectical requirement of being reasonable with the rhetorical requirement of getting one's position accepted.

The question is how van Eemeren and Houtlosser's view of argumentation as strategic manoeuvring can be helpful in accounting for the way the argumentative technique of mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument functions persuasively in argumentative discourse. To answer this question, I must first determine whether this anticipatory way of arguing can indeed be regarded as a strategic manoeuvre.

5.3 Mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument: a mode of strategic manoeuvring

In this section I will show in what way mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument in a monologue can be defined as a mode of strategic manoeuvring. To begin with, the difference between dealing with an anticipated counterargument in a dialogical context and in a monologue should be elucidated because the type of context has consequences for the persuasive functioning of this strategic manoeuvre. After that, the dialectical and rhetorical dimensions of this anticipatory way of arguing in a monologue will be explained. Understanding what each dimension involves will allow us to understand what manoeuvring strategically with an anticipated counterargument amounts to.

5.3.1 Mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument in a dialogue and in a monologue

Before I embark on discussing how mentioning and then refuting anticipated counterarguments can be defined as a mode of strategic manoeuvring, I should note that there is a difference between the type of argumentative discourse van Eemeren and Houtlosser start from in their discussion of strategic manoeuvring, i.e. a dialogue, and the specific kind of argumentative discourse in which I am interested. Van Eemeren and Houtlosser take as a starting point a dialogical context in which two parties are actively involved. What I am interested in here is a monologue through which an arguer addresses a potential party who is not necessarily physically present and who, as a consequence, may not be able to respond to the arguer's argumentative attempt. In both forms of argumentative discourse, the arguer can anticipate a counterargument of the addressed party and attempt to refute it in advance. However, the *effect* that the arguer's *anticipating move* has in a dialogue differs fundamentally from the effect that the same move can have in a *monologue*.

In an argumentative dialogue, the success of addressing an anticipated counterargument, a move typically made in the argumentation stage, need not have any detrimental effect on the acceptability of the arguer's standpoint, an outcome that can only be established in the concluding stage. This is because the other party has the possibility of prompting the arguer to make a new move if he is not satisfied with the arguer's anticipating attempt. In a monologue, however, the arguer's anticipation attempt has direct consequences for the outcome of (what is reconstructed as) the concluding stage. The verdict which the party addressed in the monologue (e.g. a reader) will eventually have to deliver on the acceptability of the anticipation attempt cannot be modified, as it is in most cases practically impossible for this party to ask the arguer to reconsider his move. As a result, whether the addressed party will accept the anticipation attempt or not will directly determine whether or not he will accept the standpoint as a whole.

While the consequences that mentioning and then refuting anticipated counterarguments may have on the arguer's chances of getting his standpoint accepted may differ depending on whether he is arguing in a dialogue or in a monologue, in both cases the arguer will be committed to attaining his rhetorical aim of getting his standpoint accepted while at the same time complying with the dialectical norms of reasonableness. The idea that an arguer can manoeuvre strategically presupposes the existence of two potentially conflicting aims regardless of the context: the dialectical and the rhetorical. Therefore, to understand how mentioning and refuting an anticipated counterargument

against a standpoint functions as a mode of strategic manoeuvring, its dialectical and rhetorical dimensions should be explained.

5.3.2 Dialectical dimension

In Chapter 4 I explained that counterarguments are types of countermoves that an arguer can expect from a reasonable party in the dialectical context of a critical discussion and that refuting a counterargument is one reasonable way of reacting to the counterargument. In what follows I will show how the dialectical dimension of addressing a counterargument in the context of a critical discussion can be brought to bear on the way mentioning and then refuting anticipated counterarguments functions as a mode of strategic manoeuvre in a monologue.

The dialectical dimension of mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument against a prescriptive standpoint is manifested in the role that this way of arguing plays in resolving the difference of opinion regarding the standpoint on the merits. Contrary to a non-anticipatory form of arguing in which the arguer reacts to implicit doubt through adducing supporting arguments, mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument is a way of arguing through which the arguer makes explicit the critical testing necessary for a reasonable resolution of the difference of opinion regarding his standpoint.

A counterargument should be regarded as representing the voice of a different party and be reconstructed as an argument brought in support of a contradictory counter-standpoint put forward by this party. This means essentially that the type of difference of opinion in which the arguer, by virtue of anticipating a counterargument, has involved himself is of the mixed type, i.e. a difference of opinion involving a standpoint and a counter-standpoint for which an argument has been anticipated. According to this dialectical reconstruction, the arguer comes to fulfil two roles: that of the protagonist of his own standpoint and that of the antagonist of the counter-standpoint. This means that for a reasonable resolution of the difference of opinion the arguer, in his role of protagonist of his own standpoint, should get the other party, in the latter's role of antagonist, to retract his anticipated doubt regarding this standpoint and, in his role as the antagonist of the counter-standpoint, refute the other party's argument (the anticipated counterargument) so as to eventually get the addressed party to retract his counter-standpoint.

What propositional content the anticipated counterargument against a standpoint will have depends on the disagreement space opened by the standpoint in question. In the case of a prescriptive standpoint the arguer addresses those issues that commonly stand in the way of doing that which the arguer is prescribing through his standpoint. It is these

issues that a party wishing to counter the standpoint refers to in contriving pertinent counterarguments against the standpoint. Such issues are called 'stock issues' in policy debate theory.[23] Freeley and Steinberg (2005) identify three stock issues: harm, inherency and solvency. Harm refers to the presence of a problem in the status quo. Inherency implies that the harm to be eliminated through the action advocated in (the propositional content of) the standpoint is inherent in the status quo. Solvency refers to whether the advocated action in the standpoint is instrumental in solving the problem or improving the status quo.

Accordingly, through advancing a counterargument pertaining to the stock issue of harm a party basically proposes a reason for not taking the course of action by stating that there is no harm in the status quo. Through advancing an inherency counterargument the arguer suggests that the existing harm is not inherent in the problem situation referred to in the standpoint, and through putting forward a counterargument relating to solvency, an arguer proposes that the status quo will not be improved through implementing the advocated course of action.

An important stock issue that policy debate theorists have not covered concerns the question of whether the course of action advocated in the prescriptive standpoint is feasible or not. This stock issue has been suggested by Feteris (2007) as a critical question associated with pragmatic argumentation (argumentation referring to positive or negative consequences of adopting a course of action or abstaining from a course of action). Strictly speaking, these critical questions arise as a way of testing the acceptability of the pragmatic argumentation used and hence presuppose that the argumentation has indeed been put forward. However, the question pertaining to the feasibility of the action advocated in the prescriptive standpoint in question can also be asked with respect to the standpoint, and hence may be supplemented as a stock issue to which a counterargument against the standpoint can refer.

From a purely dialectical perspective, it would follow that, for the sake of the critical testing necessary for a rational resolution of the difference of opinion, the arguer should accept the risk of having his standpoint rejected in case the anticipated counterargument happens to be too strong to refute, for example because it concerns an objection that the arguer cannot answer by using any arguments that he has at his disposal.[24] However, in practice arguers who choose to make explicit a possible counterargument against their standpoint have an equal investment in persuading the

[23] Freeley and Steinberg define stock issues as "those issues common to all debates on similar types of propositions or standard claims that are applicable to many propositions."

[24] How difficult it is to overcome a counterargument depends on the situation and the difference of opinion. There is in principle nothing special about any stock issue that makes counterarguments relating to it more or less difficult to refute.

opposing party to accept their standpoint as in having it critically tested and would therefore try to find ways to secure acceptance for their standpoints. In order to clearly understand how this argumentative mode of arguing functions, it should be made clear how it helps in achieving the arguer's rhetorical aim of getting his standpoint accepted.

5.3.3 Rhetorical dimension

The rhetorical dimension of mentioning and refuting an anticipated counterargument against a standpoint lies in its role in enhancing the persuasiveness of the argumentation. This persuasiveness consists of maximizing the arguer's chances of getting his standpoint accepted by the potential other party in a monologue.

The rhetorical advantage of this way of arguing stems from its anticipatory character consisting of mentioning and then refuting a counterargument *in advance*. Through addressing the counterargument in advance, the arguer can manage to convey an image of being an objective and fair arguer who is not exclusively concerned with finding the best arguments for his standpoint but also makes room in his argumentative monologue to address an opposing viewpoint. In addition, through refuting the counterargument in advance, the arguer can attempt to show himself to be stronger than the party to whom the counterargument is attributed.

Another rhetorical advantage stems from the fact that through mentioning a specific counterargument the arguer can manage to engage the addressed party in the issue to which the counterargument relates, distracting him from other equally or more important issues relating to the standpoint. Because a counterargument consists of an argument supporting a contradictory standpoint, choosing to address a counterargument can help the arguer to shift focus from his position to that of an opponent[25]. In some cases, this can help him to distract the addressed party from a possible weakness in his position.

Seen independently of the arguer's dialectical objective of subjecting his standpoint to critical testing, rhetorical persuasiveness does not have to proceed in accordance with the norms of reasonableness. Preoccupied with the rhetorical goal of attaining the maximum persuasive effect on the party addressed, an arguer may go to great lengths to 'exploit' the counterargument to get his standpoint accepted. For instance, an arguer may mention an imaginary counterargument just to create the image of objectiveness commonly associated with people who take the trouble of mentioning counterarguments. He may even try to get away with a fallacious refutation of the counterargument.

[25] This opponent can be the addressed party himself, but the counterargument can also be attributed to a party other than the one addressed.

In their treatment of this way of arguing, rhetorical theorists and persuasion researchers concerned with the argumentative technique of mentioning and refuting anticipated counterarguments have employed a concept of persuasiveness that is not regulated by reasonableness. This is of course not to say that these scholars have advocated resorting to unreasonable means of argumentation for the sake of achieving persuasiveness, but only that in studying the persuasiveness of this anticipatory technique these theorists have not provided theoretical guarantees for persuasiveness to be attained in accordance with the standards of reasonableness.

By looking into this anticipatory technique as a mode of strategic manoeuvring, whereby the dialectical and rhetorical dimensions are combined, I want to show how it is possible for an arguer to achieve rhetorical persuasiveness within the dialectical boundaries of reasonableness.

5.3.4 Combining the dialectical and the rhetorical dimensions

In order to show how an arguer can address an anticipated counterargument persuasively without compromising the reasonableness of his argumentation, the dialectical dimension of maintaining a commitment to reasonableness should be combined with the rhetorical dimension of making an attempt at securing acceptance of the standpoint. The technique of mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument against a standpoint can be regarded as a mode of strategic manoeuvring whereby the arguer mentions a counterargument that he anticipates not only to subject his standpoint to the critical testing necessary for a dialectically successful defence of his position, but also to achieve a persuasive outcome. The question is then how pursuing these two potentially conflicting aims can be combined.

Given that for a reasonable defence of the arguer's position his argumentation needs to overcome the critical reactions of the other party, it is possible to say that in the case of anticipating a counterargument the reasonableness of the arguer's manoeuvring is dependent on a) whether the counterargument can be attributed to the party addressed, b) whether this counterargument is relevant (in the sense of pertaining to the stock issues mentioned above) and c) whether the arguer has refuted this counterargument in a reasonable way. That there should be a counterargument in the first place, that this counterargument should be relevant and that the refutation should be reasonable might look like dialectical restrictions standing in the way of persuasive arguing. In fact, these restricting conditions are only there to guarantee that attaining any persuasiveness will not proceed at the expense of reasonableness. By selecting the counterargument and its

refutation strategically, the arguer can manage to attain the persuasive effect that he aims for.

Mentioning a counterargument that the addressed party does not endorse amounts to a violation of rule 3 of a critical discussion, resulting in a straw man fallacy. In case the party addressed is not prepared to accept a commitment to such a standpoint, mentioning and then refuting the anticipated counterargument cannot be but fallacious. Of course, this does not mean that an arguer should only mention a counterargument after ensuring that it is exactly the counterargument the addressed party has in mind. It suffices that the counterargument can be plausibly attributed to this party. Knowing what the targeted party has in mind is strictly speaking beyond the arguer's abilities.

Addressing an anticipated counterargument does not proceed in accordance with the standards of reasonableness for a critical discussion if the counterargument mentioned is not relevant to the standpoint. As mentioned above, however, with a prescriptive standpoint there are a number of common stock issues and critical questions that an arguer can derive his counterargument from. Relying on strategic topical selection, the arguer may be expected to select only those critical issues that are presumably pertinent to the standpoint at hand.

Even if the addressed party considers the counterargument anticipated by the arguer as a real and pertinent objection to accepting the standpoint that the arguer is trying to get accepted, the success of the arguer's strategic manoeuvre still depends on how he refutes this counterargument. From a strategic perspective, an arguer only mentions a counterargument if he thinks he can refute it. It would indeed be inconsistent of the arguer to count himself committed to the tenability of his standpoint and at the same mention a counterargument that he knows he cannot successfully refute. In their discussion of how the arguer can manoeuvre strategically with the burden of proof, van Eemeren and Houtlosser (2002) have argued that to attain his objective the arguer will choose to respond only to those counterarguments that are easy to deal with.

By identifying how mentioning and refuting an anticipated counterargument in the case of a monologue can be regarded as a mode of strategic manoeuvring, I have shown that this anticipatory way of arguing can help the arguer to secure a persuasive defence of his standpoint without violating his commitment to reasonableness. What remains to be shown is whether this strategic manoeuvre is (in principle) more persuasive than an alternative strategic manoeuvre in which no counterargument is anticipated.

5.4 The persuasiveness of mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument

In the present section I will argue that manoeuvring strategically through mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument against a standpoint should be more persuasive than manoeuvring strategically through advancing only supporting arguments. In this endeavour, I will first specify in which type of context the two modes of strategic manoeuvring can be considered as two options for defending the same standpoint. Second, I will explain the dialectical rationale behind why the anticipatory manoeuvre is potentially more persuasive than its non-anticipatory counterpart. I will draw upon van Eemeren's (2010) recent statements regarding the role that dialectical considerations can play in determining the persuasiveness of certain instances of strategic manoeuvring. Finally, I will illustrate my theoretical claims by analysing two exemplary instances of strategic manoeuvring.

5.4.1 Mentioning and then refuting a counterargument as opposed to simply advancing supporting arguments

To begin with, I need to make clear why it makes sense to compare the two ways of arguing and to investigate which of them is more persuasive. Van Eemeren (2010) has recently argued that for a theoretically justifiable comparison of the persuasiveness of certain strategic manoeuvres, these manoeuvres should first be established as alternative ways of defending the same standpoint. Indeed, it makes no sense to try to find out which of two alternative modes of strategic manoeuvring is more persuasive if the two modes do not constitute two alternative ways of defending the same standpoint. This is why it is necessary to first make clear in what way the two modes of strategic manoeuvring under discussion can in practice present themselves as two alternative ways of defending the same standpoint before proceeding to find out which of them is more persuasive.

More often than not, an arguer may find himself in an argumentative situation where he has to defend a standpoint for which there are just as many good arguments possible as there are good counterarguments. This is certainly the case in a situation in which the arguer is addressing a party consisting of a heterogeneous audience and in which it can be conjectured that some members of the audience have a counterargument regarding his standpoint and some others only have doubt about that standpoint. In such a situation, it is just as crucial for his argumentative success to mention and then refute a possible counterargument as it is to advance supporting arguments.

Because the arguer is always expected to defend his standpoint if challenged to do so, in all cases when he expects doubt or criticism he will put forward an argument to support his standpoint. When knowing or expecting that there is a possible counterargument to be anticipated from some members of the audience against his standpoint which he can refute, the arguer can rightly wonder whether he would increase his persuasiveness by mentioning and then refuting that counterargument in addition to advancing the supporting argument. In this situation, it seems justified to ask whether mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument is more persuasive than simply advancing supporting arguments.

In order for this question to have significance from a pragma-dialectical viewpoint, it should be possible to reconstruct the situation as an implicit discussion between the arguer and the addressed party. For such a reconstruction to yield significant results, an important empirical requirement should be fulfilled in the situation at hand. Namely, an addressed party who, initially, might not have had the counterargument with regard to the standpoint in mind should nevertheless consider the counterargument as a relevant objection and the refutation of it as acceptable. A similar requirement applies by the way to the case of strategic manoeuvring in which only a supporting argument is mentioned. An addressed party who at first might not have thought of this argument as a possible defence for the standpoint to be acceptable, relevant and sufficient support for the standpoint should be in a position to treat the argument as a relevant supporting argument. When these requirements are met in both instances of strategic manoeuvring, it becomes possible to reconstruct the argumentative monologue as involving an implicit discussion between the arguer and the targeted party.

Furthermore, it only makes sense to try to find out which of the two alternative manoeuvres enhances the persuasiveness of the argumentation if both manoeuvres fulfil the requirement of reasonableness, because a rational party who judges reasonably will be inclined to regard an unreasonable instance of strategic manoeuvring automatically as less persuasive than a reasonable one. Therefore, for a sound comparison of the two options it is required that in both options the arguer argues reasonably.

The question I seek to answer is thus whether it makes sense to choose between the two alternatives in a situation where there are no clear empirical grounds to consider the one alternative more persuasive than the other, such as the one manoeuvre being found reasonable and the other not or the one containing relevant (counter)arguments and the other not. Answering this question requires that the focus of the analysis be on whether there is a theoretical rationale to hypothesise that a strategic manoeuvre consisting of mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument is more persuasive than putting forward only supporting arguments.

5.4.2 A pragma-dialectical rationale for considering mentioning and then refuting a counterargument as being more persuasive

In this section I will investigate the pragma-dialectical rationale for why an instance of strategic manoeuvring in which the arguer not only advances a supporting argument but also mentions and refutes an anticipated counterargument against the standpoint is likely to be more persuasive than an instance of strategic manoeuvring in which he only puts forward arguments supporting that standpoint. Following van Eemeren (2010, p. 270), I start from the dialectical contribution that each of the two manoeuvres makes to a reasonable resolution of the difference of opinion and try to find out if there are any differences between the two manoeuvres that relate to their persuasiveness. The dialectical contribution a strategic manoeuvre makes in argumentative discourse consists of the joint dialectical force of all the argumentative moves (including those that remain in practice implicit) the arguer makes to get his standpoint accepted. I argue that the anticipatory manoeuvre is dialectically stronger than the non-anticipatory manoeuvre.

We know by now that, dialectically speaking, it depends on the other party's (anticipated) reactions whether the arguer should simply advance supporting arguments or should mention and refute a counterargument. In other words, the two ways of arguing are in principle not really options, but rather two possible situations that result from the reaction that another party may have. There are two dialectical situations: a situation in which the arguer only anticipates doubt from the other party, and a situation in which he anticipates a counterargument. In case the arguer expects that the addressed party will simply have doubt regarding the standpoint, he will have to advance arguments supporting his standpoint. In case he expects that the addressed party will not only have doubt but might also come up with a counterargument against the standpoint, the arguer will, in addition to bringing forward supporting arguments, also have to mention and refute this counterargument. In the context of a monologue under discussion the arguer may not know exactly which situation he should assume. Hence advancing only supporting arguments, on the one hand, and mentioning and refuting a counterargument, on the other, become in this case two alternative options that he can choose in defending his standpoint against the other party.

The dialectical context provides an idea of what reasonable options the arguer has at his disposal in case he anticipates doubt or a counterargument, but it does not answer the question as to which of these options is likely to be more persuasive. This is because dialectically the two instances of strategic manoeuvring are considered not so much as options but as reactions to different critical responses. It is clear from the dialectical

context, however, that when the arguer defends his standpoint against a counterargument, he subjects his standpoint to more critical testing than when he merely defends his standpoint against doubt. Assuming that the more criticism an arguer manages to overcome, the better his chances are of getting his standpoint accepted on the merits, it seems plausible to say that in principle the arguer in an argumentative monologue under discussion will produce more *dialectical strength* when he acts upon the expectation that the other party will come up with a counterargument, and hence addresses more criticism than when he acts upon the expectation that the other party will simply have doubt about the standpoint and thus risks leaving a possible counterargument unrefuted. What remains to be explained is how more dialectical strength can lead to more persuasiveness.

In the case of a prescriptive standpoint about a policy issue it is typically clear in advance which objections might be expected from the other party. These objections, which by definition refer to the 'stock issues' discussed above, constitute the relevant disagreement space from which the arguer can strategically select a counterargument that is pertinent to the standpoint he is defending. Even though the arguer might not know whether the addressed party will eventually come up with a counterargument when confronted with his standpoint, he knows, given the nature of the topical selection, what counterarguments can possibly be anticipated, so that if he mentions such a counterargument a reasonable addressed party cannot reject it as irrelevant. We can conjecture that he will achieve more persuasiveness by subjecting and overcoming more criticism, of course assuming that the arguer makes optimal use of the disagreement space associated with the standpoint that he is trying to get accepted.

As explained earlier with regard to the explicit dialectical context, when a party confronts the arguer with a counterargument, the arguer's successful defence of the standpoint will be dependent on a successful refutation of this counterargument. In the context of argumentation in a monologue, reconstructed as an implicit discussion, it is of course not known whether there is indeed a counterargument against the standpoint, but in a discussion about a policy statement it is in principle clear to the parties involved what issues relate to the type of standpoint under discussion. In the case of such a prescriptive standpoint a counterargument can relate to issues of harm, inherency, solvency and feasibility.

Relying on strategic anticipation, the arguer can achieve more persuasiveness by opting to mention and refute a counterargument relating to these issues instead of simply advancing arguments supporting his standpoint. He can act on the expectation that there will be a counterargument and proceed to refute this counterargument, thereby guaranteeing that a possible pertinent counterargument will be answered. In case the addressed party does have a counterargument, the arguer guarantees that a pertinent

counterargument has not been left ignored. Viewed from the perspective of the party addressed, simply advancing supporting arguments may not suffice. In case the addressed party simply has doubt about the standpoint, so that advancing supporting arguments will suffice, the arguer still manages to confer more dialectical strength on his defence by venturing a counterargument and thereby subjecting his position to more critical testing than the other party might have expected. By taking these considerations into account, we can presume that an arguer is more likely to be found persuasive if he mentions and refutes the counterargument than if he only advances supporting arguments.

5.4.3 Analysis of two alternative instances of strategic manoeuvring

I have made it clear why from a theoretical perspective it can be presumed that a strategic manoeuvre whereby the arguer mentions and then refutes an anticipated counterargument against his standpoint is in principle more persuasive than a manoeuvre whereby he advances only arguments supporting the standpoint. As an illustration, in what follows I will in contrast two examples of strategic manoeuvring, each of which represents one of the options, and show how the anticipatory option can be said to lead to a more persuasive outcome than the non-anticipatory option. To do this, I will consider the type of dialectical moves leading to a reasonable defence of the standpoint in each option (discussed in Chapter 4).

This analysis projects the two strategic manoeuvring options as part of a critical discussion between a protagonist (the arguer) and his targeted party (the antagonist). A comparative analysis of the (explicit and implicit) moves contained in both texts can shed light on significant differences in the ways in which the arguer in both instances defends his standpoint. As claimed above, the way in which the defence proceeds in each case, which is determined by the moves that are undertaken, can help determine why choosing the one form can lead to more persuasiveness than the other. The analysis will thus illustrate the pragma-dialectical rationale for why we should expect an instance of strategic manoeuvring in which the arguer mentions and then refutes an anticipated counterargument to be more persuasive than an instance of strategic manoeuvring in which he does not.

The analysis concerns two examples of strategic manoeuvring of the kind an ordinary arguer can address to a party consisting of a general audience. In both examples, the arguer defends the same prescriptive policy standpoint, namely *Turkey should be given the chance to join the EU*, but does so differently in each example. It is assumed that this prescriptive standpoint relates in this case to a proposition of considerable concern to the addressed party, namely whether Turkey should be able to join the EU or not.

Example 1

Turkey should be given the chance to join the EU because this country has in recent years made considerable progress both politically and economically.

Example 2

Turkey should be given the chance to join the EU because this country has in recent years made considerable progress both politically and economically. Some Europeans fear that the Islamic character of Turkey will lead to problems but Turkey is a secular country where religion plays no role in political life.

In example 1, the arguer advances his prescriptive standpoint: Turkey should be given the chance to join the EU. As a reaction to implicit doubt, reconstructed as *Why should we accept this standpoint?*, the arguer provides an argument supporting this standpoint: *this country has in recent years made considerable progress both politically and economically*. The arguer will not get his standpoint accepted if the argument provided is not accepted as a conclusive defence of the standpoint.

In example 2, the arguer advances the same prescriptive standpoint as in example 1 and provides the same argument. However, he also mentions a counterargument that he anticipates with regard to his standpoint: *Some Europeans fear that the Islamic character of Turkey will lead to problems*. He then refutes the counterargument by stating that *Turkey is a secular country where religion plays no role in political life*.

Even though in both examples the arguer does appear to defend his standpoint against the other party's anticipated doubt, which is clear from the fact that in both cases the arguer provides an argument to support his standpoint, it is clear that the arguer in example 2 does more to achieve a successful outcome than in example 1. In example 1 the arguer defends his standpoint in what can be reconstructed dialectically as a single non-mixed difference of opinion. In example 2 he defends the same standpoint in what can be reconstructed as a mixed difference opinion, by addressing not only doubt regarding the standpoint, but also a pertinent counterargument that can be reconstructed as an argument supporting an implicit counter-standpoint. The arguer in example 2 can therefore be said to have subjected his position to more severe criticism than the arguer in the first instance and have conferred more dialectical strength on his strategic manoeuvring than in example 1.

The analysis of these two exemplary instances has illustrated how manoeuvring strategically through mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument may be

expected to be more persuasive than manoeuvring strategically through simply advancing supporting arguments. By volunteering, as it were, to mention the anticipated counterargument that *Some Europeans fear that the Islamic character of Turkey will lead to problems*, the arguer seems to cater for both a potential party who may only have doubt regarding the standpoint and for a potential party who, in addition to having doubt about the standpoint, may also have a counterargument (and hence a counter-standpoint) ready with regard to a pertinent stock issue related to the standpoint, which in this case relates to the solvency issue. For the former a supporting argument like *because this country has in recent years made considerable progress both politically and economically* may suffice to get the standpoint accepted, but for the latter this argument alone may not be sufficient, even if it is relevant. For this reason and assuming that in both instances the arguer does not commit any fallacy, neither with the supporting argument nor with the anticipation and refutation of the counterargument, it can be hypothesised that a rational party who judges reasonably will find the anticipatory instance of strategic manoeuvring more persuasive than the non-anticipatory instance.

In this section I have argued that a strategic manoeuvre whereby an arguer also mentions and then refutes a counterargument that he anticipates with regard to his standpoint will be more persuasive than a strategic manoeuvre whereby he only advances arguments supporting his standpoint. I have shown that the dialectical strength characterising the first manoeuvre, which results from the fact that this manoeuvre involves dealing with more criticism than the other manoeuvre, justifies why it should be taken to be more persuasive. The analysis of the two examples served to illustrate this theoretical assumption in a concrete case. The question that remains to be addressed is whether the anticipatory manoeuvre is also more persuasive in practice.

5.5 The persuasiveness of mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument: towards experimental testing

Theoretically I have established that a strategic manoeuvre consisting of mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument is more persuasive than a strategic manoeuvre consisting only of advancing supporting arguments. What remains to be done is to determine whether it is also empirically more persuasive. To do this, these instances of strategic manoeuvring should be subjected to empirical testing. The starting point of this endeavour should be that the instances of strategic manoeuvring under comparison should, first of all, be dialectically recognised as representing two possible ways of defending the same standpoint. Second, both instances under comparison should fulfil the requirement of reasonableness.

To be sure, several factors can interfere with the process of persuasion by making it hard to arrive at an empirically valid judgement regarding the effect that the dialectical quality of a strategic manoeuvre has on its potential persuasiveness. Such factors include the reasonableness of the instances of strategic manoeuvring under investigation and the relevance of the arguments and counterarguments to be included in the test. In the discussion above I emphasised that for an adequate comparison of the two instances it should be assumed that both the arguments and the counterargument should be relevant to the standpoint at hand. I also emphasised that for the anticipatory manoeuvre to be dialectically stronger and hence more persuasive than the non anticipatory manoeuvre, both manoeuvres should be reasonable.

These two factors can influence the participants' perception of the persuasiveness of the strategic manoeuvring instances. It is even likely that rational participants will consider an instance of strategic manoeuvring containing irrelevant (counter)arguments or in which a fallacy of some sort has been committed less persuasive. This is why to examine if there is a significant correlation between the theoretical persuasiveness of an instance of strategic manoeuvring (which is the outcome of its dialectical strength) and its empirical persuasiveness (which is what ordinary arguers perceive as being persuasive), the messages need to be tested in an experimental setting in which the factors mentioned above have been kept under control and thus have no chance to affect the persuasiveness of the strategic manoeuvres under scrutiny. The reasonableness of the argumentation and the relevance of the arguments and/or counterarguments in the instances to be tested should therefore be held constant.

5.6 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter has been to explain why mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument against a prescriptive standpoint in an argumentative monologue is potentially more persuasive than advancing only supporting arguments. I started the chapter by emphasising the importance of combining the dialectical dimension of argumentation with the rhetorical dimension in understanding the persuasiveness of the anticipatory way of arguing. I have shown that through its systematic integration of dialectical and rhetorical insights the pragma-dialectical theory of argumentation provides the theoretical tools necessary to achieve an adequate understanding of how, through manoeuvring strategically with an anticipated counterargument, an arguer can achieve persuasiveness within the boundaries of reasonable argumentation (5.2).

Relying on the insights gained from section (5.2) I tried to find out in what way mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument can be regarded as a mode of

strategic manoeuvring (5.3). For this purpose, I made explicit both the dialectical and the rhetorical dimensions of the anticipatory way of arguing. I have shown that dialectically the anticipatory way of arguing can be seen as a way of arguing through which the arguer makes the critical testing of his standpoint explicit. Rhetorically, it is a way of arguing through which the arguer (a) tries to present himself to the addressed party as an objective arguer, (b) shifts focus from his own position to an opposing position and (c) tries to exhibit his strength vis-à-vis a potential opponent (since the arguer takes the initiative of refuting the counterargument). I have shown that the arguer can strategically manoeuvre with the anticipated counterargument by keeping the realisation of his rhetorical aspiration of overcoming the counterargument within the boundaries of reasonableness.

Having established that mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument is a mode of strategic manoeuvring, I proceeded to find out what makes this anticipatory instance of strategic manoeuvring more persuasive than a non-anticipatory instance of strategic manoeuvring (5.4). By taking into account the type of dialectical contribution that each of the two instances of strategic manoeuvring makes to a reasonable defence of the standpoint, I argued that the anticipatory instance should be more persuasive than the non-anticipatory instance. The rationale for this claim was that through addressing an anticipated counterargument the arguer addresses more criticism and hence confers more *dialectical strength* on his manoeuvring than through simply advancing supporting arguments.

Finally, I explained that in order for the theoretical conclusions drawn in section (5.4) to have empirical validity these conclusions should be used as hypotheses for experimental testing. For this testing to lead to the desired results, the theoretical starting points pertaining to the presumed reasonableness of the manoeuvres involved and the relevance of the argumentation should be kept under control. In the next chapter, I will discuss two experimental studies that I have carried out to test the hypothesis that messages containing a refuted counterargument anticipated with regard to a prescriptive standpoint in addition to a supporting argument are found more persuasive than messages containing only arguments supporting this standpoint.

CHAPTER 6

The persuasiveness of mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument empirically studied

6.1 Aim

In this chapter I will discuss the findings of two experiments in which I investigated the difference in persuasiveness between two types of argumentative messages: messages in which the arguer defends a standpoint through advancing only supporting arguments versus messages in which the arguer defends the same standpoint through putting forward the same supporting arguments and mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument against his prescriptive standpoint. My hypothesis, which is based on the theoretical considerations outlined in the previous chapters, is that mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument against the standpoint in addition to supporting arguments will be found more persuasive than providing only arguments supporting that standpoint.

6.2 Empirical research into the persuasiveness of two alternative modes of strategic manoeuvring: methodological limitations

For a long time persuasion scholars have sought to empirically find out whether there is a difference in persuasiveness between what they call one-sided messages, i.e. messages in

which only supporting arguments are put forward, and the so-called two-sided refutational messages, i.e. messages in which, in addition to supporting arguments, counterarguments are mentioned and then refuted (Hovland et al. 1967, Etgar & Goodwin 1982, Kamins & Assael, 1987, Golden & Alpert, 1987, among others). It has been empirically established that two-sided refutational messages are more persuasive than one-sided messages.

This general finding has been captured by O'Keefe's (1999) meta-analysis of over 40 experiments. As discussed in chapter 2, O'Keefe (2003) concluded that the results of persuasion-effects research into the difference in persuasiveness between two-sided refutational messages and one-sided messages are in agreement with the normative perspective of the pragma-dialectical theory described in the preceding chapter. He argues that a refutational two-sided message is more persuasive than its one-sided counterpart because the former satisfies the dialectical obligation of defending the standpoint against criticism, while the latter ignores such counterarguments. However, one should not be too hasty in linking these meta-analytic findings with the theoretical considerations made in the previous chapter. O'Keefe's findings are based on empirical studies of two-sided messages that are highly inconsistent and vague in terms of the argumentative design of the messages. The definition and experimental implementation of a two-sided refutational message can differ from one author to the next, depending on the type of counterargument used and the refutation used, etc.

It is in this respect perhaps useful to note that persuasion researchers do not start from a theoretically justified definition of the argumentative material that they include in their messages, particularly counterarguments (O'Keefe, 1995), and that even though these researchers commonly talk about counterargument, it is often not clear at all which definition of counterargument they employ. It is, for example, not clear whether in the two-sided refutational messages the counterarguments used relate to the standpoint or to the arguments, nor is it clear whether the refutation in these messages targets the propositional content or the justificatory force (relevance and sufficiency) of the counterarguments in question.

In light of the methodological grounds to question the findings of this line of research, it seems legetimate to try to find out if experiments starting out from an explicit theoretical perspective (pragma-dialectics) will indeed confirm that the general findings of empirical researchers regarding the persuasiveness of the various ways of dealing with anticipated counterarguments correspond also with normative expectations. In this empirical study I am concerned with only the difference between what in this line of persuasion effects research has been called two-sided refutational messages (which in addition to supporting arguments also contain anticipated counterargument and a refutation

of these counterarguments) and one-sided messages (containing only arguments supporting the standpoint).

6.3 Experiment I

Overview

143 participants were asked to evaluate the persuasiveness of 20 short argumentative messages in which the arguer defends a prescriptive standpoint. Each message was administered in five experimental conditions: condition 1 consisted of the standpoint supported with argument 1; condition 2 consisted of the standpoint supported with argument 2; condition 3 consisted of the standpoint supported with argument 1 and 2; condition 4 consisted of the standpoint supported with argument 1 followed with an anticipated counterargument against the standpoint and the refutation of this counterargument, and condition 5 consisted of the standpoint supported with argument 2 followed with the same counterargument and the same refutation as in condition 4.

6.3.1 Method

First, some preliminary considerations upon which the method used in this experiment has been based should be discussed. The aim is to explain the rationale behind the different conditions used in this experiment.

Although in practice 5 experimental conditions were created, two of them are particularly pertinent to my research question and main hypothesis: the condition in which the arguer puts forward only supporting arguments and the condition in which the arguer, in addition to mentioning supporting arguments, also mentions and then refutes a counterargument. The independent variable in the messages has thus, in principle, two levels: (1) only advancing arguments supporting the standpoint and (2) advancing an argument supporting the standpoint and then refuting an anticipated counterargument against the standpoint. An adequate empirical test of the effect of this independent variable requires that messages should be designed in such a way that the possibility of disturbing factors affecting the respondents' judgement of the persuasiveness of the messages are minimised.

First, *all* the messages should, from a pragma-dialectical perspective be reasonable, so that any effect that the (un)reasonableness of the argumentation might have on respondents' judgement of persuasiveness would be ruled out. Reasonableness has been found to affect the empirical persuasiveness of argumentation (van Eemeren, Garssen &

Meuffels, 2009). To ensure that the constructed messages are reasonable, a jury of three pragma-dialecticians was asked to determine whether any fallacies were present in the messages. After a number of deliberation and rewriting rounds, only those messages in which no fallacies were found were selected as experimental messages.

Second, control conditions had to be supplemented to rule out a possible alternative explanation. Namely, the amount of argumentative material in the messages in which the arguer, in addition to mentioning a supporting argument, mentions and then refutes a counterargument can result in 'superior' persuasiveness for these messages. The experimental design had to be constructed such that any difference in perceived persuasiveness between the two main conditions of interest could be solely attributed to the mentioning and refutation of the counterargument as such, and not to the mere introduction of more argumentative material into the message. It is conceivable that up to a certain point the presence of more argumentative material in a message – whether in the form of supporting arguments or counterarguments – can affect the receiver's judgement of the persuasiveness of this message positively. A message containing only *one* supporting argument contains less argumentative material than a message containing (1) a supporting argument that is followed with (2) a refuted counterargument, and as a result might be perceived as being less persuasive. This is why, to make the two experimental conditions of interest equal in the amount of argumentative material, the condition consisting of only one supporting argument was supplemented with one more argument so that it would consist of two supporting arguments.

The addition of an extra argument to the condition consisting of only supporting arguments, however, results in a new complexity: the condition containing one supporting argument and the refuted counterargument now differs from the condition containing the two supporting arguments in two ways: 1) it contains a counterargument that is refuted and 2) it lacks one supporting argument (added to the condition with the supporting messages). There are thus two variations that can potentially lead to a difference in perceived persuasiveness between the two messages. In this way it would not be possible to attribute any difference in perceived persuasiveness between the two conditions unequivocally to the presence of the refuted counterargument, since the presence of an extra argument might in the other condition also have an effect. The additional argument in the condition containing only supporting arguments (which is not present in the message containing the refuted counterargument) might, for example, if found weak by the respondents, possibly weaken the perceived persuasiveness of the message containing only supporting arguments.

To solve this problem and to disentangle the different factors that may influence persuasiveness, two versions of the message containing the one supporting argument and the refuted counterargument were used. In each one of these versions one of the arguments

already present in the condition containing only the supporting arguments is mentioned. In this way, any effect resulting from either supporting argument being too weak or too strong would be kept under control. Furthermore, to keep the individual effect of the two supporting arguments under constant check, the two arguments were mentioned separately in two different messages. The perceived persuasiveness of these messages would give us an indication of which supporting argument is weaker or stronger.

6.3.2 Five experimental conditions

The above mentioned methodological considerations lead to the following five experimental conditions:

A1- REF: A message containing a standpoint supported with a supporting Argument (1) followed by a counterargument against the standpoint that is refuted
A2-REF: A message containing a standpoint supported with a supporting Argument (2) followed by a counterargument against the standpoint that is refuted
A1-A2: A message containing a standpoint supported with both supporting Argument 1 and supporting Argument 2
A1: A message containing a standpoint supported with only supporting Argument 1
A2: A message containing a standpoint supported with only supporting Argument 2

In sum, the above-described experimental design should ensure that any possible difference in perceived persuasiveness between the two experimental conditions of interest (i.e. messages with or without a refuted counterargument) can be unequivocally attributed to the variable being manipulated – presence or absence of a refuted counterargument.

The following examples are intended to demonstrate how the conditions were materialised via concrete messages:[26]

Instantiations of the five conditions in message 11, entitled "*A manager to an employee about going on holiday":*

Condition A1-REF (standpoint, supporting Argument 1, counterargument, refutation of counterargument)
As far as I am concerned, you should go on holiday because you have worked too hard the last six months. You fear that we won't be able to manage without you, but there are enough colleagues who are ready to take over your tasks.

[26] The study was conducted in Dutch.

Condition A2-REF (standpoint, supporting Argument 2, counterargument, refutation of counterargument)

As far as I am concerned, you should take a holiday because you look more exhausted as the week goes by. You fear that we won't be able to manage without you, but there are enough colleagues who are ready to take over your tasks.

Condition A1-A2 (standpoint, supporting Argument 1, supporting Argument 2)

As far as I am concerned, you should go on holiday because you have worked too hard the last six months. Besides, you look more exhausted as the week goes by.

Condition A1 (standpoint, supporting Argument 1)

As far as I am concerned, you should go on holiday because you have worked too hard the last six months.

Condition A2 (standpoint, supporting Argument 2)

As far as I am concerned, you should go on holiday because you look more exhausted as the week goes by.

Instantiations of the five conditions in message 18, entitled "*A marketing consultant to his colleagues regarding the current situation of the company*":

Condition A1-REF (standpoint, supporting Argument 1, counterargument, refutation of counterargument)

I suggest that we adjust our marketing policy because in the last five years we did not change it at all. An adjustment will certainly entail an unwelcome investment, but in the long run such an investment will pay off.

Condition A2-REF (standpoint, supporting Argument 2, counterargument, refutation of counterargument)

I suggest that we adjust our marketing policy, for without any changes our sales will keep decreasing. An adjustment will certainly entail an unwelcome investment, but in the long run such an investment will pay off.

Condition A2 (standpoint, supporting Argument 2)

I suggest that we adjust our marketing policy, for without any change our sales will keep decreasing.

Condition A1 (standpoint, supporting argument 1)

I suggest that we adjust our marketing policy because in the last five years we did not change it at all.

Condition A1-A2 (standpoint, supporting Argument 1, supporting Argument 2)
I suggest that we adjust our marketing policy because in the last five years we did not change it at all, and without any change our sales will keep decreasing.

6.3.3 Dependent variable

As announced earlier, the aim of this experiment is to test whether the dialectical strength derived from mentioning and refuting an anticipated counterargument against the standpoint will affect the perceived persuasiveness of the message. Respondents are asked to judge the persuasiveness of the message on a seven-point Likert scale.

How persuasive do you find the manager in this text?

Not persuasive at all	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*Very persuasive*

Perceived persuasiveness is then the main dependent variable of the study. The fact that the persuasiveness being sought here should be the outcome of dialectical strength necessitates that arguers should be able to base their judgement of persuasiveness on the quality of argumentation in the message. However, one cannot guarantee that in judging the perceived persuasiveness of the message respondents would indeed fully rely on their judgement of the dialectical strength of the message. 'Persuasive' is an intricate concept and may encompass different things, depending on the researchers' theoretical framework and interest.

To make sure that respondents will indeed base their judgement of the persuasiveness of the message on the quality of the argumentation in the message, another seven-point scale had to be added on which respondents were asked to indicate their judgement of the argumentative strength of the message. Whether respondents would indeed base their assessment of persuasiveness on the argumentation in the text or not should become clear when comparing this judgement with their judgement of argumentative strength. The bigger the correlation between the two judgements the more likely it is that the respondents have indeed based their judgement of persuasiveness on the perceived argumentative quality of the message.

How strong do you find the argumentation that the manager has brought forward?

Not strong at all	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*Very strong*

6.3.4 Instructions

143 (N=143) higher secondary school students from the VWO 5 and 6 classes, aged between 15 and 23 years, were asked to rate both the persuasiveness and the argumentative strength of 20 short messages presenting a speaker's attempt in a private or professional conversational setting to persuade his listener to accept his standpoint regarding a certain course of action by either advancing one supporting argument, two supporting arguments or one supporting argument followed by a counterargument that is refuted. The experiment took place in the classroom. Each message was supplemented with two seven-point Likert scales on which respondents could indicate their opinion of the persuasiveness and of the argumentative strength of the message.

The first page of the questionnaire contained the instructions. Respondents were urged to read the messages carefully. They were also told that there was no correct or wrong answer. They were not told what 'persuasiveness' meant. No guidance was given to them regarding what aspects of the message they should pay attention to. Under the instruction text on the first page, respondents were asked to state their gender, age and their school level. Each questionnaire contained a total of 20 messages, the first five (1-5) being filler-messages intended to acquaint the respondents with the experimental task. Just as with the 15 experimental messages, respondents were also asked to give their judgement of the *persuasiveness* and *argumentative strength* of the filler-messages.

6.3.5 Message construction

Several message variables were kept under control: message heading, standpoint, supporting arguments, style and length, the counterargument and its refutation.

Each message was presented, not in isolation, but as occurring in a normal conversational setting. To make the context clear to the respondents and to so ensure a more or less homogeneous interpretation of the messages by the respondents, each message was supplied with a heading stating that a speaker is addressing a hearer regarding a certain topic. The topics discussed in the messages concerned daily life matters. Examples are:

A manager to an employee about going on holiday
A family doctor to his patient regarding an operation
A student to his mentor regarding his choice for subjects

The first sentence of each message consisted of the standpoint. The standpoint in the messages was invariably of the prescriptive type: a recommendation that something should be done. However, not all standpoints were presented in the same way. Varying the

presentation of the standpoint from one message to the other was intended to make the messages seem natural to the respondents. Some standpoints were presented using phrasings like "*I suggest that we…*", as in message 18. Other standpoints were presented using the phrasings "*As far as I am concerned, you should…*", like in message 11. Yet other standpoints were presented through "*I think that…*" Some standpoints were presented more directly using the phrasing *"You must…"*.

In all five conditions the prescriptive standpoint was supported with at least one argument. A jury of three pragma-dialecticians had to agree on the relevance of the arguments before these were introduced into the messages. The jury had also to agree that the selected arguments presented were more or less equally plausible and provided a rather more or less strong defence for the prescriptive standpoint.

The pragmatic argumentation scheme and the symptomatic scheme were used in designing the arguments. In the case of pragmatic argumentation, the arguments referred to positive consequences of adopting the advocated action (van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 1992). Examples of such arguments are (in bold):

I think that you should consider that offer by that bank from The Hague ***because the salary they offer is very good.***

You should take a three year warranty on that washing machine ***because in this way you would not worry about possible repair costs at all.***

I think you should do a semester in the US ***because something like this will look good on your CV.***

In the case of the symptomatic argument scheme, the arguments concerned a problem in the status quo that the action advocated in the standpoint is meant to improve. Examples of such arguments are:

I suggest that we spend our holiday in Spain this year ***because we have already been three times to France.***
I think that we should hire a temporary freelancer ***because we cannot take all those orders on our own.***
I suggest that we keep the present location ***because we cannot afford moving at the moment.***

In all 5 conditions the first supporting argument in the message was linked with the standpoint using the linkers 'because or since (see examples above).

In the A1-2 conditions, where two supporting arguments were used, the arguments were linked explicitly through linkers such as "and" and "besides", and "in addition". The aim of using these explicit linkers is to make it clear to the respondents that the arguments

are *independent*. Hence a *multiple argumentation* structure, instead of a *coordinative argumentation* structure, was used. Examples are:

A student to his friend regarding his birthday:
I don't think I should celebrate my birthday this year because I really need the money for my next trip to the US next month. ***And*** *I have already borrowed a lot of money for the expensive ticket.*

A manager to an employee about going on holiday:
As far as I am concerned, you should go on holiday because you have worked too hard the last six months. ***Besides****, look more exhausted as the week goes by.*

A family doctor to his patient regarding an operation:
We have to operate you very soon because only in this way will a full recovery be possible. ***In addition,*** *the waiting list is very short at the moment.*

In multiple argumentation, unlike in coordinative argumentation, the arguments are independent of each other such that the rejection of the one argument would not lead to the rejection of the other (van Eemeren & Grootendorst 1984, Snoeck Henkemans, 2001). Using this argumentation structure it has also been possible to create argumentative messages in which only one of the arguments is present. This would not have been possible if the supporting arguments in the message containing the two supporting arguments were coordinatively or subordinatively related. The arguments were presented as two independent alternative attempts at defending the standpoint, rather than as two interrelated arguments, in order to prevent the arguments from affecting each other, which could result in the A1-2 condition containing the two arguments being found weaker than the A1-REF or A2-REF conditions, which included only one of the arguments followed with a refuted counterargument. This undesirable outcome would then not be attributed to the fact that A1-REF or A2-REF contained an anticipated counterargument that is refuted, but to the argumentative structure in the A1-2 message which made it easy for a weak argument to affect the other argument.

The counterargument that was introduced in messages A1-REF and A2-REF (the conditions including the refuted counterargument) targeted the prescriptive standpoint and presented an objection relevant to this standpoint. This objection concerned the common stock issue of *solvency*. That is to say, the counterargument stated that the proposed action in the standpoint might have negative consequences which might eventually lead to not improving the status quo which the arguer in the message claims to want to improve. A jury of three pragma-dialecticians was asked to determine if the selected counterarguments indeed related to the solvency of the act advocated. Counterarguments which did not relate to this stock issue were excluded. The jury had also to agree that the selected

counterarguments presented a more or less equally plausible and strong attack on the standpoint, and that the selected refutations in turn presented a more or less equally plausible and strong attack on the counterargument mentioned in the message. Here are two examples (the counterarguments are in bold):

11 A manager to an employee about going on holiday:
As far as I am concerned, you should go on holiday because you have worked too hard the last six months. ***You fear that we won't be able to manage without you,*** *but there are enough colleagues who are ready to take over your tasks.*

18 A marketing consultant to his colleagues regarding the current situation of the company:
I suggest that we adjust our marketing policy, for without any changes our sales will keep decreasing.
An adjustment will certainly entail an unwelcome investment, *but in the long run such an investment will pay off.*

The refutation of the counterargument was introduced with the connector 'but' so as to emphasise the contrast between the counterargument and its refutation. The two types of refutations distinguished in pragma-dialectics were used (see Snoeck Henkemans, 1992, 1995). In some messages the refutation targeted the refutatory potential of the counterargument, and in others it targeted the propositional content of the counterargument. In message 11 above the refutation (underlined part) targets the propositional content of the counterargument: it justifies the arguer's denial of the fact that 'we won't be able to manage without you". In message 18 the refutation targets the refutatory potential of the counterargument: it does not deny the fact that "an adjustment will entail an unwelcome investment" but states that this fact, though true, cannot be sufficient to reject the standpoint that the marketing policy should be adjusted. The two types of refutation were used in order to create variation in the messages and make the messages seem more natural.

Finally, the style of the messages was kept as simple as possible so that respondents would be able to grasp the gist of the message and to deliver a well-informed judgement on their perceived persuasiveness. Technical jargon was avoided as much as possible. The messages used were relatively short. Complex sentences were avoided.

6.3.6 Experimental design

A combination of a multiple message design and a repeated measurement design was used. Using a multiple message design meant that each condition was materialized, in each questionnaire, by means of several messages, while using a repeated measurement design meant that each participant was exposed to messages of all the five conditions. For the

methodological reasons explained above, five conditions were created for this experiment. For each message, five versions were needed, each instantiating a specific condition. Including more than one version (condition) of the same message in a single questionnaire might allow the respondents to compare the versions and base their answer on the basis of the noticeable differences between the two versions. To prevent this from happening, no questionnaire included more than one version of an item, so that a respondent had to evaluate only one experimental condition of each message. This meant that five questionnaires were needed, each including only one version of each item. The order of presentation of the experimental messages was randomised over the respondents. I illustrate this design by showing how the five versions of message 11 were allocated to the questionnaires and administered to the respondents. This message was administered:

To respondent n1 in questionnaire 5 as condition A1-REF

A manager to an employee about going on holiday:

As far as I am concerned, you should go on holiday because you have worked too hard the last six months. You fear that we won't be able to manage without you, but there are enough colleagues who are ready to take over your tasks.

To respondent n2 in questionnaire 1 as condition A2-REF

A manager to an employee about going on holiday:

As far as I am concerned, you should take a holiday because you look more exhausted as the week goes by. You fear that we won't be able to manage without you, but there are enough colleagues who are ready to take over your tasks.

To respondent n3 in questionnaire 4 as condition A1-2

A manager to an employee about going on holiday:

As far as I am concerned, you should go on holiday because you have worked too hard the last six months. Besides, you look more exhausted as the week goes by.

To respondent n4 in questionnaire 2 as condition A1

A manager to an employee about going on holiday:

As far as I am concerned, you should take a holiday because you have been working too hard the last six months.

To respondent n5 in questionnaire 3 as condition A2

A manager to an employee about going on holiday:

As far as I am concerned, you should go on holiday because you look more exhausted as the week goes by.

6.3.7 Hypotheses of experiment I

Hypotheses H1 and H2 are the main hypotheses of this experiment.

H1: *A message containing both a supporting argument and a refuted counterargument (A1-REF and A2-REF) anticipated with regard to the standpoint is found more persuasive than a message containing two supporting arguments (A1-2).* This is because a message containing both a supporting argument and a refuted counterargument anticipated with regard to the standpoint possesses more dialectical strength than a message in which only supporting arguments are mentioned.

H2: *A message containing both a supporting argument and a refuted counterargument anticipated with regard to the standpoint (A1-REF and A2-REF) is found more persuasive than a message containing only one supporting argument (A1 and A2), respectively.* This is because a message containing a supporting argument and a refuted counterargument anticipated with regard to the standpoint not only possesses more dialectical strength than a message containing only one supporting argument, but contains also more argumentative material than a message containing only one supporting argument.

Hypotheses H3, H4 and H5 are the secondary hypotheses of this experiment.

H3: *A message containing two supporting arguments (A1-2) is found more persuasive than a message containing only one supporting argument (A1 and A2)***.** This is because in a message containing two supporting arguments the arguer undertakes more alternative attempts at defending his standpoint than a message containing only one supporting argument.

H4: *A message containing Argument 1 and a counterargument that is refuted (A1-REF) and a message containing Argument 2 and a counterargument that is refuted (A2-REF) are found equally persuasive.* This is because arguments (A1) and (A2) were deliberately constructed as equal in strength.

H5: *A message containing Argument 1 (A1) and a message containing Argument 2 (A2) are found equally persuasive.* This is because the supporting arguments were deliberately constructed as equal in strength.

6.3.8 Results of experiment I

Data were analysed via an analysis of variance, with "subjects" conceived of as a random factor, crossed with the fixed factor "experimental conditions"; the messages, conceived of as random factor, are nested within the levels of the fixed factor "experimental conditions" and are fully crossed with the levels of the random factor "subjects". The resulting F-ratios are not ordinary 'F-ratios', but quasi-F-ratios (denoted as F prime: F') (see Clark, 1993). The degrees of freedom for such quasi-tests are not precise, but must be approximated (through, for example, the method developed by Satterthwaite (1946)). Table 1 contains the main results of experiment 1:

Table 1: Means and standard deviations (between brackets) of perceived persuasiveness, per experimental condition

A1	A2	A1-2	A1-REF	A2-REF
4.27(1.39)	4.20(1.34)	5.14(1.06)	4.86(1.19)	4.76(1.23)

A1: messages containing a standpoint and supporting Argument 1
A2: messages containing a standpoint and supporting Argument 2
A1-2: messages containing a standpoint, supporting Argument 1 and supporting Argument 2
A1-REF: messages containing standpoint, supporting Argument 1, counterargument, and the refutation of counterargument
A2-REF: messages containing standpoint, supporting Argument 2, counterargument, and the refutation of counterargument

In contrast with our theoretical expectations, the main hypothesis (H1) was not confirmed. As far as persuasiveness is concerned, messages A1-REF and A2-REF in which a supporting argument 1 or 2 is followed with a refuted counterargument (M=4.81) were found even less persuasive than message A1-2 in which both supporting arguments 1 and 2 are mentioned (M=5.14). But, this difference was not significant: $F'(1,20) = 3.64$; $p>0.07$, at least not according to the conventional statistical significance level of 5%.[27]

Hypothesis (H2) was confirmed: Messages A1-REF and A2-REF were significantly more persuasive than messages A1 containing only supporting argument 1 and A2 containing only supporting argument 2 respectively. Messages A1-REF, containing

[27] All the reported F'-statistics in this chapter concern *a posteriori* tests, after testing for overall differences between the five experimental conditions. As for persuasiveness, the overall F' appeared to be significant: ($F'(4,20) = 11.39$; $p<0.01$; effect-size = 0.09).

supporting argument 1 in addition to an anticipated counterargument that is refuted, came out significantly more persuasive (M=4.86) than messages A1, containing only one supporting argument 1 (M=4.27): F'(1,20)=8.74; p<0.01. Likewise, a message A2-REF, containing supporting argument 2 in addition to an anticipated counterargument that is refuted, (M=4.76) was significantly more persuasive than a message A2, containing only supporting argument 2 (M=4.20): F'(1,20)=7.87; p<0.01.

As expected, the secondary hypothesis (H3) was also confirmed. Messages A1-2, containing supporting argument 1 and 2 (M=5.14), were indeed judged as more persuasive than messages A1 or A2 (M=4.24), and the difference was significant F'(1,20)=27.42; p<0.01. This shows that adding a new independent argument to an argumentative text in which the arguer has already put forward one argument in support of his standpoint boosted the persuasiveness of the message.

The other two secondary hypotheses (H4 and H5) were also confirmed. The results showed that the difference in persuasiveness between A1-REF (M=4.86) and A2-REF (M=4.76) (both containing either supporting argument 1 or 2 respectively followed with a refuted counterargument) was statistically not significant: F'(1,20)<1. Likewise, the difference in persuasiveness between A1 (M=4.27) and A2 (M=4.20) (both containing only one argument 1 or 2 respectively) was not significant: F'(1,20)<1.

As mentioned above, respondents were also asked to give their opinion of the argumentative strength of the messages. The aim was to test whether their judgement of persuasiveness would correlate with their judgement of argumentative strength.

Table 2: Means and standard deviations (between brackets) of perceived argumentative strength, per experimental condition

A1	A2	A1-2	A1-REF	A2-REF
4.07(1.19)	3.90(1.13)	5.08(.961)	4.69(.971)	4.55(1.07)

A comparison between Table 1 and Table 2 above clearly shows that overall there is a high correlation between the two variables, persuasiveness and argumentative strength: the (median) correlation over the 15 experimental messages is .686, with perceived persuasiveness per experimental condition being rated slightly higher than perceived argumentative strength. This is an important finding because it indicates that the

persuasiveness that respondents had to evaluate is probably based on their evaluation of the argumentative quality of the argumentation in the message.[28]

6.3.9 Discussion

The results presented above clearly suggest that respondents did indeed base their judgement of the persuasiveness of the messages on the quality of the argumentation. There is, after all, a one-to-one relation as far as the differences between the conditions is concerned. In other words, differences in perceived persuasiveness are reflected (mirrored) in the differences between perceived argumentative strength.

Contrary to the main hypothesis, respondents have rated a message containing one supporting argument and a refuted counterargument anticipated with regard to the standpoint and a message containing two supporting arguments as equally persuasive. Therefore, the experiment failed to establish that refuting an anticipated counterargument against the standpoint is more persuasive than just putting forward arguments supporting that standpoint.

However, respondents rated messages containing a supporting argument together with the refuted anticipated counterargument, just like messages containing two supporting argument, as significantly more persuasive than messages containing only one supporting argument. It could be claimed then, first, that this experiment has at least shown that mentioning and then refuting a counterargument has the same positive effect on the persuasiveness of the argumentation as supplying a new argument in support of the standpoint. Second, the experiment has shown that it does not matter which of the two option the arguer takes, since the difference in persuasiveness (and argumentative strength) between adding one more supporting argument and mentioning and then refuting a counterargument is not statistically significant. This is in itself a positive finding, but why did the study fail to confirm the main hypothesis?

There are a number of plausible reasons that might have stood in the way of confirming the main hypothesis. In experiment I, messages were presented as fragments from dialogues between two parties. The subjects had to envisage the situation and to base their judgments on the perceived persuasiveness of the speaker in the text within the context of that specific dialogue. Perhaps the very nature of the messages did not motivate respondents to involve themselves critically in the message because respondents were not

[28] What conception of persuasiveness respondents have in mind when evaluating persuasiveness, as well as whether the Likert scale “persuasive versus not persuasive” used in this study captures the way respondents relate to the message is at any rate a difficult question to answer and remains beyond the scope of this study. By introducing the argumentative strength scale we hoped to restrict their evaluation to the argumentative content of the messages.

presented as the direct target of the persuasive attempt. In other words, there was a dialectical exchange between two speakers in each message but not between the speaker in the message and the respondent. As a consequence, it is likely that respondents could not conceive of the counterarguments as real counterarguments.

Furthermore, the messages presented to the respondents varied in terms of the type of refutation to which the anticipated counterargument was subjected. In this study the type of refutation of the counterargument – i.e. whether it targeted the propositional content or the refutatory force of the counterargument – was randomly distributed across the messages. Strictly speaking, the refutation was not kept under strict control. In the one message the refutatory force of the counterargument was targeted, while in the other the propositional content of the counterargument was targeted.

One way to solve this issue is to use only messages in which the refutation targets the acceptability of the propositional content of the anticipated counterargument, i.e. a refutation that may be reconstructed as an argument for a counter sub-standpoint that is contradictory to the sub-standpoint (the counterargument). There is a fundamental difference between refuting the acceptability of the propositional content of the argument and refuting the justificatory force of the argument. Refuting the acceptability of the propositional content – i.e. arguing that the counterargument is not acceptable at all – implies showing also the uselessness of its refutatory force, which includes its potential sufficiency and relevance. Message 11, discussed earlier, is an example of a message in which the propositional content of the anticipated counterargument is refuted:

11 A manager to an employee about going on holiday:
As far as I am concerned, you should go on holiday because you have worked too hard the last six months. ***You fear that we won't be able to manage without you,*** *<u>but there are enough colleagues who are ready to take over your tasks.</u>*

The refutation of the anticipated counterargument *that we won't be able to manage without you* targets the propositional content of the counterargument, i.e. the very fact that we won't be able to manage without you. Through this refutation the arguer provides an argument for his implicit denial of the fact that *we won't be able to manage without you*, namely: *There are enough colleagues who are ready to take over your tasks*. This refutation is different from a refutation that could have targeted the refutatory force of the counterargument, which does not imply a refutation of the propositional content of the counterargument. Message 18, discussed above, is an example of a message in which the refutation targeted the refutatory force of the counterargument:

18 A marketing consultant to his colleagues regarding the current situation of the company:
I suggest that we adjust our marketing policy, for without any changes our sales will keep decreasing.
An adjustment will certainly entail an unwelcome investment, *but in the long run such an investment will pay off.*

The refutation *that in the long run such an investment will pay off* does not question whether an adjustment will entail an unwelcome investment or not. Giving a refutation of this sort the arguer may still accept the counterargument that an adjustment will entail an unwelcome investment (as is the case in the example). As a consequence, some respondents might not have taken this refutation as a proper refutation. A replication of experiment 1 was conducted in which the type of messages was altered (with the respondents as the target of the persuasive attempt) and the type of refutation was kept under strict control.

6.4 Experiment II: altered replication

142 VWO 5 and 6 pupils (N=142) took part in this study. Experiment II was also conducted in a classroom setting. Respondents were exposed to 24 messages (the first 4 of which were practice items). Each of the 5 experimental conditions were materialised through 4 messages instead of the 3 instantiations per condition as in experiment I. As a consequence, the power of the F'-test is higher (i.e. assuming that in the population there are differences between the 5 conditions, it is easier for our statistical test to show that these differences are really there).

6.4.1 Method

Since in experiment II the same experimental design (i.e. a multiple message design combined with repeated measurement design) was used to test the same main hypothesis and secondary hypotheses, I shall in this section discuss only the most vital changes that were affected to the messages.

Non-dialogical messages about actual topics were used that addressed the respondents as part of the general readership of the message. This change was motivated by the realization that in order for the respondents to give an informed judgment about the persuasiveness of the message, it is required that the subject feel motivated to enter into that discussion first. This could be achieved by designing the messages in such a way that the respondent will be motivated to believe that he or she is being targeted by the persuasive attempt. Therefore, messages similar to those respondents are likely to read in mass media, such as newspapers, websites, brochures, etc., were used. Each message was presented as taken from such sources, as:

From a career magazine
From a university magazine
From an advertisement
From a news column

The topics of the messages concerned issues of general interest to our target population. Here are some examples:

Depression
Relationship problems
Writing
Joining a sports club

The standpoint in the messages was invariably of the prescriptive type: a recommendation that something should be done or a warning that something should not be done. As in the previous study, the counterargument mentioned in messages A1-REF and A2-REF (the conditions including the refuted counterargument) targeted the standpoint and referred to an objection related to the solvency stock issue of the course of action advocated in the standpoint. An example of a counterargument is (in bold):

Turkey should be given the chance to join the EU because this country has in recent years made considerable progress both politically and economically. ***Some Europeans fear that the Islamic character of Turkey will lead to problems*** *but Turkey is a secular country where religion plays no role in political life.*

Unlike the refutations of counterarguments in the previous experiment, however, the refutations of the counterargument in this second study were kept under strict control: whereas in the previous study the counterargument could targeted either the refutatory force or the propositional content of the counterargument, in this experiment they targeted solely the propositional content of the counterargument (see underlined part in the above example).

In the A1-2 messages the two supporting arguments were linked in the same way as in experiment I, i.e. as two independent arguments using connectors like “in addition” to make it easy for the respondents to recognise the arguments as two alternative arguments for the standpoint. An example of this way of structuring the argumentation in the A1-2 messages is:

Turkey should be given the chance to join the EU because this country has in recent years made considerable progress both politically and economically. ***In addition,*** *this will give European companies easier access to the Turkish market.*

Here is an example of the five conditions as instantiated in message 23, presented to the respondents as coming from a political blog:

Condition A1-REF (standpoint, supporting Argument 1, counterargument, refutation of counterargument)

From a political blog:

Turkey should be given the chance to join the EU because this country has in recent years made considerable progress both politically and economically. Some Europeans fear that the Islamic character of Turkey will lead to problems, but Turkey is a secular country where religion plays no role in political life.

Condition A2-REF (standpoint, supporting Argument 2, counterargument, refutation of counterargument)

From a political blog:

Turkey should be given the chance to join the EU because this will give European companies easier access to the Turkish market. Some Europeans fear that the Islamic character of Turkey will lead to problems but Turkey is a secular country where religion plays no role in political life.

Condition A1-2 (standpoint, supporting Argument 1, supporting Argument 2)

From a political blog:

Turkey should be given the chance to join the EU because this country has in recent years made considerable progress both politically and economically. In addition, this will give European companies easier access to the Turkish market.

Condition A1 (standpoint, supporting Argument 1)

From a political blog:

Turkey should be given the chance to join the EU because this country has in recent years made considerable progress both politically and economically.

Condition A2 (standpoint, supporting Argument 2)

From a political blog:

Turkey should be given the chance to join the EU because this will give European companies easier access to the Turkish market.

6.4.2 Results of experiment II

Table 3 shows the main results of experiment 2:

Table 3: Means and standard deviations (between brackets) of perceived persuasiveness, per experimental condition

A1	A2	A1-2	A1-REF	A2-REF
4.25(1.25)	4.06(1.22)	4.56(1.18)	4.76(1.29)	4.79(1.06)

A1: messages containing a standpoint and supporting Argument 1
A2: messages containing a standpoint and supporting Argument 2
A1-2: messages containing a standpoint, supporting Argument 1 and supporting Argument 2
A1-REF: messages containing standpoint, supporting Argument 1, counterargument, and the refutation of counterargument
A2-REF: messages containing standpoint, supporting Argument 2, counterargument, and the refutation of counterargument

In contrast with experiment I, this time the main hypothesis (H1) could be confirmed. Respondents found messages A1-REF and A2-REF, containing a supporting argument 1 or 2 and a refuted counterargument anticipated with regard to the standpoint, significantly more persuasive (M=4.78) than messages (A1-2), containing two supporting arguments 1 and 2 (M=4.56): (F'(1,24)=21.88; p<0.01). [29]

The results concerning all the other hypotheses were consistent with those of experiment I. Hypothesis (H2) was again confirmed: A message A1-REF in which the anticipated counterargument is mentioned and then refuted after supporting argument 1 has been mentioned (M=4.76) is significantly more persuasive (F'(1,24)=5.59; p<0.03) than messages A1 in which only supporting argument 1 is mentioned (M=4.25). A similar pattern is observed in the case of messages in which the standpoint is originally supported by argument 2: A message A2-REF in which the counterargument is mentioned and then refuted after supporting argument 2 has been mentioned is significantly more persuasive (M=4.79) than messages A2 in which only supporting argument 2 is mentioned (M= 4.06): F'(1,24)=11.45; p<0.01.

[29] As said before, all the reported F'-statistics in this chapter concern *a posteriori* tests, after testing for overall differences between the five experimental conditions. As for persuasiveness, the overall F' appeared to be significant (F' (4,24) = 16.52; p<0.01; effect-size = 0.10).

The secondary hypothesis (H3) was confirmed too: Messages A1-2 in which the standpoint is supported with two arguments 1 and 2 are found more persuasive (M=4.56) than messages A1 (M=4.25) and A2 (M=4.06), containing either supporting argument 1 or 2: ($F'(1,24)=77.64$; $p<0.01$). The secondary hypotheses (H4) and (H5) were also confirmed. No significant difference in persuasiveness between messages (A1-REF) containing argument 1 and a refuted counterargument (M=4.83) and messages (A2-REF) containing argument 2 and a refuted counterargument (M=4.49) was found ($F'(1,24)<1$). Nor was there a difference in persuasiveness between messages A1 (M=4.25) and A2 (M=4.06) that contain only one argument 1 or 2.

As in experiment I, a strong correlation between respondents' judgements of persuasiveness and of argumentative strength could be noticed – .68.[30] This indicates – again – that the persuasiveness that respondents in this study evaluated is probably based on their evaluation of the quality of the argumentation in the message. Table 4 shows the means of perceived argumentative strength:

Table 4: Means and standard deviations (between brackets) of perceived argumentative strength, per experimental condition

A1	A2	A1-2	A1-REF	A2-REF
4.05(1.18)	3.99(1.17)	4.67(1.20)	4.83 (1.21)	4.49 (1.19)

In general, the perceived persuasiveness means per condition are mirrored in the means of perceived argumentative strength.

6.4.3 Discussion

It should first be noted that the results of experiment II are largely consistent with those of experiment I. The changes made in the argumentative design of the messages have led to the confirmation of the main hypothesis of this experiment (at least as far as perceived persuasiveness, the main dependent variable, is concerned). Mentioning and then refuting the propositional content of an anticipated counterargument against the standpoint improves the persuasiveness of an argumentative text in which the arguer has already supported his

[30] This correlation concerns the median pmc between the perceived persuasiveness and the argumentative strength over the 20 experimental messages (i.e. excluding the first four fillers used in this experiment).

standpoint with an argument, and does so more than adding a new supporting argument, provided the standpoint concerns an issue of general interest to the receiver.

Even though the changes affected to the messages have led to the confirmation of the main hypothesis, it should be noted that it did not become entirely clear whether the failure to confirm the main hypothesis in the Experiment I is due to the fact that the refutation of the counterargument was not kept under strict control, to the dialogical nature of the message, to both, or to some other factor that had gone unnoticed.

6.5 General conclusion

Experiment I has shown that there is no statistically significant difference in persuasiveness between a message in which the arguer puts forward one supporting argument and then refutes the propositional content or the refutatory force of an anticipated counterargument against his standpoint, and a message in which the arguer only puts forward two supporting arguments. Messages in which also a counterargument is addressed have been found more persuasive than messages in which only one supporting argument has been advanced. This finding concerns, however, messages in which an imaginary arguer addresses a party about a topic of no direct concern to the receiver.

However, in the case of argumentative messages concerning a topic of general concern, i.e. when the direct receiver of the argumentative message (the participant in the experiment) is also the party addressed by the arguer, and the refutation of the counterargument targets the acceptability of its propositional content, mentioning a supporting argument and then refuting an anticipated counterargument against the standpoint is significantly more persuasive than mentioning only supporting arguments, as was shown in the altered replication of experiment I. This finding seems to suggest that in principle when addressing a general audience regarding a topic of common interest, the arguer has more chance of being found persuasive if he mentions and then refutes the propositional content of counterarguments than if he puts forward only supporting arguments. This finding is in agreement with the theoretically motivated prediction that dialectical strength, which is enhanced by trying to get a standpoint accepted through mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument against it, enhances perceived persuasiveness.

More research is needed to shed light on the specific way the type of messages used as well as the type of refutation affects the way respondents approach and judge the persuasiveness of the messages. By using experimental designs whereby these possible factors are isolated it is perhaps possible to arrive at a more satisfactory answer regarding the exact circumstances in which mentioning and then refuting an anticipated

counterargument against the standpoint is perceived as being more persuasive than mentioning only supporting arguments.

CHAPTER 7

Conclusion

7.1 Summary of the findings

The aim of this study has been to find out how a strategic manoeuvre involving mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument against a prescriptive standpoint in the context of a monologue functions persuasively and whether it is more persuasive than a strategic manoeuvre involving only arguments supporting the standpoint. Starting from the pragma-dialectical assumption that for an adequate understanding of persuasiveness both the dialectical and rhetorical dimensions should be taken into consideration, I argued that a systematic integration of these two dimensions is lacking in the way the persuasiveness of mentioning and then refuting anticipated counterarguments has been studied in argumentation theory and persuasion research (Chapter 2). Placing this anticipatory way of arguing in the context of critical discussion, I have set out to identify its dialectical dimension (Chapter 3 and 4). First, I identified the countermoves against the standpoint that can be anticipated in the context of critical discussion. This has provided a clear view of the type of dialectical commitments that are involved in counterarguments, compared to other countermoves (Chapter 3). Then, I discussed the options that an arguer has in the context of critical discussion to react to these countermoves. This has given a clear view of the type of attack and the dialectical commitments that are involved in mentioning and then refuting a counterargument (as compared to merely advancing a supporting argument) (Chapter 4). I

then moved on to discuss the rhetorical dimension of mentioning and then refuting anticipated counterarguments, which consists of aiming to be persuasive (Chapter 5). I have shown how this rhetorical dimension can be combined with the dialectical dimension, which consists of the dialectical commitments identified in Chapters 3 and 4. I have explained how a strategic manoeuvre whereby a counterargument is mentioned and then refuted is dialectically stronger than a strategic manoeuvre whereby only supporting arguments are mentioned and how, *ceteris paribus*, it is also likely to be more persuasive. Ordinary arguers' judgements of the persuasiveness of these two modes of strategic manoeuvring were found to be in line with the above conclusion (Chapter 6).

The theoretical assumption underpinning this study is that only by having a clear idea of what the rhetorical and dialectical dimensions of mentioning and then refuting anticipated counterarguments consist of and how they can be combined, is it possible to understand what makes this strategic manoeuvre persuasive. Because of its systematic integration of the dialectical and rhetorical dimensions of argumentation, the pragma-dialectical theory has been used to understand the persuasive functioning of this anticipatory way of arguing.

In Chapter 2, I have shown that a systematic integration of the rhetorical and dialectical dimensions is lacking in the study of the persuasiveness of addressing anticipated counterarguments. An account of the rhetorical approach to the study of this way of arguing – namely as prolepsis – has shown that even though scholars of rhetoric are mainly concerned with the effectiveness of this way of arguing in getting the audience to accept the speaker's position, when explaining its functioning, they exhibit an awareness of the importance of its dialectical dimension. Specifically, the importance of taking into account the position of the other party has been stressed by rhetoricians. Nonetheless, such reference to the dialectical dimension may be nothing more than just the result of the fact that prolepsis characteristically contains explicit reference to the other party's objections and counterarguments.

Contrary to rhetoricians, dialecticians have not shown much interest in the argumentative technique of mentioning and then refuting anticipated counterarguments as a means of persuasion. However, their approaches did shed important light on the function of this way of arguing in resolving differences of opinion in a reasonable way through testing argumentative positions.

Unlike rhetoricians and dialecticians, persuasion researchers approach the question of persuasiveness from an empirical perspective. Their main concern is whether mentioning and then refuting anticipated counterarguments is more persuasive than mentioning only supporting arguments. O'Keefe's (1999) meta-analysis has shown that it is indeed more persuasive to mention and then refute a counterargument than to simply put

forward supporting arguments. In sum, it could be said that taken separately dialecticians, rhetoricians and persuasion researchers have provided useful insights into the persuasive working of mentioning and then refuting anticipated counterarguments. However, an explanation of the persuasiveness of this way of arguing in which the dialectical and rhetorical dimensions are systematically combined is lacking.

Chapter 3 and 4 both provided the dialectical background upon which a pragma-dialectically inspired view of the persuasiveness of this way of arguing has been based. In Chapter 3 I have concentrated on counterarguments as a type of countermove against the standpoint which can be anticipated in the context of critical discussion. I have shown that a counterargument is a complex configuration of dialectical moves that consists of doubt, a counter-standpoint and an argument supporting this counter-standpoint. That is to say, a party who advances a counterargument is a party who has not only doubted and disagreed with the arguer on the acceptability of the latter's standpoint, but has in addition to that also provided a reason for the acceptability of own (contradictory) his standpoint. This has consequences for the way the arguer can react to the counterargument.

The ways in which the arguer can react to a countermove against his standpoint constituted the focus of Chapter 4. I have made it clear that reactions to countermoves against a standpoint can be classified according to the type of commitment these reactions involve, namely whether they involve a commitment on the part of the arguer to a proposition or whether they simply challenge the other party to account for his countermove. When confronted with an expression of doubt about his standpoint, the only option that an arguer has is to provide an argument to support his standpoint. When confronted with a counter-standpoint, whether contradictory or contrary, the arguer can either challenge this counter-standpoint by means of doubt or advance a counterargument against it. When confronted with a counterargument, the arguer can react to it by attacking either its propositional content or its refutatory potential. In either case, the aspect of the counterargument which is targeted becomes a sub-standpoint, and a sub-difference of opinion arises about it. Importantly, I have argued that by reacting to the counterargument through a counter-counterargument, i.e. a refutation, the arguer not only challenges the other party to take responsibility for his sub-standpoint but he also provides a reason justifying his challenge. The dialectical reconstruction of the example at the end of Chapter 4 has given a concrete idea of the countermoves and the commitments that are involved in an argumentative text in which an anticipated counterargument against a standpoint is mentioned and then refuted.

In light of the dialectical commitments involved in a counterargument, on the one hand, and in the refutation of the counterargument, on the other, I have explained, in Chapter 5, how these dialectical characteristics can help us determine whether mentioning

and then refuting an anticipated counterargument against a prescriptive standpoint in a monologue should be more persuasive than advancing only supporting arguments and why this is so. By regarding this way of arguing as a mode of strategic manoeuvring I have shown how its dialectical and rhetorical dimensions can be combined. I have shown that mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument can dialectically be seen as a way of arguing through which the arguer makes the critical testing of his standpoint explicit. Rhetorically, through this strategic manoeuvre the arguer (a) presents himself to the addressed party as an objective arguer, (b) shifts the focus from his own standpoint to that of an opposing position and through refuting the counterargument (c) exhibits his strength vis-à-vis this opposing position.

Determining what makes mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument a persuasive strategic manoeuvre does not automatically mean that it is more persuasive than advancing only supporting arguments, for by supporting one's standpoint with arguments, one can also achieve persuasiveness. Therefore, a comparative analysis of these two modes of strategic manoeuvring was necessary to establish whether mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument against a prescriptive standpoint is indeed more persuasive than advancing only arguments supporting this standpoint. By analysing the type of dialectical contribution that each of the two instances of strategic manoeuvring makes to a reasonable defence of the standpoint, I have shown that through addressing an anticipated counterargument the arguer addresses more criticism, giving his argumentative contribution more dialectical strength than through simply advancing supporting arguments. As a result, it may theoretically be presumed that reasonable ordinary arguers should, *ceteris paribus*, find strategic manoeuvring through mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument more persuasive than strategic manoeuvring through advancing only supporting arguments. To find out if the above theoretically motivated conclusion has any empirical validity, empirical research was necessary.

In Chapter 6 I have discussed the results of two experimental studies conducted to test the hypothesis that a strategic manoeuvre whereby an anticipated counterargument against a prescriptive standpoint is mentioning and then refuted will be perceived by ordinary arguers as being more persuasive than a strategic manoeuvre whereby only arguments supporting the standpoint are mentioned. Experiment 1 found no statistically significant difference in perceived persuasiveness between a message containing one supporting argument in addition to an anticipated counterargument that is refuted and a message containing only two supporting arguments. This finding concerns messages in which an imaginary arguer addresses an imaginary party in a constructed dialogical setting regarding a topic of no direct concern to the receiver (participant in the experiment) and in

which the refutation targets either the refutatory potential or the propositional content of the counterargument. In experiment II, the same hypothesis was investigated, but this time argumentative messages were used which concerned a topic of general concern to the receivers (the participants) and in which the refutation of the counterargument always targets the acceptability of its propositional content. Mentioning a supporting argument and then refuting an anticipated counterargument against the standpoint was found significantly more persuasive than mentioning only two supporting arguments. This finding is in agreement with the theoretically motivated prediction made in Chapter 5 that through being dialectically stronger, an instance of strategic manoeuvring through mentioning and then refuting anticipated counterargument is more likely to be more persuasive than an instance of strategic manoeuvring through mentioning only supporting arguments.

7.2 Discussion of the findings

This study has presented an attempt to link the theoretical persuasiveness of an instance of strategic manoeuvring with empirical persuasiveness. Put in a broader perspective, this study has tried to investigate the possibility of a correspondence between insights of a normative argumentation theory and the question of persuasiveness which has largely been the realm of descriptive persuasion research. This study has been motivated by calls coming from both pragma-dialectics and from persuasion research to investigate more systematically how the two perspectives can be brought together. Recently, van Eemeren (2010) has suggested investigating if dialectically distinguishable alternative ways of defending a standpoint differ in persuasiveness (p. 270). In addition, O'Keefe (1995) has already argued that persuasion research can borrow the theoretically motivated variations in argumentative discourse for a more systematic message design within persuasion research (p. 13). This study has in a way tried to do this by designing the messages for empirical testing in accordance with theoretical lines of pragma-dialectics. Nevertheless, this study has only focused on one form of strategic manoeuvring.

It should first be noted that although the discussion of the empirical part has occupied the last chapter of this dissertation, it should not be concluded that the empirical part has been the main objective of this study. Rather, the theoretical and empirical parts should be taken as complementary. The two parts complement each other in that insights gained from either part can be used to inform the other part. On the one hand, applying the theoretical tools borrowed from the pragma-dialectical theory allows for drawing conclusions regarding the persuasiveness of strategic manoeuvring through mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument. However, these conclusions need empirical testing, for after all they concern strategic manoeuvres which occur in everyday

argumentative discourse. On the other hand, the empirical testing cannot be conducted without starting from theoretically motivated hypotheses about what might be persuasive argumentative conduct, nor can it start from randomly chosen forms of argumentation. To be able to make any claims about what persuades *reasonable* ordinary arguers, we need to start from what according to a normative perspective taking reasonableness as its main criterion is potentially more persuasive and then formulate relevant hypotheses accordingly.

The present study can be placed within the pragma-dialectical research project, which has recently started moving towards focussing on the differences in persuasiveness between forms of augmentation that are reasonable. Van Eemeren has recently stressed the importance of conducting empirical research that starts from theoretically distinguishable modes of strategic manoeuvring and which relies on theoretically justified hypotheses (2010, p. 269). This persuasiveness is one that operates within the boundaries of reasonableness and hence differs from the conception of persuasiveness found in rhetoric and persuasion research. By starting from the idea that both an instance of strategic manoeuvring through mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument and an instance of strategic manoeuvring through advancing only supporting arguments are reasonable, and by ensuring that for the sake of empirical testing no fallacious instances have been used, I have restricted myself to a theoretical conception of 'persuasiveness as getting one's standpoint accepted within the boundaries of reasonableness. I have tried to find out if this persuasiveness correlates with empirical persuasiveness (what ordinary arguers take to be persuasive). One may object that by focusing on persuasiveness within the boundaries of reasonableness, I have unduly restricted the concept of persuasiveness with reasonableness. Indeed, from a pragma-dialectical theoretical perspective it is absolutely not uncommon for a reasonable argumentation to be persuasive. However, it is precisely when we start looking into alternative modes of strategic manoeuvring that are both perfectly reasonable but differ in the kind of contribution they make to a reasonable defence of the standpoint (so that we can say that the one mode is dialectically stronger than the other) that we can sensibly talk of the two modes as being equally persuasive or not. The difference between mentioning and then refuting anticipated counterarguments and only advancing supporting arguments has been taken as a case point.

Certainly, this concept of persuasiveness is different from the persuasiveness that rhetoricians are often concerned with, which generally consists of aiming to have an effect on the audience, i.e. regardless of the goal of being reasonable. Their concept of persuasiveness does not discriminate between reasonable and unreasonable arguments, and hence also not between strategic manoeuvres that are dialectically strong and strategic

manoeuvres that are not, a distinction that requires the compared instances to be reasonable.

The concept of persuasiveness advocated here also differs from that employed by persuasion researchers. In their quest to empirically determine which arguments are persuasive and which are not, persuasion researchers usually do not take as a starting point that the argumentative forms that they want to investigate are in any theoretical sense reasonable. Persuasion researchers do not provide any clues as to whether argumentative moves that have more dialectical strength are potentially more persuasive than moves that have less dialectical strength. Nevertheless, O'Keefe's (1999) meta-analyses of the findings of a large number of persuasion studies into the persuasive effects of various message features suggest that messages containing features whereby an arguer makes his contribution to a rational resolution in the pragma-dialectical sense more explicit tend to be more persuasive than messages in which the arguer does not make his contribution dialectically explicit. Examples of such features include, among others, stating the conclusion explicitly in the message and refuting a counterargument rather than simply mentioning it (O'Keefe, 1999).

Persuasion theory seems thus to provide some empirical support for the connection between dialectical strength and persuasiveness which has been advocated in this study. Particularly, the Elaboration Likelihood model of persuasion developed by Petty and Cacioppo (1986) posits that arguers, as it were, prefer to be persuaded by rational arguments. Petty and Cacioppo identify two persuasion routes that ordinary people pursue in processing argumentative messages: a central route and a peripheral route. According to the protagonists of the model, when given the chance to elaborate on the arguments, arguers will subject the arguments to a maximum of scrutiny and only when they are, for one reason or another, not able to attend to the arguments elaborately will they go by non-argumentative clues to evaluate the arguments, i.e. the peripheral route. What the elaboration likelihood model seems to indirectly suggest is that argumentative moves that have an enhanced dialectical strength, and for that matter reasonable arguments in general as opposed to unreasonable arguments, should under conditions of high elaboration turn out to be more persuasive than arguments that have less dialectical strength because when arguers have the resources to scrutinise the argumentation elaborately, they are more capable of drawing a well-informed judgement, i.e. a judgement based on reasonable grounds, regarding the dialectical quality of the argumentation.[31]

[31] The question as to whether the elaboration likelihood model can be used to derive criteria for good (rationally persuasive) arguments has been addressed by O'Keefe and Jackson (1995). According to them, even though conditions under which ordinary people are able to pursue the central route of persuasion come close to ideal models of argumentation used in normative theories of argumentation, where arguments are subjected to strictly regimented critical testing, these conditions remain strictly

Reasonable argumentation is not necessarily empirically persuasive, and unreasonable argumentation is not necessarily unpersuasive (van Eemeren et al., 2007, pp. 32-33). In fact, some forms of fallacious argumentation can just as well be perfectly persuasive in reality. This is because fallacies characteristically conceal their fallaciousness (Jackson, 1995). This is why from a theoretical perspective it would be useful, if not necessary, to also investigate whether reasonable instances of strategic manoeuvring through addressing anticipated counterarguments are more persuasive than fallacious instances. Prior to conducting such investigations it should be made clear what from a pragma-dialectical theoretical perspective constitutes a reasonable instance of strategic manoeuvring with anticipated counterarguments. This can be achieved through identifying its reasonableness criteria so that it would also be possible to recognise instances of the anticipatory manoeuvre that are fallacious. Previously conducted empirical research by van Eemeren et al. (2009) has already provided evidence that ordinary language users judge reasonable instances of strategic manoeuvring as being more persuasive than unreasonable instances. In chapter 5 of this study I have already explained that an instance of strategic manoeuvring can be taken to be reasonable if the counterargument is relevant and if the refutation is conclusive. I pointed out, for instance, that an instance of addressing anticipated counterarguments can be fallacious when the arguer addresses a counterargument that the other party cannot recognise as a relevant counterargument. However, the requirement that the counterargument be relevant is by no means definitive, but it can indeed be used as a starting point for developing more refined soundness conditions for this mode of strategic manoeuvring in a separate research project.

By focusing on mentioning and then refuting an anticipated counterargument against a standpoint, this study has only addressed one variant of what could be called strategic manoeuvring with anticipated countermoves. There are various types of countermoves that one can distinguish from a pragma-dialectical perspective, each with its distinctive dialectical characteristics. These countermoves can all be anticipated in ordinary argumentative discourse. It makes perfect sense to investigate instances of strategic manoeuvring whereby the arguer addresses not an anticipated counterargument but an anticipated counter-standpoint, or anticipated doubt for that matter. It can be investigated whether the persuasiveness of such instances of strategic manoeuvring may, depending on the dialectical commitments involved in the anticipated countermove under investigation, differ in persuasiveness. Likewise, possible future research may also focus on strategic manoeuvres with countermoves anticipated regarding the argument. In her study of argumentation structure, Snoeck Henkemans (1992) has dealt with one type of

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speaking empirical and thus arguments that are judged under these conditions of elaboration as being good may not be taken to be normatively good.

these countermoves, namely counterarguments against arguments. We know now that the type of anticipated counterargument against an argument determines the type of defence the arguer will give to his standpoint, but it may just as well be interesting to question in what way these different types of anticipation function as strategic manoeuvres and whether there are any theoretical grounds to hypothesise that they differ in persuasiveness. In view of the link between the type of counterargument anticipated and the type of defence, this research will shed light on possible differences in persuasiveness between the types of defence analysed by Snoeck Henkemans (1992).

Similar research can focus on differences in persuasiveness between other ways in which the arguers react to anticipated countermove against the standpoint or against the argument. As I have shown in chapter 4, reacting with a refutation (i.e. a counterargument) is certainly not the only possible way to react to a counter-standpoint or argument. Reacting through an expression of doubt or a counter-standpoint is a perfectly reasonable reaction. One can imagine that in a given situation an arguer may not have a counterargument at his disposal to refute the anticipated counter-standpoint or counterargument and as a result may only express doubt about it (or even disagree with it). The fact that refuting a counterargument or counter-standpoint involves providing an argument for one's rejection and that merely expressing doubt or disagreeing does not makes it plausible to wonder whether this reaction is equal in terms of dialectical strength to a reaction through a refutation, which this study addressed with respect to an anticipated counterargument. A refutation, which consists of providing reason for one's doubt and disagreement, is apparently stronger. Even so, one may wonder whether there are any rhetorical gains to be made from reacting to an anticipated counter-standpoint or counterargument by means of doubt or counter-standpoint and, if there are any, whether this way of reacting is more or less persuasive than reacting through a counterargument.

In addition, the difference between attacking the propositional content of an anticipated counterargument and attacking the refutatory force of the counterargument can also be investigated. In experiment I discussed in chapter 6, messages in which the propositional content of the anticipated counterargument is refuted were mixed with messages in which the refutatory force of counterargument was refuted. It was speculated that the failure of this experiment to confirm the hypothesis that messages in which the anticipated counterargument is addressed are more persuasive than messages in which only supporting arguments were mentioned was due to the fact that some respondents may not have viewed refuting the refutatory force of the counterargument as a real refutation (especially when the refutation targets the relevance of the counterargument). Indeed, a message in which an arguer refutes the relevance of the counterargument, i.e. advances an argument supporting his sub-standpoint that the anticipated counterargument is not

relevant, might bear similarities to two-sided non-refutational messages, in which the anticipated counterargument is ignored. This is because by attacking the counterargument as irrelevant the arguer may be seen as if he is not willing to refute it. Dialectically speaking, there is nothing wrong with attacking a counterargument as irrelevant (it can be fallacious, but so can a refutation of the propositional content), but in reality it is not uncommon at all for ordinary arguers to try to get rid of a counterargument by treating it as if it were irrelevant. Again, future research is needed to shed light on this issue.

Finally, the presentational aspect of addressing anticipated counterarguments (or any other countermove) might be another interesting issue to consider. From a presentational perspective, this study has only addressed strategic manoeuvring in which the anticipated counterargument is mentioned explicitly and then refuted. This presentation differs from one in which the counterargument is left implicit and only the refutation is explicit. Reconstructed dialectically, the two instances of strategic manoeuvring should turn out to be identical – after all even when the arguer mentions the counterargument many dialectical moves are left implicit. Rhetorically, however, there is good reason to speculate that the two instances might not have the same persuasive effect on ordinary arguers. Research into these two ways of arguing would be useful. Such research would in addition also shed light on a very important empirical question, namely: what specific role does *the refutation* of the counterargument play in the persuasive functioning of addressing anticipated counterarguments? The fact that in a presentation in which the counterargument is left implicit only the refutation is present allows for observing the effect of the refutation separately.

Appendix

Example 1

Verrassing

De Bijbel blijkt de laatste weken een bestseller te zijn.
Het verkoopsucces overtreft iedere verwachting. Hoe komt dat?
Onderzoek heeft aangetoond dat bijna 70% van alle
Nederlanders de Bijbel ziet als ‘een boek van en voor iedereen’.
En: in deze rumoerige en donkere tijden zoeken mensen naar
vrede, naar licht.
Maar de Bijbel wordt niet door iedereen gezien als een boek
van vrede en licht. Bij sommige mensen roept het woord ‘Bijbel’
onplezierige gevoelens op. Dat is vreselijk jammer want de
Bijbel is écht van een voor iedereen!
Wie de Bijbel leest, herkent gevoelens en inzichten van alle
tijden en ontdekt waarom hij na duizenden jaren nog steeds
actueel is.
De Bijbel heeft ook in 2005 zoveel te
vertellen en is door de nieuwe vertaling
prettiger leesbaar dan ooit.
Ontdek het zelf en laat u verrassen…

Example 2

Geen invasie, geen bezetting en geen mishandeling

Nederlandse media geven een eenzijdig beeld over Tibet en vergeten dat de regio gewoon een onderdeel van China is

► Tibetanen zijn zielig en Chinezen hardhandig, als we de media moeten geloven.

► Ik geloof die niet. Tibetanen genieten als etnische minderheid juist privileges.

Door D. WANG

De Nederlandse media geven een zeer eenzijdig beeld over kwestie-Tibet. Zo wordt keer op keer gesteld dat China „Tibet is binnengevallen". Hoe kun je het woord 'binnenvallen' gebruiken als het je eigen grondgebied is? Tibet maakt sinds de Qing-dynastie (1644-1911) deel uit van China. De eerste jaren van deze dynastie was er een oorlog tegen de Mongolen, die leidde tot een verovering van Mongolië én Tibet. Na de val de Qing-dynastie (1911) namen de nationalistn de macht over. Rond 1945 maakte het nationalisme plaatsvoor het communisme, dat onder leiding stond van Mao Zhe Dong.

Voordat het zover was, woedde er een burgeroorlog tussen nationalisten onder leiding van Tjang Kai Tsjek, die hun macht probeerden te behouden, en de opkomende communisten. Tijdens deze strijd had Tsjang Kai Tsjek alle legers uit verschillende gebieden, onder andere uit Tibet, gemobiliseerd. Dat betekent dat alle legers werden ingezet daar waar de communisten zich bevonden. Na de val van het nationalisme keerden – in plaats van nationalistische legers – communistische legers terug naar de verlaten gebieden. Dit wordt in de westerse wereld altijd verward met het bezetten van Tibet. In mijn ogen bestaat er geen enkele twijfel: Tibet was toen een deel van China en is dat nu nog steeds.

Ook klagen de Tibetanen en de westerse media over het grote aantal Han-Chinezen (etnische Chinezen) dat in Tibet woont. Dat is toch ook niet zo gek als het grondgebied van China is? Als Gronninger mag men toch ook in Friesland wonen?

De Nederlandse media laten vooral zielige, gekleineerde en protesterende Tibetanen zien die hardhandig worden aangepakt door Chinese agenten. Dat Han-Chinezen net zo goed de dupe zijn van Tibetanen, wordt niet getoond.

Ja, het begon allemaal met de vreedzame protesten. Maar als die niet gelegitimiseerd zijn, gaan die dus tegen de regels van de wet in. Daarom is het ook niet zo gek dat de protesterende Tibetanen worden opgepakt. Als ik hier in Nederland zonder toestemming een protest organiseer, zou ik ook opgepakt worden. Als ik me verzet, gaan de Nederlandse agenten ook tot geweld over.

Voorts wil ik erop wijzen dat de Dalai Lama wel degelijk iets te maken heeft met de protesten. Tot nu toe heeft hij dat altijd ontkent. Hoe kan het dat hij niet weet wat zijn eigen mensen van plan zijn? Wat is een beter moment om de wereld bewust te maken van de kwestie-Tibet dan nu? Toen het Westen niet meteen aan zijn kant stond, dreigde hij met aftreden als de

situatie in Tibet uit de hand zou lopen. Nu vraag ik u: waarom dreigde de Dalai Lama met aftreden als hij er niks mee te maken heeft? De protesten zijn nog steeds niet opgehouden en is hij afgetreden? Nee.

De Westerse landen dringen aan op gesprekken van China met de Dalai Lama. In het verleden zijn diverse gesprekken met hem gevoerd. Maar elke keer hield de Dalai Lama zich niet aan zijn woord zodra hij steun kreeg in de westerse wereld. Dan is het goed voor te stellen dat China het nu een beetje zat is.

Ten slotte wil ik de aandacht vestigen op mensenrechten. De Tibetanen hameren erop dat ze mishandeld worden door de Chinese regering. Dat is niet waar. De Chinese autoriteiten behandelen de Tibetanen niet slechter dan de Han-Chinezen. Er bestaat in China een etnischee minderheidsregel. Dit houdt in dat etnische minderheden privileges hebben ten opzichte van de Han-Chinezen. Hiermee worden de etnische minderheden als het ware beschermed. Zo krijgen Tibetanen een veel mildere straf opgelegd voor dezelfde misdaad dan wanneer Han-Chinezen die zouden hebben begaan. Ook hoeven Tibetaanse jongeren een lager aantal punten te halen op hun eindexamen dan Hanjongeren om aangenomen te worden op een universiteit. Bovendien geldt de éénkindpolitiek niet voor Tibetanen.

Het is waar dat China nog tehort schiet op het gebied van mensenrechten. Het Chinese volk doet zijn best om deze beperkingen tegen te gaan. Het strijdt al tegen de autoriteiten voor meer vrijheid. Veranderingen moeten geleidelijk worden doorgevoerd. China heeft geen behoefte aan ‘hulp’ van buitenaf. De kwestie-Tibet is iets dat China zelf moet oplossen, net als de kwestie-Taiwan.

De Olympische Spelen hebben niets te maken met politiek. Het doet er niet toe waar die Spelen gehouden worden. Nu wordt gesproken over een boycot, maar de kwestie-Tibet en het onderwerp mensenrechten zijn niet net komen aanwaaien.

Samenvatting

Mentioning and then Refuting an Anticipated Counterargument: A Conceptual and Empirical Study of the Persuasiveness of a Mode of Strategic Manoeuvring is een studie over de overtuigingskracht van het noemen en vervolgens weerleggen van een tegenargument ten aanzien van een prescriptief standpunt in een monologische context. Kenmerkend aan deze context is dat het niet duidelijk is of de tegenpartij alleen maar twijfel over het standpunt heeft of naast twijfel een tegenargument ten aanzien van dit standpunt heeft. Hierdoor verschilt deze context van een dialogische context waarin de keuze voor de argumenten die iemand het beste naar voren kan brengen afhankelijk is van de kritische reacties die de tegenstander naar voren heeft gebracht. In een monologische context moet de betoger zelf bepalen of hij alleen op twijfel anticipeert of ook op een tegenargument. Wanneer de betoger op twijfel anticipeert, brengt hij alleen voorargumenten ter ondersteuning van zijn standpunt naar voren. Wanneer hij behalve op twijfel ook op een tegenargument anticipeert, noemt hij naast een voorargument ook een tegenargument en weerlegt hij dit vervolgens. De twee vragen die in dit proefschrift beantwoord worden zijn:

Hoe fungeert het noemen en vervolgens weerleggen van een tegenargument waarop geanticipeerd wordt als een overtuigende manier van argumenteren?

Is het noemen van en vervolgens weerleggen van een tegenargument overtuigender dan het alleen noemen van voorargumenten?

De beide keuzes worden in deze studie gekarakteriseerd als twee mogelijke manieren van strategisch manoeuvreren waarmee een betoger een zo gunstig mogelijke uitkomst van de impliciete discussie nastreeft die binnen de grenzen van de dialectische redelijkheid blijft.

Om de onderzoekvragen adequaat te kunnen beantwoorden, moest ik vaststellen wat onder de overtuigingskracht van het noemen en weerleggen van een tegenargument

wordt verstaan. Ik heb in deze studie een kritisch overzicht gegeven van de klassieke en moderne benaderingen in het persuasieonderzoek en de argumentatietheorie naar de argumentatieve praktijk van het anticiperen op tegenargumenten (Hoofdstuk 2). Het doel van dit overzicht was te bepalen in hoeverre persuasieonderzoekers en argumentatietheoretici de dialectische redelijkheid en de retorische effectiviteit van deze vorm van argumenteren in hun analyses met elkaar in verband hebben gebracht. Hoewel in de besproken benaderingen wel gesproken wordt over de dialectische dimensie blijkt er geen sprake te zijn van een systematische combinatie van de dialectische en de retorische dimensie.

De pragma-dialectische theorie, waarin een dergelijke combinatie wel tot stand wordt gebracht, is gekozen om duidelijk te maken hoe een betoger door het noemen en weerleggen van een tegenargument zijn standpunt zowel redelijk als overtuigend kan verdedigen. In deze theorie wordt uitgegaan van het concept van een kritische discussie waarin een betoger zijn standpunt verdedigt door te reageren op de tegenzetten van een andere partij. Uitgaande van dit concept is een overzicht gegeven van alle tegenzetten die een protagonist tegen zijn standpunt kan verwachten en alle redelijke keuzes die hij tot zijn beschikking heeft om op deze tegenzetten te reageren en voor een kritische toetsing van zijn standpunt kan zorgen (Hoofdstuk 3 en 4). Voor dit overzicht is uitsluitend uitgegaan van een dialectisch model waarin de effectiviteit van de reacties van de betoger op de tegenzetten afhankelijk is van de aard van deze tegenzetten. Hierdoor was het theoretisch niet mogelijk om vast te stellen welke reacties op de tegenzetten overtuigender zijn in een monologische context waarin de betoger vooraf zelf moet bepalen of hij alleen twijfel of naast twijfel ook een tegenargument van de tegenstander zou kunnen verwachten.

Om te kunnen bepalen welke keuze overtuigender is, is rekening gehouden met de retorische dimensie van de beschikbare keuzes (Hoofdstuk 5). De twee mogelijkheden worden als twee redelijke manieren van strategisch manoeuvreren beschouwd waarmee de betoger zijn standpunt zo overtuigend mogelijk probeert te verdedigen. Door geen tegenargument te noemen en alleen voorargumenten naar voren te brengen probeert de betoger geen ‘slapende honden wakker te maken’. In plaats daarvan benadrukt hij de redenen waarom zijn prescriptieve standpunten geaccepteerd dient te worden, bijvoorbeeld door sterke positieve of negatieve pragmatische argumentatie te gebruiken. Door naast het naar voren brengen van voorargumenten een tegenargument te noemen en te weerleggen laat de betoger blijken dat hij een objectieve betoger is die aandacht heeft besteed aan de positie van de andere partij.

In deze studie zijn twee voorbeelden geanalyseerd waarin de betoger in een impliciete discussie alleen op twijfel anticipeert en daardoor alleen voorargumentatie verstrekt of naast voorargumentatie ook een tegenargument noemt waarop hij anticipeert

en dit vervolgens weerlegt. De analyse maakt duidelijk dat de betoger zijn standpunt aan meer kritiek onderwerpt wanneer hij niet alleen voorargumenten naar voren brengt maar ook ingaat op een tegenargument dan wanneer hij alleen voorargumentatie naar voren brengt. Door zijn standpunt aan meer kritiek te onderwerpen is de argumentatie dialectisch krachtiger. De vraag die naar aanleiding van deze analyse gesteld werd is: kan de dialectische kracht van deze manier van strategisch manoeuvreren ertoe leiden dat deze ook overtuigender wordt?

Uitgaande van het feit dat gewone luisteraars en lezers onder gewone omstandigheden de voorkeur geven aan dialectisch sterkere argumentatie, heb ik verondersteld dat het overtuigender is om in een impliciete discussie in aanvulling op een ondersteunend argument ook een tegenargument te noemen en te weerleggen in plaats van alleen voorargumenten naar voren te brengen. Of deze veronderstelling juist is, is echter afhankelijk van hoe de betoger het topische potentieel benut dat verbonden is aan zijn standpunt, in dit geval een prescriptief standpunt. Door de aard van het prescriptieve standpunt waar de argumentatie betrekking op heeft, een beleidskwestie, is aan beide partijen bekend wat voor kritiek er in principe gegeven kan worden. Daardoor is bij een beleidskwestie vooraf duidelijk welke kritische vragen relevant zijn als strijdpunten ("stock issues"). Aangezien de betoger weet dat ook de andere partij weet wat voor kritiek relevant is, kent hij het topisch potentieel van kritiekpunten dat voor de antagonist beschikbaar is en weet hij op wat voor kritiek hij als protagonist kan anticiperen.

Als er bij een expliciet verschil van mening een tegenargument naar voren is gebracht, kan het verschil van mening niet worden opgelost als dit tegenargument niet wordt weerlegd. Dialectisch gezien is het ook in een impliciete discussie sterker als tegenargumenten die bij de verdediging van een bepaald soort standpunt relevant zijn in de argumentatie worden genoemd en weerlegd. Ook de loutere toevoeging van een extra voorargument aan een voorargument, wat in meervoudige argumentatie kan resulteren, maakt de argumentatie in principe sterker, maar niet zo sterk als wanneer er naast het noemen van een voorargument ook een tegenargument genoemd en weerlegd wordt. De redelijke betoger gaat ervan uit dat de redelijke tegenpartij deze overwegingen deelt en dat het dialectisch sterkere noemen en weerleggen van een tegenargument daardoor ook overtuigender zal zijn dan het toevoegen van een extra voorargument.

Om vast stellen of de bovengenoemde veronderstelling in de praktijk geldig is, is empirisch onderzoek uitgevoerd (Hoofdstuk 6). Bij dit empirisch onderzoek is ervan uitgegaan dat de deelnemers aan de (impliciete) discussie in dialectische zin redelijk zijn en de voorkeur geven aan dialectisch sterke argumentatie. Uitgaande van de theoretische veronderstelling dat de overtuigingskracht van de argumentatie redelijkerwijs bevorderd wordt door de dialectische sterkte ervan en dat gewone taalgebruikers de voorkeur geven

aan dialectische sterkere argumentatie, is de vraag die beantwoord moet worden of gewone taalgebruikers strategische manoeuvres waarin de betoger naast het naar voren brengen van een voorargument ter ondersteuning van zijn prescriptieve standpunt ook een tegenargument ten aanzien van dit standpunt noemt en vervolgens weerlegt overtuigender vinden dan strategische manoeuvres waarin de betoger alleen maar voorargumenten naar voren brengt. De hypothese is dat het bij het verdedigen van een prescriptief standpunt overtuigender is dit standpunt met een voorargument te verdedigen en vervolgens een tegenargument te noemen dat betrekking heeft op relevante kritiek en dit te weerleggen dan alleen twee voorargumenten naar voren te brengen.

142 proefpersonen, bestaande uit vwo 5 en vwo 6 leerlingen, zijn gevraagd om hun mening te geven over wat zij vinden van de overtuigingskracht van gespreksbeurten waarin de spreker een prescriptief standpunt verdedigt. In het standpunt spoort de spreker de luisteraar aan een bepaalde actie te ondernemen of zich van een bepaalde actie te onthouden. In het ene geval brengt hij twee voorargumenten (A en B) naar voren en in het andere geval een voorargument (A of B) en noemt en weerlegt hij vervolgens een tegenargument tegen zijn standpunt. De weerlegging kan gericht zijn op of de propositionele inhoud of op de weerleggingkracht (d.w.z. voldoendheid of relevantie) van het tegenargument.

Uit dit experiment is gebleken dat argumentatieve teksten waarin een tegenargument genoemd en weerlegd wordt nadat een voorargument A of B naar voren is gebracht even overtuigend zijn als argumentatieve teksten waarin twee voorargumenten worden genoemd – dit is in strijd met de verwachtingen. Door middel van dit experiment is het dus niet gelukt om de op basis van de theorie afgeleide hypothese te bevestigen dat argumentatieve teksten waarin ingegaan wordt op een tegenargument overtuigender worden gevonden dan argumentatieve teksten waarin alleen proargumenten genoemd worden.

Nadat er een aantal aanpassingen waren aangebracht in de inhoud van de argumentatieve teksten is dit experiment gerepliceerd. Uit dit experiment is gebleken dat argumentatieve teksten waarin het tegenargument genoemd en weerlegd wordt nadat een voorargument A of B naar voren is gebracht significant overtuigender zijn dan argumentatieve teksten waarin twee voorargumenten worden genoemd. Samenvattend kan geconcludeerd worden dat het bij het verdedigen van een prescriptief standpunt in een monologische context, waarin het niet duidelijk is welke kritiek er van de andere partij te verwachten is, overtuigender is om naast het noemen van een argument ter ondersteuning van het standpunt een tegenargument tegen het standpunt te noemen en vervolgens de propositionele inhoud van dit tegenargument te weerleggen. Deze conclusie stemt overeen met de resultaten van persuasieonderzoek naar de overtuigingskracht van boodschappen waarin wordt ingegaan op tegenargumenten. Volgens de uitkomsten van de betreffende

meta-analyse van O'Keefe (1999) is het opnemen en weerleggen van een tegenargument overtuigender dan het alleen noemen van voorargumenten.

Door middel van deze studie is getracht een theoretische bijdrage te leveren aan de discussie over de rol van dialectisch normatieve en retorische inzichten bij het analyseren van de overtuigingskracht van argumentatieve technieken. Door me op de techniek van het noemen en weerleggen van tegenargumenten in een monologische context te richten heb ik laten zien hoe de dialectische kracht van een strategische manoeuvre de retorische sterkte (overtuigingskracht) van deze manoeuvre positief kan beïnvloeden.

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