

Introduction to Logical Reasoning

Language and Disputes

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Neutral vs. Emotive Language

Compare the headlines:

FATHER KILLS DAUGHTER

MUSLIM KILLS DAUGHTER

Do these mean the same thing or are they different?

Neutral vs. Emotive Language

Denotation: The literal or primary meaning of a word or phrase.

Connotation: The idea or feeling that a word or phrase invokes in a person.

The Conjugation Game

I am *firm*. You are *obstinate*. He is a *pig-headed fool*.

I am *righteously indignant*. You are *annoyed*. He is *making a fuss about nothing*.

I have *reconsidered it*. You have *changed your mind*. He has *gone back on his word*.

Disputes: Beliefs and Attitudes

Disputes over Beliefs: When the parties disagree over what they take to be the *correct facts* of some given situation.

- Key West, Florida is further south than Doha, Qatar.
- No, it is Doha that is further south.

Disputes: Beliefs and Attitudes

Disputes over Attitudes: When the parties disagree in their *evaluations* of some given situation.

- Key West, Florida is much more beautiful than Doha, Qatar.
- No it isn't. Doha is way better.

Disputes: Beliefs and Attitudes

Of course, many disputes may involve issues concerning both beliefs and attitudes:

- Absence makes the heart grow fonder.
- Out of sight, out of mind.

Disputes and Ambiguity

Merely Verbal Dispute: When the disagreement between the parties rests primarily on different understandings of a word or phrase. The conflict is resolved by having them agree on how they should use this word or phrase.

- Haya Al-Mannai is a journalism student.
- No she isn't! She's a business major.

Disputes and Ambiguity

Obviously Genuine Dispute: There is a very real disagreement between the parties (either in belief or in attitude or in both), and this disagreement does not rest on any confusion concerning ambiguous words or phrases.

- You need to take Introduction to Logical Reasoning to graduate from the program.
- Actually, I can take a course on statistics instead.

Disputes and Ambiguity

Apparently Verbal but Really Genuine: There is not a shared understanding of some word or phrase, but resolving this disagreement is not likely to settle the deeper disagreement between the parties.

- Qatar is the most prosperous country in the world, just look at its incredible GDP.
- No, it is not. The life expectancy of the average Qatari is lower than that of the average Albanian.

Next Class...

We will look at how to construct a visual representation of an argument, known as an argument diagram (or map).