

Chapter 03
The Model of Reason
from
Public Speaking: An Idea Focus
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General Educational Objectives: This chapter helps you to:

1. Understand the Model of Reasoning.
2. Understand how the Model can be used to produce informative and persuasive speeches.

Specific Testable Objectives: As a result of studying this chapter, you should be able to:

1. Produce the simple model of reasoning.
2. Explain the function of bridges in any simple argument.
3. Differentiate each part of a simple argument
4. Distinguish deduction from induction.
5. Explain how extended blocks are used to support a simple reason.
6. Identify the seven parts in the extended model of reasoning.
7. Explain how an informative speech can be organized around the basic model

Since early times, western scholars have recognized the importance of abstraction in the thought process. Indeed, our symbol system allows us to formulate and retain general principles, or abstractions. These principles can then be used at a later time to help us manage our environment, solve problems and relate to others. In more common terms, we think and reason.

When we turn to the public arena, by understanding how these principles are interrelated, we can better understand the thinking of others. As we learn how these principles are expressed, we can work more cooperatively in arriving at mutually acceptable accords.

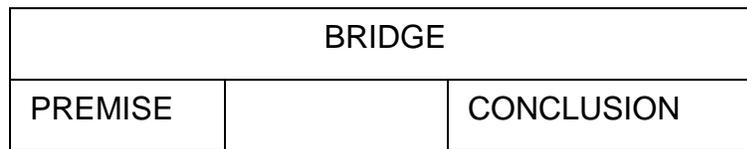
Scholars were quick to point out that some people seem to reason better than others. They have analyzed the process, not just to define what is meant by “quality reasoning,” but to provide us a clearer understanding of the process. The goal of this understanding is to help everyone to reason better. Likewise, we develop the analysis, in this chapter, based on the firm belief that reasoning defines the character of our public discourse. We hope, then, that by explicating and expanding the traditional reasoning paradigms, we have generated a model that can enable you better to understanding, and thus improve, your communication in the public arena.

The Three Basis Parts

Traditionally three parts of reasoning have been recognized. Stephen Toulmin, in recent times, has expanded on these parts. Still, it is recognized that a simple argument has three main parts. In Toulmin's terms, there are warrant, data, and claim. Toulmin's system deals with spoken arguments while the focus here is on reasoning, thus we refocus, and redefine his system in terms of reasoning. Figure 3-1 reflects the Adams model of reasoning.

Figure 3-1

Basic Bridge Model of Reasoning (Essential Parts)



In a basic sense, reasoning starts with one of many general principles that we accept as being, at least probably, true. Reasoning starts with principles in the sense that we already have them stored in our minds. Although, it may often seem that reasoning starts with an observation. For example, we observe a frown and conclude the person is unhappy. However, for the observation to become part of a reasoning process, we must already have a principle. In this case, the principle is that people often frown when they are unhappy. Although the observation keys the reasoning, it isn't the first part of the process that we have in our minds. Thus, reasoning is said to be deductive: it moves from more abstract to more specific.

Inset 3-1

Deduction: Moving in ones thinking from relatively abstract, to more specific

Induction: Forming a generalition from observing similar events

Remember: PIG (from particulars to general) has an I for induction. But also remember, "particulars" is plural.

Bridge

The abstract principle is the **bridge**, similar to Toulmin's warrant. A bridge is relatively general and, at least for the sake of analysis, is known, i.e.: accepted as true. The **bridge**, conceptually encompasses , and thus links, the other two elements. (see Chapter 2 for more development of how this conceptual functioning works). A simple bridge might be "Sunshine produces warmth." Most of us would accept this principle as

relatively true. It is general, it includes all particular locations and times. It also links two specific things, sunshine and warmth. See Tabel 3-2

Table 3-2

Differentiation of 3 Major Parts of reason		
	<i>Bridge</i>	General and accepted
	<i>Premise</i>	Specific and accepted
	<i>Conclusion</i>	Specific and not accepted
	Abstract	Specific
Accepted	<i>Bridge</i>	<i>Premise</i>
Unaccepted		<i>Conclusion</i>

Premise

The **premise** is more specific than the **bridge**. (Toulmin uses the term, *data*, for this part.) The *premise* is also accepted, at least tentatively, as being true. *Premise* may come from our past or from an observation: for example, we see the sunshine coming in our window. This observation may prompt analysis involving the **BRIDGE** above; but, again, don't think of the observation as the beginning. To define "start" in this way, only results in a confusion between induction and deduction. By remembering that the bridge was already accepted when we saw the sunshine, you can maintain an appropriate understanding of the deductive nature of reasoning.

In our simple case, we note the sun is shining in our window, an observation. However, for us to gain any meaning from the observation, we must already have some principles about sunshine: e.g.: Sunshine produces warmth. We already have the principle, the bridge. It provides the start of our reasoning. The principle, which we have either been taught or learned from previous observations (i.e. inducted) preceded the specific observation in the example. The existing principle allowed us to give meaning to the sunshine. Observing the sunshine serves as premise or data.

Conclusion

In the example of the sunshine above, we may well conclude that it is warm outside. This **conclusion**, like the *premise*, is more specific (it is linked to one moment in time and one location) than the **bridge**. Indeed, the conclusion, in large part, is contained in the warrant which covers similar situation. Toulmin uses claim in the same way that most of us use conclusion in this context.

Inset 3-2

Useful Information Relevant to Grouping Arguments –

Types of Proof – Modern Recasting of Domains of Arguments

This grouping reflects dimensions of our thought process (see Chapter 13)

Each dimension has subdivisions

Reality – Thoughts dealing with world independent of the individual

Relational – Thoughts dealing with other people. Important subdimensions here include authority or expertise, friendliness or attraction, and trustworthiness.

Goal—Thoughts of what the individual wants and desires. Others have, and we will discuss these thoughts within the concept of motivation.

All three of these may be expressed at any of the three main parts of an argument.

Since all three parts of an argument can be expressed in any domain, and often are mixed in one argument, it is difficult, at best to define an argument in these terms. One option seems to be to use the domain of the bridge for typing purposes

Summary of the Basic Reasoning

Over the years, my students have found it helpful to contrast the two statements: (1) “sunshine produces warmth” and (2) “it’s warm because the sun is shining.” At first the two statements may seem to be equivalent. However, we’d hope, having studied Chapter 2, you’d soon see that they differ in their level of abstraction. The first statement is a general principle, thus it is much more likely to be used as a *bridge*. The second, containing both premise and conclusion, is indeed a shortened argument, with the general principle omitted for us to supply.

Hopefully, the relative nature of both abstract versus specific and believed versus unknown in these definitions is understood. The *conclusion* is relatively more general than the *bridge* while relatively less believed than the *premise*. The *premise* is relatively more specific than the *bridge*. The *bridge* is relatively more abstract than the other two parts because it encompasses both and provides the link between them. However, relative to others principles, *the bridge* may be relatively more specific.

In summary, then, a simple argument has three main parts: a **bridge** that is relatively abstract and (more than less) believed, a **premise** that is included in the bridge (thus more specific) and is also (generally) accepted/believed and a **conclusion** that is linked to the data by the warrant (and, thus, is also more specific than the bridge) and isn't known or believed, by someone, when the process begins.

These three concepts, bridge, premise and conclusion, are essential in any reasoning, although all three are seldom stated in discussions. We give each others credit for being able to supply missing parts, as in saying, "It's warm because the sun is shining.". Still, even if unstated, to be a reason, it must have these three parts. It is because they are essential that we consider them major.

Minor Part of the Basic Reasoning

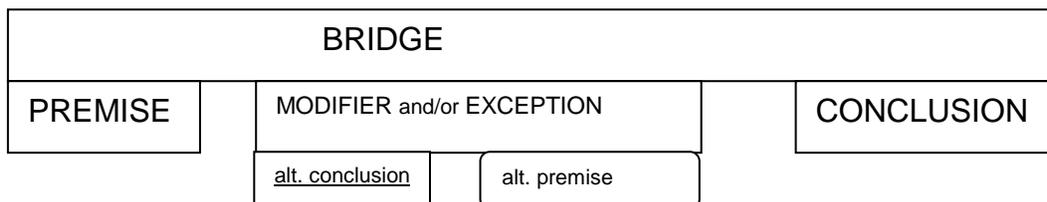
We seldom go directly or absolutely in our thinking from *bridge* to *premise* to *conclusion*. Therefore, two more parts of the simple model are needed. These two parts we call **modifier** and **exception**. A modifier (and Toulmin's *qualifier*) is a word or a phrase that restricts the likelihood of a relationship. Such words as "most," "usually" and "generally," and phrases such as "if at all possible," serve as modifiers. **Exception** extends the concept of *modifier* by actually specifying conditions where the principle (i.e. *bridge*) might not apply (Toulmin's term of *reservation* for this function works just as well).

Returning to the example of sun shining through our window, we know that other factors beyond the sun may affect the temperature outside. Thus, unless it is summertime, when we already know it's hot outside, we are likely to include, at least, a modifier in our thinking, such, "It's probably warm outside" If it is winter and we don't want to get our hopes up too much, we'd likely include an exception in our thinking, such as, "Since it is sunny, it is a warm day outside, unless the north wind is blowing."

Table 3-3 places these five parts in a model of reasoning.

Table 3-3

Basic Bridge Model of Reasoning



The Extended Model

As we said above, the nature of each major part of a reason is relative. In terms of their degree of abstraction, they are relative to each other. The degree to which the conclusion is accepted is less likely than either the bridge or the premise. However, unless both the premise and the bridge are acceptable to some degree, they do not function as intended. Since acceptance of both bridge and premise vary from person to person, it's helpful to envision a situation where a speaker believes in the bridge and the premise and a listener doesn't believe one or the other, or either. This situation is common, right?

To the speaker, the statements are bridge and premise; so, we could keep our simple model as is, if we only viewed it from the speaker perspective. However, if the speaker is wise, she will extend the reasoning in such a way as to increase the likelihood that the listener will also accept them as bridge and premise before she continues to the conclusion. She will provide initial arguments to support her bridge, premise or both before advancing her final argument. For example, she thinks her pumps need replacing. She has a bridge, shoes need to be replaced when they are worn out; and premise, her pumps are worn out, leading to the obvious (to her) conclusion that they need replacing. Given that she wants someone (like her father) to pay for the replacement, she might be wise to increase the likelihood that her father would see her existing shoes as worn out. She might do this by beginning the conversation by pointing to the shoes' deteriorated shape that has resulted from the years of wear. For her father, she has provided an extended argument, the shape of these shoes are deformed (the *premise of the extension*); so, they are worn out (the *conclusion for the extension*, which will become, once accepted, the premise for her final argument.) The intent of this extended reasoning is to increase the likelihood that the father will accept her way of thinking about needing a new pair of pumps. (If that was confusing, please do read on, another example follows.)

In essence, the speaker "stacks" reasons. To illustrate how this stacking works, I, as Toulmin, add two parts to the simple model. I will use these parts to show how the stacking works. To keep the explanation as clear as possible at this point, I will deal with each of the new terms separately using a simple weather example. Obviously, in everyday conversations, the whole process can become complicated quickly, but if you can understand it in this basic form, it may serve you well in those more complex situations. It is also hoped that the understanding the model at an elementary level will help you to understand the bigger picture when we discuss other topics in the text.

Consider the following statements that represent a more complex example of a simple argument. Before you read further, can you identify the four parts that are presented? If so, great; if not, please don't despair, it will become clearer!

1. The weather will turn nicer, with warmer days & sun!
2. In the spring, the weather usually get lovely.
3. Unless we get unusual wind patterns.
4. Officially, it is now spring.

The person speaking or thinking the ideas in the example above may be a bit optimistic to believe that it is spring just because the calendar says it is "officially" spring. Still, "it is now spring," is the premise among these thoughts. The connection between spring and nice weather (#2) is the bridge. Although the person is willing to admit exceptions in using the word "usually" (modifier), he/she still has the hope (conclusion) that the weather will turn nicer (#1). Statement #3, in spelling out when the exceptions occur, is, of course, the exception.

Returning to option 4, "Officially, it is now spring," it seems likely that this thought contains unto itself an anticipation that someone might question whether it is spring. The word, "Officially," then tends to bolster, or support, the premise. This bolstering goes beyond the confines of the **basic reason**. This addition is one of our new terms, **extention to premise**. Extending to premise establishes a block to support the premise as described above.

The word "officially" hopefully increases the likelihood that the premise, "it is now spring," will be accepted. We are left to supply the missing part of this implied *extended* reasoning. Note that there are sometimes advantages to the speaker in leaving part of the argument implied, because if stated, they are more likely to be questioned or even rejected. If the reasoning is simply suggested as in this example, the conclusion is more likely to be accepted without analysis.

One way that the *extended* (suggested) reason might be spelled out is as follows: The bridge would link "official" with "true:" e.g., "If authorities make it official, then it's likely true." The premise says the statement is official. The unstated conclusion is that the statement, "it is spring," is likely true. So, by saying it's official, the speaker increases the likelihood that the listener will accept the premise as being true. The speaker has supported his or her premise.

Examining the relationship between this extension and the premise, can you see a parallel between premise and conclusion? If so, you may skip the remainder of this paragraph. If not, consider it this way: Since extensions are provided in case (or because) the premise isn't accepted, temporarily, "it is now spring," functions as conclusion. The "officially" (suggesting something like, "the calendar says it is spring,") functions as premise. The underlying assumption that, "what the calendar says is true, is true," would be the bridge for this little, secondary reason.

The same subprocess may be activated if for some reason a bridge isn't accepted. The bridge then becomes a conclusion in a secondary reasoning with the support of the acceptance of this conclusion/bridge receiving the label of extention to the bridge. In most speech situations, and especially public speeches, extension to the bridge takes the form of what we call supporting material. If the listener did not accept that spring often brings lovely weather, the speaker might provide examples from previous years. These examples would then support the bridge. Until the listener accepts the bridge, in the listeners mind, the speaker's bridge is the listener's (potential) conclusion and the examples are premises. Hopefully, the listener will accept the truth of the examples and be compelled to accept the bridge as true also.

Typically, then, it is highly unlikely to find a simple argument in isolation. Most arguments have at least one of the types of *extensions* and probably both types. With the addition of the two extensions, we now have a complex model of an argument as presented in Table 3-4,

Clearly, even with seven parts, the complex model must have two more parts. Do you see what they are? These two are the assumptions or general principles that would correspond to bridges in the extended reasoning to establish the link between the two extensions and the conclusions they hope to support. Then, of course, in our talks with others, the building process can be extended for many levels. The same analysis would apply at each level, we just have to reuse the terminology or go to a subscript system.

Table 3-4

Parts of a reason

Extension Bridge to BRIDGE		
Extension Premise		Extension Conclusion/BRIDGE
	PREMISE	CONCLUSION

Hopefully, the self instruction examples help you to see that this analysis does have real world application. The model can even describe in an overview, the generalized form of informative speeches. See Table 3-5. No doubt, if you liked, you could probably use the symbolic form of Table 12-4 to expand Table 12-5 to diagram a complete informative speech.

Table 3-5

Generalize Model of an Informative Speech

	You need to know	useful information
This info is useful		you need to know it

In the development of informative speeches, we usually can trust that the audience believes the bridge; so, we develop the speech by presenting information in an organized way so as to show how it can be used.

When I talk to people who present informative speeches, I find that they, as I, do so in hopes that the members of the audience will put the information to use. We hope that the information will help them to change their lives for the better. In the public

domain, we hope that they will use the information, we hope the information will make them better citizens. In this sense, we see that informative speech serve as extensions to *bridges*. The information in “You want to know this information” in Model 12-5, when accepted by the audience, become principles, i.e. *bridges*, that they can use in their reasoning to reach decisions and to take actions in the future that we’d think would benefit them, and would benefit society, although when we’re providing the information, we usually have no way of knowing what the desired decision would be. If the situation defined appropriate behavior for audience members, our speech would be more clearly persuasive.

Turning to persuasive speeches, we can also use the simple reasoning model to diagram the generalize persuasive speech. See Table 3-6. If the speaker can identify desires and goals within the audience that are conducive to the action desired of them, the speaker is wise to focus on establishing the link between the desired action and achieving the desired goal. In terms of the model of reasoning, the speaker provides extensions to bridges. Given strong desires on the audience’s part, the speech can even revert back to an informative, “how to,” speech. In other situations, the speaker must support particular goals, i.e. provide extensions to premises. Again, in providing reasons that an audience should have certain goals, the speech may have basically an informative nature.

Table 3-6

Generalized Model of persuasive Speaking

links between audience’s desires/goals and desired action	
audiences’s desires and goals	action desired

Summary

In this chapter, we have presented a model of reason with examples in hope that by understanding it, you can better use reasoning, in all its manifestations. We also, applied the model to both informative and persuasive speaking. While the distinction between informative and persuasive speaking isn’t a clear-cut one, it is useful in helping you to become a better speech.

MORE SELF TEST

1. What are (or might be) the 9 parts of the following reasoning?

We have every right to be mad. They promise us a technological education, and the equipment is 1980's at best. They just don't deliver on their promise. Mother always said it's o.k. to get mad if you don't get what you are promised.

The president has promised additional pay increases for the military. My wife has said that we can buy a van when we get more money. Unless unexpected expenses occur, we'll probably have a van next year.

2. Which statement completes the reasoning in the following examples?
 3. Abortion is the same as murder. Abortion is a crime.
 1. Murder is a crime.
 2. Killers should be punished.
 3. Abortion takes a life just like any other murder.
 4. Abortion has been a crime in all civilized lands.
 4. The function of network news departments is to provide news. News departments should do their jobs.
 1. News departments are also for entertainment.
 2. They should refuse to carry any non-news items.
 3. News departments often provide political messages.
 5. If you are my friend, you'll let me drive even though I've had a few beers. So, give me my keys.
 1. People who drink can often drive very well.
 2. People should not be allowed to drink and drive.
 3. Friends don't let friends drive drunk.
 4. You are my friend.