

Tools for Helping to Assess Relevance in Argumentation

Macagno (2018) advanced a pragmatic approach to relevance that conceives of it as a relationship between pairs of speech acts put forward as moves in a dialogue. The thread of dialogue connecting them provides the context from which evidence can be collected and brought to bear on any claim that one speech act is relevant to another or not. Another part of the evidence is the goal of the dialogue as a whole. This pragmatic approach is centrally directed to dialogues containing argumentation, benefiting from recent work in argumentation studies. Macagno holds that assessment of relevance depends on the argumentation schemes and implicit premises used to make up a chain of argumentation connecting one move in a dialogue with another. This paper gives additional support to this pragmatic approach by refining it with some argumentation tools from artificial intelligence. The tools are applied to a series of problematic examples, some of them well known since Grice, where relevance is an issue.