

## **Analysis of Arguments in the Public Debate on the Alphabet Change in bilingual Kazakhstan**

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### **Abstract**

By focusing on an example of a public social debate on language policy, this article aims at showing the relevant contribution of argument analysis to the understanding of such debates. Argumentative discourse constitutes an essential condition for real democratic practice. Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca (1958: 73) point out that the commitment to argumentative practice offers an alternative to the use of violence. The relationship between argumentation and a democratic society is fundamental: argumentation is the substance of democracy, which differs from other social systems in that the only legitimate power is the power of the word. It is free will, which builds on the word alone, that enables us to live together in freedom. An important aspect of democracy, being based on a dialectic ideal, is its uncertain outcome: van Eemeren (2002: 71) characterizes democracy as «institutionalized uncertainty». Thus, insight into the functioning of argumentation contributes significantly to the understanding of democratic processes.

**Keywords:** Argumentation, Pragma-dialectical approach, Analytical reconstruction of arguments, Argument schemes, Loci, Argumentum model of Topics

### **INTRODUCTION**

The analysis of a debate on language policy regarding the transition of Cyrillic script into Latin in bilingual Kazakhstan illustrates how arguments are generated and the need for them to be well embedded in their institutional and cultural context in order to be really effective. The debate analyzed here was triggered in October, 2006 at session of Assembly of peoples of Kazakhstan, by the remark of President N.Nazarbayev about necessity of livening up the switching process of the Kazakh language to the Latin alphabet. This statement made by him was a turning point in a language policy of the republic. This event was perceived as an opening signal for the discussion on alphabet change in Kazakhstan. Since then the reform of the Kazakh alphabet became one of the issues in linguistic research associated with the use of the state language which keeps coming back as a

topic of scientific forums. Different viewpoints concerning proposal of the president were commented on in Kazakhstani press. The corpus analyzed here consists of a total of 20 articles, 17 of which appeared in Kazakh language newspapers, 2 in Russian and only one in English. While part of Kazakhstani population perceive the issue as a serious threat to linguistic and cultural identity, others consider it to be unrealizable for the near future.

### **1. The cultural and institutional context of the debate**

With independence, the impetus of alphabet change was perceived as an instrument of de-sovietization and at the same time as a means of individual nation-building, westernization, and modernization. This impetus mainly seized the three new states of NIS with a smaller Russian population – Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. In Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, by contrast, each with a considerably a higher percentage of Slavic speakers, the question of alphabet change remained an aim discussed largely by intellectual circles and individuals until in October, 2006 at session of Assembly of peoples of Kazakhstan, the President N.Nazarbayev mentioned an issue about necessity of livening up the switching process of the Kazakh language to the Latin alphabet. This statement made by him was a turning point in a language policy of the republic.

The issue about the choice of the national alphabet has in Kazakhstan rather a long history. The Soviet period became the period of numerous language experiments. In the last third of the nineteenth century, Cyrillic letters were introduced into government schools among the Kazakhs (who traditionally used the Arabic script) together with the alphabetization and education program of the Russian missionary and orientalist Nicolai I. Il'minskii (1822-91). A reformed Arabic- based script successfully adapted to the needs of Kazakh is the reason that in the 1920s the advocates of Arabic script lost ground only slowly, a phenomenon unique to Kazakhstan. Eventually, the Kazakhs – like the other Turkic peoples – had to follow the directives of the party in adopting the 'New alphabet' (i.e., the modified Latin script). Latinization, introduced in 1929, was soon well on its way. Further evidence was the hasty attempt to transform the Latin based Kazakh alphabet into Cyrillic, this strategic step of the USSR researchers in Soviet nationalism call the policy of Russification. (Tynyshpayev, 167-89).

Many of the potential voices of opposition had been silenced in the terrible purges carried out by Stalin during that decade, in which the majority of the Central Asian intelligentsia was liquidated and the remainder was reduced to unwilling collaboration with the regime. Again, linguistic reasons were given for this move but, contrary to what Soviet linguists may maintain, the Cyrillic alphabet is no better for representing the Turkic sounds than the Latin script, nor does it involve fewer diacritical marks. Extra letters for certain Turkic sounds are necessary in both systems. The contention that the non-Russian peoples of the Soviet Union, recognizing the great value of the Russian script, desired to make this switch also arouses suspicion. The Kazakh alphabet on the basis of Cyrillic was imposed in 1940. The young intelligentsia, being brought up on the values of the European

civilization, and striving to obtain recognition among the Russian scientific circles, would choose Russian as the language for their scientific works, even when their works were connected with the exploration of Kazakh land, culture and natural resources.

The penetration of Russian into the scientific domain was, of course, not accidental. Although not a result of conscious and direct language legislation, it was an outcome of the colonial administration's efforts to develop the system of education for the purpose of training a class of Russian-speaking, loyal natives that could serve the needs of colonial bureaucracy and fulfill the function of role models in the early attempts of cultural assimilation. The fact that the administration was taking education as a serious asset in Russification can be demonstrated by their willingness to collaborate with a distinctive figure among the Kazakh intelligentsia of the time—the famous Kazakh pedagogue Ibrai Altynsarin. While nominally only a school inspector for the Turgai region, Altynsarin was in fact the architect behind the network of secular schools introduced in the steppe at the end of the 19th century; the network, which, according to Martha Olcott:

...was not intended to achieve mass literacy, but to educate a small sector of society, a new elite, who it was hoped would become bilingual and accept the 'inherent superiority' of the Russian culture (and maybe even the Russian faith). (Olcott, 1985, 181)

The establishment of a network of Russian schools in the steppe was closely related to another indirect language-policy effort—the attempt to transfer the Kazakh alphabet from Arabic into Cyrillic script. As it has been mentioned, this was done for the purpose of eliminating the influence of the anti-Russian Islamic Orient. Being not only a distinguished educator, but also a recognized linguist, Altynsarin was the author of the first version of the Cyrillic-based Kazakh alphabet. According to Olcott,

Altynsarin spent his life striving against what he feared was the imminent destruction of a unique Kazakh people, who unable to adapt their nomadic economy, would slip in status and merge with the undistinguished rabble of the empire. He maintained that the successful economic transformation of the Kazakh economy would occur only if a minimal level of technical education was introduced. Altynsarin often found himself in conflict with his Russian superiors as he attempted to achieve "enlightenment" without Russification. He had to be "convinced" that the Cyrillic script was better than the Arabic one, yet he shared the Russians' belief that Kazakh needs would best be served by a network of secular rather than confessional schools. (Olcott, 1985, 187)

Altynsarin was not the only representative of the Kazakh intelligentsia who was concerned about the status of the native tongue. One of the unexpected outcomes of the human resource policy of czarism was the formation of a class of educated native individuals who were brought up in the best traditions of European education, but nevertheless remained committed to their own culture, striving to bringing to the steppe the best advantages of Western civilization and, simultaneously, to do everything possible to prevent cultural assimilation and to maintain cultural sovereignty. The contribution of these individuals to the

development of the Kazakh language was both direct and indirect. Some of them influenced the emergence of the modern Kazakh language by their literary, political and philosophical works. Others, like Baitursynov and Bukeikhanov, were initiating discussions about the purity of the Kazakh language, and about the development of a script which would better reflect the Kazakh phonological system. The last two also made a huge contribution into understanding the grammatical structure of Kazakh (see Olcott, 1985, 189).

The end of the colonial period was also marked by the rise of nationalism and marked tensions in interethnic communication. Language-related initiatives remained only a part of economic and social policy; increasingly, however, language development was being initiated by the representatives of the indigenous population.

The adoption of the Cyrillic script opened the door for the Central Asian languages to be influenced by Russian in the lexical, phonological, morphological, and even syntactic domains. Perhaps the most obvious influence has been the massive influx of Russian terms into these languages. Many languages in the young Soviet state, including those in Central Asia, were perceived to be deficient in the lexical domains considered to be most important in a Communist society, namely the language of Marxism, Soviet political structure, science and technology, and industrialization. Thus, it was necessary to introduce into the languages terms which expressed these concepts.

Although in the last few years of Soviet dominance there was a relatively free public discourse about language and alphabet – as an expression of the need to recover national self-esteem – Kazakhstan's leaders displayed caution in such matters, then and up till now. Alphabet reform was a delicate issue in a country with more Slavs than Kazakhs and with more Russophones than Kazakh –speakers; and, after independence, they were faced with the implicit (and sometimes explicit) threats of chauvinists in Russia and northern Kazakhstan to annex that part of the republic to the Russian Federation. It was a relatively a simple matter to change place and street names (and some personal ones) from Russian into Kazakh, or issue banknotes in Kazakh only – in Cyrillic script. The Law of Language adopted in August 1989 had not mentioned alphabet. Newspaper articles for this or that script. Those favoring Latinization mentioned computer compatibility (Kazakhstanskaya Pravda 31 July 1992.; Novoe Pokolenie 20 aug. 1997; Turkestan 25 Nov. 1998) and superior suitability in the technological age (Irtysh 18 Mar. 1997), or argued that it would facilitate foreign language study (Panorama 9:4 Mar. 1995), or the cultural rapprochement of the Turkic peoples (Kazakhstan Sarbazy 31 Mar. 1998) – summing up a widespread sentiment for political and cultural reorientation.

In any event, Kazakhstan participated in the meetings of high – ranking representatives from the five Turkic republics convened in Turkey in 1992 and 1993, in which it was eventually agreed in principle to adopt the Latin script. Kazakh linguists and turcologists showed a sustained interest in the matter (Kazakhstanskaya Pravda 31 July 1992; Zaman - Kazakhstan 12 Jan. 1996). Among

these specialists, Abduali Kaidarov, then director of the Institute of Linguistics of the academy of Sciences of Kazakhstan and chairman of the Kazakh language society (Kazak tili), argued for the introduction of the Latin alphabet in an important initiative taken in 1992. In 1993, he went a step further by proposing a revised version oriented towards the Common Turkic alphabet. Another important move came in 1995 from the well-known turkologist K.M.Musaev who advocated a combination of elements of the Kazakh Latin script used in the 1930s and the Turkish Latin script. The campaign for developing a new Latin alphabet has been well received by specialists at the Institute of Linguistics of the of Kazakh Academy of Sciences (conversation with Prof. Kobei Kusainov, Almaty, 28 March 1997; notes by Professor Abduali Kaidarov, e.g. in *Egemen Kazakhstan* 6 Jan. 1996) and continues to occupy the minds of language specialists in other institutions in the country (*Kazak Adebieti* 24 Feb. 1998) and abroad. A current scientific project sponsored by a program of the European Union for cooperation with scientists from the New Independent States and the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Kazakhstan is evaluating the suitability of the current Kazakh script and plans to make recommendations for a Kazakh alphabet and orthography reform. Others spoke up for the Cyrillic alphabet, in which important Kazakh works had been published (KP 6 June 1995). In fact it is estimated that more than 90% of all the available literature in Kazakh is printed in the current Cyrillic – based Kazakh script (Kirchner 1999). Another argument, not shared by many, pointed out the satisfactory adaptation of the Cyrillic script to the Kazakh language, and the fact that Russian served perfectly well as a ‘bridge’ between the nationalities, especially in the face of an admitted slowdown in the development of Kazakh scientific and technological terminology (*Russki Yazik I Literatura v Kazakhskoi Shkole* 1995, № 7-8:35).

When in 1993 the first Constitution of Kazakhstan declared Kazakh to be the state language and Russian to be the language of interethnic communication (adopting this division of statuses from the 1989 Law on Languages of the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic), the language issue became a topic of heated debate between Russian and Kazakh nationalists. It triggered confrontation in Parliament and in society at large.

Under pressure from Russians and other Russophones, including ethnic Kazakhs, the 1995 Constitution elevated the status of Russian to that of an official language, although the text of the constitution is obscure: ‘In state organizations and in local government bodies, Russian is officially used on an equal footing with Kazakh’ (Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 1995, Article 7).

Satisfying the linguistic claims of Russians and other Russophone residents of the republic was a necessary political step in order to prevent interethnic conflict in society. Granting Russian status equal to that of Kazakh, as an official language, became an indicator of political equality – a crucial condition for integration of Russians in the state.

## **2. Issues and standpoints**

Concerning the issue of alphabet change in Kazakhstan two major standpoints can be defined: the first party (protagonist) argues for the switching to Latin, the second

party (antagonist) is for keeping to Cyrillic. The articles and editorials coming up on the very issue are published in Russian or Kazakh language press, where the platform function of the newspapers is prominent, where the form of presentation is merely reporting; the discourse is of argumentative nature.

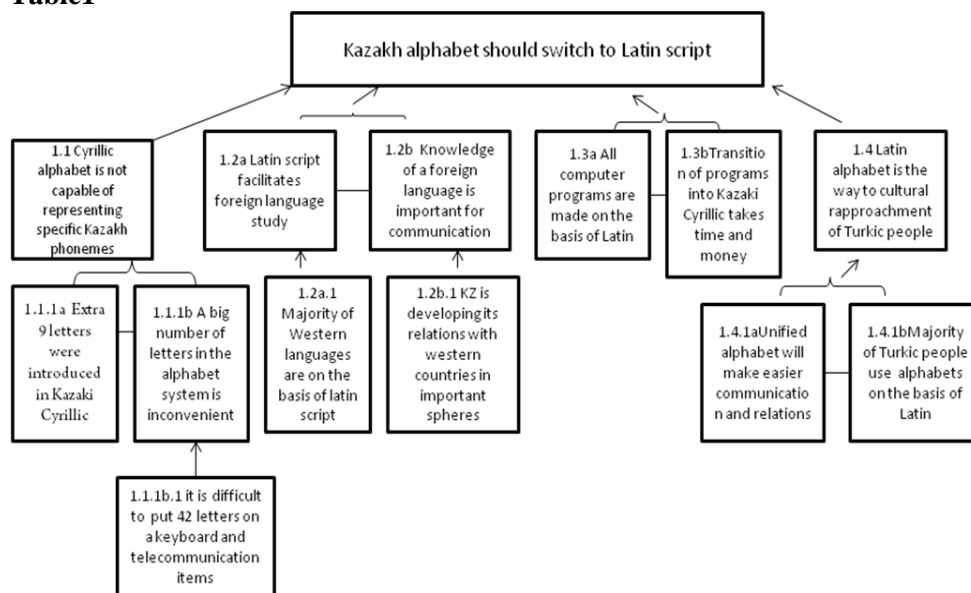
The pragma-dialectical approach to argumentation language use proposes a *model of critical discussion* for showing how a difference of opinion can be resolved (Van Eemeren & Grootendorst 2004). Argumentative language is always to be seen as part of an exchange of views between two parties, even if, as in the present debate in newspapers on the alphabet transition in Kazakhstan, the exchange of views takes place by way of a monologue. The monologue of the protagonist, who puts forward and defends his/her standpoint, is a specific kind of critical discussion where the role of the antagonist remains implicit: “*Even if the role of the antagonist is not actively and explicitly performed, the discourse of the protagonist can still be analysed as a contribution to a critical discussion: The protagonist makes an attempt to counter (potential) doubt or criticism of a specific or non-specific audience or readership.*” (Van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 2004, 59).

As our concern is public discussion, which touches different spheres of life, there are many editorials, interviews by people from different spheres speaking from their own perspectives on the issue published in different types of media. As the basic corpus were selected interviews from authorities in various spheres and we deal with *implicit argumentative discussion*. Examining the corpus of analysis concerning alphabet change, were identified two major standpoints, and one shared only by a little minority. Different arguments were advanced for the defense of the standpoint in relation to the areas of interest: for linguistic, educational, cultural, social, economic, technical reasons.

In order to arrive at a reasonable evaluation of argumentation, its structure must be carefully identified. The simplest argumentation consists of just one single argument, but the structure of argumentation can also be much more complex. Multiple argumentation, for instance, consists of more than one alternative defence of the same standpoint. And in coordinative argumentation, several arguments taken together constitute the defence of the standpoint. Another complex argumentation is subordinative argumentation, with arguments supporting arguments. Complex argumentation can always be broken down into a number of single arguments. And that is exactly what happens when the argumentation structure analyzed. For the defence of the standpoint 1 were advanced several autonomous arguments, and here we have multiple argumentation. These defenses do not depend on each other to support the standpoint and, are, in principle, of equal weight. Each defense could theoretically stand alone and is presented as if it were sufficient to defend the standpoint. To show clearly that the arguments that form part of multiple argumentation all support the same standpoint, each argument is assigned the number of the standpoint followed by a number of its own: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, and so on. Each separate argument has an arrow leading to the standpoint. Each single argument can be supported by coordinative or subordinative arguments. In coordinative arguments the relatedness of single arguments is emphasized by

linking them with horizontal lines and by assigning them all the same number, followed by a letter (1.1a, 1.1b, 1.1c, etc.) Subordinative argumentation is indicated by the use of decimal points. Subarguments are indicated by two points (1.1.1 or 1.1.1a or 1.1.1'). To emphasize that subordinative argumentation consists of a chain of arguments that are dependent on each other, they are represented in the schematic overview as a series of “vertically connected” arguments, linked with arrows. In our structural reconstruction of arguments multiplicity, coordination, and subordination occur in combination, as is illustrated in table 1:

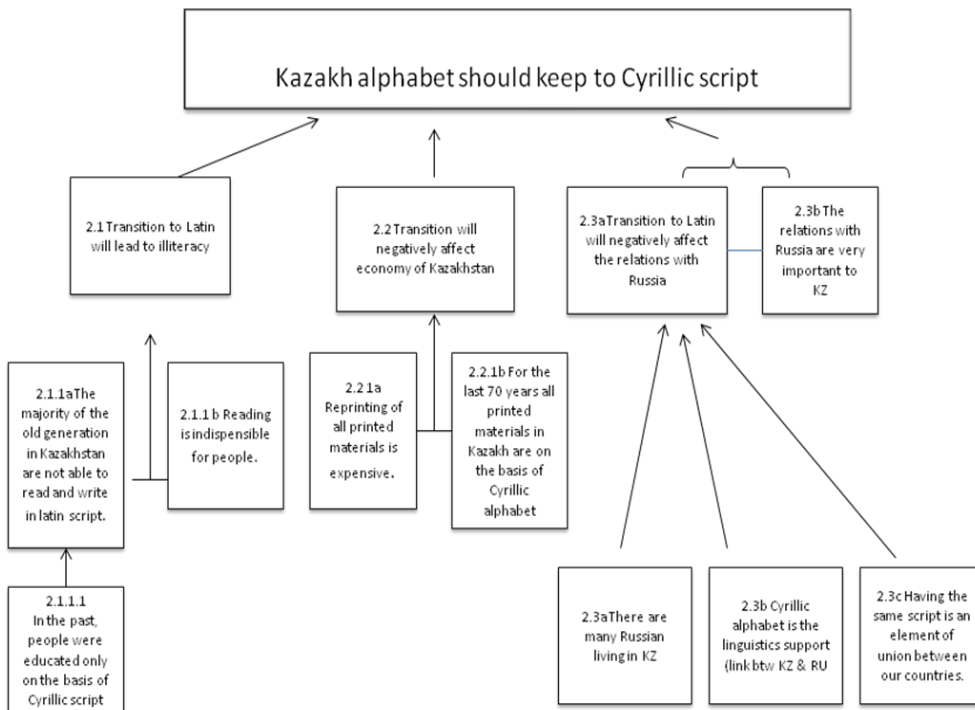
**Table 1**



In table 1 presented the results of the analysis. Sometimes it is difficult to distinguish coordinative argumentation from multiple, and the only way is to go by the content of the arguments and the standpoint. In 1.1 argument is single and is intended as a separate defense of the standpoint and it is supported by coordinated subarguments as in 1.4. 1.2a is not in itself sufficient argument and have to be taken together with 1.2b; therefore argumentation is coordinative as in 1.3a coordinated with 1.3b. In this kind of coordinative argumentation, there is only one line of defense so that if any part of it is eliminated, the whole defense is weakened or even destroyed.

In table 2 is illustrated the results of the analytical reconstruction of the standpoint 2 of the opposing party (antagonists).

Table 2



Using the ideal model as a guide, the reconstruction aims to produce an *analytic overview* of all components of a discourse or text that are pertinent to the resolution of a difference of opinion. Pursuing this aim involves examining exactly which points are at issue, which procedural and material points of departure are chosen, which explicit, implicit, indirect and unexpressed arguments are advanced, which argument schemes are used in each single argumentation, and how the argumentation that is formed by combining single argumentation is structured. By extracting in the analysis all the explicit and implicit parts from the argumentative discourse or text that play a role in the resolution process, everything is utilized that can be relevant to a considered evaluation. (van Eemeren and Grootendorst , 2004)

When evaluating argumentation, the argumentation must first be checked for logical and pragmatic inconsistencies. A *logical inconsistency* is when statements are made that, because they contradict each other, cannot possibly both be true. When argumentation contains two statements that, although not logically inconsistent, have consequences in the real world that are contradictory, it is called *pragmatic inconsistency*. Then each individual single argument must be assessed to determine whether it is based on valid reasoning. To do this, any unexpressed elements must be made explicit. Argumentative discourse can be defective in various ways. There may be contradictions in the argumentation as a whole, and individual arguments may be unacceptable or otherwise flawed. To assess the soundness of argumentation and to determine whether the standpoint has been



conclusively defended, it must be checked for such weaknesses. To be considered sound, a single argument must meet three requirements: each of the statements that make up the argument must be acceptable; the reasoning underlying the argument must be valid; and the “argument scheme” employed must be appropriate and correctly used. (Frans van Eemeren, Rob Grootendorst and Francisca Hencemans 2002)

The acceptability of argumentative statements is easier to determine in some instances than in others. There are statements whose acceptability can be established with no problem. For example in table 1 there is an argument 1.3a advocating the standpoint 1:

*All computer programs are made on the basis of the Latin script.*

The argument is factual and can be agreed on quickly but is not sufficient in itself to be sound, and has to be taken together with 1.3b.

Of course, in many other instances it is very difficult to agree on the acceptability of a statement, particularly if it involves a complex matter or strongly tied to particular values and norms:

*1.2a Latin script facilitates foreign language study.*

*1.4 Latin alphabet is the way to cultural rapprochement of Turkic people .*

*2.3a Transition to Latin will negatively affect the relations with Russia.*

If such statements are not supported by further argumentation, the party’s argumentation as a whole may not be accepted as an adequate defense (or refutation) of the standpoint. It might be the case that the audience has accepted them already at an earlier stage, or accepts them as they are, without any further support. They may, however, be regarded as a problem by an outside critic who reflects more carefully on the argumentation. This problem can only be solved by gathering independent evidence. For instance, in argumentation 1.4 the soundness can be checked by making unexpressed elements explicit or by asking critical questions. The author of the argument aims to state that: *If majority of Turkic people are now using alphabets on the basis of Latin script, then they have a unified alphabet, which leads to unification of Turkic people.* By this we made implicit premise: *Unified alphabet is the cause to strong relationship* explicit. And ask a critical question if it is always the case that a unified alphabet leads to unification. And immediately emerges the contra argument: Many Arabic countries for hundreds of years have been using Arabic script or Slavic people Cyrillic and it is not the case that they, necessarily, are in good relationship. And there is, as well, the fact that the majority of countries of Turkic origin are now using alphabet on the basis of Latin, but different variants of it. In any case, there is no one unified script for all Turkic peoples. Thus it was identified that advanced argument 1.4 is not always valid.

A single argument can be considered sound only if the underlying reasoning is logically valid or can be made valid. If the underlying reasoning is logically invalid, then the argument is not an acceptable defense or refutation. For instance, argument 2.1 in table 2 is based on valid reasoning and easily can be agreed on, because the subarguments are acceptable. It is true that *the majority of the old generation in Kazakhstan is not able to read and write in Latin script and reading is*

*indispensable for people* and also true that *in the past, people were educated mostly on the basis of Cyrillic script*. To this argumentation a Kazakhstani linguist A.Kaidar in the interview states the following: “Some consider that transition to Latin will lead to illiteracy. In my opinion, this is erroneous opinion. It is possible to master Latin alphabet and learn to write its letters in two-three weeks. It will not cause special difficulties. At the same time we will keep ability to read and write in Cyrillic”. Still it is difficult to suppose all population of Kazakhstan to master Latin script in such a period.

The soundness of an argumentation also depends on how it employs one of the possible argument schemes. By means of argument *scheme*, the arguments and standpoint being defended are linked together in a specific way, which may or may not be done correctly. There are three main categories of argument schemes, and they characterize three different *types of argumentation*. For each type of argumentation, there is a particular relation between the argumentation and the standpoint. We can demonstrate these three types of argumentation by the following examples:

1. Kazakh alphabet should switch to Latin script
  - 1.1 The majority of advanced and developed countries use Latin alphabet. (1.1') (Using Latin script is a symptom of being advanced.)
2. Kazakh alphabet should keep to Cyrillic script.
  - 2.1 Majority of countries of Turkic origin have already switched or switching to Latin script either. (2.1') (And Kazakhstan, analogously, should not be behind of this process.)
3. Kazakh alphabet should keep to Cyrillic script.
  - 3.1 Transition to Latin will negatively affect economy of Kazakhstan. (3.1') (Transition causes expenses (reprinting, making up new programs, etc.))

These arguments each represent a different type of argumentation. This becomes clear if one considers unexpressed premises. In particular, they provide more information about the type of connection between the explicit reason and the standpoint. In the first argument, the argumentation is linked to the standpoint by claiming that one thing (using the Latin script) is *symptomatic* to another thing (being advanced). In the second argument, an *analogy* is made between one thing (countries of Turkic origin) and another (Kazakhstan). In the third argument, one thing (transition to Latin) is presented as being the cause of another (expenses).

For each argumentation, different criteria of soundness are applicable. To determine whether a given argument meets the criteria relevant to that type argumentation, certain critical question must be asked. For an adequate evaluation, it is thus essential to carefully distinguish the main types of argumentation and to ask the right set of critical questions.

### 3. Locus analysis of the argumentation based on the Endoxon of the nature of the Republic of Kazakhstan

After accomplishing an analytical reconstruction from the pragma – dialectical perspective (van Eemeren, Grootendorst, Jacobs, Jackson 1993), the analysis makes use of the *Argumentum Model of Topics* (AMT), set up in the Institute of Linguistics and Semiotics, University of Lugano, in particular by Eddo Rigotti and Sara Greco-Morasso (see Rigotti 2006, 2009a, 2009b; Rigotti & Greco-Morasso 2006). The analysis of argumentation based on this model allows, on the one hand, to offer a very precise detail of the inferential structure of arguments. On the other hand, it allows to highlight the relation between the arguments and their premises, i.e. to explicitly connect arguments with the opening stage and, more in particular, with the context of the argumentative interaction (Rigotti 2006). The AMT can therefore be integrated in the analytical reconstruction of argumentation based on the model of critical discussion. Aiming at a representation of argument schemes able to monitor the inferential cohesion and completeness of arguments, AMT focuses on two components of argument scheme that could be distinguished, using pragma-dialectical terms, as *procedural* and *material* respectively.

The *procedural* component is based on the semantic-ontological structure that generates the inferential connection from which the logical form of the argument is derived.

The *material* component integrates in the argument scheme the implicit and explicit premises bound to the contextual common ground (Rigotti 2006).

Four main reasons can be identified to adopt the AMT perspective as a tool for the analysis of the inferential organization of arguments:

1. The inferential organization of actual arguments is made more explicit.
2. The argument premises are identified in such a way that allows distinguishing the procedural premises from the material (endoxical) ones and focusing on the crossing point between the procedural and the material components.
3. The context-boundness of arguments is made evident (see also Rigotti 2006) by eliciting endoxon and datum within the material component of the argument scheme.
4. As Garssen (2001: 91) remarks, argument schemes can be distinguished “because each scheme comes with different critical questions”. Walton, Reed and Macagno (2008: 3 and *passim*) also highlight the significance of critical questions to evaluate argument schemes. In this relation, the AMT can support the elicitation of the possible critical questions that are relevant for each knot of the Y-structure (see Christopher-Guerra 2008) and specify to what exact Knot the validity problems bound to an argument are connected (Eddo Rigotti, Sara Greco Morasso, 2009) .

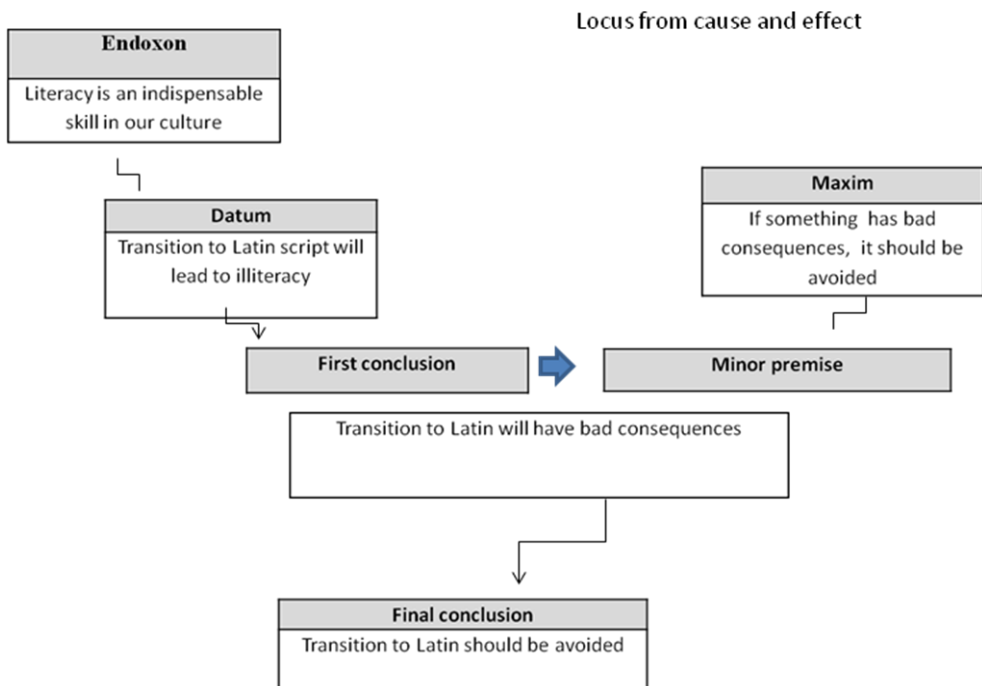
Let us represent the essential ingredients of argument 2.1 (*Transition to Latin script will lead to illiteracy*) with the Y-structured figure proposed by Rigotti within a recent re-elaboration of the ancient doctrine of Topics (see Rigotti & Greco 2006, 2009; and in Rigotti 2006, 2009a&b). The general principle underlying the reconstruction of the inferential structure of this argumentation is that of finding those implicit premises that are necessary in order for the argumentation to be valid

from a logical point of view. Such operation is part of an analytical reconstruction of argumentation.

The reasoning procedure underlying the argumentation is developed on the right line, which starts from a maxim, i.e. an inferential connection generated by an ontological relation (locus), that activates a logical scheme leading, through a minor premise, to the final conclusion, the latter corresponding to the standpoint, or claim.

On the left line, we find the argument's material starting points, i.e. premises that must be shared by the co-arguers in order to ascertain the minor premise of the procedural line, and justify the final conclusion. Of course, only if the maxim is valid and the minor premise is actually the case, the conclusion can be correctly drawn.

The minor premise is the result of a syllogistic procedure whose major and minor premises correspond to two specific types of material premises: the major premise corresponds to an *endoxon*, i.e. a principle based on an opinion generally accepted within a certain context or community ( a university, a country, etc...); the minor premise (not to be confuse with the minor premise of the procedural component on the right side) is a *datum*, i.e. a factual assertion presented as specifically related to the particular situation of discussion.



First, the standpoint to be supported, which has already been identified, becomes the final conclusion of the reasoning, insofar as it is the statement that the whole argumentation intends to demonstrate. Then, on the basis of the argument identified, it is possible to elicit the hooking point and thus the locus on which the argumentation is based. In our case, the “avoidance” of the Latin script is connected

with its bad consequences. More specifically, it is now possible to identify the maxim actually working as a major premise of the syllogistic reasoning based on this argument scheme, which can be formulated as: “If something has bad consequences, it should be avoided”. Combining the maxim with the final conclusion, it clearly emerges that the minor premise, still missing in the reconstruction, should be: “Latin script will cause bad consequences”.

Considering the minor premise of this reasoning, it is clear that it needs some backing in turn— that, *literacy is, indeed, indispensable*. Such a statement, thus, becomes the final conclusion of another reasoning which, rather than being anchored to a logical principle like the maxim derived from the locus, stems from a major premise referring to the interlocutors’ common ground in terms of shared knowledge, beliefs and values. We can formulate such premise as: “*Literacy is an indispensable skill in our culture*”. In the AMT, such premises bound to the common ground are named with the term employed by Aristotle, who first elaborated on the significance of the relation with shared premises in argumentation, namely *endoxon*. The minor premise connecting the endoxon to the conclusion is normally a datum that is part of evidence for the interlocutors or that is presented as such: in our case, “*Transition to Latin will lead to illiteracy*”, which is declared by the antagonist. The importance of the combination of these components resides in the advantage it brings to the analysis of the inferential structure of arguments in terms of their logical consistency and persuasiveness. The “quasi y-shaped” graphical representation presented in Figure 20 has been introduced in the AMT in order to highlight the crossing of lines of reasoning stemming from premises of different nature that are present in real argumentation. It intends to provide a more complete account of all the inferential passages (based on syllogistic reasoning) that are effectively at work in argumentation. In this sense, this model is proposed, from a methodological point of view, as integration to the methodology of the analytical reconstruction. It is also important to specify that such a reconstruction of the inferential structure of actual argumentative moves is preliminary to their *evaluation* in terms of logical consistency and persuasiveness and allow identifying potential mistakes, fallacies and other manipulative processes.

Especially the endoxical components of the *locus* analysis of the argumentation has shown the vital importance of the communicative context for generating and evaluating arguments. The knowledge of the specific context in its institutional and interpersonal dimensions (Rigotti 2007: 522–524) allows the inclusion of the audience and the common ground in the process of argument generation. It also permits an evaluation of the arguments by means of critical questions (Walton 2005: 54) with respect to the applicability of the locus to the specific context and with respect to the validity of the values expressed by the endoxon for the addressed audience. These aspects usually remain implicit in argumentation. The efficiency of the argumentation analyzed here cannot only be put down to their inferential validity (thanks to its topical component), but also to its persuasiveness which has its origin in the endoxical component. It is adapted to an audience that is familiar with and committed to the peculiarities of Kazakhstan, its culture, its institutional and social bilingualism and its ethnical structure.

**CONCLUSION**

The analysis of the debate based on a pragma-dialectic approach to argumentation theory and on the model of critical discussion (van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 2004), on the one hand, allows us to obtain an overview of the debate and its dialogic nature, and, on the other hand, the analysis of strategic manoeuvring in the argumentation stage, especially by means of a *locus* analysis, elucidates the mechanisms of single argumentation strategies. The overview of the debate permits a closer look at the mixed discussion with two standpoints. The standpoints regarding the issue of the alphabet reform are opposing.

This paper has illustrated the reconstruction and evaluation of a complex argumentation developed within a specific social context. As well, was made an effort to integrate the reconstruction of the argument structure with the reconstruction of the argument scheme proposed by AMT. By reconstructing the arguments advanced for and against new alphabet script, the fallaciousness and soundness of arguments were identified. Sometimes arguments may seem sound and valid, which fallaciousness can be made clear only by making analytical reconstruction from the perspective of argumentation theory.

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