# Aida – Attitude and Identity in Argumentation

The Aida project is concerned with argumentation theory and specifically with arguments which seem designed to express an attitude or affirm the arguers identity rather than to convince anyone of the truth. The project aims to do three things:

1) To describe the different uses that arguments can have, usually known as the functions of argument;
2) To look at the role of identity in argumentation by studying several corpora, large collections of texts, featuring such arguments;
3) To develop the argument evaluation system known as CAPNA (Comprehensive Assessment Procedure for Natural Argumentation) so that it can deal with identity arguments.
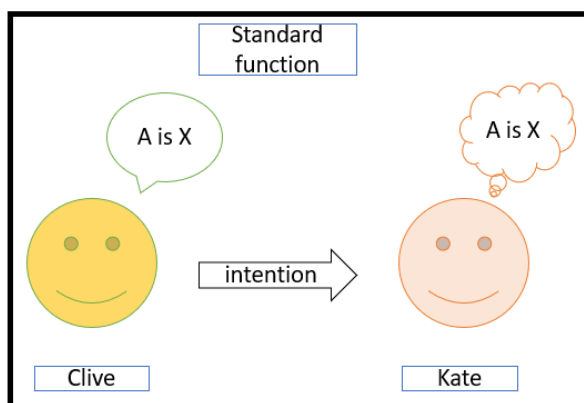
Arguments are usually considered to be justifications for the truth of a certain statement. This can be referred to as their standard function. However, sometimes language may be used in the form of an argument to accomplish other tasks, such as to reinforce aspects of our own personal identity or establish ourselves as members of a particular group.

These non-standard functions are very important in our normal discourse, but are not well understood by researchers. The Aida project would try to improve that understanding by looking at large numbers of real arguments taken from both traditional and social media and collected into a special Aida corpus.

The results obtained could have a large influence on all the main areas of argumentation research. In argument theory, the description of

argument functions will help researchers to learn more about a range of other uses of argument structures in discourse. In practice, the corpus study will illustrate how this method can be used in the field, allowing more empirical and experimental work to be conducted. Finally, in the implementation of ideas, the work on the CAPNA system will provide researchers with a powerful, flexible tool which they can use in their own studies as well as for educational purposes.

Perhaps more importantly, the results from the Aida project can help with a general understanding of how we express our feelings and our identity, particularly on social media, while debating important issues. We can use this knowledge to improve our own communication and to better understand others: both what they are trying to say, and why they are trying to say it.