

CMPT 880/890

Writing labs

Outline

- Identifying problems in paragraphs
- Arguments
- What should be an argument and what shouldn't?
- Claims
- Reasons
- Evidence

Finding problems in writing

The other key aspect of this thesis is availability. This is defined as how accessible an individual is. It is in many ways the other half of the natural interaction of awareness. While others are aware of you, you are available to them. In this context, it is the level of social interaction that you are capable of or willing to be a part of. Whereas awareness is the interpretation by others of data about you, availability relates more to the raw data (embodiment, location, activity) about you as an individual. Where awareness is the metaphor for the social status you provide, availability contains the semantic information that you present.

Finding problems in writing

- Read the paragraph and think about:
 - what is the topic of the paragraph?
 - what is the argument?
 - what is the writer trying to accomplish in the paragraph
 - inform or convince?
 - if only inform, then why?
 - is the main point stated early?
 - the 'topic sentence'
 - do the sentences support the paragraph's argument?
 - what do the sentences themselves say?
 - and what expectations do they implicitly introduce?

Finding problems in writing

- This change will allow us to better leverage our talent base in an area where developmental roles are under way and strategically focuses us toward the upcoming Business System transition where Systems literacy and accuracy will be essential to maintain and to further improve service levels to our customer base going forward.

Finding problems in writing

Within our society, it has been shown that there is an individual. An individual with individual thoughts and actions. But who determines whether or not he is correct in their choices? Are our thoughts brain washed through the media with it's hellish ideas or our closet friends that try to direct us in the right direction? No one may ever know what is right or wrong. So what is ethical relativism anyway? And who is behind all of the madness of ethical relativism? It has been said that relativist's are believed to think that relativism is true. Ethical Relativism is of a mind to say that whatever one's culture says is right is the right thing for him or her to do. One might conclude that the world we human beings live in is not without a variety of many different and diverse cultures with different cultural practices and hence different moralities. Studying ethics from a philosophical point of view, ethical relativist's might conclude that your wasting your time just like philosophers have always wasted they're time.

Finding problems in writing

In order to simplify the process of designing augmented interactions for WIMP interfaces, we present a conceptual framework that is based on a high-level view of a user's interaction with a GUI. The framework has at its core the idea of an *interaction*, which we define as a combination of an *object* in the interface with one or more *actions*, each of which have a characteristic degree of freedom. Interactions are undertaken in service of a user *task*, and are supported by *input mechanisms* that provide the actual input data. In the following sections we describe each part of the framework in more detail, starting with the idea of an interaction.

Finding problems in writing

In June immense schools of small, silvery fish called capelin enter the hundreds of bays that dot the eastern coast of Newfoundland to perform a fascinating ceremony. The males and females separately approach the gravel beaches and are borne ashore in waves so laden with their bodies as to be virtual walls of fish. There, on the gravel, the females lay their eggs and the males fertilize them; then most of the fish die.

Arguments

What is an argument?



What is an argument?

- An attempt to convince the reader of something
- You have ‘something to say,’ a point to make
- More than just statements of facts
- Arguments are based on making *claims*
 - “Recency-based caches have lower fault rates than frequency-based caches”
 - “Halos help users understand the locations of off-screen objects of interest”
 - “Interpreting information visualizations is a substantial problem for colour-blind users”

A conversation with a skeptic

- “Recency-based caches have lower fault rates than frequency-based caches”
 - Oh really? Why do you say that?
- “Halos help users understand the locations of off-screen objects of interest”
 - Is that so? Convince me.
- “Interpreting information visualizations is a substantial problem for colour-blind users”
 - I don’t believe you.

The structure of an argument

- Claim
- Reason(s) for the claim
- Evidence for the reasons
- It is important to understand the argument before you write the paragraph / paper!
- Write the argument out in point form first!

Questions (for the writer)

- What is my claim?
- What reasons support my claim?
- What evidence supports my reasons?
- Do I acknowledge and respond to likely objections?
- What principle makes my reasons relevant to my claim?

What is a claim?

- A sentence that asserts something is true or false
 - e.g., “Lurkers are a drain on the resources of an online community”
- The *main claim* of your paper is the claim that is supported by the entire paper
 - e.g., “Auditory cues reduce the time it takes users to locate the mouse cursor”

What is a reason?

- A sentence supporting a claim
 - Answers the question “why?” after a claim
 - “Awareness is an important design principle for distributed groupware” [claim]
 - “Why?”
 - “Because awareness allows more efficient communication”
- So, a reason is also a claim!
 - and may be supported by another reason
 - but at some point, the support will be *evidence*

What is evidence?

- Sentences that state facts, findings, or results
- The actual data
- Something that can be measured or seen
 - “Fisheye views provide a better sense of context than traditional zoom views”
 - “Because they provide visibility of the entire dataset at all times”
 - “Here is a demonstration showing that they provide better visibility”

Sort out the parts

- TV violence can have harmful effects on children
- Because those exposed to lots of TV tend to adopt the values of what they see
- Constant exposure to violent images makes children unable to distinguish fantasy from reality
- Smith (1997) found that children ages 5-7 who watched more than three hours of violent TV per day were 25% more likely to say that what they saw on television was really happening.

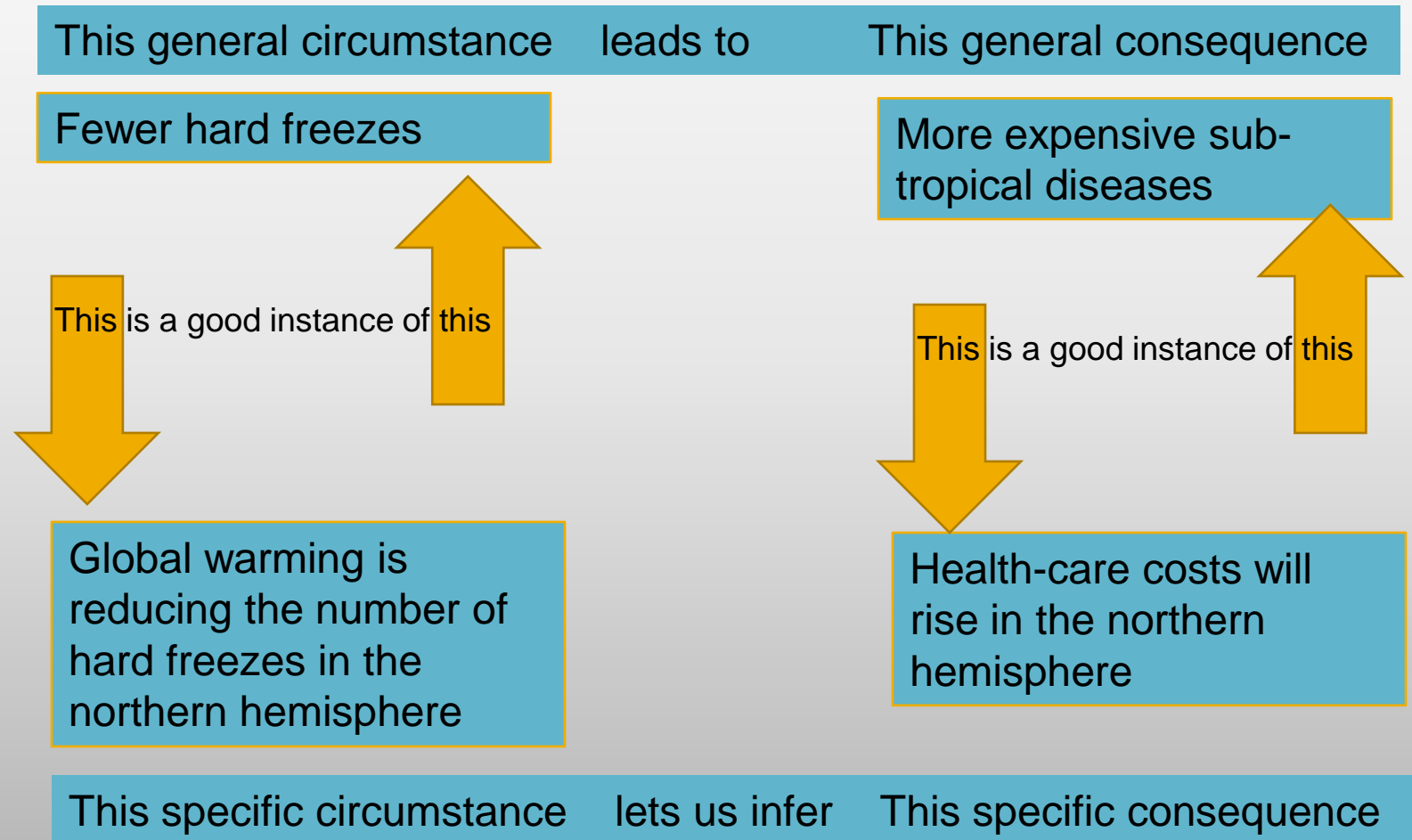
Responding to objections

- “But what about X?”
- You must anticipate your readers’ objections and address them
- “I have solved problem Y”
 - “But is your solution feasible?”
 - “But will your solution cost more money?”
 - “But will it work in all cases?”
 - “But will it cause more problems than it solves?”
 - “But is it better than the current method of solving Y?”

Connecting reasons to claims

- “Health-care costs will continue to rise in the northern hemisphere because of global warming”
 - Huh? How does global warming have anything to do with health-care costs?
 - Your reason doesn’t support your claim
- *Warrants* provide a general principle that establishes the relevance of your reason to your claim
 - “When there are fewer hard freezes in a region, subtropical insects and therefore subtropical diseases become more common, and these are very expensive to treat”

Warrants



Are warrants always necessary?

- Not always
- It depends on what your readers are likely to accept
- More controversial claims may need more reasons
 - Well-accepted claims may need no reasons
 - “Everyone knows that ...”
- Reasons that are not obvious need warrants
- The point is to think about your reader

Example

Although tightly-coupled interaction is common in the real world, the precision timing and exact movements required for this degree of coordination are extremely difficult to achieve in distributed groupware. This is largely because of the presence of network delay: delay makes it difficult for people to coordinate their actions, because the visual information that shows what other people are doing arrives late, and the shared action quickly become disorganized. The interdependency and the fine granularity of tightly-coupled interaction makes this type of coordination sensitive to latencies as low as 100-200ms [2], which are still frequently seen in Internet applications.

Exercise

- Write a claim, reason(s), warrants, and evidence about which programming language should be taught in first-year computer science classes
- Include (for practice) all the elements
- Make up the evidence (but make it sound believable)