

## NEW BOOK INFORMATION

Communication Studies / Linguistics

### Argumentation in Dispute Mediation

A reasonable way to handle conflict

Sara Greco Morasso

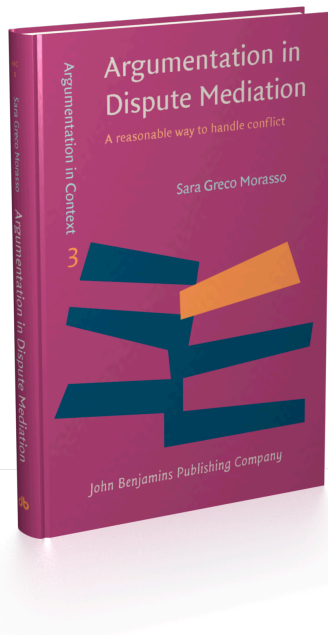
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The context of mediation immediately highlights the importance of argumentation as a means to reasonably handle conflict. *Argumentation in dispute mediation* tackles this topic providing both theoretical insights and detailed empirical argumentative analysis. Its goal is twofold: to explore mediation as a real-life context of argumentation and to show how an increased argumentative awareness could improve conflict resolution. Particular emphasis is accorded to mapping mediation through an interdisciplinary reasoned review of existing accounts. The outline of a conceptual framework of mediation constitutes a solid basis for the study of argumentation in mediation. The argumentative analysis of a corpus of mediation cases, based on the pragma-dialectical account and the Argumentum Model of Topics, shows the mediator's moves which actually help conflicting parties discuss reasonably. The mediator's topical potential plays a crucial role in this relation at the levels of issue selection, evoking of cultural-contextual premises and choice of argument schemes.

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“Sara Greco-Morasso is a prominent member of a group of young scholars that are spearheading research into the role of argumentation in a variety of concrete social, cultural and professional contexts and practices. Her book on the role of argumentation in mediation shines for theoretical finesse and for attention to detail in examining real practices and authentic conversational data. The palette of theoretical and methodological tools put to good use in the book is impressive, and most notably includes the use of lexical semantics in the clarification of key domain terms (like *conflict*) and the application of *loci* (topics) to the analysis of the inferential configurations of the arguments used by mediators. With this sensitive and well informed book, argumentation quietly reclaims a domain that is naturally its own: the use of reason in dialogue to restore jeopardized relationships.”

**Andrea Rocci**, Università Della Svizzera Italiana (USI)

“A specific strength of this brilliant work is the very refined analysis of conflicts in their argumentative but also human, emotional as well as cognitive dimensions. In the actual practice of conflict resolution, these elements mutually scaffold each other for better or for worse. The reader will find a very detailed account of how the process of argumentation is co-constructed in the context of dispute mediation. In other words, this book re-reads the tenets of conflict resolution from a communicative viewpoint, showing how the fundamental principles of mediation are realized by means of the mediator's contribution to the parties' argumentative discussion. The consideration of the disputants' interests (guaranteed by the mediator) builds the necessary trust for them to shift from conflict to cooperation and opens the way to enter into a sound argumentative process. The mediator's argumentative awareness is a key-element in this respect: it enhances the possibility to reframe the problem and helps the parties build a creative solution to their problem. This very well informed book will fascinate all those who are interested in understanding argumentation and conflict mediation in context.”

**Anne-Nelly Perret-Clermont**, University of Neuchâtel

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