ACCSCIENCE PUBLISHING

Beytulhikme An International Journal of Philosophy

ORIGINAL RESEARCH ARTICLE

Justifying and Answering Premise Criticism: An Epistemic Model

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Abstract

The epistemic status of a challenge to an interlocutor's premise is central to any dialectical tradition, yet its underlying logic is rarely made explicit. Classical Islamic disputation theory offers a systematic, but largely unexamined, treatment of this problem. This article investigates the normative justification and critical resolution of premise criticism within *Ādāb al-Baḥth wa al-Munāẓara* (ABM), the classical Islamic tradition of legal and philosophical dialectics. Within classical ABM, premise criticism is bifurcated into epistemically warranted and unwarranted classes. This paper proposes that the five seminal concepts used to define dialectical justification (*sanad/ mustanad*), namely, support (*taqwiya*), basis (*mabnī ʿalayh*), correction (*muṣaḥḥiḥ*), confirmation/corroboration (*taʾyīd/taʾkīd*), and the sole sufficient reason (*malzūm musāwī*), delineate a highly structured hierarchy of epistemic warrant. Integrating classical Islamic disputation theory with modern analytic epistemology, I map these five categories onto the distinction between subjective and objective justification, as well as inductive (probabilistic) and deductive (certain) rationales. I show that while support and basis represent purely subjective epistemic stances, correction and confirmation operate as objective-probabilistic (inductive) warrants. In contrast, the sole sufficient reason delivers objective-certain (deductive) entailment. Finally, I model the strategic dialogue game from the proponent's perspective, detailing the conditions under which a critic's challenge must be answered through independent justification, a dilemma-based reductio, or structural argument revision (*taġyīr al-ʿilla*). The study concludes that classical ABM yields a robust, formalized epistemic model with profound implications for contemporary argumentation theory and dialectical logic.

Keywords: Premise criticism; justification; dialectics; *ādāb al-baḥth wa al-munāẓara*; analytic epistemology.

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Citation: Çelik, M. (2026). Justifying and Answering Premise Criticism: An Epistemic Model. *Beytulhikme An InternationalJournal of Philosophy*, 16(3): 983-997.
https://doi.org/10.36922/BIJP94337

Received: May 9, 2026

Revised: July 7, 2026

Accepted: August 14, 2026

Published online: September 30, 2026

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1. Introduction

The conceptual and procedural codification of *Ādāb al-Baḥth wa al-Munāẓara* (ABM), the classical Islamic framework of rational dialectics and formal disputation, achieved its seminal formulation in Shams al-Dīn al-Samarqandī's (d. 1322) *Risāla fī Ādāb al-Baḥth*. In this epoch-making treatise, al-Samarqandī delineated the constitutive taxonomy of dialectical engagement, formalized the procedural trajectory of scholastic debate, and operationalized these systemic rules through illustrative paradigms. Owing to its rigorous axiomatic architecture and its pedagogical efficacy in sharpening advanced cognitive and analytical faculties, the study of ABM precipitated a profound intellectual efflorescence, institutionalized extensively within Ottoman madrasas. Subsequently, prominent intellectual figures, most notably al-Ījī (d. 1355), Taşköprülüzāde (d. 1561), al-Birgivī (d. 1573), Hüseyin Çelebī (d. 1610), Saçaklızāde (d. 1732), Veliyüddīn Cārullah (d. 1738), and Gelenbevī (d. 1791), substantially elaborated and institutionalized this discursive lineage. The architectural core of this dialectical framework is systematically anchored in three primary modalities of critique: the objection of premises (*manʿ*), the refutation of the undergirding evidence via inconsistency (*naqḍ*), and the refutation of the main claim by counterargument (*muʿāraḍa*) (Çelik, 2022, 2023).

The dynamic interplay between the justification of and the response to premise criticism occupies a central locus within this dialectical framework. Classical ABM literature bifurcates premise criticism into epistemically warranted and unwarranted classes of objection. The conceptualization of justification (*sanad*), delineated through diverse theoretical frameworks across major scholastic authorities, finds expression in highly specialized linguistic and syntactic phrasing patterns. Furthermore, these classical formulations intersect directly with contemporary epistemological inquiries concerning epistemic warrant, rational justification, and cognitive value. These profound parallels precipitate a rigorous investigation into whether classical ABM yields a coherent epistemic model capable of both licensing and defusing premise criticism.

Can the classical taxonomies of premise criticism and their corresponding justifications be fruitfully reconstructed through a contemporary epistemological lens? Do these diverse formulations admit a systematic hierarchy of epistemic strength? How do distinct classes of justification modulate the dialogical and normative obligations of the proponent and opponent within a strategic dialogue game? Can the conceptual apparatus of ABM be formalized as a rigorous normative model? In addressing these inquiries, this study argues that classical ABM provides a highly sophisticated, structurally coherent, and robust epistemic model of premise criticism.

While contemporary scholarship on classical Islamic dialectics recognizes premise criticism as a cornerstone of the disputational art, it routinely bypasses the formal definition and epistemological anatomy of such critique. Modern treatments frequently restrict their focus to mapping the linguistic phrasing of justifications, without probing the underlying epistemic dimensions and cognitive values that govern their variation (see Pehlivan, 2022; Pehlivan & Çelik, 2018). Moreover, although premise criticism intersects with epistemic concepts in both classical texts and contemporary argumentation theory, there remains a critical lacuna regarding the evaluation of epistemic warrant within ABM topics. Within contemporary argumentation theory, premise criticism is acknowledged almost exclusively through a procedural lens (Krabbe & van Laar, 2011). Nevertheless, these contemporary schemata neither specify the precise epistemic conditions that license a given critique nor formalize the dialogical mechanics required to resolve distinct modalities of justification; instead, they restrict their purview to the procedural obligations imposed upon the proponent. Similarly, modern argument models in the Toulminian tradition favor a holistic analysis of macro-argumentative structures over a fine-grained evaluation of the epistemic status of individual premises (Toulmin, 2003). To remedy these systemic lacunae, this study offers an integrated epistemological analysis of both the normative justification of and the dialogical response to premise criticism.

Methodologically, this study adopts a rigorous deductive-analytic framework. I begin by formally codifying the concept of justification, thereby delineating the precise epistemic boundaries of premise-level criticism. Utilizing these foundational definitions as a systematic baseline, I deductively derive the corresponding modalities of logical inference that govern each class of objection. Finally, I map these formal logical structures onto their specific linguistic and dialogical phrasing patterns, operationalizing and illustrating our model through concrete formal and textual paradigms.

The subsequent analysis is organized into five systematically integrated sections. **Section 2** delineates the foundational taxonomy of premise criticism and establishes the conceptual contours of the epistemic hierarchy of justifications. **Section 3** interrogates the baseline of this hierarchy, the subjective epistemic level, by analyzing how the opponent registers an objection via ungrounded "support" (*taqwiya*) and "basis" (*mabnī ʿalayh*), while modeling the proponent's corresponding defensive counter-strategies. **Section 4** examines the objective-probabilistic stratum of "correction" (*muṣaḥḥiḥ*), elucidating its inductive, corrective mechanics. **Section 5** addresses the

 https://doi.org/10.36922/BIJP94337

parallel objective-probabilistic domain of "confirmation" (*taʾyīd/taʾkīd*), analyzing how empirical or inductive evidence corroborates a dialectical challenge. Finally, **Section 6** reconstructs the highest echelon of the hierarchy, the "sole sufficient reason" (*malzūm musāwī*), demonstrating its deductive, certainty-conveying validity, and modeling the sophisticated dialectical maneuver of structural argument revision (*taġyīr al-ʿilla*).

2. Justifying doubt regarding the premise

Interlocutors frequently direct their criticism not toward an opponent's primary claims or conclusions per se, but rather toward the perceived epistemic fragility of the constituent premises advanced in their support. Indeed, compelling research suggests that targeting foundational premises possesses greater dialectical efficacy than a holistic challenge to the overarching conclusion or its entire evidential framework (Alshomary et al., 2021, pp. 8–9). Consequently, the primary locus of dialectical disputation systematically revolves around the critical deconstruction of these undergirding propositions. In this light, the interrogation of individual premises functions as an oblique yet highly effective subversion of the macro-argument's overall validity.

The fundamental objective of premise-level criticism (*manʿ*) is to engender dialectical doubt, thereby compelling the proponent to discharge their burden of proof by adducing secondary justification. This objective delineates both the intrinsic epistemic status of the targeted proposition and the formal boundaries of dialectical challenge. Accordingly, a premise susceptible to criticism must not be a necessary, self-evident, or non-inferentially justified proposition. In other words, the domain of critiquable premises is coextensive with theoretical (*naẓarī*) propositions, which admit only inferential justification (Pehlivan, 2022, p. 215). For example:

Proponent: *Every X is L (Claim). Because (i) every X is B, (ii) every B is L, and therefore every X is L (Argument).*

Another person, acting as a critic, expresses their doubt regarding the second premise of this argument:

Opponent: *I do not agree that every B is L (Expression of Doubt).*

Such critique, however, merely registers a bare expression of doubt. Objecting to a premise through ungrounded skepticism carries negligible dialectical force, rendering it a structurally feeble challenge in terms of both subjective persuasion and objective epistemic validity. At this juncture, the strategic introduction of a justification (*sanad*) is vital to bolster the critical force of the challenge itself. For instance, the opponent may formulate a composite objection wherein the formal expression of doubt regarding the second premise is reinforced by an explicit, corroborative warrant:

Opponent: *I do not agree that every B is L, because some Bs may be E (Reinforced Expression of Doubt).*

Within the classical corpus of ABM, the primary linguistic and logical challenge directed against a theoretical premise is codified as an "objection" (*manʿ*), whereas the auxiliary rationale deployed to fortify this challenge is designated as a "justification" (*mustanad/sanad*). Disputation theorists systematically define the normative boundaries of this justificatory element through five distinct conceptual rubrics: namely, support (*taqwiya*), basis (*mabnī ʿalayh*), correction (*muṣaḥḥiḥ*), confirmation/corroboration (*taʾyīd/taʾkīd*), and the sole sufficient reason (*malzūm musāwī*). Operating within this dialectical framework, classical logicians have formulated five corresponding classes of justification to calibrate the epistemic weight of the critic's doubt. These justificatory modalities are structured as follows:

(i) Taftāzānī and Ḥabūshānī: Justification is to support (*taqwiya*) the expression of doubt regarding the premise (Ḥabūshānī, n.d., fols. 105b-106b; Taftāzānī, n.d., fol. 26b).

(ii) Ḥabūshānī: Justification serves as the basis (*mabnī ʿalayh*) for the expression of doubt regarding the premise (Ḥabūshānī, n.d., fol. 129b).

(iii) Bahashtī, Kīlānī, and Shāshī: Justification demonstrates that the expression of doubt is possible by stating that the premise must be corrected (*muṣaḥḥiḥ*) in accordance with the appropriate conditions that enable it to be true (Bahashtī, n.d., fol. 200a; Kīlānī, fol. 22b; Shāshī, fol. 16a).

(iv) Baypazārī, Mīr Maybudī, and Shirvānī: Justification is confirmation and corroboration (*taʾyīd/taʾkīd*) of the expression of doubt regarding the premise with evidence (Baypazārī, fol. 17b; Mīr Maybudī, fol. 10a; Shirvānī, 2010, p. 161).

(v) Baypazārī and Bulghārī: Justification is the sole sufficient reason (*malzūm musāwī*) for expressing doubt regarding the premise (Baypazārī, fol. 17b; Bulghārī, fol. 77b).

When synthesized collectively, these formulations clearly delineate the distinct epistemic strata that separate the bare expression of doubt regarding a premise from its formal justification. This stratification arises because each definitional rubric illuminates a discrete cognitive modality inherent to the justificatory act (Başdemir, 2010, pp. 56–64; Chisholm, 1982, pp. 3–24).

The dual conceptual rubrics of the subjective (*bi-zaʿm*

al-māniʿ) and the objective (*bi-nafs al-amr*) serve to elucidate the distinct epistemic gradations inherent within each of these definitional frameworks of justification. Crucially, the bifurcation between subjective and objective justification remains a foundational cornerstone of contemporary analytic epistemology.

By definition, subjective justification is instantiated when an individual believes that their adduced reasons substantiate a given proposition, here conceptualized as an expression of doubt, independent of whether these reasons establish a formal logical entailment. Within this subjective framework, the opponent's discursive act fails to differentiate between objective epistemic warrants (namely, a sole sufficient reason, correction, or confirmation) and various non-objective cognitive values, such as low probability, weak analogy, solitary testimony, transmission from unreliable authorities, unrepresentative sampling, non-probative explanations, or sophistical rhetoric (De Pierris, 1989, pp. 371-374; Ḥabūshānī, fol. 130a; Kvanvig, 1984, p. 71).

According to Kvanvig (1984, pp. 71–84), objective justification consists strictly of adducing reasons that logically substantiate a given judgment, here conceptualized as an expression of doubt, within either inductive or deductive parameters. Stated otherwise, objective justification is constituted by the formal logical entailment between premises and conclusion, operating entirely independent of the opponent's subjective categorization of that warrant as support, correction, confirmation, or sufficient reason.

Objective justifications are systematically bifurcated into two primary epistemic modalities: those conveying probability and those yielding certainty. Within this taxonomy, correction (*muṣaḥḥiḥ*) and confirmation (*taʾyīd/taʾkīd*) constitute objective-probabilistic warrants, reflecting the temporal flux wherein the justificatory strength of evidence dynamically increases or diminishes. Crucially, the rectification of errors and omissions cannot deductively guarantee a proposition's truth value; rather, it merely enhances its verisimilitude, rendering the proposition a closer approximation to truth than its prior formulation. Conversely, the sole sufficient reason (*malzūm musāwī*) engenders absolute epistemic certainty. By demonstrating a necessary and invariant explanatory or causal relation under all possible circumstances, the sole sufficient reason systematically guarantees the truth of the target proposition. Consequently, correction and confirmation are fundamentally anchored in inductive reasoning, whereas the sole sufficient reason operates strictly within a deductive framework.

Within this framework, support (*taqwiya*) and basis (*mabnī ʿalayh*) function strictly as subjective justifications. When an agent attempts to justify a proposition P utilizing these modalities, they merely maintain a cognitive belief that their proffered reasons substantiate P. Crucially, they fail to demonstrate any actual, objective logical relationship between these reasons and P; indeed, establishing such an objective connection may be structurally impossible. Under these subjective parameters, while it is rationally permissible—and perhaps even normatively required—for the agent to believe P given their subjective belief-set, this justification possesses no intersubjective force. Consequently, although the agent may be subjectively warranted in their belief, they lack the normative standing to demand that an interlocutor accept P, an epistemic transition that can only be licensed through the provision of objective reasons.

Consequently, an interlocutor who adduces a rationale merely as support (*taqwiya*) and basis (*mabnī ʿalayh*) for an expression of doubt achieves only subjective justification. In this context, designating a reason as support and basis implies that it lacks any objective-logical propositionality. By virtue of this non-objective status, rigorous dialectical scrutiny must be applied to ascertain whether a justification proffered under the rubrics of support and basis conceals an underlying objective warrant, such as correction (*muṣaḥḥiḥ*), confirmation (*taʾyīd/taʾkīd*), or a sole sufficient reason (*malzūm musāwī*).

Correction is a type of objective justification (see Table 1). It occurs when a person believes that a proposition, such as *P*, is true by citing the fact that they have corrected its errors and shortcomings. This person subjectively justifies their belief in *P* when they believe they possess the reasons that render this proposition error-free and complete. However, they are expected to establish an objective-logical connection, appropriate for correction, between the reasons they hold and proposition *P*. Yet, when this person fails to establish this connection, either there is no objective justification whatsoever, or there are objective justifications—such as correction, confirmation, or a sole sufficient reason—awaiting demonstration. Accordingly, when a correction justification is purely subjective, it must be evaluated to determine whether it contains any element of objectivity.

An objective correction justification is inductive. Correction does not guarantee the truth of a proposition, such as *P*, which it objectively justifies. This is because merely rectifying the errors and/or shortcomings of a proposition does not constitute a positive justification for its truth; it merely ensures that it is freed from negative burdens. Therefore, rectifying the errors and deficiencies of a proposition such as *P* amounts to obtaining a form of that proposition in which belief is more reasonable than it was before. In other words, demonstrating the errors and

deficiencies of the belief in *P* does not lead that belief directly to the truth, but brings it closer to the truth.

Confirmation is an objective justification. It occurs when a person believes that a proposition, such as *P*, is true by citing individual cases as evidence. This person may believe that the evidence they possess constitutes grounds for believing that proposition *P* is true; in this case, their confirmation justification for believing in *P* is subjective. When this person demonstrates the logical relationship between the evidence at their disposal and proposition *P*, they provide an objective confirmation justification for proposition *P*. However, when only a subjective confirmation justification is provided, either there is no justification at all, or there is one of the objective justifications—namely, correction, confirmation, or a sole sufficient reason—awaiting demonstration. We must also bear in mind that the way to demonstrate to this person that their subjective justification is, objectively speaking, either a lack of justification, a correction, a confirmation, or a sole sufficient reason lies through dialectics or rhetoric.

Objective confirmation justifies proposition *P* inductively. This is because confirmation takes either specific cases (examples) or probability as evidence to justify proposition *P* (Brody, 1968; Crupi, 2025). When an example or probability is presented as evidence that a proposition, such as *P*, is true, the truth of that proposition is not guaranteed. Therefore, confirmation shows that believing in the truth of proposition *P* is more reasonable. Confirmation enables us to objectively believe that, of the contradictory sides, *P* is true and that believing in *P* is more reasonable than believing in its contradiction, ~*P*. Consequently, confirmation does not provide a justification equivalent to the contradictory of the premise. Accordingly, it can be said that there is continuity rather than necessity between the confirmation justification and proposition *P*. The evidence of specific cases or probability that justifies *P* as confirmation is not something that is necessarily present with *P*, but rather something that is continuously present with it. Therefore, the objective relationship between the confirmation justification and the expression of doubt is not a necessary logical relationship, but a continuous and probabilistic one (Table 1; Cenedî, fols. 53a, 55b; Popper, 1954, p. 143).

The sole sufficient reason is deductive objective justification (see Table 1). It deductively guarantees a proposition such as *P*. In logic, the sole sufficient reason is the antecedent of a conditional proposition. The consequent of this conditional proposition is the necessary condition. Accordingly, when proposition *P* is the sole sufficient reason, there is also a necessary condition justified by it, such as *Q*. Here, *Q* is the expression of doubt. Therefore, the expression $P \rightarrow Q$ is the objective representation of the sole sufficient reason. However, in the conditional proposition $P \rightarrow Q$, it is always possible that there are other sufficient reasons besides *P*, such as *Z, C, D*, which guarantee *Q*. This is because the justification of a necessary condition by a sufficient reason is through material implication (Köz, 2003). Therefore, in a given situation, there can be more than one reason for *Q* to occur. In other words, we can speak of a pool of possible sufficient reasons, such as *P, Z, C, D*, which guarantee and justify *Q* in different situations. Although we can speak of possible sufficient reasons for *Q*, in any single instance, there must be a specific sufficient reason that guarantees *Q*. This is because a proposition like *Q*, which describes a particular state of affairs, can have only a single sufficient reason in that specific instance. Whenever one of the reasons from this pool of possible sufficient reasons is demonstrated to be the justification for *Q*, this justification becomes the sole sufficient reason.

For example, let *Q* be "the ground is wet." The possible sufficient reasons that guarantee *Q* include *Z* ("a hose burst"), *P* ("it rained"), and *T* ("someone spilled water"). However, in a specific situation, only one of these can be the sole sufficient reason for *Q*. In other words, if the ground is wet, either it rained, or someone spilled water, or a hose burst. When one of the possible sufficient reasons is identified as the sole sufficient reason for the necessary condition, the argument must be expressed deductively. Based on this example, when we determine that rain is the sole sufficient reason for the ground being wet in a specific instance, we construct a deductively valid and sound argument: "It rained on this ground. Every occurrence of rain makes the ground wet. Therefore, this ground is wet."

According to these explanations, the most general terms with the lowest epistemic degree of justification are support and basis. The term that defines a justification with greater epistemic strength than support and basis is correction. The term indicating that a justification has greater epistemic strength than correction is confirmation or corroboration. The term that is stronger than the concepts of support-basis, correction, and confirmation/corroboration, and which guarantees the expression of doubt, is the sufficient reason. Accordingly, we can first divide the justification of the expression of doubt into those that guarantee and those that do not. The one that guarantees the expression of doubt is the sufficient reason. Those that do not guarantee can be divided into those that provide evidence and those that do not. The one that provides evidence is confirmation/corroboration. Those that do not provide evidence can be further divided into those that point out errors and those that do not. The justification that points out errors is correction. The one that does not point out errors,

does not provide evidence, and does not guarantee is support-basis (see Table 1).

Table 1. Epistemic classification of justification types

Type of justification	Core function	Pointing out errors	Providing evidence	Level of guarantee	Epistemic status	Epistemic strength	Type of inference
Support/basis	Merely providing	Does not point out	Does not provide	Does not guarantee	Subjective	Very low	None
Correction	Pointing out errors and	Points out	Does not provide	Does not guarantee	Objective Probability	Low	Induction
Confirmation /corroboratio	Strengthenin g the	Points out	Provides	Does not guarantee	Objective Probability	Medium	Induction
Sole sufficient reason	Demonstratin g the truth of	Points out	Provides	Guarantees	Objective Certainty	High	Deduction

3. The opponent's support and basis for the expression of doubt and the proponent's response

In the first two definitions, justification merely provides orientation to the opponent's expression of doubt. With this type of justification, the opponent generally offers a subjective justification without being aware of the actual epistemic value of the statement expressing the justification. Therefore, the opponent merely believes that the justification supports the expression of doubt, without knowing its cognitive value.

When justification is put forward merely as support and basis, it constitutes subjective justification. Therefore, when presenting support and basis, the opponent does not point out an error in the premise, nor do they intend to provide evidence for the expression of doubt or a sole sufficient reason that logically guarantees it. Accordingly, the claim that the presented justification supports and serves as a basis for the expression of doubt means solely that this justification is not logically linked to the expression of doubt regarding the premise with an absolute verifier but rather serves as a statement that merely provides orientation to the interlocutor regarding the expression of doubt (Dutilh Novaes, 2022, p. 2; Nickerson, 2020, pp. 1, 3, 7). Let us consider the following example:

Proponent: *Every J is O (Claim). Because (i) every J is B, and (ii) every B is O. Therefore, every J is O (Argument).*

Opponent: *On what grounds must B be characterized as O? (Expression of Doubt). Indeed, why is the possibility of B being F precluded (Support/Basis)?*

The opponent states that they can believe *B* is not *O*. The opponent believes that *F* can justify this expression of doubt. However, they have no idea about the logical relationship between *F* and the expression of doubt. In fact, what occurs in the opponent's mind is merely $F \nrightarrow \sim O$ or $F \rightarrow ? \sim O$. That is, the opponent, while unable to establish any inductive or deductive logical relationship, believes that if *B*s are *F*, they probably cannot be *O*. For this reason, the opponent does not use definitive language when expressing the possibility of *F*. Therefore, the opponent does not assert that the possibility of *F* is an incomplete reason preventing the acceptance of the premise, or a justification that logically points out its error. Furthermore, they do not logically demonstrate that *F* is evidence or a sufficient reason for *B*. The opponent is unaware of whether *F* is an objective justification based on good reasons, such as a correction, confirmation, or sufficient reason, to accept that *B* is not *O*. For this reason, to express support and basis, the opponent may also use the following phrasing patterns, in which no logical relationship is established between the expression of doubt and the justification:

Phrasing patterns for support and basis

•**Opponent:** Why shouldn't *B*s be something other than *O*? Indeed, why is it not possible for *B*s to be *F*?

•**Opponent:** I do not agree that *B*s are *O*. Since it is possible for *B*s to be *F*, why shouldn't they be something other than *O*?

•**Opponent:** I do not agree that *B*s are *O*. Doesn't the possibility of *B*s being *F* explain why they could be something other than *O*?

•**Opponent:** I do not agree that *B*s are *O*. Doesn't the possibility of *B*s being *F* make it reasonable that they could be something other than *O*?

•**Opponent:** How do you reach the necessity of *B*s being *O* so easily? Why is the possibility that *B*s are *F* being ignored?

•**Opponent:** I do not agree that *B*s are *O*. Some philosophers who have expressed opinions on this matter state that *B*s are *F*. Why shouldn't this view be valid here?

Subjective justification is neither necessary nor sufficient

for objective justification (Kvanvig, 1984, p. 71). Therefore, if an objective logical-epistemic relationship—such as correction, confirmation, or sufficient reason—can be established between the expression of doubt and the justification put forward by the opponent as support and basis, the opponent may still be justified. However, if the justification presented as support has no objective-logical relationship, as is the case in rhetoric or fallacy, there is no possibility of the opponent being justified. Hence, in the first scenario, the proponent can justify their own premise by objectively showing that the opponent could be justified and then refuting this objective justification. In other words, even if the opponent is unaware of it, the proponent can demonstrate that the opponent's support and basis contain objective justifications, but that these objective justifications do not ultimately justify the opponent. Thus, the proponent can prove their own premise by refuting the objective justification that the opposing party unwittingly expressed for their doubt.

Is it sufficient for a mere objective-logical relationship to be established between the justification and the expression of doubt for the proponent to prove their own premise by refuting the justification of the expression of doubt? In other words, is it enough for the proponent to show that the opponent's support-basis justification is actually an objective justification and then refute it to prove their own premise? To answer this question in the language of logic, proving a proposition by refuting another can only be based on the principle of non-contradiction. In other words, if the proponent wishes to prove their premise by refuting the justification of the expression of doubt, they must first prove that the justification of the expression of doubt is the contradiction of the premise or an equivalent proposition to it. Here, the proponent actually proves their own premise by demonstrating with evidence that the justification put forward by the opponent as support and basis is a justification that could be advanced at the level of a sufficient reason—which is the contradictory of their own premise—but that this justification is false. However, the proponent does this only after proving their own premise with an independent argument. If the proponent cannot prove that the justification is the contradictory of the premise or equivalent to it, they merely prove their premise with an independent argument. Let us illustrate this with an example.

Proponent: *You have claimed that the premise is doubtful. However, it is impossible for Bs not to be O. For every B is Z, and Zs are O. Therefore, Bs are O (Proof of the Premise). Furthermore, you think that Bs cannot be O. To support this, you take as your support and basis that Bs are actually F and that those which are F can never be O. Indeed, we know that in many cases, when Bs occur together with condition D, F is a sufficient reason for Bs. That is, if F is the sole sufficient reason for Bs, then Bs occur together with condition D (Demonstrating that the Support/Basis can be a Sufficient Reason). In this case, either O or F is correct as the sole sufficient reason for Bs. This is because the same subject, namely B, cannot have two different sole sufficient reasons. Therefore, B being O and B being F are contradictory. However, Bs do not occur with condition D, because there is a situation such as G (preventer) that prevents condition D. For this reason, F cannot be a sufficient reason for Bs (Refutation of the Possible Contradictory Sufficient Reason). That is, the claim that Bs are F is false. Consequently, the contradictory of this claim, which is my proposed premise that Bs are O, is true (Proof of the Premise by Reductio ad Absurdum).*

In this example, the proponent first proves their premise with an argument. Secondly, they state that *B can* have another sufficient reason, such as *F,* other than *O*, as claimed by the opponent. They show that *F* being a sufficient reason for B occurs under a condition such as *D*. Then, by citing that a thing cannot have two sufficient reasons (*taʿāruḍ al-adillah*/conflict of evidence), they construct a dilemma. This also means that attributing both *O* and *F* to the same subject simultaneously would result in a contradiction. Accordingly, either *O* is the sufficient reason for *B*, or *F* is the sufficient reason. Now, it is time to demonstrate that *F* is *not* the sole sufficient reason. They base this on the fact that *B* cannot have condition *D* due to *G*. *F* being a sufficient reason for *B* depends on condition *D* occurring for *B*. However, *G* prevents condition *D* from occurring in *B*. Therefore, *F* cannot be the sole sufficient reason for *B*. Since one side of the dilemma—namely *F*—has been negated, only *O* remains as the sole sufficient reason for *B*. Thus, the proponent has proven their premise.

According to the second scenario, the proponent does not engage with the opponent's subjective state and simply proves their own premise. This is because, as mentioned earlier, subjective justification alone is neither sufficient nor necessary for objective justification. If the proponent fails to take this into account and treats subjective justification as sufficient or necessary, it will not objectively prove their premise. However, in a disputation whose goal is to reach the truth, the proponent is expected to present objective justifications regarding the premise (Ḥabūshānī, fol. 130a). In this context, let us illustrate the proponent's response to the opponent with an example within this framework.

Proponent: *You have associated Bs with F. However, there is no logical-epistemic relationship that can be shown between B and F. Indeed, associating these two concepts would lead us to absurd conclusions, such as Bs being L (Exposing the Subjective Justification). For this reason, rather*

than engaging with your justification, I will prove my premise. Now, it is impossible for Bs to be anything other than O. For every B is Z, and Zs are O. Therefore, Bs are O (Proof of the Premise).

4. The opponent's request to correct the premise and the proponent's response

In the third definition, the function of the justification is to convince the proponent of the validity of the expression of doubt by presenting epistemic or linguistic errors or shortcomings of the challenged premise as grounds. In other words, by identifying incomplete or erroneous epistemic or linguistic features of the premise, the opponent demonstrates the validity of the expression of doubt regarding the premise to the proponent. In this case, independent of their own belief, the opponent turns to objective justifications that identify the epistemic and linguistic errors or shortcomings of the premise. Therefore, justifying the expression of doubt by pointing out shortcomings or errors in the premise through correction is an objective justification.

Correction, being an objective justification, justifies the expression of doubt probabilistically and inductively. Correction indicates probability because the probability of believing a proposition that is linguistically or epistemically corrected is higher than believing its previous form. However, merely correcting the errors and shortcomings in the premise does not provide positive evidence or a sufficient reason for the expression of doubt; it merely reduces the negative burden of the proposition. For this reason, although correction offers objective justifications independent of the opponent's belief, its epistemic strength is low. Thus, the opponent demands that the proponent correct the errors of their premise by pointing them out. However, to confirm the expression of doubt, the opponent does not provide evidence or a logically guaranteeing sole sufficient reason by pointing out the error of the premise. Accordingly, the assertion that the justification—which states that the premise must be corrected, i.e., reconstructed according to appropriate conditions that enable it to be true—demonstrates that the expression of doubt is possible, is solely to show that the expression of doubt is possible by voicing the errors of the premise without an absolute verifier (Frank, 1978, p. 44; Nasr & Aminrazavi, 2014, pp. 484, 486; Walton, 2013, p. 224). Let us consider an example.

Opponent: *I do not agree that Bs are O (Expression of Doubt). For the conditions under which Bs can be O have been left open. If your premise had been constructed to include condition D, it could have been acceptable (Correction).*

Here, the opponent believes that it is unacceptable for *B*s to be *O*. To justify this belief, the opponent presents *D*, which they consider to have a corrective function, as a justification. This situation constitutes a subjective justification for the opponent. In this case, according to the opponent, the proponent failed to state in the premise that *B* must possess condition *D* to be *O*, which is a shortcoming in the premise. However, the opponent does not put forward *D* as a justification merely because they believe there is a deficiency or error in the premise. Furthermore, alongside their subjective justification, the opponent presents an objective justification by demonstrating the logical/epistemic relationship of *D*, which is a condition for *B* to be *O*. Therefore, the correction justification of the expression of doubt is the demonstration of the error or deficiency of the premise, independent of the opponent's belief in it. Accordingly, the proposed correction justification objectively points out an error but does not provide evidence and does not guarantee the expression of doubt. Moreover, while justifying their doubt regarding the premise with correction, the opponent can use the following phrasing patterns:

Phrasing patterns for correction

•**Opponent:** It seems difficult to accept this premise in its current form. This is because there is a deficiency in the premise regarding its condition. For the proposition to be acceptable, it should have been expressed as "Bs are Os subject to condition D."

•**Opponent:** The premise you put forward does not seem convincing in its current form. Because the circumstances under which Bs are Os have been left open. If the premise had been constructed to include condition D, it could have been acceptable.

•**Opponent:** This premise is incomplete in its current state. Indeed, it contains a significant deficiency regarding the extension of the judgment. For the proposition to be true, the quantitative element in the premise must be explicitly specified as D.

•**Opponent:** The current form of your premise harbors some issues. In particular, the sample point implied by the generalization has not been clarified. If the premise had been structured such that the generalization is contained within a sample like D, its acceptance might have been possible.

•**Opponent:** It seems impossible to accept your premise in this form. Because it is assumed that B can only be explained by O. However, other possibilities, such as D, have not been eliminated.

•**Opponent:** I do not accept the premise that Bs are Os. Because the term O used in the premise is vague and does not convey a precise meaning. Therefore, the premise is not clear in this state. If Os had been explained/defined by D,

your premise could have been acceptable.

•**Opponent:** I do not accept the premise that Bs are Os. For it is asserted in the premise that it is impossible for Bs to be separate from O. However, no principle demonstrating this necessity has been put forward. If the assertion that Bs are Os had been demonstrated by a principle like D, your premise could have been acceptable.

The proponent can eliminate the opponent's doubt regarding the premise by proving the premise. They can prove the premise either by an argument or by refuting the correction. The proponent answering the doubt merely by proving the premise means that they do not engage with the justification of the doubt. Their lack of engagement with the justification of the doubt concerns both the subjective and objective aspects of this justification. Sometimes the opponent may believe that the justification they put forward for their doubt regarding the premise has a corrective function. However, the objective state of the justification put forward by the opponent may not coincide with this subjective justification. In fact, although they believe they have put forward a correction justification, an objective relationship of correction cannot be established between this justification and the expression of doubt. Consequently, while a correction justification exists subjectively, objectively no such justification is present. In this case, without engaging with the justification of the expression of doubt, the proponent merely proves the premise with an argument.

Proponent: *You put forward condition D as a necessary element for the premise. This implicitly means that you accept the claim that Os are Ds (Statement of Condition). However, cases are possible where B is O despite the absence of D (Counter-example). This demonstrates that D is not a necessary condition. Furthermore, no necessary relationship has been established in your justification between D and B being O. Therefore, D lacks any logical link to the premise. Moreover, no justification has been presented to ground this necessity. Since no logical relationship can be established, your objection of an incomplete condition based on D is invalid (Non-Objective Support). Since you have not presented an objective justification equivalent to the contradictory of the premise, I will not use your justification to prove the premise. Instead, I will prove the premise with a sound argument. In this framework, every B is K, every K is O, and therefore, every B is O (Proof of the Premise by an Argument).*

On the other hand, correction can be an objective justification independent of the opponent's belief that the justification is a correction. In this case, the proponent can still answer the doubt by merely proving the premise with an argument, without engaging with this justification. This is because a correction justification, even if it objectively strengthens the expression of doubt, is not a justification that guarantees it or is completely equivalent to it. In other words, a correction justification cannot deductively guarantee the truth of the expression of doubt. It aims to show that believing in the truth of the expression of doubt is inductively reasonable. Therefore, objectively, correcting a premise is not the sole sufficient reason. For this reason, correction cannot objectively be equivalent to the contradictory of the premise. Within this framework, the proponent answers the opponent's doubt by merely proving the premise with an argument.

Proponent: *You put forward condition D as an element that must be expressed for B to be O. This implicitly means that you accept the claim that Os are Ds (Statement of Condition). Yes, I accept that D is a condition for B to be O. However, let us not forget that D here is not an intrinsic condition, but an extrinsic one. That is, we must understand that D is not a necessary condition, but a sufficient one for B to be O. For we know that, albeit in exceptional cases, Bs can be Os without the condition D. Therefore, I accept that D is not an essential condition, but a temporal condition for Bs to be Os (Objective Correction). Since your correction objection is not a necessary condition for the premise, it is not equivalent to the contradictory of the premise. In this case, its refutation does not prove the premise. Therefore, because you have not presented a justification equivalent to the contradictory of the premise, I will not use your justification to prove the premise. Instead, I will prove the premise with a sound argument. In this framework, every B is K, every K is O, and therefore, every B is O (Proof of the Premise by an Argument).*

The justification that the opponent subjectively believes will correct the premise may, in fact, objectively be the sole sufficient reason that can be treated as a necessary condition. In this case, the proponent first proves their premise with an argument. Second, they demonstrate that the justification put forward by the opponent for correction is actually the sole sufficient reason, thereby showing that it is equivalent to the contradictory of their premise. Subsequently, the proponent refutes this justification, which is equivalent to the contradictory of the premise, thereby proving their premise a second time through *reductio ad absurdum*.

Proponent: *You have claimed that the premise is doubtful. However, it is impossible for Bs not to be O. For every B is Z, and Zs are O. Therefore, Bs are O (Proof of the Premise). Nonetheless, you think that Bs cannot be O. To support this, you stated that B being O cannot be put forward independently of a condition like D. In fact, we can even say that under condition T, Bs cannot be independent of condition D, and therefore D is the sole sufficient reason for B. That is, if D is the sole sufficient reason for Bs, then Bs occur*

together with condition D (Demonstrating that the Correction can be a Sole Sufficient Reason). In this case, either O or D is correct as the sole sufficient reason for Bs. This is because the same subject, namely B, cannot have two different sole sufficient reasons. Therefore, B being O and B being D are contradictory. However, Bs do not occur together with condition D, because there is a situation such as G that prevents condition D. For this reason, D cannot be a sufficient reason for Bs (Refutation of the Possible Contradictory Sufficient Reason). That is, the claim that Bs are D is false. Consequently, the contradictory of this claim, which is my proposed premise that Bs are O, is true (Proof of the Premise).

5. The opponent's confirmation of the expression of doubt and the proponent's response

In the fourth definition, the function of the justification is to confirm the opponent's belief in the truth of their expression of doubt with evidence, and to convince the proponent that their premise is open to doubt with evidence. In this case, the opponent shows an error by presenting evidence. However, evidence is not a sufficient reason that logically guarantees the expression of doubt. Accordingly, confirming the expression of doubt with evidence is solely to put forward a case as *evidence* through an inductive argument, without being cast in a deductive argument form and without an absolute verifier, in order to show that believing the expression of doubt is more reasonable than not believing it (Brody, 1968, pp. 297-299; Crupi, 2025; Yılmaz, 2019, p. 34).

Opponent: *I do not agree that Bs are O (Expression of Doubt). For how can I accept that Bs are O when there are findings of P showing that Bs are not O (Confirmation)?*

The opponent justifies their expression of doubt by presenting evidence identified through scientific studies. However, although this confirming justification strengthens the premise by exposing its error and presenting evidence, it does not deductively guarantee the truth of the expression of doubt. Furthermore, while justifying the expression of doubt by confirming it with evidence, the opponent can use the following phrasing patterns:

Phrasing patterns for confirmation

•**Opponent:** I do not agree that *B*s are *O*. Since evidence *P* showing that *B*s are not *O* has been encountered, how can we accept this premise?

•**Opponent:** I do not agree that *B*s are *O*. Since evidence *P* showing that *B*s are not *O* has been encountered, how can this premise be acceptable in the face of this evidence?

•**Opponent:** I do not agree that *B*s are *O*. Since examples of *P* showing that *B*s are not *O* have been encountered, how can we claim that this premise is true in the presence of these examples?

•**Opponent:** I do not agree that *B*s are *O*. Since findings of *P* showing that *B*s are not *O* have been encountered, shouldn't we accept, in light of these findings, that this premise is open to debate?

•**Opponent:** I do not agree that *B*s are *O*. Since evidence *P* showing that *B*s are not *O* has been encountered, is this premise really so robust when we take this evidence into consideration?

The proponent can answer the opponent's doubt regarding the premise by proving the premise. They can prove the premise either by an argument alone or by presenting an argument and refuting the confirmation justification, which they demonstrate can be equivalent to the contradictory of the premise. The proponent answering the doubt merely by proving the premise means that they do not engage with the confirmation justification of the doubt. Their lack of engagement with this justification of the doubt concerns both the subjective and objective aspects of this justification. Within this framework, the proponent merely proves their premise with an argument in two ways.

In the first scenario, the opponent may sometimes believe that the justification they put forward for their doubt regarding the premise has a confirmation function. However, the objective state of the justification put forward by the opponent may not coincide with this subjective justification. In fact, although they may sometimes believe they have put forward a confirmation justification, an objective and logical confirmation relationship may not exist between this justification and the expression of doubt. Consequently, while a confirmation justification exists subjectively, objectively no such justification is present. In this case, without engaging with the justification of the expression of doubt, the proponent merely proves the premise with an argument.

Proponent: *You put forward examples of P as evidence that Bs cannot be O (Statement of Evidence). However, cases have been observed where Bs are O despite being accompanied by examples of P (Counter-example). This demonstrates that P is not evidence for the expression of doubt. Furthermore, no necessary relationship has been established in your justification indicating that the evidence P prevents Bs from being O. Because if a state of affairs can coexist with two contradictory propositions, no logical relationship can be established between this state of affairs and those propositions. Therefore, examples of P also lack any logical link to the premise. Moreover, no justification has been presented to ground this necessity. Since a logical relationship*

cannot be established, your objection that Bs cannot be O based on examples of P is invalid (Non-Objective / Subjective Confirmation). Since you have not presented an objective justification that has the potential to be equivalent to the contradictory of the premise, I will not use your justification to prove the premise. Instead, I will prove the premise with a sound argument. In this framework, every B is K, every K is O, and therefore, every B is O (Proof of the Premise by an Argument).

In the second scenario, the opponent believes that the justification they put forward for the expression of doubt is confirmation, and this justification may indeed be an objective justification, independent of the opponent's belief. However, does having an actual confirmation justification before them require the proponent to engage with it in order to prove their premise? No; in this scenario, as in the first, the proponent answers the doubt by merely proving the premise with an argument, without engaging with this justification. This is because an objective confirmation justification, even if it inductively strengthens the expression of doubt, is not a justification that deductively guarantees it or is completely equivalent to it. In other words, the confirmation justification cannot deductively guarantee the truth of the expression of doubt. It aims to show that believing in the truth of the expression of doubt is inductively reasonable. Therefore, objectively, confirming a premise is not the sole sufficient reason. For this reason, no evidence can objectively be equivalent to the contradictory of the premise. In other words, the opponent proving the truth of the expression of doubt—which is the contradictory of the premise—with inductive evidence that confirms it, does not demonstrate that the premise is false. Within this framework, the proponent first states that the confirmation justification does not refute their premise, and then answers the opponent's doubt by merely proving the premise with an argument.

Proponent: *You put forward examples of P as evidence that Bs cannot be O (Statement of Evidence). Yes, I accept that examples of P open the claim that Bs are O to debate and create doubt in this direction (Objective Confirmation). However, it is not possible to say that these findings necessarily entail the conclusion that Bs are not O. For the findings of P depend on specific experimental conditions and do not cover all cases of B. These findings are also open to situations that can be explained differently, rather than showing that Bs are incompatible with O. Consequently, neither a necessary nor a generalizable relationship has been established between P and the conclusion "B is not O." Therefore, P confirms the doubt. But it is not a justification that logically guarantees it. In other words, it does not necessarily follow from P that Bs are not O. Consequently, the contradictory of the premise is not grounded with an epistemic strength equivalent to the premise, and is therefore insufficient to refute my premise. For this reason, I will ground my premise not based on P, but with an independent argument that establishes a necessary relationship. In this framework, every B is K, every K is O, and therefore, every B is O (Proof of the Premise by an Argument).*

In the case where the proponent proves the premise both by an argument and by refuting the confirmation justification—which they show can be equivalent to the contradictory of this premise—the justification that the opponent subjectively believes will confirm the premise must actually have the potential to objectively be the sole sufficient reason. In this scenario, the proponent first proves their premise with an argument. Second, they demonstrate that the justification put forward by the opponent for confirmation can actually be the sole sufficient reason, thereby showing that it can be equivalent to the contradictory of the premise. Subsequently, the proponent refutes this justification, which can be equivalent to the contradictory of the premise, thereby proving their premise a second time through *reductio ad absurdum*.

Proponent: *You have claimed that the premise is doubtful. However, it is impossible for Bs not to be O. For every B is Z, and Zs are O. Therefore, Bs are O (Proof of the Premise by an Argument). Nonetheless, you think that Bs cannot be O. To support this, you stated that B being O cannot be put forward in the face of evidence P. In fact, we can even say that under condition T, Bs cannot be independent of the observed state P, and therefore P is the sole sufficient reason for B under condition T. That is, if P is the sole sufficient reason for Bs, then Bs occur together with state P (Demonstrating that the Confirmation can be a Sole Sufficient Reason). In this case, either O or P is correct as the sole sufficient reason for Bs. This is because the same subject, namely B, cannot have two different sole sufficient reasons. Therefore, B being O and B being P are contradictory. However, Bs do not occur together with state P, because there is a situation such as G that prevents the evidence P. For this reason, P cannot be a sufficient reason for Bs (Refutation of the Possible Contradictory Sufficient Reason). That is, the claim that Bs are P is false. Consequently, the contradictory of this claim, which is my proposed premise that Bs are O, is true (Proof of the Premise by Reductio ad Absurdum).*

6. The opponent's presentation of a sole sufficient reason for the expression of doubt and the proponent's response

In the fifth definition, the function of the justification is to prove the opponent's expression of doubt with the sole sufficient reason that logically entails/guarantees it. Accordingly, the justification put forward for the expression of doubt being the sole sufficient reason means, if and only

if, the sufficient reason guarantees the expression of doubt as its absolute verifier (Brennan, 2024, pp. 2, 4; Young, 2022, p. 102).

Opponent: *I do not agree that Bs are O (Expression of Doubt). For everything that is O must necessarily be N. However, you also know that Bs, by their very nature, are not N. In this case, how can Bs be O (Sole Sufficient Reason)?*

The expression of doubt in this example is justified by the sole sufficient reason. Within this framework, the opponent has put forward an argument that deductively guarantees the expression of doubt regarding the premise. When the opponent justifies the expression of doubt with such a deductive argument, they believe that they have simultaneously pointed out the error of the premise, confirmed the expression of doubt, and guaranteed it. To express this type of justification, the following phrasing patterns can be used:

Phrasing patterns for sole sufficient reason

•**Opponent:** I do not agree that *B*s are *O*. For everything that is *O* must necessarily be *N*. However, you also know that *B*s, by their very nature, are not *N*. In this case, how can *B*s be *O*?

•**Opponent:** I do not agree that *B*s are *O*. Is it not the case that everything that is *O* is *N*? But it is intellectually evident that *B*, by its very nature, is not necessarily *N*. Therefore, the claim that *B* is *O* is invalid.

•**Opponent:** I do not agree that *B*s are *O*. A thing is either *N* or it cannot be *O*. *B* is not *N*. Thus, the claim that *B* is *O* is unsustainable.

•**Opponent:** I do not agree that *B*s are *O*. It appears you have expressed in your previous works that everything that is *O* is, by its very nature, necessarily *N*. Despite this, how can *B*, which is not *N*, be *O*?

•**Opponent:** I do not agree that *B*s are *O*. You will either accept that *N*s are *O* or you will accept that *B*s are *O*. Since you know that *N*s are, by their nature, necessarily *O*, you cannot accept that *B*s are *O*. Therefore, you must accept that *N*s are *O*.

•**Opponent:** I do not agree that *B*s are *O*. If you defend that *B*s are *O*s, then you defend that anything can be *O* without being *N*. However, we clearly know that *N*s are, by their nature, necessarily *O*. Therefore, you cannot defend that *B*s are *O*.

The proponent can respond to this doubt justified by the sole sufficient reason either by proving the premise, or by accepting the sole sufficient reason justifying the expression of doubt and changing the argument of their claim (*taġyīru'l-ille*/*tagyīru'l-ʿillah*). They can prove the premise either by merely using an argument, or by both using an argument and refuting the sole sufficient reason justification, which they show is *not* equivalent to the contradictory of the premise but is actually one of support, correction, or confirmation.

When the proponent responds to the doubt by merely proving the premise with an argument, it implies that they do not engage with the sufficient reason justification of the doubt. Their lack of engagement with this justification concerns both the subjective and objective aspects of this justification. Within this framework, the opponent may sometimes believe that the justification they present for their doubt regarding the premise has the function of a sole sufficient reason. However, the objective state of the justification put forward by the opponent may not coincide with this subjective justification. In fact, in such cases, although they believe they have put forward a sole sufficient reason justification, there is no objective and logical relationship between this justification and the expression of doubt. Consequently, while a sole sufficient reason justification exists subjectively, objectively, no such justification that confirms the expression of doubt in any way is present. In this case, without engaging with the justification put forward for the expression of doubt, the proponent merely proves the premise with an argument.

Proponent: *You put forward N as the sole sufficient reason why Bs cannot be O (Sole Sufficient Reason Statement). However, cases have been observed where Bs are O despite not being N (Counter-example). This demonstrates that N is not the sole sufficient reason for the expression of doubt. Furthermore, no necessary relationship has been established in your justification indicating that lacking the cause N prevents Bs from being O. Because if a concept like B can coexist with two contradictory propositions, this shows that a logical relationship cannot be established between this concept and those propositions. Therefore, the cause N also lacks any logical link to the premise. Moreover, no justification has been presented to ground this necessity. Since a logical relationship cannot be established, your objection that Bs cannot be O based on the cause N is invalid (Non-Objective / Subjective Sole Sufficient Reason). Since you have not presented an objective justification that has the potential to be equivalent to the contradictory of the premise, I will not use your justification to prove the premise. Instead, I will prove the premise with a sound argument. In this framework, every B is K, every K is O, and therefore, every B is O (Proof of the Premise by an Argument).*

The opponent believes that the justification they put forward for the expression of doubt is the sole sufficient reason, and this justification may indeed be an objective justification, independent of the opponent's belief. However, does having an actual justification before them

require the proponent to engage with it in order to prove their premise? No; in this scenario, as in the first, the proponent answers the doubt by merely proving the premise with an argument, without engaging with this justification. This is because the opponent presenting an objective justification which they believe to be the sole sufficient reason does not necessarily require this justification to actually be the sole sufficient reason. Accordingly, the opponent may believe that the justification presents a sole sufficient reason, but this justification may objectively be one of the correction or confirmation justifications.

In this case, the proponent demonstrates that the proposed justification is not objectively a sole sufficient reason, but rather a correction or confirmation. They state that even if this justification inductively strengthens the expression of doubt, it is not a justification that deductively guarantees it or is completely equivalent to it. In other words, this justification cannot deductively guarantee the truth of the expression of doubt. It aims to show that believing in the truth of the expression of doubt is inductively reasonable. Therefore, objectively, justifying a premise in this manner is not the sole sufficient reason. For this reason, this justification cannot objectively be equivalent to the contradictory of the premise. In other words, the opponent proving the truth of the expression of doubt—which is the contradictory of the premise—with an inductive justification does not demonstrate that the premise is false. Within this framework, the proponent demonstrates that the presented justification is not objectively the sole sufficient reason but is rather a correction or confirmation, and then answers the opponent's doubt by merely proving the premise with an argument.

Proponent: *You put forward N as the sole sufficient reason why Bs cannot be O (Sole Sufficient Reason Statement). Yes, cases have been observed where Bs are O while possessing N (Counter-example). The reason these cases are observed is that Bs coexist with Os under condition C. For when Bs are O subject to condition C, they coexist with N. This reveals the logical necessity of Bs coexisting with N in some specific instances where B is O. However, it is clear that this situation cannot be generalized to all cases where Bs are O. Therefore, you are presenting evidence that confirms your expression of doubt. In this case, the evidence you present is not equivalent to the contradictory of my premise (Objective Justification That Is Not a Sole Sufficient Reason). Within this framework, since you have not presented an objective justification that has the potential to be equivalent to the contradictory of the premise, I will not use your justification to prove the premise. Instead, I will prove the premise with a sound argument. In this framework, every B is K, every K is O, and therefore, every B is O (Proof of the Premise by an Argument).*

The proponent can respond to the opponent by accepting the sole sufficient reason that justifies the expression of doubt and changing the argument of their claim (*taġyīr al-ʿilla*). In other words, the opponent believes that they have presented a sole sufficient reason to justify the expression of doubt, and objectively, the presented justification is indeed a sufficient reason. In this case, the proponent accepts that the premise they put forward to prove their claim is false. But does this falsehood require the proponent to be defeated in the disputation and the disputation to end? No, it does not.

This can be explained in two ways. First, regardless of its justification, the expressed doubt does not possess refutative force. Therefore, the proponent either proves their premise or finds an opportunity to renew their evidence, depending on the justification of the opponent's doubt. Second, the proposition that the proponent is obliged to defend without change in the disputation is the claim. Accordingly, the disputation does not end unless the opponent refutes the proponent's claim, or the proponent abandons their claim. Within this framework, the proponent first demonstrates that the opponent is justified in their objection, and then renews their argument.

Proponent: *You put forward N as the sole sufficient reason why Bs cannot be O. In fact, you present an argument such as: Ns are O, and Bs are not N; in this case, Bs are not O (Sole Sufficient Reason Statement). Yes, I accept that my premise asserting that Bs are O is false, and indeed, that Ns are O, which is the sole sufficient reason in your justification, is true (Acceptance Statement). However, my acceptance of this and the fact that my premise is false does not require me to abandon my claim, as it does not refute the truth of the core disputation topic, which is that Js are O. This justified objection of yours merely requires me to renew my evidence (Transition to a New Argument). Accordingly, every J is O (Claim). Because (i) every J is N, (ii) every N is O. Therefore, every J is O (New Argument).*

7. Conclusion

Our ideas can be criticized through the premises we put forward to justify them. In this case, attention must be paid to the epistemic level of the criticism. If the critic merely holds a subjective epistemic stance and what they put forward cannot be evaluated objectively, there is no need to engage with this criticism. For the critic lacks the justifications to bring their objection to an objective ground. In this scenario, the proponent may content themselves with merely proving their premise objectively. Nonetheless, if the critic possesses a subjective epistemic stance but what they put forward has the potential to be evaluated objectively, the

epistemic level of the criticism must first be determined.

If the criticism remains at the level of correction or confirmation, it does not possess the capacity to refute the premise. Therefore, without directly engaging with this criticism, the proponent can prove their premise with an independent argument. If the criticism carries the potential to be a sole sufficient reason but has failed to reach this level due to certain conditions and preventers, it will be sufficient for the proponent to demonstrate this situation with its reasons to prove their premise. On the other hand, the critic, despite their subjective stance, may have expressed an objective sole sufficient reason. In this case, the objection must be accepted, and the argument supporting the premise must be renewed (*taġyīr al-ʿilla*). However, this does not mean that the proponent abandons their claim. On the contrary, thanks to the criticism, they obtain the opportunity to ground their claim with a more robust argument.

It must also be kept in mind that the critic may not always act with a subjective epistemic stance. Critics such as academic peer reviewers, thesis committee members, paper discussants, and expert disputants in their respective fields are obliged to put forward objective justifications. In such contexts, it is mandatory to correctly identify the objective level of the criticism and, in any case, to engage with the critic's justifications with academic rigor. If the criticism is based on objective correction or confirmation, it is demonstrated that this justification is insufficient to refute the premise, and the premise is proven with an independent argument. If the criticism is at the level of a sole sufficient reason, the proponent either proves their premise by demonstrating that the justification is not truly a sole sufficient reason, or accepts the criticism as justified and renews their argument. In both cases, the claim is not abandoned; only the evidence supporting it is established on a more reliable foundation. This process should be regarded as a dialectical progression, and the constructive function of criticism in knowledge production must be acknowledged.

Finally, it should be noted that ABM's model of premise criticism does not merely offer a theoretical framework but also carries the potential to serve as a functional tool in various practical fields. When evaluated in terms of teaching and learning processes, this model provides educators with the opportunity to identify the epistemic level of the objections raised by their students and adopt a pedagogical stance accordingly. An objection that remains at the subjective level indicates that the student has a conceptual deficiency, whereas an objectively presented sole sufficient reason can be an indicator that the student has grasped the subject deeply and that the educator needs to reconsider their argument. From a broader perspective, it is evaluated that this model, which serves to determine the epistemic level of justifications, can function as a guiding framework in fields such as legal negotiations, academic debate environments, and institutional decision-making processes. In this regard, it is anticipated that this dimension of the ABM tradition will continue to be a productive resource for future studies in the fields of applied epistemology and argumentation education.

Acknowledgments

None.

Funding

None.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interests.

Author contributions

This is a single-authored article.

Ethics approval and consent to participate

Not applicable.

Consent for publication

Not applicable.

Availability of data

No datasets were generated or analyzed during the current study.

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