NRW-FORTSCHRITTSKOLLEG
ONLINE-PARTIZIPATION

Fachhochschule
für öffentliche Verwaltung
NRW

HEINRICH HEINE
UNIVERSITÄT DÜSSELDORF

Deliberation durch Argumente, Narrationen, Emotionen und Humor

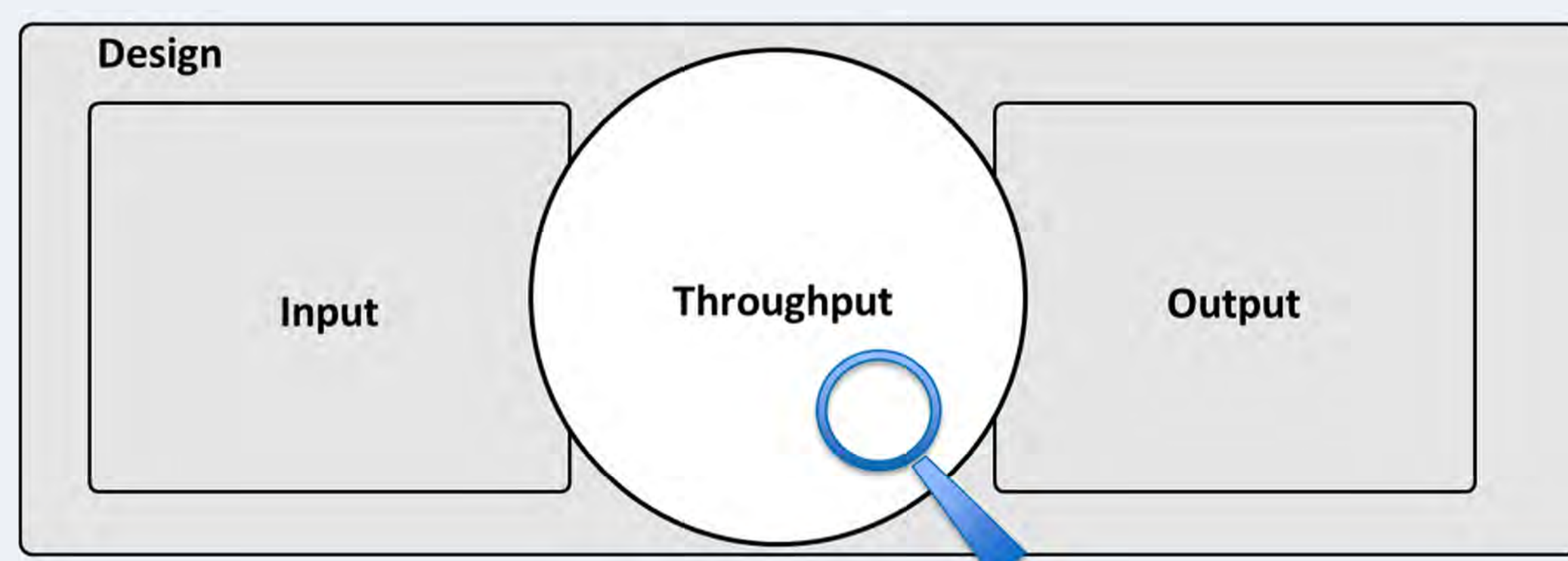## Katharina Esau • Kommunikationswissenschaft • Institut für Sozialwissenschaften

Hintergrund und Forschungsfragen

It is highly controversial which communication processes and forms of communication exactly are needed to achieve outcomes like e. g. impartiality, consensus, increase of knowledge, and legitimate political decisions. This appears particularly relevant with regard to the internet providing new public spaces for political communication and new forms of citizen participation. Different models of democracy are associated with different requirements on communication processes (Freelon 2010). However, the theory of deliberative democracy and the concept of democratic deliberation as a demanding form of communication play an outstanding role in the field of political communication research (Coleman et al. 2015). Against this backdrop, calls for more inclusive deliberation processes have initiated first starting points in the theoretical examination (e. g., Basu 1999; Dryzek 2000; Young 2000; Hoggett & Thompson 2002; O'Neill 2002; Krause 2008; Bickford 2011) and empirical research (e. g., Graham 2010; Roald & Sangolt 2011; Steiner et al. 2017) on different forms of communication such as narrative communication or storytelling, different kinds of expressions of emotions and humorous communication. Ryfe (2002) labels these forms of communication as the *relational mode of deliberation* (Ryfe 2002: 360). Bächtiger et al. (2010) discuss in this context the so-called *Type II deliberation*. In this light, the PhD project aims to answer the question how different forms of communication – argumentation and alternative forms of communication – affect the course of online discussions that can be found in top-down invited online mini publics:
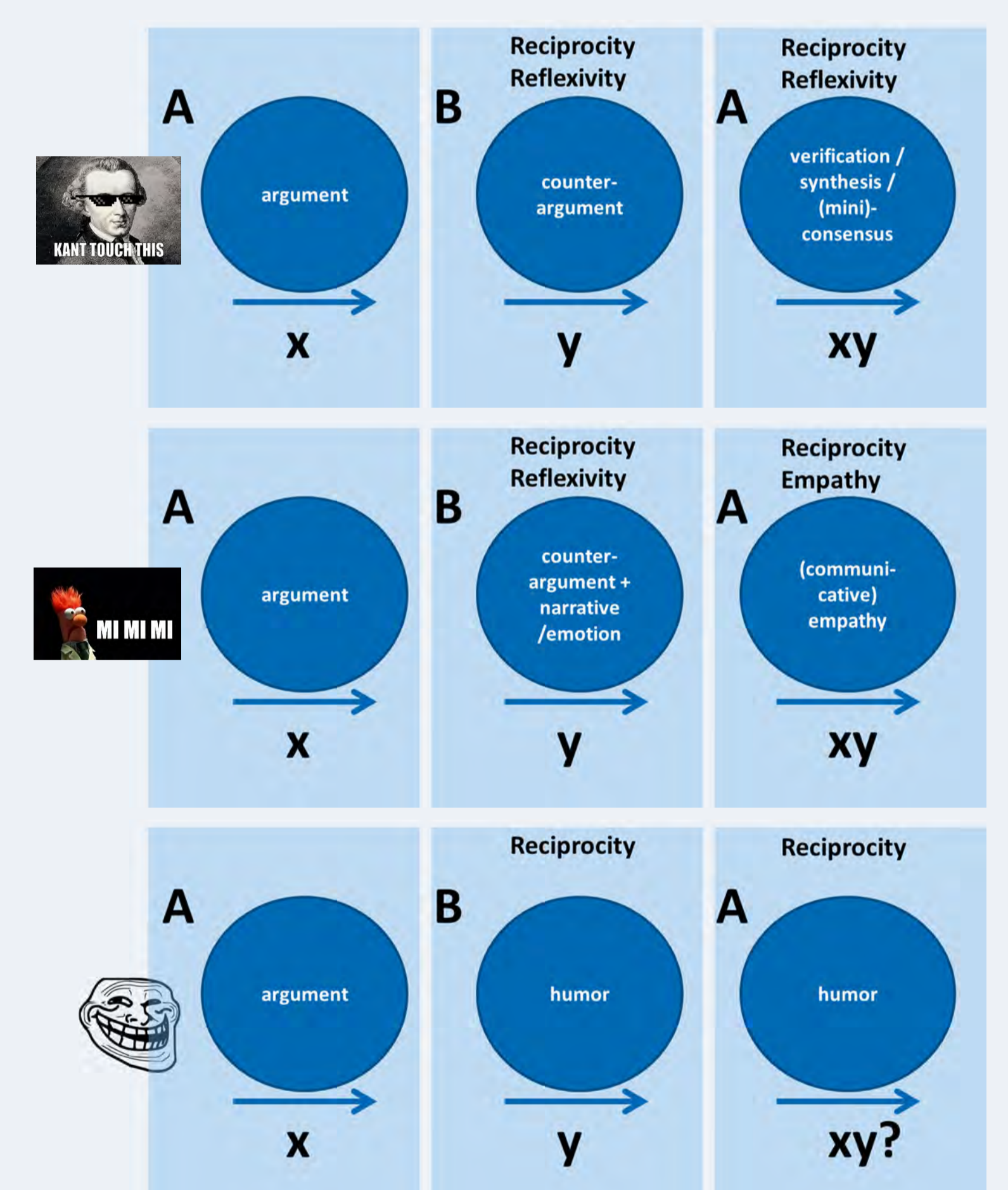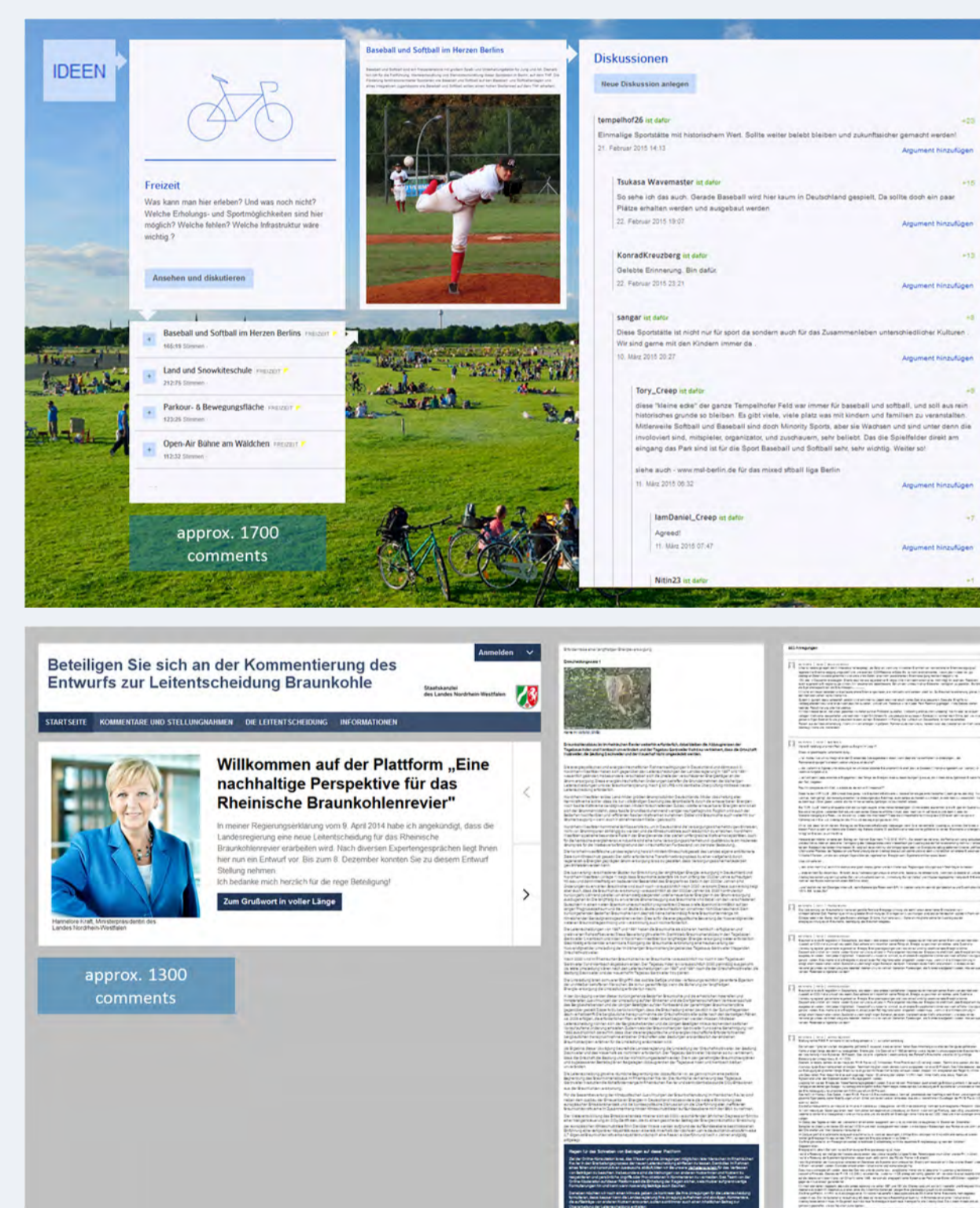
- *Under which conditions, to what extent, and in what forms are arguments, narratives, emotions and humor present in citizen-to-citizen discussions in the context of online participation on the local level of politics?*

- *How do the different forms of communication influence the following interaction sequences and with these, the further course of discussion?*

Forschungsdesign und Ergebnisse

The basic assumption is that emotional and expressive forms of communication and personal experiences play a vital role in public citizen-to-citizen communication. Thereby they fulfill discursive and coordinative functions which need to be examined more closely, especially in relation to the three levels of achieving mutual understanding: reciprocity, reflexivity and empathy (Graham 2008, 2010).
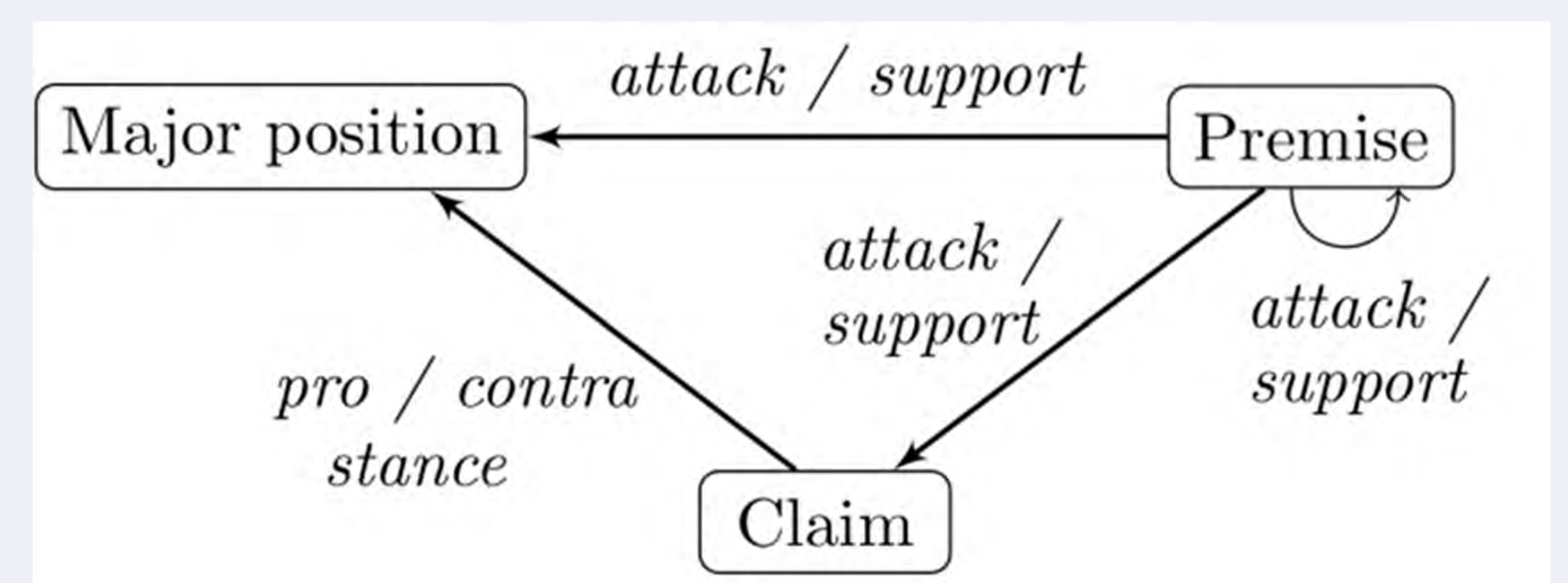

- K. Esau, D. Frieß, C. Eilders (2017). Design Matters! An Empirical Analysis of Online Deliberation on Different News Platforms, *Policy & Internet*, 9(3), 321–342.

Interdisziplinäre Projekte

Interdisciplinary research with Matthias Liebeck (Computer Science): combining techniques and experience from both fields for the analysis of argumentative structures and the detection of emotions in online discussions.

- M. Liebeck, K. Esau, S. Conrad (2016). What to Do with an Airport? Mining Arguments in the German Online Participation Project Tempelhofer Feld, *Proceedings of the 3rd Workshop on Argument Mining*, ACL 2016, Berlin, 7.-12. August, 144–153.

- M. Liebeck, K. Esau, S. Conrad (2017). Text Mining für Online-Partizipationsverfahren: Die Notwendigkeit einer maschinell unterstützten Auswertung. *HMD Praxis der Wirtschaftsinformatik, Online Participation*, 54(4), 544–562.

Betreuungsteam

- Prof. Dr. Christiane Eilders (Kommunikationswissenschaft, Düsseldorf)
- Prof. Dr. Christoph Neuberger (Kommunikationswissenschaft, München)
- Jun.-Prof. Dr. Ulf Tranow (Soziologie, Düsseldorf)
- Dr. Oliver Märker (Zebralog GmbH & Co. KG)