

Argumentation and discourse / *Argumentação e discurso*

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ABSTRACT

After demonstrating that studies of argumentation, which spread throughout modern linguistics from Ducrot and Anscombe's pragmatics, do not align with discourse studies because, for these authors, argumentation is a fact of *langue* and not a discursive fact, this text¹ aims to show how discursive theories can work with the issue of argumentation. They cannot be restricted to linguistic microanalysis as adopted by integrated pragmatics, although eventually they can make use of it. They should revisit the classical tradition. If, on the one hand, the rhetoric studied the discursive construction of arguments and on the other studied the antiphonic dimension of discourses, the discursive theories should inherit from the rhetoric work; that is, they should read it in the light of the theoretical issues expressed today. To inherit from rhetoric work means, therefore, taking into account centuries of previous studies, to describe according to current discursive studies the discursive mechanisms which enable the speaker to produce meaning effects that make the audience believe what is said; it also means to analyze the actual operational mode of argumentation, i.e., the dialogism in argumentation.

KEYWORDS: Discursivization; Dialogism; Argumentative mechanisms

RESUMO

Depois de mostrar que os estudos de argumentação que se difundiram na linguística moderna a partir da pragmática de Ducrot e Anscombe não se integram nos estudos de discurso, pois a argumentação nesses autores é um fato de língua e não de discurso, este texto pretende mostrar como podem as teorias do discurso trabalhar com a questão da argumentação. Elas não se podem limitar à microanálise linguística proposta pela pragmática integrada, embora, eventualmente, possam servir-se dela. Elas devem visitar a tradição clássica. Se a retórica estudou, de um lado, a construção discursiva dos argumentos e, de outro, a dimensão antifônica dos discursos, as teorias do discurso devem herdar a retórica, ou seja, lê-la à luz dos problemas teóricos enunciados na atualidade. Herdar a retórica significa, pois, de uma parte, levando em consideração séculos de estudos já realizados, descrever, com as bases dos estudos discursivos atuais, os procedimentos discursivos que possibilitam ao enunciador produzir efeitos de sentido que permitem fazer o enunciatário crer naquilo que foi dito; de outra, analisar o modo de funcionamento real da argumentatividade, ou seja, o dialogismo presente na argumentação.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Discursivização; Dialogismo; Procedimentos argumentativos

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¹In a new light, this text incorporates a few excerpts and examples from *Figuras de retórica* [Rhetoric Figures], published this year by Editora Contexto.

It is commonplace in current linguistics to state that argumentativity is intrinsic to human language and, for this reason, every utterance is argumentative. This viewpoint is due to Oswald Ducrot and Jean Claude Anscombe's studies, who work with rhetorical and argumentation notions. However, one should consider that the meaning of these terms as employed in those French authors' work are very different from the rhetoric tradition that dates back to Aristotle. For them, argumentation is the study of the utterance's semantic orientation and of the networks that express them.

Initially Ducrot postulates the insertion of a "rhetoric component" in the models designed to explain language in use. This module would address the meaning of an utterance in use, i.e., in a communicative situation. At the same time, a linguistic (semantic) component that would regard the *langue* signification of a certain sentence would be posited. This way, he incorporates the argumentation and the rhetorical issues in the pragmatics-semantic dimension.

A first component, that is, a set of instructions (*semantic linguist description of L*, i.e., abbreviated form of *linguistic component*) assigns to each utterance a certain signification regardless of any context. For example, to A corresponds signification A'. It falls to the second component (*rhetorical component*) to provide the effective meaning of A in a situation X taking into account both the meaning A' which is related to A and the circumstances X in which A is produced [our translation] (DUCROT, 1987, p.15).²

Thus, for example, the semantic component confers upon the utterance *It is raining too much* the signification that the meteorological phenomenon of rain in a very large amount is taking place in that particular moment. Nevertheless, this utterance could be employed in different communicative situations: By two passengers in an airport, who are waiting for a plane to take off; by a referee during a soccer match; by a mother to her son, who is getting ready for his morning jog. It is the rhetorical component that provides an actual meaning to the utterance in each of aforementioned situations, which could be paraphrased, respectively, for example, as follows: a) The

² Excerpt translated from the Portuguese version: *Um primeiro componente, isto é, um conjunto de conhecimentos (descrição semântica linguística de L ou, abreviadamente, componente linguístico) atribuiria a cada enunciado, independentemente de qualquer contexto, uma certa significação. Exemplificando: a A corresponde a significação A'. Caberia ao segundo componente (o componente retórico), considerando a significação A' ligada a A e as circunstâncias X nas quais A é produzido, prever a significação efetiva de A na situação X* (DUCROT, 1987, p.15).

plane must not take off due to the severe weather; b) I will interrupt the match because it is impossible to go ahead with it; c) I think it is better for you not to go jogging now.

A rhetorical component proposition

requires the mobilization of the enunciation circumstances to explain the concrete meaning of a specific utterance in use, only after a signification has been assigned to the utterance itself regardless of any appeal to the context [our translation] (DUCROT, 1987, p.16).³

It should be noted that the rhetoric component rules are not “linguistic” rules in the strictest sense, but they “are justifiable irrespective of its use in semantic description and they can be certified, for example, by general psychology, by logic, the literary critics, etc.” [our translation] (DUCROT, 1987, p.17).⁴

If rhetoric concerns itself with the meaning of the utterance in use, i.e., in a particular situation of enunciation, rhetoric becomes synonymous with pragmatics.

Anscombe and Ducrot started to focus on the argumentation notion. However, their concept has nothing to do with discursivization, as understood by the ancient rhetorical tradition that considered it as a discursive strategy that aimed at persuading the audience (the “enunciate” as we would say nowadays). For them, “a speaker produces an argument when he/she presents an utterance U1 (or a set of utterances) intended to *lead to accept* another (or a set of others) U2” [our translation] (1988, p.8).⁵ If every utterance is directed at a certain conclusion and this orientation is part of its meaning, argumentation is a *langue* fact and not a discursive fact. For this reason, in a second moment, an integrated pragmatics is proposed, i.e., one that is inseparable from semantics. The rhetoric component is not something that can be added to the semantic component, but it is part of this component. The authors write the following in the forewords of *L’argumentation dans la langue*: “This influence form is taken as a

³ Excerpt translated from the Portuguese version: *pressupõe que as circunstâncias de enunciação são mobilizadas para explicar o sentido real de uma ocorrência particular de um enunciado, somente depois que uma significação tenha sido atribuída ao próprio enunciado, independentemente de qualquer recurso ao contexto* (DUCROT, 1987, p.16).

⁴ Excerpt translated from the Portuguese version: *serão justificáveis, independentemente de seu emprego na descrição semântica, e poderiam ser autenticadas, por exemplo, pela psicologia geral, pela lógica, pela crítica literária, etc.*(DUCROT, 1987, p.17).

⁵ Excerpt translated from the Portuguese version: *um locutor produz uma argumentação, quando ele apresenta um enunciado E1 (ou um conjunto de enunciados) destinado a levar a admitir um outro (ou conjunto de outros) E2* (1988, p.8).

forming part, a constitutive part, of the utterance meaning which is termed argumentative force. To mean, for an utterance, is to orient” [our translation] (1998, p.5).⁶

This issue of an orientation towards a particular conclusion is thoroughly explained:

The use of an utterance has a purpose, at least as essential as reporting on the realization of its truth conditions, which is to orient the enunciatee towards certain conclusions and not to others [our translation] (ANSCOMBRE and DUCROT, 1988, p.113).⁷

So when a mother tells her son who is getting ready to go out that *The sun is too strong*, this utterance leads to conclusions such as *Do not go now, leave it for later; Take an umbrella to protect yourself*, but it does not orient to conclusions as *Do not get any protection from the sun; The weather conditions are great for walking the streets*.

These authors take the concept of *topoi* from classical rhetoric. However, the *topoi* compiled by Aristotle in *Topica*, which were part of *inventio*, keep tenuous relationship with, for example, Anscombe’s notion of it. For the Stageiran, *topos* is a kind of a model with which many arguments can be constructed. See, for example, *topoi* of quantity and of quality. In the integrated pragmatics, *topoi* are “general principles which underpin the reasoning, but are not the reasoning” [our translation, 1995, p.39].⁸ In the case of the statements *Dress warmly, because it is too cold*, the *topos* is that the cold weather is prone to catch a cold.

If, for this integrated pragmatics, argumentation is the chain of utterances that leads to a certain conclusion, its preferred domain is the study of connectors that perform this chaining. Furthermore, it studies the argumentative orientation of the

⁶ Excerpt translated from the Portuguese version: *O sentido de um enunciado comporta como parte integrante, constitutiva, essa forma de influência é que é denominada força argumentativa. Significar, para um enunciado, é orientar* (1988, p.5).

⁷ Excerpt translated from the Portuguese version: *A utilização de um enunciado tem uma finalidade, ao menos tão essencial quanto a de informar sobre a realização de suas condições de verdade, que é a de orientar o destinatário para certas conclusões e não para outras* (ANSCOMBRE e DUCROT, 1988, p.113).

⁸ Excerpt translated from the Portuguese version: *princípios gerais que servem de apoio aos raciocínios, mas não são raciocínios* (ANSCOMBRE, 1995, p.39).
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utterances and the *topoi* that underlie the chaining, which were performed on the surface by connectors.

The discourse theories, whatever they may be, cannot be limited to this linguistic microanalysis, although eventually it may serve them. Paul Ricoeur stated that text meaning is produced in the internal play of structural dependencies and in the relations with what is outside of it (1991). This means that discourse theories must take into account two aspects: On the one hand, the organization of the discursive unities and on the other hand, the actual operation mode of discourse, that is, its dialogical character. In order to do so, it is necessary to revisit the classical tradition.

Following a long tradition, Aristotle divides reasoning into necessary and preferable (2010, I, 2, 1356b-1358a; 1938b, I, 1; II, 27). The first is the one whose conclusion necessarily follows from the premises stated, i.e., if the premises are actual, the conclusion cannot be valid. Premises are propositions, ideas, from which one can reach a conclusion. The perfect type of necessary reason was, for this philosopher, the syllogism of demonstration:

Every big city faces traffic jams.
São Paulo is a big city.
Therefore, São Paulo faces traffic jams.

If it is true that every big city faces traffic jams and that São Paulo is a big city, then it cannot be untrue that São Paulo faces traffic jams. In this case, the conclusion depends on values, on worldview, on religious beliefs, on feelings, etc.

A preferable reason is the one that leads to a possible, probable, plausible conclusion, but it is not necessarily true, because the premises that support it are not logically true. The dialectical syllogism or the rhetorical syllogism is an example of this kind of reasoning.

Every teacher is dedicated.
André is a teacher.
Therefore, André is dedicated.

In this case, it is possible, probable, plausible that André is dedicated, but it is not logically true, once not every teacher is necessarily dedicated. In this case, the

assumption of certain premises and thus of particular conclusions depend on beliefs and values.

The necessary reasoning belongs to the field of logic and it serves to demonstrate certain truths. The preferable reasoning is studied by rhetoric, and it is employed to persuade someone to accept a thesis, because it is the fairest, the most suitable, the most advantageous, the most convenient and so on. In most cases, there are no logical truths in human affairs. For instance, Is abortion a right or a crime?; Is same-sex marriage a consequence of the equality of all or it is a natural law violation? None of these conclusions are logically true, because they depend on values, on beliefs, on fears and on aspirations, etc.

According to Cicero, persuasion takes place when arguments are mobilized in order to convince someone to accept a thesis, when an addressee has his/her state of spirit, passions and preconceptions, etc. touched by commotion (1942, II, 28, 121). In the referendum on banning the sale of firearms, the “Yes” campaign was mainly supported by persuasive arguments; the “No” campaign was essentially supported by touching arguments and manipulated people’s feeling of insecurity.

The arguments are reasoning addressed to persuade, i.e., to convince or to touch, both equally valid to make a certain thesis to be accepted. Rhetoric is the art of persuasion, an “art of effectively using language.” For Aristotle, rhetoric “is not simply to succeed in persuading, but rather to discover the means of coming as near such success as the circumstances of each particular case allows” (2010, I, 2, 1355b).

Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* comprises three books. This first work deals with the speaker, how he/she conceives his/her arguments and how he/she builds his/her *ethos* in the enunciation. The second analyzes the audience, how it receives arguments according to the *pathos*. The third examines the message, *logos*, how the arguments are expressed. Each one of them approaches a different kind of proof. Aristotle states:

Of the modes of persuasion furnished by the spoken word there are three kinds. The first kind depends on the personal character of the speaker; the second on putting the audience into a certain frame of mind; the third on the proof, or apparent proof, provided by the words of the speech itself (2010, I, 2, 1356a).

Old rhetoric was divided into five canons, although only the first three were objects of more accurate studies:

1. INVENTIO	Euresis	<i>invenire quid dicas</i>	finding what to say
2. DISPOSITIO	Taxis	<i>inventa disponere</i>	ordering what is found
3. ELOCUTIO	Lexis	<i>ornare verbis</i>	adding the ornament of words, of figures
4. ACTIO	Hypocrisis	<i>agere et pronuntiare</i>	performing the discourse like an actor: gestures and diction
5. MEMORIA	Mnémè	<i>memoriae mandare</i>	committing to memory

(BARTHES, 1975, p.182).⁹

If there is a clear distinction between Logic and Rhetoric, the difference between Rhetoric and Dialectics has varied throughout time. Aristotle states that Rhetoric is the counterpart of Dialectics (2010, I, 2, 1356a), since this is the logic of what is probable, i.e., the non-demonstrative reasoning (1938a, I, 1). That is why the *topoi*, i.e., commonplaces, are central to Aristotle's rhetoric: They are patterns on which the general acceptance is founded, the ground of what is probable (2010, I, 2, 1358a). As aforementioned, *topics* are part of *inventio*. Thus, one might think that dialectics is the art, which describes the employed means of demonstrating and refuting.

Rhetoric acknowledges the great importance of Rome through the works of Cicero and Quintilian, etc. In medieval times, the basis of every education is the *septennium*, preparing for theology that reigns supreme on the seven liberal arts, sum of human disinterested knowledge. These arts are divided into two groups: One studies language, the *trivium* (grammar, dialectics and rhetoric), and the other scrutinizes nature, the *quadrivium* (music, arithmetic, geometry and astronomy).¹⁰ Rhetoric is “the art of speaking well” (*ars bene dicendi*).¹¹

⁹ Barthes observes that *Inventio* is not a creative notion, but rather an extractive one. The arguments are extracted from a place (the Topic), where they already are (1975, p.52).

¹⁰ This structure is repeated and codified in the fifth and sixth centuries by Martianus Capella (a pagan African) who institutes the hierarchy of the *Septennium* in an allegory, The Marriage of Mercury and Philology (Philology here designates total knowledge): Philology, the learned virgin, is promised to Mercury; she receives, as a wedding present, the seven liberal arts, each being represented with its symbols, its costume, its language; for example, *Grammatica* is an old woman, she has lived in Attica and wears Roman garments; in a little ivory casket, she carries a knife and a file to correct the children's

Over time, many authors begin to make a distinction in what was an inseparable whole: On the one hand, there was a theory of argumentation that takes into account the canons of *inventio* and *dispositio* in which the elements are addressed to convince and persuade (*Topology*), and on the other hand, there was a theory of figures that approached the *elocutio* (*Tropology*, theory of tropes). The greek word *tropos* means “turn,” “way,” “direction.” Regarding language, one considers a “meaning change, a semantic change.” Thus we began to think of two kinds of rhetoric: The argumentation rhetoric and the tropes rhetoric. Genette demonstrates that there was a rhetoric restrain in its historical course: Firstly, it was put apart from argumentation and from composition and it became narrowed to the *elocutio* theory;¹² then, *elocutio* was reduced to tropology studies, i.e., to a theory of figures (1982, p.103-126). This gradual contraction of rhetoric’s field of competence is designated by him as “rhetoric restrained.” The French author states that a discourse theory must inherit rhetoric as a whole.

As we showed on *Figuras de retórica [Rhetoric Figures]*, “According to Cicero, on *De oratore*, there are four virtues of style (*virtutes elocutionis*): Correctness (*latinitas*), clarity (*planum*), distinction¹³ (*ornatus*) appropriateness of the discourse to circumstances (*aptum*)” (1942, III, X). Lausberg, on *Elementos de retórica literária [Elements of literary rhetoric]*, employs the Latin designation to these virtues, respectively, *puritas*, *perspicuitas*, *ornatus* and *aptum* (2004, p.119, § 102).¹⁴ The first three qualities of the style serve the fourth. They enable appropriateness. It means that a

mistakes; *Rhetorica* is a beautiful woman, her garments are embellished with all the figures, she carries the weapons intended to wound her adversaries (BARTHES, 1988, p.31-32).

¹¹ Renier observes that while rhetoric was known as *ars bene dicendi*, grammar was known as *ars recte dicendi* and dialectic as the *ars vere dicendi* (1989, p.151).

¹² Translator’s note: it is important to make clear that there is an oscillation in the translation of the term *elocutio* due to the different terms employed by the English translators of the works that are being quoted in this paper. Alan Sheridan, who translates *Figures of Literary Discourse*, does not translate the term and chooses to keep the use of the Latin word as it is, i.e., *elocutio*. E. W. Sutton, who translated *De Oratore* into English, opted to employ the word *style*.

¹³ Translator’s note: There is also an oscillation in the translation of the term *ornatus* due to the different terms employed by the English translators of the works that are being quoted in this paper. While E. W. Sutton on *De Oratore* uses “distinction” to refer to *ornatus*, Harry Caplan on *AD C. Herennium de Ratione Dicendi* employs “embellishment.”

¹⁴ Translator’s note: there is no English version of Lausberg’s book *Elementos de retórica literária [Elements of Literary Rhetoric]*. However, the use of Latin designating the four virtues of elocution can be seen on other works of this author, such as on the *Handbook for Literary Study: a Foundation for Literary Study*, which was translated from German into English by Mathew T. Bliss, Annemick Jansen & David E. Orton; edited by David E. Orton & R. Dean Anderson, published in 1998 by Brill.

virtue such as correctness is not something intrinsic to the *langue*, but it depends on the discourse type, its genre, etc. Clarity also plays a discursive role. Vieira, in the Sermão da Sexagésima [Sermon for Sixty],¹⁵ distinguishes the order that “influences” from the order that “makes manner of workmanship”:

The oldest preacher in the world is the sky. *Coeli enarrant gloriam Dei et opera manuum ejus annuntiat firmamentum* — David tells us. Assuming that the sky is a preacher, it should have sermons and words. Yes, it does, says the same David. It has words and has sermons, and more, fine ears. *Non sunt loquellae, nec sermones, quorum non audiantur voces eorum*. Which are the sky’s sermons and words? – The words are the stars, the sermons are their composition, their display, their harmony and their stroke. See how the sky preaches in the same way that Christ taught on Earth. Both of them sow: The land sown with wheat and the sky sown with stars. The preaching is to be as one that sows, and not like those who tile. It is orderly, but like the stars: *Stellae manentes in ordine suo*. Every star is in its order, but it is an order that influences and it is not an order that makes manner of workmanship. God ordained the sky in stars chess only as preachers do their sermons in words chess. If a part is to be white, there must be another to be black; if from a part one says light, from another one says shadow; if from a part one says down, from another one says up. It is not enough to have two words alone on a sermon? Do all of the words must be in line with its antonym? Let us learn from the display style of the sky and also from the word disposition. The stars are very distinct and very clear. So shall the preaching style be; i.e., very distinct and very clear. Nevertheless, do not be afraid of the low style appearance; the stars are very distinct, very clear and very high. The style can be very clear and very high; so clear that everyone understands it and so high that even those who know it will have much to understand [our translation] (1959, tomo I, p.19-20).¹⁶

¹⁵ Translator’s note: The work *Sermões* [Sermons] has been translated into several languages (Spanish, Italian, German and French), but until the publication of this paper there has been no English translation available.

¹⁶ Excerpt translated from the Portuguese version: *O mais antigo pregador que houve no Mundo foi o céu. Coeli enarrant gloriam Dei et opera manuum ejus annuntiat firmamentum — diz David. Suposto que o céu é pregador, deve de ter sermões e deve de ter palavras. Sim, tem, diz o mesmo David; tem palavras e tem sermões; e mais, muito bem ouvidos. Non sunt loquellae, nec sermones, quorum non audiantur voces eorum. E quais são estes sermões e estas palavras do céu? — As palavras são as estrelas, os sermões são a composição, a ordem, a harmonia e o curso delas. Vede como diz o estilo de pregar do céu, com o estilo que Cristo ensinou na terra. Um e outro é semear; a terra semeada de trigo, o céu semeado de estrelas. O pregar há de ser como quem semeia, e não como quem ladrilha ou azuleja. Ordenado, mas como as estrelas: Stellae manentes in ordine suo. Todas as estrelas estão por sua ordem; mas é ordem que faz influência, não é ordem que faça labor. Não fez Deus o céu em xadrez de estrelas, como os pregadores fazem o sermão em xadrez de palavras. Se de uma parte há de estar branco, da outra há de estar negro; se de uma parte dizem luz, da outra hão de dizer sombra; se de uma parte dizem desceu, da outra hão de dizer subiu. Basta que não havemos de ver num sermão duas palavras em paz? Todas hão de estar sempre em fronteira com o seu contrário? Aprendamos do céu o estilo da disposição,* 62 *Bakhtiniana*, São Paulo, 9 (1): 54-74, Jan./Jul. 2014.

It is not the place here to discuss all this elocution's features, once we are interested in the conception of *ornatus*, which was understood as language embellishment through the use of figures, of tropes. This rhetorical figure was considered to be decorative and, as such, unnecessary, like a “discursive luxury” [our translation] (cf. LAUSBERG, 2004, p.128, §162).¹⁷ This way, the argumentative function of the tropological dimension of rhetoric was undermined” [our translation] (FIORIN, 2014, p.26-27).¹⁸

Kuentz, when studying *elocutio* in Ramus, warns us:

But, in Ramus, it is stated more clearly than ever that rhetoric was the science of ornament. If grammar is “the art of speaking well,” rhetoric, as it is stated in the *Dialectics*' foreword, teaches how to “ornament a word.” It is important to note that, in stating this, Ramus, despite what it may superficially seem, claims the opposite of what was asserted in the Latin treatises on the theory of *ornatus*. We find in this case an example of the nominalist illusion, which was already highlighted by M. Finchant. The constant employment of rhetoric's technical terminology conceals the concepts' profound change (...). There is a great gap between the Ramist ornament and the Latin *ornamentum* that separates the adornment from the instrument, the plaque from the functional [our translation] (1975, p.117).¹⁹

Let us try to understand the meaning of this term in Latin. The Latin *ornatus* corresponds to the Greek word *kósmos*, which is the antonym of chaos. *Ornamentum* means “device, apparatus, equipment, harness, collar, armor” and only afterwards it started to mean “insignia, honorary distinction, garnish.” On *De Bello Gallico*, the

e também o das palavras. As estrelas são muito distintas e muito claras. Assim há de ser o estilo da pregação; muito distinto e muito claro. E nem por isso temais que pareça o estilo baixo; as estrelas são muito distintas e muito claras, e altíssimas. O estilo pode ser muito claro e muito alto; tão claro que o entendam os que não sabem e tão alto que tenham muito que entender os que sabem (1959, tomo I, p.19-20).

¹⁷ Expression translated from the Portuguese version: *luxo do discurso* (cf. LAUSBERG, 2004, p.128, §162).

¹⁸ Excerpt translated from the Portuguese version: *esvazia-se a dimensão tropológica da retórica de sua função argumentativa* (FIORIN, 2014, p. 26-27).

¹⁹ Excerpt translated from the Portuguese version: *Mas, em Ramus, afirma-se mais claramente que nunca que a retórica foi a ciência do ornamento. Se a gramática é a “arte do bem falar”, a retórica, como afirma o prefácio da Dialectique, ensina a “ornar a palavra”. É importante observar que, ao afirmar isto, Ramus, apesar das aparências, diz o contrário do que afirmavam os tratados latinos sobre a teoria do ornatus. Encontramos aqui um exemplo da ilusão nominalista, já destacada por M. Finchant. A constância do vocabulário técnico da retórica dissimula a modificação profunda dos conceitos (...). Entre o ornamento ramista e o ornamentum latino vai grande distância que separa o adorno do instrumento, o plaqué do funcional* (1975, p.117).

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excerpt *naves (...) omni genere armorum ornatissimae* (III, XIV, 2) must be translated into English as “ships (...) fully equipped and appointed with every kind of [naval] implement.” That is to say that the initial meaning conveyed by *ornatus* in rhetoric was not “garnish,” but “well-argued,” “well equipped to perform its function,” This means that there is no gap between argumentation and figures, once the latter always play an argumentative role. In the words of Vieira, *Ornatus* is the order of the stars, “but it is an order that influences and it is not an order that makes manner of workmanship” (=garnish). The *Ad. C. Herennium: De Ratione Dicendi* (Rhetorica ad Herennium) states that “the embellishment we use in order to adorn and enrich the argument” (II, 28, p.108).²⁰ We cannot forget that the root of the word *argumento* [argument] is *argu-*, which means “to bright, shine” and which forms the Portuguese words *argênteo* [silvery], *argentário* [silverware], *argento* [silver], *argentar* [to silver], *argentaria* [silverware], *argentífero* [argentiferous]. Etymologically, all these words come from the Latin word *argentum*, “prata” [silver].²¹ An argument is what stresses an idea; it is what brightens it.

Without any doubt, rhetoric is the subject which, in Western history, started discursive studies. Its designation comes from the Greek word *rhexis*, which means “the act of speaking,” therefore “discourse.” *Rhetorike* is the art of an orator, of the persuasive discourse. The emergence of the first discursive course brings with it awareness of discursive heterogeneity. In effect, from its very beginning, it was part of Corax’s lessons that every discourse can be inverted by another discourse, that everything that is performed by words can be unperformed by them, that a discourse is opposite to a counter-discourse. It is said that Corax offered to teach Tisias his techniques, as long as he received his payments according to his pupil’s results. When Tisias advocated his first case, he would give him payment if he won it; if he did not win it, he would not have to pay the fee. After completing the lessons, the pupil sues his master. During this first action, he would win or lose. If he won it, he would not have to

²⁰ In Latin, original version: *Exornatio est, qua utimur rei honestandae et conlocupletandae causa, confirmata argumentatione* (II, 28, p.107).

²¹ Translator’s note: The English noun argument formed by the verb argue and the suffix –ment is also etymologically related to the meaning of “to bright, shine”, once the etymology, according to the Online Etymology Dictionary, of the verb argue is “ c. 1300, from O. Fr. Arguer (12c.), from L. argutare ‘to prattle’ freq. of arguer ‘to make clear, demonstrate,’ from PIE *argu-yo-, from base *arg ‘to shine, be white, bright, clear’ (see argent). Related: Arguable; arguably. Colloquial argufy is first attest ed 1751.”

pay any fee due to the court's decision. If he lost it, he would not have to pay any fees due to their previous agreement. Corax builds his counter-discourse by taking Tisias' argument and inverting it. If Tisias won the lawsuit, he would have to give him payment due to their previous agreement; if he lost it, he would have to pay him due to the court's decision. In both cases, he would have to pay him [our translation] (PLANTIN, 1996, p.5).

The Sophists are the ones who boost this new subject. They left us four discursive notions: Contribution – the principle of antiphony, the paradox study, the notion of probability and of discursive interaction [our translation] (PLANTIN, 1996, p.6-7).

The principle of antiphony demonstrates that every “truth” is built by a discourse and it can be unbuilt by a counter-discourse; an argumentation can be inverted by another; everything that can be performed by words can be unperformed by others. In Corax and Tisias' agreement, there is a conflict between the duties from a private contract and from a court decision. The major task in argumentation is trying to solve issues that have rules that stems from different and conflicting systems. In the case of abortion, there are people who are against it because they invoke religious precepts; others are for it because they are based on health principles, for instance. Reasons regarding the limits of religion and state power face each other.

Antiphony is the placement of opposite discourses, each one produced by distinct points of view, each one projecting a given reality. This is still the basis of Justice, the adversarial principle. The Brazilian Constitution ensures this principle in every lawsuit. A house built in a slum collapsed due to a landslide caused by heavy rains. Point of view 1: The State must compensate the residents, because it did not build retaining walls in order to avoid landslides and, therefore, it is responsible for what happened. Point of view 2: The State has no duty of compensating the residents, because, once there are laws forbidding building on hillsides, those who illegally built their house there are responsible for what happened. The confrontation of these two points of view constitutes this lawsuit and the judge must come to a decision by considering both.

The newspaper *O Estado de S. Paulo* has published in its Sunday's supplement *Aliás* a section entitled *A questão é* (The question is) for some time. In this section there

was a question followed by controversial answers given by experts and readers, such as: *Do you agree with quotas for black professors? Is São Paulo a nice place to live? Will Ronaldo's generation outperform Pele's?*²²

Contrary to common-sense thinking, the paradox shows that language is not transparent, its order is not homologous to the world; it has a proper order, which is autonomous in relation to reality. It is language that categorizes the world, organizing it. The paradox makes clear that the functioning of the language is autonomous in relation to reality. All rhetoric scholars have devoted themselves to the detailed study of paradoxes.

Cicero presented the Liar's Paradox in *The Academic Questions*, demonstrating that if one says that he is a liar, either the speaker is telling the truth, then he is a liar, or this speaker is lying, therefore he is being honest (1872, II, XXX, p.68). As to language, one can lie when he/she is telling the truth and can tell the truth when he/she is lying.

Camões produced a beautiful sonnet with paradoxes in order to approach the contradictory nature of love.

Love is a fire that burns without being seen;
It's a wound that hurts but is not felt;
It's a dissatisfied contentment;
It's a pain that disorients without stinging;

It's desiring nothing but to love well;
It's a solitary movement through the crowd;
It's never being satisfied with contentment;
it's believing that one is saved through loss.

It's willfully desiring to be imprisoned;
It's serving whom you've conquered, as conqueror;
It's remaining loyal to one who murders us.

But how can its favor cause
friendship in the human heart,
if love is so contrary even to itself?
(2013, p.223)

The poet tries to define love in the first eleven verses. In order to do so, in each verse he makes a metaphor. Each of them contains, within itself, a paradox (e.g.

²² Translator's note: Ronaldo and Pelé are very famous Brazilian soccer players who belong to different generations. Ronaldo is 37 years old and Pelé is 73 years old.

dissatisfied contentment; stingless pain), which prevents him from making a definition, once a definition should not contain contradictions. In the last triplet, the poet gives up defining love and expresses his perplexity by asking: How can men look for love if it is so contradictory? The poem [in the original version, in Portuguese]²³ starts and ends with word *love*. At his final attempt to define love, it is as if the poet said: Love is love. The oxymorons make the impossibility of clarifying what love is, because love is something that must be experienced and not a subject of a logical discourse.

This probability addresses the fact that there is no truth or falsehood, no right or wrong regarding human realities. When we are dealing with human aspects, we think of what is probable, because we play with stereotypes about human actions and about the types of people we believe exist. Those stereotypes are created by a reflection of the human being's behavior in a variety of situations. Then, when we face a certain event, we estimate what we judge to be feasible in order to reach to a conclusion. The reasoning built upon what is probable can take us to new paradoxes.

The caretaker Francenildo Santos Costa contradicted the Finance Minister, Antônio Palocci, who claimed that he had never been to the house, the so-called "República de Ribeirão Preto" [Ribeirão Preto's Republic], to meet prostitutes and do dubious business. Immediately afterwards, information about Costa's bank accounts leaked to the press. It is probable that the government was responsible for secretly breaching the caretaker's bank account, because doing so would cast doubt on the honesty of Costa's allegations; he had received 25,000 thousand Brazilian reais from January to March. This is the probability at the first level. However, once the opposition is aware of this first level probability and knows that the government will be charged for this breach, for which it will have to bear the burden of the proof, it was this same opposition that broke the caretaker's bank secrecy with the help of an employee who was a supporter of an opposition party. This is a second level probability.

Dialectics leads to the following thesis: The discursive interaction is the reality in which social relationships are set. Over ten centuries, prominence switched from one to another subject of the *trivium*, but it has always kept a consciousness of discursive heterogeneity and of social interaction. For example, the *disputatio*, with its *sic et non*,

²³ Translator's note: We added this information between brackets, because the English version of Camões' sonnet, differently from the original in Portuguese, does not end with the word *love*.
Bakhtiniana, São Paulo, 9 (1): 54-74, Jan./Jul. 2014.

sed contra, respondeo is an interactive task of how to build discourses that contradict a given thesis. It is a task in which a discourse is built in opposition to another discourse.

Rhetoric is, in a certain way, the daughter of democracy. In dictatorships, divergent points of view are not allowed. It is in democracy that contradiction, which is rhetoric's foundation, blooms. The social relationships are always based on heterogeneity, and democracy is the respect to disagreement. Only by means of the antiphonic word that controversial issues can be solved without the opponent's physical annihilation. The democratic principle is the exhaustive debate of diverging points of view in order to make decisions, which always demands hard work. Some would prefer silencing opposing voices, but humankind's march shows that rhetoric's peak moments coincide with the periods of greater freedom, more security and more peace.

If rhetoric has studied, on the one hand, the discursive construction of arguments and on the other, the antiphonic dimension of discourses, the discursive studies must inherit rhetoric. However, what does it mean to inherit rhetoric? Read it in the light of the current theoretical issues. When it was stated that the conception of linguistic heterogeneity was already present in rhetoric's creation, we did not mean that rhetoric is a foreshadowing of the Bakhtinian dialogism, for instance, once a teleological view of science does not support itself. Actually, we were reading the subjects approached by rhetoric from the perspective of modern theoretical issues. Therefore, inherit rhetoric means taking into account centuries of previous studies in order to describe, using the current discursive studies as a foundation, the discursive mechanisms that allows the enunciator to produce certain effects of meaning, which enable the enunciatee to believe on what is being said; it also means analyzing the argumentation's concrete mode of operation, i.e., the dialogism in the argumentation.

Let's take an example of description of discursive construction: A reduction to the absurd (in Latin, this mode of argumentation is called *reductio ad absurdum* or *reductio ad impossibile*) or apagogic argument (from Greek word *apagoge*, which means to "a leading away" and from it derives the meaning "an indirect argument."). In the formal logic, a *reductio ad absurdum* is a reasoning in which a contradiction stems from a premise, thus allowing the conclusion that it is false. For example, one states that nothing exists. In this case, another person may reply: "So, you said nothing about the

existence. Clearly, you have just said something. If nothing exists, you did not say what you just did. Therefore, it is false that nothing exists.”

Note that the *reductio ad impossibile* relies on two basic principles of formal logic: No contradictory implications (no statement can be both true and false at the same time) and the excluded middle (a statement is either true or false, there is no third option).

In rhetoric, the apagogic argument is to assume a certain statement as true in order to draw conclusions that lead to absurd consequences, i.e., untenable, illogic, silly and opposite to the good judgment or to a principle previously assumed and thus show the falsity of the statement. Take the following as examples:

- a) A mother asks her son why he started smoking. He answers that all of his friends do it. Then, the mother says: If all of them jump off Rio-Niterói’s bridge, will you jump too?
- b) – The text has no meaning; it is the reader who gives it meaning.
– Therefore, it means that the other people’s texts do not exist. Only my text exists.
- c) – The central tenet of homeopathy states that water retains the memory of the substances that are dissolved in it, even when the solution is watered to such a point that no trace of the original substance is in it.
– If this tenet is true, homeopathic medicines are worthless, once the water will acquire both all the beneficial and harmful chemicals.
- d) [...] Did São Paulo exceed the average rate of murders for Brazil and Rio de Janeiro this year? No, it did not. On the worst day of the current wave of violence, there were 22 murders in São Paulo. This figure is absurd for a state, but not for the entire country. Only for providing food for thought, I annualize this figure by multiplying it by 365 (this is a *reductio ad absurdum*, because it is impossible that any city in the world, let alone São Paulo, would have every day as many as it does on its worst day). But let’s move forward. Then, with this math, there would be 8,030 murders by the end of the year. Taking into account the same population figure that is shown in the yearbook, São Paulo would reach the horrifying rate of 19.2 murders per 100,000 inhabitants. I repeat that if São Paulo reached its worst daily

figure every day, its murder rate would still be 26% lower than the actual rate reached by Rio de Janeiro or 42% lower than Bahia's rate, for instance [our translation] (AZEVEDO, 2012, p.90).²⁴

If the rhetoric figures must not be considered as adornments of discourse, then they must be analyzed in their argumentative dimension. Tropes and figures, i.e., figures in which there is and there is not a meaning change of a word or phrase, are enunciative operations that intensify and, consequently, also mitigate meanings. In order to accentuate (or to deemphasize) the meaning of a utterance, an enunciator performs four operations, which were already analyzed by the ancient Greek rhetoricians: The addition or repetition with its consequent increase of an utterance; the omission that naturally reduces an utterance; the transposition of linguistic elements, i.e., the changing of the order of linguistic elements or arrangement in an utterance. Tropes would be an operation of meaning change. However, as tropes are a non-semantic relevance, which establishes a new relevance, we cannot take them simply and purely as a semantic change. Actually, tropes perform a semantic concentration movement, which is characteristic of metaphors, or a semantic broadening, which is a property of metonymies.

Let's illustrate it with an operation of omission of an utterance. *Anacoluthon*, from Greek word *anakolouthos*, which means "without sequence," is the figure that topicalizes a term for emphasizing it; however, when performing this operation, it omits the term's connector and, for this reason, it has no syntax function in the sentence. Thus, it becomes a mere topic of a comment. Usually, topicalization, i.e., the operation that converts a sentence's element into a topic, that is, into its theme, which will be further commented in a sentence, is marked by the placement of this element in the beginning of a sentence. In the sixth part of Vieira's Sermão XX do Rosário [Sermon XX of

24 Excerpt translated from the Portuguese version: [...] *neste ano, São Paulo superou a média brasileira e também a do Rio em crimes de morte? Não. No pior dia da atual onda de violência, houve 22 assassinatos em São Paulo. Um absurdo, sim, para o estado, mas não para o Brasil. Só para pensar, anualizo esse número, multiplicando-o por 365 (o que é um exercício de reductio ad absurdum, pois é impossível que qualquer cidade do mundo, muito menos São Paulo, possa ter todos os dias do ano iguais ao seu pior dia). Mas vamos seguir adiante. Por esse cálculo, seriam, então, no fim do ano, computados 8 030 crimes de morte. Considerando a mesma população levada em conta pelo Anuário, São Paulo atingiria a assustadora taxa de 19,2 mortos por 100.000 habitantes. Repito, se São Paulo atingisse todos os dias do ano a sua pior marca diária, a sua taxa de homicídios ainda seria cerca de 26% menor do que as efetivamente atingidas pelo Rio de Janeiro ou 42% menor do que as taxas da Bahia, por exemplo* (AZEVEDO, 2012, p.90).

Rosary, part XX] (1959, book XII, p.103 [our translation]),²⁵ there is a topicalization of *The three oriental kings*, who came to Belém to worship God's newborn Son; it is a Church tradition that one of them was black (= It is a Church tradition that one of the three oriental kings, who came to Belém to worship God's newborn Son, was black). In this case, the meaning of the three kings of orient is accentuated. It distinguishes the topic about what is going to be commented from the remaining part of the sentence, thus magnifying its function.

Another aspect to be analyzed in the discourse is the dialogic dimension of argumentation: For instance, the debate about whether the Libra field's auctioning was a privatization or a concession; if a concession is or is not a privatization.

In the following excerpt from chapter V of *Gargantua*, by François Rabelais, there is the argument "In dryness the soul can never dwell," to justify drunkenness:

I'm wetting, I'm drinking, all for fear of dying. Keep drinking, you'll never die!"

"If I don't drink, I'm dry; then I'm dead. My soul will flee away into some frog pond. In dryness the soul can never dwell (RABELAIS, 1999, p.16).

In this case, there is a parody of Pseudo-Augustine's statement: *Anima certe, quia spiritus, in sicco habitare non potest; ideo in sanguine fertur* (1908, p.50, 23, 3).²⁶

At this point an issue can be raised: Are all discourses argumentative? We might think that the answer is no, because only the discourses that explain and amplify disagreements, as well as those that seek to solve conflicts by looking for consensus and for common aspects between diverging point of views, would fall in that category - in other words, the discourses that aim to show the controversies or agreements. Thus, only certain genres, such as political discourses (debate), legal discourses (prosecution and defense), religious discourse (apologetic sermon) and so on, would be considered argumentative. However, the actual operation mode of discourse is dialogic, as Bakhtin shows in two texts from different periods:

²⁵ Excerpt translated from the Portuguese version: *Os três reis orientais, que vieram adorar o Filho de Deus recém-nascido em Belém, é tradição da Igreja que um era preto.*

²⁶ Latin excerpt in English: The soul, which is spirit, can not dwell in dust; it is carried along to dwell in the blood.

Any concrete utterance is a link in the chain of speech communication of a particular sphere. The very boundaries of the utterance are determined by a change of speech subjects. Utterances are not indifferent to one another, and are not self-sufficient; they are aware of and mutually reflect one another. These mutual reflections determine their character. Each utterance is filled with echoes and reverberations of other utterances to which it is related by the communality of the sphere of speech communication. Every utterance must be regarded primarily as a *response* to preceding utterances of the given sphere (we understand the word “response” here in the broadest sense). Each utterance refutes, affirms, supplements, and relies on the others, presupposes to be known, and somehow takes them into account. After all, as regards a given question, in a given matter, and so forth, the utterance occupies a particular *definite* position in a given sphere of communication. It is impossible to determine its position without correlating it with other positions (2013a, p.91, emphasis in original).

Dialogic relations are relations (semantic) among any utterances in speech communication. Any two utterances, if juxtaposed in a semantic plane (not as things and not as linguistic examples), end up in a dialogic relationship (2013b, p.117).

Now, if argumentation is taking a stand against another stand, the discursive dialogic nature implies that two points of view do not explicitly need to be issued. Once a discourse is always a discourse about another discourse, every discourse is argumentative, because all of them are part of a controversy, refuting, supporting, challenging, relying on and contradicting a given standing. Every discourse is argumentative, because they are a responsive reaction towards another discourse. Therefore, Parnassianism is in opposition to the third-generation romantic poetry, to the latter’s grandiloquence, own oratory tone, steeped in history, extensive temporality and wide spatiality. In opposition to the latter, the first movement creates a descriptive and a non-emphatic poetry that deviates from social issues and expresses a reduced temporality and a restricted spatiality. This dialogic dimension is what makes both poetics argumentative discourses.

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