General Pragmalinguistic Overview of Some Lexical, Syntactical and Rhetoric Units in Argumentation

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Abstract—The paper discusses some pragmalinguistic features of argumentation in English. It is mentioned that although some language units (phonetic, morphological, syntactical) are context-based, the lexical ones can serve as argumentative strategies even out of context. However, it is stated that the pragmatic purpose of certain linguistic means with a negative argumentative meaning (e.g. conjunction *but*) becomes clear only in the context. The evaluative and qualifying role of operators in argumentation (e.g. author's modality or implicit positive assessment) is also highlighted in the article. Since the process of argumentation is aimed at either on the proof of truth (alethic modality), or on conviction of prompting a person to an action (action modality), modality is represented as another important element of argumentation. Besides, some features of different syntactical constructions in pragmatic structure of Argumentative Discourse (AD) are touched upon. Since the linguistic content of AD takes place in the orientation of rhetorical framework, rhetorical techniques are considered its structural component. In the paper, the role of topoi is also discussed for effectiveness of achieving the goal of argumentative message. To our mind, the paper can force ways through appropriate theoretical frameworks for future AD and linguistic argumentative analysis.

Keyword—pragmalinguistics; argumentation; persuasion strategies; modality; topoi; rhetorical devices.

I.   INTRODUCTION

The object of study of pragmalinguistics covers all-level (lexical, grammatical and prosodic) linguistic elements which express various aspects of speech acts being able to serve as signs of argumentative meaning. Some language tools with argumentative power are capable of expressing this meaning free from context. Here belong, first of all, expositive and commissive verbs, verbs expressing consent, disagreement, objection, rebuttal, refutation; adverbs; pronouns with adversative meaning; interjections; phraseological units with negative meaning, etc. Besides, the contextual conditioning of using conjunctions is widely observed in dialogues. F.Henkemans suggests that it is possible to determine the type of argumentation structure if there are lexical units in the argument that have qualifying or modal value – the connectors

[3]. Other level linguistic means (phonetics, morphology, syntax) are context-based.

Any statement that leads, even sometimes implicitly, to a specific conclusion is argumentative. It must be mentioned that argumentation is not limited to a certain type of activity; it is a permanent feature of language use.

The study of argumentative strategies should not be limited only to structuring of the explicit parts of argumentation process (clarification, concession, explanation, justification). Here it is necessary to shed a light upon the problem of connector analysis. In the process of semantic analysis of connectors (therefore, so/then), argumentative strategies are brought to the pragmatic stage.

Another pragmatic feature of argumentation is that it is closely related to the system of evaluative and qualifying values (e.g. author's modality or implicit positive assessment). These values are represented in AD with the help of operators. In generative grammar, the technical term "operator" denotes a type of expression that enters into an a-bar movement (or non-argument movement) dependency.

Focus must be made especially on an important feature of argumentation – the modality. Needless to state that argumentation process is focused either on the proof of truth, or on the conviction of prompting a person to an action. In any of these cases, modality comes into play. In proving the truth, argumentation is associated with alethic modality, but during conviction, action modality accompanies argumentation.

We consider argumentation as a discipline that also describes the rules for conducting critical discussion defining the subject of the study of argumentation. The effectiveness of achieving the goal of an argumentative message is directly related to methods of conducting critical discussion, which, in their turn, are the subject for rhetorical research. Rhetorical techniques should be considered as structural components of AD.

Thus, we include rhetorical analysis in structural analysis of AD since argumentation is the semantic content of structure. Linguistic content takes place in the orientation of

rhetorical framework. Analysis of AD, its micro and macrostructures is carried out on the basis of the topoi.

Touching upon the non-argumentative means of persuasion, they are based on speech tactics of "paralogical demonstration" which involve the use of the figures of speech (FS) as rhetorical devices aimed at verbal ornamentation. Paralogical demonstration involves FS with different syntactical, lexical and cognitive patterns. Although the representatives of pragmalinguistic school oppose relating argumentation to rhetorical devices, we admit the use of logical reasoning represented by rhetorical means. It is a fact that appealing to feelings, authority, and opinion of the majority, as a means of argumentation, happens quite often in AD which makes use of the rhetorical devices inevitable.

Thus, in this paper we attempt to analyze some lexical, syntactical and rhetorical features of argumentation in the light of pragma-dialectical study. We state that not only lexical means are essential for the pragmatic composition of AD. Instead we suggest that a profound analysis of all-level language units is vital for the sound evaluation of argumentation. In other words, the paper aims at studying not only the so-called lexical indicators of argumentation such as *because, therefore, for, the reason(s) is (are),* etc., but also to syntactical and rhetorical indicators as vital elements of AD

II. MATERIAL & METHODS

A. *Lexical means of argumentation*

Linguistic means of expressing consent include such words as: yes, nice, sure, super, excellent, great, of course, etc. Disagreement is mainly represented by: no, wrong, nonsense, impossible, absurdity, not at all, in no way, etc. Statements of a prohibitive nature either close the topic under discussion (*I am not going to answer this question*) or impose a ban on a certain type of behavior (*Never say "never"*).

Those means that are verbal and serve to mark the argument include:

1) verbs expressing consent, agreement or disagreement (*to offer, to suggest, to propose, to accept, to decline, to deny; to persuade* , etc.);

2) expositive verbs (*to agree, to protest, to explain, to conclude, to reason, to argue*, etc.).

In argumentative semantics adversative conjunctions and adverbs with negative meaning (*but, yet, still, only, nevertheless*) are closest to verbs. We can assume that adversative conjunctions are strong formal markers of counter-thesis statements. Traditionally, conjunctions *and* and *but* were considered the indicators of relationship between sentences reflecting state of affairs. In his "radical argumentativism" concept, O.Ducrot suggests that these conjunctions are indicators of argumentative relations [2: 315]. Interactive use of the conjunctions *and* and *but* rouse special interest. These conjunctions are used in all types of discourse, but their use in a certain way is arguably limited: *and* cannot connect two premises with incompatible concepts: *Take and read this book: it is very long and admonitory.*

Conjunction *but* is more appropriate in this context. However, conjunction *but*, with its contradicting semantics, cannot always be the linguistic element functioning as the means of argumentation. The pragmatic purpose of certain linguistic means with a negative argumentative meaning becomes clear only in the context. Based on the concept of context, O.Revenko "binds" the language means of expressing opposition into concrete argumentative constituents (thesis-argument-conclusion, counter-thesis – counter-argument – counter-inference) and, thereby, establishes their pragmatic function in the structure of argumentative discourse. "Verbs with opposite meaning, adversative conjunctions, adverbs with opposite meaning are included in the logical-semantic structure of counter-synthesis and, accordingly, counter-inference" [5: 125]. Contextual conditioning of using conjunctions is widely observed in dialogues. If we approach context in a broader sense - as a polyphonic thinking, the two opposite points of view (O.Revenko and O.Ducrot) are eliminatedConjunction *but* is more appropriate in this context. However, conjunction *but*, with its contradicting semantics, cannot always be the linguistic element functioning as the means of argumentation. The pragmatic purpose of certain linguistic means with a negative argumentative meaning becomes clear only in the context. Based on the concept of context, O.Revenko "binds" the language means of expressing opposition into concrete argumentative constituents (thesis-argument-conclusion, counter-thesis – counter-argument – counter-inference) and, thereby, establishes their pragmatic function in the structure of argumentative discourse. "Verbs with opposite meaning, adversative conjunctions, adverbs with opposite meaning are included in the logical-semantic structure of counter-synthesis and, accordingly, counter-inference" [5: 125]. Contextual conditioning of using conjunctions is widely observed in dialogues. If we approach context in a broader sense - as a polyphonic thinking, the two opposite points of view (O.Revenko and O.Ducrot) are eliminated.

From linguistic point of view, a thesis is usually not marked, instead an argument is introduced by explicitly/implicitly expressed causal adverbs (*because, for, as*), as well as inference (*thus, so, therefore, this is why*).

Counter-thesis is marked by adversative conjunctions, and adverbs that function, as a rule, with implicitly causal conjunctions. The counter-inference is determined on the basis of the functional-pragmatic orientation of counter-thesis and counter-argument and is marked by the same means as inference.

Moreover, argumentation is closely related to the system of evaluative and qualifying values (e.g. author's modality or implicit positive assessment). While researching the operators (*little, a little, almost, barely, hardly*), O.Ducrot arrives at a conclusion that argumentation enters the semantic structure of sentence through these lexical units. According to the author, operators allow us to orientate towards a specific conclusion, which cannot be arrived at only on the basis of the informative content a sentence:

There were twenty people.

So the party was a success. There were almost twenty people. So the party was a success. (1)

There were barely twenty people. So the party was a success. (2)

The use of the operator in (2) creates the effect of irony, which in turn leads to a negative conclusion, though misunderstanding is also possible. O.Ducrot called the positive and negative "evaluative" aspects of the use of operators "arguments" [2: 317]. Owing to O.Ducrot's concept, which assumes that argumentativeness is an inherent feature of sentence, the linguistic predicates "to be expensive" and 'to work" in the sentences "This restaurant is expensive", "John worked more than Peter" are always argumentation-oriented. When we call something "expensive", we have a definite conclusion in our mind. In this sense, the use of predicates is comparable to the topoi by Aristotle:

The less expensive a thing, the better deal it is. VS *The more expensive a thing, the less a good deal it is.*

Topos also leads to a certain conclusion in a particular speech situation. O.Ducrot arrives at a conclusion that argumentative operators have a twofold function [2: 322]:

1) They inform if the direct topos is "The more x, the more y", or the convergent topos is "The less x, the less y". (In this case, we deal with the correct application of the scheme of reasoning in the process of argumentation).

2) Operators allow us to judge argumentative power of a statement.

The approach of radical argumentativism by O.Ducrot is traced in the concept of the analysis of the structure of argumentative discourse by F.Henkemans [3]. The author convincingly shows that it is possible to determine the type of argumentation structure if there are lexical units in the argument that have qualifying or modal value - the connectors. According to F.Henkemans, lexical units such as *even, anyway* can serve as indicators of "coordinating" and "multiple" arguments, respectively.

The classification of argumentation markers offered by Eemeren et al is more linguistically oriented:

Markers of multiple argumentation are*: by the way, incidentally, while apart from, needless to add that*;

Coordinating argumentation markers are: *this to thing combined, lead to the conclusion that, when it is also remembered that, in addition to the fact, as well as the fact that.*

Subordinating argumentation markers are: *since because, because* [2]. A.Tseronis represents a different view-point concerning argumentative markers suggesting that argumentation markers cannot be restricted to element marking relations.

The author substantiates the view-point after reviewing literature on the linguistic realization of argumentative moves as well as literature on the subject of discourse markers, it became clear that the search for representative items of should also include elements that signal a certain function that is of pertinence to argumentative analysis: "In this view, argumentative markers can be any single or complex lexical expression as well as a discursive configuration whose presence in a given utterance marks that utterance or the one preceding/following it, or a larger piece of discourse as having a certain argumentative function (as an argumentative move, a type of argument or an argumentative strategy)" [7].

The next important element of the argumentation is modality. Argumentation process is focused either on the proof of truth, or on the conviction of prompting a person to an action. The former is associated with alethic modality, the latter with action modality. Verbs with opposing meaning can be divided into groups depending on their alethic or nominative orientation. The verbal group with alethic modality is formed by verbs: *to refute, to disprove, to rebut, to disapprove, to contradict, to convict* and others. The group of action modality verbs includes: *to refuse, to reject, to decline, to repel.*

Language indicators of modality prove that such lexical units can serve as an effective tool in assessing the structure of argumentation. The following stand out among the pragmatic keys to determining the structure of argumentative discourse:

Modal adverbs: *possibly, probably, certainly*;

Modal adjectives: *possible, probable, certain, possible, eventual*;

Modal verbs: *can, must*;

Verbs: *suppose, believe, think.*

All the listed modal words and expressions show the degree of confidence of speaker in the acceptability of the point of view put forward, i.e. the epistemic modality. Thus, modal words serve as indicators of the illocutionary power of argumentative speech act

B. Syntactical means of argumentation

A careful study of the Speech Act (SA) categories of argumentation and the means of their expression allows us to reveal the objective laws governing the use of language units, to deepen their semantic analysis. Example, in the sentence, formal-grammatical analysis identifies only grammatical subject - subject, syntactical semantics – semantic (or real) subject. In pragmalinguistic analysis, the protagonist (the performer of the action) and the source of information (the author of the statement) are distinguished.

The possible discrepancy between the three subjects explains many shades of meaning and the objective laws governing use of a number of speech indicators. Example, the conjunctions *for* and *because* are synonymous and are used interchangeably in many contexts:

I decided to resign from the job because I was overworked and underpaid; I decided to resign from the job for I was overworked and underpaid.

Both the versions are grammatically correct. However, while *because* is used to state the reason as the most important part of utterance, *for* accentuates the reason only as an afterthought. Both conjunctions differ pragmatically in their

correlation with participants in communication. Such aspects must be taken into account in the critical analysis of AD.

The syntactic means of designing AD include various communicative types of sentences - introductory constructions, and indirect use of communicative types of sentences, etc. A declarative sentence can be perceived not simply as argumentation, but as an expression of additional pragmatic shades: refusal, reproach, discontent, etc. In its turn, an interrogative sentence can be used as a means of incentive, acting as an argument. Moreover, an argument expressed by question is often more resolute.

Assertion can be expressed by different types of questions: rhetorical, reflexive, phraseological structures, etc. Speaking about the analysis of the structure of SA, it is necessary to remember that in direct SAs communicative and pragmatic meanings coincide, in indirect ones they differ. Constituent parts of a complex sentence perform definite functions in the structure of argument concerning thesis, proof, and conclusion.

III. RESULTS

Lo Cascio considers AD as a form of language use, governed by a set of syntactical rules. The use of AD patterns (profiles) occurs according to pragmatic rules. Lo Cascio analyzes the syntactical form of AD, the means of verbal presentation of argumentation, correction and restriction markers, identifies their functions in the structure of argument and counterargument [2: 329].

The effectiveness of achieving the goal of an argumentative message is directly related to methods of conducting critical discussion, which, in their turn, is the subject of rhetorical research. Rhetorical techniques partially coincide with argumentation patterns. Analysis of AD, its micro and macrostructures, from the position of argumentation and from the position of rhetoric, is carried out on the basis of the topoi. The most common grounds in the process of reasoning are: reasoning on the basis of causative-consecutive relationships, reasoning on the basis of authority, and reasoning on the basis of analogy. As for the methods of persuasion (proper rhetorical means), the "Aristotelian dialectic" defines them: ethos, pathos and logos.

Ethos and pathos traditionally belong to non-argumentative means of persuasion, whereas logos - to argumentative. The logical demonstration is based on the functional-argumentative model offered by S.Toulmin [6]. The argumentative method is based on carrying out the logical rules of inference. Such tactics are called "tactics of logical demonstration" [4: 113]. Non-argumentative method is associated with carrying out the logical rules of inference, as well as analogy. This is the speech tactics of "paralogical demonstration" [4: 113]. Paralogy, i.e. the area of deliberate errors, includes:

1) figures of speech based on compositional patterns of syntactical arrangement (word order, inversion, contrast, etc.);

2) figures of speech based on interaction of different types of lexical meaning (metaphor, synecdoche, metonymy, allegory, irony, sarcasm, etc.);

3) figures of thought (hyperbole, litotes, gradation, etc.).

Paralogical demonstration involves use of the FS designed to embellish the style, verbal ornamentation, as arguments in a thesis substantiation chain: "Figures of speech can turn a common piece of speech/writing into something much more persuasive, memorable and enjoyable. In this case, figures of speech become *rhetorical devices*" [8: 140].

A paralogical device is based on argument to ethos - the method of persuasion based on unity of moral and ethical standards of an addresser and an addressee, and argument to pathos - the method of evoking feelings and emotions. An AD with communicative-pragmatic attitude to convince an addresser of the acceptability of expressed opinions widely uses an argument to ethos, therefore, according to some researchers, argumentation aimed at convincing an audience is a "paralogous" technique, since it takes into account the characteristics of audience and is not based on logic [4: 113].

This point of view contradicts the approaches of the representatives of Pragmalinguistic School, who oppose linking argumentation to rhetorical devices. However, we have to admit that appealing to feelings, authority, and opinion of the majority, as a means of argumentation, happens quite often in argumentative practice, and in most cases the use of this strategy is effective. That is why we admit the use of logical reasoning together with rhetorical means of persuasion, but with some limitations.

N.N.Dobryakova takes up a firm position that there is a need to compromise between rhetoric and argumentation: "It is necessary to distinguish between argumentation and a clearly presented logical construction of reasoning (logical demonstration), reinforced by rhetorical means of persuasion, and conviction, which is based on paralogous demonstration or rhetorical techniques for constructing convincing speech" [1: 41].

As rhetorical strategies with pragmatic goals, the author classifies: maximum argumentative communication strategy, contrastive strategy, strategy of dramatic proof, strategy of image, dramatization of crisis strategy, strategy of demonstrating the effectiveness of bills, contrastive-axiological strategy, and regulatory-axiological strategy N.N.Dobryakova takes up a firm position that there is a need to compromise between rhetoric and argumentation: "It is necessary to distinguish between argumentation and a clearly presented logical construction of reasoning (logical demonstration), reinforced by rhetorical means of persuasion, and conviction, which is based on paralogous demonstration or rhetorical techniques for constructing convincing speech" [1: 41].

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IV. CONCLUSION

From the point of view of pragmalinguistics, the justification for using any of these strategies depends on how correctly the argumentative reasoning scheme is used (reasoning based on authority, on cause and effect relationships, on analogy, etc.), whether different kinds of appellatives are sufficient for the justification of thesis, whether the author evades to undertake obligation of proving his/her point of view by using rhetorical techniques..

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