

Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to explore, how critical discourse analysis, namely Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA), analyses argumentation strategies and how it uses the concept of topos. The main task of DHA is to grasp how socially problematic phenomena (e. g. discrimination) spread and based on this knowledge it aims to suggest ways to tackle them (e. g. defining correct and fallacious argumentation practices). In this way, DHA embraces both descriptive and normative approach.

As a key analytical tool for describing and assessing argumentation, DHA uses the concept of topos. According to DHA, topos is a scheme which connects arguments with conclusions (e. g. the *topos of authority*, working in a sense we perform action x because subject y suggests so). The advantage of topos is the fact that, on the one hand, compared to arguments, it is more general, on the other hand, compared to abstract logical rules, it is more related to the content of argumentation. As such, it provides a useful tool for exploring typified manners of argumentation and persuasion.

The way DHA analyses argumentation strategies and topoi, however, became a subject of criticism. First, it concerns the fact that argumentation analysis in DHA often lacks method and transparency (Žagar 2010). Second, it concerns the fact that criticism of argumentation strategies is not based on sufficient and clearly justified normative criteria (Forchtner–Tominc 2012, Kopecký 2018).

I argue that to make the analysis of argumentation strategies more convincing and transparent, DHA should: (1) reconstruct the argumentation under analysis thoroughly and explicitly and make the analysis accountable and the results falsifiable, (2) extend the logical and procedural normative criteria FOR theoretically well-justified ethical criteria, and (3) explore argumentation strategies in the wider context of other discursive strategies.

Key words

critical discourse analysis, Discourse-Historical Approach, discursive strategies, argumentation strategies, argumentation, topos