

SHORT TERM SCIENTIFIC MISSION

BRIEF

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Research interest:

This STSM was anchored in work already carried on and in progress within the activities of the Cost Action 17132, coordinated by Dr. Marcin Lewinski. The main topic for research was Argumentation in institutional discourse, with focus on properties of argumentative styles, a new analytical notion in the pragma-dialectical approach to argumentation. The objectives proposed during the research mission are meant to contribute to research on argumentative reality and within CA17132-Work Group 2 (Norms of Public Argument: Concepts and Methods – Subgroup: Linguistics), whose member I am.

STSM Summary:

Activities: A) Collaboration with Professor Dr. Vahram Atayan in the field of argumentation studies. B) Documentation and access to materials and databases available of the University of Heidelberg and its library. C) Distinguishing – from a theoretical and methodological perspective – between organizational and institutional discourse, and identifying conceptual overlappings between the two categories.

Summary: In spite of the particular circumstances of academic activities because of special sanitary regulations, access to the library of the university was not completely restricted and documentation was perfectly possible. Prof. Vahram Atayan provided me with the necessary documents for access to the academic premises and with a number of his own publications, as well as access to European corpora and data.

Results: 1) Refining an initial framework for theorizing on organizational discourse as a domain of communicative activity in argumentation studies. This appears to

be an area of research both for social sciences and the humanities, while it should be distinguished as a communicative activity from institutional discourse. A schematic description of the communicative activity type organizational discourse relevant for argumentation studies is in progress, imagined as a conceptual and methodological tool in argumentative analysis. The interest of this description is to provide analysts with a set of clues for representation, selection, and interpretation of empirical material apt to be approached by instruments available in argumentation theory and studies.

2) A practical contribution to argumentation analysis, by exploring possible connections and applications of the recent notion of argumentative style (van Eemeren 2019) to the communicative domain of organizational communication. Further documentation on the topic and in the area of the STSM project has shown that the adopted methodology appears adequate. An important finding was the identification of discourse concerns in social sciences fields not strictly connected with humanities, such as the approach of discursive practices and their relationship with meaning in the field of human relations studies.

3) Among the conceptual and methodological issues approached was concerned with applying the notion of macro-argumentative structure proposed by Vahram Atayan to the study of institutional discourse. This notion appears to be instrumental in identifying and describing various categories of argumentative style by means of text types, which I proposed in previous presentations in conferences (Leiden 2020, Wroclaw 2020). The combination of these two analytical perspectives, involving the notions of macro-argumentative structure and text type, respectively, appears interesting and promising for further investigations that I intend to make. The collaboration with Vahram Atayan, has proved very successful and beneficial, as it has always been the case (special issue of *Studii de lingvistică*, eds. Gâță & Atayan, 2019). Further study on institutional, organizational and academic discourse from the perspective of pragma-dialectics, of the notion of argumentative style and of the concept of macro-argumentative structures has been facilitated by the STSM.

4) Work on the final versions of two articles has benefited a lot from this STSM. They were both submitted to the editors of a monograph and of a journal special issue, respectively. Two other studies in progress, which are to be first presented in conferences in September-October have also had a lot of input from documentation at the University of Heidelberg.

5) The STSM has consistently contributed to ensuring a better basis for my contribution to the working objectives of CA 17132 Subgroup Linguistics of Working Group 2, where we deal with functions of language acting upon how argumentation is built, structured, constructed. The minimal argumentative unit, as Atayan sees it, is the core of argumentation, but the other elements serve to empower it or to hide part of it, in order to disguise the need for acceptance when an argument is not perfectly valid.