The variation of linguistic and rhetorical features across different functions of argument

The main goal of this research is to analyse how the linguistic and rhetorical features of arguments vary across different argument functions. This study also aims to:

a) Create an original functional classification of arguments;
b) Analyse real-world discourse rather than made-up arguments;
c) Investigate the language of the gathered arguments;
d) Examine how the feelings, beliefs, and background of a person are expressed through argumentation.

Argumentation can be used for other things than just trying to convince another person; it may also be used to show identity to other speakers. According to some studies, every message conveys something about one's identity.

These aspects of identity and relationships between arguers remain an under-researched area of argumentation studies. This is why it is important to examine this area, as this research analyses real-world discourse and arguments rather than just theoretical arguments made up by researchers for their research purposes.

This research includes building a database containing arguments from social media platforms, such as X or Reddit, as well as a corpus consisting of arguments from the US presidential debates and speeches. By analysing linguistic and rhetorical features in a large-scale corpus containing arguments in English, this research allows to gain a better understanding of rhetoric and how people use it in real-world discourse. I will look at a presented argument, investigate the language by looking at metaphors, repetitions, idioms, rhetorical questions, & vulgarity, and determine its function. Metaphors and idioms are parts of language that enrich speech while the use of emotional and evaluative language often tries to persuade the listener.

What is important is to distinguish between using arguments to show personality and arguments that actually want to persuade the receiver, as well as examining the mentioned linguistic features using real-life arguments.

Argumentation is not only about persuasion: it is also a study of the human mind and a way to come closer to the study of personal identity. By examining these aspects, it is possible to gain a better understanding of how people argue, how they formulate their opinions, and essentially, how they think. Rhetoric provides a framework for critical thinking, which is an important skill to develop and something that seems to be becoming more and more problematic in today's society.

The research contained in this project has the potential to advance the field of argumentation studies in ways such as: a) examining a field that combines linguistics, identity and relationships between arguers, which remains an under-researched area of argumentation; b) helping to gain a better understanding of rhetoric, which in return helps to improve communication; c) improving the understanding of issues of public discourse; and d) helping in the art of perfecting argumentation.