Argumentation through narrative

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The paper analysis the way in which narratives are used in argumentation. The theoretical part is divided into two subsections – argumentation and narrative - both presented in terms of theories and functions. The practical part is based on the transcription of a training course organized by an insurance company. The aim of the analysis is to study the way in which argumentative stories can be used in a formal setting, by identifying the type of argument, the part played in it by the story, and the function the story has in the structure of the argument.

Keywords: *argumentation, narrative, argumentative story, structure, functions*

1. Theoretical framework

Traditionally, linguists have differentiated between narrative, descriptive and argumentative texts (Chatman 1975; Dressler and de Beaugrand 1981; Rovenţa-Frumuşani 2000; Wengraf 2001), explanative and instructionist texts (Werlich 1976), expositions (Adams 1992) and procedural, hortatory and expository ones (Longacre 1996). These classifications are based on the functional and structural features of the text, which are important in terms of understanding and storing the message of the text and also play a significant part in their syntactic and semantic structures (Rovenţa-Frumuşani 2000, 144).

Narratives, which have a dynamic character, tell a story and are structured as a sequence of events connected by a cause- effect relation. Descriptions, which have a static character, include actions or events presented in terms of their fixed qualities, while argumentative texts, which have a persuasive character, indicate the speaker's "general orientation" and their conception of the world (Wengraf 2001, 174).

However, many linguists consider that these text types cannot be clearly differentiated, as narratives may combine with a description or an argument, and

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they believe that the concepts should be taken in a wider sense, as clear cut distinctions are difficult to make. For instance, Bal (2017, 24) states that the term argumentative should be taken in the widest sense, as including opinions and declarations.

This paper focuses on an analysis of a combination of two text types, namely argumentative and narrative, and these two text types will be presented in more detail below.

1.1. Argumentation

Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (2012) define argumentation as the study of discursive techniques intended to obtain or increase the audiences' adhesion to the ideas advanced; the focus does not fall on the information conveyed but on the way in which it is communicated and its effect on the audience. Rovenţa-Frumuşani (2000, 5-8) states that argumentation is an essential component of any discourse type whose aim is to convince or influence an audience by presenting justifications in support of the advanced thesis; argumentation is a complex type of discourse, characterized by interactional features (it aims to influence the interlocutors' beliefs or actions), dialogic features (it aims to prompt the interlocutor into action), and cohesive ones (from a syntactic, semantic and situational perspective).

1.1.1. Types of arguments

There are two types of reasoning, induction and deduction; the former starts from the particular and moves to the general while the latter starts from the general and moves to the particular. The syllogism, belonging to the deductive type, usually includes two premises and the conclusion while the enthymeme is a syllogism in which one of the premises, the conclusion, or a premise and the conclusion are missing (Rovenţa-Frumuşani 2000, 60-61). Induction has been regarded as more intuitive and persuasive than deduction, being closer to the audience's experience and often appealing to facts and examples, which lends argumentation a more dramatic character.

Arguments have been studied from a variety of perspectives – purpose, type of reasoning, structure, form. Below some of these classifications are presented.

Aristotle classifies rhetoric into three types – epideictic, deliberative and judicial. The first aims to increase the audience's support of the presented values, the second aims to decide on a future activity whose result may be beneficial or harmful, while the third aims to consider the justice or injustice of a certain act.

Ancient rhetoric also identifies five elements of the rhetoric system, namely invention – what the argumentation is about, disposition – the structure of the

discourse (further detailed below), elocution – the aesthetic dimension of the discourse, memory –- the speaker has to commit the speech to memory, and action – the actual delivery of the speech (Rovenţa-Frumuşani 2000, 20).

Disposition, or the coherence or relevance of a speech, is further divided into six parts: exordium – the beginning of the speech, which presents its main idea, proportion – related to the semantic dimension, narration– presenting the facts needed to understand the topic, confirmation – the proofs presented in support of the argument, refutation – the rejection of the opponents' arguments, and peroration, or the ending of the discourse.

In The New Rhetoric, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (2012) also analyse argumentation techniques, which they divide as based on formal reasoning, the quasilogic arguments, or on the structure of reality, which comply with the very essence of things. The quasilogic arguments are further divided into arguments based on association and dissociation (which compare different elements in a positive or negative way) (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 2012, 234-235); the ones based on the structure of reality include the cause-effect type of argument, the pragmatic argument, which evaluates a deed depending on its positive or negative consequences, and the argumentation by example which may rely on a real or hypothetical example.

1.1.2. Toulmin's model of argumentation

According to Toulmin (2003), a fully expressed argument consists of six parts: the claim, the data, the warrant, the qualifier, the backing of the warrant and the rebuttal.

The claim, or what has to be justified, is equivalent to the conclusion of the argument as presented by ancient philosophers. The data represent the basis of the claim and would answer the question "What have you got to go on?" (Toulmin 2003, 90). The warrant explains the steps covered from the data to the conclusion, which is compared to a bridge and would answer the question "How do you get there?" (Toulmin 2003, 91). The philosopher further subdivides arguments into warrant-using, in which a single datum is relied on to establish a conclusion, and warrant-establishing, in which the acceptability of a warrant is made clear by applying it to a number of cases in which both the data and conclusion have been independently verified (Toulmin 2003, 112). The qualifier is indicative of the strength of the data and claim while the rebuttal presents the circumstances under which the warrant is more or less defensible; the backing of the warrant is defined as assurance that supports the data, varying according to the type of argument (which can be classifications or statistics, etc.), while the rebuttal specifies the circumstances under which the warrant is stronger or weaker (Toulmin 94-98).

1.1.3. Functions of arguments

Arguments are used not only to persuade the audience of the speaker's point of view but also to solve a disagreement, to reach a joint conclusion in a negotiation, to recommend an action, to increase the audience's support in favour of a particular idea or to prompt a particular action in the future (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 2003, 62). The two authors emphasise the interactive character of argumentation, as the speakers orient themselves to the audience, whom they try to convince by resorting to a wide range of techniques.

1.1.4. Fallacies

When arguments do not observe the norms of reasoning, they are fallacious. Tindale (2007, 2) defines fallacies as breakdowns of the norms of reasoning or arguments that are apparently valid but actually are not. He recommends as methods of identifying a fallacy the analysis of the relevance of propositions as related to one another and the context of the argument, by which he refers to the relation between the speaker and the audience, the purpose of the argument and the commitment of the two parties (Tindale 2007, 23-25). The philosopher also lists several types of fallacies, out of which, for the purpose of the current paper, mention is made of two – the 'hasty generalization', defined as an argument providing too little evidence to justify the conclusions (Tindale 2007, 150) and 'the hypothetical a priori analysis', which refers to conclusions based on irrelevant or unreal examples (Tindale 2007, 196).

1.2. Narratives

Like argumentation, narrative is a fundamental form of verbal interaction whose main function is to understand the world (Rovenţa-Frumuşani 2000, 145).

Narrative texts appear in wide-ranging environments – novels, plays, movies, cartoons, etc. (Rovenţa-Frumuşani 2000, 145), lawsuits, visual images, philosophical discourse, teaching and history writing (Bal 2-17: xiv) and stories can be of multiple types: "counterfactual narratives, habitual narratives, second stories, argumentative narratives, small stories" (De Fina and Georgakopoulou 2012, xii).

According to De Fina and Georgakopoulou (2012, 138), we live in "a storytelling society", where narrative has become a dominant mode of communication; the two authors consider that narratives can be approached as a text type and as an epistemology mode, the latter being based on the capacity of narrative to give meaning to human experience (De Fina and Georgakopoulou 2012, 15).

1.2.1. Structural features of narratives

Traditionally, narrative texts have been characterized by features such as temporal sequence of events, human characters, cause-effect relation. Narratives include a transition from one state to another, the new state representing a new balance. The story is populated by characters and the hero usually undergoes four stages: the contract – the hero accepts the mission, the competence or qualification – the hero has or acquires the powers that will help them fulfil the mission, the decisive test — the hero fulfils the contract, and the glorification stage — the hero's character and deeds are publicly acknowledged (Rovenţa-Frumuşani 2000, 152-153).

More recently, narrative texts have been approached as "representation of experientiality" (Fludernik 1996, 20), as "the ability to capture human reactions and emotions in the face of events" (De Fina and Georgakopoulou 2012, 8-9), which means that the story-like qualities of a narrative depend not only on its structural features but also on the way in which the audience perceives them: "[f]or a text to be seen as a story, the audience needs to be emotionally involved and the action must deal with difficulties and obstacles to be overcome, i.e. it must be able to arouse interest and affective participation" (De Fina and Georgakopoulou 2012, 7).

1.2.2. The narrator and the audience

Traditionally, stories were considered as told by the narrator to a silent audience; this perspective has changed and the audience's role has been increasingly emphasized. (De Fina and Georgakopoulou 2012, 86). Godwin (1984) states that stories are 'recipient-designed', in other words take into account the characteristics of the interlocutors' to whom the story is addressed. Stories are the result of the joint activity of the narrators and their audience since the audience interferes in the action, expresses their feelings and opinions related to the story, and plays an active part in the unfolding of the narrative:

> they [the stories] can be expected to be jointly drafted or co-authored by the participants involved; this shift brings into sharp focus the roles of audience and takes us away from the restrictive scheme of active teller vs. passive recipients. (De Fina and Georgakopoulou 2012, 44)

According to the same two authors, narrators have 'telling rights', which indicate the unequal power status of the two parties, as it is the narrators who decide what story to tell, when and how to tell it. In institutional talk the asymmetry is even more obvious: "[t]he asymmetry in social roles translates into differences in telling roles. The talk is managed in ways that are seen as consonant with institutional objectives" (De Fina and Georgakopoulou 2012, 131).

1.2.3. Linguistic realizations

The relation between the narrators and their listeners has been studied from a linguistic point of view too, emphasizing the way in which stories are introduced and closed; these initial and ending parts indicate the role the story plays in the current context (De Fina and Georgakopoulou 2012, 44). The preface of the story informs the listeners of what is to follow, aligns them as recipients, prepares them for providing a reaction to the story (De Fina and Georgakopoulou 2012, 46). Shiffrin (1984) calls the phrases used to begin or end a story 'story entry devices' and 'story exit devices', and she also analyses them as complex indications for the listeners in terms of how to interpret, evaluate or comment a story.

1.2.4. Functions of narratives

Narratives fulfil a variety of functions: they represent a way of understanding the world, a manner of making sense of human experience and expressing it, of "imposing order on the chaos of the world (De Fina and Georgakopoulou 2012, 18), they are a way for narrators to display a particular identity.

1.3. Narratives in argumentation

Text types cannot be clearly separated and they share common features; for example, the argumentative type is related to the narrative one by the ordering feature of the claims and to the descriptive type by the values advanced (Rovenţa-Frumuşani 2000, 27).

De Fina and Georgakopoulou differentiate between formal and dialogical argumentation, the latter type sometimes resorting to stories:

> Everyday arguments are dialogical; they are designed for specific audiences and crucially depend on local context... Scholars have analysed both the ways in which whole stories are used by interactants to sustain arguments and ways in which specific narrative sequences function within wider narratives to help storytellers make argumentative points. (De Fina and Georgakopoulou 2012, 97)

Rovenţa-Frumuşani (2000, 157-158) emphasizes the similar functions that arguments and narratives share: the topic of how people should live is shared by the epideictic type of arguments and by narratives such as myths and legends. Both arguments and stories are based on particular sequences, for example argumentation involves a narrative link between facts and arguments, while narratives include deliberative sequences. Wengraf (2001, 255) also states that

argumentation is a common feature of narration, illustrating his point with moments when characters have to decide on particular actions:

> There is an internal debate (argumentation) within each character, or an overt argument between two characters, or a suggestion by the narrator of how the character might have decided otherwise. Argumentation is therefore intrinsic to any narration of agents and action. (Wengraf 2001, 255)

Finally, a third feature shared by the two text types is that they take into account and are highly influenced by the audience (De Fina and Georgakopoulou 2012, 116)

Schiffrin (1990) and De Fina and Georgakopolou (2012) state that claims in arguments can be stories, as they are related to personal experience and are thus more difficult to reject, representing a form of evidence highly valued in everyday arguments: "[e]xperiential evidence is much more difficult to reject than rational argumentation" (De Fina and Georgakopoulou 2012, 98).

There are other features of stories that account for their use as claims in arguments: they provide the speaker with the possibility of shifting the opinion from the current context to a story-context. Thus, the speaker's opinions are voiced as the character's ones, which makes them more difficult to be attacked by the audience (De Fina and Georgakopoulou 2012, 98). Stories also appeal to the listeners' emotions and create an atmosphere of trust between the speaker and the listeners (De Fina and Georgakopoulou 2012, 142).

Another crucial function held by argumentative stories is to indicate the speaker's moral stance: "[e]xamples are provided by narrators to highlight moral points and underline their moral stance" (De Fina and Georgakopoulou 2012, 98).

From a structural point of view, argumentative stories have specific features, which are different from "more traditional" stories: for instance, they include fewer events, the action plays a reduced part, the dialogue in these stories actually expresses the narrator's point of view and the evaluative part of the narrative is of high importance (De Fina and Georgakopoulou 2012, 105):

> The evaluative component of the story is considered to be the very claim presented as compressed argumentation; argumentation can be seen as a mode of polemical evaluation. And the end-evaluation, the moral of the story, is a compressed argumentation. (Wengraf 2001, 255)

2. Data analysis

This part of the paper presents the analysis of the data which were recorded from a training course for insurance agents. The recording includes the beginning of the course. For transcribing conventions see Appendix 1.

There are 17 participants in this course, namely Dragoş, the manager of the training agency, Bogdan, the regional trainer and 15 trainees. This is the first time they all meet and the data represent the very beginning of the course. Dragoş opens it by giving an outline of the course, the timetable, after which he asks the participants to briefly introduce themselves. Next, the manager begins the second sequence; the analysis below is of this part of Dragoş's speech, in which the manager uses an argumentative story in order to persuade the trainees of one of the most important qualities an agent needs – that of not allowing others to stop them from achieving their aim. The analysis aims to identify the way in which Dragoş builds his argument.

The manager announces the story in a rather emphatic way:

> Înainte de a-l lăsa pe [prenume] să vă prezinte compania şi problematica daţi-mi voie să vă spun o povestioară care mi-a plăcut foare mult şi anume↓
> (Gheorghe, Măda, Săftoiu 2002, 178)

> *Before letting [first name] present the company and the topics, allow me to tell you a little story which I liked very much, namely…*

and then the story begins.

The story entry elements by means of which the manager announces his telling of a story emphasise its importance: "which I liked a lot"; the story is also introduced in a mitigated way – it is "a little story" the adjective "little" aiming, probably, at not making the trainees believe that they are treated like children. By becoming a narrator, Dragoş places himself in a powerful position, as he knows, tells, and interprets the story.

The story is about a frog competition, in which the competitors' aim was to reach the peak of a mountain. All the frogs were very determined to win; after the start, the supporters began to voice their scepticism – the frogs were too small, they could not jump too high and the distance to the top was too long. The frogs started to jump but gradually they became tired, stopped, and abandoned the race. The supporters kept discouraging the frogs, commenting that it was impossible for any frog to finish the race and that their aim was impossible to achieve. Finally, the smallest and weakest of the frogs remained the only contestant in the race and reached the top. The spectators completely changed their attitude, expressed their admiration and asked the frog how it had trained in order to succeed; to their

surprise, they got no answer as the frog was deaf. The paragraph below is the story as told by the manager:

Dragoş: a fost un concurs. # l ↑ linia de start s-au aliniat câteva broscuţe un număr considerabil. concursul consta în# a se căţara aceste broscuţe# pe-un pisc. şi sigur aliniate↓la start↓ hotărâte să câştige s-ajungă-n vârf. prima. # se dă startul↓ de pe margine cei care trebuia să le încurajeze sceptici <F a;; păi cum să reuşiţi. păi voi credeţi că prin salturile astea care de-abia vă fac să mergeţi doi centimetri o să reuşiţi să ajungeti în vârful pisculuі? uitaţi-vă la ele n-o să reuşiţi niciodată..> sigur că↓ cu cât urcau mai mult era tot mai dificil tot mai greu. parte din ele se opreau şi abandonau↓ cei de pe margine <F hu::: nu se poate e imposibil cum să ajungă o broscuţă în vârful muntelui. > mai abandonau dintre ele # cele de pe margine <F e imposibil↓ nu credem↓ nu vedeţi cât vă chinuiţi?> şi la un moment dat din toate broaştele una mai pipernicită mai micuţă sălta în continuare. Toţi <F NEBUNO o să-ţi frângi gâtul. > nimic. ea mergea mai departe. şi într-un final ajunge în vârf↓ de munte. sigur curioasă lumea în jurul ei ↑# întrebări. CUM de ai reuşit. CÂT ţi-a trebuit să te antrenezi. fantastic ce rezistenţă la efort. şi punând toate aceste întrebări ## nu primeau nici un răspuns ####, broscuţa era surdă. (Gheorghe, Măda and Săftoiu 2002, 179)

there was a contest. # at↑ the starting line several frogs lined up, a considerable number. the contest meant # that# these frogs# climb a peak. and of course ↓lined up at the start↓ determined to win, to reach the top. the first. # the start is given↓ on the side the ones who were supposed to support them skeptical <F well how can you succeed; well do you believe that these leaps which hardly move you forward by two centimeters will make you succeed in reaching the peak? look at them you'll never succeed.> of course↓ the higher they climbed the more difficult the harder it became. some of them stopped and gave up↓ the ones on the side <F boo, it's not possible it's impossible how can a little frog reach the top of the mountain. > some more abandoned # the ones on the sides <F it's impossible↓ we don't believe↓ can't you see how you torment yourselves?> and at one time of all the frogs a weaker one, a smaller one kept leaping. everybody <F YOU MAD ONE you'll break your neck. > nothing. It kept going. and finally it reaches the top↓ of the mountain. of course the people curious around it ↑# questions. HOW did you make it. HOW LONG did it take you to train. amazing, the resilience. and asking all these questions## they got no answer####, the little frog was deaf.

The structural analysis of this argumentative story indicates its narrative character as illustrated by the temporal sequence of events and the cause-effect relation (the frog wins as it is deaf). Other narrative features are the presence of characters (a combination of animals and people), and the stages undergone by the character: the contract, to enter the race, the competence, the resilience, the decisive text, the frog wins the competition, and the glorification stage, the on-watchers' attitude change.

The story has a very dramatic character – the words of the people watching the race are rendered as direct speech; these words represent a very large part of the story and play an important part in it. The intensity of these comments gradually increases. At the beginning of the competition, the sceptical audience questions the frogs' ability to win – "how can you succeed, you can hardly jump two centimetres and you believe you will reach the top? Look at them; you'll never succeed"; the next stage of the comments indicates complete lack of confidence in the competitors' ability to win: "it can't be, it's impossible, how can a frog get to the top of the mountain" while the third stage expresses not only the audience's utter distrust but also fear for the frogs' lives: "You fool, you will break your neck". The public's attitude drastically changes when they see that the frog reached the peak. They ask questions which express their admiration: "HOW did you make it. HOW LONG did it take you to train. amazing, the resilience."

The story can be interpreted as a fable because of the hero that is a frog; the reason why Dragoş resorts to a fable is probably the fact that the trainees are highly unlikely to question it. Using Toulmin's model, Dragoş's argument can be reconstructed as follows: The claim – to be a good insurance agent you need to be resilient and not listen to the people who had no success in selling insurances. The claim is the story itself, while the warrant has a double structure: the first is represented by Dragoş's explanations provided after the ending of the story and the second the statistics provided when commenting on the story; the qualifier is of high certainty and the warrant has no backing. The audience's words, rendered as direct speech, can be interpreted as the counterargument, or the rebuttal of the claim. This argument is warrant-using, as the story is the datum relied on to establish a conclusion.

The argument is an enthymeme as it has no premise; it is an inductive type of argument, used by the speaker to make the story easier to understand and more involving for the audience.

In terms of Aristotle's classification, this argument is epideictic, as its main aim is to promote the value of self-reliance and self-confidence.

Dragoş's story can be analysed according to the five stages described by ancient rhetoric. Invention, the introduction of the story, is the "story-entry

device", the disposition, the story itself and Dragoş's explaining it, elocution is illustrated by   the speaker resorting to a combination of narrative, drama and explanations, then the memorization of the speech and finally its delivery, which is carried out in an impressive manner. The style is highly persuasive and adequate and Dragoş delivers it very convincingly.

Using Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's classification, Dragoş's argument is one based on reality, of a pragmatic nature and including an example. The example chosen is a very strong one, because of the unexpected end of the story, whose purpose is to impress on the trainees the quality a good life insurance agent should have. After telling the story, Dragoş reiterates his point by covertly drawing the analogy between the story and the actual context in which the trainees will work, which requires them to be determined and pursue their goal.

The speaker uses the story as it is more memorable and has a stronger effect than an argument based on facts, statistics and reason. The story is suitable for a heterogeneous audience – this is the first time that the course manager meets the trainees. He probably estimates a diverse audience in terms of age (the trainees have ages ranging from 20 to 60 years), education, and jobs (teacher, student, retired person, etc.). The story used is easy to understand and yet not simplistic and by telling it Dragoş achieves a close connection with his listeners.

The argumentative story can be analysed as a fallacious argument; Dragoş commits the hasty generalization fallacy, as he draws many conclusions on too little evidence. The situations are not similar and the speaker tries to overcome the dissimilarity by providing a detailed analysis of the story. It is an apriori analogy, as the insurance agents' situation is compared to an unreal situation (Tindale 2007, 196).

The story is the first part of Dragoş's argument. The second part is based on explanations and statistics, as the speaker wants to convey his message very clearly. Thus, he continues by explaining the story, this time appealing to reason and resorting to facts and statistics.

He starts the second part of the argument with a negation, which actually expresses the listeners' reaction:

> NU efortul de a ajunge până sus era mare # ci efortul de a nu asculta ce-ţi spun ceilalţi. (xxx) Nu# efortul de a reuşi vă va face oameni de succes ci efortul de nu vă lăsa opriţi din drumul vostru de cei care N-AU avut success.
>
> (Gheorghe, Măda and Săftoiu 2002, 179)

> *NOT the effort of reaching the top was big # but the effort of not listening to what the others tell you (xxx). Not the effort to succeed will turn you into successful agents but the effort of not allowing yourself to be stopped on your way by those who DID NOT have success.*

The use of the five negations emphasizes the unexpected nature of the qualities an insurance agent has to have, which is a fine complementation of the unexpected end of the story. Next Dragoş appeals to the audience's feelings when he warns them of what they will experience:

> cu certitudine în cursurile de început în asigurări vin foarte mulţi oameni↓ şi voiam să vă spun de la început ca să ştiţi ce vă aşteaptă. numai de la începutul acestui an în aceste cursuri în această agenţie au trecut PESTE o sută de persoane. au rămas↓ sub zece. au rămas CEI CARE↓ cu adevărat↓ şi-au stabilit un obiectiv. şi … înainte de a merge mai departe să mai facem încă un lucru şi anume↓ fiecare dintre voi să vă spuneţi CARE este obiectivul vostru în acest /job/

<div align="right">(Gheorghe, Măda, Săftoiu 2002, 179-180)</div>

> *It is certain that the first insurance courses are attended by many people↓ and I wanted to tell you from the beginning so that you know what is in store for you. only from the beginning of this year these courses in this agency have been attended by OVER a hundred people. fewer than ten remained. the ones that have remained where THE ONES who really↓ had set themselves an objective. and ... before moving on let's do one more thing namely↓ each of you tell yourselves WHICH is your objective in this /job/*

He warns the trainees of the difficulty of a life insurance agent's job and supports this idea with statistics; the end of his speech emphasizes again the importance of having an objective and thus, he makes the trainees feel that they are the ones ultimately responsible for their success.

The combination of the types of sentences in the second part of the argument is extremely varied – statements, interrogatives, exclamations, direct speech, repetitions.

The two parts of the argument are craftfully structured – to explain what is an insurance agent's main quality Dragoş resorts to a story, followed by a very detailed explanation.

The manager chooses the argumentative story for a variety of reason – to impress his point on the trainees, to establish good rapport with them, to present himself as an experienced person, to persuade them that the course is useful and professionally delivered. He has telling rights and his story, continued with its interpretation, wants to impress on the audience that he is an experienced and honest trainer. He adjusts his story to the audience, as illustrated by the dramatic way in which he tells it, by the repetitions he makes, and by the verbs of communication he uses, verbs which indicate his considering the interlocutors: "I'll tell you a little story", "I wanted to tell you from the very beginning".

3. Conclusions

The use of narrative in argumentation reflects the creative manner in which speakers use the language in order to achieve their communicative purpose.

In the data analysed above, the purpose of the argumentative story is to impress on the audience what being a life insurance agent involves. The story Dragoş uses to this end is very well chosen, particularly because of its unexpected ending. By telling the trainees this particular story, the speaker achieves several purposes: he makes the participants feel responsible for their future professional success, he makes them aware of the difficulties involved by this job, draws their attention to quality of the course and to the trainers' professionalism and establishes a closer relation with the participants.

Dragoş makes use of his telling rights and draws the audience's attention to the story by explicitly stating that it is a very interesting one; it is a fable, having universal value, whose point is clearly explained by Dragoş in the second part of the argument.

Dragoş's argument has two claims: the first one is the argumentative story and the second the explanations he provides after telling the story, by resorting to facts and figures. The speaker's aim is to convey his message as clearly as possible and for this he uses the two parts – the former appealing to his audience's affect and the latter to their reason.

The trainer adjusts his story to the audience, as illustrated by the dramatic way in which he tells it, the repetitions he uses, the verbs of communication he uses.

The story is a fable, and as such, it becomes more difficult for the audience to reject or criticize it. The story is a simple one, but the moral point it makes is strong and it is told in a consummate way – repetition, combination of sentences, dramatism, achieved by means of direct speech, intonation, etc.

The story includes few events but many comments rendered as direct speech, which serve the purpose of expressing the point of the story. Actually, the reaction of the people watching the race is the main part of the story. It serves as the warrant in the enthymeme, and the argumentative story makes a very strong warrant as it explains the world in a more personal way.

This motivational speech is a very complex one; it resorts to a variety of stylistic devices – a wide range of sentence types, repetition, use of negations, emphasis, direct speech and it combines a variety of styles such as of argumentative, narrative, explanatory and evaluative.

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Appendix

The transcribing conventions are those used by Ionescu-Ruxăndoiu (2002).

↓   falling intonation
↑   rising intonation
pause
<@>   laughter simultaneous with speaking
<z>   smile simultaneous with speaking
<R>   fast speech rate
<xxx> unclear text
[...]   words not transcribed
TEXT emphasis
?   sentence rising intonation