ARGUMENTATIVE UNDERPINNINGS OF TELEOLOGICAL REFLECTIVE SENSE ASCRIPTON IN ENGLISH POLITICAL DISCOURSE

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Teleology as the philosophy of science is about purpose-related 'ultimate' explanation of meaning. The present paper is an attempt to address the problem of meaning formation in political discourse relying on the semantically relevant principles and methods of moral teleology, informal logic and psychology of perception. The conducted research is focused on purpose-related semantic, logical and psychological patterns of 'deep' understanding of the propositional content of utterances in political discourse. The basic assumption of this research is that the concept of the morally viable final goal proves to be a perennial point of contention among the parties concerned and the catalyst of teleological reflective sense ascription. Arguably, any utterance elicits explanation and justification of both the speaker's meaning and of the meaning recovered by an addressee. The substantiation of the intended and recovered meaning in political discourse may assume different forms of an explicated purposive argument or of an introspective inferred conclusion about causes, purposes and potential consequences of what is said. The latter is posited in this account as teleological reflective sense ascribed by an addressee to the original propositional content. The purpose-related linguistic argumentative and explanatory construct assessing moral propriety of an utterance is viewed as a teleological explanation. The term 'argument' is treated in this paper as a linguistic representation of the outcome of teleological reflection about means and ends of what is said. An argument functions in discourse as an independent variable and as a logical construct underpinning the propositional content of an utterance. The argumentative proof supporting the plausibility of the ascribed teleological reflective sense comes in a wide variety of linguistic, logical and psychological manifestations. The analysis of the empirical material suggests that arguments validating the ascribed teleological reflective sense are mainly focused on: (a) the speaker's motives; (b) the purposes declared or alleged; (c) the expected consequences; (d) the speaker's track record. Arguments substantiating teleological reflective sense in political discourse tend to be subjective, frequently biased and occasionally non sequitur. The concepts of common sense, truth, moral value and the final purpose are critically important for natural language understanding and translation. In political discourse domain understanding the idea of moral propriety is inherently subjective and purpose-dependent. The assessment of moral rightness is notoriously difficult for human reasoning, it is all the more so for artificial intelligence as a computer aided basis for machine translation. Realising this, the developers are struggling to augment machine translation by embedding into the artificial 'brain' teleologically relevant 'human' traits like the awareness of the final goal, moral evaluation functions, an attention mechanism. Artificial intelligence with its current reliance on human supervision laid bare the critical issues for translators to grapple with in the process of natural language translation and while fine-tuning machine generated translations.

АРГУМЕНТАТИВНЕ ПІДҐРУНТЯ ТЕЛЕОЛОГІЧНОГО РЕФЛЕКСІЙНОГО СМИСЛУ В АНГЛОМОВНОМУ ПОЛІТИЧНОМУ ДИСКУРСІ

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Телеологія як філософія науки зосереджена на «граничному» (ultimate) поясненні смислу. У пропонованій статті розглянуто проблему смислоутворення у політичному дискурсі з опорою на семантично релевантні принципи і методи моральної телеології, неформальної логіки та психології сприйняття. Виконане дослідження зосереджене на семантичних, логічних, психологічних закономірностях «глибокого» (deep) розуміння пропозиційного смислу висловлення у політичному дискурсі. Розуміння кінцевої мети у політиці як прагнення до результату, котрий би задовольнив усі залучені сторони, постає основним предметом суперечок на шляху до досягнення взаєморозуміння і каталізатором утворення телеологічного рефлексійного смислу. Очевидно, що будь-яке висловлення у політичному дискурсі потребує пояснення і виправдання з точки зору його смислового наповнення. Обґрунтування висловленого смислу і смислу сприйнятого адресатом може бути здійснено у політичному дискурсі засобами експлікованого аргументу або у вигляді інтроспективної інференції як висновку щодо причин, цілей і потенційних наслідків певного ствердження. Інтроспективна інференція щодо ціннісно-цільових і причинно-наслідкових аспектів висловлення втілює телеологічну рефлексію, семантичні наслідки якої у цьому дослідженні постульовано як телеологічний рефлексійний смисл. Мовний аргументативний і пояснювальний конструкт, котрий репрезентує телеологічний рефлексійний смисл і виявляє доцільність і відповідність висловлення моральним нормам, виконує функції телеологічного пояснення. Термін «аргумент» розглянуто у пропонованому дослідженні як лінгвістичну репрезентацію телеологічної рефлексії щодо способів і засобів досягнення висловленої кінцевої мети. Аргумент функціонує у дискурсі як незалежна змінна і як логічне підґрунтя пропозитивного смислу висловлення. Аргумент, який доводить обґрунтованість телеологічного рефлексійного смислу, набуває у політичному дискурсі розмаїтих лінгвістичних, логічних і психологічних характеристик. Аналіз емпіричного матеріалу вказує на те, що аргументи для обґрунтування телеологічного рефлексійного смислу переважно зосереджені на: (а) мотивах мовця, (б) цілях задекларованих або імплікованих, (в) потенційних наслідках висловлення. Поняття істини, моральної цінності та кінцевої мети є надзвичайно важливими для розуміння і перекладу природної мови. У політичному дискурсі витлумачення ідеї моральності виявляє ознаки суб'єктивності, упередженості і залежності від поставленої мети. Цю тезу щодо характерної суб'єктивності та упередженості телеологічної рефлексії у політичному дискурсі засвідчують результати аналізу корпусу аргументативних конструктів як лінгвістичних репрезентацій телеологічного рефлексійного смислу. Якщо оцінка моральної відповідності висловлення є складним завданням для людської свідомості, тим паче це є проблемою для штучного інтелекту як основи машинного перекладу. Усвідомлюючи це, науковці прагнуть узгодити композиційні і контекстуалістські напрями семантики і таким

чином удосконалити машинний переклад, оснаставши штучний «мозок» телеологічно релевантними «людськими» властивостями: здатністю до «розуміння» кінцевої мети, функцією селективного осмислення наданої інформації (розподілу уваги), спроможністю надати моральну оцінку висловленій думці.

Problem statement. It is universally accepted that language as "the vehicle" of human rational thinking "relies on argument and inference" [O'Hear, 1987, p. 137]. Numerous semantic and translation theories provide ample evidence for the need of 'explanation', 'justification', or, in other words, of the argumentative validation of the meaning expressed and the meaning recovered in the natural language environment. Semantics *par excellence* grapples with the convolutions of the meaningful content of human thought. As F. Recanati puts it, semantics "is in the business of systematically assigning meaningful content to sentences and other complex expressions" [Recanati, 2020, p. 113]. There is an obvious reason for the justification of the meaning of an utterance because the same sentence can be used in different statements, asserting different propositions [Lowe, 1995, p. 881]. W.V. Quine totally dispensed with the notion of identical propositions as "a mistaken ideal" [Quine, 1960, p. 206]. J. Locke stressed that the same words often "fail to excite" in different speakers "the same ideas we take them to be signs of" [Locke, 2013, p. 658]. Thus, any assertion elicits some form of explanation and justification of both the speaker's meaning and of the meaning recovered by an addressee. Accordingly, the substantiation of the meaning in political discourse may take the shape of an either articulated purposive argumentation or an introspective inferred conclusion about causes, purposes and tentative consequences of what is said. In terms of teleology, the latter is posited as teleological reflective sense added by an addressee to the original propositional content [Shevchenko, 2024]. Teleology as the philosophy of science is viewed as a certain form of "purposive explanation" of human actions, intentions, desires and the "ultimate" explanation of meaning [Bruce, Yearly, 2006, pp. 299, 300; Devitt, Sterelny, 1999, p. 156]. In teleology the basic purpose-related linguistic argumentative and explanatory construct assessing moral and ethical validity of an utterance is posited as a teleological explanation. Formal logical, syntactical and lexical features of teleological explanations have been sufficiently expounded [Woodfield, 2000; Woodfield, 2010, p. 15; Wright, 2013, p. 233]. Normally, a teleological explanation is supposed to incorporate an antecedent as a conceptual entity being explained (explanandum) and a consequent as a proclaimed or alleged outcome of a statement (explanans). However, as empirical material suggests, in natural language and specifically in political discourse with its convoluted combination of articulated, implied, concealed and ascribed constituents of meaning, formal and standardised patterns of argumentation may defy any established categorisation. The present paper attempts to address the problem of meaning formation in political discourse relying on the tenets of moral teleology, informal logic and the psychology of perception, with a specific focus on the phenomenon of selective retrieval, retention and recall of information by a speaker. Teleological reflective sense substantiation is treated in this enquiry as epistemic justification, viz. teleological explanation of the outcome of reflection on the norms of "what a person ought to believe", on the correlation of "natural variables" as the set of data, and on "the 'goodness' of a belief" [Cohen, 1995, pp. 262–263; Goldman, 1995, p. 434; Horwich, 2008, p. 171; Lucan, 1995, p. 263].

Teleology, the vagaries of natural language understanding and translation.

What exacerbates the problem of moral judgement and the ensuing attribution of teleological reflective sense in discourse is the fact that the notion of "morally right" proves to be "a notoriously difficult concept" because humans have "imperfect understanding" what is right and what is wrong [Bostrom, 2017, pp. 266, 267]. With reference to political discourse, it would be more precise to say that understanding the idea of moral propriety is intrinsically subjective and purpose-dependent. If the assessment of moral appropriateness is difficult for human reasoning, it is all the more so for artificial intelligence as a computer aided basis for machine translation. The concepts of common sense, truth and the final purpose are characteristic of human reflective thinking and they are critically important for natural language understanding and translation. However, till this day these pivotal sense formation factors in discourse have been beyond artificial intelligence capabilities. One of the renowned authors on the subject of natural language processing J. Eisenstein maintains that "we are still far from translation systems that match the nuance and depth of human translations" [Eisenstein, 2019, p. 405]. The developers are struggling to augment machine translation by (a) combining compositional and contextual approaches in semantics, (b) emulating human neuron networks and embedding into the artificial 'brain' characteristically human and teleologically relevant traits like the awareness of the final purpose, moral evaluation functions, "an attention mechanism" (selective data processing), to name just a few [Bostrom, 2017, pp. 132–133, 235, 266; Eisenstein, 2019, p. 418].

Artificial intelligence assisted machine translation laid bare the critical issues for translators to grapple with in the process of translation of natural languages and while fine-tuning machine generated translations. The concept of purposiveness in natural language understanding is instrumental in selective processing of empirical data by speakers, not just by filtering it, but by adding some humanly inescapable reflective semantic overtones to the original meaning. These semantic metamorphoses in discourse elicit either (a) an explicated purpose-related argumentative justification of the meaning of an utterance or (b) a tacit unarticulated argument meant to validate the ascribed teleological reflective sense as an inferred conclusion and as an introspective teleological explanation of causes and purposes of what was asserted.

The staggering variability of the attributed teleological reflective senses and the diversity of arguments securing the alleged plausibility of added meanings to a certain utterance point to the psychologically proved selective nature of retrieval, retention and recall of the perceived information according to the individual's "current purposes and needs" [Chandler, Munday, 2020, p. 432]. Teleology is the epitome of purposes and needs. According to the classification of L. Talmy, about 50 basic factors are subject to the so-called "linguistic attention" to direct the focus of the speaker or of the addressee on the relatively salient linguistic representations [Talmy, 2007, pp. 264–267].

The hypothesis. The primary assumption of this study is that the concept of the common 'GOOD' as a teleological constant and the epitome of the final purpose to strive for is a primary point of contention among the parties involved and the catalyst of teleological reflection and reflective sense ascription in political discourse. *'Telos'*-related arguments function in political discourse as canonical or oblique teleological explanations. Independent variables drawn into the process of teleological reflective sense ascription are coordinated with concomitant argumentation. Argumentative justification of the ascribed teleological reflective sense comes in a wide variety of linguistic, logical and psychological manifestations.

The aim of this study is to determine the tentative nomenclature of argumentative constructs involved in the justification of teleological reflective sense ascription in political discourse.

The object is syntactically, logically and psychologically variegated argumentative patterns substantiating teleological reflective sense attribution.

The subject of this enquiry is the types and semantically relevant explanatory characteristics of arguments validating teleological reflective sense ascription in political discourse.

The empirical material. Since this paper is a thematically connected sequel to the article previously published [Shevchenko, 2025], the illustration material highlights the same conceptual entity (riots) in the same issue of "The Daily Mail" newspaper [The Daily Mail, 2024, 4 August]. This is to show the nature, plausibility and diversity of arguments validating teleological reflective judgements passed on the same conceptual entity in political discourse.

The methodology. Teleological methods are applied in this account for the analysis of arguments substantiating or confounding the semantic plausibility and moral validity of socially and politically salient assertions. The *'Telos'*-based heuristic methodology is also used in this enquiry due to (a) the involvement in the semantic processes in discourse of an extensive and potentially infinite number of factors, (b) the non-factual nature of propositions referring to the future events with uncertain consequences. Inductive and deductive rules and inferential principles of informal logic were relied upon in this study because they provide ways and means for the analysis of hidden assumptions, assertions and arguments "woven into the fabric of discourse" [Bunnin, Yu, 2004, p. 347; Tully, 1995, p. 500]. Informal logic supplements the rules and methods of formal logic by involving inductive as well as deductive "patterns of inference" to cover "rich meaning in natural language… largely ignored by formal logic" [Tully, 1995, p. 500]. Having analysed the semantic correlation between and among variables in discourse [Shevchenko, 2025], we deem it feasible to use the argumentation analysis in this account because, as L. Gelston puts it, the links between semantically salient variables "are only as strong as the arguments demonstrating their supposed relationship" [Gelston, 2025].

Presentation of the main material. The term 'argument' is understood in this paper as a proposition representing the outcome of teleological reflection about means and ends of what is said, or as a purposive "complex of propositions <…> designated as premisses and conclusions" [Walton, 1995, p. 48]. An argument is also viewed as "a piece of discourse" representing the process of "reasoning" [Forbes, 1994, p. 3]. The formation of the ascribed 'addressee's meaning is determined by relevant independent variables highlighting the teleological categories of cause, consequence and the means to achieve the desired final goal as a dependent variable [Shevchenko, 2025].

The analysis of the types of argumentation constructs substantiating the semantic content of teleological reflection in this enquiry is carried out on the semantically relevant principles of moral teleology, heuristics and informal logic. The commentaries under consideration are viewed as linguistic representations of teleological reflective reasoning and as argumentative conceptual entities consisting of: (a) propositions (premises) denoting causality and (b) propositions expressing/alleging conclu-

sions. The categories of cause and conclusion (consequence) are inherently teleological and can be actualised either explicitly with the help of lexical markers ('because', 'therefore', 'consequently', and the like), or can be "deducible", or can "entail" the asserted premises [Kirwan, 1995, pp. 47, 48]. Strictly speaking in the mode of formalised logical abstractions, the argument is considered to be valid when "the conclusion follows from its premises" [Forbes, 1994, p. 3]. However, the empirical data shows that in natural language the rules of logical rigour in the process of teleological reflection are not always a determining factor. Along with rigid logical reasoning the heuristic reflective sense formation involves inferential induction, conjecture, intuition and bestowal of meaning which does not strictly entail the asserted set of premises.

The analysis of arguments in question proves the sentiment that 'ordinary' human reflective judgement concerning moral and ethical issues is "frequently muddled" and may be "mixed up with questionable metaphysical assumptions" affecting common sense [Smart, 1978, p. 3]. Accordingly, the corpus of the analysed commentaries as argumentative entities and as linguistic representations of teleological reflective thinking can be broken into two major groups depending on their semantic, logical and syntactical structure: (a) simple and (b) convoluted. The term 'simple' is used here to indicate a semantically robust, syntactically clear-cut and logically plausible assertions tightly linked to the basic conceptual entity of the text under consideration (riots) e. g.: *I am 74, British and* **agree with the protesters** *and hope it continues* **until our needs are put first** [logical Liverpool, United Kingdom]. Semantically, logically and structurally convoluted commentaries are characterised by loose or indirect logical and semantic ties between an antecedent and a consequent of a proposition when premises are not always overtly followed by logically valid consequences, e. g.: *These* **unhappy people venting anger** *and* **a few taking advantage**. *Basically,* **the common man has no representation** *in the UK today.* **Over four million vote for Reform** *and* **they get four seats**. **Three and a half million vote for lib dems** *and* **they get over 70 seats**. **The government are not just not listening, they really don't care** *how many are sacrificed on the altar of* **multiculturalism** [cantbetrue, Cardiff, United Kingdom]; **The NHS is not serving those who pay into it**, *they cannot see a* **GP** *when they need help, local councils do everything the local elder leader demands and* **police make no arrest** *even when* **a female police officer is savagely assaulted** *and* **Mr Starmer is at a loss** *to why these rioters see an opportunity to join the mess* [Whatsitallabiut, Derby, United Kingdom]. What we observe in the above examples can be called a rather random selection of factors (independent variables) demon-

strating individual specifics of the speaker's teleological reflection and ensuing meaning attribution to the fact of reality (*riots*). Personal attitudes and political biases of the speaker produce a rather motley array of independent variables with the assigned causal semantic values (*the common man has no representation; the government are not listening; they really don't care; multiculturalism; the NHS is not serving those who pay into it; they cannot see a GP; police make no arrest; Mr Starmer is at a loss*) and a mixture of independent variables with the assigned semantic value of consequence (*unhappy people vent anger; a few take advantage; a female police officer is savagely assaulted*). Nevertheless, the appraisal of the factors affecting understanding of the notion of the final goal by the addressees is not arbitrary, but betrays a certain system and falls into a web of distinctive argumentative types.

The typology of arguments, terminology and original formulations in this account are predominantly used in accordance with the overviews of J.A. Cuddon, R. Purtill and D. Walton [Purtill, 1999, p. 43; Cuddon, 2014, p. 54; Walton, 1995, pp. 48, 49; Walton, 1999, pp. 431–435]. Arguments are treated in this study as independent variables and as logical underpinnings of teleological explanations. They substantiate the reasons for certain independent variables to be involved in the process of teleological sense attribution. The semantic analysis of arguments in this enquiry is built on the established presumption that "valid arguments are those in which the truth of the conclusion of a set of premises is guaranteed by the truth of those premises" [O'Hear, 1987, p. 138]. Accordingly, an argument as an independent variable determines the plausibility (value) of the propositional content of teleological reflective sense. In the formalised way the above thesis can be expressed as $y = F(x)$, where y is the value (plausibility) of the proposition (premise), x is the argument of the function F (conclusion) (Fig. 1).

The empirical material accumulated for this research has revealed some characteristic features of the argumentative constructs validating teleological reflective constituents of meaning in discourse. Arguments substantiating the plausibility of the ascribed teleological reflective sense are mainly focused: (a) on the speaker's motives; (b) on the purposes declared, implicated, or alleged; (c) on the inferred or expected consequences of actions proposed; (d) on the speaker's reputation, track record, or moral and social standing. Concerning the criteria of teleological judgement and argumentative justification of political statements by the speakers, any robust system of classification is hardly possible. Arguments validating specific propositional content as an outcome of teleological reflection are understandably subjective, frequently biased and occasionally *non sequitur*, with
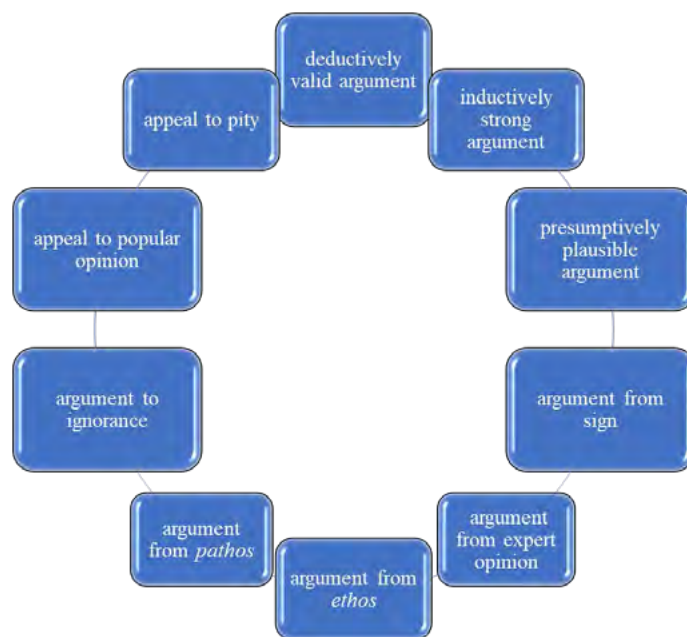
**Fig. 1. Arguments validating the specific semantic value
of the ascribed teleological reflective sense**

no attempt to provide any explicated logical argumentation at all, leaving the semantic gaps for readers to fill in. The study shows that teleological reflective sense ascription is carried out in coordination with personal addressee's mental knowledge representations as "informal and intuitive human knowledge" [Colman, 2015, p. 406].

The empirical facts suggest that argumentative underpinnings of teleological reflection and ensuing ascription of additional meanings in political discourse come as a result of the following 'purpose'-related cognitive operations:

(a) selective retrieval, selective retention, or selective recall of data concerning linguistically represented conceptual entities (facts of reality, actions, events) or their attributes;

(b) occasional (exceptionally rare) naïve or slavish treatment of the asserted premises of an utterance as the true "immanent meaning" [Chandler, Munday, 2020, p. 224]. In the latter case the semantic content of linguistic representations of facts of reality is accepted at face value with no ostensible addressee's critical reassessment and with no reference to a wider context.

The studied empirical material makes it possible to suggest the following distinguishable types of argumentative basis for teleological reflective sense attribution. Teleologically relevant argumentation is treated in this research as canonical or oblique teleological explanations (Disclaimer: the analysed assertions do not reflect the attitudes of the author of this research; the style and the syntax of the original statements are left unchanged).

From the point of view of logical rigour, the following types of arguments can be singled out:

a) **a deductively valid argument** is a cogent argument with a robust interrelationship between premises and conclusions, when "we are *logically* bound" to accept the validity of conclusions [Purtill, 1999, p. 43], e.g.: *The policies used to manage this country over the last 30+ years, have clearly **failed** and an urgent **rethink is needed**. The govt **need to shelve all of their current plans** and **focus on fixing this**. It's all very well having a big economy, but **social cohesion must come first*** [Lucid_dreamer, Fortress of Solitude, United Kingdom]. In teleological terms, this argumentation construct performs the function of an oblique (indirect) teleological explanation with reference to causes, consequences and tentative means of achieving the final goal. In this particular instance, there is a concatenation of arguments starting with the premise (*the policies have failed*), which is followed by several conclusions: the conclusion of one argument (*rethink is needed, need to shelve all their current plans*) is a premise to another (*to focus on fixing the situation, social cohesion must come first*). A deductively valid argument in question is formulated on the logical rule *modus ponens*: if the antecedent holds (*'the policies failed'*) the consequent is inferred (*'an urgent rethink is needed', 'need to shelve current plans', 'focus on fixing the situation', 'social cohesion must come first'*);

b) **an inductively strong argument** is based on probability [Walton, 1995, p. 49] when speakers are "logically bound" to view the conclusions as probable [Purtill, 1999, p. 43]. In this case, the relationship

between the premises and conclusions that justify the plausibility of the assigned teleological reflective sense, requires additional substantiations. In teleological terms, an inductively strong argument corresponds to the format of an oblique descriptive teleological explanation, e.g.: ***Perhaps** the government should take this seriously as a warning that illegal immigrants are not welcome. **Until the government completely stops the boats, people will feel ignored**. I am convinced that <...> stopping the boats is possible by talking to other countries, but **for some reason our governments seem to "encourage" the boats. Why?** [Brat Bruton, United Kingdom]. The argument under consideration builds on the logical construct *modus tollens*: the negation of the antecedent ('*the boats are not stopped'*) entails the negative consequent (people are not heard, viz. '*ignored'*);

c) **a presumptively plausible argument** is a conjecture with the questionable fulfilment of truth conditions, where the connection between premises and conclusions is based on "the burden of proof" [Walton 1995, p. 49], e. g.: ***2011 riots**? New government* [Enigma, North, United Kingdom]; *So, **the demonstrations have been hijacked**! **I wonder by who and why**, especially in deprived areas?* [cantbetrue, Cardiff, United Kingdom]. The validity of this kind of argument is difficult to ascertain because the semantic content of assertions is open-ended and the implied conclusions can be held as *non sequitur*, not directly relevant to the validity or invalidity of premises.

From the point of view of the referential basis, the following types of argumentation constructs have been identified:

d) **an argument from sign** is based on some characteristic features of the fact of reality functioning as signs. This type of argumentation construct validating the assigned teleological reflective sense betrays semiotic underpinnings, e. g.: ***Conditions** in our most deprived communities are absolutely **shocking** and over the past 10–14 years that decline was rapid. Schools can't help them, **social services are invisible, policing is too thin and drug dealers and pushers are rife**. **It's going to take a lot of fixing** Kier* [Rex Kwon do, Lancashire, United Kingdom]; *People seem to be upset about the **looting**, yet haven't we had an article a day saying **this shop was looted, that shop was looted**, all over the country. Providing they only took 200 pounds worth, **the police shouldn't be bothered or even turn up** because that is what has been happening everywhere else* [hotpots, chester, United Kingdom]. The conclusions as the outcome of teleological reflection on the causes and consequences of the contemplated conceptual entity (riots) come as a result of attribution of teleologically relevant meaning (semiosis) to the monadic concatenation of facts of reality as semiotic entities (*shocking conditions, invisible social services, thin policing, rife drug dealers, looting of shops*);

e) **an argument from expert opinion** is an argumentative construct where the logical relationship between the premises and conclusions in favour of the assigned teleological reflective sense is based on an appeal to the presumably authoritative opinion of a knowledgeable person, e. g.: ***My family are from that part of the world**. And **I'm not surprised this is happening.** The area is a tinder box of resentment and building tension. Whole areas are now no go. The looting and destruction...* [Lloyd-McKenna, Edinburgh, United Kingdom];

f) **an argument from *ethos*** tends to justify the plausibility of the assigned teleological reflective sense appealing to the reputation, track record, character, stature of the speaker whose assertion is being contemplated. The argument from *ethos* may acquire a poignant *ad hominem* touch [Cuddon, 2014, p. 54] when the proposition of the speaker's assertion is viewed as implausible, or can be refuted due to the reputational and situational inconsistencies, e. g.: *1 month ago, **Keir Starmer** became our PM. It has been **a good start for him** and **Labour*** [PanixATK, London, United Kingdom]. The phrase *'a good start'* in the context of raging riots conveys an ostensibly sarcastic connotation;

g) **an argument from *pathos*** provides the argumentative basis for the attributed teleological reflective sense by referring to the way the speaker makes his point, to the style and to the emotional purport of his rhetoric, e. g.: *Starmer needs to read the room and **say the right things**. If he **harps on about the riots without addressing the reasons for the riots** there **will be more to come*** [Fredney, Everywhere, United Kingdom]. This particular argument is unequivocally categorical and is based on the implication of the constrained teleologically relevant formula *tertium non datur*: either '*say the right things'* or '*there will be more'* trouble, there is no other option;

h) **an argument to ignorance** (*argumentum ad ignorantiam*) builds on a proposition whose truth value has not yet been proved. In the given instance, the argument validating teleological reflective sense assigned to the proposition "depends on the person being ignorant or uninformed" [Cuddon, 2014, p. 54], e. g.: *I am still **trying to figure out** what **the real objective** is* [Boll1026, BOLLINGTON, United Kingdom];

i) **an appeal to popular opinion** (*argumentum ad populum*) is the argumentation construct aiming to justify the attribution of teleological reflective sense by appealing to group loyalties, popular tendencies, customary modes of behaviour. This type of argument is conventionally presumed to be fallacious [Walton, 1999, p. 431], e. g.: *Illegal immigrants **are now starting to be housed near villages**. There's already been **complaints (in the news) from people concerned** about their **villages being overrun with migrants** leaving their infrastructure unable to cope with the*

extra numbers [Oldfogey1, Somewhere Hot, United Kingdom]; ***Do politicians ever talk and listen to the general populace*** *or only the minorities? Can they not understand* **the majority have genuine concerns which** *are* **not being addressed***?* [beachbrit2, Sale, United Kingdom]; *Govt, all our politicians, and the media, need to be clear that* **a lot of us think** *that* **they need to differentiate between groups of thugs rioting and employing violence***, with the* **vast majority of us who just want the UK to stay as the UK***. "Right"* **most of us** *might be, but not "Extreme Right"* [Kernow Dragon, Wickford, United Kingdom];

j) **an appeal to pity** (*argumentum ad misericordiam*) is the argument in favour of the teleological reflective sense which goes together with the appeal to pity to bolster the purport of the assigned meaning and to validate the speaker's conclusions, e.g.: *I* **worked from age 16 to 70** *and because I* **missed a few years payments have to live on a reduced pension***. In the meantime, I see* **immigrants getting double what I get** *plus benefits. <…> I'm now on the far right* [livinthedream, Palm Springs, United States].

Within the corpus of the analysed commentaries some types of the argumentative constructs have been identified which are not specifically tied to the original propositional content and which possess a questionable relevance to the validity or invalidity of the proposition in question, e. g.:

a) **a whimsical argument** is the *non sequitur* argumentative construct, with no relevant logical validation or with fanciful reasoning for the fun of it, producing spurious or confounding effect on the link between premises and conclusions, e. g.: *One benefit is* **my wife has just cancelled her shopping trip** *into town (Liverpool).* **I hate going shopping** *so* **it's a win for me** *as I was going to take her.* **Grab some popcorn, feet up and read the comments** [Steve the Sapper, Gender Critical, United Kingdom];

b) **a "sophistical" argument** is essentially a ploy "to evade a burden of proof" and to divert the argument "away from the real issue" [Walton, 1995, p. 49]. With a sophistical argument the logic of argumentation which was meant to validate the added teleological reflective sense can be regarded *non sequitur*, because conclusions are not linked directly to the premises of the original propositional content with reference to the conceptual entity of riots, e. g.: *Some of these* **immigrants are probably subletting their flats while scooping up the freebies** *here...* [Wellblowmedown, Yorkshire, United Kingdom]; **Other countries don't want illegal immigrants either***.* **They're happy to pass the problem on to us** *so turn blind eye when they set out to cross the Channel* [Rey De Los Golfiados, Manchester, United Kingdom]; *You couldn't make it up.* **I was expecting a Labour government to usher in a new era** *like the Winter of Discontent, but the speed of* *this has taken everyone by surprise* [nermal, still in the UK, somewhere];

c) **the "definist fallacy"** is an argument about the definition of a term in question with the presumption that the definition suggested by the speaker is meant to validate his/her own conclusions, and it is viewed as a sophism that will help "to get the best of a speech partner" [Walton, 1995, pp. 181, 839], e. g.: *Please,* **define far right** *and* **disclose your evidence** *about the person or people who set this fire* **falling into your definition** [In Essex, Leigh-on-Sea, United Kingdom].

Conclusions and prospects for further research. The conducted analysis throws light on the general scope of semantic, logical, psychological, socio-political and ethno-cultural factors determining the formation, ascription and substantiation of teleological reflective senses in political discourse. An argument *per se* functions in discourse as an independent variable and as a logical construct validating the propositional content of an utterance. *'Telos'*-related arguments perform in political discourse the functions of canonical or oblique teleological explanations assessing moral validity and truth values of assertions with reference to the final purpose. Variables drawn into the process of teleological reflective sense formation are coordinated with relevant argumentation.

Arguments justifying the plausibility of ascribed teleological reflective senses are mainly focused: (a) on the speaker's motives; (b) on the purposes declared or inferred; (c) on the expected consequences of proposed measures or actions. From the point of view of logical rigour, the argumentative justification of the ascribed teleological reflective sense comes as: (a) cogent arguments with a robust logical validity; (b) arguments with random, irrelevant or inadequate logical validation.

From the point of view of the referential basis, the following types of argumentation have been identified: (a) arguments with random referential basis to divert attention away from the real issue; (b) arguments based on the definition of a term in question; (c) arguments based on probability; (d) arguments based on semiotic processes; (e) arguments based on an appeal to the authoritative opinion; (f) arguments based on the character of the speaker; (g) arguments based on the style of the rhetoric; (h) arguments based on the unproven truth value of an utterance; (i) arguments based on group loyalties; (j) arguments based on an appeal to pity.

Hopefully, translation studies as a theoretical and practical discipline can benefit from the proposed research which was supposed to pinpoint purpose-related semantic, logical and psychological patterns of 'deep' understanding of the propositional content of political discourse. Further research of truth values affecting the semantic processes in discourse may prove to be promising.

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