ISSA Proceedings 2010 – Definition And Prescription As Classifiers Of Arguments: A Comparison Of Two Models To Analyze Arguments, Sproule (1980) And Toussaint-Ducasse (1996)

1. Introduction

As we can see, authors working in the field of argumentation can develop quite different theories and models, especially in a pedagogical context. Let us assume that it would probably be useful to review and reflect on these theoretical achievements, not only for historical reasons but also to reflect on the limits and resources of previous models. This is what I would like to attempt here, with two models developed in two books that I wish to consider and compare. It has been a few years since I was stricken by the differences between these two Argumentation handbooks, books that of course I have used in classes, one from J. Michael Sproule, and the other by francophone authors from Québec, Nicole Toussaint and Gaston Ducasse, helped by pr. G. A. Legault. The first book is *Argumentation*. Language and its influence (1980), the other one is *Apprendre à argumenter*. Initiation à l'argumentation rationnelle écrite, théorie et exercices (1996).**[i]**

When I am mentioning « models » here, discussing specifically the S model and the TD model, I am describing and discussing the analytical tool that is furnished in these books by their respective authors in the aim of helping students to discern the main characteristics of a given argument. Armed with these analytical tools, students are supposed to be then able to analyze arguments. These books are both destined to an undergraduate public, but they can also be used at a professional graduate level. They both can be especially useful as first books in

argumentation studies. If the theoretical level and the written explanations of Sproule's book seem more theoretically advanced than those from Toussaint-Ducasse, the latter has more guidelines, schemas and details to help a beginner to grasp the argumentation domain; in that sense it can be said to be more "user friendly" then the other, more complex one.

These models have obviously been developed in a teaching context, but they are different in their orientation. Briefly stated, we can give the following precisions on the models. The S model distinguishes, among arguments, between descriptive, interpretive and evaluative arguments, meaning by interpretives, statements raising issues of definition, whereas of course descriptives are concerned with facts and states of affairs, and evaluatives are considering situations with the prism of some values used as more or less precise criteria. The TD model distinguishes, in terms of kinds or arguments available, between assertives, evaluatives and directives, meaning by this last element prescriptions, whereas the other categories overlap with those of Sproule. In each case we have three important categories that come out in the forefront of their respective model, but as we can see they disagree in one third of their respective categories; the Interpretive category is not to be found in TD and the Directive category is not to be found as such in the S model.

Each model represents a certain interest in its specificity. Probably because they differ, there still is a kind of compatibility of that plurality of tools in their capacity to analyse different arguments. Once we start using these kinds of tools, it is difficult to discard one of them as irrelevant, because they obviously have something complementary, as is showed by using them to analyze arguments.

There are basically two ways to look at this situation. The first strategy would be to try and combine them in a synthetic model. The second one would be to refer them to their interactive context of use, their pragmatic setting and respective teaching context. Developing the first briefly will lead us to the second strategy as being the more interesting one.

1 – We could surmount this divergence by simply combining the different elements present, and forge a four-term model that keeps what they have in common and what is specific to each. We would then have descriptives, interpretives, evaluatives and directives (but no commissives – which would not be surprising since these authors do not interrogate the pragmatic dimension of argumentation (Van Eemeren & Grootendorst 2004, p. 62 f.).

2 – But if we start to enlarge the model, we might as well add other dimensions too. It is probably more interesting to interrogate the specificity of each model and their raison d'être. To fuse the two models in one would be to sacrifice a certain level of simplicity that was probably a goal. These models obviously have been constructed to give a simplified and usable tool to students.

Focussing then on the first option, we will explore more systematically these models by looking more closely at some representative examples of their specific content, without pretending to furnish a complete and quantitative analysis of their respective work. Used and sometimes new copies of these books can easily be found at the time of this printing.

2. Briefly situating the authors and their respective interest
The present author has been teaching argumentation for a number of years (since 1997) inside an applied ethics perspective, in a graduate setting destined to professionals. This permits me to introduce an element that is important in both Sproule and Toussaint-Ducasse, and that is probably the reason of my previous interest in them: their strong integration and taking into account of what I generally call the ethico-moral dimension of human life and communication. These aspects manifest themselves differently in each handbook. In Sproule, ethical criteria are very important to judge the arguments, alongside the effects standard, the truth and rhetorical validity standard (Sproule 1980, p. 75-92). In Toussaint-Ducasse, the ethical interest manifests itself both by their choices of topics of discussion and by a stance given on the evaluative-directive pair among a total of three main categories, the third being the descriptive (Toussaint-Ducasse 1996, p. 32-89).

On another level of consideration, the careers of the different authors are not of the same amplitude. For those who would not know, Sproule was a speech communication professor for many years, and was named Emeritus professor of Speech communication in San Jose State University. He also published a number of articles and books (among which Sproule, 1992 and 1996), touching especially argumentation, rhetoric and propaganda issues in the public sphere; he was a dean of the College of Arts of Saint Louis University (starting in 2004) and is a recent past president (2007) of the very important NCA association in the United States, a country into which he certainly attained national and international status. With an excellent level of complexity and precision, Spoule's book was obviously meant for students at the undergraduate level, maybe freshmen or the

equivalent. Nicole Toussaint and Gaston Ducasse have been for many years college teachers preparing for the undergraduate level, but they have the merit to have been among the first to give some handbook of argumentative skills to francophone Québec students, and as such they had a good diffusion into a quite small population over all. Noteworthy is also the fact that their book was prepared with the help of an important ethics professor in French speaking Canada, Georges A.-Legault, well known for is applied ethics perspective oriented towards philosophical pragmatism and decision-making issues. This is probably the first time TD's work is discussed at an international level. This having been said, that does not preclude the interest of looking at both these models, I hope to show why in the following.

S seems to be a tool constructed mostly for analysing documents, whereas TD is a tool servicing preferably a purpose of developing rational thought and writing skills, by providing structures of possible developments. But as things are standing, they both can also be used in the other way, since analysing and producing arguments often come together.

3. The Sproule model
To introduce the model, here we have to start with the general notions used. For Sproule, there is the basic and the extended argument (referring to Brandt, 1970). The basic argument is "the relationship of two terms via a name-relation pattern" (Sproule, 1980, p. 4). It is the simple declarative sentence by which two concepts or names are connected. For instance, the sentence "Smoking is harmful to your health" or "Dr Shintani is a good teacher" are basic arguments. This certainly can be reported back to basic attribution, as in Aristotle's *Peri Hermeneias* (Aristotle 2004). Sproule proceeds then to define assumptions, elements seen as unstated and supporting visible arguments. The extended definition of the argument will then be "two or more basic arguments connected in such a way that one of them is a claim to be proved and the other (s) is (are) date offered in support of the claim" (Sproule 1980, p. 8). Then an argument can be said to have three composing elements: "the data, the reasoning process, and the conclusion". Syllogism, enthymeme and the Toulmin model are briefly presented. For him, four different issues emerge in argumentation: issues of fact, of definition, of value...and of policy. For instance, if there is a conflict in faculty-administration relation, supposing that we have evaluated the situation to be bad, "the general policy issue becomes one of what should be done to dampen conflict

and encourage cooperativeness…"(Sproule 1980, p. 19). We should already note that he will develop specific categories in his model only for the first three kinds of issues.

For his definition of the nature of meaning, he seems close to Charles S. Peirce: it is a triadic relationship between a referent, an interpreter and a symbol, but there is a second interpreter, the other person (Sproule 1980, p. 33). One useful distinction he gives is the one between positive terms and dialectical terms, taking back R. M. Weaver's famous distinction. The first raise issues of fact; the others have what he calls nebulous referents, like justice or independence (Ibid. p. 34), and they can receive their meaning only in a dialectical way, by the interplay of questions and answers. Dialectical terms might be a necessary level of knowledge, but they carry important emotional overtones, and arguers tend to not define them satisfactorily (Sproule 1980, p. 36). Also noteworthy is the many functions of language: to report, to persuade, and there is an attitude-revealing function, a Self-revelation function, a relationship function with reference to Palo Alto (Watzlawick, Beavin and Jackson 1967).

We mentioned before that the S model distinguishes between descriptions, evaluations and interpretations, but we need to go into further detail. What is called a description draws first-order issues of fact, an evaluation draws first-order questions of value; interpretations draw first-order issues of definition (Sproule 1980, p. 69). In the first type of statements, we have appeal to facts, data and statistics, the problem we have is to ascertain if the facts alleged are or were the case. In the second, facts are regrouped and given meaning, they are united in an appropriate category (Sproule 1980, p. 142). Today, we would probably talk of framing issues here (Schön & Rein 1994). Statements that are evaluative for Sproule, using Rokeach's well known perspective, are based on values defined as "a person's notion of what is to be preferred" (Sproule 1980, p. 184).

Some of his material will help to better understand his perspective. In one example, we will see how the distinction between descriptions and definitions functions according to him. Sproule quotes an article from the *New York Times*, May 5, 1977, about the impeachment of Nixon. Without repeating the newspaper's quote, I reproduce Sproule's commentary to render visible his treatment.

(1) "The initial questions raised by the data offered in this news article are ones

of fact: Was Mr. Nixon cited as an unindicted co-conspirator? […] Did the House Judiciary Committee actually made the charge that Mr. Nixon participated in conspiracy to obstruct justice? Only when these factual issues are resolved can the reader proceed to the definitional question stated in the claim: Did Mr. Nixon commit an illegal act? The key observation to be made here is that while not everyone will accept the interpretive claim that "Mr. Nixon committed an illegal act", they can be brought to agree that the House committee did allege his guilt." (Sproule 1980, p. 71).

In this example, issues of fact as deployed in the legal sphere obtain meaning by being reconstructed as steps towards establishing the possible validity of an interpretive. While treating examples like this one, Sproule does not work most of the times by constructing and sequencing different propositions. As we can see here, starting with a substantial quote of a newspaper, he just reformulates the questions that can be raised. It is also interesting to note that this example, as many others in the book, is thoroughly legal and political in its nature, and gives voice to one very important type of recourse in any court of law, we could identify it as staying close to the facts while letting value elements play their part. Sproule situates his work inside what is called forensic debate (Sproule, 1980, p. 364). Other examples around what were immediately contemporary events in 1980, the Nixon impeachment, the Vietnam War and similar topic, abound in the book that refers copiously to *Newsweek*, *The New York Times*, *Times* etc.

For Sproule, a particular argument might raise first-order issues of fact AND subsidiary issues of value (noted 2). The same argument can also raise subsidiary issues of definition (noted 3). Every argument has potentially these three dimensions, present with differing importance. Sproule asserts that a specific prevalence would be present, meaning we will be able to distinguish what is of first order on this and that case. He admits that a combination of these issues is almost always present in complex argument. In practical use though, in some instances it is not easy to decide which aspect comes first, i.e. if this or that argument raises first-issue order of definition or of evaluation, for instance. Difficulties of the same kind might arise between arguments raising first-order issues of fact versus of evaluation. The tool can function nonetheless in general if we try and weigh carefully what is the most important use of the argument in the context.

Sproule does not discuss "framing" issues as such in this book, he does not make

a technical use of this word that many authors report to E. Goffman (but see also Dewey 1925). Nonetheless, his use of the interpretive category understood as raising first-order issues of definition, is certainly a way to put some element in perspective and take into account something similar to the theme of framing inside his argumentation theory. This can be seen when he notes the fact that interpretations and evaluation sometimes overlap. For example, in a given election, descriptions give us the percentage of votes obtained by this or that candidate, whereas interpretations tell us "which candidate "won" the primary" or "which candidate did better/worse than expected"; the totals of the vote are then put into perspective by relating them to other opinions or facts (Sproule 1980, p. 144). Interpretives as raising definition issues certainly can be seen as framing devices, since they permit the grouping of facts under a category.

This role of the interpretive can be seen in an example about the Vietnam war (1965). Here Sproule refers to an expert on Vietnam history, Bernard Fall, according to which there were two different ways to see the forced moving of a million Vietnamese rural dwellers. In one narration of the event, by leaving the North of the country the refugees fled Viet Cong terrorism, but according to another interpretive, they were driven out by American bombing, which according to the author gives at the same time an argument against the war (Sproule 1980, p 145). Here either the communists are responsible for the fleeing refugees, or it is the Americans that are to blame. Without having to take a side, the author simply shows how each interpretive has different implications. It is by the repetition of the examples that some position of the author (let us identify this as "liberal", whatever that signifies) can be inferred, not because he would be dishonest in the treatment of the specific arguments.

Another example is not political: an anonymous writer (signing "Shy one buck") writes to a newspaper column, "Dear Abby". This person was in a grocery store, saw a woman arriving at the counter, having to pay, and then frantically looking into her purse, to declare out loud she was a dollar short. The writer to Abby's column felt sorry and offered a dollar to help her. The woman expressed many thanks and insisted in writing the name and address of the giver, she also promised to send the dollar back to him by mail. Three weeks passed, there was nothing in the mail, so our guy writes to Abby and says: "…and I just didn't peg her as the kind who would beat me out of a dollar" (Sproule 1980, p. 145). To better understand this nowadays, we would have to talk about a ten dollar bill. In

any case, the "Dear Abby" person had then no difficulty in offering as an answer to the plaintiff three different interpretations of the same fact, one being the following: "She may have lost the paper with your name and address on it". Using the same facts, Abby supplies different interpretations, placing the woman in alternative categories.

Interpretations also occur with comparisons, and with the use of metaphors; he gives the example of a strike being on one side compared to a hijacking or kidnapping, and on the other side to "a revolution for freedom of the small people against "the captains of industry" (Sproule 1980, p. 147). Comparisons act to construct reality, they are highly argumentative and are seen as an important strategy in defining issues. Sproule will also develop on analogy, argument from precedent, minimization-maximization as comparative tools that are also used under the interpretive mode. We might be interested to find one use of that last argumentative structure in an example about offshore drilling (no later than February 24, 1975, in *Newsweek*, p. 68), maximizing the economic benefits and minimizing the ecological aspects (Sproule 1980, p. 151).**[ii]** He notes three subtypes of this argumentative figure: playing on frequency, size and degree. When he comes to discuss causality (in the same chapter on interpretation), he makes a long detour by Mill's canons of induction to go back again to political issues: different causes can be put forward to explain a given phenomena, and the way we assign cause plays an obvious role in defining the situation. He also treats arguments of sign, like the "tip of the iceberg", arguments that predict future consequences, like the "domino theory" or the fear appeal, with reduction ad absurdum, humor, sarcasm, the argument of conspiracy, even the dilemma (with one horn of a situation being presented as less lethal than the other, for instance having to choose between freedom and starvation) and the antithesis. These argumentative figures (that could certainly by reconstructed as schemes) are all grouped under the interpretive category.

One of Sproule's forces is the evaluation criteria for argumentation he puts forward. There is the effects standard, the truth standard, the Ethics standard, there is also the validity standards, and he constructs a mechanic for deciding rhetoric validity, putting literally into the balance asserted level of certainty and established level on certainty, we can then have an overstating or an understating of a claim. The argument will be declared valid if it is accurately qualified or understated (Sproule 1980, p. 88-89).

He recognizes that values are multiple and play a part, they can be attributed to persons. But he does not treat differently attribution of value to an end, to a mean, a state of being or a type of action. And if we regroup together all these inside what we could call figures of attribution, he does not take into account evaluation as such of X or Y in terms of specific criteria or in terms of specific values. The many different ways into which values can enter into a proposition are all lumped together.

4. T-D model
The book from Toussaint and Ducasse is a school handbook for students, most of the times of age 16-19, what is called in the province of Quebec (other provinces in Canada use a different teaching structure) the collegial or CEGEP level (Collège d'enseignement général et professionnel). This comes after the secondary school, for some students it constitutes a terminal degree, and for those who wish to obtain a University degree, the "college" level diploma is a mandatory requirement. A few other books are also available in Québec, they are especially used in one of the three required philosophy courses at the college level, the one that treats rational thinking and argumentation. The TD book comes with exercises, many examples, schematic representations etc. This book is also full of precise recommendations specifying how to proceed in the construction of an argumentative text. They tend to work by starting with propositional sentences, in the context of an argumentative development that is to be made afterwards.

They look especially at written argumentation, starting also with basic elements about attribution in ordinary language. Their general approach is dialectical in a sense that it involves taking explicitly into account the statement of a position (we would say a claim) on the basis of a problem-setting; the first step is the constructing of the position with its main arguments, including links between position and arguments. This leads to the formulation of opposing arguments, and to the answer or refutation of the arguments that go with that counter position or opposing claim. A good argumentation has to take into account the opposing side in a debate. They propose also to furnish a finale in reasserting the position taken and announced in the beginning. They aim at facilitating the construction of argumentative claims by students, while helping to see how an argument actually functions in different cases. The notion of "une problématique", meaning the problematic, or the way a question is posed and pre-structures the discussion, is

the necessary starting point in their perspective. As is also the idea of a controversial domain, an element that is required since we will not argue about the obvious or the uncontroversial, as we have learned since the beginnings of rational thinking.

Their vision of what is an argument is also quite specific. To three types of problem-settings, three types of statements and positions will correspond. There are assertive, evaluative and directive claims, which they call positions; most of the times the authors will aim at giving a precise and short formulation of the position/claim in a single proposition, including the argument used, for instance "The existence of unions was beneficial to workers because since their existence, the number of hours of work for a week has been reduced…" (Toussaint-Ducass, 1996, p. 119). For them, assertives are statements that answer to questions about determination of reality, they are deployed in a problematic about the existence or not of something or aiming to sustain or deny some attribution of a characteristic to some thing. To quote them: "The statement of an assertive position is a judgment that answers to a problematic question that is about the existence of a reality, its nature or the relationships between realities"**[iii]** (Toussaint-Ducasse 1996, p. 58). These statements can be categorical and certain, or hypothetical. The hypothetical is seen as something that could or could not exist, and its existence is seen as depending on a condition, that the argument will have to show. It is in that restricted sense that they take into account modality, but they do not discuss it as such. A certain assertive position will have to be confirmed by facts, meaning data acceptable by all. A hypothetical assertive will be justified by a realisable condition (like when people say: It would be possible to recycle more if the cities would furnish accessibility tools like recycling bins). As for evaluatives and prescriptives, they respectively come from a problematic of value and evaluation, and a problematic of what to do or not do, but they are not presented in modal terms.

Evaluatives do not come either as categorical or as hypothetical, and by their examples we can see in fact that argumentation in those guises tends to support a categorical affirmation of the positions taken. One example is the following:
(2) "The new reproductive techniques are more harmful than good for the human species (is declared harmful (*néfaste*) what provokes destruction of human life to satisfy a whimsical desire)" (Toussaint-Ducasse 1996, p. 201).

They take into account and discuss one counter-argument:

(3) "Yes, but they also permit to prevent and cure genetic diseases",
to which they answer by giving another counter-argument:
(4) "But the danger of genetic selection is greater then the benefices of preventing and curing grave sicknesses" (Ibid.)

We should note that (2) is an affirmative assertion, even though some validation is seen as required and is offered inside the handbook. We should also note that (3) is also backed by some elements in the text, but (4) is more again a general evaluative assertion that would require more clarification, which they develop only a little. One massive statement seem to be refuted by another massive statement, we are passing from Charybdis to Scylla. Hypothetical statements might be required in those kinds of issues.

Arguments of this kind are said to rely on value judgments, and they can be backed by consequential arguments (called pragmatic by explicit reference to Perelman) or "facts corresponding to a non pragmatic evaluation", i.e. referring to norms, values or principles (Toussaint-Ducasse 1996, p. 77). Directives raise issues of how to act, they prescribe or forbid some way of acting or behaving. According to them, a Directive argument can be justified as a moral obligation by recourse to a general norm, or it can be justified as a necessary means to a justified end (Toussaint-Ducasse 1996, 200-201). This gives us a total of six argumentative structures in to which rational argumentation is supposed to occur or can occur in written developments.

An example will show how they would have difficulty to stay neutral on some specific important issues. Translated in English, it would go like this: "Feminine and Masculine characters are more acquired then innate, as we ca see by Margaret Mead's study on three ethnical groups of New Guinea that shows different ways to be a woman or a man" (Toussaint-Ducasse 1996, p. 109). The authors proceed systematically, while explaining this example, first to the clarification of the statement, then to the clarification of the binding relationship between the argument and the position. This binding leads to clarify the content of Mead's study, giving details about the ethnic groups to which she refers, which leads to an intermediate conclusion showing that qualities and roles are not universal, which permits the main conclusion as to the acquired aspect of gendered behaviour. This position is seen by them as a certain Assertive position backed by confirmation in the facts of a well known research. Of course, thus formulated the position can seem to be backed by the Mead study.

In their model, the normative or deontological argument surfaces for the two types of statements that have to do with the ethico-moral dimension, i.e. the evaluative and the directive, as a counterpoint to the pragmatic or teleological argument that is also an option in both types of statements. This seems to confirm the closeness, almost redundant character of the evaluative and of the prescriptive to one another as categories in their model. Six elements then sum up every argument according to TD: possible or actual facts, ends and means, norms and values.

Let us note also that this closeness between evaluation and prescription is discussed in ethical theory, in the same movement as their difference is also debated. The question of the relationship between norms and values is also a difficult one, since if the values can inspire norms, many different norms or rules of behaviour can claim to be manifestations or realizations of a single value. Sproule notes that this often goes hand in hand with different definitions, or the different play of interpretives (Sproule 1980, p. 199-201, section "Conflicts based on the same value"). We also have a similar structure for the assertives, since we can put facts and data as backing, but we can also put forward a realizable condition, referring here again to action, as the model does for the evaluative and the directive. Facts can then be seen as analogues to a norm in the domain of reality issues.

Throughout their book, Toussaint and Ducasse emphasize the importance of the validation link between argument and position. Its importance goes with its fragility in many situations, where it is in need of reinforcing. They do not have the interpretive category, and they do not raise the question of the constellation of terms used to discuss an issue including figures of speech, metaphors and names, what is called framing in communication and media studies and in some trends of rhetorical studies or in social sciences more generally (see for instance Tversky and Kahnemann 1981). But they use definition constantly in their work. Their use of the problematic and of problematization understood as problem-setting takes into account this dimension that is sometimes called framing, but from a philosophical point of view. For instance, they will define "the development of an assertive position" as the "manifestation of the meaning that we give it. It includes the clarification of the meaning of the key words with descriptive definitions and illustrations, and the clarification of the general meaning of the statement of the position" (Toussaint-Ducasse 1996, p. 61). In other words, the

reflective use of definition will help clarify and develop an argumentative position.

Distinguishing as they do between evaluation and prescription is interesting, but taken in itself it would not be sufficient. For instance, there are nuances to take into account on each side. After all, it is one thing to attribute value, it is another to judge according to a certain value positively or negatively, which is evaluation properly speaking (Dewey 1939). And it is another thing again to intimate a certain course of action. For that matter, their classification does not take into account the differences between prescribing, giving an order, pleading for a practical solution, suggesting a course of action, etc.

5. Concluding remarks
If the Sproule book can be used to indirectly document its readers about the United States of circa 1975, giving us information about the Vietnam War and the Nixon era, the TD book can be used to document the general questions and ideas discussed and abundant in the young Québec population since the late seventies through the 1990s.

The professors of philosophy that are Toussaint and Ducasse rely on definition to develop argumentative strengths; the speech communication professor that is Sproule shows clearly the political use of interpretation in the understanding of political events.

We should note that the two models agree on the importance and the specificity of statements about issues of fact. In Toussaint-Ducasse, something is missing compared to Sproule, the interpretive, and some element is added, the prescription that they call the directive.

(1) The models have specific features that say something of their usefulness
We can say that TD emphasize the ethico-moral by giving it two thirds of their attention already in terms of the categories they put forward. In TD the examples forcibly have a tendency to be taken inside the vast domain of moral issues. This happens while discussing possible positions about ethical issues. We have to see a correlation between their emphasis on ethico-moral issues and the fact that two of three of their main categories are relevant to those kinds of issues (the Evaluatives and the Directives). Their model might then be specially useful for working on a corpus of moral or ethical judgments.

In S the examples and problems treated are set in terms of more broadly

construed political dilemmas. Here again, a correlation has to be seen between the importance of the Interpretive category in politics generally speaking and the fact that the preferred examples are taken into that domain. This says also something about its possible usefulness.

The categories that are specific to each model (Interpretive for Sproule and Directive for Toussaint-Ducasse) have a structuring importance in their respective theories, they serve as grouping and organizing structures; in that sense, each of the elements of the two triads work as classifiers of arguments, and also as selecting tools for picking up and constructing examples. But since Definition (or Interpretives) and Prescription (or Directives) are what distinguishes them respectively the one from the other, they also give us the specificity of their respective approaches. In that regard, they work as classifiers of their theories of argumentation taken globally.

In Sproule we have four types of issues, one being the policy issue and concerning action generally speaking, He does not develop this domain by looking at a specific type of propositions, like T-D is doing by focussing on prescriptions. This is probably because policy issues are seen by Sproule as too complex to reside only in the explicit directives or prescriptions. He has specific chapters towards the end of the book to discuss policy analysis that are in fact the culmination of the volume. These chapters treat "what should be done" in terms of "the use of argument to establish or refute a policy position", which is really more than just prescribe a specific course of action. He especially shows how on policy issues, the three levels are necessarily present and intertwined in a complex manner.

One of its strength compared to the TD model is its taking into account of the interpretive. We could say that without considering it as such, he touches the framing questions but limits it to the grouping factor of a series of facts and by saying it is the language used that raise issues of definition. What he lets on the side is what is called framing more broadly speaking today: namely the use of this and that term, name, adjective or category in the way to discuss an issue. Framing also encompasses the problem setting of a specific issue seen as the way that the problem or question is formulated, this is close to TD's intentions.

The TD model gives a general structure that provide us with a very basic outlook of argumentative reasoning that is easy enough to help develop some argumentation skills for beginners. It puts emphasis mostly on the problem of the

relationship between the claim being made and the arguments that sustain it. Its way to deal with definition issues is to render conscious and reflexive the meaning of the concepts used, by inserting into a writing strategy the question of the meaning of the terms discussed.

(2) Limits of these models

We do not find in these books a theorizing of the speech act dimension of argumentation, as we find in the books from Van Eemeren and colleagues. We do not achieve the clarity and precision of Walton on the analytical-logical aspect, and neither the rhetorical clout of Perelman or the explicit wish of keeping together the logical, the dialectical and the rhetorical, as we find in Tindale (Walton, Reed and Macagno 2008; Perelman 1977; Tindale 1999). In terms of handbooks, another book seems more rightly designed for decision makers (Rieke, Sillars and Peterson 2008), even though nothing of the kind is available in French.

Neither of these models really takes into account modality and rebuttals, as Toulmin did in his celebrated 1958 book. We noted that TD distinguished, in matters of fact, the certain and the hypothetical, but there is no reason why the evaluatives and directives should not also be theorized in terms of modality, a thing they avoid. TD is closer to an inferential logic by their insistence on validation links and inference. Sproule takes into account the ethos – pathos – logos triad, whereas TD neglects it. We cannot say that they are very close to informal logic in the sense the expression took in the last decades. The TD model lacks some developed discussion of induction, deduction and abduction, basic reasoning skills that are forcibly required in an informal logic perspective, as we can see for instance in Walton's books or elsewhere.

Of course, Sproule recognizes the distinction between evaluations and prescriptions, but he does not give it a specific treatment. In fact, as we have seen, Sproule underscores the notable difficulties in some contexts to bind together an evaluation with a specific practical position. Even if it is given a great importance in both works, we can not say that the value issues are clearly situated in them, they are supposed to be already understood.

(3) Their respective context of use

In the case of Sproule, almost all of his examples are taken from the political domain. This goes with his well known interest for the political sphere, as we can

see by his list of books and articles, especially his work on propaganda issues. If we keep in mind that political actors are supposedly experts in defining the terms of a public discussion, and if we remind ourselves of the necessity in which politicians are situated to frame problems and solutions according to their party's way of defining the issues at hand, we will not be surprised by this emphasis that is visible in the sheer structure of the analytical tool that Sproule provides (Reese, Gandy and Grant 2003). Said in other terms, he has a model that fits well with the purpose of looking at the political sphere and to policy issues in particular. As for T-D, their immediate context is clearly that of ethical discussions properly speaking inside philosophy classes, even though the book presents itself mostly as an introduction to argumentation for undergraduates. The examples are simple to understand, and do not require a high level of knowledge, for instance of the recent history, but they require and contribute to an ethical consciousness of debated questions. Some examples touch at the political, but considered from a moral point of view. Their analytical tool then reflects this privileged domain of discussion which concerns ethical discussions and issues, mostly to be held in classes.

The field-dependency and field-relatedness of argumentation is something well established since Toulmin's 1958 groundbreaking work. Does our work here show a field dependency not only of argumentative practices, but also of theoretical work about argumentation? We certainly have showed a correlation between preferred domain of interrogation and the categories put in the forefront, even though we did not select a quantitative approach and have not endeavoured to treat exhaustively their respective material. Until further verification then, it would seem that the preferred field of application and research has "selected" the required dominant categories, in one case the Interpretive, in the other the dual system of Evaluatives and Directives, respectively useful especially to understand in some way political phenomena, or to orient action and evaluate practices. To consider things in the opposite direction (the categories constructed permitting to select domains and preferred examples) would only be to consider the other face of the same coin.

NOTES
[i] Sproule (1980) and Toussaint-Ducasse (1996), respectively the S model and the TD model for the ends of this disussion. See references for the bibliographical details.

[ii] Many different terms could be used to describe identifiable argumentative procedures, like the *ad baculum*, etc. Instead of using the "scheme" word here, that is used with great efficacy by Walton and colleagues theses days, or to talk of *topoï*, that could also be valid but would refer us to Aristotle, Cicero and the other classics, we prefer to use here, for our describing purposes, "argumentative structures" that seems general enough to take into account the work of Sproule and Toussaint-Ducasse.

[iii] Personal translation, as for the following.

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