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## IMPROVEMENT OF ELOQUENT SKILLS IN RHETORIC LECTURES

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**Annotation.** From ancient times to the present day, the role of rhetoric has changed because social, political, economic, and even legislative environment was changing as well determining the formation of different public speaking. However, the main peculiarities of rhetoric remained unchanged. Therefore, the role of the speaker has changed as well. Despite this fact, the significance of public speaking did not degrade; on the contrary, it has increased and almost became a daily activity.

Students studying rhetoric in the program of Law and pre-trial process are required to fulfil the main needs including overcoming the fear of speaking in front of the audience and lack of confidence determined by doubts on linguistic correctness and expression. Frequent tasks of speaking in front of the audience on different topics help students to decrease the distrust, while frequent practice habituate them to peculiarities of public speaking and help to overcome difficulties.

**Keywords:** rhetoric, peculiarities of public speaking, obstacles of public speaking, students.

### INTRODUCTION

Origin of rhetoric goes back to ancient times when Ancient Greece had developed this field of speaking, the apogee of which was then determined by political, trade and legal relations of society.<sup>1</sup> Current rhetoric is different because it is adapted to present realities considering different social relations of society, and political and legal system. Furthermore, rhetoric has extended affecting various sciences: music rhetoric, pedagogy rhetoric, legal rhetoric, etc. Now rhetoric is simply an art of persuasion used in various fields without which no public activity, including both written and spoken activities, could survive.

From ancient times rhetoric is also being used in legal doctrine. Then, when there were no procurators and lawyers, and when anybody had the right to accuse another person who had to defend himself/herself, the most important aspects of the court were to defend himself/herself and to prove his/her innocence. Eventually this job was taken by logographers, i.e. people who were writing defensive texts to accused person.<sup>2</sup> This could be considered as embryo of legal rhetoric which later developed into complex legal system in which the rhetoric itself have assumed the new meaning; however, the basis remained the same, i.e. to

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<sup>1</sup> Зубанова, С.Г. Риторика, Москва, 2003, с. 7; Koženiauskienė, R. Juridinė retorika, Vilnius, 2005, p. 34.

<sup>2</sup> Зубанова, С.Г. Риторика, Москва, 2003.

help to defend or to learn to accuse properly. Surely, in these days legal system is determined by many laws regulating the activity of all bodies of law, therefore, rhetoric plays less important role. It is not enough to prepare eloquent and excellent speech as it has to be validated legally and reasoned by legislation.

In the studies of Law and pre-trial process, rhetoric is important by its original (to convince), legal (to justify and to reason) and modern (to induce) significance. The lawyer is required not only to be able to speak in public, but also do so without infringement, revelation of material of pre-trial investigation, etc.

Therefore, the **subject** of the research is rhetoric lectures studied in the programme of Law and pre-trial process.

The **objective** of this research is to discuss the essence of rhetoric to students studying Law and pre-trial process.

In order to reach the objective the following **tasks** were raised:

1. Discuss the importance of rhetoric to modern society.
2. Analyze the needs of the students and their importance when studying rhetoric.

Developing the field of rhetoric science, it is important to consider consistent patterns and peculiarities of each rhetoric direction associated with another field of science. One of such directions is legal rhetoric. Student expectations when studying rhetoric reveal particular patterns relevant while learning the art of speaking.

## **RHETORIC AND LAW IN MODERN SOCIETY**

As it was mentioned before, now rhetoric is perceived differently than in ancient times. Currently it became a synonym of language, style and culture of behaviour. Rhetoric helps to form the concept of society's public life.<sup>3</sup> Every person speaking in public is expected to express thoughts clearly, smoothly and expressively. It is hard to perceive that a person could not be able to do so both for objective and subjective reasons. Therefore, if this happens, he/she is being publicly criticized.<sup>4</sup>

As it was mentioned before, the importance and validity of rhetoric role in law goes back to ancient times. At first Greek logographers were only writing speeches to the citizens considering the nature of the case and an audience of judges, also age, education and character of the client, so clients only had to learn the speech by heart and say it before the

<sup>3</sup> Bankauskaitė-Sereikienė, G. *Oratorystės menas*, Vilnius, 2003, p. 6.

<sup>4</sup> <http://tv.lrytas.lt/?id=14153608631415114836>.

court. Surely, the case was always won by those whose eloquence was better because the speech could convince and affect judges who had no legislative preparation and were relying on the sense of justice. Eventually they formed the law, dogmas of law and legislation which in Greek was called *rheton* (lot. *justum*). Therefore, later those speakers, who were able not only to talk expressively, but also to creatively interpret and convince the audience of conditionality of then unshakeable legislative, were called by Greeks *rhetoricians*. Romans had translated this word to *orator*, and the technique of such persuasion was called *rhetoric*. Changing situation had determined the fact that other masters of eloquence, whose speeches hadn't been based on arguments, were being criticized and that way legal speeches slowly separated from speeches of philosophers, historians and poets.<sup>5</sup> For oratory lawyer important things are reality and validity of facts used in order to prove the truth. Modern lawyers are not called orators; however, it is assumed that he/she must have a good eloquence, be able to justify his/her speech before the Court, etc.

Rhetoric is not seeking for orators in a present society because such people must have specific features in order to present their speeches expressively, freely and without any text. Furthermore, there is almost no place for orators to show off their eloquence. Present rhetoric is interactive, a person is waiting and willing for a feedback, and he/she is appealing to emotions; therefore, it determines the fact that a function of impact and persuasion overrides the function of convincing because it is not enough to only convince others. Consequently, rhetoric is called a part of mass communication theory, where communication is understood as intercourse and exchange of thoughts. The main form of such exchange is public speech. It is determined as a bilateral action; however, it is a specific form of spoken language, it is an organized communication, which can be interpreted as a contraposition to informal speech, personal (of two people) or interpersonal (of three and more people) intercourse.<sup>6</sup> Consequently, now specifics of public speaking, its verbal and nonverbal aspects, psychological matters, measures affecting audience, etc. receive a particular focus. It is not enough to only present particular information; the presented information must be effective, it has to draw attention, must be presented in an interesting form, etc. Therefore, public speaking is noticeably removed from the original concept of rhetoric, when conviction and persuasion were only associated with the artistic expression of words, because now rhetoric gets closer to oral manipulation, and verbal and nonverbal suggestibility. Public speaking

<sup>5</sup> Koženiauskiene, R. *Juridinė retorika*. Vilnius, 2005, p. 34–37.

<sup>6</sup> Koženiauskiene, R. *Retorika. Iškalbos stiliatika*. Vilnius, 2001, p. 43.

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becomes a part of different fields. Originality of every field determines the change of public speech features.

### NEEDS ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS STUDYING RHETORIC

Activity of lawyers is almost always public because they need to have wide contacts with people, to participate in hearings of the court and present press releases. Such communication requires the competence of communication. This competence is absolutely crucial to a modern person who is trying to find his/her place in knowledge society. It is particularly important to be able to communicate in a business like, political or social activity.<sup>7</sup> Business language of the lawyers includes both rhetoric and legal aspects because it must satisfy the description of perfect speech, i.e. it has to prove, convince and explain. Consequently, the lawyer must know both the peculiarities of public speech and legal matters; therefore, legal public speech is complex by its content and structure. Speakers of such speeches must have or acquire many oratory features.

Do students studying Law and pre-trial process have such features? Such features are acquired only by few of them. Indeed, despite the tendency of public speaking to express own thoughts clearly and reasonably, many students identified the fear to speak in front of the audience as an obstacle. It is both paradoxical and not paradoxical. In Ancient Greece only people who had features required to orators were able to become ones. Today any person who has to say something or to communicate with somebody in public is required to be the orator. It is not known why students become paralyzed only by a thought of public speaking: is it the reaction of the audience, fear to stumble while speaking, lack of confidence in speech content or the thought to be seen by a lot of people. Fear of the audience is closely related to the lack of self-confidence. There is a two-side link between the lack of self-confidence and fear because the lack of self-confidence determines the accumulation of fear and the uprising fear affects confidence. Therefore, when a student is studying rhetoric, one of the challenges is not only to learn what to say and how to do it, but also how to do it in order to lose the fear of the audience. Fear of speaking is twofold: the real fear of the audience which paralyzes the speaker and is often preventing him/her from saying a single word and maybe even from standing in front of the audience, and the state of losing a *comfort zone* when the speaker experiencing stress has to decide to present his/her speech instead of sitting comfortably and listening to this speech as a member of the audience. Sadly, the first kind of fear cannot be

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<sup>7</sup> Bankauskaitė-Sereikienė, G. Oratorystės menas, Vilnius, 2003, p. 7.

eliminated by the learning of rhetoric because such fear comes from deep psychological barriers; however, the second kind of fear may be defeated while learning rhetoric. After all, one of the ways to defeat the fear of speaking is frequent experience. This could be acquired during rhetoric seminars which could be used for this kind of activity. One can also try psychological and physical exercises which help to relax before the speech, or try different strategies of speaking and listening involving already known and unknown given situations which can vary from official speech of congratulations to excuses for things he/she had done. Considering student abilities, it is possible to design situations where students would be able not only to acquire theoretical knowledge of rhetoric and to learn to apply it, but also would habituate to the listening and watching audience, and would see and perceive that the audience may be of different mood. Frequent accomplishment of individual tasks and tasks in pairs or in groups presented in front of the audience provide students with the possibility to acquire experience, to watch friends and together discuss seen advantages and disadvantages. Not less important are the tasks which reveal not only the importance of speaking, but also the essence of listening and ability to convey the information.

The second important aspect includes student expectations to learn to speak correctly and expressively. This need is closely related to the part of speciality language; however, during the rhetoric lectures teachers may also draw attention to the most frequent linguistic errors occurring in speciality language, especially if they are noticeably repeated while preparing linguistic tasks. Furthermore, each oral task allows teachers and students to discuss accentuation and pronunciation errors together with peculiarities of speaking timbre and loudness. Written tasks reveal not only linguistic correctness, but also the ability to enunciate thoughts smoothly, to associate paragraphs and to present the text written by the computer according to the intended formal requirements.

Particular efforts are needed when preparing written tests. The capability to scientifically justify own thoughts, to find and apply the scientific material or to carry out the research are the essential abilities not only for the learning to speak on general topics, but also for the capability to process information scientifically. One of the most difficult assignments of such task is to learn to systemize and associate the information collected from different sources, and to properly interpret it. This task develops the ability to search for information, to evaluate it responsively and to present it. The presentations of these tasks (preparation of accomplished task and oral presentation) also give students the ability to acquire skills helping to speak in front of the audience and to learn to present the accomplished works. This

task requires not only to be able to smoothly present scientific researches on a chosen topic, but also to know how to show own contribution, and to learn to represent oneself and the accomplished research. This is also associated with the ability to affect and convince of relevance of accomplished task.

Other needs while studying rhetoric included the ability to evaluate the speaker, ability to interest and motivate the audience by own speech, to separate manipulative means, to use it and apply it in own profession, to write defendant and defensive speeches, and to learn to speak more officially, formally and consistently. A part of these aspects might be revealed while preparing speeches which are presented orally. Other aspects, for example, the preparation of defendant and defensive speeches, are intended as individual tasks. These tasks help to reveal the ability to present the information officially, formally, consistently and, of course, reasonably and justly showing objective factors determining the particular evaluation of criminal situation. This task is already a part of legal rhetoric when one associates eloquence, legal matters and reasoning.

Therefore, considering the mentioned needs occurring while studying rhetoric in the study programme of Law and pre-trial process, it was noticed that primarily it is important to accept public speaking as one of many duties feeling responsibility and not giving it excessive prominence. Then the fear to speak in front of the audience will be minimized and there will be no need for worries. When there will be no worries, public speaking will become different and the speaker together with the audience will feel better. Then all of the attention is drawn to the things which are being said and to the content of the speech. When the speaker accomplishes this step, everything else will test speaker's erudition, knowledge of own work and duties improving linguistic competence and ability to reason and justify own thoughts.

## CONCLUSIONS

After the discussion on the role of rhetoric in a modern society, its changes and adaptation considering different social, political and legal environment, it can be said that public speaking is an important part of everyday life. Not only orators have to be able to speak in public because today the function of the speaker is relevant to many. Therefore, a person might feel fear which occurs due to the lack of self-confidence, doubts about the reaction of the audience and things which will be said. This is also determined by changing role of the orator because now the speaker is not the person who only holds a monologue presenting it to

the listening audience. It is essential for the modern speaker to receive a feedback from the audience which determines the success of communication process.

Fear to speak in front of the audience was identified by students studying Law and pre-trial process as one of the obstacles. They lack self-confidence, they are afraid of uncertainty involving the audience and they are frightened by the fact that they do not know if they will be able to say everything in a way it was intended. Correctness of the speech, expression and other aspects which rise doubts and suppose the lack of self-confidence and confidence for own success are also important. Therefore, the purpose of rhetoric lectures is not only to teach what to say and how to do it, but also to teach how to conquer obstacles which prevent people from speaking in public. One of the main purposes of rhetoric tasks is speaking practices which help students to lose the lack of self-confidence and fear. Other features of speech deliverance including correctness, expression, reasoning, justification, etc. are developed as well.

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## IŠKALBOS ĮGŪDŽIŲ GERINIMAS RETORIKOS PASKAITOSE

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### Santrauka

Retorikos vaidmuo nuo antikos laikų iki šių dienų pakito, nes keitėsi socialinė, politinė, ekonominė, netgi teisinė aplinka, lėmusi kitokios viešosios kalbos radimąsi. Tačiau pagrindinės retorikos mokslo ypatybės išliko. Atsižvelgiant į tai, kito ir oratoriaus vaidmuo. Nepaisant to, viešojo kalbėjimo svarba ne sumenko, o dar labiau išsiplėtė, tapo kone kasdienė veikla.

Nuo antikos retorikos mokslu naudojasi ir teisės doktrina. Šiandien ginti, kitus įtikinti savo nekaltumu buvo vieni svarbiausių tuometinio teismo aspektų, kai dar nebuvo nei prokurorų, nei advokatų – kiekvienas galėjo kitą apkaltinti, o šis turėjo gintis. Ilgainiui atsirado logografs – žmonės, kurie rašė ginamuosius tekstus apkaltintiems žmonėms. Tai galima laikyti juridinės retorikos užuomazgomis, kurios vėliau išsirutuliojo į sudėtingą teisinę sistemą, kurioje ir pati retorika įgavo naujų prasmų, tačiau pagrindas išliko toks pats – padėti ginti arba išmokti tinkamai kaltinti. Be abejo, šiomis dienomis teisės sistema yra apibrėžta daugelio įstatymų, reglamentuojančių visų teisės organų veiklą, tad retorikai tenka menkesnis vaidmuo. Nepakanka parengti iškalbingą ir puikią kalbą, ją dar reikia pagrįsti ir juridiškai, kalba turi būti argumentuota teisės normomis.

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Taigi straipsnio objektas yra retorikos dalyko studijos teisės ir ikiteisminio proceso programoje. Tikslas – aptarti retorikos dalyko svarbą studentams, studijuojantiems teisės ir ikiteisminio proceso programoje.

Dalykinė teisininkų kalba apima tiek retorinį, tiek juridinį aspektą, nes ji turi atitikti tobulos kalbos apibūdinimą: įrodyti, įtikinti bei išaiškinti. Vadinasi, reikia išmanyti ir viešosios kalbos ypatumus, ir teisinius dalykus, todėl viešoji juridinė kalba yra sudėtinga tiek turiniu, tiek struktūra. Jų sakytojams reikia turėti arba įgyti nemažai oratoriaus savybių. Ar tokiomis savybėmis pasižymi teisė ir ikiteisminį procesą studijuojantys studentai? Tik kai kurie.

Teisės ir ikiteisminio proceso studijų programos studentai viena iš viešojo kalbėjimo kliūčių įvardija būtent baimę kalbėti prieš auditoriją. Jie nepasitiki savimi, juos baugina nežinia dėl auditorijos, dėl to, ar jiems pavyks pasakyti viską taip, ką jie yra suplanavę. Taip pat svarbus veiksnys yra kalbos taisyklingumas, raiškumas ir kt. aspektai, dėl kurių kylančios abejonės vėlgi suponuoja nepasitikėjimą savimi ir savo sėkme. Taigi retorikos dalyko tikslas yra ne tik mokyti, kaip ir ką kalbėti, bet ir mokyti įveikti kalbėjimo kliūtis, kliudančias sakyti viešąsias kalbas. Vienas iš pagrindinių atliekamų retorikos užduočių tikslų yra kalbėjimo praktika, kuri ir padeda atsikratyti nepasitikėjimo, baimės. Kartu ugdomos ir kitos kalbų sakymo savybės: taisyklingumas, raiškumas, pagrįstumas, argumentavimas ir pan.

**Pagrindinės sąvokos:** retorika, retorika, viešojo kalbėjimo ypatumai, kliūtys sakant viešąsias kalbas, studentai.

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