

Rhetoric of things

Retoryka rzeczy

9 (1) 2022 EDITORS: ANNA M. KIELBIEWSKA, ANNA BENDRAT

SPRAWOZDANIE/REPORT

KINGA ROGOWSKA

UNIVERSITY OF WARSAW, POLAND

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6879-3869>

kj.rogowska2@uw.edu.pl

Sprawozdanie/report: The RHEFINE Conference (24-25.02.2022, Zagreb, Croatia and online)

License

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 international (CC BY 4.0).

The content of the license is available at <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.29107/rr2022.1.9>

KINGA ROGOWSKA

UNIVERSITY OF WARSAW, POLAND

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6879-3869>

kj.rogowska2@uw.edu.pl

Sprawozdanie/report: The RHEFINE Conference (24-25.02.2022, Zagreb, Croatia and online)

The RHEFINE Conference took place on the 24th and 25th of February 2022 at The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of the Zagreb University and online. The conference's theme was *Rhetorical Research and Didactics*. It consisted of two keynotes that opened both days of the conference, 18 papers presented by international scholars, a roundtable on rhetorical curricula, and parallel workshop sessions on different rhetorical skills and ideas.

The conference was opened by Diana Tomić, the leader of the Croatian team of the RHEFINE project, the dean of the Faculty, Domagoj Tončinić, and the head of the Department of Phonetics, Gabrijela Kišiček. The program's first point was a keynote by Kris Rutten (University of Ghent) titled *The rhetoric of cultural literacy*. He argued that we live in a cultural crisis and explained how cultural literacy is rhetorically constructed within contemporary cultural policy and practice. He discussed the educational implications of a rhetorical approach toward cultural literacy.

The first session, *Rhetoric in an educational context*, started with Petra Aczél's (Corvinus University of Budapest) *Future-Proofing Rhetorical Education*. She advocated moving from the product-centered view of rhetorical education that focuses on the speech itself to the position of rhetorical sensitivity, so the teaching of rhetoric should be skill-oriented and aim to build rhetorical literacy both from the role of the speaker and the part of an audience member.

Next, Sanja Kišiček (University of Zagreb) talked about *Creating a Collaborative Student-Centered Culture in Higher Education* and pointed out the role of a teacher as a designer of the learning process, which in the collaborative education is the role that they share with students. To develop an open culture in the classroom, she presented five components: building community, public speaking, education technology, planning for success, and alternative assessment.

Zdravka Biočina (Zagreb School of Economics and Management), the next speaker, in her presentation *Epideictic oratory as an educational tool*, talked about

using Nobel speeches in a rhetoric course curriculum. She pointed out how the addresses were constructed: from the winners who did not want to accept the award, those who kept their distance, and those who received the prize but chose rhetorical means that were not typical for the genre.

The last speaker was Maria Załęska (University of Warsaw). In her talk – *Educational hidden agenda of the debate. A meta-cognitive account* – she presented critical metacognition in rhetorical education on an Oxford debate case study. She showed the chances and risks of using debate in the classroom.

The second session, *Impact and influence of rhetoric in society*, was started by a talk from Kristine Marie Berg (University of Copenhagen) called *Rhetorical citizenship for a polarised world: presentation and examination of a course in 'bridge building'*. She presented the aims and ideals of the Danish organization “The Bridge Builder education” designed for a politically polarised society and spoke about rhetorical citizenship.

The following presentation was from Iglia Kassabova (Institute of Rhetoric and Communications, Sofia): *The rhetoric of the protests in Bulgaria 2013-2020: visual and verbal messages*. She spoke about the protesters’ civic rhetoric on the streets and in the virtual space, such as protests as art performances.

Kristijan Sedak, Paula Galić, and Antea Brkić (Catholic University of Croatia) delivered a part of their research in a paper, *Interpersonal Communication Channels in Persuasion*. They demonstrated the relation between using individual, interpersonal communication channels and election decisions concerning the socio-demographic characteristics of voters.

The following speech was from Ivanka Mavrodieva, Iglia Kassabova, Stefan Serezliev, Yovka Tisheva, Georgi Petkov, and Todor S. Simeonow (Institute of Rhetoric and Communications), who presented *Rhetorical traditions on Rhetoric in Bulgarian Universities*. They demonstrated study programs in rhetoric in Bulgaria, popular Bulgarian books and translations of rhetoric-focused books to Bulgarian used in the education process, and courses that combine rhetoric with other disciplines.

The last presentation was by Ewa Modrzejewska and Agnieszka Szurek (University of Warsaw). In their speech *The integration of rhetoric into the curricula of the Faculty of Polish Studies*, they showed the curriculum of the “Philology for media” specialization and translation specialization, which contain courses that touch on different aspects of rhetorical knowledge.

After the presentation sessions, there was a time for a roundtable on rhetorical curricula where participants shared their experience teaching rhetoric and building and changing contemporary rhetorical education. The last point of the program was a RHEFINE Book Club, where participants discussed the rhetorical books

that had the most impact on their rhetorical education and the research they were conducting.

The second day of the conference was opened by a keynote from Gabrijela Kišiček (University of Zagreb) *Speech delivery in rhetorical scholarship: A historical overview*. She presented the importance of speech delivery from the rhetorical and argumentative perspective from ancient times to the most recent research, the significance of speech delivery, and why it should be an essential part of rhetorical education.

The first session — *Application of rhetoric in various edu-contexts* — was opened by Fotini Egglezou (Hellenic Institute of Rhetorical and Communication Studies) with her speech *The use of common topics in teaching creative writing*. She examined the main aspects and systems of topics and how to use them in a contemporary classroom.

Ivana Bašić (University of Zagreb) spoke about *Evidential rhetorical strategies for constructing knowledge in academic discourse*. She listed rhetorical tools for achieving academic persuasion — evidential and epistemic.

Next, Elenmari Pletikos Olof (University of Zagreb) and Mihaela Matešić (University of Rijeka) introduced a paper *Analogy — a rhetorical figure in conveying knowledge*. They explained the strengths and weaknesses of analogies in their metaphorical and logical qualities, when used in education, based on a corpus of academic lectures.

The last presentation in this session was from Ivanka Mavrodieva, Igljika Kassabova, Stefan Serezliev, Yovka Tisheva, Georgi Petkov, and Todor S. Simeonow (Institute of Rhetoric and Communications). *Rhetorical analysis of speeches and presentations* was about using means from traditional and modern rhetoric to teach students how to analyze addresses with the new method proposed by the speakers.

After the session, participants took part in one of the three elective workshops. Ana Vlah and Diana Tomić conducted a workshop that has shown different perspectives on listening: from hearing, through listening, active listening, critical listening, and rhetorical listening, focusing on the benefits of the last one. Sanja Kišiček taught a workshop titled *Collegial Dialogue for Culture of Collaboration*. She introduced instructional peer coaching to academic educators and showed possibilities of improved communication skills through a structured type of collegial dialogue. Last workshop was led by Elenmari Pletikos Olof and Jelena Vlašić Duić. Their workshop *Speech Skills* familiarized participants with exercises to improve speech skills, usually done before speech delivery.

The last session of the conference, *Contemporary trends in the rhetorical classroom*, was opened by a presentation from Ana Vlah (Utrecht University)

and Michael Burke (University College Roosevelt). In *Teaching the enthymeme: The importance of rhetorical reasoning in higher education*, they explored the idea of enthymeme as an umbrella term in rhetorical curricula and presented ten valuable lessons on teaching enthymeme.

Next presentation was from Kinga Rogowska and Agnieszka Budzyńska-Daca (University of Warsaw). *Structured Classroom Debate as a Genre for Teaching Rhetoric* touched on the pedagogically beneficial way to teach students how to debate based on a genre-oriented approach.

The third paper, *Improvisation at Rhetoric Workshops as a Way of Teaching Communication Skills*, by Aleksandra Łukowska and Agnieszka Budzyńska-Daca, introduced the idea of theatrical improvisation exercises as means to teach rhetorical skills. They provided examples of exercises that marry rhetoric and improv that instructors can use in class.

Next, Tena Žganec (Govornička Akademija Demosten) and Ines Carović (University of Zagreb) presented introductions and conclusions of Croatian video blogs in *Rhetorical characteristics of video blogs*. They indicated that vlogs combine traditional public speech elements and new media's rhetorical genres. They aim to create an impression of a dialogue to encourage further interaction.

The presentation that closed the session and the conference was from Diana Tomić and Jelena Vlašić Duić. *Rhetorician & Phonetician: a long way back and a great way ahead* was an attempt to answer how the relation between rhetoric and phonetics developed in Croatian rhetorical tradition.

The conference hosted scholars from different European countries that seemed to have a similar goal: to evaluate and improve rhetorical research and didactics. In those two days, many conversations took place. Many will proceed forward to ensure the growth of rhetoric as an interdisciplinary field of study that touches on important issues for 21st-century humans.

Rhetoric for Innovative Education (RHEFINE.eu) is a two-year KA2 Erasmus Strategic Partnership in higher education. It is coordinated by the Centre for Applied Rhetoric (University of Warsaw, Poland), and the partners include The Department for Theoretical and Applied Phonetics (University of Zagreb, Croatia) and the Institute of Rhetoric and Communication (Bulgaria).