

## **PREPARATION OF PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS FOR COMMUNICATIVE AND RHETORICAL ACTIVITY IN SCHOOL IN THE CONTEXT OF THEIR PRACTICAL TRAINING**

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**Abstract.** The article deals with the analysis of the state of the primary school teachers' preparation for communicative-rhetorical activity at school, diagnostics of formation of communicative-rhetorical skills of future teachers. The theorists and practitioners give an important place to rhetoric as a science and an academic subject in the training teachers of the new generation. It is the communicative and rhetorical skills as an important component of the general and professional culture of the teacher that will help the primary school educator to organize the pedagogical process effectively, build convincing communication with children, their parents, colleagues, officials etc. However, in the theory and practice of pedagogical education and science the phenomenon of communicative-rhetorical competence as the most important component of the teacher's professional profile is not realized, its structure is not distinguished, psychological and pedagogical bases and, technology of its formation for students are not clearly defined, the world's experience of rhetorical personality formation is studied. This was confirmed by the results of a survey conducted among undergraduate students, graduates of pedagogical faculties of Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University, Kamyanets-Podilskyi Ivan Ohienko National University, Drohobych State Pedagogical University of Ivan Franko, students of postgraduate pedagogical education Ivano-Frankivsk, Khmelnytsky, Lviv regions. Thus, most respondents consider their level of communication and rhetorical skills to be insufficient. More than 70% are afraid of the audience; 84% do not know how to speak "without paper". All respondents, including teachers, regardless of work experience, called the main reason for the ineffectiveness of pedagogical communication the fact

that during professional training they did not have well-formed communication and rhetorical skills. The obtained results convincingly prove the need for their purposeful formation in future primary school teachers. Optimal construction and implementation of the educational process for the formation of students' communicative and rhetorical skills is possible with a technological approach, the essence of which is to modernize the didactic system based on the study of its components and experimental verification of its effectiveness, as well as the introduction of in general, the rhetoric of the initial process in the pedagogical institution.

*Keywords:* communicative and rhetorical competence; communicative and rhetorical skills; future primary school teachers; higher educational establishment; rhetoric; communicative and rhetorical activity

### **Introduction**

Current trends in the development of higher pedagogical education require a constant review of conceptual and technological approaches to the training of teachers. The theorists and practitioners give an important place to rhetoric as a science and an academic subject in the training teachers of the new generation. It is the communicative and rhetorical skills (CRS) as an important component of the general and professional culture of the teacher that will help the primary school teacher to organize the pedagogical process effectively, build convincing communication with children, their parents, colleagues, officials etc. These professional skills are necessary for a teacher, because communication and "the word" are his main tools in the activity. In this regard, the formation of the CRS of future primary school teachers in the process of their professional training in higher educational establishment will serve to increase the efficiency of their professional activities, promote fuller self-realization of the individual, the development of individuality.

But in the theory and practice of pedagogical education and science the issue of communicative rhetorical competence (CRC) is not completely researched, the phenomenon of communicative rhetorical competence as the most important component of the teacher's professional profile is not realized, its structure is not defined, psychological and pedagogical bases are not clearly defined. Its formation for students under the conditions of study in a higher educational establishment (HEE), the technology of CRC formation is not defined, the world experience of formation of rhetorical personality is not studied. The complexity of this process lies in the fact that the problem of forming CRC is especially relevant in pedagogical HEE, because there is usually a system of forming a set of subject and general pedagogical knowledge and skills of the future teachers, while less attention is paid to the communicative and rhetorical component of pedagogical education aimed at creating a harmonious language personality that has the skills to effectively influence the audience.

This was confirmed by the results of a survey conducted among undergraduate students, graduates of pedagogical faculties of Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian

National University (PNU), Kamianets-Podilskyi Ivan Ohiienko National University (KPNU), Drohobych State Pedagogical University of Ivan Franko (DSPU), students of postgraduate pedagogical education institutes of Ivano-Frankivsk, Khmelnytsky, Lviv regions (more details will be discussed below). Now let's just note that more than 82% of respondents are not satisfied with the level of their own communicative and rhetorical competence obtained during the training period.

### **Review of the research on the topic**

The results of the analysis of the sources<sup>1)</sup> (Black 1980; Polito 2005; Horner et al. 1994) show that in world educational practice, in particular higher education institutions of the leading EU countries, USA, communication disciplines for teachers are central, basic. The subjects of the language-rhetorical cycle are the main ones in bachelor's programs. Thus, in US colleges and universities where teachers are trained, these subjects usually combine general theory of rhetoric and applied pedagogical rhetoric. An important role in the professional training of American teachers, according to educational standards, is given to the communicative component, which is associated with the study of educational methodology, mastering constructive models of communicative pedagogical actions in various socio-pedagogical situations (cases). In American universities, the emphasis is on communicative and rhetorical activities, it is instrumentalism that determines the content of courses and workshops for the study of rhetoric in the departments of communicative studies (Bondarenko 2017; Leloup 2003; Totten, Sills, Digby & Russ 1991). There are grounds to argue about the successful rhetoric of pedagogical education in the United States: the formation of communicative and rhetorical competence of future teachers provide such subjects as classical rhetoric, scientific rhetoric, public rhetoric, rhetorical practice, curricular didactics, pedagogical rhetoric. The formed communicative language competence of future teachers presupposes readiness to carry out successful communication, to possess various communication tools; be able to use established speech patterns to solve various pedagogical tasks, etc. (Kadirov 2016). Future professionals are introduced to modern theories and trends in rhetoric (Black 1980; Foss, Foss & Trapp 2014; Getrude 1990; Polito 2005; Horner et al. 1994). For example, *Inviting Understanding: A Portrait of Invitational Rhetoric* Edited by Sonja K. Foss and Cindy L. Griffin. *Inviting Understanding: A Portrait of Invitational Rhetoric* is an authoritative reference work designed to provide a comprehensive overview of the theory of invitational rhetoric, developed twenty-five years ago by Sonja K. Foss and Cindy L. Griffin. This theory challenges the conventional conception of rhetoric as persuasion and defines rhetoric as an invitation to understanding as a means to create a relationship rooted in equality, immanent value, and self-determination. Rather than celebrating argumentation, division, and winning, invitational rhetoric encourages rhetors to listen across differences, to engage in dialogue, and to try to

understand positions different from their own (Foss & Griffin 2020). The teacher training program in the United States includes special courses in communicative didactics, which expand the very concept of “pedagogical rhetoric theory developed by the founders of the Institute of Global Dialogue A. Gangadin and L. Svidler. The theory of “deep dialogue” includes educational tasks, social and moral aspects of communication (Totten, Sills, Digby & Russ 1991).

In the system of higher education in France, teacher training in pedagogical institutes of university type (the 2nd year of studying) involves the study of such rhetorical disciplines as: “Peculiarities of school teacher’s work”, the content of which determines the mastery of communication (rhetoric) as a tool of pedagogical influence and “Theater/Directing”, which teaches future teachers of staging and directing plays, theater, reading<sup>1</sup>). French scientist Stephanie Leloup compiled a professional profile of the “ideal teacher” based on the main results of a survey of college students. Among the components he mentioned the ability to build personal relationships with students on mutual respect; possession of such qualities as sense of humor, literacy, erudition, etc. ; ability to build interesting lessons, keep the class's attention throughout the lesson; knowledge of the subject, ability to interest in it; mastery of communication styles, mannerisms, pedagogical tact, public speaking, etc. – dominated by communicative and rhetorical skills, which indicates the awareness of future French teachers of the importance of mastering communicative and rhetorical skills (Leloup 2003).

Thus, the educational process of pedagogical educational institutions in European countries and the United States is aimed at the formation of communicative and rhetorical skills.

Taking this into account, the problem of rhetoric of higher education in Ukraine is relevant, this is emphasized by G. Bondarenko (2017), N. Holub (2008), L. Matsko (2015), A. Pervushina (2012). G. Sagach (Sagach, & Yunina 1990) and others. However, the issue of forming communicative and rhetorical skills of future primary school teachers in the Free Economic Zone has not been thoroughly developed to the end.

**The aim of the article** is to analyze the state of preparation of primary school teachers for communicative and rhetorical activities at school, to diagnose the formation of communicative and rhetorical skills.

### **Substantiation of pedagogical experiment and its experimental base**

The formation of a competitive primary school teacher is possible only if the CRC is formed, ready for effective communicative and rhetorical activities, which is manifested in the process of direct relationships with students, interaction with their parents, colleagues, teachers, other educational and social institutions.

In order to diagnose the formation of CRC among undergraduate students, graduates of pedagogical faculties of PNU, KPNU, DSPU, as well as students of postgraduate pedagogical educational establishments of Ivano-Frankivsk, Khmelnytsky and Lviv

regions, a survey was conducted where there were 220 engaged people in total. According to the survey, most people consider their level of CRC formation to be insufficient. More than 70% are afraid of the audience, 84% do not know how to speak “without paper”. All respondents, including teachers, regardless of length of service, called the main reason for the ineffectiveness of pedagogical communication the fact that during their training they were not well-formed CRS.

### **Methods**

To solve the tasks and achieve the goal it was used a number of research methods i.e. theoretical analysis of scientific sources on the research topic, their systematization and generalization; theoretical modeling; collection and processing of empirical data (observation, questionnaires, testing, interviews, content analysis, analysis of student speeches, study of educational documentation, etc.) to diagnose the formation of communicative and rhetorical skills in students; methods of mathematical statistics, analysis and generalization of research results.

### **Stages and characteristics of the experimental work**

The analysis of the state of preparation of students in HEE shows: there is still no perspective concept of formation of CRS for future teachers; the analysis of the curricula of the higher schools gives grounds to assert that 1 – 3 disciplines are usually aimed at the formation of the CRC at best; elements of rhetorical training are not integrally integrated, they are mostly random, partially fixed in separate educational subjects studied by undergraduate students; moreover, the component of communicative rhetorical competence, in particular communicative rhetorical skills are considered be minor ones and are in the background of professional training of future primary school teachers, therefore, they are not the subjects of special attention.

Such authors as H. Bilavych, G. Sagach, N. Holub, L. Matsko, G. Onufrienko and others consider rhetorical activity as effective thinking and speaking activity, which is aimed at creating persuasive speech, interaction with the audience, personality and positive influence on it. Rhetorical activity is closely related to public speaking, so it is communicative and rhetorical. The structure of CRC (communicative rhetorical skills are believed to be its important component) can be conditionally presented as a synthesis of interconnected components i.e. mental, speech and communicative. Such a structure, in our opinion, makes it possible to combine in communicative rhetorical skills and classical approaches to rhetorical activity (classical triad “a thought – a word – an action”), and modern requirements for its organization and implementation. We believe that it most fully reflects their essence. Of course, we have conditionally singled out these components, which are interconnected.

CRS are professionally necessary for a teacher, as his work is related to communication and establishing effective interaction with students, their parents, their colleagues, etc. It is important to note that among the qualities that a future primary school teacher should

possess, Ukrainian respondents singled out such as communicativeness, eloquence, ability to influence and persuade, flexibility, delicacy and tact in communication, etc. Thus, the persons we interviewed also recognized the leading role of communicative activity in the teaching profession, the need for appropriate training of students for it. We believe that the communicative aspects of the activities of the future primary school teacher can rightly be called communicative and rhetorical. In fact, the purpose of this activity is not only to establish connections and transmit certain information, but also to have a positive impact on the individual, to achieve mutual understanding, persuasion, explanation, and motivation by means of an effective word. And these are already rhetorical aspects, and require the teacher to apply rhetorical skills.

The list of such skills, in our opinion, constitute the "communicative rhetorical professional profile" of the teacher i.e. the ability to formulate the goals and objectives of professional communication; ask questions and answer them professionally; manage communication depending on the defined purposes; to prove, argue, refute, persuade; to conduct a conversation, interview, business conversation, discussion, debate, controversy, etc.; have the technique and logic of speech; have appropriate speech structures and lexical units that affect the emotional and expressive state of the student and others; be able to write a speech and build a public speech, etc. (Bilavych 2018; Holub 2008).

To study the dynamics, determine the effectiveness of the process of forming CRS for students, objectively evaluate its results, find out how this process affected the development of personality, you need to get a clear idea of measuring the levels of formation of these skills. Thus, the question arises of the criteria for studying and assessing the formation of the CRS in future primary school teachers. We suppose this criterion to be those features of rhetorical activity, which carry out its evaluation, give the opportunity to assert the effectiveness, efficiency, influence of this activity.

In determining the criteria and levels of formation of the CRS, we took into account the criteria for assessing the professional communication skills of teachers (A. Kapska), the criteria for the formation of communicative skills in students (A. Pervushina), the criteria for assessing rhetorical monologue (D. Alexandrov), the criteria for dispute effectiveness) (Bondarenko 2017; Holub 2008; Pervushina, 2012; Sagach & Yunina 1990). In order to fix, objectively interpret and evaluate the CRS, the features that characterize the degree of manifestation of each criterion were clarified. The first criterion (motivational) is a system of student motives aimed at mastering the CRS; attitude to them as professionally necessary ones for future teachers, the conditions of their self-realization (manifested in the degree of persistence, activity, initiative and other personal qualities). The second criterion (semantic) is the degree of understanding of the essence of communicative and rhetorical activities and the CRS, their structure and content; knowledge of techniques and methods of performing appropriate actions. The third criterion (activity) is a measure, the degree of implementation of the CRS in the process of communicative and rhetorical activities. As for the mental component it is the efficiency and culture of thinking, its logic and consistency, clarity and

depth of argumentation, persuasiveness of thought, creativity and originality of the concept. Regarding the speech component, it is the efficiency and culture of speech, its correctness, clarity, accuracy, richness, brevity, relevance, artistic and figurative expressiveness, mastery of speech technique. The communicative component presupposes the effectiveness and culture of communication, i.e. determines the degree of achievement of effective interaction between the speaker and the audience.

Based on these criteria and components of rhetorical activity, five parameters were identified, according to which the formation of rhetorical skills in future primary school teachers was further assessed: motivational, semantic, mental, speech, communicative. The evaluation of the CRS for each parameter was carried out on the basis of the assessment of the relevant personality qualities in the range from 1 to 5 points: “5” – the quality is very strong and constant; “4” – the quality is strong and frequent; “3” – difficult to determine (manifestations and manifestations are the same); “2” – the quality is weak and rare; “1” – the quality is very weak or not at all (Sagach & Yunina 1990). Characteristics of the parameters for assessing rhetorical skills are given in table 1.

**Table 1.** Criteria characteristic of the levels of CRS formation for future primary school teachers for each parameter

| No | Parameters                                               | Levels     | Criteria for levels                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|----|----------------------------------------------------------|------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1  | M<br>O<br>T<br>I<br>V<br>A<br>T<br>I<br>O<br>N<br>A<br>L | high       | The attitude to CRS as to professionally necessary for the future teacher, an important condition of self-realization of the person which has steady character; expressed emotionally stable needs and aspirations to master the CRS, which are manifested in activity, persistence, initiative.                                                   |
|    |                                                          | sufficient | The attitude to the CRS is positive, they are aware of their importance as professionally necessary; persistent needs to master them; communicative and rhetorical activity is usually characterized by activity, persistence, initiative.                                                                                                         |
|    |                                                          | medium     | The attitude to communicative and rhetorical activity is generally positive, the need to master the CRS is not clearly understood, and therefore has not become a stable motive, which systematically encourages the mastery of these skills; insufficient persistence and initiative in communicative and rhetorical activity, unstable activity. |
|    |                                                          | low        | Значення КРУ для майбутньої діяльності усвідомлюється слабо або ж зовсім не усвідомлюється, тому практично відсутні позитивна мотивація й вольові зусилля щодо оволодіння КРУ; дії студентів характеризуються безініціативністю, інертністю, небажанням долати труднощі тощо.                                                                      |



|   |                                      |            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|---|--------------------------------------|------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2 | C<br>O<br>N<br>T<br>E<br>N<br>T      | high       | Knowledge of the essence of CRS in monological, dialogical and polylogical forms is deep, it is the property of personal consciousness, the internal determinant of behavior                                                                                                                                                                            |
|   |                                      | sufficient | In general, knowledge of the essence of communicative and rhetorical activities and basic concepts is conscious and deep.                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|   |                                      | medium     | Possession of basic knowledge of rhetoric, understanding the essence of the CRS, their components; recognition of the relative importance of the CRS in future professional activities.                                                                                                                                                                 |
|   |                                      | low        | Knowledge is empirical.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 3 | M<br>E<br>N<br>T<br>A<br>L           | high       | Communicative and rhetorical activity is characterized by logical harmony, it is characterized by certainty, consistency, validity, persuasiveness, clarity and depth of argumentation; elements of originality of style and creative approach are revealed.                                                                                            |
|   |                                      | sufficient | Communicative and rhetorical activity meets logical requirements, but sometimes lacks an original approach, insufficiently developed creative thinking.                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|   |                                      | medium     | There is a lack of clarity of thinking, sometimes there are violations of logic and consistency of presentation, lack of persuasiveness and argumentativeness of opinions; there are no manifestations of originality and creativity.                                                                                                                   |
|   |                                      | low        | Rhetorical actions are performed at the level of life without taking into account logical requirements; characteristic uncertainty of opinion, the sequence of presentation is broken, there are contradictory judgments; weak argumentation and persuasiveness.                                                                                        |
| 4 | S<br>P<br>E<br>E<br>C<br>H           | high       | Speech is correct, characterized by clarity, expediency, capacity, richness of verbal means, imagery; high level of speech technique.                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|   |                                      | sufficient | Speech is correct, clear, expedient, clear, but sometimes insufficient artistic imagery of style, there are shortcomings of speech technique.                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|   |                                      | medium     | Mistakes, available words and sounds-parasites are allowed in speech, verbosity, monotony, disturbance of tempo, inconsistency of intonation and other technical omissions are shown; speech lacks artistic and figurative expressiveness and clarity.                                                                                                  |
|   |                                      | low        | Speech is monotonous, indistinct, unclear, there are gross violations of the speech norm; speech technique is poorly developed; there is no imagery of speech.                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 5 | C<br>O<br>M<br>M<br>U<br>N<br>I<br>C | high       | Rhetorical actions are coordinated with features of an audience and a concrete situation, ability to empathy, attraction, reflection is shown; communication with the audience is in the nature of interaction; developed skills of self-regulation; emotionally expressive manifestations are adequate and contribute to effective rhetorical activity |



|   |                                                               |            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|---|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5 | C<br>O<br>M<br>M<br>U<br>N<br>I<br>C<br>A<br>T<br>I<br>V<br>E | sufficient | Communicative behavior is generally adequate, but sometimes there is a stereotype of rhetorical activity, inconsistency with the requirements of the new situation and the characteristics of a particular audience (changing the situation of communication and the audience does not lead to changes in behavior).                                                                                           |
|   |                                                               | medium     | Mental and speech activities do not always meet the communicative requirements; insufficient perceptual skills: difficulties with reflection, empathy, attraction; errors in the choice of adequate means of influence and organization of interaction with the audience; emotionally expressive behavior often does not correspond to the situation of communication, self-regulation is not always possible. |
|   |                                                               | low        | Ways to influence the interlocutors are mostly inadequate, contact with the audience can not be established, so the activity is one-sided; communicative qualities are not formed; the value of emotionally expressive means is not realized and is not controlled.                                                                                                                                            |

Therefore, for the features of each of these parameters there may be a number of specific manifestations that will characterize a certain level of CRS formation. Under the level of formation of the CRS, we understand the qualitative characteristics of sufficiently stable properties that determine the degree of implementation of the features of our selected parameters, their consistency with each other. Thus, the following parameters of the CRS formation are characteristic of the motivational parameter: the system of student motives aimed at mastering the CRS; attitude to them as professionally necessary for future primary school teachers, the conditions of their self-realization (manifested in the degree of persistence, activity, initiative and other personal qualities). The semantic criterion characterizes the degree of understanding of the essence of rhetorical activity and CRS, their structure and content; knowledge of techniques and methods of performing appropriate actions. The mental criterion is characterized by efficiency and culture of thinking, its logic and consistency, clarity and depth of argumentation, persuasiveness of thought, creativity and originality of the concept. Speech criterion characterizes the efficiency and culture of speech, its normativeness, correctness, clarity, accuracy, richness, brevity, relevance, artistic expressiveness, mastery of speech technique, communicative – efficiency and culture of communication, i.e. the degree of effective interaction based on perceptual, interactive and emotionally expressive skills.

Depending on the degree of manifestation of CRS, on the basis of certain criteria and their features four levels of rhetorical skills were identified, namely high, sufficient, medium and low. In pedagogical research, a high level of a quality of personality, which is an indicator of the formation of skills, is characterized by the presence of all the features inherent in this indicator. The medium level is stated in the presence of about half of the signs of the relevant criterion. A low

level is determined when there are less than half of the signs of the total number that reveals the criterion, or in their absence (Holub 2008; Pervushina 2012).

Approximate criteria for level indicators of CRS formation for each parameter are shown in table. 1

The indicator of CRS formation for each parameter and the general level of CRS formation for students was the average value of the sum of points, which was evaluated for each of the elements (parameters), according to the following scale: 5 – 4.5 points – high level, 4.4 – 3.5 points – sufficient level, 3.4 – 2.5 points – medium level, 2.4 – 1 point – low level.

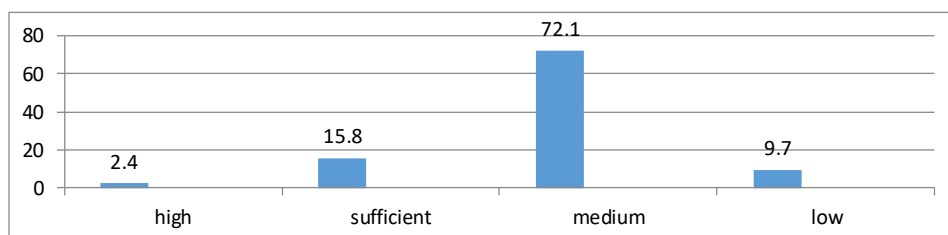
For example, such characteristics as the attitude to the CRS as professionally necessary for the future teacher, an important condition for self-realization of the individual is stable; expressed emotionally stable needs and aspirations to master rhetorical skills, which are manifested in activity, persistence, initiative; knowledge of the essence of CRS in monological, dialogical and polylogical forms is deep and it is the property of personal consciousness, the internal determinant of behavior; communicative rhetorical activity is characterized by logical harmony, it is characterized by certainty, consistency, validity, persuasiveness of thought, clarity and depth of argumentation; elements of originality of style and creative approach are shown; correct speech, characterized by clarity, expediency, capacity, richness of verbal means, imagery; high level of speech technique; rhetorical actions are coordinated with features of an audience and an exact situation, ability to empathy, attraction, reflection is shown; communication with the audience has the character of interaction; developed skills of self-regulation; emotional and expressive manifestations are adequate and contribute to effective communicative and rhetorical activity, corresponded to a high level (5 – 4.5 points).

In order to find out the levels of CRS formation for students, special methods of their study have been developed. For example, to identify the level of CRS by motivational parameter and their self-assessment, students used a questionnaire containing four statement questions. Future primary school teachers had to choose from four alternatives one answer that most fully reflects the characteristics being studied:

1. After graduation, do you plan to work in your chosen specialty? (“required”, “probably yes”, “not sure”, “probably not”).
2. Does the effectiveness of your future professional activity depend on the level of your CRS ownership? (“definitely depends”; “depends”, “probably depends”; “does not depend”).
3. You consider mastering the CRS to be... (“mandatory”, “desirable”, “possible”, “optional”).
4. You have CRS... (“at a high level”, “at a sufficient level”; “at a medium level”; “at a low level”).

A score (1 – 3) was determined for each answer to questions.

Based on the results of the written survey, clarification interviews were conducted. Given the average values of the survey data, the following indicators of CRS levels in future primary schools were determined by motivational parameter: 2.4% – high level, 15.8% – sufficient level, 72.1% – average level, 9.7% – low level (Fig. 1).



**Figure 1.** Levels of CRS among the future primary school teachers due to the motivational parameter

Analysis of CRS self-assessment data shows that 6.6% of respondents consider themselves to be high, 29.4% to be sufficient, 46.1% to be average, and 17.9% to be low.

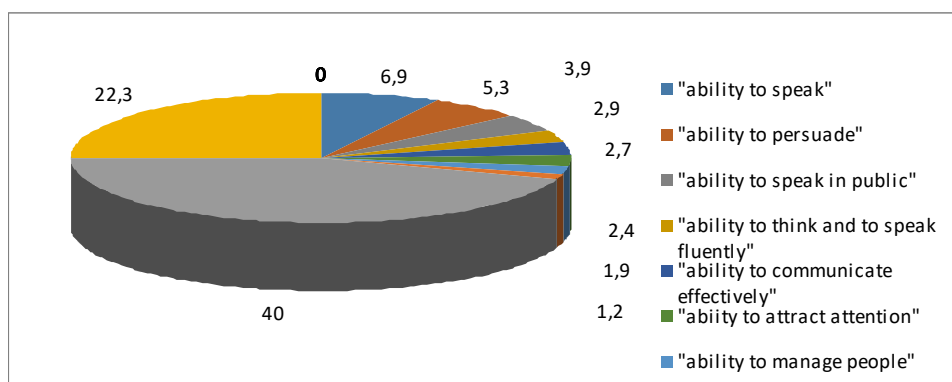
The degree of students' awareness of the essence of communicative rhetorical activity and the content of the CRS, their components and basic rhetorical concepts (content parameter) was revealed by the method of testing. Students were asked to complete sentences where it was necessary to define the following concepts: rhetoric, rhetorical skills, rhetorical activity, speech culture of the speaker, mental culture of the speaker, communicative culture of the speaker, public speech, business conversation, business conversation, discussion, debate, controversy.

Each completed judgment received a score. The correctness, completeness and depth of judgments were taken as criteria for assessing the level of theoretical knowledge. The evaluation was carried out as follows: 5 points – the answer is correct, complete, deep; 4 points – the answer is correct, but somewhat not deep or not completely complete; 3 points – the answer is generally correct, but not deep and not complete; 2 points – superficial answer, often on an empirical level of understanding; 1 point – the answer is incorrect; 0 points – no answer. Only 1.3% of all answers received are correct, complete, deep. 8.0% were supposed to be correct, but not deep or not completely full answers. The largest number of answers are generally correct, but not complete and not deep (32.6%). 23.3% of students' answers are superficial, often at the empirical level of understanding. 18.5% of

incorrect answers were also received, and in 16.3% of cases the sentence was not extended (no answer).

The use of the method of content analysis made it possible to establish the degree of students' understanding of the essence of the concepts of rhetoric offered to them for definition. Thus, only about half of the respondents show a more or less correct understanding of the essence of the concept of "rhetoric", 14.6% give superficial answers, and a quarter of all students have not been able to define this concept. Only a little more than a third of respondents identified rhetoric as a science, of which 11.7% – "the science of communication", 6.8% – "eloquence", 6.6% – "speech (language)", 5.1% – "about public speaking", 3.2% – "about business communication", 1.9% – "about the correct, clear presentation of information" and so on. About one in five considers rhetoric an art: 19.5% – "the art of speaking (communicating)", 1.5% – the art of eloquence. 11.2% of respondents defined rhetoric as a certain skill: "the ability to communicate with people", "the ability to pronounce correctly", "the ability to speak"; 5.3% believe that it is a "speech to the public", 4.9% – "thinking, thought" and so on.

Only 2.4% of all respondents defined the essence of rhetorical activity as "creating public speech according to the rules of rhetoric", and 7.3% – as "activity based on knowledge and skills in rhetoric." About one in five in the definition mentions only a certain aspect or feature of rhetorical activity, and more than 70% of respondents gave a superficial or incorrect definition. Thus, 8.3% identify rhetorical activity with public speeches, 6.6% – with "the ability to speak and give a talk in front of people", 5.8% define it as "the activity of people in communication with other people", 3.4% – "activities related to correct expression", 1.2% – "activities related to speech analysis"; 3.2% believe that rhetorical activity is "a process of studying rhetoric" and so on.



**Figure 2.** The results of the students' answers for the question "What is CRS?"

None of the respondents gave a completely correct answer about the essence of the CRS (Fig. 2). Some students define these skills as “speaking skills” and “human rhetoric skills” (10.2% and 6.9%, respectively). Others cite some of the CRS's hallmarks: “persuasiveness” – 5.3%, “public speaking ability” – 3.9%, “thinking and speaking fluently” – 2.9%, “clear speech” and “correct speaking”, “communicate” – 2.7% each, etc. There were also the following definitions: “the ability to attract people's attention” (2.4%), “the ability to manage people” (1.9%), “the ability to learn” (1.2%), etc. 40% of respondents said they did not know what a CRS was, 22.3% did not answer this question at all.

No correct, complete and profound answer has been received regarding the essence of the speaker's mental, speech and communicative culture. About one-fifth of all definitions are given “through a circle”: “a speaker's thinking culture is his thinking culture” (similar to speech and communication culture).

About one in nine (10.9%) define a speaker's thinking culture as “the ability to think correctly”; as “clear statement of opinions”, “consistency and validity of thinking”, “correctness and logic of thought” – respectively 6.6%, 3.4%, 2.4% and so on.

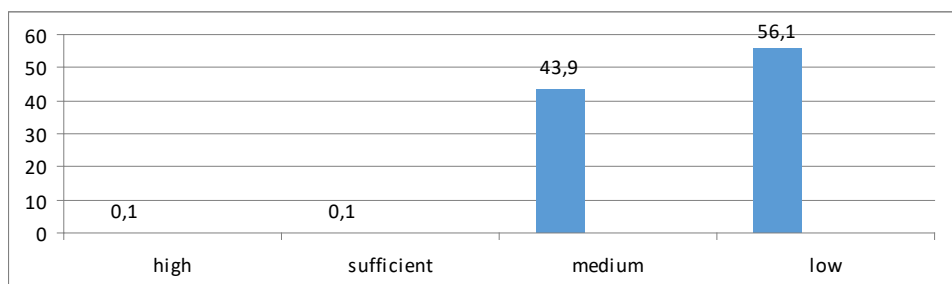
Regarding speech culture, its individual elements are more or less fully named: “correctness of speech” – 8.7%, “clarity and imagery of utterances” – 2.4%; “impeccable command of the language”, “quality speech”, speech in which there are no errors” – 1.7%. One third of respondents (33.4%) define the speech culture of the speaker as a certain skill, which is characterized by certain speech qualities: “the ability to speak the language fluently” – 7.8%, “the ability to express their thoughts aloud” – 6.3%, the ability to speak well to speak” – 5.6%, the ability to express thoughts with the help of words correctly” – 4.1%, “the ability to express oneself logically and correctly” correctly 3.9%; “ability to communicate orally with the audience” – 3.6%, ability to speak in front of the audience – 1.9%, etc.

Respondents understand the communicative culture of the speaker as the ability to communicate (every fifth), “communication culture” – 7.0%, “the ability to listen and speak” (every tenth), “the ability to report some information” – 2.2%.

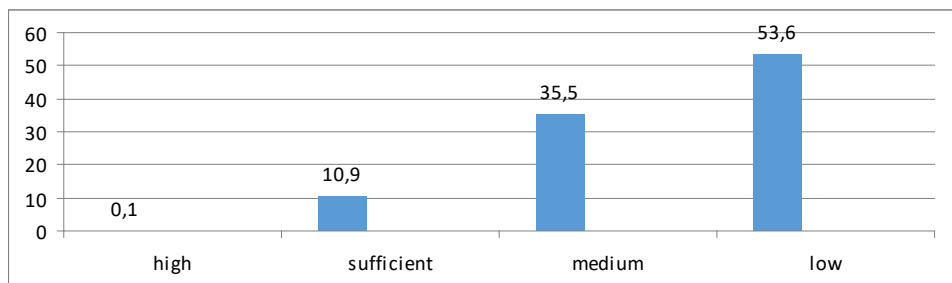
Students' definition of the main forms of rhetorical activity (public speech, conversation, business conversation, discussion, debate, controversy) is also not correct, complete and deep. Thus, half of the respondents (50.7%) understand public speech as a person's speech in front of an audience (a group of people, other people, etc.). More complete and in-depth answers are: “these are the words with which the speaker addresses the audience” – 3.7%, “this is a speech in front of a group of people to report the information (discussion of information)” – 3.3%, “public speech that has a socially important goal” – 3.1%, etc.

Students' answers prove not only ignorance of the theory of rhetoric, its basic concepts (this is understandable, because only 1.5% of all respondents have studied rhetoric before), but also a lack of general erudition. Students' logical culture is extremely low: 12.7% of all completed judgments received contain a logical error – “a circle in definition”, for example: “rhetorical skills are rhetorical skills”, “speaker's thinking culture is his thinking culture”, “conversation – this is when people talk” and so on. Other logical errors were made, in particular, the disproportionate definitions (“rhetoric is a science”, “rhetorical activity is an activity that educates a person”, “speech culture is the ability to express oneself clearly”, etc.).

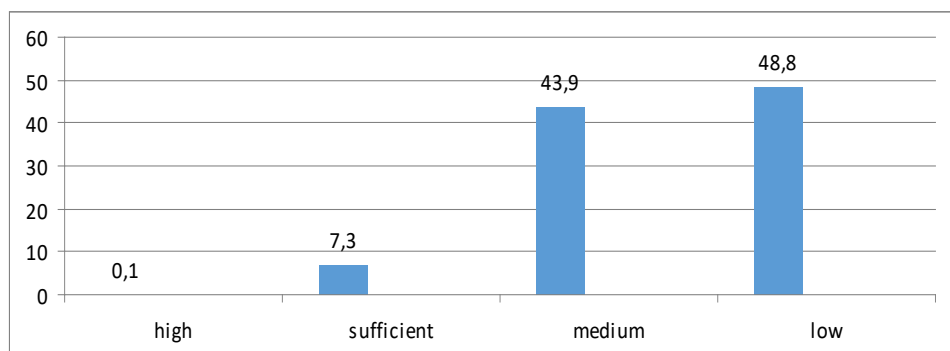
According to the results of the assessment of the CRS formation, no students with a high and sufficient level were identified according to the content parameter, 43.9% of respondents showed average results, and the largest group – 56.1% were students with a low level of knowledge (Fig. 3). It is also alarming that almost 17% of respondents (approximately one in six) received a score of 1.4 points and below.



**Figure 3.** The results of the assessment of the CRS formation on the content parameter



**Figure 4.** The results of the assessment of the CRS formation by activity parameter



**Figure 5.** Levels of CRS possession of future primary school teachers at the ascertaining stage of the research

Assessment of the activity manifestation of rhetorical skills (according to mental, speech and communicative parameters) was carried out by analyzing them in the process of a 5-minute public speech. The students were invited to speak in front of an audience of classmates on any topic of their choice. The speech was evaluated by a group of experts consisting of a teacher of rhetoric, a teacher of psychological and pedagogical disciplines and an experimenter, who were previously acquainted with the methodology and criteria for assessing rhetorical skills. An indicator of the level of formation of the rhetorical skills activity among students was the arithmetic mean of the assessments of three experts on three parameters (mental, speech and communicative). The evaluation gave the following results: high level – 0%, sufficient – 10.9%, medium – 35.5%, low – 53.6% (Fig. 4).

The general level of CRS formation of each student was determined as the arithmetic mean of the sum of points for each parameter (motivational, semantic, activity). Indicators 5 – 4.5 points characterized a high level, 4.4 – 3.5 points – a sufficient level, 3.4 – 2.5 points – an average level, 2.4 – 0.1 points – a low level. As a result of the ascertaining research of levels of rhetorical skills of students on the basis of an estimation of indicators according to the criteria defined by us the following data are received: high level is not possessed by any of researched, sufficient level was demonstrated by 7.3%, medium – 43.9%, low – 48.8% (Fig. 5).

The results of the assessment of students' rhetorical skills by experts were compared with their self-esteem (Table 2).

A comparison of students' self-assessment and CRS expert assessment revealed some inconsistencies. Thus, only a third of students (33.7%) evaluate themselves more or less objectively; in 54.6% of students (more than half) self-esteem was overestimated in relation to its assessment by experts, and in 11.7%



**Table 2.** Levels of formation of rhetorical skills based on self-assessment and expert assessment

| Assessment         | Levels (%): |            |        |      |
|--------------------|-------------|------------|--------|------|
|                    | high        | sufficient | medium | low  |
| Self-assessment    | 6.6         | 29.4       | 46.1   | 17.9 |
| Expert asseessment | -           | 7.3        | 43.9   | 48.8 |

(approximately every ninth) – underestimated. According to the results of the clarification conversation, it was found that the overestimation of the CRS is generally associated with ignorance of the requirements for communicative and rhetorical activities and insufficient reflection. Low self-esteem in most cases is the result of self-doubt, lack of experience in rhetoric, and so on.

### **Conclusion**

Thus, the analysis of curricula, programs of the specialty “Primary Education” and the state of rhetorical training proves that they are not sufficiently focused on the purposeful formation of the CRS for students. In the presence of significant opportunities of psychological and pedagogical disciplines for communicative and rhetorical training, their potential remains unrealized due to some inconsistency of teaching content with the requirements of pedagogical activity, mainly theoretical orientation and focus on monologue forms of communication, insufficient activation of students' cognitive activity, weak interdisciplinary links.

The results of the study indicate that the CRS of future primary school teachers are insufficient (high level – 0; sufficient – 7.3%; medium – 43.9%; low – 48.8%). In particular, the weakness of target attitudes and motivation of students for rhetorical training, lack of awareness of the rhetorical skills importance in future professional activities, little experience of public speaking. The level of students' CRS correlates with the level of development of their creative thinking, speech and communicative qualities. In the course of the research it was established that in rhetorical activity students face numerous difficulties.

The obtained results convincingly prove the need for purposeful formation of CRS in future primary school teachers in the process of their professional training. Optimal construction and implementation of the educational process for the formation of CRS for students is possible with a technological approach, the essence of which is to modernize the didactic system based on the study of its components and experimental verification of its effectiveness, as well as introduction to the curriculum “Fundamentals of Rhetoric” initial process.

## NOTES

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