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Abstract. The subject of the present study is the relationship between oral and written speech within the context of rhetoric. The paper aims to analyze the fundamental characteristics of these two forms of speech, their linguistic and communicative functions, and to identify the specific nature of their coexistence in rhetorical discourse.

The relevance of the research is determined by the transformation of contemporary public communication, in which oral and written forms are becoming increasingly interdependent. Although the distinctions between oral and written speech have been widely studied, this paper examines their coexistence within rhetoric as a complex and hybrid linguistic-communicative act – an aspect that has so far been addressed only fragmentarily in Georgian linguistics. The novelty of the research lies in the fact that it explores not only the boundaries between oral and written speech, but also their dynamic interdependence within specific socio-historical contexts.

The study is based on descriptive-analytical and comparative methods and integrates the theoretical principles of functional stylistics and rhetoric. At the first stage, the concepts of oral and written speech and their linguistic and communicative characteristics are examined, with particular attention paid to the hybrid nature of rhetoric. At the second stage, a textual and stylistic analysis of samples of Georgian rhetoric from various fields is conducted, evaluating the features of written preparation and oral realization of rhetorical texts. Through comparative analysis, the mechanisms of opposition and complementarity between oral and written speech are identified.

The main objective of the paper is to determine the functional and structural relationship between written and oral speech in rhetoric. To achieve this objective, the study: defines the linguistic characteristics of oral and written speech; analyzes the differences between these two forms; describes the intermediate and transitional nature of rhetoric between oral and written modes of speech; demonstrates that rhetoric represents an organic synthesis of both forms, often based on a previously written text but ultimately realized through oral performance; and examines how this synthesis influences the effectiveness and structural formation of rhetorical discourse.

The research demonstrates that rhetoric cannot be considered solely within the framework of either oral or written speech. Rather, it constitutes a hybrid activity in which written speech provides pre-structured content and organization, while oral speech contributes emotional engagement, audience interaction, and the potential for improvisation. This complexity grants rhetoric a unique role in both verbal creativity and public communication.

Keywords: rhetoric; oral speech; written speech; functional stylistics.

Introduction. The present study examines written and oral speech and their relationship to rhetoric. Each of these forms possesses distinctive characteristics that differentiate them from one another. Rhetoric, in turn, has its own specificity: it is neither exclusively a written nor solely an oral tradition. In order to clarify the relationship among these phenomena, the study draws on the works of scholars such as Gr. Kiknadze, N. Kandelaki, and others. First, the general concepts of oral and written speech are discussed, presenting the views of Gr. Kiknadze and other scholars. Subsequently, the relationship between these two forms and rhetoric is examined, with particular reference to N. Kandelaki's perspectives. This approach allows for a clearer understanding of the main characteristics of rhetoric, which are primarily associated with one essential feature – its integration of both written and oral traditions. Accordingly, the aim of this study is to analyze the relationship between oral and written speech, their linguistic and communicative characteristics, and to define their functions within rhetoric.

Review of Sources / Literature Review. The present study is based on a broad range of Georgian and international rhetorical, linguistic, and stylistic literature addressing the characteristics of oral and written speech, their interrelationship, and their functioning within the context of public communication.

Within the Georgian scholarly tradition, particular attention is devoted to the works of Gr. Kiknadze, in which the stylistic differences between oral and written speech are analyzed in detail, along with their significance for the study of speech styles. The theoretical framework proposed by Kiknadze makes it possible to conceptualize oral speech as an immediate, situationally conditioned form enriched with paralinguistic means, while written speech is viewed as a more controlled, reflective, and structurally stable communicative system.

Equally important are the studies of N. Kandelaki, in which rhetoric is presented as a specific form of oral art that is nevertheless closely connected to the written tradition. Kandelaki's concept – according to which public speech is typically prepared in written form in advance and subsequently realized as an oral performance – constitutes one of the main theoretical foundations of the present research. This approach conceptualizes rhetoric simultaneously as a textual and performative act.

The literature review also takes into account the works of A. Gventsadze, L. Kvachadze, G. Kvaratskhelia, and other scholars who address issues of functional stylistics, the coexistence of written and oral communication, and their specific application within public discourse.

Within the context of international rhetorical theory, the study draws on the views of J. Jasinski and R. Toye, who conceptualize rhetoric as a unity of text and speech, product and process, form and function. This perspective complements the Georgian scholarly tradition and enables rhetoric to be examined within a broader interdisciplinary framework.

Methodology. The research was conducted on the basis of a descriptive-analytical method, within which written and oral speech are regarded as distinct yet closely interconnected communicative systems. The methodological framework integrates theoretical approaches from functional stylistics and rhetoric, enabling a comprehensive analysis of the interrelations between these two forms of speech.

At the first stage, a theoretical analysis is carried out, encompassing the examination of the concepts of oral and written speech, as well as their linguistic and communicative characteristics. At this stage, particular attention is paid to those theoretical propositions that conceptualize rhetoric as a hybrid phenomenon situated between written and oral modes of speech.

At the second stage, textual and stylistic analysis is employed to examine samples of Georgian rhetoric from various fields and genres. The analysis focuses on the preliminary written preparation of texts, the

specific features of oral performance, as well as cases in which rhetorical texts existed in written form but were not realized orally.

The study also employs a comparative method, through which the functions of oral and written speech are examined in terms of both opposition and complementarity. This approach makes it possible to identify the transitional and integrative nature of rhetoric.

The methodological framework thus allows rhetoric to be examined not merely as a form of speech, but as a complex communicative act in which textuality and performativity jointly determine the effectiveness of rhetorical discourse.

Oral and Written Speech: General Overview. As an introduction, it may be noted that speech consists of two main components: 1. characteristic speech behavior, which includes the word itself (the content of speech), vocalization (the form of speech), gestures and facial expressions, and spatial behavior (the positioning of interlocutors); 2. the characteristic speech situation, determined by social factors, including the communicative setting, relationships among participants, and the interaction between the speaker and the speech environment (the audience), as well as physical factors such as the place of interaction (home, educational institutions, public establishments, etc.).

Each participant in a communicative act plays a specific speech role within a dynamic process of interaction. This role is conditioned by participants' social status, personal attitudes, situational moods, and the nature of unfolding events (Forchkidze, 2018, p. 17). Consequently, any act of communication – whether a public speech before a large audience or a simple conversation between two individuals – requires consideration of the interlocutor's or audience's interests and the communicative situation.

It is also noted that “oral speech is characterized by a live context and, therefore, by the active use of expressive means. These often influence speech and may even replace linguistic constructions, which is why oral speech may appear more fragmented and incomplete. Written speech requires greater precision and completeness; it must be more deliberate and reflective, with less influence from situational context and greater conscious control” (Mshvidobadze, 1990, p. 30). Thus, the difference between oral and written speech is evident, yet their relationship to rhetoric is no less significant.

Gr. Kiknadze points out that, in stylistic studies, oral and written speech possess different values and identifies their distinguishing features (Kiknadze, 1957, pp. 32-35). However, as A. Gventsadze notes, the differences between oral and written speech do not justify viewing them as opposing styles; stylistics is equally concerned with stylistic categories used in both forms (Gventsadze, 1974, p. 31). L. Kvachadze emphasizes their equal importance: “Today, written speech is widely used alongside oral speech as a means of human interaction and exchange of ideas” (Kvatchadze, 1981, p. 89). Let us examine the characteristics of oral and written speech as outlined by Gr. Kiknadze:

1. In the study of style, oral speech has several advantages, foremost among them being its immediacy. When speech is not prepared in advance, the words uttered in oral communication emerge spontaneously, appearing in the given moment and immediately taking form. Accordingly, oral speech is characterized by a greater degree of immediacy than written speech, which is the product of additional control and various forms of revision (Kiknadze, 1957, pp. 32-33);

2. From a linguistic perspective, observation of oral speech is more productive for the study of style, since in such cases the tendency toward deliberate word selection plays a relatively smaller role in human speech. However, this advantage is outweighed and surpassed by the advantages inherent in written speech, which provides more appropriate information for identifying stylistic regularities (Kiknadze, 1957, p. 32);

3. Oral speech is determined by conditions that may be decisive for the speaker only at a given moment. For example, a person's speech may vary depending on who the listener is at that moment, what concerns

the speaker, or whether the speaker is in the mood to speak, and so on. In short, each individual instance of oral speech may be highly specific in each particular case. Therefore, it is more difficult to grasp the general nature of style through direct observation of oral speech. In contrast, written speech is far freer from such momentary factors, as it is less dependent on and conditioned by incidental circumstances affecting the speaker (Kiknadze, 1957, p. 33);

4. In oral speech, the role of supplementary elements is fulfilled by various paralinguistic, that is, non-verbal auxiliary means: gestures, facial expressions, tone of speech, and others. In the study of speech style, these non-verbal auxiliary means are particularly noteworthy, as they differ according to each specific linguistic or situational context. Written speech is much freer from such accompanying non-verbal means; therefore, its study represents a more reliable method for clarifying the nature of style (Kiknadze, 1957, pp. 33-34);

5. In written speech, particular attention should be paid to the changes introduced during the process of writing, as these can provide certain information about a person's stylistic tendencies in speech, the formation and development of style, as well as indicate the factors that manifest themselves during the act of writing (Kiknadze, 1957, p. 34);

6. When using written material, we are better able to trace the development of style, its specific features, and its essence on the basis of examples created by the most prominent and leading figures of society – great masters of speech. By observing their work, it becomes possible to identify both the stylistic characteristics of an individual speaker and, more generally, the regularities governing the formation of style as such (Kiknadze, 1957, pp. 34-35).

According to Gr. Kiknadze, oral and written speech offer different possibilities for the study of style. The principal advantage of oral speech lies in its immediacy and spontaneity; however, it is strongly dependent on subjective and situational factors, as well as on paralinguistic means, which makes it difficult to identify the general regularities of style. In contrast, written speech is less conditioned by incidental circumstances, is subject to control and editing, and allows for the observation of the formation and development of style. Therefore, despite certain advantages of oral speech, written speech is considered a more reliable and productive source for the in-depth study of the nature of style.

The Relationship Between Written and Oral Speech and Rhetoric. Georgian rhetoric scholar N. Kandelaki also draws attention to the distinction between oral and written speech (see in more detail Kandelaki (ed.), 1958, p. 9). Elsewhere, he likewise notes that rhetoric is not merely a form of oral speech: "Rhetoric is the art of the oral form, with its own specific nature; however, in general it is a form of verbal creativity whose stylistic refinement requires its fixation in written form. Every public oral speech is essentially prepared in writing. Its subsequent transcription is also a common practice. In this way, rhetoric acquires a fixed form, comes to resemble literary production, and enters the treasury of artistic literature. This circumstance determines the place of oratorical art within the sphere of verbal creativity" (Kandelaki (ed.), 1958, p. 10).

In addition to oral speech, N. Kandelaki also points to the written tradition characteristic of rhetoric: "The reading of a written text is also different, when a person, while reading what has been written, does not need to think about what is to be said next, since here the written fixation of thoughts is restored in sound through the established habit of reading" (Kandelaki, 1989, p. 25). N. Kandelaki directly addresses the difference between oral and written speech in the context of rhetoric and writes: "Public oral speech, by virtue of its specific nature, is so strictly bound to time that even the slightest inappropriate pause causes great discomfort. Quite different is the process of written speech, when a person can stop the pen, reflect on the form in which a thought should be expressed, and then give it written form. Even after that, one may

erase what has been written and imprint it again in a new form. Written speech is not precisely determined in time” (Kandelaki, 1989, p. 25).

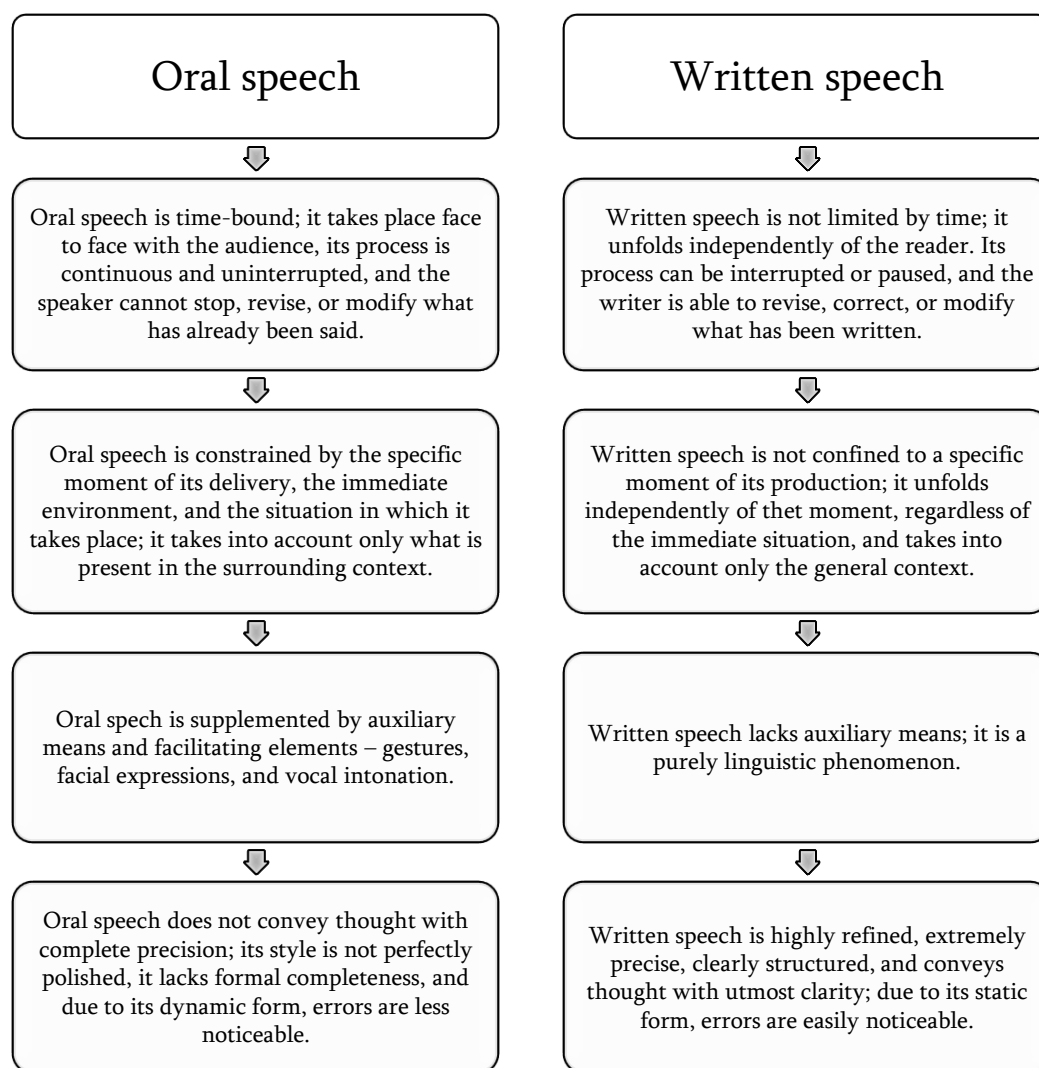
When discussing the difference between oral and written speech, N. Kandelaki notes the following: “Public oral speech, by virtue of its specific nature, is so strictly determined in time that even the slightest inappropriate pause causes great discomfort. Quite different is the process of written speech, when a person can stop the pen, reflect on the form in which a thought should be expressed, and then give it written form. Even after that, one may erase what has been written and imprint it again in a new form. Written speech is not precisely determined in time” (Kandelaki, 1989, p. 25). In addition to oral speech, N. Kandelaki also points to the written tradition characteristic of rhetoric: “The reading of a written text is also different, when a person, while reading what is to be said, does not need to think about what will be said next, since the text here represents the sounding restoration of thoughts fixed in writing through the established habit of reading” (Kandelaki, 1989, p. 25).

N. Kandelaki also reflects on the similarities and differences between rhetoric and literature, noting that the creative work of the orator and that of the writer are both branches of verbal art. Their principal point of similarity lies in their ornamented verbal form, while the main indicator of their difference is the manner in which this form is expressed. In rhetoric, this expression is oral, whereas in literature it is written. The orator is characterized by an oral creative process, while the writer by a written one. Rhetoric represents the highest stage of oral speech, whereas literature represents the highest stage of written speech. The form of the creative material in the former is oral, and in the latter written. Thus, in their respective manifestations, we are dealing with the oral and written forms of speech, which differ from one another (Kandelaki (ed.), 1958, p. 8).

Traditionally, rhetoric is addressed to a listener, whereas literature is addressed to a reader: “[...] rhetoric presupposes a listener, while literature presupposes a reader. The orator and the listener meet during the creative process, whereas the writer and the reader meet after the creative process” (Kandelaki (ed.), 1958, p. 9). However, N. Kandelaki himself points out that this is not a strictly codified rule, noting that a given rhetorical work may be addressed to a reader, while a literary work may be addressed to a listener: “A literary work may be spoken aloud after it is written and listened to by an audience, while an oratorical creation may be fixed in writing during its delivery, before it, or after it, and read by a reader” (Kandelaki (ed.), 1958, pp. 9-10).

According to N. Kandelaki, rhetoric should be divided into two components: as a written and textual product, and as an oral and performative act. These two levels are closely interconnected: the text prepares the performance, while the performance endows the text with renewed life.

Figure 1. Oral and written speech (Kandelaki, 1989, p. 25)



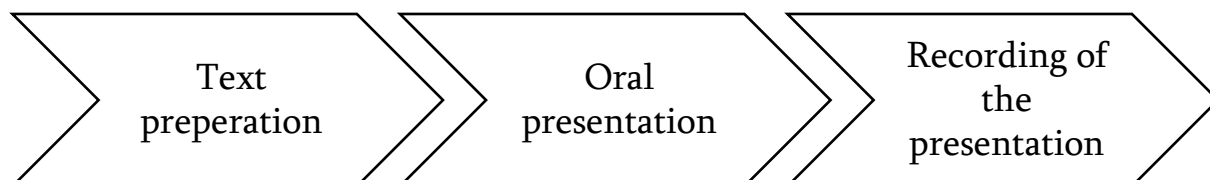
Indeed, one cannot but agree with the view according to which “the term rhetoric may be used to denote both writing and speech (the art of oratory). Ultimately, speech is often based on written texts and, on occasion, may even be read in printed form. Rhetoric cannot be understood as an exception to text and language, independent of the technical means through which it is conveyed to listeners and readers” (Toye, 2013, p. 4). A different formulation is found in the view expressed by J. Jasinski, in which the opposition between the written and oral dimensions of rhetoric is more sharply articulated: “rhetoric as form vs. rhetoric as function, product vs. process” (Jasinski, 2001, p. xxiii).

The existence of both oral and written traditions of rhetoric is also evidenced by examples from Georgian eloquence. By way of illustration, we may refer to specimens of homiletic rhetoric, such as Chapter IV of *The Martyrdom of Abo of Tbilisi* by Ioane Sabanisdze – “Praise of the Holy Martyr Abo” – as well as the *Homilies of Ioane Bolneli*. These texts allowed for repeated reading and were simultaneously fixed in written form; moreover, when delivered orally, they were subject to a tradition of verbatim recitation. The same can be said of academic rhetoric. In particular, “a scholarly lecture, report, or informational presentation is prepared in advance, written down, and in most cases delivered on the basis of a written text. Thus, these forms are bookish in nature and stand in clear opposition to non-bookish speech” (Kvaratskhelia, 1987, p. 3).

In addition to the fact that public speech is, in most cases, prepared in advance in written form, it may also be recorded in writing – stenographically – at the very moment of presentation. In earlier periods, when

the only means of preserving a public address was its written transcription, the modern era has witnessed a sharp increase in recording methods: “oral speeches are often published in newspapers, journals, or as separate editions” (Koberidze, 2016, pp. 19-20). Subsequently, the invention of radio and later television further expanded the scale of verbal communication, extending its reach to mass audiences. Audio and video formats are also used to record public speeches. Thus, public speech is a complex phenomenon, as it generally involves the prior written preparation of the message, its oral presentation before an audience, and finally its fixation either in stenographic form or as an audio or video recording.

Figure 2. Stages of a Public Speech



If we examine the titles of Georgian oratorical specimens, we find that they consistently and unambiguously indicate the form of the orator’s discourse, which raises the question of whether public speech is solely the product of oral or of written communication. In the titles of Georgian oratorical texts, very often – almost without exception – in the second position we encounter the words “spoken” / “delivered”. It has been argued that the high frequency of these linguistic forms in titles invariably emphasizes that public speech belongs more to the domain of oral speech than to that of written language (Kentchiashvili, 2024, p. 34).

The above does not preclude the possibility that a public speech may also be prepared in advance in written form. In Georgian rhetoric, it is difficult to find examples that are not, at least to some extent, prepared beforehand in writing. Moreover, within the oratorical tradition itself there are titles of public speeches that demonstrate the opposite tendency. Specifically, illustrative examples can be found in the genres of lectures and reports within academic rhetoric, as well as in the genre of reports within political rhetoric, where the titles of oratorical texts include such combinations as “Lecture, read...” and “Report, read...”. These formulations point to the predominance of the written form over the oral one.

In addition, the history of Georgian rhetoric includes several exceptional cases that are particularly revealing with regard to the relationship between written and oral forms. There are examples in which an oratorical text was created from the outset in written form and was specifically intended for public delivery; however, for various political, social, or personal reasons, the orator was unable to carry out the planned speech.

In such circumstances, the text was preserved solely in the form of a written document and was never orally delivered before an audience. Nevertheless, such oratorical texts often still found their way into the press: they were published in newspapers or journals, thereby acquiring another, written dimension of publicity. This practice allows us to observe that the historical development of oratorical discourse in Georgia is not limited to oral practice alone; on the contrary, the written form preserved the integrity of the speech and endowed it with the function of subsequent preservation and dissemination even when the text was never actually delivered orally.

An illustrative example of such a case from the history of Georgian rhetoric is the speech prepared by Kato Mikheladze for delivery at the Georgian National Congress in 1917. However, the chair of the congress, Akaki Chkhenkeli, did not grant her permission to speak publicly. Nevertheless, Kato Mikheladze later

published the written version of the speech in the periodical she had founded, *The Voice of the Georgian Woman*, under the original title: “My Speech, Which Mr. Ak. Chkhenkeli Did Not Allow Me to Deliver at the National Congress on 20 November in the City of Tbilisi” (*The Voice of the Georgian Woman*, 1917, pp. 3-4).

Among other examples, particular attention should be paid to [Speech Delivered by Iakob Gogebashvili on the Occasion of the 60th Birthday and the 40th Anniversary of the Literary and Public Activity of Ekaterine Gabashvili, at the Georgian Theatre in the City of Tbilisi, on 1 May 1911]. As is evident from the content of the speech, Iakob Gogebashvili had intended to address the jubilee with a speech; however, due to illness, he was unable to do so and published the text of the prepared public speech in a newspaper. On the basis of an analysis of the speech’s content, it has been argued that this was not a speech that was actually delivered, or that it is equally possible that the speech was delivered at the jubilee and that the printed version of the same speech was published by the author at a later date (Gogebashvili, 1955, pp. 175-478). This view is partially correct, since the text of the speech was published in the newspaper *Sakhalkho Gazeti* on the very day of the jubilee, 1 May (*Sakhalkho Gazeti*, 1911, pp. 2-3). It may therefore be assumed that Gogebashvili had sent the written version of the intended speech to the newspaper’s editorial office in advance for publication; however, whether the speech was in fact delivered orally remains difficult to ascertain.

Another example is [a speech delivered by the representative of the Tiflis Georgian Gymnasium, Alexander Tchitchinadze, on the day of Akaki Tsereteli’s funeral, February 8, 1915]; the speech was published in the journal *Ganatleba* under the original title “Speech: by Mr. Al. B. Chichinadze, Representative of the Tiflis Georgian Gymnasium,” and in the footnote, the editor added the remark: “This speech was supposed to be delivered on February 8, on the day of Akaki’s funeral, but, like many others, it was not delivered” (*Ganatleba*, 1915a, p. 120).

In the same issue of the journal *Ganatleba*, a second oratorical example was also published [a speech delivered by Lado Bzvaneli on the day of Akaki Tsereteli’s funeral, February 8, 1915], under the original title “On the Day of Akaki’s Funeral,” and at the end, the editor added the remark: “This speech was supposed to be delivered by the author, who came as a representative from Kutaisi, but since the number of speeches was limited by the committee, like many others, this one was not delivered” (*Ganatleba*, 1915b, p. 124).

Among other cases, it is worth noting [a speech delivered by Kalistrate Tsintsadze on the occasion of Catholicos-Patriarch Leonide’s death, July 17, 1921]. It was supposed to be delivered in Sioni on July 17, 1921, but due to the very late conclusion of the service, it was not delivered (Tsintsadze, 2014, p. 170).

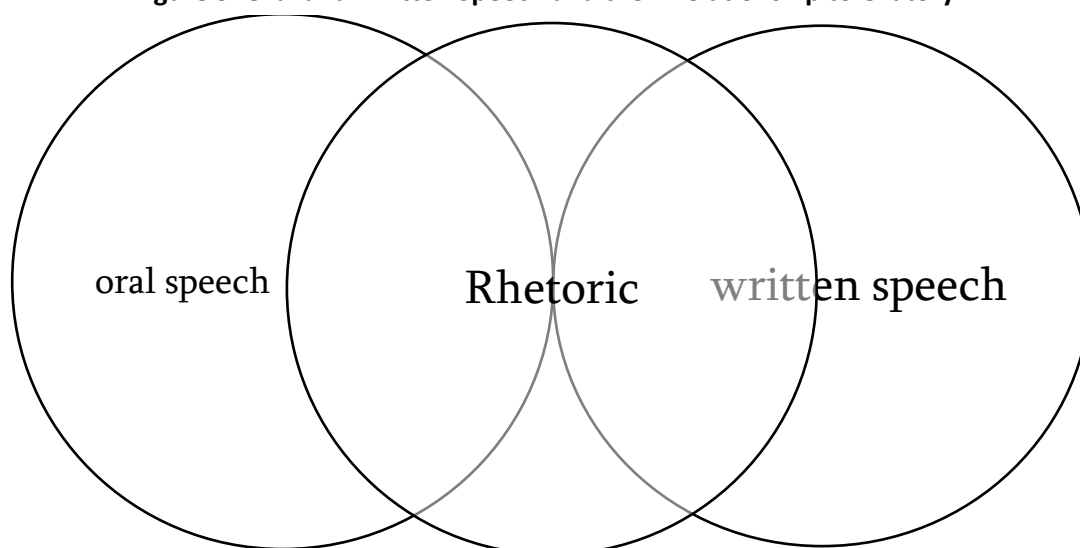
Finally, the question still arises: what is the relationship between written and oral speech and rhetoric? The point is that models of public speaking create the impression of oral speech. A presentation requires oral delivery, during which the speaker demonstrates improvisational abilities – this is precisely the condition that enables influence and ensures the maintenance of the audience’s concentration. However, such rhetorical models also imply a certain degree of prior intervention by their authors and written preparation of the intended message. Therefore, there is no strict dichotomy between oral and written speech; rather, it can be argued that rhetoric unites the traditions of written and oral speech. At the same time, rhetoric possesses its own specific characteristics independent of either mode, which are manifested in its improvisational potential (Kentchiashvili, 2021, p. 54, 201-202).

By its nature, rhetoric belongs to the domain of oral speech; however, it cannot be regarded solely as a spontaneous, improvisational process. The effectiveness of public speaking is largely determined by the prior written preparation of the text, which ensures structural coherence, purposefulness, and semantic precision. Thus, rhetoric represents a form of communication in which the vitality of oral speech and the organizational rigor of written speech function in conjunction.

Indeed, rhetorical texts are characterized by a certain specificity, since in essence they presuppose oral speech; however, depending on practical needs, they are prepared in written form in advance and, after public delivery, recorded in various ways – stenographically as well as in audio and video formats during the presentation itself (Kentchiashvili, 2021, p. 54, 202). This circumstance once again emphasizes the fact that rhetorical speech is a dynamic process in terms of both time and form, transcending rigidly defined oral or written frameworks.

In view of the above considerations, public rhetoric emerges as a transitional and intermediate link that integrates the traditions of written and oral speech. Consequently, rhetoric encompasses both written and oral modes of expression. It is precisely their intersection that produces public speeches capable of achieving their communicative goals and demonstrating a high level of verbal artistry (Kentchiashvili, 2021, p. 54, 202). Rhetoric is the result of the convergence of written and oral speech. It is on the basis of this synthesis that public speeches are able both to influence the audience and to demonstrate high aesthetic and communicative value. In this sense, rhetoric is neither purely written nor purely oral speech – it is an autonomous and distinct verbal art.

Figure 3. Oral and Written Speech and their Relationship to Oratory



Conclusion. Speech, as a form of communication, manifests itself in two primary forms: oral and written. These represent different ways of using language, determined by temporal, spatial, and social contexts. Oral speech is characterized by immediacy and temporality; it is produced within a specific communicative situation in real time, which requires the simultaneous presence of the participants. Written speech, by contrast, is independent of time and space. These characteristics demonstrate that oral speech is dependent on situational, emotional, and social context, whereas written speech is abstract and universal.

In rhetoric, the functions of written and oral speech often coexist: the text contains structure, logic, and argumentation, while oral delivery is associated with emotion, interaction with the audience, and improvisation. Rhetoric thus integrates elements of both oral and written speech. The text of a public speech is often written and prepared in advance, yet the final product is ultimately delivered to the audience in oral form. For this reason, oratorical art constitutes a hybrid activity situated between written and oral speech. Moreover, oral and written speech perform different communicative functions. Despite their distinct

natures, they reveal a close interrelationship, particularly in rhetoric, where prior textual preparation combined with oral presentation creates a powerful means of communication. Ultimately, understanding the differences between written and oral speech within rhetoric has not only theoretical but also practical significance, as it enables the creation of more effective texts and the strategic management of communication.

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