Revising academic discourse - Intercultural Rhetorical Competence of a lecturer in postmodern Europe.

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Introduction

Multiculturalism, linguistic and cultural turns, as well as multiple sociopolitical changes resulting from globalization have marked the last decades with hectic needs to reformulate human educational goals and practice. Change has been observed in all the disciplines of human sciences, and it showed itself in the form of paradigmatic overlapping, explosion of new thoughts and practicing new methods of praxis and research. Change has also affected academic priorities, subjects of education, teacher education and student-teacher relationship. It has been of global character although its pace, its timing and degree of innovative thought assimilation might have differed depending on the political systems or cultural conditioning in particular nations. Disregarding this obvious source of difference, whole Europe still represents a historically intertwined cultural circle rooted in ancient Greek and Roman civilizations, which bears implications for an underlying assumption of this paper stated below.

The following article does not deal with a wide concept of global communication, neither does it aspire to make a thorough overview of historical development of rhetoric as science or art. The scope of rich literature on the topic exceeds the author's capability to quote even a part of it. It will, however, be referred to the correlation between rhetoric and communication, as well as to the chronology of rhetoric's historical evolution, as it has been reviewed by Skwara (2011). The purpose of this shall be to search for those elements which appear crucial for the main hypothesis of this paper, which is the following: contemporary lecturers across Europe need a thorough and goal-oriented training in intercultural rhetorical skills, as they are destined to operate in the global academic environment, be it in Europe or elsewhere. Rhetorical training, originating from ancient philosophers and orators' *Schools of Rhetoric*, and filtered through various reinterpretations, redefinitions and approaches of European schools over history, needs to be viewed as a life ring for global education and communication on the academic level.

The context of my argumentation has thus been narrowed down to the dimension of academic competencies of teachers-lecturers. This dimension is, however, wide enough to

have already become a field of extensive study among pedagogues, sociologists, psychologists and linguists not only in Poland, but also across Europe. This is why it will be necessary to fall back on some of the already existing concepts concerning lecturer's effectiveness and "attractiveness", as well as on the theories of language that underlie any discussion about rhetoric. As Rusinek (2011:11) remarks, "rhetoric is not something added to language just like erotic is not added to our body. Rhetoric is a feature, dimension, function of a language, just as erotic is a feature and function of our body." If so, it needs to take into consideration also achievements of the academic thought in philosophy of language, sociology of communication, human cognition, and pedagogy. The discussion will thus concern both this physical dimension of rhetoric (treated in the Ciceronian perspective as more technical, pragmatic skills, possible to be trained and learnt as genres: *ars dicendi, ars praedicandi, ars poetriae, ars dictaminins, ars notaria, ars epistolando,* in: Skwara 2011:34), and also a more humanistic dimension. The latter is related to renaissance-like treatment of rhetoric back as "pure art" of speaking, devoid of the Aristotelian truth dogma and giving way to interpretative meanings, perlocution, manipulation and other linguistic distortions of epistemological truth, being nowadays analyzed within Critical Discourse Analysis. The reason for this choice is the wish to situate the art and skill of rhetoric, as they might be seen and practiced today, among the range of changing paradigms of modern philosophy in order to redefine its place, reinterpret its meaning, and make its crucial position in today's education an argument for raising contemporary lecturers' qualifications. For that purpose, also the very art of lecturing must be considered from the perspective of communicative and social event, receptive to all the paradigmatic rules prescribed by the theories of e.g. personalized education (e.g. Carl Rogers), progressivism (John Dewey), or symbolic interactionism (Herbert Blumer), to name just a few.

The paper will have the following structure. Firstly, some contemporary paradigms in pedagogy, communication, sociology, linguistics and discourse analysis shall be recalled. Also, due to the European context of the discussion, as well as due to the globalisation of rhetoric, being a fact stated by Zgółkowa (2001), multiculturalism must not be omitted. As the above author remarked already in 2001, "a specific charm of this art comes also from its global, almost imperial appetites, and a potential to apply almost to every sort of text – or rather, as it is said today – every sort of discourse". Secondly, the reader's attention shall be drawn to the very lecture as a linguistic unit, and to its major features and goals. Because a typical lecture (as one of rhetorical styles and examples of formal educational discourse) is structurally a monologue, it deserves special attention in terms of rhetorical and discourse

analysis. Firstly, because it is a an open plenum for rhetorical skills, and secondly, because due to changing rules of teacher-student interaction in the era of autonomy based and subject oriented didactics, it appears to be exceptionally demanding and difficult. In the era of interactive modern technologies, individual and personalized ("customized") communication, the generation of "digital natives" who come to the academic lecture halls are a highly demanding audience. There are numerous reasons for that, which shall be explicated and discussed within the framework of French school of discourse analysis, which defines discourse as a complex „happening/event" caused by all possible non-linguistic factors surrounding text.

Next, specific contexts of a lecture in multicultural Europe shall be highlighted. In this part, the lecture will be presented not only as a linguistic event, marked by the participation of people who remain under influence of modern ideologies of humanism, power of language, power in education and other. It shall be briefly discussed as an event inevitably immersed in the paradigm of multiculturalism[1]. And it is not only because of the aforementioned globalization of rhetoric, mass media, access to foreign literature or geographical mobility of academic staff. The point of attention will be here the globalization of identity. The phenomenon of global identity has one simple aspect contributive to the effectiveness of lecturing: the diversity of students with their own perceptive abilities and learning strategies. This fact must not be forgotten in any analysis of rhetorical skills of a lecturer in the postmodern era.

And finally, the major postulate shall be formulated: why should lecturers who function in global professional environments, master this special competence of being good rhetoricians, and what such competence consists of? A model of *Intercultural Rhetorical Competence* shall be proposed, being a modified version of a model of Intercultural Competence created by the author (Karpińska-Musiał, 2009) for students of a foreign philology. It is my belief, however, that a similar composition of skills, knowledge and attitudes are needed by lecturers of any specialization, so the context will not be limited just to philological education and practice. A lecture here is not a class unit aimed at teaching a particular foreign language. It is taken as a universal didactic unit aimed at effective (i.e.

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[1] It is necessary to distinguish between the concepts of multiculturalism (fr. *Multiculturalisme*), which refers to co-existence of many cultures, pluriculturalism (fr. *Pluriculsturalisme*), which means reciprocal permeating of many cultures, and interculturalism/cross-culturalism (fr. *Interculturalite*,) which refers already to the sphere of relation between cultures (Bourse, 2008), i.e. between their representatives and their subjective representations of cultural phenomena.

meeting the goals of particular content or ideology) delivery. For this effectiveness the quality of both lecturer's and students' *attitude* shall be made very conducive.

1. Theoretical background: overlapping paradigms in social sciences, education and linguistics.

What is in fact postmodernism? Is it only, using Cuddon's entry in his *Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory* (2000), "an eclectic approach, [by a liking for] aleatory writing, [and for] parody and pastiche"? (in: Barry 2009:80) ? Is it only a destruction of the norm, awareness of diversity? Contestation of all that was "modern" and nostalgic about the past and exhilarating fragmentation of existing systems? Liquidity of life and ever present uncertainty (Bauman, 2005)? Melted patterns of culture and extinction of tradition in the name of contradictions and "multiplicity of meanings"? (Barry 2009:70) How far have the transformations in the sphere of higher education been a consequence of the big theories in literature and philosophy of the bygone century?

A closer look at the specificity of postmodernist current and its potential meaning for the revision and reinterpretation of a very lecture as a rhetorical event shall be still taken further in this article. For the time being it is only worth noticing that specific revolution in the models of academic teacher's competences has its roots in two major turns observed over the last few decades, being postmodernism's side effects: a *linguistic turn* in the philosophy of language and an *anthropocentric cultural turn* in cultural studies. Both following postmodernist attack at clarity and objective truth, switched social (thus also educators') attention to the individuality, creativity and highly meaningful personality of each and every human being. The first one shed new light on the analysis and function of language, making it itself an object of analysis and simultaneously a device to construe a discursive reality. By introducing the notions of *deconstruction* and *discursiveness* into the theory of Speech Acts, post-structuralists and analytical philosophers like Derrida or Wittgenstein revolutionalised the approach to reinterpreting text, understanding its meaning or translating cross-cultural contents. Consequently, also approach to rhetoric as art and science had to change. Specifically, the interest of linguistic analysis was how the meanings come to life in the processes of ever new interactions and how the INDIVIDUAL experience affected the meanings rather than the universal rules of language. *Reflexive modernity*, a term of transition described by Beck, Lash and Giddens (2009), had empowered the role of *reflexivity*, thus giving way, among other, to subjectification in didactics and educational dialogue, where

linguistic picture of the world (Bartmiński, 2006) had become a filter of reference.. Language as such has also been offered subjectification, which enhanced its role in communication, its effectiveness, tools, communicative effects and empowering or disempowering function in terms of politics (e.g. Henriksen, 2011). Especially the aforementioned French school of discourse analysis, being under the strong influence of Lacan's psychoanalysis, treated discourse more widely than Saussure-ian Anglo-Saxon/German schools. This more psychological and phenomenological approach to text treated discourse as a socio-ideological, culture and context dependent „linguistic product", always DIRECTED at some RECIPIENT and always entangled in the network of ideologies, sociolinguistic varieties and unexpected communicative circumstances. Such a paradigmatic evolution could not avoid being a reason for the growth of importance ascribed to linguistic and communicative competences of those who use language to speak publically.

Such an approach towards linguistic discourse matched the anthropological turn in social sciences, which remarkably transformed the whole understanding of a human being, giving priority to his/her phenomenological and holistic nature of existence. This is why both of the aforementioned turns in paradigms could not be ignored by teacher education. Teachers have been affected by literary and philosophical theories in social sciences mainly by the way they have been educated. Szempruch (2013:49) recapitulated the process of paradigm shift in this sphere over the XX-th century, enumerating the following models of teacher education: *personalized, general* (general declarative knowledge), *pragmatic* (competence oriented) *specialist* (professional, disciplinary knowledge), *skill-oriented* (methodological), and the latest: *progressive, eclectic* and *permanent*. The eclectic approach appears to be an outcome of axiological heterogeneity (Paulston, 1992), which in turn seems to have become a fertile ground for the rise of cross-cultural and intercultural quasi-paradigms permeating the contemporary teacher education (Orchowska and Karpińska-Musiał, 2014 in print). Additionally under the influence of *symbolic interactionism* (Blumer, 2007*)*, constructivist theories of learning (Dylak, 2000) and the role of Bourdieu's *habitus* (1991) for building different cultural and linguistic capitals, contemporary teachers, academic lecturers included, are faced with a task that appears totally overwhelming, but at the same time challenging, demanding and fulfilling.

2. Lecture as a rhetorical event

Delivering a lecture belongs to the final element on a scale of a classical *ars bene dicendi* rhetoric theory: *actio or pronuntiatio.* At the same time, with reference to a famous rhetorical

triangle, it is ***ars***, the central component in the triad *artifex-ars-opus*. A lecture is a "product" of a dynamic interrelation between its creator (Speaker) and its recipient (Audience). It appears exceptionally complex and multilayered due to close relation to deconstructionism, which as one of the post-structuralist features is considered to be the most spectacular come-back of rhetoric in the XXI century. In simplified terms, the new "readings" of any text proposed by J. Derrida have implied a very individual approach to each and every rhetorical event, such as delivering the academic speech (being a verbalized text).

These two perspectives - being a *pronunciation*, and being socially constructed *art* (regardless of its more theoretical or more pragmatic, technical level of analysis) induces a possibly double analysis of a lecture: first, as the compilation of all the components preceding *pronunciation*, i.e *inventio*, *topos*, *dispositio*, *elocution* and *memoria* (Wilczek 2009:9), and secondly, as a dynamic communicative event, receptive to all the para-linguistic, contextual and social mechanisms and conditions that affect its content, form and effectiveness. The first perspective suggests to view a lecture as a linear process of making a speech informative, coherent and cohesive, interesting and logical, delivered adequately and fortunately. All the previous components i.e. finding a theme (*invention)*, providing and quoting sources (*topos)*, preserving a systematic structure (*disposition*), choosing rhetorical tools and making it fluent and audible (*elocution*), should be applied before the final delivery (*pronunciation*). The second perspective, in turn, tells us to view the lecture as a unique, social and to some extent unpredictable event, which is open to phenomena of linguistic pragmatics (e.g. violating Grice's Maxims or Felicity Conditions), non-verbal communication and reciprocity rules. The most important, however, is the analysis of the contemporary lecture with the rule of adequacy in mind. Adequacy, colloquially named 'rhetorical tactfulness', implies all the above criteria to be met and placed in the context. Not without a reason, a rhetorical triangle places its 3 elements in the common field of this one key-word: context.

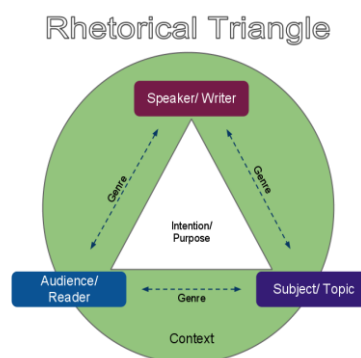**Kuhn: Dynamics of science and development is *not verification or falsification, but persuasion* (Fish 2002:442)**

Image of Rhetorical Triangle reproduced as seen in Hephzibah Roskelly and David A. Joliffe's text Everyday Use: Rhetoric at Work in Reading and Writing, Second Edition, 2009. Pg. 16.

Both perspectives contribute to the effectiveness of a lecture enormously, and must not be neglected either in research or in praxis. Each of the elements should be echoed in the speech delivered in the academia. The question is, however, about the degree of balance between them. It appears to be legitimate to claim that structuring a lecture to its formal shape requires a lot of skills (linguistic, communicative) and knowledge (subject matter, structure, logical argumentation, expertise, data etc.). All of them constitute the obligatory components of various models of academic competence and usually are classified as professional/disciplinary skills and knowledge. As Kazimierz Brodziński, a Polish professor, already in 1826 defined the function and features of an academic lecture, it "needs to be a synthesis of the latest research, a picture of contemporary state of arts". He called it *prelekcja (a prelesson)*, which must be „strictly methodological, that is it must meet specific conditions which will make a student's mind sensitive and truly occupied. Only then will all the other passions disappear" (Suchmiel 2011:67). Such definitions contain the echoes of positivist paradigms, but Brodziński did not focus only on methodology. He also seemed to be a forerunner of an interactionist style of a lecture. He definitely, as Suchmiel notices, connected this form of discourse with the prominent role of a RECIPIENT by saying that the most positive and demanded result showing the lecture's effectiveness is the "intellectual activity" of the students. This shows that the second perspective had been recognized already a long time ago, still in the times of the Enlightenment project, with all its aspirations for "fullness", "sense" and effectiveness.

The perspective of social and cultural context appears exceptionally valid in the contemporary times of paradigmatic overlapping and change. Today's recipients do not need to originate from various cultures in order to be a heterogeneous audience with different needs, cognitive abilities, intellectual capacities and different packages of receptive skills. Budzyńska-Daca (2009) enumerates the following features of a lecture which remain prone to contextual differentiation: linguistic etiquette, audiences reactions, length of speech, physical environment, type of a lecture hall/room, level of stress, modesty topos and its adequate application, style of delivery (spoken/read/presentation/using notes), eye-management, non-verbal behavior, para-linguistic features of language (tone of voice, loudness, pitch, pace, pausing and timing, clear articulation). Cicero used to claim that the top skill of an orator is to *inflame the soul of the hearer.* All the above components, once applied, make a chance to meet this goal grow. They do, however, require from a lecturer a wider range of aptitudes than the ones mentioned in the first perspective. They require some transgression of axiological and teleological character, which will lead to a specific approach of a lecturer, categorized as

attitude. The one of flexibility, authenticity, openness, sensitivity to a difference and empathy. The quality of attitude appears to be an exceptionally burning issue in the context of lecturing in a cross-cultural academic environment. It should be remembered that this particular context (lecturing) seems to be a kind of a mirror-reflection of a fragmented, liquid and unpredictable reality as described by post-modernists, being itself one of the Lyotard's '**mini-narratives**", *"which are provisional, contingent, temporary, and relative and which provide a basis for the actions of specific groups in particular local circumstances"* (Barry 2009:83). Let me deal with this aspect in more detail below.

3. **Multicultural context of lecturing in post-modern Europe.**
Communicative culture of postmodern Europe, call it a discursive reality of analytical philosophers, a mixture of Habermas's communicative realities, Lyotard's "incredulity towards metanarratives" (in: Barry 2009:83) or Baudrillard's world of "simulations", enforces the revival of rhetoric in contemporary academia. A human being as *Animal Symbolicum* has brought contemporary rhetoric to its being more exchange of messages instead of their artistic, aesthetic production. In this exchange, a huge meaning is ascribed to the channel of communication, which remains under the influence of a wide spectrum of both linguistic and paralinguistic factors. It is enough to mention, after Zgółkowa (2001), that rhetorical narrative requires, among other, a carefully chosen sequence of arguments, agonistic discussion, coherent and cohesive structure, holistic perspective (good start and relevant ending), and persuasive stylistic shape. Lecture is a kind of a monodrama performance presented by an actor: it requires some degree of memorization and aforementioned clear pronunciation, lively intonation and body language adopted to presented points in a speech. Only these criteria show how much the level of difficulty grows higher in case of a multicultural audience. The potential of making an ERRONEOUS DECISION, closed body posture, wrong mimicry or badly directed eye-contact carry a risk of losing touch with the audience or, more dangerously, closing them to the flow of information intended for a particular lecture.

Decisions of a lecturer and of the audience (i. e of speaker and hearers) are, in terms of symbolic interactionism, nothing else than *interpretations* of meanings attributed to symbols used by both parties, here especially by the Speaker. George Herbert Mead claims that in every interaction „an individual attributes meaning to the chosen objects, assesses their usefulness for her/his actions and on the basis of this assessment makes a decision *to point to* a particular *object*" (Blumer 2007:63). This object may be the topic chosen for a lecture, method of presenting it, presupposition as to its being understood, while pointing can be

understood as 'deciding to use'. The process of such decisions is according to G. H. Mead a *construction* of meanings and not their simple and straightforward *delivery*. As Blumer continues, „ an individual must point to all the objects he/she needs to consider in the process: what to do, how to do it, look at the circumstances which will either be conducive or hindering for the action, consider the demands, expectations, bans and risks that may appear in the situation in which he/she will perform the action (…) An individual constructs his action from fragments and gives them direction, reconsidering various things and interpreting their meaning for future action. There are no examples of a conscious acting that would take another shape" (Blumer 2007:63)[2]. In this description one can easily decode both the Theory of Speech Acts (care for perlocutionary effect), symbolic interactionism, echoes of constructivism and a lot of reflexivity. At the same time, we can see that exactly due to all these elements, the ACT OF LECTURING is open to all possible distortions caused by different types of listeners gathered in a lecture hall: people of different linguistic and cultural capitals. Although both Mead and Blumer emphasize that an individual always constructs meanings and takes up decisions **in the social context**, i. e not by own personal rules, desires, emotions, own "ego", it is always a risky situation once this social context is different than the "known" local context and set of rules. This is exactly where the lecture becomes a ring for meeting the "Other" and why multiculturalism has a say in this process.

The act of lecturing may be viewed from the perspective a cross-cultural paradigm exactly because it is a dialogue with the "Other". Having said that all such aspects as shared background knowledge, intentions, non-verbal behavior or emotive factors are meaningful for understanding a lecture, in search for arguments FOR the intercultural character of this speech event we may refer to the *episteme* coined by Michael Foucault (1970). Foucault defines "epistemological unconscious" as the area of subconscious factors affecting the decisions to undertake action, and calls it *episteme*. This notion is said to be a wider concept than Kuhn's paradigm, as it touches the whole *discourse of the epoch*, goes far beyond the local and the known. From this perspective, entering a lecture hall appears to be a place where both conscious and subconscious motives draw a lecturer to particular decisions. Lacan would add here the "sovereignity of the unconscious " (Barry 2009:110) and the "subconscious that lies beneath the conscious of the text", which a lecture also represents. Going so deep in the analysis might even lead us to total rejection of the formal and "conscious" text of a lecture, especially due to the "endemic elusiveness of *the signified"* possible to occur in the case of

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[2] Translation from Polish by the author

international audience (Barry 2009: 110). The parallels, however far reaching, are worth attention due to one conclusion: talking to the audience, however artistically and orderly by the rules of rhetoric, has been subjected to many more influences in the times of postmodernism than only knowledge - based, eristic skills demands. It seems to be determined by the very personalized spheres of interaction of different, less or more conscious human "egos".

4. **The need for rhetorical training as a priority to academic lecturers. The problem of competence.**

The problem of effective lecturing in the face of conditions mentioned above has its reasons. One of them, except for the very specificity of intercultural audience, might be the fact that the art of listening has been endangered, similarly to the art of speaking. This is not a new phenomenon, caused hypothetically by the influence of modern media. According to Skwara (2011), this problem might be traced back to the moment when the medieval theoreticians and orators switched their attention to the manuscripts and books instead of speeches, typical for ancient Greece. As Skwara (2011:2) mentions, "such a situation brought about the disappearance of reciprocal contact between the speaker and his auditorium. Concentrating on speech figures and phrases of the speaker was replaced by following the word written on parchment". A contemporary lecturer must, then, choose between two possible life rings: either, as in so called "second sophism", perform "linguistic heresy" (Skwara 2011:29), which means using speech ornaments aimed at drawing listener's attention or, following Francis Bacon, be more pragmatic and apply a more "inartistic rhetoric". In the second case, the lecturer would first of all fall back on dispositions of his listeners, and on the very thing whether "the subject of discourse was adapted to the assumptions of a specific hearer". Such a pragmatic approach would be closer to the mechanisms of contemporary discourse analysis, promoting a more subjectivist and student-oriented didactics. On the other hand, it stands in some opposition to the philosophical theory of rhetoric as art and draws attention to persuasive (also manipulative in negative sense) functions of rhetoric. It should, however, be kept in mind that a lecture is not deprived of such mechanisms, and the criterion of critical evaluation of objective truth lying behind the presented content might not be a priority. The priority is not the delivery of objective information and knowledge, especially in the face of the above mentioned complex mechanisms of truth construction and perception. If so, the priority remains to engage and involve the students, to evoke an aforementioned "intellectual

activity" and keep them "cognitively receptive" in order for them to construe their own bodies of knowledge.

The dogma of truth should, presumably, be replaced with the dogma of authenticity. An authentic lecturer will show his passion for the topic without talking about this passion. Showing engagement and involvement (parallel to adequate assessment of all the conditions and variables described before) should become the top asset of an effective lecturer, especially cross-culturally. Lecturer's authenticity could be seen as axiological *value added*, the one that ignores the rules of language, structural purism and communicative logic. Authenticity has no target culture and might thus be a common ground for multicultural level of lecturing. Last but not least, it is a value found in the category of attitude, the one that in the beginning of this paper has been said to be the most crucial field of mastery for contemporary academics.

Thus, the set of competences required seems to be far more than just heterogenic. A model presented below allows to have a look at one possible compilation of different subcomponents of *Intercultural Competence of Foreign Language Teachers* (Karpińska-Musiał 2009:272). A circular model, based on three core fields: knowledge, skills and attitude, was supposed to show a dynamic set of competences which all together constitute the *Intercultural Competence*. Linguistic, meta-linguistic and cultural knowledge are not, however, reserved for didactic praxis of language teachers only. They may equally well be attributed to a rhetoric competence of any academic orators who, according to the above argumentation, deal daily with a patchwork of human identities in front of them.

This is why it seems to be justified to take this model as a ground for its further development and complete two partially empty spaces in it. *Intercultural Rhetorical Competence* should occupy the space marked with a dotted line, which in the original model was like an empty "signifier" waiting for completion. This space, being presented as a final outcome of the sequential application of all the other components in the model (what the direction of an arrow suggests), encompasses pragmatic and proteophilic competence: two most complex types, coping with recognition of linguistic pragmatics and a skill to "inculcate discourses" (Fairclough, 2003). Especially the latter seems to be essential. As Dervin (2007) describes proteophilic competence, it signifies a skill to be flexible enough to change discourses adequately to the situation, to be socio-linguistically and context-aware. This is exactly what post-modernist discourse analysis dictates to lecture-rhetoric of today. *Intercultural Rhetorical Competence* needs to take this fact into consideration.

Attitude of authenticity and engagement are the second updating element of the proposed model. It seems to match the incomplete part of circular figure over the core fields of *attitude* and partially *skills*. Quite not by coincidence, this space belongs to pedagogical competence, be it in general education or in language teaching. This fact only confirms the obvious: pedagogical education must rely on trust and authenticity as primary normative rules.
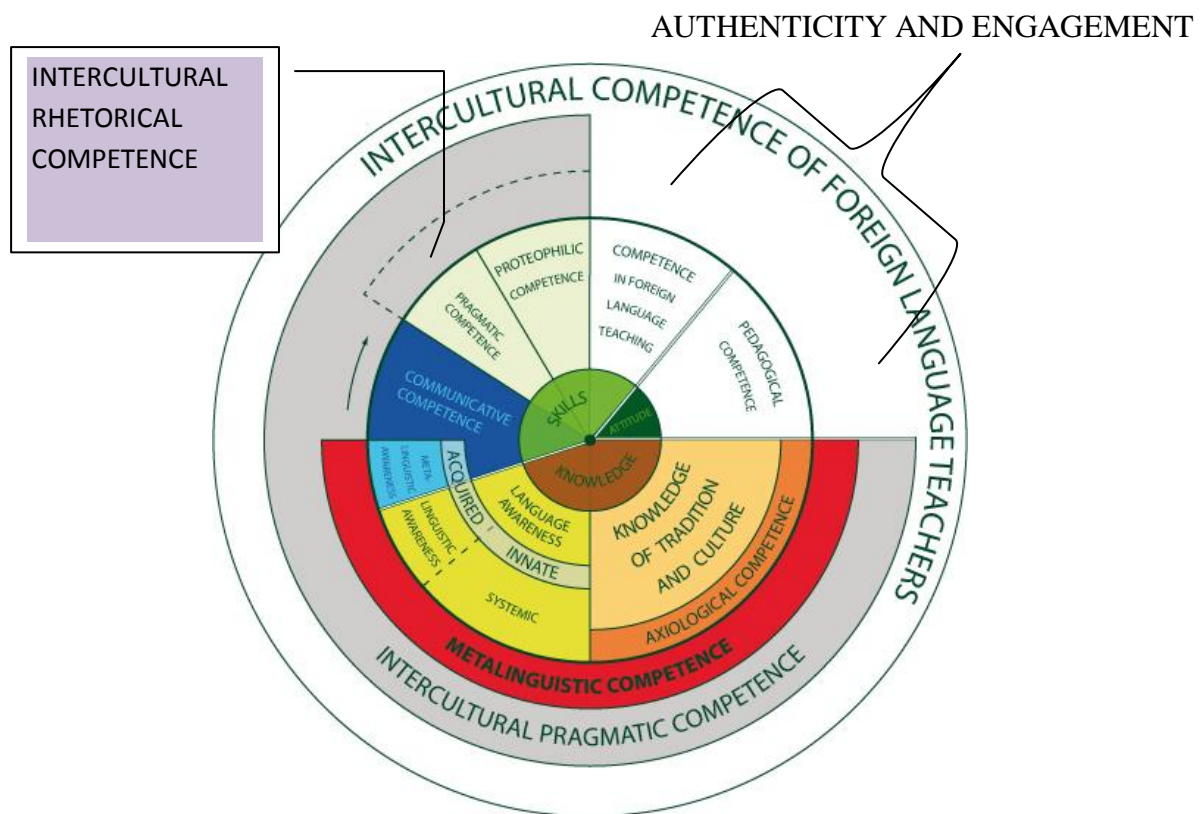
Graph 1: Intercultural Rhetorical Competence in the Model of Intercultural Competence of FL teachers.

5. Final remarks – how can we make it work?

Having considered the complex nature of lecturer's competencies, it can be said that contemporary academic orator will function in a humanistic dimension of rhetoric, treated as a "pure art" of speaking, receptive to all manipulative, social, context and culture dependent factors. These factors, being sorts of distortive elements, make rhetoric of today distant from only technical, physical dimension, which promoted teaching *genres* and unchangeable, orderly rules of speaking. Both dimensions, however, are ever present in every lecture of postmodern academia. Physical dimension seems to find a specific mirror-reflection in metaphorical language (where metaphors have their essentially physical sources), whereas

humanistic one in irrevocable diversity and unpredictability of language, in which symbolic meanings may be differently constructed by the lecturer and still differently decoded by the audience. To preserve intelligibility, the only reasonable invariant element seems to be authenticity. If accompanied by a catchy style, lively intonation, live experience and good articulation, authenticity may become a key to cross-cultural understanding and, consequently, effective education.

Authenticity has one possible technique to be used in the context of a lecture. It is the technique borrowed from Simon Sinek[3] who teaches leaders to be inspiring and persuasive in their commercial talks. A secret lies in starting with the question WHY we want to achieve success. Only later should it be explained in what way (HOW) it can be used an what it *de facto* is (WHAT). In academic terms, it may mean exactly the same: say first WHY you want to share some knowledge, and only later do talk about the agenda or content of a lecture. It's a simple rhetorical maneuver of switching the order of questions: *why, how, what*? In fact, it is an example of a powerful mechanism to make people interested, involved, to fascinate them with an idea, and finally to make them LISTEN. This, in turn, is the primary objective of a lecturer, be it in the ancient times or today. The one being so much in danger of dying out.

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[3] Simon Sinek, *The Golden Circle*, available at: http://www.startwithwhy.com/

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