

Rhetoric

A body of rules which serve in order to produce texts ‘according to the rules of art’ (either written or spoken)

Purpose of Rhetoric

The purpose of rhetoric is to persuade: intellectually (*docere*) and emotionally (*delectare, movere*).

- **DOCERE:** using **LOGOS** (appeal to reason)
- **DELECTARE:** using **ETHOS** (appeal to character)
- **MOVERE:** using **PATHOS** (appeal to emotion)

Structure

A speech, according to the classical pattern, has four parts:

1. **EXORDIUM** (prooimion, introduction, Einleitung)
2. **NARRATIO** (diegesis, narration, Erzählung)
3. **ARGUMENTATIO** (pistis, argument, Beweis)
4. **PERORATIO** (epilogos, conclusion, Schluß)

Stylistic Levels

(Note: one may find different stylistic levels in the same text; their use depends on the desired effect)

- **GENUS HUMILE:** low style, plain style, close to everyday speech, possibly even colloquial. Characteristics: simple, mainly conventional usage, little ‘ornament’, few figures of speech
- **GENUS MEDIUM** or **MIXTUM:** middle or mixed style, often used in learned dissertations, designed to “delight” rather than “move” the audience; tends to be used in (some) poetry, in comedy etc.
- Characteristics: ample use of tropes, embellishments
- **GENUS GRANDE** or **GRAVE** or **SUBLIME:** high or sublime style, solemn, emphatic, passionate, designed to move the audience, tends to be used in tragedies, eulogies, heroic epics etc. Characteristics: complex syntax, unconventional word order, unconventional figures of speech, rhythmicized language

Traditional Steps for Preparing a Speech

5 partes artis:

1. **INVENTIO:** (heuresis, invention, Erfindung)
 - a mnemonic verse from the 16th century:
 - Who, what and where, by what help, and by whose:
 - Why, how, and when, do many things disclose
2. **DISPOSITIO** (taxis, arrangement, Anordnung), cf. above ‘structure’
3. **ELOCUTIO** (lexis, style, Stil)
4. **MEMORIA** (mneme, memorizing, Gedächtnis)
5. **ACTIO** or **PRONUNTIATIO** (hypokrisis, execution, Vortrag)

Genres of Speeches

	Genus demonstrativum	Genus deliberativum	Genus iudiciale
Topic	Honour/Dishonour	Advantage/Detriment	Justice/Injustice
Function	Praise/Reprimand	Admonition/Warning	Accusation/Defence
Temporal Reference	Present	Future	Past
Example	Praise (panegyric), libel, gratulatory texts, ode etc.	Political speech, didactical purposes, sermon	Speech at court, pamphlet, satire, apology

How to learn Rhetoric

How to acquire the methods of rhetoric?

- **ARS:** command of rhetorical techniques
- **IMITATIO:** imitation of exemplary models
- **EXERCITATIO:** practice

[Source: Heinrich F. Plett, *Einführung in die rhetorische Textanalyse*, Hamburg 21973 [1971], 3-22, 102-105.]