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THE PSYCHO-PEDAGOGICAL ASPECTS OF TEACHING OF RHETORIC IN GRADES 8-9 OF A SECONDARY SCHOOL

Abstract

This research investigates the psycho-pedagogical aspects of teaching the art of rhetoric to adolescents in grades 8-9, focusing on students aged 13-16. Recognizing the unique developmental characteristics of this age group, the study aims to identify key criteria informed by psychological principles that can enhance instructional practices. Specifically, the research seeks to understand how factors such as the desire for independence, increased peer interactions, and the quest for identity influence the effectiveness of rhetoric education. By developing a comprehensive framework based on these characteristics, the study emphasizes the importance of adapting teaching methods to align with the cognitive and social needs of adolescents. To gather insights, a survey was administered to 54 students, equally divided between grades 8 and 9, using eight carefully crafted questions that reflect the identified criteria. The results will be analysed to determine the extent to which students' responses align with the proposed socio-psychological characteristics. This analysis aims to shed light on the significance of rhetoric education in promoting critical thinking, self-expression, and interpersonal skills among adolescents. Ultimately, the findings are expected to inform the development of elective courses that not only foster rhetorical abilities but also support students' overall personal and social growth, creating a more engaging and relevant educational experience.

Keywords: psycho-pedagogical aspects, adolescents, age characteristics, grades 8-9, the Art of Rhetoric.

Introduction. All subjects should be taught in accordance with the age of the students. The state mandatory standard of basic secondary education is also aimed at ensuring the gradual deepening of subject knowledge and skills by stages, considering pupils' age characteristics. The saying of sages: "Treat your son like your king until he is five years old, regard him as your servant until he is fifteen years old, and after fifteen years, consider him to be your friend"

Matyzhanov, (2023) indicates that appropriate education is given to the child adapted to his age.

In psychology, the term “age” means the period of human development (Zharyqbaev & Sangylbaev, 2011; Bekchanova, 2023). The characteristics of age are considered the laws of development according to a person’s age (Zharyqbaev & Sangylbaev, 2011). Correspondingly, developmental psychology helps to recognize the mental development of a person and the laws of formation in the breath of life. One part of developmental psychology is the mental development of the adolescent and the formation of his personality (Zharyqbaev & Sangylbaev, 2011; Abd El Salam et al., 2023).

The 8th-9th grade pupils of secondary schools are persons usually aged between 13-16 years. “Zhetkinshek” is a term given to a person aged 13-16, depending on age (Zharyqbaev & Sangylbaev, 2011). In folk wisdom that has been preserved and has reached today, this age period is considered a special period. For example, “Er bala – on ushte otaw iyessi” (that is, a boy is the head of the family at thirteen), “On ushte ul – ulan, On beste – qyz ulan” (that is, a boy is a growing person at thirteen, a girl is a growing person at fifteen), “Bolar adam on besinde bas bolar, bolmaityn adam otyz besinde zhas bolar” (that is, there is a person who become a head at fifteen, there is a person who remain a child at thirty-five) (Keikin, 2023; Segizbaiuly, 2014). These proverbs explain that zhetkinshek is not a kid, but rather “a growing person”, “head of a family” and accepted as an adult by people.

No project illustrates directly that a person has some kind of ability at a certain age and such a project is always found only through research and observation (Aimauytuly, 2023). Therefore, to teach any subject, including the Art of Rhetoric, it is necessary to determine the socio-psychological aspects of 13-16-year-old pupils according to their age.

This study aimed to categorise the features of adolescent students in grades 8–9 into categories according to psychologists’ declarations and to poll teenagers to find out how important it is to teach students the art of rhetoric based on their

age. Similarly, the following are three research questions that help determine the importance of teaching the Art of Rhetoric to members of the appropriate age group:

1. Which statements of psychologists regarding the age characteristics of adolescents can be taken as a criterion?
2. What can be the result of the survey conducted according to the selected criteria?
3. Is it important to teach the Art of Rhetoric to 8-9 grades including their social activities, behaviour, and abilities?

Materials and methods. For famous persons, their teenage years are similar to the building blocks of their personality development. Tolebi begins his path of being “bi” (by the Oxford Qazaq dictionary, the judge chosen by the people) at the age of fifteen (Dadebaev, 2016). Shal aqyn compares the words he uttered at the age of fifteen to fire and flames and compares himself to an eagle on a rock (Zharyqbaev & Sangylbaev, 2011). Qudaiberdiuly (2021) a poet and a follower of Abai, narrates his ten-to-fifteen-year-old attitudes, interests, and changes in his behaviour, clarifying that young Shakerim wanted to be different from others, to strive for creativity and to be free, to study science.

Adolescence is a period of transition from childhood to individuality. Adolescents want to communicate with their peers, to be independent, to separate themselves from adults, and they need other people to recognize their rights. That is why one of the first psychological signs of a certain period is considering themselves adults, the feeling of growing up (Bapaeva, 2014).

Adolescence is a period when various conflicting personalities often clash. Calling it “storm and attack” (Ibraimova & Ermentaeva, 2020), Hall (1904) shows 12 different conflicts in adolescent behavior: activity and fatiguability; cheerfulness and sadness; confidence and shyness; selfishness and sociableness; kindness and anger; verbosity and reticence; sensitivity and indifference; intelligence and thoughtlessness; desire for knowledge and passion for action; traditionalism and innovation; sense and mind; wisdom and folly.

Adolescents embark on a journey of self-exploration, making it crucial to consider their orientation and adjustment to adulthood (Rydell & Brocki, 2024). This phase of psychological development is pivotal for personality formation, as adolescents strive to understand their own identities (Ibraimova & Ermentaeva, 2020). They require a supportive environment that fosters this exploration (Mandel, 2015). During this time, both boys and girls begin to analyse themselves and others, often feeling that their thoughts, feelings, character, behaviour, and appearance are under scrutiny. In response to this perceived judgment, they may seek refuge in intellectualism, pursuing answers to abstract and philosophical questions. This process enhances their ability to think abstractly, formulate predictions, and evaluate outcomes.

As described above, the direction of thinking of adolescents changes from concrete to abstract thinking (Sanders, 2013). Piaget (2016) divides the development of child intelligence into three stages. The third stage covers the period from 11-12 to 14-15 years. Piaget (2016) calls the third period the formal operations period. At this stage, the act of thinking takes place without being based on visuals. Because adolescents can think abstractly, they are used to scientific thinking: the practice of making predictions and conclusions, and accepting other people's arguments, motives, and ideals (Kruchinin & Komarova 2016). Analyzing Piaget's (2016) statement, Menkiti (2009) names two cognitive abilities of adolescents: a) distinguishing "reality" from "possibility" and knowing what results can be achieved or not; b) thinking deeply and reporting on what one is thinking (Menkiti, 2009).

The social status and activities of adolescents change gradually and become closer to adult life (Gotlieb et al., 2024). Vygotsky (1929) notes two different trends of this change. In the first one, adaptation to adult life faces some obstacles, and in the second one, adaptation to adulthood is carried out normally. The former trend is affected by material dependence on parents and

a lack of significant social activities and school lessons, while the latter trend is facilitated by the adolescent's feeling of being an adult, striving for independence, and acceleration (Kruchinin & Komarova 2016).

The adolescent period is a marginal period between two different cultures, specifically, the world of children and adults: the adolescent does not want to be a member of the children's culture, but cannot enter the society of adults either (Bapaeva, 2014). According to Vygotsky, (1929) one of the signs of this period is the creation of a life plan.

What should a teacher who teaches adolescents be like? Psychologists state that adolescents want to see sincerity, morality, and attentiveness from their teachers and they value these qualities highly (Katerinina, 2015). Therefore, it is better for the teacher to "propose morals rather than rules" to the young pupil (Zharyqbaev & Sangylbaev 2011; Xia et al., 2022). It is also important to remember that teachers and parents must maintain the best possible relationship with adolescents (Jaruseviciute et al., 2024; Esche & Böhnke, 2024).

A historical fact worth noting is that while studying the data related to the era of Kazakh adolescents before the October Revolution, noted two features characteristic of adolescents: one is a high level of listening ability, and the other is the ability to speak skilfully (Zharyqbaev & Sangylbaev 2011). Currently, it is important to develop the reproductive (listening and reading) and productive (speaking and writing) skills of pupils.

Adolescence is the period when the basic position and value of an individual are determined. In this period, the orientation of a person to value will play a key role (Zharyqbaev & Sangylbaev, 2011). Based on Spranger's (2019) statement "Personality according to value" defines six different types of personality (value), which are: economic person (thrift), aesthetic person (beauty), theoretical person (attentiveness), social person (sociability), political person (lust for power), and religious

person (religiousness). All of these values can be found in a person, but one of these values may weaken or strengthen the other, and one may hinder or help the other. However, the direction of a person's life could be determined based on only one guiding value.

Analysing the statements of the above-mentioned psychologists, the socio-psychological features of the 13-16-year-old pupils were classified into seven criteria that should be taken into account in teaching the Art of Rhetoric. According to these criteria, an adolescent:

- advances towards the adult group, therefore tries to be independent;
- often communicates with peers;
- he is looking for himself: he wants to find his place and function in society;
- analyses both himself and others, gets used to philosophical thinking (thinking deeply);
- the act of thinking takes place without being based on visuals;
- however, he accepts the opinions, motives, and ideals of others;
- switches to abstract, scientific thinking: makes predictions, checks them, makes conclusions.

Although the main methods of youth psychology are observation and experimentation,

we thought it would be good to try how adolescents answer questionnaires prepared based on the criteria. The questionnaire consists of eight closed questions. The survey questions based on the criteria are as follows:

1. Who do you think you are: a kid or an adult?
2. Who would you like to talk to more?
3. Are you looking for a position in society or a profession?
4. "Who is a person?", "What should a person be?", "What should society be" Are you looking for answers to questions like?
5. Do you try to do something yourself or do you prefer to do based on visual aids?
6. Do you think like "If this is done like... then it will be like...?"
7. "Let your mind guide your words, not your tongue. Know what you are talking about. Know who you are talking to. Know where to speak. Know when to speak. Know how to speak." Do you agree?
8. Do you want to know how to speak, to whom, where, and, when?

If the percentage of the answers to the questions is below 50, then it is assumed that compliance with the established criteria is at a low level (table 1). The percentages of middle and high levels are given in the table.

Table 1. *The correspondence level*

Percentage	Correspondence level
0-25%	Not corresponded
26-50%	Low level
51-75%	Middle level
76-100%	High level

The first question was asked to examine the pupils' transition from childhood to adulthood; the level of conformity was not taken into account. The last eighth question's purpose was not to clarify the characteristics of pupils by age, but to find out from which grade it is correct to start the teaching of public speaking, so the answers of the two grades were only compared.

Results. The survey was conducted in a secondary school named after A. Navoi N13. 54

pupils (27 pupils of the 8th grade and 27 pupils of the 9th grade) participated in the survey. During the survey, the purpose of the study was explained to the students: "Dear pupil! Try to answer the survey honestly. Because your valuable opinion is very important to us. You can refuse to participate in the survey." Therefore, pupils participated in the survey according to their wishes.

Table 2. Results of the survey

The questions	Answers are to be marked according to the criteria	Pupils of the 8 th grade	Pupils of the 9 th grade	Correspondence level	Average percentage
Who do you think you are: a kid or an adult?	– A kid	78%	44%	The correspondence level is ignored	61%
	– An adult	22%	56%	The correspondence level is ignored	39%
Who would you like to talk to more?	– With my neighbour friends.	70%	67%	Middle/Middle	69%
	– With my friends				
Are you looking for a position in society, a profession? “Who is a person?”, “What should a person be?”, “What should society be?”	– Yes	85%	93%	High/High	89%
	– Yes	63%	81%	Middle/high	72%
Are you looking for answers to questions like? Do you try to do something yourself or do you prefer to do based on visual aids? Do you think like “If this is done like... then it will be like...”?	– I try to do it myself	81%	78%	High/High	80%
	– Yes	81%	93%	High/High	87%
“Let your mind guide your words, not your tongue. Know what you are talking about. Know who you are talking to. Know where to speak. Know when to speak. Know how to speak,” Boltirik Sheshen said. Do you agree? Do you want to how to speak, to whom, where, and, when?	– Yes	100%	93%	High/High	97%
	– Yes	74%	52%	The correspondence level is ignored	63%

1. Who do you think you are: a kid or an adult? 78% of 8th graders and 44% of 9th graders consider themselves as kids, while 22% of 8th graders and 56% of 9th graders chose the answer “an adult” respectively (figure 1).

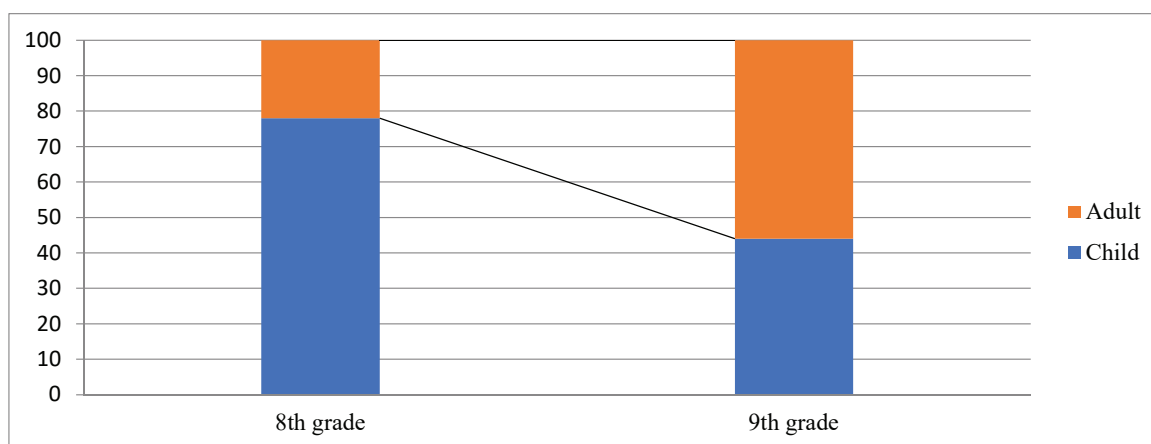


Figure 1: Kid or Adult (%)

In this case, as reasons for changing the answer from “kid” to “adult,” two reasons can be mentioned. The first is the age difference. The total age difference between 9th graders and 8th graders is 1.2 years. This is a natural situation, that is, as a pupil grows up, he considers himself an adult. And the second reason may be the class the pupil is in. For example, all three 15-year-old pupils studying in the 8th grade marked the answer “child”. Even a 14-year-old pupil in the 9th grade chose the answer “adult”.

2. Who would you like to talk to more? 8th grade and 9th grade pupils indicated the desired answer almost equally (70% and 67% respectively): they mostly want to talk with their neighbour friends or friends. One of the pupils wrote “with God” as a friend, while another pupil wrote, “with no one”. The correspondence level is middle. Why does an adolescent often

want to communicate with peers? The reason for this may be that parents, relatives, or teachers still consider pupils as kids.

3. Are you looking for a position in society or a profession? 85% of 8th graders and 93% of 9th graders who took part in the survey answered “Yes”. The level of correspondence between the answer and the statements of psychologists is high. This result shows that the implementation of elective courses could start in 8th grade according to the wishes of the pupils.

4. “Who is a person?”, “What should a person be?”, “What should society be” Are you looking for answers to questions like? We thought it would be better to illustrate it with a diagram because the level of conformity of the result to the statement is different (figure 2). The correspondence level is 63% in the 8th grade, while the result is higher in the 9th grade (81%).

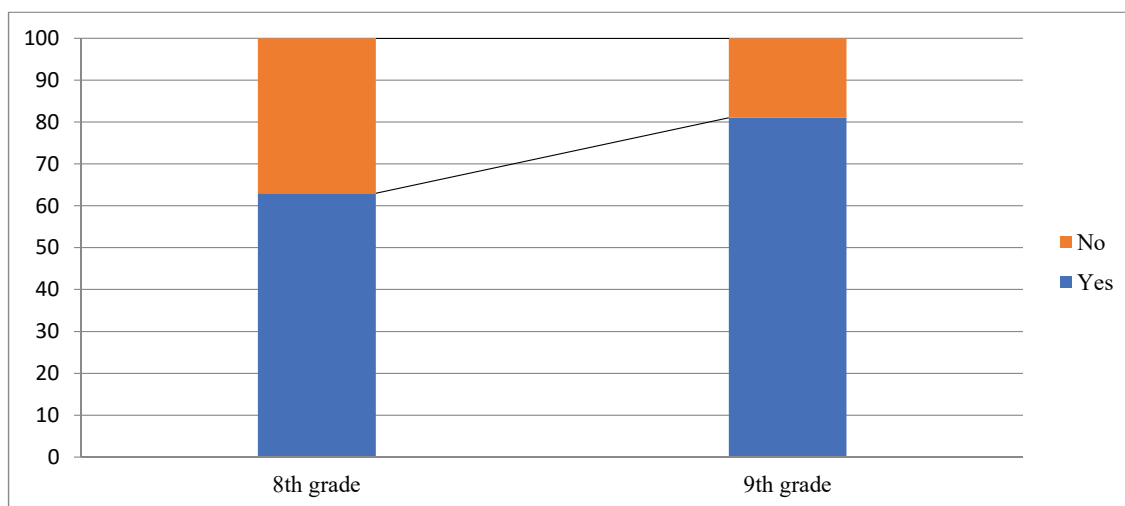


Figure 2: Philosophical thinking

5. Do you try to do something yourself or do you prefer to do based on visual aids? For most pupils (81% of the 8th grade, and 78% of the 9th grade respectively) it is better to try something by yourself without any example. Therefore, the level of compliance with the statement is also high.

6. Do you think like “If this is done like... then it will be like...”? Although the correspondence level is high in both classes, according to the diagram, the percentage increased by 12% in the 9th grade (figure 3).

7. “Let your mind guide your words, not your tongue. Know what you are talking about. Know

who you are talking to. Know where to speak. Know when to speak. Know how to speak”. Do you agree? The level of compliance with the statement “accepts the opinions, motives, and ideals of others” is high. However, even though all the pupils in the 8th grade accepted the saying of Boltirik Sheshen, the percentage decreased (93%) in the 9th grade.

In conclusion, these following statements of psychologists became important in teaching the Art of Rhetoric: an adolescent often communicates with peers (middle level); analyses both himself and others, gets used to philosophical thinking (middle level); he is

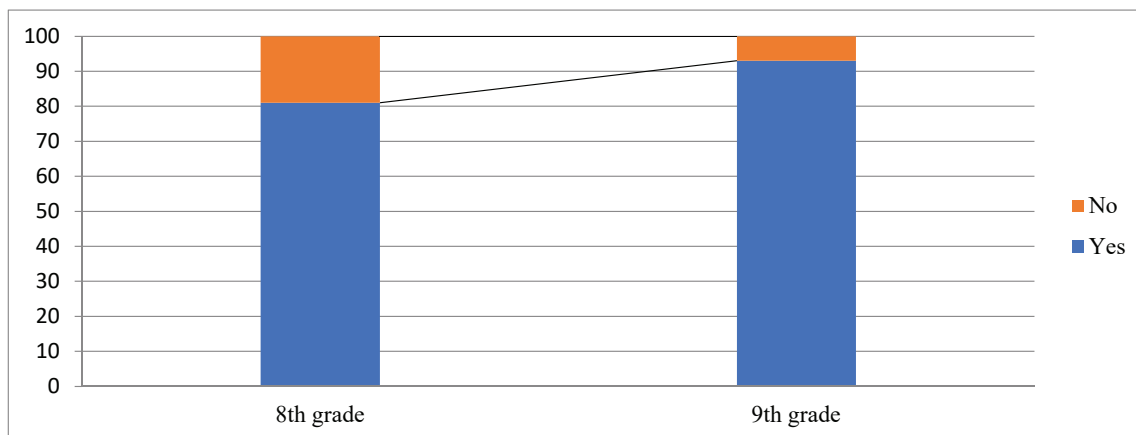


Figure 3: Abstract thinking

looking for himself: he wants to find his place and function in society (high level); switches to abstract, scientific thinking: makes predictions, checks them, makes conclusions (high level); accepts the opinions, motives and ideals of others (high level).

Discussion. Although it is not necessary to demand the Art of Rhetoric from anyone (Zharyqbaev & Sangylbaev, 2011), an adolescent needs to learn as much as possible about the theory of the Art of Rhetoric, to familiarize himself with the models of Rhetoric in the 8th grade, and in the 9th grade to develop the relevant skills.

Firstly, an adolescent wants adults to accept him also as an adult; he strives to prove that he has his point of view and his thoughts. The Art of Rhetoric teaches a pupil who wants others to consider him an adult what, when, where, and how to say or speak (Dadebaev, 2016). According to Hall (1904), since adolescence is characterized by both traditionalism and innovation, the pupil needs to master the appropriate use of both of these contradictions. For example, fifteen-year-old Tole was not satisfied with the judgment of the judges: “Oh, the good ones! White must be estimated as white!” he said. One of the judges: “Turn away from the son who talks even there is his father and turn away from the daughter who talks even there is his mother! Who is this boy?” he said. Then the young Tole answers according to the tradition: “Oh, my older brother, is not the owner of a family at thirteen? Am I guilty of being fifteen years old?”. And young Qazybek says to Qontazhy: “By our custom, a man

sits according to age, speaks according to his mouth”. To the words of Malaisary “Turn away from the son who talks even there is his father and turn away from the daughter who talks even there is his mother!” Young Syrym answered innovatively: “If there is a father and a son talks, he is probably growing up, if there is a mother and a girl talk, then she is probably growing up” (Torequl, 2006).

Secondly, the Art of Rhetoric contributes to the development of skills of logical thinking and combining theory with the practice of an adolescent pupil who turns to think deeply, hypothetically, and scientifically. Since the Art of Rhetoric is connected with all branches of science and art (Dadebaev, 2016), this mentioned Art shows models of scientific thinking, testing theory with experience, which is necessary for a young pupil in all fields. For example, 13 or 14-year-old Senkibai with the permission of Tole Bi settles the following dispute: a Kyrgyz man accused a rich Kazakh horseman of killing his child in the cradle and came to demand blood price. According to the Kyrgyz, the rich man drove a herd of horses near the Kyrgyz yurt. The Kyrgyz claimed that the heart of the child in the cradle was stopped and the child died due to the loud noise of horses. Senkibai then said: “Let’s milk a flock of sheep, boil the milk on a pot, and make curdled milk. The herd of horses that passed the Kyrgyz man’s house should be ready,” he said. The gathered people milked a flock of sheep and made curdled milk. When they opened a pot of thick milk, they saw that the thick cream was solid. Young Senkibai

ordered to drive the herd of horses near the house again. (The pot with curdled milk was closed). When the horses pass near the house, it is like the earth shakes. After the dust had settled, the gathered people opened the pot and saw that the elbow-thick cream of curdled milk was cracked in four places. Then Senkibai said: “The heart of a young child is not like thick cream? When a herd of horses passes, is not it a sign that it is broken in two parts? The rich man is guilty who drove horses over the village, not through God’s wide land,” he says (Torequl, 2006). We notice that this decision Senkibai is the result of abstract thinking, making predictions, and checking them.

Esei Bi tells the young generation: “Be deep in exhortation, be deaf to gossip. Do not take your grandfather’s camel foal, but take his blessing.” Thirdly, through the examples of Rhetoric, pupils perceive the judgment, motives, and ideals of intellectuals. Adolescents want to make decisions on their own like adults, but they need advice from adults. In this regard, it is better to give as examples the advice and blessings of Bi-Sheshens to followers and children. When young Tole wants to receive his father’s blessing, before giving a blessing, his father explains the importance of unity with the example of a bundle of sticks (Torequl, 2006). And nine-year-old Zhetes asks exhortation that will not die and wear out, will not be forgotten, instead of a horse that will die and a coat that will wear out. Then Tole Bi blesses him to be the mind of many houses, the wise man of many countries, the brother of many warriors, to judge white as white and black as black (Torequl, 2006). Boltirik Sheshen “Do not say there is no enemy, under the cliff, do not say there is no wolf, under the hat. Own your head, own your hands, own your tongue,” he said. But his son understands the meaning of his exhortation only after quarrelling with someone somewhere. Then Boltirik Sheshen explains “the enemy”: “If it is stubborn, your character will attract enemies... If it is judgmental, your mind will attract enemies... If it is a critic, your demand will attract enemies... If it is insatiable, your eyes attract enemies... If it is inappropriate, your words will attract enemies.” He said

(Torequl, 2006). Boltirik Sheshen tells his son that the real enemy of a person is his behaviour.

An adolescent who is interested in adults’ ingenuity, needs models of intellectualism. Tole Bi says: “Do not say he is young, if he is intelligent, then he is older” (Torequl, 2006). Therefore, fourthly, the Art of Rhetoric offers young pupils a golden treasure of ingenuity and improvisation. Let’s give examples of Rhetoric. “Are we older or are you older?” To that question, Young Edil replied: “If we add the ages of the ninety children standing here, who is older if we are not older?” (Torequl, 2006) To Malaisary’s words, “A big son was born from a bad person who even cannot feed sheep, probably it will be you?” young Syrym answered: “Yes, he is me. But people used to say that from one bunch of firewood will be made a statue...” “There are three types of old men: a troublesome old man, a disrespectful old man, and an old man walking house by house. Which one are you?” he asked a counter-question. Knowing that Syrym came to be blessed, Malaisary who was impressed by his ingenuity, said: “A young who can be a man has a business with a man...”, wishing him to be a righteous and famous man, he blessed him (Torequl, 2006). When Dosai Bi was young, his father asked him, “Is the king bigger or the farmer?” “Of course, the farmer is bigger. If the farmer does not give grain, won’t the king die of hunger?” he answered.

Since Rhetoric is an Art based on truth, it is very important for a creative pupil who has mastered Rhetoric to become an honest citizen who does not pursue personal interests and serves for the sake of society. According to the state mandatory standard of basic secondary education, the social responsibility and decision-making abilities of pupils should be developed based on instilling values in education. Therefore, the goals of teaching the Art of Rhetoric and instilling values should be directed to the development of the skills of writing systematically, logical and creative thinking, humaneness, and honesty. The “openness” and “accuracy” of tasks also can contribute to the development of pupils’ creative skills (van der Zanden et al., 2020; Hernandez Sibó et al., 2024).

Conclusion. Adolescence is the period of formation of a person as an individual. Teaching without considering the socio-psychological characteristics of the pupil, who is an independent representative of a difficult period, is a breach of trust. Because the teacher should avoid imparting knowledge that is alien to the pupil's nature and teach knowledge not for school, but for life. Therefore, under the purpose of the study, the statements of psychologists were selected for consideration in teaching the Art of Rhetoric related to the behaviour of adolescents. The 8th-9th graders voluntarily answered survey questions prepared based on psychologists' statements. According to the result, the criteria "he is looking for himself: he wants to find his place and function in society"; "switches to abstract, scientific thinking: makes predictions, checks them, and makes conclusions"; "accepts the opinions, motives, and ideals of others" was found to be highly consistent with the statements.

About 74% of the 8th-grade pupils and 52% of the 9th-grade pupils want to learn the Art of Rhetoric. This result indicates that it is better to organize the "The Art of Rhetoric" class as

an elective course. However, it is important to teach the Art of Rhetoric to any adolescent pupil. Since the school is considered a social place. The Art of Rhetoric contributes to pupils entering adulthood, and adapting to adult society more easily. This is one. And, secondly, during the study of Rhetoric patterns, a pupil learns ways of self-development of his creative ability. As a result, the pupil's listening ability, speaking skills, ability to solve problems, and writing style may come to a certain system through education and exercises related to the Art of Rhetoric. Thirdly, how to read and, especially, how to listen is one of the main skills that rhetoric offers. The materials and results of this research could be used to prepare elective courses aimed at developing the creative abilities of pupils for 8-9 grades of a secondary education school.

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