

Streaming Channel Brand's Rhetoric through @NetflixID Twitter Account

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to analyze the rhetoric of @NetflixID, well-known as a brand's Twitter account using Selzer's rhetorical analysis approach. Data was collected in January 2020 through documentation using the text analysis technique. The objective of this research is to analyze @NetflixID's rhetoric and show that @NetflixID was found to be embodied the human character by using humor, emojis and emoticons, authorship and personal pronouns, non-formal language style, choice of words, anecdote, and non-standard vocabularies in giving information and showing emotions. *Canon style* and *canon memory* help find the *pathos* and *logos* of @NetflixID. Furthermore, this research found the potential uses of conversational tone, authorship, and personal pronouns as a marketing communication tool in initiating social interactions, generating affective responses from the audience, creating emotional bonds with the consumer, and attracting the consumers' attention similarly to humor. After all, this research discovers @NetflixID's rhetoric in promoting the products and engaging with audiences.

Keywords:

Brand's rhetoric
Social media
Streaming channel
Twitter



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INTRODUCTION

Since a long time ago, rhetoric has studied how to stimulate audiences through the way communicators speak or communicate (verbal), but it is also non-verbal. The study of rhetoric in the past was strongly influenced by its primary task, to train public orators (Safnil, 2010). According to Beugrande and Dressler, the earliest study of texts can be found in rhetorical studies, which have been carried out from the ancient Greeks and Romans time to the Middle Ages and beyond to the present (Safnil, 2010). The main fields of study of rhetoric are the invention or discovery of new ideas, the disposition or compilation of the ideas, the elocution or the discovery of appropriate expressions to convey ideas, and memorization or efforts to remember or memorize those ideas before delivery (Safnil, 2010).

Nevertheless, rhetoric has been used and studied in speeches and paper text and has expanded into social media. Looking back on Aristotle, Aristotle's three elements of rhetoric have been vital to his theory of success (Stevanovich, 2012). When Aristotle's three forms of rhetoric are alluded to in verbal speeches, they become relevant to social media because it is not just about a one-time performance on stage. Instead, a virtual town hall meeting 24 hours a day is never-ending (Blanchard, 2011). It means that social media is a "stage" that can be used for 24 hours, "speech" or interaction can take place 24 hours in contrast to oral speech, which occurs only once. Because of this element of dialogue and an aspect of real-time, the social media discourse needs to follow a sound communication strategy and elements of rhetoric to ensure success for the brand. Depending on the brand, or the situation, ethos, pathos, or logos can be appropriate at different times (Stevanovich, 2012).

Rhetorical analysis is a flexible way to analyze articles and texts (Bryman, 2016). A rhetorical analysis can use symbolic words and persuasive actions (Selzer, 2004). It concentrates on text and looks for potential implications in it. Rhetoric has the analytical ability to find some invisible relationship. Rhetoric is also an excellent tool to help people

analyze the language of the text and social behavior. Netflix uses several social media platforms, both as a customer service media or as a representation of the company (Davis, 2017). Moreover, one of them is Twitter. As for Indonesia, the official account of Netflix is @NetflixID.

According to Arora, Netflix believes in word-of-mouth promotion as its marketing strategy (CNN Indonesia, 2019). They see that customers from various social classes will subscribe and talk about the product when customers like their content by making exciting and sound content (CNN Indonesia, 2019). According to Mangold and Faulds, social media opens opportunities to interact directly with a digital communication approach between companies or brands (Aštari, 2021). Under Twitter's function as a microblogging site, microblogging (in a tweet form) works as an online tool for customer word-of-mouth communications. It discusses the implications for corporations using microblogging as part of their overall marketing strategy (Jansen et al., 2009).

Netflix's Twitter is used for building up media consumption, preferably on its platform (Jamison, 2021). Netflix's responses show that sometimes it pays off to embrace a weirder, nerdier brand voice. Their genuine enthusiasm for TV and movies allows them to connect with fans and followers, and it also helps to promote their content (Cyca, 2019). That is why Netflix's Twitter is fun to watch (Aviles, 2019).

This research was conducted to add and develop another perspective in the academic study of Communication Studies, specifically discussing rhetoric related to brand or company social media. Researchers see that @NetflixID is using a unique way of using rhetoric. As a corporate' social media, they can engage with the audience, promoting their products and persuade their audience to subscribe to them in a nerdy and weird voice (Cyca, 2019), which is why this research wants to intercalate rhetorical research to increase the awareness about the role of rhetoric in social media's company.

METHOD

This research uses rhetorical analysis as a method. The general focus of rhetorical analysis is to arrive methodically at insights into the performance of a communication event (or assemblage of events) through an investigation of particular features of the event (Zachry, 2009). This research conducts an interpretative paradigm based on the abovementioned problem and related objectives. Developing interpretative paradigm theory aims to product descriptions, views, and explanations of certain social events to uncover systems of interpretation and understanding (meaning) that exist in the social environment (Gunawan, 2014).

The data analysis unit in this research is retrieved from Twitter account @NetflixID from January 1 to January 31, 2020, and collected with the documentation technique. This research uses the rhetorical analysis process since it is helpful to understand the implications of theory on the work of rhetorical analysis by considering theoretical perspectives that have predominantly characterized the research (Zachry, 2009). A few steps in analyzing through the rhetorical analysis process consist of identifying texts for analysis, categorizing the texts according to purpose and type, and identifying constituent parts of texts (Zachry, 2009). Interpret and discuss one or more configurations of the parts and whole of the texts in relationship with some overarching theoretical concepts.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Authorships and Personal Pronouns on @NetflixID

The data in this study refers more to @NetflixID positioned itself as a company and the audience in the Twitter environment. @NetflixID positioning itself in a tweet using first-person pronouns by Indonesian language rules. @NetflixID used the "Aku" word, meaning "I," 19 times and *saya* once. *Aku* in Indonesian is used for informal situations, in contrast to *saya*, whose use is more formal. *Aku* can also be used for interaction situations between people who have a close relationship. Unlike *saya*, that used to sound more polite.

The other finding related to the @NetflixID Twitter account of authorship and pronouns addresses its audience in tweets or replies, referring to how @NetflixID positions its audience by using specific pronouns. In its application, @NetflixID uses a series of personal pronouns, both in Indonesian language studies and not. *Kamu, kakak, kak, mas, om, guys, guis, bli, Swifties, geng, sultan, wibu, and nakama*, @NetflixID also uses authorship addressed itself and the audience at the same time, namely by using *kami* and *Kita* pronouns. *Kami* is used when the person being spoken to is omitted. *Kita* is used when the persons they are talking to are included. The researcher found the presence of the use of pronouns *dia*. *Dia* is used to be addressing the authorship of Netflix's movie's character.

By using those variations of pronouns, @NetflixID engages with the audience interactively and makes an effort to be closer to its audience. One example can be seen in the January 6 tweet when @NetflixID used *guis* to call out the audience to talk with @NetflixID by giving closure feelings towards the audience (using *guis*, a pun created by @NetflixID for 'guys'). The use of authorship in social media in business, marketing, and public relations research is dialogic and uses conversational approaches to corporate communication with customers on social media (Kim et al., 2014).



Fig.1. @NetflixID used guis to call the audiences

@NetflixID's authorship builds an interactive interaction between them by communicating using the human voice. With authorship, @NetflixID can be easier to approach and engage with the audience since @NetflixID uses a conversational approach, which means that authorship helps develop a conversational tone that @NetflixID's tried to build. In addition, the authorship variation used by @NetflixID can indicate whether or not a tweet is formal.

B. Conversational Tone through Two-way Communication and Casual Approach

This study's conversational tone is another finding found predominantly on Twitter accounts @NetflixID in January 2020. The conversational tone used by @NetflixID helps set up the interactive atmosphere by engaging through two-way communication and making a casual approach.

By doing two-way communication, @NetflixID strives to engage the audience in the interactions that @NetflixID wants to build, so that not only helps to ensure the message can be delivered to the audience but reciprocal interactions. The point is that audiences can continue to get the latest updates related to Netflix, and @NetflixID can learn and get more insights about their audience, both customers and prospective ones. In addition, the use of two-way communication that @NetflixID is a form of application of Twitter functions that support two-way communication.

Meanwhile, the casual approach applied by @NetflixID helps deliver compelling and relatable messages to the audience. The choice of words @NetflixID used helps make the message more understandable and relatable. On January 9, when @NetflixID announced the collaboration with *Kemdikbud RI*, it used words such as "*berteman*," meaning '*making friends*' and "*biar ketularan pintar*," meaning '*get as smart as them*.' It also uses authorship *Aku* for stating itself and *kak* for stating @Kemdikbud_RI, @pusbangfilm, and @budayasaya. When used appropriately, selective authorship and choice of words will make the message clearer, making the message more straightforward for the audience to understand.

The conversational tone is also emphasized by emojis that help express feelings @NetflixID in its tweets. As seen in a follow-up tweet on January 26 regarding the announcement of the poster *To All The Boys: P.S. I Still Love You*, which will be released on February 12 that used drooling emoji (🤔), shows that @NetflixID laughed at how the audience is more focused on Lara Jean's (main character of the movie) dress. The emoji helps @NetflixID in conversation management by helping users in tone adjustment because it can give extra emotion or meaning to the communication, so it (emoji) possesses similar neural responses to face-to-face communication (Gantiva et al., 2019), which means that it can help the virtual interaction more alive since it promotes the daily conversation sensation.

The use of conversational tone by @NetflixID helps make messages more understandable and engageable. Conversational tone application focuses on the customer instead of a company. The point is that the message is conveyed so that the customers interact daily—this conversational tone uses familiar language and casual instead of formal and unfamiliar terms. In the case of @NetflixID, conversational tone is shown using casual and talkative language and familiar language. Nevertheless, please note that @NetflixID does not use the conversational tone seen in the absence of two-way communication and uses common words and authorship in some tweets.

C. Humor in Shaping @NetflixID's Human Voice

The other findings in this study are the use of humor through interaction, specific visual media, anecdotes, and the choice of words. The humor found in interactions conducted @NetflixID is seen in ridiculous responses when replied audiences reply.

In a January 26 tweet, @NetflixID used a GIF meme to help of building humor on the tweet. In that tweet, @NetflixID selected a choice of words that resembles a person or an employee that talked about their life through the caption "*Kadang pengen tau-tau udah jadi kaya aja gitu, bisa ngga ya*," meaning "Sometimes I want to become rich suddenly, can I not?" which sounds talkative and casual as if it was a personal account. Moreover, by using an edited GIF, there was a story that @NetflixID wanted to share with the audience about @NetflixID, wondering how it is like to be rich after getting half-paid as a probation employee. The example shows how the choice of words and the usage of

anecdotes collaborate with interaction and visual-media-contained tweets in delivering humor. It is a finding that has not been found in previous studies.



Fig. 2. @NetflixID made a humorous tweet using an edited GIF taken from YOU

Tabares stated that the use of humor by @NetflixID arguably makes sense considering comedy is a valuable and efficient tool for communicating just about everything since it tears down walls (Baker, 2018). It is in line with research conducted by Baker, where Wendy's official Twitter account uses humor to create a dialogue, and it is even broader than just a retweet compared to Wendy's (using retweets and replies to build up the conversation) (Baker, 2018). Another benefit of using humor in a brand's social media on @NetflixID is that it provides a space for customers to express their ideas and opinions and retweet and reply to other Twitter users' tweets, encouraging a conversation not just with @NetflixID but also with other audiences.

The application of humor by @NetflixID has proven able to show human-like character by sharing its experience, showing its feelings, and being dialogic. In following what Aaker said, brand personality is defined as "a set of human characteristics associated with a brand" (Aaker, 1997). Furthermore, in the *Brand Personality Scale* (Aaker, 1997), humor is included in the *Sincerity* dimension, representing an honest, wholesome, and cheerful personality found in @NetflixID in January 2020. It is an additional finding that has not been found in previous studies and the former theory used in this research.

D. @NetflixID's Five Canons of Rhetoric

The discovery of five canons in this study is based on the researcher's type of research, rhetorical analysis. Five canons help view a message's initial process until it is delivered in text form (Selzer, 2004). In this study, five practical canons dissected the process from the purpose of tweets made to how Twitter is used as a platform for @NetflixID.

On canon invention, @NetflixID's tweets were created to promote series or new movies that will or have aired on Netflix, inform everyone about news and updates related to Netflix's achievements or agenda, give Netflix content recommendations, ask the audience about something, give a response or interact with the audience, and be confident about @NetflixID's experience and engage with the audience. Broadly speaking, tweets made by @NetflixID represent some of the primary goals of promoting Netflix's content, interacting with the audience, and engaging with the audience.

If we look closely, this follows the findings of canon delivery where @NetflixID used its platform for a marketing purpose, interacting and engaging with the audience. As in the January 23 tweet that purposely used its platform as a marketing platform by making a tweet to inform other Oscar-nominated Netflix animations about 2020. However, not all canon invention's findings on tweets represent Twitter's usage found in canon delivery.

A brief analysis conducted when shedding canon invention and canon delivery found some tweets were not aligned with the evidence stated before, solving initial speculation that canon invention and canon delivery had continuity. It is proved in a tweet on January 29 when @NetflixID confides about how it was bewitched by Henry Cavill's beauty that made it want to watch the video more than once. While the actual usage of Twitter that can be seen in this tweet is as a marketing platform (promotion).

Canon arrangement explains how the message is constructed to flow (Selzer, 2004). In this research, canon arrangement is helpful to see what compositions are contained in @NetflixID's tweet on January 2020. The study's findings on the composition of tweets found that they used specific visual media used in many tweets, especially in tweets that were uploaded to promote, inform, engage, or even confide in. Another discovery from the canon arrangement are hashtags discovered on tweets on January 7 (#KelasNetflix) and January 24 (#CrashLandingonYou), retweeted quotes discovered on six tweets, and Japanese emoticons discovered on tweets dated January 1 and 9.

The use of specific visual media is also found in canon memory, which helps make it easier for the audience to understand the content of information in tweets. This study seeks to see how @NetflixID created tweets that were easier to understand by the audience. In addition to the specific use of visual media used, other findings in this canon are statements of facts and the usage of humor.

The humor @NetflixID uses to create a dialogic ecosystem (Baker, 2018). So, before the interaction happened, the audience noticed the tweet first because of the humor they saw in those tweets. The usage of humor also proves a point stated in the advertisement that humor helps as a means to create a purpose so that the information conveyed triggers attention (Purwaningwulan, 2013). Other findings have not been found in previous research about the proof of perspective of humor in advertisements applicable in rhetoric research.

Canon style in this study helps find the style used by @NetflixID in January 2020, whether it is formal or informal. The language style searches are conducted based on formal or informal vocabularies, authorship usage, and emojis. Based on the data collected, most tweets @NetflixID uploaded were using informal language style, and tweets with formal language style are only 9, 30, and 31 January.

The use of non-standard vocabulary seen in @NetflixID's tweets, such as words used daily, influenced by regional languages, influenced by the development of the times, its shape is fickle and has the same meaning as the standard vocabulary. In addition to vocabulary, canon style was discovered by the use of authorship and personal pronouns that show casualties and the use of emoji in expressing emotions or feelings @NetflixID.

E. Three Elements of Rhetoric by Aristotle on Twitter Account @NetflixID

The three elements of rhetoric in this study were seen based on the designation of credibility and character (*ethos*), incorporating emotion and feelings (*pathos*), and the application of logic shown (*logos*) on @NetflixID in January 2020. *Ethos* explains how communicators project the character of a speaker/communicator, including their credibility (Hartelius & Browning, 2008). *Ethos* on the @NetflixID Twitter account is determined based on the credibility shown on the profile. It is easier for @NetflixID to show its credibility since it has more than 130,000 followers by the first day of January 2020, has a verification badge after its name, received many likes in some of its tweets, delivers fresh news about Netflix's contents in Indonesia, and showed characters in interacting, promoting, and engaging with its audience.

To see the character of @NetflixID, the researcher uses humor, tone, authorship, and canon style. Humor helps create dialogue and makes the retweets and replies broad (Baker, 2018). In addition, @NetflixID's choice of words and anecdote in building up the humor helps make the tweet sound talkative and casual as if it was a personal account, creating a dialogical interaction (Baker, 2018). The conversational tone helps shape every @NetflixID's tweets to show its human voice. It is also helped by using *canon styles* that indicate non-standard or non-formal language styles useful in delivering messages used in everyday life.

Furthermore, authorship has a role in the portrayal of @NetflixID characters. Using varied and personal authorships helps create a "human" character in @NetflixID. Including authorships or personal pronouns (such as *aku*, *kamu*, *bli*, *kak*, *Swifties*, and so on) gives the text a more realistic approach and influences the reader's perception of its credibility (Nelzén, 2017).

When elaborately used, all those components help @NetflixID create a human voice, which builds a brand with human characteristics. The human voice applied by @NetflixID proved Kelleher and Miller's research that the human voice on brands works to maintain a positive consumer-brand relationship (Kelleher & Miller, 2006). Incorporating the human voice on Twitter by @NetflixID also proved that Twitter facilitates the communication process to maintain high-quality relationships with consumers through human voice (Zhang, 2017).

Pathos serves to see how @NetflixID attracts an audience visible through canon invention, authorship and personal pronouns, humor, and conversational tone by using emotions and what audience's emotions are triggered. @NetflixID used emotions in many tweets that were visible when the tweet was mainly confiding about things and on tweets to promote upcoming movies/series aired on Netflix.

@NetflixID used the conversational tone shown from anecdotes to express its emotions. Anecdote is a useful literary device to attain pathos as it can create empathy in the readers by including a story about a person or a real-life situation (Nelzén, 2017). It makes sense to see how @NetflixID uses its personal experience to convey its emotions and feelings through tweets supported by selecting authorship, humor, and words that create a human voice.

The use of specific authorships such as *Aku*, *Kamu*, *Kita*, and any other variations used @NetflixID functional to help him convey emotional messages more quickly to the audience since it makes the message sounds more personal and more intimate. As explained earlier that the use of authorship helps help @NetflixID in using a human voice in its tweets since customers want to know if they are interacting with "another human being" (Canhoto & Clark, 2013). In addition, the humor on the account @NetflixID has a role to play in audiences' emotions. As in the previous example, an audience felt triggered and mad because of the humor @NetflixID made.

Some of the things used by @NetflixID in terms of pathos show that to provoke audiences' emotions, it has to show its emotions and feelings so the audience will follow. When looking at discussions related to pathos on @NetflixID, the human voice significantly shapes pathos, especially on tweets with a non-formal language style. The use of the human voice brought consumer-brand interactions and relationships to a more personal level (Kelleher & Miller, 2006; Kwon & Sung, 2011; Labrecque, 2014), so it helps to make the audience feel a connection is of great importance in the appeal of pathos (Nelzén, 2017).

Logos on @NetflixID are viewed through canon memory on @NetflixID, primarily through facts and visual media used. Facts in logos are referred to by Aristotle, which states logos are an element based on things that are always true (Sloane, 2001).

In addition to uploading short trailer videos of the upcoming Netflix content, visual media in shaping @NetflixID's logos is also found in some tweets that inform about the achievements actors, movies, or Netflix-related series got. As for the January 7 tweet regarding the *Sex Education S2* announcement, @NetflixID used a video to inform the date release at the end of the video (as emphasis) and show short scenes in the trailer. Through a sense of logos, the rhetoric can prove the truth or apparent truth through persuasive arguments, and this is evidenced on the @NetflixID Twitter account through the use of visual media as proof of truth.

F. Rhetoric as Marketing Communication Strategy of Twitter Account @NetflixID

We have seen how the findings are related to the other findings, such as how authorships help create conversational tone, how canon style influences @NetflixID's character, and so on. This phenomenon can also be found in @NetflixID's tweet replies on incorporating rhetoric in interactions. By including rhetoric in its replies, it helps in making the interaction flows effortlessly. It corresponds to the rhetoric strategy that orientates rhetoric around the opportune moment and encourages an improvisatory approach.

By being spontaneous, @NetflixID was able to adapt to the audience's context and stay connected with the audience. It is stated that the rhetoric must continually engage in changes in the constitution of the audience and make improvisatory adaptations to the dynamics of the rhetorical situation (Miles & Nilsson, 2018).

In addition, @NetflixID also paid attention to the circumstances in interacting with the audience, as it is also corresponding to Miles and Nilsson that the rhetoric must continually engage in its surroundings (Miles & Nilsson, 2018), which @NetflixID gave responses that related to the primary tweet as stated before.

As a brand's Twitter account, @NetflixID has shown human characters by being quirky, funny, and to the point with the use of human voice, which is proven from the use of personal pronouns and authorships, humor, and conversational tone in five canons of rhetoric and three elements of rhetoric.

The other tweet that proves the previous point stated is on tweets January 16 about Miss Americana with non-formal language style, conversational tone, and humor in promoting it, which helps @NetflixID to design the strategy since it provides a space for customers to express their ideas and opinions (Baker, 2018). This tweet also proves the other point of rhetoric as a marketing communication strategy by stimulating demand where none exists (Torp & Andersen, 2018).

The other finding related to the rhetoric in the marketing communication strategy of @NetflixID is that the potential use of authorships & personal pronouns and conversational tone as performed similarly with humor for being an effective tool in initiating social interactions and generating affective responses from the audience (Meyer, 2000). They also help create emotional bonds with the consumer and attract the consumers' attention, similarly to humor (Primanto, A. B. Dharmmeṣṭa., 2019).

The emergence of humor has enhanced marketing communication by providing pleasure, initiating social interactions, and generating affective responses from the audience (Meyer, 2000). From the data that has been analyzed and discussed, authorships and personal pronouns, and conversational tone did the same thing as how humor works in marketing communication.

For example, in a tweet on January 6, when @NetflixID confided about its favorite scene in *Posesif* movie, @NetflixID engaged with the audience and initiated by using authorship and personal pronouns to break down the wall of professional environment and feeling of @NetflixID, and the conversational tone in generating effective response by enhancing the job of humor in delivering the humor meaning of the tweet. It is proven by the audiences' replies that challenged it to show the screenshot of the favorite scene mentioned (iFlix's animation footage).

From the tweets that have been discussed, authorships & personal pronouns and conversational tone also help in creating emotional bonds with the consumer and attracting the consumer's attention. These functions have been mentioned as a few reasons why humor is known as an effective tool in marketing communication (Primanto, A. B. Dharmmeṣṭa., 2019). As those findings are discovered, this discussion is discovering the potential of conversational tone and authorships & personal pronouns in marketing communication strategy for brands or companies to consider.



Fig. 3. @NetflixID being spontaneous in interacting with the audience

CONCLUSION

Through the analysis process by using rhetorical analysis, the researcher discovers @NetflixID's rhetoric in promoting the products and engaging with audiences who discover the dominant role of authorships and personal pronouns, conversational tone, and humor in @NetflixID's tweets in January 2020, which each of them played a role in tracing several canons of rhetoric and three elements of rhetoric.

Through rhetorical analysis, it can be seen if @NetflixID is a company's Twitter account that uses the human voice in almost its tweets. It is demonstrated through the use of personal pronouns that are used to address the audience and to address itself (authorship) by sharing its experience and emotions through emojis and anecdotes, engaging and interacting with audiences by using non-formal language styles that @NetflixID used in a created conversational tone that helps in speaking as customers than a company. Coupled with the use of helpful humor in shaping the human personality of the brand (Aaker, 1997), it strengthens @NetflixID's human-like character on Twitter.

Some canons assist in finding some of Aristotle's elements of rhetoric, such as canon style that assists in studying credibility in ethos and canon memory which helps in studying the clarity of information on logos on @NetflixID during January 2020. The non-formal language style found on @NetflixID helped in discovering its character as a company's Twitter account that has a human-like character by using non-standard vocabulary and authorship and personal pronouns. Canon memory helps find @NetflixID's logos by looking out at facts @NetflixID made about information and announcements to help the audience memorize it.

This research also finds the role of rhetoric on the Twitter account @NetflixID in terms of marketing communication strategy. @NetflixID showed spontaneous responses in interacting with the audience with the help of conversational tone and non-formal language style. @NetflixID also proven using canon style, conversational tone, and pathos to prove that the rhetoric should be audience-focused. By allowing the audience's ideas, feelings, knowledge, and habits to communicate a brand's resources in formulating the strategy (Miles & Nilsson, 2018), as the audience's habit or interest was acknowledged, @NetflixID shows by applying rhetoric in communication strategies by stimulating demand where none exists (Torp & Andersen, 2018).

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