

Rhetorical Devices Used To Make Emphasis In Brian Tracy's Talk "How To Build A Business That Works"

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates the types of rhetorical devices that Brian Tracy used in his business presentation, three types of rhetorical devices that are mostly used, and how these rhetorical devices are used to make emphasis on his business tips and suggestions. This research used Harris (2018) and Fahnestock (2011) theories on rhetorical devices. The findings showed that Brian Tracy utilized different types of rhetorical devices to aid him in emphasizing his main idea, such as metaphor, simile, sentential adverb, asyndeton, polysyndeton, hyperbole, paralepsis, litotes, and climax. The three most used types of rhetorical devices in his presentation are Metaphor, Sentential Adverb and Simile. Brian Tracy utilized metaphor to create a clearer imagery, sentential adverb to separate the anecdotes and conclusion, and simile to give comparison of two subjects. From the findings, the writer concludes that rhetorical devices can help the presenter in delivering his main points. Rhetorical devices help in emphasizing the main idea and creates a more engaging presentation with the audience, hence creating a more impactful and beneficial presentation.

Keywords: business strategies, emphasis, presentation, rhetorical devices

INTRODUCTION

Rhetorical devices are words which are used with unique applications and special meanings (Harris, 2018). Rhetorical devices include a variety of categories, each of which has multiple devices. According to Fahnestock (2011), rhetorical theory presents a rich array of methods for understanding actual arguments, whether they are spoken or written.

The data analysed in this research is a video on a show called Genius Network that invited Brian Tracy as the speaker. Brian Tracy is the Chairman and CEO of Brian Tracy International, a company that specializes in the training and development of individuals and organizations. He presented about how people could build a good working business. He discussed what should and should not be done regarding growing a business. He also provided tips and suggestions on how people should run their businesses.

Throughout his presentation, Brian Tracy used a lot of anecdotes and examples to explain more about his business principles. The stories that he told could be quite long and that could distract people's attention. Strategically, Brian Tracy used rhetorical devices to separate his anecdotes and explanation as to emphasize his explanation, so that people that got lost in the anecdotes could still follow through with his explanation. As his presentation is 49 minutes long and he has several tips and suggestions, his audience could easily get bored and lost. Brian Tracy used rhetorical devices to make it more interesting while emphasizing the important points that could affect business growth. This attracted the writer to research further on how rhetorical devices make emphasis.

METHOD

The problem of this research was solved qualitatively. Dörnyei (2011) explained that qualitative data usually consists of written notes and documents of various types, as well as recorded spoken data that has been transcribed into text form. He explained that qualitative data have a tendency to become increasingly long and rather unfocused. There is no explicit restriction on what could be considered data. A qualitative research aim is the reflection of the complex real-life situations that the data concerns.

This research fits Dörnyei's (2011) description of qualitative research because: The data is in the form of video transcription, the data is the presentation of Brian Tracy, and the findings were based on the writer's interpretation of the data. Thus, it is appropriate to classify the author's study as qualitative in nature.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

During his presentation, Brian Tracy used a few of the rhetorical devices to emphasize some important points in his talk. During the presentation, Brian Tracy used 9 types of rhetorical devices. Those 9 types of rhetorical devices that are used are: metaphor, simile, sentential adverb, asyndeton, polysyndeton, hyperbole, paralepsis, litotes, and climax. Of the nine types of rhetorical devices that are used, the most frequently used types of rhetorical devices are metaphor (16 times), sentential adverb (11 times), and simile (11 times).

4.1 Metaphor

Metaphor interestingly occurred the most often metaphor, with a total frequency of 16 times. Harris (2018) explains that the common construction for metaphor is by using *to be* verb to equalize the subject and the image by saying that the subject is the image. According to Fahnestock (2011), metaphor is the insertion of terms into unexpected contexts. Metaphor is commonly done by equalizing an uncommon scenario with a more common scenario. The use of metaphor emphasizes the importance of the subject by making it easy for people to understand.

Text 1

Focus is the most important requirement for success in our fast-moving world today, if you can focus you can succeed and if you cannot you cannot. It's almost a **black-and-white** thing. (Par 4, see Appendix)

In this extract, Brian Tracy used "black-and-white" to show two different sides that could not be mixed. Black and white are two completely different colours. This means that there is no grey area or in between. Brian Tracy used this metaphor to indicate that the outcome of business is only either success or failure, there is no in-the-middle distraction. These two colours are used because white usually corresponds to positivity while black corresponds to negativity. Hence in a business topic, white corresponds to success and black corresponds to failure. Brian Tracy used the "black-and-white" metaphor to convince people of the importance of focus, because focus may affect how successful their business would be, whether it would be a success or failure. This metaphor of "black-and-white" emphasizes the importance of focus. People's aim to start a business would always be successful, nobody wants to start a failing business. Hence, people should focus on the task and not be distracted by superficial things. When people start to lose their focus, it is the start of them failing.

4.2 Sentential Adverb

Harris (2018) explains that sentential adverbs are often placed near the beginning of a sentence, where important information is usually placed. He adds that sentential adverbs bring focus and emphasis to that part of the sentences. Essentially, sentential adverbs create pauses to emphasize certain parts of the sentence.

Text 2

I read an article about myself. I was a very successful entrepreneur in New Zealand and the article was sent to me last week. I'm reading this article he said "The turning point in his life was when he went to a Brian Tracy seminar and learned how to focus." he was broke, he was unemployed, he had no money, and he walked out of the seminar a completely different person and he had written goals. he then looked around and as it happens, he saw an article on coffee shops and Starbucks' success in the United States. and it said coffee shops are good business to be in because more and more people like the idea of a specialty coffee shop and if it has a wi-fi then they go there it becomes a social centre and so on. he knew nothing about coffee and before the dust had settled, he owned 80 coffee shops in Australia and New Zealand. and then he says he got into a divorce and I had to sell it for 50 million dollars to share the proceeds with his wife. but he did not share, he did not sell off the worldwide rights to it so he's rebuilding. **Anyway**, his point was at the end of the article they said "Well what would you say to aspiring entrepreneurs who want to be successful?" and he said just two things: "focus and fail fast." focus and fail, fast learn, quickly try something new. and I thought I'd just pass that on because it's sort of what I have discovered over the years, is the faster you fail and learn the faster you succeed. you actually learn to succeed by failing. you know Thomas J. Watson's famous line "If you want to increase your rate of success you must double your rate of failure because success lies on the far side of failure." (Par 5)

*Background
Story*

Conclusion

The text talks about the importance of focusing and failing fast. Brian Tracy starts by talking about an article on the growth of a very successful entrepreneur in New Zealand. He gives the background story and journey of that particular entrepreneur to be successful. After finishing the anecdotes of the entrepreneur, Brian Tracy used the sentential adverb "anyway" to conclude the anecdotes and explain what could be learned from that entrepreneur. The main point of the article is to focus and fail fast. In this way, Brian Tracy highlights and brings the emphasis on focus and fails fast.

4.3 Simile

Brian Tracy used Simile ten times. According to Fahnestock (2011), similes are widely used in contemporary argumentative prose. A simile expresses an explicit comparison between two subjects. Harris (2018) adds that similes are imaginative comparisons between two different things. To create a simile, Harris (2018) says that the image must be familiar and the difference between the subject and image should be substantial. He adds that similes are used not only to increase interest but also to imaginatively clarify an idea. Quoted By Fahnestock (2011, p. 109),

Quintilian expressed that similes are insertion used to prove our arguments and to make our imagery clearer.

Text 3

and one of the things that is holding back entrepreneurs, business owners, is killing them by the way and it's wiping out an entire generation it's this obsession with technology." I see people that are walking with their phones, it's almost **like drug addicts that are mainline**, they cannot stop staring at their screen they cannot stop pushing their buttons. I hate to say there are people in this room that had that problem, but the fact is that this obsession, with looking at the screen and staying connected, is killing people because it stops them from focusing. you cannot focus if you are distracted **like an attention deficit disorder dog**, so you're constantly ringing and responding to bells almost like a crazy person in a toy factory. if thinking is the most important thing you do because of the consequences of thinking determine the entire quality of your life, then the quality of your thinking determines the quality of your life. So, the more time that you spend thinking and thinking well and thinking clearly the more successful you are... (Par 6)

In this text, Brian Tracy uses the simile "like drug addicts that are mainline" to create a clearer imagery of how addicted people are to their phones. People who are addicted to drugs will have a harder time living without drugs, because they need the drugs with them all the time. This is how Brian Tracy depicts people with phones. Brian Tracy also exclaimed that people in this generation are so addicted to the use of phones. They will directly open up any notifications that pop up almost instantly. Brian Tracy compared this with the simile "like an attention deficit disorder dog". This is because some dogs need to have attention. If we do not give the dog any attention, it will keep asking for our attention for example by acting or behaving badly, or making troubles. It is explained by Brian Tracy that this addiction caused people not to be able to focus. Both of the similes he used focus on how people become lack of focus due to the addiction with phones. This helps Brian Tracy to emphasize that focus is important as it helps people to think clearly which then would determine how successful they are.

CONCLUSION

This thesis has shown how Brian Tracy used rhetorical devices during his presentation in order to make emphasis on his business tips and suggestions. Applying Fahnestock's (2011) and Harris's (2018) theories on rhetorical devices, this study has shown that rhetorical devices have been used in a unique and uncommon way to impact the attitudes, beliefs, and actions of the audience.

During his presentation, Brian Tracy used a number of different types of rhetorical devices, but the top three were metaphor, sentential adverb, and simile. He seemed to utilize metaphors to create a clearer imagery, sentential adverbs to separate the anecdotes and conclusion, and similes to give comparison of two subjects. The metaphor and simile helped Brian Tracy to give a common visualisation and comparison so that people could understand easily, while the sentential adverb is used to conclude the anecdotes or to give simpler explanation.

In conclusion, rhetorical devices are very helpful for public speakers to make the presentation more impactful. As can be seen from Brian Tracy's presentation under study, rhetorical devices are very useful for the speaker to make emphasis on the points that he was

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making. Rhetorical devices are also helpful in making the presentation interesting in order to keep the audiences' attention.

It is strongly advisable for speakers to use rhetorical devices to emphasize their main ideas in order to have a successful and impactful presentation. Rhetorical devices are helpful for speakers or presenters to control the flow of the audience's attention to create a more engaging presentation. They can help the audience understand easier about the arguments of the topic being presented. Other than that, rhetorical devices are helpful to help the audience in comprehending the flow of the topic. Hence the presentation would have more impact and meaning for the audience.

As this study only research on Brian Tracy's use of rhetorical devices to emphasize his business principal presentation, further research on different rhetorical devices' types and a different media can also be interesting. Such research can further contribute to the richness of using rhetorical devices to achieve better organization of thoughts in a presentation.

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