

## Analysis of Rhetorical Devices Used by Alex Hormozi and Lewis Howes

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### ABSTRACT

This study is about the use of rhetorical devices in podcasts, entitled, *How They Keep You POOR! (Watch This To Become A MILLIONAIRE In 2023) | Alex Hormozi*. The purpose of this study is to analyze types of rhetorical devices and find the differences and similarities used by Lewis and Alex. The present study employs 15 rhetorical devices by McGuigan (2007) to identify the rhetorical devices used in the podcast. Podcast's transcripts were examined using a qualitative approach to find the rhetorical devices. The result of the findings is Lewis uses 4 rhetorical devices: hyperbole, hypophora, allusion, exemplum, where Alex uses 9 rhetorical devices: hyperbole, hypophora, rhetorical question, distinctio, imagery/simile, metaphor, allusion, sententia, exemplum. Understatement, litotes, procatalepsis, analogy, and eponym are not used in the podcast. In the difference, Lewis did not use rhetorical question, distinctio, imagery/simile, metaphor, and sententia. However, in the similarity both Lewis and Alex used hyperbole, hypophora, allusion, and exemplum. In conclusion, hyperbole and exemplum can be used as the tools for the speaker's to inspire the audience because it is exaggerating statements and gives the related matter in the real-life context which can grab the audience's attention.

**Keywords:** business context, podcasts, rhetorical devices

### INTRODUCTION

People are social humans. It means that a person always interacts with another person or with a group of people or a group of people with another group of people. Communication serves as a tool that extends beyond mere exchanging words; it presents as a cornerstone for human interaction (Littlejohn et al., 2016). Through conversations, people forge and nurture personal relationships, shaping an environment where shared meaning and deepen the context of communication. The impact of communication is not imprisoned to the creation of individual relationships, it plays a pivotal role in development and transformation of communication. Moreover, communication works for the conduit through which culture is communicated, it binds generations together through the exchange of traditions and values.

McGuigan (2007) states that rhetorical devices are linguistic tools that are used to enhance communication in order to be meaningful. Rhetorical devices are techniques or strategies that bring ideas more effectively and make a stronger impact on the audience emotionally. Rhetoric, according to Leith (2011) is often referred to as the art of persuasion, it is a fascinating area that revolves around one individual's attempt to influence other people through the power of words. Leith (2011) also states that rhetoric is a realm of knowledge that can be meticulously analyzed and understood, much like the way people delve into the intricate nuances of poetry. Fundamentally, rhetorical devices are like a palette for the painter to make the art more beautiful, inspire its words with emotion, persuasion, and refinement.

The significance of rhetorical devices plays a crucial role in taking over communication beyond its surface and engaging the audience's emotion on a deeper level. According to McCroskey (2015)

rhetorical communication involves a source stimulating a specific meaning in the mind of a receiver through verbal and non-verbal communication. The source explains the intended meaning, but if the context of the communication is unsuccessful, the receiver may interpret differently. Verbal communications are transmitted through language, while nonverbal communications include body language, facial expressions, and tone of voice.

The writer chooses a podcast about *How They Keep You POOR! (Watch This To Become A MILLIONAIRE In 2023) | Alex Hormozi* (Howes, 2022). The discussion of the podcast is discussing various aspects of wealth, success, and personal development. The guest star, Alex Hormozi, discusses the mindset of poverty and how finance can shape one's perspective about counterproductive ways. The podcast emphasizes the importance of prioritizing time and money to give a powerful impact in life. Alex Hormozi suggests that people should invest their skill into something meaningful in order to increase their output of hard work, such as investing in mentorship, coaching, and self-education that will make whole as the time goes, even if the finance with debt, is positioned as preferable to passive consumption in the present. Alex Hormozi insists on focusing on the practical skills needed for income generation and investment in education. The power of compound learning is to make a point, it is related with the importance of identifying problems as entrepreneurial opportunities. Selling, building, and leading are identified as important skills for financial success. Developing leadership is highlighted, and continuous mentoring and learning are emphasized. Strategies for productivity and achieving financial goals are discussed, including the dedicated hard work and hundred hours of effort in skill acquisition.

The guest star, Alex Hormozi, is an Iran-American entrepreneur and business leader who co-founded the gym empire Fitness Blender. Alex Hormozi has successfully scaled multiple brick and mortar businesses and turned around 32 locations using his own model. Then, Alex Hormozi creates a licensing model for over 4000+ locations in 4 years. He has scaled and exited 7 companies with his notable exit being the majority sale of his licensing company for \$46.2M in 2021 (Alex Hormozi Bio, n.d.). Alex Hormozi has transitioned to the owner/shareholder position in his companies in 2020 and he becomes founder of Acquisition.com to invest his wealth in other businesses (Alex Hormozi Bio, n.d.). Alex Hormozi is known for his expertise in customer acquisition and monetization. Alex Hormozi is dedicated to advancing equal access to education and encouraging entrepreneurship in underprivileged communities. Alex Hormozi has graduated from Vanderbilt University Magna Cum Laude in three years with BS Human and Organizational Development and worked as management consultant (Alex Hormozi Bio, n.d.)

The host of the podcast, Lewis Howes, is a lifestyle entrepreneur, high performance business coach, and keynote speaker. Lewis Howes is a former professional football player and two sport All-American, as well as a current USA Men's National Handball Team Athlete (Howes, 2006). Lewis Howes hosts a top ranked podcast called The School of Greatness, which has over 100 downloads and 1000 episodes since 2013 (Howes, n.d.). Lewis Howes has been acknowledged by The White House and President Obama as one top of the 100 entrepreneurs under age of 30. Lewis Howes is also a contributing writer for Entrepreneur and has been featured on various major media outlets. Furthermore, Lewis Howes is a two times best selling author and shares inspiring interviews on The School of Greatness with world renowned leaders in various fields (Howes, n.d.).

In this study, the writer is going to analyze the podcast, namely *How They Keep You POOR! (Watch This To Become A MILLIONAIRE In 2023) | Alex Hormozi* (Howes, 2022). The main purpose why the writer wants to analyze is to provide the analyzing types of rhetorical devices Alex Hormozi employs to communicate his insights on achieving financial success. The writer also provides the analyzing types of rhetorical devices Lewis Howes employs to elicit detailed responses from Alex Hormozi.

McGuigan (2007) states that rhetorical devices are tools used in reading, speaking, and writing to improve effective communication. The purpose of rhetorical devices is to convince, educate, express personal ideas, or even entertain the audience, listener, and reader.

According to McGuigan (2007), rhetorical devices serve four main purposes. The purpose of rhetorical devices is to convince or persuade. Persuasion itself is both a technique and a form of communication known as rhetoric. Rhetorical devices can influence the audience's emotions and opinions in a subtle way, which is not always a direct approach. The technique of rhetorical devices can evoke emotions, create vivid visual images, or reference credible sources. After that, the purpose of the rhetorical device is to educate or inform, the most used in rhetorical devices when it comes to teach or explain concepts to the audience is using metaphor. It can make difficult concepts easier to understand. In other words, rhetorical devices are used to teach someone and explain something difficult to someone. The rhetorical devices, such as metaphor, come naturally when the speaker wants to inform others. Additionally, the purpose of rhetorical devices is to express personal ideas. When writing an essay to convey personal thoughts, it does not matter whether the information is true or false. However, the speaker or the writer needs to persuade that the ideas are worth reading and considering in order to be perceived by the audience. Furthermore, the purpose of rhetorical devices is to entertain the audience. Skilled writers or speakers use these devices to engage the audience emotionally. When writing to entertain, the purpose is to guide the readers in a particular direction. Entertainment can be a powerful tool to persuade, educate, or express the speaker or the writer.

In analyzing the employment of rhetorical devices by Alex Hormozi and Lewis Howes, the writer uses rhetorical devices written by McGuigan (2007). McGuigan (2007) states there are fifteen rhetorical devices especially on strategies, namely hyperbole, understatement, litotes, antithesis, hypophora, rhetorical question, procatleipsis, distinctio, simile/imagery, metaphor, analogy, allusion, eponym, sententia, exemplum. The writer is going to use fifteen rhetorical devices to support analyzing the podcast.

In this study, the writer provides the analyzing types of rhetorical devices Lewis Howes employs to elicit detailed responses from Alex Hormozi. The writer also provides the analyzing types of rhetorical devices Alex Hormozi employs to communicate his insights on achieving financial success. The writer wants to find the similarities and differences between the rhetorical devices used by Lewis Howes and Alex Hormozi.

## **METHOD**

This study utilized a qualitative methodology. As outlined by Creswell (2014) and Dörnyei (2007), four defining traits characterize a qualitative research: (a) the researcher served the primary research instrument, (b) the data and analysis outcomes were descriptive and presented in words rather than numbers, (c) the data consisted of videos that were transcribed into text, and (d) the study conclusions stem from the researcher interpreting the textual data. This study met all four criterias for a qualitative study. Specifically, the author was the key instrument, the findings were reported in descriptive, textual form, videos are transcribed as part of the data collection, and the author's interpretation of the textual data shapes the study conclusions. By gathering four criterias, this study qualified as qualitative research under the framework put forth by Creswell (2014) and Dörnyei (2007).

The writer's study corresponded with Creswell (2014) and Dörnyei (2007) characteristics of qualitative research because: (a) the writer's data was going to be transcription of the podcast's utterances, (b) the writer's data was descriptive and presented in words, (c) the writer's analysis explored the perspective of individual in the podcast that are being studied, (d) the result of the study was based on the

writer's interpretation of the data. Therefore, the writer's study was compatible to be considered as qualitative study.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

First, the writer shows the results of analysis of rhetorical devices used by Lewis Howes to elicit detailed responses from Alex Hormozi. McGuigan (2007) states that there are 15 types of rhetorical devices; hyperbole, understatement, litotes, antithesis, hypophora, rhetorical question, procatalepsis, distinctio, simile/imagery, metaphor, analogy, allusion, eponym, sententia, exemplum. Lewis only uses five rhetorical devices -it is only hyperbole, antithesis, hypophora, allusion, and exemplum.

Second, the writer shows the result of analysis of rhetorical devices used by Alex Hormozi to provide the analyzing types of rhetorical devices Alex Hormozi employs to communicate his insights on achieving financial success. McGuigan (2007) states that there are 15 types of rhetorical devices; hyperbole, understatement, litotes, antithesis, hypophora, rhetorical question, procatalepsis, distinctio, simile/imagery, metaphor, analogy, allusion, eponym, sententia, exemplum. Alex Hormozi uses 11 rhetorical devices -it is hyperbole, litotes, hypophora, rhetorical question, procatalepsis, distinctio, simile/imagery, metaphor, allusion, sententia, exemplum.

Alex Hormozi uses more rhetorical devices than Lewis Howes. From the data analysis, Alex uses 9 rhetorical devices where Lewis uses 4 rhetorical devices. The rhetorical devices used by only Alex are rhetorical question, distinctio, imagery/simile, metaphor, and sententia. The reason why Alex uses more rhetorical devices than Lewis is because Alex uses provocative thought and draws listeners into the discussion, often clarifies key terms to ensure the audience understands his concepts, and explains abstract business concepts into relatable scenarios. For example, by using imagery to make the process noticeable, Hormozi might compare growing a business to building a house. The rhetorical devices make Alex's advice feel not only practical but also personal and relatable. His ability to connect with the audience through engaging questions, vivid imagery, and relatable metaphors strengthens his message and motivates action.

Next, the difference in rhetorical devices used by Lewis Howes and Alex Hormozi is exemplum. The result of the data analysis is that Alex uses more exemplum than Lewis as the rhetorical device. The reason behind the result is Alex tends to speak about business, building financial discipline, developing skills by giving examples on what is happening in the real world and real experience from other business men. Alex provides examples of real-world events and experiences from others, making it easier for listeners or readers to understand the information being conveyed. This approach, rather than presenting direct arguments, can inspire the audience to gain new insights from real-world occurrences.

There are similarities that can be found from two subjects: Lewis Howes and Alex Hormozi. The first similarity of rhetorical devices in podcasts, namely, *How They Keep You POOR! (Watch This To Become A MILLIONAIRE In 2023) | Alex Hormozi* is the use of hyperbole, hypophora, allusion, and exemplum. The type of rhetorical device, hyperbole, is used in podcasts to persuade and grab the attention of listeners and readers to make the statement clearly delivered. This use of rhetorical devices is to make the statement can be delivered clearly to the audience in order to make the audience understand the meaning easily, so the use of hyperbole can be exaggerated for audience to connect with them emotionally and can grab their attention to make them remember easily through the process of what is delivered in podcast building financial and developing skills. Next, the similarity is the use of hypophora. In the podcast, the interviewee and the guest speaker tend to ask and give questions and answer it by themselves and explain it thoroughly and the reason is to make the listeners and readers avoid confusion and for that reason, it can make it easily understandable for the listeners and the readers. Third, the similarity is the

use of allusion. In the podcast, the writer found the same traits of two people talking with rhetorical devices, by giving an example of someone famous and its purpose is to serve the readers and listeners to see the bigger picture and evoke emotion so the listeners and readers can learn from someone famous. The fourth similarity is the use of exemplum. In the podcast, the use of exemplum can be tools for listeners and readers to understand actual examples rather than direct arguments. By giving actual examples and illustrating the point can be more effective to deliver information and can be easily understood for the listeners and the readers.

The next similarity in the podcast is the absence of rhetorical devices, namely, understatement, litotes, antithesis, procatalepsis, analogy, and eponym. The use of understatement is to create irony and emphasize extreme events. The possibility of the absence of understatement is there is no use of creating irony and emphasizing extreme events to deliver financial building and developing skills in the podcast. The podcast tends to talk about all the things that are related to financial building and developing skills with examples of what is happening in the real world. Both subjects did not use litotes. Litotes are also similar to understatement, whereas, litotes emphasize points by using opposite literal meaning. The topic in the podcast is mostly talking about building financial and developing skills. It discusses directly without using litotes because the use of litotes can weaken the claim of information, which means, it can confuse the listeners and the readers for the information. Next is the absence of antithesis. In the podcast, the speakers tend to discuss what is happening in the real world which is related to financial and development skills and it reverses the use of antithesis where it uses contrasting language to make points for contrasting ideas. Procatalepsis is also not found in the data. In the podcast, the discussion focuses on successful businesses and strategies for developing a mindset geared toward success. There are no arguments or objections needed when delivering something successful businesses because it needs to be delivered directly. The fifth similarity is the absence of analogy. In the podcast, the writer was not expecting that there is no analogy used in the podcast after analyzing the data. The possibility of its absence is because the podcast focuses on presenting straightforward advice and actionable strategies to overcome systemic and self-imposed financial challenges. The absence of analogy might be intentional to ensure clarity and practicality, catering to audiences seeking immediate, tangible advice. The sixth is the absence of eponym. This rhetorical device focuses on the characteristics and qualities of something or someone with someone or something else. In the podcast, it focuses on principles, strategies, and habits rather than attributing concepts to specific individuals or historical figures. While notable personalities like Alex Hormozi and Lewis Howes themselves are discussed as thought leaders, their names are not used as eponyms to label specific ideas or practices.

The last similarity of the rhetorical devices used by Lewis Howes and Alex Hormozi is the use of hyperbole. Hyperbole was used more by both subjects. Lewis Howes uses 9 phrases of hyperbole, where Alex Hormozi uses 7 phrases of hyperbole. The possibility of hyperbole is used because hyperbole is making exaggerated statements where its purpose is to attract the attention and inspire the audience, whether it is readers or listeners. By exaggerating some phrases in building financial, building business, and developing skills according to the podcast, listeners and readers can easily understand what the speaker is trying to say and it can give a strong impression to the readers and listeners so they can understand

## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, rhetorical devices can be used as the tools for the speaker's to inspire the audience. In this podcast, hyperbole and exemplum were the most frequently used devices. Hyperbole, with its exaggerated statements, amplifies the urgency of breaking free from limiting beliefs and highlights the critical importance of financial habits, energizing listeners to take action. Exemplum, on the other hand, brings the conversation closer to the audience by offering real-world examples and relatable tones that

bridge the gap between abstract principles and practical application. Together, these devices create a compelling balance of emotional resonance and logical clarity, allowing the speakers to not only motivate their audience but also provide actionable guidance grounded in real-life contexts.

For further study, analyzing the use of rhetorical devices across different podcast genres, such as education, entertainment, or news, can be conducted to understand if certain rhetorical devices appear more based on the content focus. Additionally, a larger project, including multiple episodes or speakers, could provide deeper insights into patterns of rhetorical device usage.

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