

## **A Study of the Applications of Multiple Rhetorical Skills to Reports Regarding Exhibition Centers**

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### **Abstract**

*The culture of exhibition centers expands people's view of life. Colorful reports can grab visitors' attention and recognition and may influence their motivation to visit. For a report to achieve vividness, the application of rhetorical skills is the key. Thus, this study aimed to explore the applications of multiple rhetorical skills to print media reports. The research method adopted was the qualitative research method. Throughout the analyses, this study found a combination of rhetorical skills to be relevant. The expected effect of this study is to help students in communication related departments to apply rhetorical skills to the practical writing of reports.*

**Key words:** exhibition center, report writing, rhetoric

### **Introduction**

The culture of exhibition centers can help people view life from a variety of new perspectives and improve their taste in leisure time. Writing a vivid and interesting report regarding an exhibition center is not only a central concern of the exhibition center, but also it is an important learning issue for students in communication related departments who will shoulder the social responsibility of media in the future. This study aimed to explore how to teach students to write vivid and true-to-life reports and improve their design ability in their writing.

Thus, this study analyzed a combination of multiple rhetorical skills to describe the appearance of the center based on the content of the 88<sup>th</sup> issue of "Az Travel" regarding the Shanghai World Expo Exhibition & Convention Center. This study analyzed a combination of two or more rhetorical skills, for the purpose of improving students' flexibility in design and applications. The essence of rhetoric is the art of textual expression. It helps to make descriptions livelier with higher aesthetics (Lin, 1981).

This study selected sentences with two or more rhetorical skills because the purpose is to train students to think in a more diversified way to write outstanding reports without being limited to applying only one single rhetorical skill at a time. Moreover, various aspects of the center can be reported. Yet, this study focused on the reports regarding the appearance of the center, stressing the innovation and practical applications of rhetorical concepts. Thus, only the results of sentences with two or more rhetorical skills were presented. The goal was to help readers learn more about combinations of rhetorical skills as the basis for creative report writing.

According to the literature review, to date a study on the rhetorical analysis of reports regarding the appearance of an exhibition center has yet to be conducted. Therefore, this study performed preliminary research on applications of multiple rhetorical skills to help readers learn more about rhetorical concepts. Imitation is a way to describe based on senses (Wu, 2000). Repetition is to use the same character repeatedly (Shen, 1995). Parallelism means using different words in a similar structure (Li & Chang, 1993). Exclamation is a convention to express emotions through words (Huang, 1997). Conversion describes by converting properties of a person or an object (Chen, 2003). Figure of speech is a way to describe using an example (Guan, 1993). Antithesis is a skill to describe the contrary (Dong, 1994). Manifestation means to describe using a concept across time and

space (Huang, 1999).

After readers understand the simple rhetorical concepts above, they can work on their own creative writing based on the combinations of rhetorical skills under the research results of this study. For example, they can combine three rhetorical skills, imitation, figure of speech, and conversion. Thus, this study stressed applications of combinations of rhetorical skills rather than analyzing an example. The researcher gave the following example of creative writing: “the appearance of the exhibition center at night is like a brave warrior guarding his homeland.” Figure 1 shows the analysis of the rhetorical skills applied.

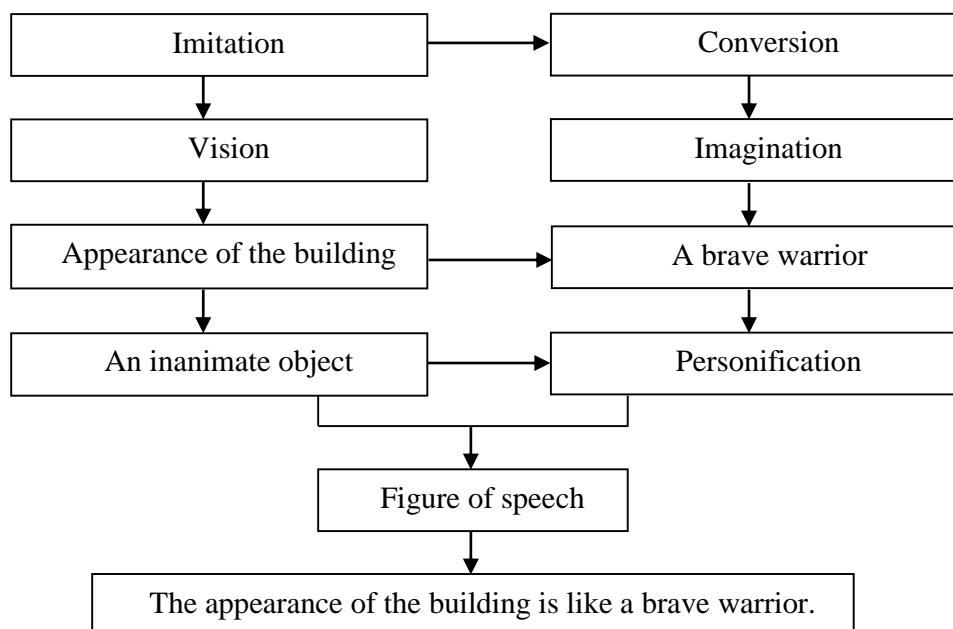


Figure 1 3 rhetorical skills were applied to creative writing

## Method

This study adopted the content analysis method and the concept analysis method, which are both qualitative research methods. The indicators used in this study are the first 34 indicators from the book “Advertisement Rhetoric” (Chiu, 2013). The content to be studied is the content regarding Shanghai World Expo Exhibition & Convention Center of the 88<sup>th</sup> issue of “Az Travel (Lin, 2010)”. The analysis method and steps are: (1) read the content; (2) select the parts of the content with rhetorical concepts; (3) confirm the complete rhetorical concepts in these parts of the content; (4) exclude the text not used for the rhetorical skills; (5) extract complete rhetorical sentences; (6) analyze the rhetorical skills used in the extracted sentences, exclude the sentences with only one rhetorical skill applied and for the sentences with two or more rhetorical skills applied, record the names of the skills; (7) analyze the combinations of multiple rhetorical skills; and (8) compare the selected sentences and pick only one representative sentence if there are several sentences that share similar properties. In other words, each of the selected sentences should be unique in its descriptive properties. That is, all the selected sentences should be mutually exclusive in their properties. This way, it is more likely to discover a greater number of rhetorical skills applied to describe different types of appearances.

## Results

This study extracted sentences from the essay “COLORFUL EXPO” from the 88<sup>th</sup> issue of “Az Travel (Lin, 2010)” with ten rhetorical skills including imitation, exclamation, figure of speech, conversion, antithesis, repetition, parallelism, manifestation, symbol, and climax. At least two of the skills were applied to each of the sentences. A total of 12 sentences were extracted with different descriptive properties. Two or more rhetorical

skills were applied to each of the sentences. 10 combinations were found. Combination A (imitation and figure of speech) was found twice. Combination B (imitation, exclamation, figure of speech, antithesis, manifestation and climax) was found twice. The remaining combinations listed below were found once only: Combination C (imitation, repetition, and parallelism); Combination D (exclamation and symbol); Combination E (imitation, exclamation, figure of speech, antithesis, and symbol); Combination F (figure of speech, imitation, and manifestation); Combination G (antithesis, conversion, manifestation, and climax); Combination H (imitation, conversion, figure of speech, antithesis, and manifestation); Combination I (antithesis and manifestation); and Combination J (parallelism, antithesis, and manifestation). These combinations are summarized in Table 1 and Table 2. The figures also reveal the number of times each rhetorical skill was applied.

Table 1 The 1<sup>th</sup> to the 6<sup>th</sup> Extracted Sentences with the Corresponding Rhetorical Skills

Sentence Rhetorical skill		1	2	3	4	5	6	1~6	1~12 Total	%	Rank
1	Imitation	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	5	8	19.5%	1
2	Repetition	✓	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	2.4%	7
3	Parallelism	✓	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	4.9%	5
4	Exclamation	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	4	4	9.8%	4
5	Conversion	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	5	12.2%	3
6	Figure of speech	-	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	4	7	17.1%	2
7	Antithesis	-	-	✓	✓	✓	-	3	7	17.1%	2
8	Manifestation	-	-	✓	✓	-	-	2	7	17.1%	2
9	Symbol	-	✓	-	-	✓	-	2	2	4.9%	6
10	Climax	-	-	✓	✓	-	-	2	3	7.3%	5
Total of rhetorical skills		3	2	6	5	5	2	23	41	-	-
Combination		C	D	B	B	E	A	-	-	-	-

Table 2 The 7<sup>st</sup> to the 12<sup>th</sup> Extracted Sentences with the Corresponding Rhetorical skills

Sentence Rhetorical skill		7	8	9	10	11	12	7~12	1~12 Total	%	Rank
1	Imitation	✓	✓	-	✓	-	-	3	8	19.5%	1
2	repetition	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1	2.4%	7
3	parallelism	-	-	-	-	-	✓	1	2	4.9%	5
4	exclamation	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	4	9.8%	4
5	conversion	-	-	✓	✓	-	-	2	5	12.2%	3
6	figure of speech	✓	✓	-	✓	-	-	3	7	17.1%	2
7	antithesis	-	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	4	7	17.1%	2
8	manifestation	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	5	7	17.1%	2
9	symbol	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	2	4.9%	6
10	climax	-	-	✓	-	-	-	1	3	7.3%	5
Total of rhetorical skills		2	3	4	5	2	3	18	41	-	-
Combination		A	F	G	H	I	J	-	-	-	-

## Discussion

This study applied rhetorical skills to prove the value of combining rhetorical skills using “Combination B” to create a sentence: “The building was a wonderful site in the morning, as if a modern girl full of vigor, dressed in colorful clothes. At night it was like an amiable grandmother dressed in traditional clothes seated in her medieval castle. ” the six rhetorical skills in this sentence and their application is analyzed in Figure 2. Imitation

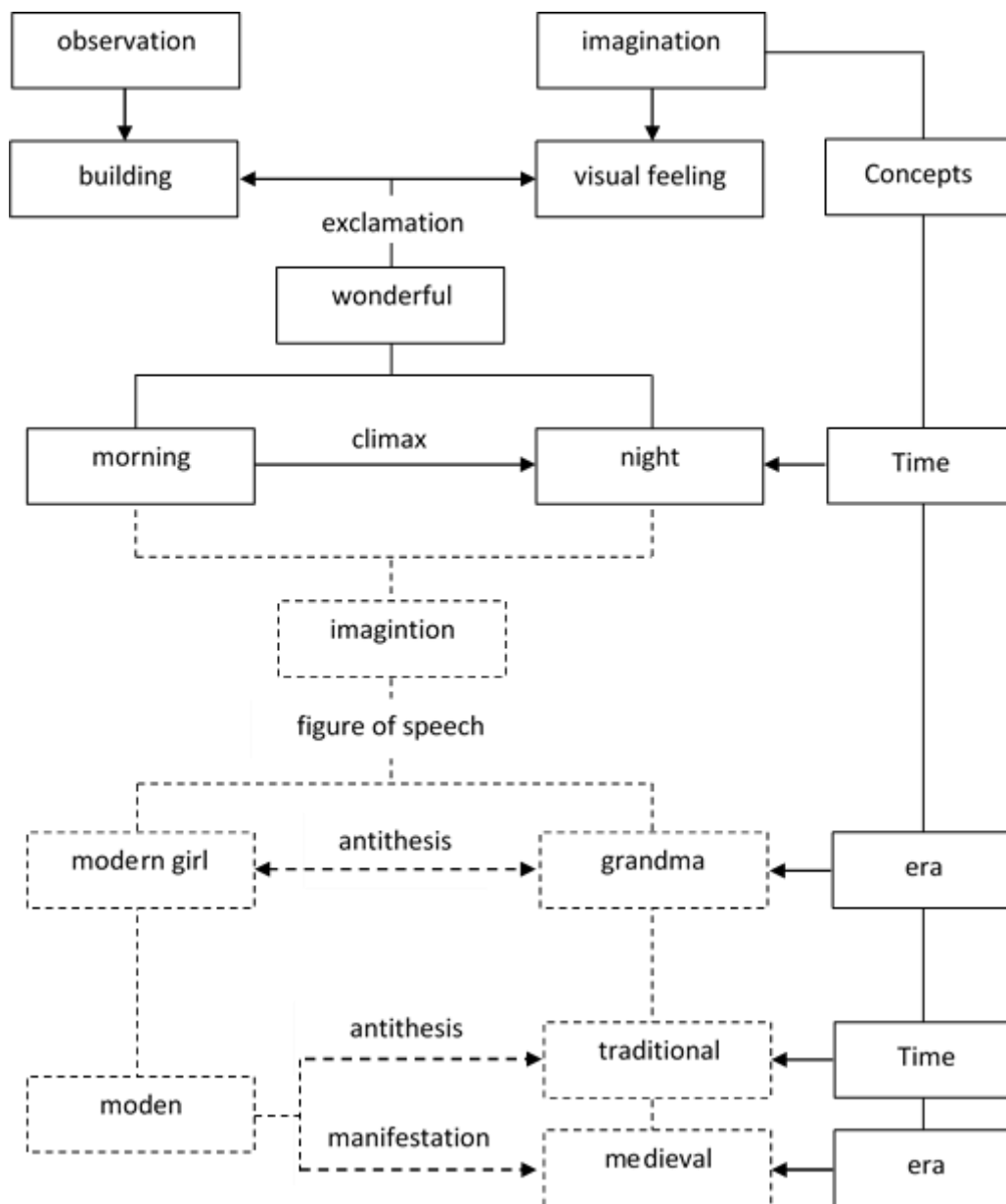


Figure 2. The application of result Combination B’s rhetorical skills

The rhetorical skills applied to sentences that appear in reports that describe exhibition centers are based on observation and reflection. Sentence 1 described the quality and shape of the glass and the six colors used in the space through visual observations. The structure includes imitation and parallelism. The character “se (color)” appears 6 times in the sentence. The skill applied here is repetition. Sentence 2 described the center as a “paradise”. This skill is a figure of speech and the term “breathtaking” applies the rhetorical skill of exclamation.

Sentence 3 showed the evolution from the past to the present and to the future using booths. Applied rhetorical skills include climax, parallelism, and antithesis. The skill of figure of speech was also applied to enhance the feelings from the situation. Lastly, the skill of exclamation was applied to bring the vigor of the description to the maximum. Sentence 4 described colors and materials through sensual observations. The skill of figure of speech was applied when the shape was described as like “an umbrella/parasol”, making the description livelier.

Sentence 5 associated the appearance of the architecture with an UFO based on the author’s observation. This is the metaphor structure of the skill of figure of speech. Then, the skill of antithesis was applied to the description of day and night. And the syntax of simile was integrated to create the “mega-metaphor” structure with 1 tenor, 2 connectives, and 2 vehicles. And the skill of exclamation was applied to the praise “first-class”.

Sentence 6, Sentence 7, and Sentence 8 all combined the skill of visual imitation and the skill of simile. The descriptions based on visual observations include descriptions of thickness, imagination, color, light or shade, dynamics, being new or old, material, being inside or outside, day or night, delicacy, and perception. The conversion used in Sentence 9 is to convert abstract concepts of “classics” and “future”. The rhetorical skill materialized the abstract concepts.

Sentence 10 described the association when seeing a post office from the Ching Dynasty. The “Ching Dynasty” is a period in the history. “Sending to oneself” is in the present day. There is a comparison of time between them and this is where the skill of antithesis was applied. Sentence 11 compared the old-fashioned and new architectures. The skills of manifestation and antithesis were applied regarding the time change from ancient to modern times. Sentence 12 described the design style using the terms “concise” and “steady”, this is where the skill of antithesis was applied. And the skill of manifestation was applied with the term “nostalgia” to present history as present.

## Conclusion

After this study analyzed the sentences with two or more rhetorical skills, it was found that the most frequently applied rhetorical skill was visual imitation, followed by the skill of figure of speech, which helps readers to understand what the author wanted to express more easily through analogy. This is why this skill was the second most frequently used skill. These two skills could be combined with other rhetorical skills easily.

Moreover, whether being used separately or in combination with other rhetorical skill(s), the skills of imitation and figure of speech were the most frequently used rhetorical skills. The researcher believes that, when writing a report regarding an exhibition center, if the purpose is to related meaning in a lively way, using imagination with analogy to describe the center vividly will definitely grab visitors’ attention.

The second important combination consisted of these two rhetorical skills combined with the skill of antithesis featuring contrast descriptions and the skill of exclamation to express surprise or praise, that is, the combination of 4 rhetorical skills: imitation, figure of speech, antithesis, and exclamation. In sum, if the 10 rhetorical skills presented in this study can be mastered and applied flexibly, it will definitely be possible to make reports even more brilliant.

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