Practice of Rhetoric by Stand-up Indonesia Comic's Community

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Abstract: Stand-up comedy has become entertainment that caught the attention of Indonesia society. This single comedy trend initially arises from an event stand-up comedy talent search in one of the private tv stations. Stand-up comedy's characteristic as an only comedy has elements of rhetoric that are inherent in it. As a form of rhetoric, rhetoric becomes an essential aspect in the preparation of stand-up comedy. Stand-up comedy is not an instant and secure comedy. It takes a long and challenging process for someone to become a comic and pursue a world of stand-up comedy. Implementation of rhetoric is crucial and necessary that becomes the key to the success of the stand-up comedy appearances by the comics of the Indo North Jakarta Stand-up comedy community.

1 INTRODUCTION

Rhetoric, which is considered as an art or technique to influence people through words and was introduced over 2000 years (Boisvenue, 2013; Malesh, 2018), has become more relevant nowadays in the digital era. With the massive development of technology (Rahmawati et al., 2018), the ability to getting public attention becomes a real skill needed by every person. Words can be a powerful tool to offer ideas, to explain phenomena, to influence decisions, and to build up beliefs in changing one's behaviour.

However, it is often found that the skill of rhetoric is not getting enough attention from a broader scope of people. In a study conducted in America, for example, it was found that many students at universities were not able to produce excellent writings when they graduated. Furthermore, from various tests conducted in Texas, the students' writing skills decreased (Karr, 1995).

People live to communicate, in which most of the communication happens in a public sphere. Public speaking is one of them, and speaking in public really has a real influence on society. Thus, public speaking has a significant impact on empowering the mind of the listeners (Vanover, 2015).

Every person has a different style of rhetoric. In communication, it needs both the actor's background in conveying ideas and the context that happens at the moment. Dialogues occur in a private sphere (e.g. a talk with family) will be different from discussions that occurred in a public sphere (public speaking).

Rhetoric, or the ability to influence people, is not an abstract concept. In a business world, the knowledge of rhetoric has a significant impact on the company as an effective technique to get investors. One of the popular methods of rhetoric among the entrepreneurs is an elevator pitch, which means the ability to perform a presentation in only 30-60 minutes to the investors (Boisvenue, 2013).

This short presentation becomes crucial since an entrepreneur needs to demonstrate a whole plan and strategy in order to get investors' funds as well as to manage them. A less-than-an-hour presentation is a chance for every entrepreneur to validate their ideas and strategies in running the business and managing the funds from the investors.

The study analysis of rhetoric centres on understanding people in certain social situations in which it uses language to influence others. Philosophers have used techniques of rhetoric to understand how conventional media, such as print media and television, use advertisements to persuade customers, and how media is used by the officers to make people following the rules (Malesh, 2018), as well as how the media is used by presidential candidates in giving their speeches to convince

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people (Minder, 2013). Moreover, even scientific works use analysis of rhetoric since academic texts are also considered as a tool for social persuasion (Boisvenue, 2013).

Rhetoric basically emerges as a form of social interaction as simple as how speakers position themselves among the audiences, whether they use a formal or informal style to show their impressions to people and to show how they present themselves. If a speaker wants to be respected, she or he may need to build up the gap from the audiences (listener). For example, the speaker always uses formal style and talks structured dialogues. On the other hand, if a speaker needs to appear as an egalitarian, she or he often uses a more casual and informal style and talks in a simple, everyday language. This will make people easy to understand what the speaker is saying. Rhetoric can be charismatic in which it will inspire the listeners, or even it can be so emotional until it reaches the phase of shaping the listener's intellectual mind since it stimulates logic (Vanover, 2015).

A speaker does not only play a role to just convey the main message. A speaker needs to understand metaphors and utterances as a part of what makes every text come to life. Metaphors can be used as some significant clues to understanding the whole meaning of a document, or metaphors can be used strategically as a basis for thinking and justification for individual opinions or ideas when the speaker delivers metaphors to the public.

The first rhetoric was known in a literary work titled *The Exaltation of Inanna (Inanna),* a poem by the Sumerian priest, which continues to develop in various forms, including a model of repetition, confirmation (using evidence), argumentation, and others (Boisvenue, 2013). Aristotle then continued the progress by developing the method of forming rhetoric systematically in the theory of five canons of rhetoric. This theory focuses on aspects of verbal communication and a speaker's credibility. According to Aristotle, the audience's perception towards the characters, knowledge and intentions of the speaker will affect the rhetoric (Minder, 2013).

According to Aristotle, it takes an understanding of human communication to build up good rhetoric (Sook, 2015). This is what makes Aristotle find his five rhetorical techniques, such as *inventio* (invention), *dispositio* (arrangement), *elocutio* (style), *memoria* (memory), *pronuntiatio* (delivery) (Gawel, 2009; Karr, 1995; Madson, 2018; Minder, 2013). These five elements are the foundation of conveying rhetoric. Rhetoric is used to influence people, or even to change people, without validating whether what the speaker says is true or not (Sook, 2015).

Rhetoric, or known as oral communication in the past (Minder, R. (2013), is now familiar as public speaking. One of the public speaking types, which is currently popular among millennials, is a stand-up comedy or an action of talking publicly for the purpose of entertainment. Comedy is a form of communication that is able to influence people since it relates to people's emotion (happiness). Emotion is being a crucial factor that can shape people's perspectives or even change people (Aristoteles in Sook (2015). There is also a presumption that Aristotle's masterpiece has inserted a sense of comedy in it (Castricone, 2019). Comedy has dominated the works of human communication, such as films (Castricone, 2019).

Comedy has become an inseparable part of human "mental recreation" since it is able to heal people's anger and sadness. Comedy often creates "great momentum" as well as unforgettable and surprising moments because it encourages our enthusiasm and works to channel our redemption, joy, sadness, resistance and even mockery (Cutrone, 2019; Pearce, 2014).

Stand-up comedy is a solo performance in entertainment. Comedy is one of the oldest arts in the West (Castricone, 2019). However, comedy has transformed into a culture that is able to negotiate with and to deconstruct a traditional culture, and the industry started to begin in the late 19th century (Marx, 2012). The popularity of stand-up comedy in Indonesia started to rise in 2011.

In the same year, 2011, Kompas TV held a talent search event titled "Stand Up Comedy Indonesia", or was known as 'SUCI'. From SUCI, stand-up comedy Indonesia community is formed. The popularity of stand-up comedy is growing great when this kind of comedy became a program on Metro TV and Kompas TV in which this competition event gives an opportunity for young people to have their stand-up comedy performances.

Stand-up comedy is a comedy performed on stage by someone who makes jokes in the duration of 10 minutes to 45 minutes. Stand-up comedy can also be interpreted as a form of comedy that is conveyed in different ways, and the speaker has her or his written material. Someone who performs stand-up comedy is called a comic (Pragiwaksono, 1:2012). Furthermore, stand-up comedy has a unique concept in which the speaker performs alone in front of the audiences, and the speaker delivers the messages along with the jokes to the audiences.

The popularity of stand-up comedy makes young people interested to learn stand-up comedy and even become one, or to become a comic. This rationale encourages people around Indonesia to build up stand-up comedy communities, such as in North Jakarta. The stand-up comedy community in North Jakarta was established in February 2012 and is named Stand-Up Indo Jakarta Utara.

In a comic's performance, a comic is actually doing the process of rhetoric or public speaking in which a comic delivers a message in the form of humour about topics or phenomena to the audiences, and the viewers are mostly laughing as their response towards a comic. In doing stand-up comedy, every comic must plan what she or he wants to share to the audiences, and a comic will deliver the humour or message through his or her own style supported by stand-up comedy techniques. Every comic in Stand-Up Indo Jakarta Utara has different style and technique, and these styles, as well as techniques, give them personal identity or image as a comic.

There is something unique about delivering message or humour through stand-up comedy in the eyes of communication perspective. Every comic's communication style during a stand-up comedy is not only an action of talking like a comedian with a conventional method of comedy, and preferably a comic tends to deliver more critical and satirical humour and messages in the form of a comedy. Besides a comic plays a role to entertain the audiences, a comic can also be a platform to deliver public aspiration towards any issues happening nowadays. As a person who becomes a powerful tool in influencing others, the messages shared by a comic to the audiences become the new perspectives and knowledge for the viewers.

This article explained the implementation of rhetoric done by the comics of Stand-Up Indo Jakarta Utara community. Every comic in Stand-Up Indo Jakarta Utara community has a different perspective towards phenomena happening in the society.

2 DEFINITION AND EXPLANATION

2.1 Rhetoric

Rhetoric is a style of speaking that can be achieved by technical skills or even natural talents. Nowadays, rhetoric is defined as an art of speaking in which it is used during a communication process between individuals. This art of speaking does not mean that a speaker can talk nonsense, yet a speaker must have the ability to speak and give a speech in a concise, clear, and impressive manner. Furthermore, modern rhetoric includes strong memories, high creativity and fantasy, effective techniques with great research as well as a sense of having good judgments. Good rhetoric also needs the right choice of words and tone of speech in accordance with its purpose, space, time, situation, and whom a speaker is talking with.

The starting point of rhetoric is talking. Speaking means saying a word or sentence to someone or a group of people or to achieve a particular goal, for example giving information or giving a response. Speaking is one of the specific abilities' human possessed. Language emerges when humans say and convey their thoughts to other humans. Modern rhetoric is a harmonious combination of knowledge, mind, art and speaking ability. In conversational or accessible language, rhetoric means at the right place, at the right time, in a more effective way, saying the right, correct, and impressive words. In other words, a person must be able to speak clearly, concisely and effectively, in the art of speaking, it is also required that the mastery of the material and proper disclosure through language.

According to Echols in Suhandang (2009: 25), the term rhetoric can be found in the vocabulary of English, which means cleverness of talk or speech. The art of public speaking actually has emerged in the past (around 3000 years BC). According to Devito in Suhandang (2009: 35), there was an essay aimed at the Egyptian king Pharaoh, and the article contained suggestions for being able to speak effectively (Boisvenue, G. (2013). Humans have unwittingly learned how to express their feelings and opinions since they first communicated with other humans.

The tradition of rhetoric is even mentioned by Stephen W. Littlejohn *"The study of rhetoric is really where the communication discipline began because rhetoric, broadly defined, is human symbol use"* (Littlejohn, 2008:50), has become the most fundamental language technique and has been the basis of reference throughout the history of communication theory (Burkett, 2011).

The techniques of rhetoric are systematically compiled by Aristotle (384-322 BC). Aristotle was a pupil of the great Greek philosopher Plato (427-347 BC). In his thinking, Plato developed techniques to do rhetoric more effectively. Plato was a student of "the father of world philosophy" Socrates (469-399 BC). From the sources of the teachings of Socrates and Plato, we then came to the theory of "The Five Rhetorical Canons" that were conceived by Aristotle (Graff, 2000; Burkett, 2011).

2.2 The Five Rhetorical Canons

The Five Rhetoric Canons is the basis for studying and applying the science of rhetoric. In fact, the five canons of rhetoric are at the centre of the rhetorical tradition. *"Central to the rhetorical tradition are the five canons of rhetoric"* (Littlejohn, 2008: 50).

a. Invention (Inventio)

　　The initial stage where a speaker must find a topic or problem that will be raised in his speech. Discovery is also interpreted broadly as a group of information and knowledge brought by a speaker into a speaking situation (West Turner, 2010: 11). The discovery stage is closely related to the conceptualization process of a speaker on the problem. In this stage, the speaker collects data and then interprets it from the speaker's personal point of view.

b. Arrangement (Dispositio)

　　In the drafting stage, the speaker arranges words, sentences, and language that will be used and conveyed into text or speech notes. Aristotle believes this action is taxis, which is performing the division. The speech script that would be addressed by the speaker is divided and arranged according to the flow of human thought, namely: introduction, statement, argumentation, and conclusion (Suhandang, 2009: 39). More than that, an arrangement is a process of organizing symbols and organizing information related to the relationship between humans, logos, and the context involved.

c. Style (Elocutio)

　　Style is how the speaker presents himself in front of the audience. The choice of words and the use of appropriate grammar with the audience will make the speech or message addressed can be received effectively. For example, it is not possible to make a speech about politics and economics in front of Kindergarten students. Aristotle (Suhandang, 2009: 39) argues: "Use the right, correct, and understandable language; choose clear and direct words; deliver beautiful, noble, and lively sentences; and adjust the communication to the audience.

d. Memory (Memoria)

　　In this stage, the speaker must remember the script or text that has been compiled to be conveyed to the audience. This stage is the most essential stage for the success of the speaker in delivering his speech in front of the audience. In this stage, the speaker can practice his memory over and over again for the speech he will deliver later. This memory does not only refer to simple memories but also relates to reservoirs cultural memories, including processes that affect us in obtaining and processing information (Littlejohn, 2008: 50).

e. Delivery (Pronuntiatio)

　　This stage is the final stage, where the speaker "executes" or deliver the script that he has made and remembers in front of the audience verbally. In this stage, the speaker's behaviour is very instrumental. Delivery usually includes some actions such as eye contact, vowel marks, spelling, clarity of pronunciation, dialect, body movements, and physical appearance. Aristotle said that delivery was explicitly related to the manipulation of sound. (West Turner, 2010: 14) In this stage, the speaker must, in various ways convince the audience of what he is saying through multiple means. The birth of these five canons has made rhetoric always a "knife" for evaluating and validating actions of public communication (rhetoric) (Graff, 2000), stand-up comedy is no exception.

3 METHOD

This research is descriptive qualitative research. This study aims to find a detailed description of the problem under study. Data collection techniques used in this study are interviews, observation, and literature study. The method of observation which emphasizes the effort to describe and analyze human behaviour, the subjective experience that goes through and the psychological dynamics that represent the actual practice of the individual. (Rahmawati et al., 2018, 2019; Sugiyono, 2014). The author not only made observations but also attended and took part in the work process of the individuals and teams observed (Rahmawati et al., 2018, 2019; Riyanto, 2010).

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the research described in this sub-chapter are based on the analysis activities that researchers have conducted on primary data in the form of interviews with three sources. From the results of the interview, the researcher can see the five stages of rhetoric that are passed and used by a comic in the process of implementing rhetoric.

The first informant is Krisna, in the early stage namely gathering topics (or in stand-up comedy is the premise), Krisna used observation in gathering topics or premises by paying attention to the surroundings. By looking around, Krisna can choose and determine the premise to be used as material. In the second stage, arrangement, Krisna chose to use mind-mapping to make the material. The third stage is style Krisna prefers not to create certain characters or characteristics Krisna chose to be himself on the stage so he can feel comfortable. Then, the fourth stage, memory, is the stage where Krisna remembers the material that has been made, by repeating the stuff that he has made so that Krishna can remember the material and sort the content that will be presented. In the fifth stage, submission, Krisna believes that when he was doing stand-up comedy, he was not working but wanted to bring information about the unrest that occurred in the community and provide a solution in delivering the material to the audience.

The second informant, Rahman Avri, in the first stage, claims to find material using his personal life as a topic of discussion. In the second stage, Rahman chooses to write because, by writing, Rahman can select the words he will use. Then, about the style, Rahman said that he always tried to relax when he brought the material he had made on the stage and did not create his own character when he was on the scene. In the fourth stage, Rahman said that he often uses the open mic event as a means to remember the material, because in the open mic he can bring out the content over and over again in different regional open mic to remember and then sorts out material that makes the audience laugh. He also uses keywords to remember the content he made because keywords make it easy for him to remember the words of the material. In the fifth stage delivery, Rahman Avri delivered the material he had made in front of an audience, saying that he used his casual style and continued to make eye contact.

The third informant, Yanto Black, in the first stage, collects premises through events that occur in the neighbourhood where he lives or from family and society. In the second stage, Yanto Black arranged the set up of material he had by writing it on a note so that

he knows which words could be used or not. For the third stage, Yanto does not create his own characteristics and prefers to be himself when appearing on stage. In the fourth stage, Yanto remembers the material that has been made by practising in front of the mirror and also attending open mic events around Jakarta so that he can practice and remember the material he has made even more. In addition, he also uses keywords to remember all the material he has made. In delivery, Yanto conveyed the material he had made by making the audience feel like they were speaking with him personally.

5 CONCLUSION

The Five Rhetoric Canons is an inseparable step from rhetoric construction, which consciously or not, always done by comics in compiling and delivering their stand-up comedy material. Each comic has its own way of implementing rhetorical techniques into the process of preparing their stand-up comedy. The difference brings out its own uniqueness in each comic both in terms of the content of jokes, personas, and the way they appear when delivering material on stage.

The authors get a clear and in-depth picture of how comics always use the theory of five rhetoric canons in every activity of creating, writing, and delivering a stand-up comedy. From this research, we learn a lot about stand-up comedy. As an intelligent comedy, there is a long and systematic sequence of processes behind the making of stand-up comedy. In this comedy, one cannot rely solely on spontaneity or the physical aspects of individuals. There is a process of thought, arranging, honesty, anxiety and even criticism that is poured by the comics in every material delivered.

The stages of the theory of five rhetorical canons are interrelated, and all phases must be carried out by the comics. Indeed, the ability and manner of each comic in carrying out these stages are different from one another. This is the deciding factor that makes the comics develop and find their true identity.

Comics also use tricks to attract the attention of the audience, whether it's delivering their mainstay materials to make the audience laugh in the first 30 seconds, speak loudly, do riffing, or make eye contact. Besides, they always try to be themselves when delivering material so they will not feel nervous and feel comfortable on the stage.

Stand-up comedy is not an instant and easy comedy. It takes a long and challenging process for

someone to be able to become a comic and pursue the world of stand up comedy. Based on this research, according to the informants, they carried out the five stages in the theory of the five rhetoric canons in each process of preparing stand-up comedy materials to deliver them on stage either in open mic activities or in a show.

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