

# Applications of rhetorical devices in advertising and marketing in a popular magazine

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## Abstract

In modern society, in which particular attention is paid to media marketing, the marketing of popular products through print media is not only an important link in business planning but is also a way of creating a trend for products. Rhetoric is the art of creating aesthetics through the design of words and meanings. Showing the aesthetics of popular products through rhetorical devices has become a trend in print media marketing. The purpose of this study is to explore the scale and the focus of rhetoric and its applications. Thus, in this study, issues of the Chinese version of an international magazine, “with”, were selected from the same month (April, the late Spring edition) in two different years (2014 and 2015) to determine the numbers of different rhetorical devices used to market popular products. Qualitative methodology was adopted to identify the applications of rhetorical devices. It is anticipated that this study will help readers understand the priorities and importance of applications of various rhetorical devices in marketing popular products in the print media.

**Keywords:** Popular products, print media, rhetoric

## 1. Introduction

In a society with a knowledge economy and information economy, industries related to popular products have been promoted by the culture of beauty. With the awareness of aesthetics that is a worldwide trend, it has become normal to pay attention to aesthetics in modern life. As a result, the design goals of many popular products are all related to aesthetics. When a product is released, marketing is the driving force to promote it. One of the core marketing strategies is to find a way to present the aesthetic features of the product. Here, the precision and vividness of the messages delivered depend on the application of rhetorical devices. Well-designed applications of rhetorical devices help not only to send messages and provide information, but also present the aesthetic dimensions of products. However, in the international literature on rhetoric, countless rhetorical devices are listed – too many to digest – and it is difficult for readers to distinguish which rhetorical devices are helpful in describing their products.

This study draws on the Chinese version of the international magazine “with” for two reasons. First, it provides insights into how rhetorical devices are applied in Asia culture. Second, the circulation of this magazine was the highest in Asia, making it a meaningful research object. Also, by analyzing the numbers of applications of various rhetorical devices in two issues, published in the same month but in different years, and making initial comparisons it is possible to obtain information regarding the priorities and importance of various rhetorical devices as applied to marketing popular products.

This study is positioned as exploratory research. It offers those with basic rhetorical capability a further insight into the applications of rhetorical devices in the field of popular products. In it, the number of times each rhetorical device was applied and the numbers of sentences with more than one rhetorical device were counted as the basis for gaining a preliminary understanding of how different rhetorical devices can be applied.

## 2. Literature review

From the perspective of commercial marketing, for a product to be popular, one important channel is print media. In particular, a product can become popular if consumer demand for related knowledge can be satisfied through descriptions of the product, facilitating acceptance of the product by the target group. Before the product is accepted by consumers, rhetoric helps ensure that textual descriptions of the product deliver messages effectively. The functions of rhetoric include providing basic and accurate descriptions (Chen, 2003), depicting appearances vividly (Fu, 1969) and increasing implicit charm (Huang, 1999). Through these functions, rhetoric can create an association with descriptions of popular products. Popular products are thus attached to humans. Rhetoric in descriptions of popular products concerns not only material aspects, but also tastes and aesthetic values integral to humans. Therefore, the literature on rhetoric often alludes to the basic concept of rhetoric as concerning the art of showing aesthetics (Huang, 1999; Lin, 1978). There is an association between applications of the features of rhetoric and the emphasis on aesthetics in relation to popular products. In other words, through the application of rhetorical devices, it is possible to convey the aesthetics of popular products. In sum, rhetoric is the technique of using words. It is the language of art which helps show the aesthetic properties of popular products.

In the past, designs for advertising and marketing through print media often drew heavily on graphs. Among the previous studies regarding advertising and graphic marketing, Yang and Hsu (2013) examined the influence

of graphs in advertising from the consumer perspective and Wen and Liu's (2006) research combined a focus on graphs and consumer psychology. In recent years, the trend of applying rhetorical devices to the marketing of popular products has gained significance. Most previous studies have focused on a single rhetorical device. There are also studies regarding the application of rhetorical devices to advertising (Li, 2010; Liang, 2003). It has become increasingly common to market popular products through print media advertisements. To give consumers a strong impression of the product advertised, various rhetorical devices may be applied. This study aims to aid in the strategic design of the application of rhetorical devices to the marketing of popular products of beauty by analysing the numbers and types of applications of rhetorical devices related to popular products in print media, specifically a magazine, in the context of Asia.

### 3. Research methods

The method adopted in this qualitative study is content analysis (Wang, 2001). It draws predominantly on the rhetorical devices and typology of usage given in Chiu's (2013) publication "Rhetoric in Advertising". Based on this, the words, phrases and sentences in the content related to marketing popular products were explored to analyse the extent to which rhetorical devices were applied. The rhetorical devices used were summarized and categorized to calculate the number of applications. The research steps were as follows:

- (1) Read the Chinese version of the April 2014 issue of the international magazine "with".
- (2) Analyse each word/sentence to determine if any rhetorical device was employed and omit those with no such application.
- (3) Record each word/sentence containing some rhetorical device.
- (4) Analyse the main rhetorical device applied, i.e. the most important or significant rhetorical structure in each word/sentence. There is at most one main rhetorical device for each word/sentence.
- (5) Classify paradigm of the main rhetorical devices into categories and count the numbers of applications.
- (6) For each category, analyse whether rhetorical devices other than the main device were applied and classify them for the purpose of counting the numbers of applications. For each instance in which a rhetorical device other than the main device was applied, this was termed a subcategory rhetorical device. Usually, when one rhetorical device is employed in a word/sentence, other rhetorical devices are also used (Chiu, 2013). This is why it is necessary to look for applications of additional rhetorical devices, record them and count them. This step can be omitted if no additional rhetorical device is found.
- (8) Having undertaken the previous steps for the April 2014 issue, repeat the same steps for the April 2015 issue to make preliminary comparisons.
- (10) Summarize the numbers of applications of these rhetorical devices in tabular form together with an overview.

As mentioned in the Introduction, the focus of this study is on the numbers of applications. Interpretations of rhetorical meanings are not included in this study. That is, one of the research limitations of this study is the lack of interpretation of rhetorical meanings. Moreover, in this study, popular products are not categorized. The purpose is to examine more comprehensive and flexible usages of rhetorical devices.

### 4. Research results

The research results are presented in tables: the first (Table 1) shows the numbers of applications of the main rhetorical devices in 2014 and 2015 respectively and collectively, ordered by frequency; the second (Table 2) shows the numbers of applications of additional rhetorical devices for each main rhetorical device, ordered by frequency; the others (Tables 3–11) show different usage types of main rhetorical devices and corresponding frequencies, ordered by frequency.

#### 4.1. Numbers of applications of main rhetorical devices

A total of 19 main rhetorical devices were found in the issues studied, in descending order of number of applications: imitation; conversion; figure of speech; antithesis; inlay; question; climax; ellipsis; parallelism; hyperbole; exclamation; repetition; manifestation; apostrophe; pun; anagram; symbol; quotation; malapropism (see Table 1).

**Table 1**  
 Number of applications of main rhetorical devices

Rhetorical device	2014	2015	Total
1. Imitation	52	74	126
2. Conversion	11	39	50
3. Figure of speech	11	82	93
4. Antithesis	22	20	42
5. Inlay	26	16	42
6. Question	5	37	42
7. Climax	16	17	33
8. Ellipsis	1	26	27
9. Parallelism	13	13	26
10. Hyperbole	8	13	21
11. Exclamation	3	16	19
12. Repetition	6	1	7
13. Manifestation	0	7	7
14. Apostrophe	3	3	6
15. Pun	4	1	5
16. Anagram	3	1	4
17. Symbol	3	0	3
18. Quotation	0	2	2
19. Malapropism	1	0	1

*4.2. Additional rhetorical devices and frequency of application for each main rhetorical device*

The results for the main rhetorical devices with the corresponding additional rhetorical devices are summarized as follows: (1) when the main rhetorical device applied is “hyperbole”, the most common additional rhetorical device is “inlay” in the 2014 issue, “imitation of vision” in the 2015 issue and “imitation of vision” when both issues are analysed together; (2) when the main rhetorical device applied is “climax”, the most common additional rhetorical device is “imitation of vision” in both the 2014 issue and the 2015 issue and thus overall; (3) when the main rhetorical device applied is “parallelism”, the most common additional rhetorical device is “imitation of vision” in both the 2014 issue and the 2015 issue; (4) when the main rhetorical device applied is “imitation”, the most common additional rhetorical device is “climax” in both the 2014 issue and the 2015 issue; (5) when the main rhetorical device applied is “conversion”, the most common additional rhetorical devices are “inlay”, “repetition” and “manifestation” in the 2014 issue, “imitation of vision” in the 2015 issue and “imitation of vision” when both issues are analysed together; (6) when the main rhetorical device applied is “inlay”, the most common additional rhetorical device is “imitation of vision” in both the 2014 issue and the 2015 issue and thus overall; (7) when the main rhetorical device applied is “antithesis”, the most common additional rhetorical devices are “imitation of vision” and “climax” in the 2014 issue, “imitation of vision” in the 2015 issue and “imitation of vision” when both issues are analysed together; (8) when the main rhetorical device applied is “figure of speech”, the most common additional rhetorical device is “imitation of vision” in both the 2014 issue and the 2015 issue; (9) when the main rhetorical device applied is “question”, the most common additional rhetorical device is “imitation of vision” in both the 2014 issue and the 2015 issue; (10) when the main rhetorical device applied is “malapropism”, the only additional rhetorical device in the 2014 issue is “imitation of vision” and there is no additional rhetorical device in the 2015 issue; (11) when the main rhetorical device applied is “ellipsis”, the only additional rhetorical devices are “apostrophe” and “question” in the 2014 issue, “imitation of vision” in the 2015 issue and “imitation of vision” overall; (12) when the main rhetorical device applied is “pun”, the most common additional rhetorical device is “anthimeria” in the 2014 issue and there is no additional rhetorical device in the 2015 issue; (13) when the main rhetorical device applied is “anagram”, the most common additional rhetorical devices are “imitation of vision”, “hyperbole”, “inlay”, “parallelism”, “question”, and “antithesis” in the 2014 issue, with no additional rhetorical device in the 2015 issue; (14) when the main rhetorical device applied is “symbol”, the most common additional rhetorical devices are “conversion” in the 2014 issue, “conversion”, “hyperbole”, “repetition”, and “manifestation” in the 2015 issue and “conversion” when both issues are analysed together; (15) when the main rhetorical device applied is “repetition”, the most common additional rhetorical devices applied are “hyperbole” and “parallelism” in the 2014 issue, with no additional rhetorical device in the 2015 issue; (16) when the main rhetorical device applied is “exclamation”, the most common additional rhetorical devices “inlay”, “hyperbole”, and “exclamation” in the 2014 issue, “imitation of vision” in the 2015 issue and “imitation of vision” and “inlay” when both issues are analysed together; (17) when the main rhetorical device applied is “apostrophe”, the only additional rhetorical device is “manifestation” in the 2014 issue and there is no additional rhetorical device in the 2015 issue; (18) when the main rhetorical device applied is “manifestation”, the only additional rhetorical device is “imitation of

vision” in the 2015 issue and there is no additional rhetorical device in the 2014 issue; (19) when the main rhetorical device applied is “quotation”, the only additional rhetorical device is “manifestation” in the 2015 issue and there is no additional rhetorical device in the 2014 issue. All these results are summarized in Table 2.

**Table 2**  
 Additional rhetorical devices and the application frequencies for each main rhetorical device

Main rhetorical device	Additional rhetorical device																					
	Imitation of vision		Imitation of touching		Apostrophe		Inlay		Conversion		Anthimeria		Symbol		Hyperbole		Climax		Exclamation		Parallelism	
	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015
Hyperbole	2	9	-	1	-	-	4	4	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	2
Climax	5	15	-	2	-	-	-	2	1	2	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	2	3
Parallelism	6	11	-	5	-	-	3	5	-	-	2	-	-	-	1	-	3	-	-	-	-	-
Imitation	-	3	-	5	-	-	3	4	5	7	-	-	-	2	3	3	12	21	-	2	2	3
Conversion	1	20	-	7	1	2	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	5	-	3	1	6
Inlay	11	8	2	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	4	-	2	5	-	3
Antithesis	7	7	-	4	-	-	3	6	-	1	-	-	-	1	4	2	7	4	-	1	-	1
Figure of speech	8	46	1	10	-	1	-	4	1	4	1	-	-	3	-	22	-	1	1	3	1	-
Question	2	8	-	5	-	-	-	3	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	2
Malapropism	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ellipsis	-	12	-	2	1	1	-	2	-	2	-	-	-	1	-	2	-	6	-	-	-	3
Pun	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Anagram	1	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Symbol	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Repetition	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	1	-	-	-	3	-
Exclamation	-	8	-	1	-	1	1	7	-	2	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	1	1	-	-	-
Apostrophe	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Manifestation	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	3	-	-	-	2
Quotation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>25</b>

Main rhetorical device	Additional rhetorical device																					
	Repetition		Question		Antithesis		Manifestation		Ellipsis		Figure of speech		Aposiopesis		Anastrophe		Imitation of hearing		Quotation		Pun	
	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015
Hyperbole	-	1	-	-	-	6	1	4	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Climax	1	7	-	-	3	4	2	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Parallelism	3	3	-	-	2	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Imitation	5	6	-	-	4	2	-	-	-	-	1	4	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Conversion	2	3	1	-	1	5	2	2	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Inlay	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Antithesis	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Figure of speech	-	2	-	-	-	1	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Question	1	3	-	-	-	7	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Malapropism	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ellipsis	-	4	1	-	-	3	-	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-
Pun	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Anagram	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Symbol	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Repetition	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Exclamation	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Apostrophe	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Manifestation	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Quotation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>

#### 4.3. Usage types and frequencies of application for each main rhetorical device

##### 4.3.1. Hyperbole

When the main rhetorical device applied is “hyperbole”, the usage types include “reduction” and “expansion”. In the 2014 issue, expansion comprises 62.5% of usages compared to 37.5% for “reduction”. In the 2015 issue, this is reversed with 61.5% of the usages being “reduction” compared to 38.5% for “expansion”. Taking the use of hyperbole overall, 61.9% of its usages are in the 2015 issue and 38.1% in the 2014 issue. These results are summarized in Table 3.

**Table 3**

Usage types and frequencies of application for hyperbole

Hyperbole	Total Frequency (%)	Usage type	
		Reduction Frequency (%)	Expansion Frequency (%)
2014	8 (38.1)	3 (37.5)	5 (62.5)
2015	13 (61.9)	8 (61.5)	5 (38.5)

##### 4.3.2. Climax

As shown in Table 4, when the main rhetorical device applied is “climax”, the usage types include “gradual decreasing” and “gradual increasing”. In the 2014 issue, 93.8% of the usages are “gradual increasing”, higher than 6.3%, the percentage for “gradual decreasing”. In the 2015 issue, 100% of the usages are “gradual increasing”, with no use of “gradual decreasing”. When taken together, 51.5% of the usages of “climax” are in the 2015 issue and 48.5% in the 2014 issue.

**Table 4**

Usage types and frequencies of application for climax

Climax	Total Frequency (%)	Usage type	
		Gradual decreasing Frequency (%)	Gradual increasing Frequency (%)
2014	16 (48.5)	1 (6.3)	15 (93.8)
2015	17 (51.5)	0 (0)	17 (100)

##### 4.3.3. Parallelism

From Table 5 it can be seen that when the main rhetorical device applied is “parallelism”, the usage types

include “with the same number of characters” and “with different numbers of characters”. In the 2014 issue, 84.6% of the usages are “with the same number of characters”, higher than 15.4%, the percentage of “with different numbers of characters”. In the 2015 issue, 61.5% of the usages are “with the same number of characters”, compared to 38.5% for “with different numbers of characters”. Taking both issues together, 50% of the usages of “parallelism” are in the 2015 issue and 50% in the 2014 issue.

**Table 5**  
 Usage types and frequencies of application for parallelism

Parallelism	Total	Usage type	
		With the same number of characters	With different numbers of characters
		Frequency (%)	Frequency (%)
2014	13 (50)	11 (84.6)	2 (15.4)
2015	13 (50)	8 (61.5)	5 (38.5)

#### 4.3.4. Imitation

When the main rhetorical device applied is “imitation”, the usage types include “imitation of vision”, “imitation of hearing”, “imitation of touch”, “imitation of smell” and “imitation of taste”. In the 2014 issue, 76.9% of the usages are “imitation of vision”, higher than 21.2% and 1.9%, the percentages of “imitation of touch” and “imitation of smell”, respectively; there are no applications of “imitation of hearing” or “imitation of taste”. In the 2015 issue, 66.2% of the usages are “imitation of vision”, higher than 21.6%, 9.5%, 1.4% and 1.4% for “imitation of touch”, “imitation of smell”, “imitation of hearing” and “imitation of taste”, respectively. Taking both issues together, 58.7% of the usages of “imitation” are in the 2015 issue and 41.3% in the 2014 issue. These findings are summarized in Table 6.

**Table 6**  
 Usage types and frequencies of application for imitation

Imitation	Total	Usage type				
		Imitation of vision	Imitation of hearing	Imitation of touch	Imitation of smell	Imitation of taste
		Frequency (%)	Frequency (%)	Frequency (%)	Frequency (%)	Frequency (%)
2014	52 (41.3)	40 (76.9)	0 (0)	11 (21.2)	1 (1.9)	0 (0)
2015	74 (58.7)	49 (66.2)	1 (1.4)	16 (21.6)	7 (9.5)	1 (1.4)

#### 4.3.5. Conversion

When the main rhetorical device applied is “conversion”, the usage types include “objectification” and “personification”. In the 2014 issue, 81.8% of the usages are “personification”, higher than 18.2%, the percentage of “objectification”. In the 2015 issue, 76.9% of the usages are “personification” compared to 23.1% for “objectification”. When both issues are analysed together, 78% of the usages of “conversion” are in the 2015 issue and 22% in the 2014 issue (see Table 7).

**Table 7**  
 Usage types and frequencies of application for conversion

Conversion	Total	Usage type	
		Objectification	Personification
		Frequency (%)	Frequency (%)
2014	11 (22)	2 (18.2)	9 (81.8)
2015	39 (78)	9 (23.1)	30 (76.9)

#### 4.3.6. Inlay

As can be seen from Table 8, when the main rhetorical device applied is “inlay”, the usage types include “at the start of a sentence”, “in the middle of a sentence”, “in the middle and at the end of a sentence”, “at the end of a sentence”, “at the start and end of a sentence” and “at the start and in the middle of a sentence”. In the 2014 issue, 34.6% of the usages are “at the start of a sentence” and 34.6% “in the middle of a sentence”, 15.4%, 11.5% and 3.8% are “at the end of a sentence”, “in the middle and at the end of a sentence” and “at the start and end of a sentence”, respectively, with no application of “at the start and in the middle of a sentence”. In the 2015 issue, 43.8% of the usages are “in the middle of a sentence”, 31.3%, 12.5%, 6.3% and 6.3% are “at the end of a sentence”, “in the middle and at the end of a sentence”, “at the start of a sentence” and “at the start and in the middle of a sentence”, respectively, with no application of “at the start and end of a sentence”. Taking the two issues together, 61.9% of the usages of “inlay” are in the 2014 issue and 38.1% in the 2015 issue.

**Table 8**  
 Usage types and frequencies of application for inlay

Inlay	Total	Usage type					
		At the start of a sentence	In the middle of a sentence	In the middle and at the end of a sentence	At the end of a sentence	At the start and end of a sentence	At the start and in the middle of a sentence
		Frequency (%)	Frequency (%)	Frequency (%)	Frequency (%)	Frequency (%)	Frequency (%)
2014	26 (61.9)	9 (34.6)	9 (34.6)	3 (11.5)	4 (15.4)	1 (3.8)	0 (0)
2015	16 (38.1)	1 (6.3)	7 (43.8)	2 (12.5)	5 (31.3)	0 (0)	1 (6.3)

#### 4.3.7. Antithesis

When the main rhetorical device applied is “antithesis”, the usage types include “textual antithesis” and “abstract antithesis”. In the 2014 issue, 72.7% of the usages are “abstract antithesis” compared to 27.3% for “textual antithesis”. In the 2015 issue, 50% of the usages are “abstract antithesis”, the same as for “textual antithesis”. When both issues are analysed together, 52.4% of the usages of “antithesis” are in the 2014 issue and 47.6% in the 2015 issue (see Table 9).

**Table 9**  
 Usage types and frequencies of application for antithesis

Antithesis	Total	Usage type	
		Textual antithesis	Abstract antithesis
		Frequency (%)	Frequency (%)
2014	22 (52.4)	6 (27.3)	16 (72.7)
2015	20 (47.6)	10 (50)	10 (50)

4.3.8. *Figure of speech*

When the main rhetorical device applied is “figure of speech”, the usage types include “simile”, “metaphor”, “synecdoche” and “metonymy”. In the 2014 issue, 54.5% of the usages are “synecdoche”, higher than “simile” at 45.5%, while there are no applications of “metaphor” or “metonymy”. In the 2015 issue, 68.3% of the usages are “simile” compared to 18.3%, 11% and 2.4% for “synecdoche”, “metonymy” and “metaphor”, respectively. When both issues are analysed together, 88.2% of the usages of “figure of speech” are in the 2015 issue and 11.8% in the 2014 issue (see Table 10).

**Table 10**  
 Usage types and frequencies of application for figure of speech

Figure of speech	Total	Usage type			
		Simile	Metaphor	Synecdoche	Metonymy
		Frequency (%)	Frequency (%)	Frequency (%)	Frequency (%)
2014	11 (11.8)	5 (45.5)	0 (0)	6 (54.5)	0 (0)
2015	82 (88.2)	56 (68.3)	2 (2.4)	15 (18.3)	9 (11)

4.3.9. *Question*

When the main rhetorical device applied is “question”, the usage types include “question without answer”, “question and answer” and “rhetorical question”. In the 2014 issue, all the usages are “question and answer”, whereas there are no applications of “question without answer” or “rhetorical question”. In the 2015 issue, 91.9% of the usages are “question and answer” compared to 5.4% and 2.7% for “rhetorical question” and “question without answer”, respectively. Taking both issues together, 88.1% of the usages of “question” are in the 2015 issue and 11.9% in the 2014 issue (see Table 11).

**Table 11**  
 Usage types and frequencies of application for question

Question	Total	Usage type		
		Question without answer	Question and answer	Rhetorical question
		Frequency (%)	Frequency (%)	Frequency (%)
2014	5 (11.9)	0 (0)	5 (100)	0 (0)
2015	37 (88.1)	1 (2.7)	34 (91.9)	2 (5.4)

**5. Discussion**

Information on popular products is delivered through the propagation of media, which can help to achieve the purpose of promotion and marketing. The content of print media is often presented in the forms of graphs and text. Rhetoric is a part of the field of text. According to some studies, there has been widespread integration of rhetoric in descriptions of popular products. Rhetoric is not only a matter of theory. Through paradigmatic designs, it can be applied in practice. One purpose of the use of rhetoric is to create aesthetic associations with words and terms. When a popular product is described in terms evoking beauty and emotion, it is more likely that consumers will respond by making a purchase. Thus, the goal of marketing can be achieved.



This study has analysed the applications of 19 rhetorical devices. Although the numbers of the applications of these devices are different, each application is designed based on the unique requirements of a target group. Thus, it is difficult to determine which rhetorical devices should be employed. The total numbers of applications of these rhetorical devices applied in the two issues of “with” were obtained for sorting and classification purposes, but these numbers alone cannot be considered a principle for application. There are many differences between the issues from the two different years. There are different types of usage for the same rhetorical device and the numbers of applications for different usage types are also quite different. Thus, it is necessary to explore the numbers of applications for different usage types of the same rhetorical device. In other words, the numbers of applications for different usage types of a main rhetorical device do not represent the ranking of that rhetorical device.

## 6. Conclusion

This study researched 19 rhetorical devices applied in the April issues of two different years of a popular magazine, “with”, in the Chinese context. The rhetorical device most commonly employed is imitation, while the least commonly used is malapropism. It can be inferred that imitation, which is about descriptions of sensual experiences, helps to give readers a strong impression and greater knowledge of the popular product being described. Therefore, the number of applications of this device is the highest. Yet, in terms of additional rhetorical devices used in conjunction with the main rhetorical devices, the main rhetorical device that exhibits the most additional rhetorical devices is figure of speech, whereas the most common additional rhetorical device is description of vision. Thus, from the perspective of the different types of main rhetorical devices used, the number of applications of imitation is the highest. However, the frequencies of the five types of imitation – description of vision, description of hearing, description of touch, description of smell and description of taste – are quite different. The frequency of use of description of vision is the highest. In sum, the main focus of popular products is on visual effects. For this reason, the rhetorical device of imitation is clearly very important.

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