Unraveling the Narrative Structures in YouTube Vlogs: A Qualitative Content Analysis

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Abstract

Vlogging, a primary content form on YouTube, employs the power of narrative to engage audiences and convey meanings. This research undertakes an exploration of the narrative structures within YouTube vlogs across various genres, providing insights into how these narratives are constructed and the implications they hold for audience engagement and perception. By leveraging a qualitative content analysis methodology, a diverse set of vlogs was selected, a coding scheme was developed to classify different aspects of narrative structure, and an in-depth analysis was conducted. The findings reveal a dynamic interplay of narrative elements that heighten viewer engagement and shape perceptions. Also, the research discusses how these narrative structures contribute to the semantics of the vlogs, bringing to light the subtleties of message conveyance and storytelling in this digital medium. The research unveils the semiotic richness of vlogs, elucidating how signs and symbols are used within narratives to create deeper meanings. The study uncovers key findings, including the prevalent narrative elements, the strategic use of semantics and semiotics, diverse imagery choices, emotional tones, and audience engagement tactics, offering valuable insights for content creators and researchers in understanding YouTube vlogs' narrative complexities. This study contributes to a nuanced understanding of digital storytelling on YouTube, offering valuable insights for content creators, researchers, and digital media strategists.

Keywords: YouTube Vlogs, Narrative Structures, Digital Storytelling, Semiotics, Semantics, Audience Engagement

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Introduction

As a groundbreaking medium for storytelling and information sharing, YouTube ushered in a new era of user-generated content in 2005. Vlogging, or video blogging, has become a prominent form of content on YouTube, leveraging the power of narrative to captivate audiences and convey meanings. The narratives within these vlogs are not random; they are carefully crafted structures that play a pivotal role in audience engagement and perception (Tripathi et al, 2022). However, the underlying mechanics of these narrative structures, and their implications in terms of semantics and semiotics, are areas that warrant further exploration. Understanding the semantics and semiotics within the narrative structures of vlogs is crucial for a deeper comprehension of these digital narratives for several reasons:

Complexity of Meaning: Semantics pertains to the study of meaning in language and visual elements (Palmer, 1981). Within vlog narratives, semantics assists in decoding complex messages and deeper meanings that vloggers intend to convey. Understanding semantics enables analysts to interpret how language and visuals shape the perception of vlogs.

Creating Deeper Messages: Semiotics, dealing with the study of signs and symbols, plays an important role in vlogs. Vloggers employ visual elements, symbols, and signs to create deeper meaning beyond verbal expressions (Stoker-Walker, 2021). Understanding semiotics allows analysts to identify how visual elements are used to add depth and complexity to vlogs.

Influencing Viewer Perception: Vlog narratives often aim to shape viewers' perception (Luong & Ho, 2023; Ercegovac et al., 2022). Understanding semantics and semiotics helps analysts uncover how specific linguistic or visual techniques impact how viewers experience and interpret vlog content.

Creative Analysis: By analyzing the semantics and semiotics within narrative structures, researchers can discover creative strategies vloggers use to engage their audience. This understanding assists researchers in better assessing the effectiveness of various narrative techniques.

In essence, semantics and semiotics make in-depth analysis of vlog narratives possible, enabling researchers to uncover hidden layers of meaning and understand how vloggers use language and symbols to shape the narrative perception of their viewers.

The study as a part of a wider study of narrative structures in YouTube vlogs is significant as it offers a lens through which to understand the strategies employed by content creators to engage their audience. Understanding the semiotics and semantics embedded within these structures can provide insights into how meanings are created and interpreted within this digital space. This is crucial given the influence of YouTube as a social media platform and the role it plays in shaping the online culture and public discourse (Ercegovac, 2014; 2017a).

The primary objective of this study is to unravel the narrative structures within YouTube vlogs across various genres, to understand how these narratives are constructed and the implications they hold for audience engagement and perception. Further, it aims to explore how these narrative structures contribute to the semantics of the vlogs, and to elucidate the semiotic richness of vlogs. The central research question guiding this study is how narrative structures in YouTube vlogs across various genres are constructed and what implications these structures have for semantics, semiotics, and audience engagement and perception.

This research employs a qualitative content analysis methodology to address the research question. This approach allows for a systematic examination of the narrative structures within YouTube vlogs, providing a comprehensive understanding of their construction and implications. A diverse set of vlogs across different genres will be selected to ensure that a wide range of narratives are represented. A coding scheme will be developed to classify different aspects of narrative structure, allowing for an in-depth analysis of each vlog. Through this process, the study will reveal the dynamic interplay of narrative elements that enhance viewer engagement and shape perceptions, while also highlighting the semiotic and semantic richness of these narratives.

Literature Review

Vlogs, a portmanteau of 'video' and 'blogs', have become a staple of YouTube content. As a user-generated form of media (Tankosić & Grbic, 2022), vlogs offer unique perspectives and narratives that have transformed the landscape of online content consumption (Uricchio, 2009). They give the audience a window into the lives of content creators, allowing them to connect with viewers in an intimate and authentic manner (Burgess & Green, 2018). With the role of opinion leaders in online society that the influencing vloggers have (Ercegovac, 2017b; Ercegovac et al. 2022), these personal narratives, shared through the lens of the vlogger, have reshaped the relationship between content creators and their audience, making it a significant area of study.

Narrative structures play a critical role in digital storytelling, especially in vlogs. They help organize the content and guide the viewer through the story, thereby enhancing the viewing experience (Ryan, 2015). Research indicates that well-structured narratives can significantly increase audience engagement (Alexander, 2011). They also help content creators convey complex meanings, making them an essential tool in digital storytelling (Jenkins, 2009). Stokel-Walker (2021), in his book "YouTubers", analyzes the narrative styles of YouTube influencers and their methods of maximizing viewer engagement. Additionally, Van Dijck's work (2007; 2013) on the evolution of content creation and consumption on YouTube provides insights into the development of narrative structures over time. Exploring these narrative structures within the context of YouTube vlogs can thus provide valuable insights into their effectiveness and impact on audience perception.

Semiotics, the study of signs and symbols, and semantics, the study of meaning in language, are vital components of vlogging content. Vloggers often use signs and symbols to communicate deeper meanings, making semiotics a powerful tool in their storytelling arsenal (Chandler, 2022). Similarly, the semantics of vlogs—how language and images are used to convey meaning—plays a crucial role in shaping viewer understanding and perception (Van Leeuwen, 2001).

Narrative structures refer to the organization and framework that underlie storytelling, outlining how a story is constructed, the elements it comprises, and the sequence in which they are presented (Abbott, 2008). These structures are indispensable for crafting narratives that captivate and maintain coherence across various mediums such as text, speech, and visuals (Ryan, 2004). Understanding narrative structures involves deciphering key components of storytelling, such as exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and denouement (Prince, 1982). Comprehending how these elements collaboratively craft a compelling narrative arc is crucial in holding the audience's attention and guiding them through the unfolding story (Sternberg, 1978).

In-depth research into narrative structures necessitates the exploration and analysis of a spectrum of storytelling techniques, genres, and media, identifying prevalent patterns and conventions (Abbott, 2008). Investigating how various narrative structures influence aspects such as audience engagement, emotional impact, and the conveyance of themes and messages is fundamental (Ryan, 2004). Semantics and semiotics are the main elements of narrative structures. Semantics, concentrating on the meaning encapsulated within language and symbols, intertwines with narrative structures, shaping storytelling (Trask, 1999). Semiotics, as explored by Eco (1979), delves into the interpretation of signs and symbols, illuminating their capacity to impart profound, multifaceted meanings within narratives. Eco's insights into semiotics elucidate the interconnectedness of signs and symbols with narrative structures, emphasizing their collective significance in the effective communication of narratives. Understanding this interrelationship is quintessential for both the creators and analyzers of narratives, spotlighting the mechanisms through which storytelling is imbued with meaningfulness and resonance.

Ercegovac's study on the adaptation of traditional television formats into user-generated content on YouTube (2022) and Lotz's examination of the transformation of television in the digital era (2014) provide insights into how semiotics and semantics are employed in vlogs. Examining these aspects in the context of vlogs can illuminate the subtleties of message conveyance and storytelling in this digital medium.

Audience engagement and perception are significantly influenced by the narrative structures of vlogs. Engaging narrative structures can foster a strong connection between the content creator (vlogger) and the viewer (Ross, 2011; Vittadini et al. 2013), leading to higher audience retention and interaction. Similarly, the perception of the vlog content is largely shaped by how the narrative is structured and presented (Lindgren, 2021). Understanding these dynamics can offer valuable insights into how to effectively engage viewers and shape their perceptions through the power of narrative.

Methodology

Qualitative content analysis, as a research method, enables the subjective interpretation of textual data through a systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). The qualitative content analysis employed in this study is designed to be inductive, allowing the research findings to emerge from the frequent, dominant, or significant themes inherent in raw data (Thomas, 2006). The qualitative aspect of the analysis entails a detailed examination of the narrative structures in vlogs, drawing out their implications on semantics, semiotics, and audience engagement.

To ensure a wide representation of narrative structures, vlogs from various genres on YouTube will be selected. These genres include lifestyle, gaming, beauty and fashion, travel, education, health and fitness, food, tech reviews, and daily vlogs. The selection will involve choosing vlogs that have been posted within the last year, have at least 10,000 views, and come from creators with a minimum of 50,000 subscribers to ensure the vlogs are from active and relatively influential creators. Approximately 5 vlogs from each genre will be randomly selected, totaling about 45 vlogs. This sample size will provide a broad view of narrative structures while ensuring the manageability of data for qualitative analysis.

To conduct the qualitative content analysis (Tankosić et al. 2017), a coding scheme which will serve as a guideline for the classification and interpretation of narrative structures within the selected vlogs will be developed. The scheme will include codes related to narrative elements such as introduction, problem or conflict, climax, resolution, and conclusion, as these are core elements of traditional narrative structures (Labov & Waletzky, 1967). Codes relating to semiotics and semantics, including the use of signs, symbols, language, and imagery will be developed too. Specific codes will also be established to capture elements relating to audience engagement such as calls to action, questions, direct addresses to the audience, and use of viewer-generated content. As the analysis progresses, additional codes may emerge and be included in the coding scheme.

The process of qualitative content analysis will begin with a careful viewing and transcription of each selected vlog. The transcripts will be used to gain an in-depth understanding of the content, and the videos will be watched to discover visual elements for particular categories. Following this, the coding scheme will be applied to each transcript and its video, with segments of text and visuals being categorized according to the established codes. This process will facilitate the organization of data and the identification of patterns and themes. Once coding is complete, the coded segments will be analyzed to explore the construction and implications of narrative structures within the vlogs. This analysis will consider the frequency, relationships, patterns, and trends of the coded segments to draw out meaningful insights regarding narrative structures, semiotics, semantics, and audience engagement and perception.

To provide a more precise explanation of this analysis framework, it is important to clarify what is encompassed by the codes assigned to the elements of narrative structure for both text and video recordings. The codes related to narrative

elements include key components such as introduction, problem or conflict, climax, resolution, and conclusion. These elements are central to traditional narrative structures, as established by Labov and Waletzky (1967). The framework incorporates codes related to semiotics and semantics, encompassing the use of signs, symbols, language, and imagery within the narratives. Specific codes are established to capture elements associated with audience engagement, including calls to action, questions, direct addresses to the audience, and the utilization of viewer-generated content. The selection of these particular codes is based on their significance in understanding the overall narrative structures and their potential impact on audience engagement and perception. These codes provide a comprehensive framework for the systematic classification and interpretation of narrative structures within both text and video vlogs.

Regarding the rationale for explaining only a subset of categories within the broader narrative structure, the decision is guided by the need to focus on the most salient and relevant elements for the research objectives. The criteria for selection are based on their potential to shed light on the research questions and goals effectively. This approach ensures a manageable and focused analysis that yields meaningful insights while maintaining the feasibility of data handling.

Findings

Across the sample vlogs, several distinct narrative elements were identified. The Analytical Framework for Identifying Narrative Structures (Table 1) provided a structured approach to understanding how vloggers construct their narrative content. This framework aided in recognizing recurring elements that contribute to viewer engagement and message conveyance.

Table 1: *Analytical Framework for Identifying Narrative Structures*

Narrative Structure Element	Description and Examples
Introduction	Greeting, topic introduction.
Conflict/Issue	Central event or challenge.
Development/Resolution	Steps taken to address the conflict/issue.
Climax	Unexpected twist, height of tension.
Conclusion	Recap and reflection.
Audience Engagement	Questions, calls to action.
Semantic Elements	Language, imagery, symbolism.
Semiotic Elements	Visual cues, props, symbols.

Within Table 1 various elements were found to be prevalent in the vlogs, aligning with the core components of narrative structure. For instance, the "personal experience" emerged as a recurring element that anchors the narrative within the context of the vlogger's life (Huh et al. 2014), often weaving anecdotes into the overarching storyline. The presence of "audience address" was also notable; vloggers

directly spoke to their audience, inviting them into a conversation or sharing personal insights. Elements such as the "call to action", where viewers were asked to interact, and "teasers" hinting at future content, were also commonly found across various genres. Interestingly, gaming vlogs uniquely incorporated "challenge narratives", where the vlogger attempts to overcome difficulties in the game, thereby adding suspense to the storyline. This identification of narrative elements within the vlogs was made possible through the systematic application of the analytical framework, shedding light on the complex layers of storytelling present in YouTube vlogs.

Table 2: *Complete coding scheme*

Category	Codes	Subcategory	Description	Examples
Narrative	1	Personal story	The vlogger shares personal experiences or stories	Talking about their day, sharing a personal experience
	2	Day-in-life	The vlogger shares a typical day or a special day in their life	Morning routine, a day at work, a day of travel
	3	Travel adventure	The vlogger shares experiences from a trip or an adventure	Visiting a new city or a country, going on a hike,
	4	Product or service review	The vlogger reviews a product or service	Reviewing a gadget, a makeup product, a restaurant
	5	DIY	The vlogger explains how to make or do something	Cooking a meal, fixing a car, making a product at home
	6	Educational	The vlogger offers knowledge and expertise in a certain area	History, art, math, media literacy, science, photography, cars, fitness, digital marketing, nutrition
	7	Professional advice	The vlogger offers the advice on how to act in certain situations	How to create social media campaigns, how to eat healthier, how to style your hair according to the face shape, how to preserve the motor in your car during the wintertime.

Patterns	1-0	Recurring themes Y/N	Themes or topics that recur across multiple vlogs of the same author	Fitness, technology, fashion.
SIGNS AND SYMBOLS	1	Logos and brands	Presence of specific logos or brands	Clothing brands, tech gadgets
	2	Visual motifs	Recurring visual elements or styles	Specific camera angles, color themes, relevant product placement, settings of the area according to topic or the genre.
	3	Editing styles	Distinctive ways of editing videos	Fast cuts, slow-motion scenes, use of music
Language	1	Use of informal language	Use of informal, colloquial language or slang	"Hey guys", "What's up"
	2	Use of formal language	Use of formal language or jargon	Use of informal vs. formal language
	3-4	Use of humor or sarcasm (informal/ formal)	Presence of humor or sarcasm	Jokes, funny anecdotes
	4	Specific phrases or words	Recurring phrases or words unique to the vlogger	Catchphrases, unique greetings, personalized intro or outro
Imagery	1-2	Urban/rural settings	Depiction of cityscapes or countryside	Shots of city streets, landscapes
	3-4	Indoor/outdoor scenes	Scenes shot indoors or outdoors	Home tour, beach scenes
	5-6	Use of close-ups/ wide shots	Types of camera shots used	Close-ups of the vlogger, wide shots of the surroundings
	7-8	Use of color/ lighting effects	Use of specific color themes or lighting effects	Specific color grading, night scenes
Audience Interaction	1	Calls for likes/ subscriptions	Requests for viewers to like the video or subscribe to the channel	"Don't forget to like and subscribe"

	2	Call for comments	Request for viewers to comment	Asking people for suggestions or to comment certain issue, experience or express feelings
	3	Response to comments	Acknowledgment of or response to viewer comments	Reading out comments, answering questions
	4	Giveaways or Q&A sessions	Conducting giveaways or question-answer sessions	Announcing a giveaway, a Q&A vlog
Production Quality	1	Video/audio quality	Quality of the video and audio	HD video, clear audio
	2	Editing complexity	Complexity and sophistication of the video editing	Use of transitions, overlays
	3	Special effects or animations	Use of special effects or animations	Animated intros, visual effects
EMOTIONAL TONE	0	Regular emotional expression	Dominant emotions expressed in the vlog	Happiness, sadness, excitement
	1	Happy/Cheerful		
	2	Sad		
	3	Sarcastic		
	4	Excited		
	5	Dark		
	6	Funny		
	7	Melancholy		
SOCIAL ISSUES	1	Discussion on current events	The vlogger shares thoughts on social or political events	Discussion of elections, social movements
	2	Advocacy	The vlogger uses their platform to advocate for a cause	Promoting environmental awareness, mental health awareness
COLLABORATION	1	With other YouTubers	The vlogger collaborates with other YouTubers on a video	Joint vlog, challenge video with another YouTuber

	2	With brands	The vlogger collaborates with a brand for a sponsored video	Product review for a brand, sponsored travel vlog
CULTURAL REFERENCES	1	Popular culture	The vlogger references movies, music, TV shows, or internet memes	Quoting a movie line, mentioning a popular song
	2	Traditional culture	The vlogger references traditional or cultural practices	Discussing a holiday tradition, traditional food
PERSONAL BELIEFS	1	Personal values	The vlogger shares their personal beliefs or values	Discussion on the importance of family, hard work
	2	Religious beliefs	The vlogger discusses their religious beliefs	Sharing a religious practice, discussing a religious holiday
VIEWER ENGAGEMENT	1	Viewer challenges	The vlogger involves viewers in a challenge or task	Asking viewers to share a photo, complete a challenge
	2	Polls/Quizzes	The vlogger engages viewers with polls or quizzes	Asking viewers to vote on something, quiz about the vlogger
MONETIZATION	1	Advertisements	Presence of ads in the video	Pre-roll ads, mid-roll ads
	2	Affiliate links	The vlogger shares affiliate links	Links to buy products in the video description
	3	Patreon or other fundraising	The vlogger mentions Patreon or other fundraising platforms	Asking viewers to support them on Patreon

Table 2 presents a full and comprehensive coding scheme developed for the purpose of analyzing various components within the selected YouTube vlogs. Each category and subcategory outlined in the table represents distinct elements that contribute to the overall content and narrative of the vlogs. These elements include narrative patterns, signs, symbols, language use, imagery, audience interaction, production quality, emotional tone, engagement strategies, cultural references, personal beliefs, and more. By employing this structured framework, the research aims to systematically explore and understand the complex layers of vlogging content, shedding light on how these elements collectively contribute to the overall

semantics, semiotics, and aesthetics of the vlogs. For the purposes of this paper several categories have been chosen and analyzed.

Signs and symbols

The presence of signs and symbols in the analyzed vlogs (Lacsina, 2023) is notable. Code 2 appears frequently, indicating the use of visual motifs and recurring visual elements. This suggests that vloggers are intentional in their visual representation, utilizing consistent camera angles, consistent design of the shooting set as well as color themes to enhance the visual experience for viewers. Also, Code 3, which represents distinctive editing styles, is also quite prevalent. This implies that vloggers are employing specific editing techniques such as fast cuts, jump-cuts, frequent change of the shots or slow-motion scenes to create dynamic and engaging content.

Language

The language used in the vlogs showcases a mix of informal and formal styles. Code 1, representing the use of informal language, is frequently observed. This aligns with the conversational and relatable nature of vlogs, as vloggers often use phrases like "Hey guys" to establish a friendly rapport with their audience. Code 4, which signifies the presence of specific phrases or words unique to the vlogger as well as personalized intros and/or outros, also appears frequently. This indicates that vloggers are developing their own catchphrases or personalized greetings to distinguish their content.

Imagery

The analysis of imagery in the vlogs reveals a diverse range of visual elements. Urban and rural settings (Code 1-2) are commonly depicted, suggesting vloggers' engagement with different environments. Indoor and outdoor scenes (Code 3-4) are also frequently observed, reflecting the vloggers' versatility in capturing various settings. The use of close-ups and wide shots (Code 5-6) is prevalent, indicating an intentional visual strategy to highlight both details and broader contexts. Interestingly, Code 7-8, which pertains to the use of color and lighting effects, appears in a substantial number of instances, suggesting that vloggers are attentive to visual aesthetics, applying specific color themes and lighting effects to enhance the visual appeal.

Audience interaction

The analysis of the audience interaction category revealed several noteworthy findings. Vloggers actively engaged with their viewers through calls to action (Code 1), often encouraging them to like, comment, and subscribe, thereby fostering a sense of community and interaction. These strategies have effectively increased viewer interaction by observing a noticeable uptick in likes, comments, and subscriptions

when vloggers issued these calls to action. Vloggers frequently responded to viewer comments (Code 2), creating a dynamic and participatory environment where audience input was acknowledged and integrated into the ongoing narrative. This approach was found to boost interaction levels as evidenced by increased viewer comments and ongoing discussions. Some vloggers organized giveaways or Q&A sessions (Code 3-4), which not only incentivized viewer participation but also strengthened the sense of connection between vloggers and their audience. These interactive elements within the vlogs were found to be highly effective in increasing viewer interaction. The success of these strategies was evident in the heightened engagement levels, including increased entries for giveaways and active participation in Q&A sessions. These findings underscore the vlogger's role as a facilitator of audience interaction and community building within the vlogging platform.

Emotional tone

The emotional tone conveyed in the vlogs is diverse. Code 1, representing a happy and cheerful tone, is frequently observed. This aligns with the positive and upbeat nature of many vlogs, where vloggers often share joyful experiences and interactions. Code 3, indicating a sarcastic tone, appears occasionally, suggesting vloggers' use of humor and irony. Code 0, which represents regular emotional expression, is present in several instances, showcasing the vloggers' genuine sharing of their emotions. The presence of other emotional tones such as excitement (Code 4), funny (Code 6), and melancholy (Code 7) reflects the varied emotional range presented in the vlogs.

The semantics of the vlogs, namely the use of language and images to convey meaning (Sujaya et al. 2023), varied across genres but consistently served to enhance viewer understanding and perception. The study noted the adept use of rhetoric, metaphor, and symbolism to communicate complex ideas. For instance, beauty vloggers used specific jargon and visual demonstrations to articulate makeup techniques (Bhatia, 2023), while travel vloggers used descriptive language and immersive footage to convey (Li & Hayes, 2023) the experience of different locales. The narrative was further enriched using music and sound effects, which subtly influenced the tone and mood of the storytelling.

Vloggers also used semiotics, the study of signs and symbols, to create deeper meanings and communicate on a non-verbal level. Visual elements, such as thumbnails and on-screen graphics, served as signposts to guide viewer expectations (Abbasi et al. 2022). The use of props and settings were also prevalent; these served as symbols, providing additional context and contributing to the overall narrative. For example, in lifestyle vlogs, home settings created a sense of personal intimacy, while in gaming vlogs, the virtual environment of the game served as a significant symbolic element. In fitness vlogs, attire and equipment served as symbols representing the fitness culture. These signs and symbols added a layer of semiotic richness to the vlogs, allowing vloggers to communicate beyond words (Tankosić et al. 2020) and deepen the narrative experience.

Discussion

The study's findings reveal the complexity of narrative structures in YouTube vlogs and their significant influence on viewer engagement and perceptions. The recurrent use of personal experiences, audience address, calls to action, and teasers across vlogs (Haseet al. 2022) suggest that these are fundamental elements of vlogging narratives, contributing to their relatability, interaction, anticipation, and intimacy. These elements are not only instrumental in enhancing viewer engagement but also pivotal in shaping viewer perceptions, leading to stronger viewer-vlogger relationships.

Semantically, vloggers employ a rich arsenal of language and imagery techniques to deliver nuanced messages and stories. The use of jargon, metaphor, symbolism, and music/sound effects all contribute to a compelling storytelling atmosphere that invites viewer understanding and participation. The significant role of signs and symbols in vlogs illustrates the deep semiotic richness in this digital medium. Vloggers use visuals, props, settings, and more as semiotic tools to communicate non-verbally and deepen the narrative experience (Vasudevan & DeJaynes, 2012).

The findings provide valuable insights for content creators, particularly vloggers, on how to construct narratives that enhance viewer engagement and shape perceptions positively. The use of personal experiences, audience address, calls to action, and teasers can be strategically incorporated into their narratives. Semantically, they can leverage language, imagery, music, and sound effects to enrich their storytelling. Understanding and employing semiotics in their content – the use of meaningful signs and symbols – can add depth to their narratives.

For researchers, the study offers a comprehensive understanding of vlogging narratives, semantics, and semiotics, which can be used as a foundation for future research. The methodology used can also be replicated or adapted to study other digital media or narrative structures. For digital media strategists, the research provides insights into the elements that drive engagement and shape perceptions in the context of YouTube vlogs. These insights can be used to develop effective content strategies and guidelines for brands and influencers on YouTube.

This research contributes to the field of digital storytelling by offering an in-depth understanding of the narrative structures in YouTube vlogs, their semantic and semiotic elements, and their implications for audience engagement and perception. It sheds light on the strategies used by vloggers to captivate audiences, convey meanings, and create deep connections. The research also adds to the literature on the semiotics and semantics of digital content, particularly user-generated content. By unraveling the narrative structures in vlogs and illuminating their implications (Rahmeh, 2023), the study provides a valuable lens through which to understand and appreciate the art and power of digital storytelling in the YouTube era.

Conclusion

This study has delved into the narrative structures in YouTube vlogs across various genres, seeking to understand their construction and implications for viewer engagement and perception. It found that personal experiences, audience address, calls to action and teasers, as well as particular language and imagery are common narrative elements across vlogs. These elements enhance viewer engagement, which could further lead into shaping viewer perceptions, fostering a sense of authenticity and relatability. In terms of semantics, the study found that vloggers use language, imagery, music, and sound effects strategically to convey nuanced messages and enrich their storytelling.

The study also revealed the significant role of semiotics in vlogs, where visual elements, props, and settings serve as signs and symbols, adding a layer of meaning beyond the verbal narrative. These findings offer valuable insights for content creators, researchers, and digital media strategists and contribute to the field of digital storytelling by highlighting the strategies vloggers use to engage audiences and convey meanings in this digital medium.

One limitation of this study is that it analyzed vlogs across various genres, and did not examine genre-specific narrative structures. Future research could delve into this aspect to understand how narrative structures may differ based on the genre of the vlog. Another limitation is that this study examined narrative structures from the content creators' perspective. A viewer-centric study could be conducted to understand how audiences interpret and react to different narrative elements. This could provide additional insights into viewer engagement and perceptions.

As the field of digital storytelling continues to evolve, longitudinal studies could be conducted to understand how vlogging narratives adapt and change over time in response to shifting viewer preferences and technological advancements. Such research could contribute to the ongoing exploration of digital storytelling and its impact on audience engagement and perception.

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Razotkrivanje narativnih struktura u Jutjub vlogovima: kvalitativna analiza sadržaja

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Apstrakt

Vlogovanje, kao primarni oblik sadržaja na Jutjubu, koristi snagu narativa za angažovanje publike i prenošenje značenja. Ovaj rad istražuje narativne strukture unutar Jutjub vlogova kroz različite žanrove, pružajući uvid u to kako su ovi narativi konstruisani i koje implikacije imaju za angažovanje i percepciju publike. Koristeći

metodologiju kvalitativne analize sadržaja, izabran je raznovrstan skup vlogova, razvijena je šema kodiranja za klasifikaciju različitih aspekata narativne strukture, i sprovedena je dubinska analiza. Nalazi otkrivaju dinamičnu interakciju narativnih elemenata koji pojačavaju angažovanje gledalaca i oblikuju njihovu percepciju. Takođe, istraživanje ukazuje na to kako ove narativne strukture doprinose semantici vlogova i ukazuju na suptilnost prenošenja poruka i pripovedanja u ovom digitalnom mediju. Istraživanje otkriva semiotičko bogatstvo vlogova i objašnjava kako se znakovi i simboli koriste unutar narativa za stvaranje dubljih značenja. Studija otkriva važne nalaze, uključujući preovladavajuće narativne elemente, stratešku upotrebu semantike i semiotike, raznovrsne izbore vizuelnih elemenata, emocionalne izraze i taktike angažovanja publike, nudeći vredne uvide za kreatore sadržaja i istraživače u razumevanju narativnih kompleksnosti Jutjub vlogova. Ovo istraživanje doprinosi detaljnom razumevanju digitalnog pripovedanja na Jutjubu, nudeći vredne uvide za kreatore sadržaja, istraživače i profesionalce koji se bave digitalnim medijima.

Keywords in Serbian (Italic): Jutjub vlogovi, Narativne strukture, Digitalno pripovedanje, Semiotika, Semantika, Angažovanje publike