LLD 100A- Section 11

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**Rhetorical Analysis**

**Introduction**

There are many different ways to communicate with others. Rhetorical analysis is one way to examine how effectively communication achieves its goals. The components in a rhetorical analysis are introduction, rhetorical situation, analysis of rhetorical strategies, analysis of rhetorical appeals, and conclusion. Writers use rhetorical analysis to be able to understand the genre of writing that is being used. I hope to learn the genre of writing in the field of nursing by writing this rhetorical analysis. Marjorie Rutherford (2008) used rhetorical writing when she wrote the document *Standardized Nursing Language: What Does It Mean for Nursing Practice?* which will be the document that will be analyzed in this essay. Rutherford is formally a doctoral student at the University of South Florida and studied nursing informatics with a focus on the Nursing Intervention Classification (NIC) system and the Nursing Outcome Classification (NOC) system (Rutherford, 2008, p. 7). Rutherford uses many different rhetorical appeals and rhetorical strategies in the document that I will be analyzing. The rhetorical appeals that Rutherford uses in this document are logos and ethos. With the use of these appeals, Rutherford is able to explain her point through rhetorical strategies such as narration, definition, and exemplification. I will be discussing the use of these rhetorical appeals and strategies in my analysis.

**Rhetorical Situation**

**Audience**

The intended audience is nurses, people interested in the field of nursing, patients, nurse educators, researchers, and administrators. A standardized nursing language affects all of these groups in some way. Rutherford discusses the benefits of a standardized nursing language. She mentions “Implications of Standardized Language for Nursing Education, Research, and Administration.” Rutherford believes that nurse educators can use a standardized nursing language to educate future nurses. She feels that by having a standardized nursing language nurse educators will be able to teach future nurses how to use certain systems. Moreover, Rutherford mentions that the data stored in a data warehouse by bedside nurses allows administrators and researchers to discover trends in patient care. Therefore, it is vital to have a standardized nursing language. One example of how Rutherford is able to connect with her audience is when she claims, “Use of a standardized language is not something that is done just because it will be useful to others. Use of a standardized language has far reaching ramifications that will help in the delivery of nursing care and demonstrate the value of nursing to others” (Rutherford, 2008, p. 5). The author wants the reader to be able to realize that not only is a standardized nursing language beneficial to others, but it also is beneficial to the field of nursing itself.

**Purpose**

Rutherford clearly states the purpose of a standardized nursing language in the abstract, explaining that it applies to the healthcare environment and has many benefits. She states that “The benefits include: better communication among nurses and other health care providers, increased visibility of nursing interventions, improved patient care, enhanced data collection to evaluate nursing care outcomes, greater adherence to standards of care, and facilitated assessment of nursing competency; implications of standardized language for nursing education, research, and administration” (Rutherford, 2008, p.1). Furthermore, Rutherford wants current and future nurses to know why having a standardized language in nursing is significant. I think Rutherford wants readers to think about how a standardized nursing language can impact nurses, people interested in the field of nursing, patients, nurse educators, researchers, and administrators.

**Context**

This document would be used in a journal related to the healthcare field. Health professionals and students would use this document to learn about what it means to have a standardized language for nurses and the benefits of it. Also, they can learn about the disadvantages there are by not having a standardized nursing language.

**Style/Tone**

The style used in this document is APA. The following shows an example of how Rutherford presents the style APA:

“Rutherford, M., (Jan. 31, 2008) "Standardized Nursing Language: What Does It Mean for Nursing Practice? "OJIN: The Online Journal of Issues in

Nursing. Vol. 13 No. 1. Available:

[www.nursingworld.org/MainMenuCategories/ANAMarketplace/ANAPeriodicals/OJIN/TableofContents/vol132008/No1Jan08/ArticlePreviousTopic/StandardizedNursingLanguage](http://www.nursingworld.org/MainMenuCategories/ANAMarketplace/ANAPeriodicals/OJIN/TableofContents/vol132008/No1Jan08/ArticlePreviousTopic/StandardizedNursingLanguage).”

The APA style of writing is common in the nursing profession. Furthermore, the tone Rutherford uses in this document is formal. She expresses, “Most articles in the nursing literature that reference standardized nursing languages are related to research or are scholarly discussions addressing the fine points surrounding the development or evaluation of these languages” (Rutherford, 2008, p.1). By using the phrase “addressing the fine points,” she demonstrates a formal tone.

**Organization**

Rutherford structures the document into an abstract, definition of a standardized language, current standardized nursing languages and their applications, and the benefits of standardized languages (Rutherford, 2008, p.1-2). She ends the document with a summary, restating her main points addressed in this document.

**Rhetorical Appeals**

**Logos**

One use of rhetorical appeals that Rutherford believes is important to use in this document is logos. Logos, also known as rational or logical appeals, is the use of logical reasoning (Sunderman, 2011, p.25). Rutherford believes that a standardized nursing language is important and gives many reasons why she believes this. One example of her use of logos is, “A standardized nursing language should be defined so that nursing can be communicated accurately among nurses and other health care providers” (Rutherford, 2008, p.1). Rutherford illustrates logos in this example by using logical reasoning. She feels that there needs to be a common ground when it comes to communication amongst nurses and health professionals. This is so that they can all understand each other without miscommunication taking place. Another example Rutherford uses to show the logos appeal is by stating Norma Lang, an authority’s opinion, of the effects of not having a standardized nursing language. In this document Lang states, “If we cannot name it, we cannot control it, practice it, teach it, finance it, or put it into public policy” (Clark and Lang, 1992, p. 109; Rutherford, 2008, p.1). Lang is correct in that not having a standardized nursing language can lead to many negative effects. Rutherford uses the rhetorical appeal logos effectively in this document.

**Ethos**

Another use of rhetorical appeals used by Rutherford in this document is ethos. Ethos, also known as ethical appeals, is based on the character or personality of the author (Sunderman, 2011, p.25). Rutherford feels that a standardized nursing language will allow nurses to communicate globally. She says, “By using one standardized nursing language, nurses from all over the world will be able to communicate with one another, with the goal of improving care for patients globally” (Rutherford, 2008, p.5). This statement shows the author’s character in that she is analyzing how a standardized nursing language will be significant locally as well as globally. Also, the author is analyzing the benefits patients will gain from a standardized nursing language. Another example of ethos the author uses in this document is when she states, “Use of standardized nursing languages promises to enhance communication of nursing care nationally and internationally. This is important because it will alert nurses to helpful interventions that may not be in current use in their areas” (Rutherford, 2008, p.3). Once again, this illustration shows Rutherford’s persona in that she finds that having a standardized nursing language can be beneficial locally as well as globally. Rutherford presents the rhetorical appeal ethos well in this document.

**Rhetorical Strategies**

**Narration**

Rhetorical strategies are “patterns of organization” (Henze, 2010, p.3). The first rhetorical strategy Rutherford uses to communicate her point effectively in this document is narration. Narration is a method used to express a purpose by using storytelling. In this document, Rutherford made a visit to the labor and delivery unit of a local community hospital to observe the nurses’ recent implementation of systems for nursing care documentation within their electronic health care records system (Rutherford, 2008, p.1). One nurse made a statement that she found shocking, saying, “We document our care using standardized nursing languages but we don’t fully understand why we do.” By stating this, Rutherford shows the reader that many people do not understand why it is necessary to have a standardized nursing language and the benefits of having one. The author draws the reader in immediately by starting this article with the use of storytelling.

**Definition**

The second rhetorical strategy Rutherford uses in this document is definition. Definition is the explanation of unfamiliar terms or ideas (Porter, 2011, p.23). The definition of a standardized nursing language is a “common language, readily understood by all nurses, to describe care” (Keenan, 1999, p.12). Rutherford uses Keenan’s definition of a standardized nursing language to explain the importance of why it is needed. Another example Rutherford uses is the definition from The Association of Perioperative Registered Nurses (AORN). AORN defines a standardized nursing language as “[providing] nurses with a common means of communication” (Rutherford, 2008, p.2). Rutherford explains, “Nurses from different units, hospitals, and geographic areas, or countries will be able to use commonly understood terminology to identify the specific problem or intervention implied and the outcome observed” (Rutherford, 2008, p.2). By defining what a standardized nursing language is, the author helps us understand why it is vital to have a standardized nursing language.

**Exemplification**

The third rhetorical strategy the author uses in this document is exemplification. “Exemplification is the use of examples to explain or elaborate an idea” (Porter, 2011, p.23). In this document, Rutherford uses exemplification multiple times. One example of exemplification Rutherford uses is a “documentation related to vaginal bleeding for a postpartum, obstetrical patient” (Rutherford, 2008, p.2). She emphasizes that nurses document the amount of bleeding as small, moderate, or large, but there is no method as to how the amount of blood is determined. Rutherford believes that not only precision is needed in documentation but a standardized nursing language is needed as well in order to treat patients properly. Another example of exemplification that Rutherford uses is when she reports the following:

“A NOC outcome that labor nurses frequently use is pain level (moorehead et al., 2004), related to severity and intensity of pain a woman experiences with contractions. The pain level can be assessed before and after the use of coping techniques such as breathing exercises and repositioning. Indicators for this specific pain outcome include: reported pain, moaning and crying, facial expressions of pain, restlessness, narrowed focus, respiratory rate, pulse rate, blood pressure, and perspiration (p.421) and are rated on a scale from severe (1) to none (5)” (Rutherford, 2008, p. 4).

The author represents strong examples of the importance of a standardized nursing language in order to document effectively.

**Conclusion**

Authors use rhetorical strategies and appeals to communicate effectively in order to achieve their goals. Rutherford does a commendable job of using a variety of rhetorical strategies and appeals in order to prove her point. In this document she uses logos, ethos, narration, definition, and exemplification. I believe that logos and definition in this document were successful for Rutherford’s purpose. This is because this document is about the need for a common language that can be understood among nurses and other health professionals. Therefore, Rutherford uses logic in order to explain how not having a standardized nursing language could create confusions and misunderstandings. With all due respect to the author, I would suggest Rutherford include more real world examples from health care professionals and patients and to bring in the rhetorical appeal pathos. Rutherford can use the pathos appeal in this article by mentioning how not having a standardized nursing language has affected patient’s health negatively. I feel that the use of emotions will connect the audience to Rutherford’s purpose more effectively. This document was very insightful and helped me understand the importance of why a standardized language is necessary in the nursing field.

**References**

Rutherford, M., (2008). Standardized Nursing Language: What Does It Mean for Nursing Practice?. *OJIN: The Online Journal of Issues in Nursing, 13*, 1. Retrieved from http://www.nursingworld.org/MainMenuCategories/ANAMarketplace/ANAPeriodicals/OJIN/TableofContents/vol132008/No1Jan08/ArticlePreviousTopic/StandardizedNursingLanguage