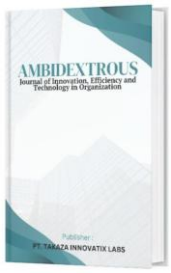
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Coverage Communication Style as a Personal Branding Strategy for Captain Victor in PUBG Mobile Content on TikTok

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Abstract:*The development of TikTok has created opportunities for gaming content creators to establish distinctive digital identities through communication styles. This study aimed to analyze Captain Victor's personal branding through his news-style coverage of PUBG Mobile content based on Peter Montoya's eight laws of personal branding. A qualitative descriptive approach with a case study method was employed. Three informants were purposively selected, consisting of Captain Victor as the primary informant and two followers as supporting informants. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, non-participant observation, and documentation. The data were analyzed using the Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña interactive model, which involved data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Source and method triangulation were used to strengthen credibility. The findings indicated that The Law of Distinctiveness was the most prominent dimension, reflected in formal language, a distinctive voice, adaptive intonation, and news-style gameplay narration. Specialization, audience-perceived personality, and consistency also supported the development of his digital identity. The study concludes that communication-style differentiation constitutes the defining feature of Captain Victor's personal branding, although audience perceptions were not entirely uniform.*

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Introduction

The development of digital technology and social media has transformed the way individuals construct identities, convey messages, and gain recognition from audiences. In the digital communication ecosystem, social media no longer merely serves as a means of entertainment and information exchange, but has also become a strategic space for building personal branding through message consistency, communication character, and unique content. TikTok, with its short-form video features and wide content distribution, provides creators with the opportunity to showcase their expertise and build relationships with audiences based on the characteristics of the content they produce. Research by Ishihara and Oktavianti (2021) shows that personal branding on TikTok can be built through consistency, specialization, and professionalism in content delivery. These findings align with Hayu and Alexandrina (2024), who demonstrated that message delivery character, specialization, leadership, and reputation are crucial elements in shaping the personal branding of educational creators on TikTok. Thus, a creator's identity in the digital space is determined not only by the frequency of appearances or popularity, but also by the ability to develop a distinctive and recognizable communication character.

This phenomenon is also evident in the development of the esports industry and the increasingly diverse digital gaming content. Gaming content is no longer limited to demonstrations of playing skills, game strategies, or live match broadcasts, but has evolved into a digital communication product that combines information, entertainment, narrative, and audience interaction. Studies of esports communities and gaming content creators show that these activities encompass a wide range of content production forms, from information dissemination to competitive content, demonstrating the expanding role of creators in the digital entertainment ecosystem.

In the Indonesian context, TikTok has become a platform for creators to develop different communication approaches according to their audience characteristics and their respective fields. One interesting phenomenon is Captain Victor, through his TikTok account @kaptenvictor, who presents PUBG Mobile content in a reporting style resembling a newscaster. Different from approaches that prioritize exaggerated expressions or informal conversational language, Captain Victor uses relatively formal diction, distinctive voice intonation, and a structured delivery of game information. Based on the description in this study, this style is a characteristic that distinguishes him from other PUBG Mobile content creators and makes the account relevant to study as a personal branding phenomenon in digital media.

Previous research has provided an important foundation for understanding the formation of personal branding through social media. Ishihara and Oktavianti (2021), through their study of influencer personal branding on TikTok, emphasized the importance of authenticity, consistency, specialization, and professionalism in creating a recognizable identity for audiences. Meanwhile, Maharani (2023), in her study of local creator Tombro Widodo's personal branding management, used Peter Montoya's eight laws of personal branding to explain the relationship between content character, credibility, audience, and revenue generation opportunities through social media.

Kusuma and Paramita's (2024) research also shows that implementing personal branding elements can help creators build brand awareness through strategically planned TikTok content. The study's findings confirm that personal branding isn't formed solely through popularity, but rather through consistent identity management and communication.

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However, applying a personal branding framework to different types of creators requires considering the characteristics of different content areas, communication styles, and audience expectations. Although studies on personal branding on TikTok have developed, previous research still shows variations in the focus of objects and communication approaches. Hayu and Alexandrina (2024), for example, studied educational creators who build their image through straightforward delivery of career information, while Kusuma and Paramita (2024) focused on the personal branding of art creators in relation to business brand awareness. Research on film creators and broadcast content creators also shows that managing communication style can be an important part of building a digital identity and reaching a specific audience (Putri, 2024; Djeke & Paramita, 2024). However, these findings do not necessarily explain how a news broadcasting style is applied to gaming content, which is characterized by competitiveness, dynamics, and entertainment-oriented. This difference in context is important because the formal communication style in PUBG Mobile content is not only related to the way information is conveyed, but also has the potential to shape perceptions of a creator's competence, credibility, personality, and uniqueness. Therefore, a study is needed that specifically connects the coverage style in gaming content with the formation of personal branding.

A research gap lies in the limited discussion specifically examining the use of a newscaster-like reporting style as a personal branding strategy in PUBG Mobile content on TikTok. Previous research has explained the formation of personal branding in creators in education, arts, entertainment, and other fields, but has not sufficiently explained how journalistic communication characteristics, such as formal diction, articulation, intonation, and information delivery structure, play a differentiating role in the gaming content environment. Research by Kusuma and Paramita (2024) emphasizes the application of personal branding to increase brand awareness, while Ishihara and Oktavianti (2021) discusses the formation of influencer identity through several personal branding characteristics.

Both studies provide a conceptual foundation, but the differences in the objects and focus of their analyses leave room for understanding the formation of gaming creators' identities through their distinctive reporting styles. Based on this gap, the research problem is formulated as follows: how is Captain Victor's personal branding constructed and displayed through the reporting style in PUBG Mobile content on TikTok when analyzed based on Peter Montoya's eight laws of personal branding? This formulation directs the analysis to the relationship between the communication character displayed, the consistency of the reporting style, and the formation of an identity that distinguishes Captain Victor from other creators.

Based on these problems, this study aims to analyze Captain Victor's personal branding through his reporting style in PUBG Mobile content on TikTok using Peter Montoya's eight laws of personal branding, namely specialization, leadership, personality, distinction, visibility, unity, constancy, and reputation. The urgency of this research lies in the need to understand how gaming content creators can develop a distinctive communication identity amidst digital content competition and the tendency to use similar delivery formats. The novelty of this research lies in placing a reporting style resembling a newscaster as the focus of personal branding analysis in the context of PUBG Mobile content, rather than just the creator's popularity, number of followers, or visual appeal. By integrating Peter Montoya's framework and Captain Victor's communication characteristics, this study is expected to provide theoretical contributions to the development of personal branding studies in the context of gaming creators as well as practical contributions for creators in designing a communication identity that is consistent, distinctive, and relevant to the audience. Thus, this study not only describes the characteristics of Captain Victor's content but also explains how reporting style

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can function as an element in forming identity and personal branding differentiation on social media.

Research Methods

Research Design and Type

The study, " Coverage Communication Style as a Personal Branding Strategy for Captain Victor in PUBG Mobile Content on TikTok," uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study method. This approach was chosen because the research focuses on an in-depth understanding of the process of personal branding formation through the communication style displayed by a content creator in the social media environment. Case studies allow researchers to examine phenomena contextually by considering the characteristics of the subject, communication patterns, consistency of content presentation, and audience perceptions of the digital identity being constructed. In line with the principles of qualitative research discussed by Creswell and Poth (2018), understanding a phenomenon requires in-depth data collection from various relevant sources. In the context of Indonesian research, Sugiyono (2022) also positions qualitative research as an approach oriented towards understanding the meaning of phenomena based on data obtained in natural conditions. Therefore, this approach is relevant to analyzing Captain Victor's coverage style through Peter Montoya's eight laws of personal branding: The Law of specialization, The Law of leadership, The Law of personality, The Law of distinctiveness, The Law of visibility, The Law of unity, The Law of Persistence, and The Law of Goodwill. The focus of the analysis is not directed at measuring the statistical popularity of accounts, but at interpreting the character of communication and its relationship to the formation of personal branding identity (Ishihara & Oktavianti, 2021; Hayu & Alexandrina, 2024).

Participants and Informant Selection Techniques

In this qualitative research, the terms population and sample in the statistical sense are not the primary basis for determining participants. The study used a purposive sampling technique, selecting informants based on the suitability of their experience, knowledge, and involvement with the phenomenon under study. The research informants consisted of three individuals: Captain Victor as the key informant and two followers of the TikTok account @kaptenvictor as supporting informants. Captain Victor was chosen because he is the creator and manager of the account being studied, thus having direct experience in content planning and implementing a reporting style. Meanwhile, two supporting informants were selected from among active followers aged 20 to 30 who follow Captain Victor's content and have experience watching or interacting with it. The selection of supporting informants aimed to obtain the audience's perspective to compare the identity presented by the creator with the perceptions of the message recipients. The selection of informants based on information relevance aligns with the principles of qualitative research explained by Sugiyono (2022) and Emzir (2020), while the use of multiple perspectives in understanding personal branding is also relevant to the studies of Ishihara and Oktavianti (2021) and Kusuma and Paramita (2024). Thus, the three informants were positioned as sources of contextual information, not as a sample intended to statistically represent all TikTok followers.

Data collection instruments and techniques

The primary instrument in this study was the researcher, supported by an in-depth interview guide, observation sheets, and documentation. The interview guide was semi-structured to maintain data collection focus on the problem formulation while allowing for further

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exploration based on informant responses. Questions for Captain Victor focused on the rationale for his coverage style, content planning process, message consistency, and digital identity development strategies. Questions for supporting informants focused on perceptions of voice characteristics, language use, demeanor, credibility, and content consistency. Non-participant observation was conducted on video uploads on the TikTok account @kaptenvictor, paying attention to verbal elements, intonation, narrative structure, expression, and the presentation of game information. Documentation included interview recordings, relevant audiovisual materials, and audience interactions in the comments section. The use of these multiple instruments helped researchers understand the phenomenon through complementary data, as outlined by Sugiyono (2022) and Sudaryono (2021) in the principles of qualitative data collection. Observations of communication characteristics and audience reception are also relevant to research on personal branding on TikTok by Ishihara and Oktavianti (2021) and Hayu and Alexandrina (2024). Because this research is qualitative, the quality of the instrument is assessed through the appropriateness of the questions to the research objectives, the clarity of the indicators, and its ability to generate relevant data, rather than through statistical reliability testing as is the case with quantitative survey instruments.

Research Procedures

The research procedure was carried out through the stages of preparation, data collection, data processing, and checking the validity of the findings. In the preparation stage, the researcher established the research focus, formulated research questions, determined informant criteria, developed interview guidelines, and established Peter Montoya's eight laws of personal branding as an analytical framework. The next stage was data collection through in-depth interviews with Captain Victor and two followers of the TikTok account @kaptenvictor, non-participant observation of relevant content, and documentation of audiovisual materials and audience responses. Data from the interviews were used to understand the creator's perspective and followers' experiences, while observation and documentation were used to examine how personal branding characteristics emerged in digital communication practices. All data were then transcribed, organized, and grouped according to themes relevant to the research focus. The researcher then compared information from various sources to identify congruences, differences, and emerging patterns. These stages follow the principles of systematic qualitative research as described by Sugiyono (2022) and Emzir (2020), and align with the case study approach, which emphasizes the use of multiple sources of evidence to understand phenomena contextually (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In the context of personal branding, this procedure allows researchers to compare the identity that the creator wants to display with the communication character that is actually seen and the audience's perception of it (Kusuma & Paramita, 2024; Hayu & Alexandrina, 2024).

Data Analysis Techniques and Data Validity

Data analysis used the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), which includes data condensation, data presentation, and drawing and verifying conclusions. In the data condensation stage, researchers selected and organized interview transcripts, observation notes, and documentation to retain information relevant to the problem formulation. Data were then categorized based on Peter Montoya's eight laws of personal branding. The data presentation stage was carried out by compiling thematic descriptions that showed the relationship between reporting style, communication consistency, creator character, and audience perception. Next, researchers drew conclusions based on patterns and interrelationships between themes, then cross-checked these conclusions against available empirical evidence. To increase data validity, the study used source triangulation by comparing the statements of Captain Victor and two supporting informants, as well as technical

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triangulation through cross-checking between interviews, observations, and documentation. This process is important so that interpretation does not rely solely on the statements of one informant or observations of one type of data. The use of interactive analysis and cross-checking is in line with the principles of qualitative analysis proposed by Miles et al. (2014), Sugiyono (2022), and Emzir (2020). The personal branding analysis framework was also consistently used to interpret findings regarding content characteristics and audience perceptions, as relevant to the studies of Ishihara and Oktavianti (2021) and Kusuma and Paramita (2024). Analysis can be conducted manually using a thematic coding matrix; the use of software such as NVivo or ATLAS.ti was not stated as there is no information confirming that these tools were used in the study.

Ethical Considerations of Research

The research was conducted in accordance with the ethical principles of qualitative research, particularly participant consent, transparency regarding the research objectives, respect for privacy, and responsible use of data. Prior to conducting interviews, informants needed to receive an explanation of the research objectives, the nature of their involvement, the use of recordings, and the use of information for academic purposes. Consent to record interviews must be clearly obtained, while the identity and personal information of supporting informants must be protected in accordance with the consent granted. Publicly available TikTok content can be observed as part of the research object, but the use of comments, screenshots, and potentially identifiable information still requires consideration of privacy and the context of its publication. The principles of respect for participants and researcher responsibility align with the discussion of ethics in qualitative research by Creswell and Poth (2018) and the principles of responsible research as explained by Sugiyono (2022). In this study, information regarding the ethics committee approval number or ethical clearance could not be ascertained from the available materials. Therefore, this information is not included as fact and needs to be adjusted to the actual research permit document.

Results and Discussion

Research Results

This study aims to analyze Captain Victor's personal branding through his reporting style in PUBG Mobile content on TikTok. Data were obtained through interviews with three informants: Captain Victor as the primary informant, and Dhiva and KA as supporting informants, who are viewers of Captain Victor's content and live streaming activities. Data collection was also conducted through non-participant observation, documentation, and literature review. The analysis shows that the formation of Captain Victor's personal branding can be identified through his verbal style and intonation, narrative delivery perspective, character differences in content and live streaming, consistency of reporting style, interaction with the audience, and audience perception of the distinctive identity displayed.

The first finding relates to the use of verbal style and intonation in content delivery. Interview results indicate that Captain Victor uses formal language, structured word choice, clear articulation, and a voice character reminiscent of a news anchor. The key informant explained that this style is related to his experience as a radio broadcaster for approximately ten years. This experience is then applied in PUBG Mobile content production through the use of relatively formal language and the avoidance of profanity. Captain Victor stated, "To differentiate myself from others, what I present on my livestreams I deliver to the camera using formal language, without being toxic, like a news anchor" (Captain Victor, June 16, 2026). The

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intonation used is not always the same, but is adjusted to the game situation. When the match is tense, the delivery tends to be slower and softer, while surprising situations are responded to by a spontaneous increase in volume.

The second finding shows that Captain Victor packages PUBG Mobile gameplay from a news coverage perspective. The game is not only presented as a playful activity, but also framed as an event being reported to the audience. Captain Victor explained, "The gameplay is made as if there is an event that must be covered in every match" (Captain Victor, June 16, 2026). This approach is evident through the use of formal narrative to describe match situations, including tactical moments, game mistakes, and incidents containing elements of humor. KA's informant stated that Captain Victor's style differs from other creators who tend to emphasize game mechanics with expressive delivery. The combination of an authoritative voice, formal language, and sometimes humorous game situations are characteristics that are recognizable to the audience. Thus, the findings suggest that the way gameplay is conveyed is an important part of the character of Captain Victor's content.

The third finding relates to the differences in character between the main content and live streaming activities. Interview data shows that Captain Victor uses a more formal communication style in his main content, while his everyday communication can be more relaxed. However, audience perceptions of this character are not entirely consistent. Dhiva believes that the serious demeanor in the content is part of the production requirements, especially since she noticed a difference when Captain Victor live streamed on other accounts. Conversely, KA believes that this serious character is likely part of his true nature. These differing views indicate that audiences do not always provide a uniform interpretation of the relationship between the persona portrayed in the content and the creator's personal character. Nevertheless, both informants still recognized Captain Victor's speaking style, voice, and delivery as inherent characteristics.

The fourth finding indicates efforts to maintain consistent reporting style through content production and live streaming activities. Captain Victor emphasized the importance of creators' continued activity by stating, "Consistency is very important. If you want to continue being an influencer or streamer, you have to keep doing it. Regardless of your mood" (Captain Victor, June 16, 2026). This consistency is also reflected in audience habits when accessing live broadcasts. Dhiva stated that he watches live streams almost every day because he knows the schedule, while KA mentioned that Captain Victor's live broadcasts appear relatively frequently when the creator is live. However, the audience's level of recall of Captain Victor shows differences. Dhiva immediately remembers Captain Victor when talking about PUBG Mobile, while KA remembers certain gameplay characteristics, particularly the habit of using defensive strategies or ngendok.

The fifth finding shows that Captain Victor's reporting style is the main distinguishing feature among other PUBG Mobile creators. This distinction is formed through a combination of formal language, a distinctive, authentic voice, intonation resembling a newscaster, structured narrative delivery, and a blend of serious and humorous characters in the game. Captain Victor stated that some other creators have tried reporting concepts in different games, but he chose to use his real voice, not an artificially generated voice. Both supporting informants also recognized this style of speaking and delivery as a distinctive characteristic. Furthermore, the research data shows that Captain Victor strives to maintain polite communication and avoid conflict. Based on the overall findings, the personal branding identity most easily recognized by audiences is the newscaster's style in PUBG Mobile content, while consistency of activity and communication character are supporting elements.

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Discussion

The research findings show that Captain Victor's personal branding is primarily formed through differentiation in communication style, particularly the use of formal language, distinctive voice character, intonation resembling a news anchor, and presentation of gameplay as an event being covered. This uniqueness is reinforced by previous communication experience, consistency in maintaining the content format, and audience recognition of the characteristics of his delivery. Based on Peter Montoya's eight laws of personal branding, The Law of Distinctiveness is the most prominent aspect, while Specialization, Personality, and Persistence play a supporting role. These findings show that creator identity is not only built through the content objects chosen, but also through the way these objects are consistently communicated to the audience (Montoya & Vandehey, 2002; Haroen, 2014).

The dominance of The Law of Distinctiveness can be understood through the combination of two elements that simultaneously shape Captain Victor's identity: broadcasting techniques and the context of gaming entertainment. Experience as a radio announcer provides verbal and vocal skills that are then applied to gaming content, while gameplay provides situations that can be packaged as news narratives. This combination produces a communication character that differs from the presentation style of creators who are more oriented towards demonstrating gaming skills or spontaneous expression. In this context, differentiation lies not only in the choice of formal language, but also in the consistent use of authentic voice, articulation, and perspective of the coverage. This finding is in line with the concept of personal branding that places uniqueness as an element that forms an easily recognizable identity, while expanding its application to gaming content through the integration of cross-disciplinary communication skills (Montoya & Vandehey, 2002; McQuail, 2010).

Furthermore, The Law of Specialization is evident through Captain Victor's focus on PUBG Mobile content delivered in a news-style. This specialization refers not solely to mastery of the game but also includes the ability to package match situations into informative and entertaining narratives. Meanwhile, The Law of Personality is reflected in the use of authentic voices, polite demeanor, and avoidance of offensive language. However, Dhiva and KA's differing views on whether the serious character is a genuine personality or a production necessity demonstrates that authenticity cannot be inferred solely from appearance in content. In the digital media environment, the identity displayed is the result of the interaction between individual character, communication choices, and audience perceptions. Therefore, these findings support the use of the concept of personal branding to analyze creator character, but also demonstrate the importance of distinguishing manufactured personas from personal traits that are not yet fully observable (Montoya & Vandehey, 2002; Winarso, 2021).

The Law of Persistence and the Law of Visibility also need to be understood through the distinction between production consistency and content exposure. Captain Victor expressed a commitment to continuously creating content and streaming, while the two supporting informants reported different experiences regarding the appearance of their videos on the For You Page (FYP). Dhiva's experience suggests that a live streaming schedule can be an alternative way to maintain relationships with creators, even if videos don't consistently appear on the FYP. Conversely, KA recalls specific gameplay characteristics more than the creator's identity when discussing PUBG Mobile. These findings demonstrate that consistent activity does not automatically result in uniform levels of audience visibility and recall. In the context of social media, the ability to produce content sustainably needs to be distinguished from the reach of content distribution and the strength of identity associations formed within each viewer (Montoya & Vandehey, 2002; Mardiana & Ratnawati, 2023).

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Regarding the Law of Leadership, the Law of Unity, and the Law of Goodwill, the research results show that the three cannot be concluded to have the same level of visibility as the differentiation of reporting styles. A structured delivery style demonstrates the ability to direct the narrative, but this evidence is not sufficient to state that Captain Victor has established widely recognized leadership within the PUBG Mobile community. Similarly, polite communication and avoidance of harsh words support a positive image, but do not in themselves prove a complete alignment between public persona and behavior across all life contexts. Differences in audience perceptions regarding Captain Victor's serious character also indicate limited information in assessing identity unity. Thus, the three laws are more appropriately treated as aspects that still require additional evidence, rather than as indicators that are completely fulfilled or completely absent (Montoya & Vandehey, 2002; Haroen, 2014).

Theoretically, this study provides a contextual contribution to the application of Peter Montoya's eight laws of personal branding in the gaming content industry on TikTok. The findings indicate that these eight laws do not always appear with the same level of visibility but can have different positions depending on the creator's characteristics and the content format being developed. In Captain Victor's case, communication differentiation is central to his identity, while specialization, perceived personality, and consistency support his recognition by the audience. Practically, this pattern can serve as a reference for gaming creators seeking to build a distinctive identity through developing communication skills, selecting narrative formats, using consistent voice characteristics, and tailoring content to audience needs. However, the implementation of these strategies still requires consideration of the appropriateness of the creator's character and cannot be assumed to have the same impact on every account (Montoya & Vandehey, 2002; Fajriyanti, 2021).

However, the research results need to be interpreted with due regard to the limitations of the design and data coverage. This research employed a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study method and involved one primary informant and two supporting informants. This number of informants allows for an in-depth exploration of communication characteristics, but does not adequately depict the diversity of audience perceptions. Furthermore, the findings regarding Captain Victor's identity are based on interviews, observations, and documentation within the research context, and therefore cannot be used to prove a causal relationship between coverage style, popularity, and audience engagement. Future research could expand the number of informants, compare multiple gaming creators, and combine content analysis with audience interaction data to examine how communication differentiation relates to personal brand recognition. Such developments could enrich the application of personal branding theory and test the transferability of the findings to different social media contexts and gaming communities (Montoya & Vandehey, 2002; Winarso, 2021).

Conclusion

This study concludes that Captain Victor's personal branding through PUBG Mobile content on TikTok is primarily shaped by a newscaster-like reporting style, characterized by the use of formal language, a distinctive voice character, adaptive intonation, and gameplay delivery through a structured narrative that combines information and humor. Based on Peter Montoya's eight laws of personal branding, The Law of Distinctiveness is the most dominant aspect, supported by specialization, audience-perceived personality, and consistency in maintaining content formats. These findings indicate that differentiation of communication styles is an important element in building a recognizable gaming creator identity, although production consistency does not always result in uniform audience perception and recall. This study has

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limitations because it only involved three informants and focused on one creator, so the results cannot be generalized to all gaming creators or used to prove a causal relationship between reporting style and popularity. Therefore, further research is recommended to involve more informants, compare several creators, and combine interviews with content analysis and audience engagement data. Practically, gaming creators can develop a distinctive communication identity through the selection of narrative formats, strengthening verbal skills, character consistency, and evaluating audience responses, while maintaining the suitability between the content concept and the creator's characteristics.

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