



KADİR HAS UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

NEW MEDIA DISCIPLINE AREA

**POPULAR CULTURE REPRESENTATION ON YOUTUBE:
AN ANALYSIS ON YOUTUBE REWINDS**

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SUPERVISOR: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Çiğdem BOZDAĞ

MASTER'S THESIS

ISTANBUL, AUGUST, 2017

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"I, Sida Dilara Denci, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis."



SIDA DILARA DENCI

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ABSTRACT

POPULAR CULTURE REPRESENTATION ON YOUTUBE: AN ANALYSIS ON YOUTUBE REWINDS

Sida Dilara Denci

Master of Arts in New Media

Over the last decade, Youtube has become a platform that we use every day, so it hosts our popular culture in a way. The platform has been using popular culture since 2010 with a year in review videos called “Rewinds”. Popular culture is represented in a good way on Rewinds, highlights the idea that popular culture brings everyone together. Even though, these Rewinds are produced corporately and prone to manipulation, YouTube is still “your” tube with the criticism received from users, self-rewind videos.

My thesis specifically focuses on "Popular Culture Representation on YouTube and the Evolution of the Representation" and to point out Youtube’s position when it comes to popular culture, my methodology includes applying a content analysis on all 7 YouTube Rewind videos which are 2010 YouTube Rewind: Year in review”, YouTube Rewind: Year in Review 2011”, “Rewind YouTube Style 2012”, “Youtube Rewind: What does 2013 Say?”, “Youtube Rewind: Turn Down for 2014”, “YouTube Rewind: Now Watch Me 2015” and "Rewind 2016: The Ultimate 2016 Challenge.”, respectively.

Keywords: YouTube, rewind, viral, user-generated content, popular culture

1. INTRODUCTION

Introduction

In 2010, Youtube uploaded a compilation of the 10 most watched videos called “Youtube Rewind: A Year in Review” to its “Youtube Spotlight” channel to mark the end of the year. After 2010, the Rewind video has become an annual event and Youtube kept uploading Rewind videos in every December. As stated in the name, Rewind videos mainly feature the most watched videos and content creators of that year. After 2011, Youtube turned the videos into professional productions where they collaborated with agencies. Thus, Youtube took advantage of the popular culture through using the elements in their own branding activations. Before Youtube, popular culture was being used for advertising campaigns and branding activations. For instance, Absolute’s promoting its bottle with a white skirt as Marilyn Monroe is an advertising campaign which everybody can relate to somehow. Because of this use of elements, some communication theorists have dismissed popular culture as commercialized mass produced culture for a mass audience (Adorno, Horkheimer 1941) whereas others suggest its associations with countercultural, alternative and subversive values (Brake 1980; Frith 1988; Hebdige 1979; Street 1986). This paper asks how popular culture is being represented on Youtube Rewind videos and how this representation change over time.

All 6 Rewind videos are analyzed in this study. First of all, the differences in the style of the videos have been valued. Over the time, YouTube changed the style of the videos for particular reasons such as marketing and branding, and turned them into real production pieces. Last but not least, not only the references to the popular culture elements but also the subject’s gaze and their positioning explicitly and implicitly. The videos are respectively titled as “2010 YouTube Rewind: Year in review”, “YouTube Rewind: Year in Review 2011”, “Rewind YouTube Style 2012”, “Youtube Rewind: What does 2013 Say?”, “Youtube

Rewind: Turn Down for 2014”, “YouTube Rewind: Now Watch Me 2015” and “Rewind 2016: The Ultimate 2016 Challenge.”

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Commercializing Culprit or Social Cement? What is Popular Culture?

Since its emergence around 19th century with the industrial revolution, popular culture has always been a controversial issue in media and communication studies. For centuries, scholars argue about what is popular culture, how popular culture functions, how popular culture affects society, and most importantly how industries use popular culture as an influence tool.

In order to understand what popular culture is, one must look at what “culture” means in the first place. British cultural story theorist, Raymond Williams considers the term “culture” as the “one of the two or three most complicated words in the English Language” (Williams, 1983). According to Williams, culture can be explained in three ways; as “a state of process of human perfection in terms of certain absolute or universal values, consequently as the ideal”, “as an intellectual and imaginative work where human thought and experience recorded” and as “a description of a particular way of life.” (Williams, 1983) Few people think of popular culture as the products of human perfection and that’s where the discussion of popular culture begins.

Looking at the literal meaning of the term “popular culture”, one can simply say that “popular culture is simply culture that is widely favored or well-liked by many people.” (Storey, 2009, pg.5) So according to Storey’s first definition of popular culture, the quantitative dimension must be included in the definition, however, simply looking at the quantitative dimension doesn’t provide a complete perspective of popular culture. Another way of explaining popular culture is to define it as the rest of the culture elements after we decide what high culture is. According to this definition, some cultural elements does not meet the requirements

to be high culture and are considered as inferior culture. As Storey states “In other words, to be real culture, it has to be difficult. Being difficult thus ensures its exclusive status as high culture. Its very difficult literally excludes, an exclusion that guarantees the exclusivity of its audience.” (Storey, 2009) This definition is also supported by Matthew Arnold. The term “high culture” (Arnold, 1869) coined in *Culture and Anarchy* by Matthew Arnold in 1869, although the term was only mentioned as culture by referring to the “high culture” elements while anarchy was used to refer “low” and “popular culture”. In the preface of *Culture and Anarchy*, it is stated that “Culture is the disinterested endeavor after man's perfection” and culture meant to “know the best that has been said and thought in the world”. From the point of view of Arnold, high culture is a force for moral and political good, popular culture or low culture is distorting the order of the society and breaks the society apart. What are cited as examples of products of low culture are reality television shows, escapist fiction, yellow journalism, soap operas, subculture music while artworks of widely-recognized painters, masterpieces of well-known musicians or composers such as Mozart, Beethoven is generally considered as high culture and valued more than low culture. In the eyes of this perspective which considers popular culture as the inferior culture revolves around the idea that popular culture products are mass-produced commercial culture, while high culture products are seen as art. Therefore, the crucial concern here is what popular culture offers. However, what is considered high culture now is used to be popular culture of their time. For instance, while the music of Mozart is considered to be high culture in the 21st century, around 1760s, the work of Mozart was highly popular. Therefore, the division between high and popular culture is not crystal clear. However, “It suddenly seemed that the cultural had been replaced by the economic, revealing a division between ‘the rich’ and ‘the thousands’”. (Storey, 2009) Therefore, popular culture received criticism by Frankfurt School, as well. In criticism of popular culture, Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer suggested that popular culture serves

to the industries and two scholars coined the term “culture industry” to signify the process of the industrialization of mass produced culture and the commercial imperatives which drove the system.(Adorno, Horkheimer, 1941) They consider the cultural industry as “The sociological theory that the loss of the support of objectively established religion, the dissolution of the last remnants of precapitalism, together with technological and social differentiation or specialization, have led to cultural chaos is disproved every day; for culture now impresses the same stamp on everything. (Adorno, Horkheimer, 1941) Horkheimer and Adorno suggest “Culture is a paradoxical commodity. So completely is it subject to the law of exchange that it is no longer exchanged; it is so blindly consumed in use that it can no longer be used. Therefore it amalgamates with advertising. The more meaningless the latter seems to be under a monopoly, the more omnipotent it becomes. The motives are markedly economic. One could certainly live without the culture industry, therefore it necessarily creates too much satiation and apathy. In itself, it has few resources itself to correct this. Advertising is its elixir of life. But as its product never fails to reduce to a mere promise the enjoyment which it promises as a commodity, it eventually coincides with publicity, which it needs because it cannot be enjoyed.” (Adorno, Horkheimer, 1941) In a nutshell, Adorno and Horkheimer claim that art became a tool for profit and it serves the people with capital. The people with capital own the culture with their monopoly over the mass production. As a result, all mass culture products become identical. In this point of view, movies and radio should not be considered as art. The capitalism gives the society a leisure time and tells how to spend it with the mass cultural products. The mass culture is considered as a tool of legitimization of certain ideologies within the society. Constantly, these media reproduce and legitimize the current ideologies which makes the society believe that they are content with the current system. Thus these media become nothing but the businesses serving the capitalism. TV, movie, music business called as "industries" do not interested in the social necessity of their final products,

but their revenues. However, the standardized products are not resisted by the society, because they are claimed to be derived from the needs of the society. The culture industry is also used as a tool to create false necessities for the society, thus the mass culture lead consumers to accept the current system without resistance by making them identify themselves with the products. Thus, the culture industry reproduce the current status quo within the society by accepting the inequalities. The culture industry does not lead the consumer to think, but serves a pre-digested view of the world. There is no room for imagination of the society in the culture industry.

Within the system maintained by culture industry, everyone is supposed to behave accordingly to their "level" and choose the category of mass product for their level. Even though the culture industry seems to provide a living area for the individual, but basically it is against the individuality. The individual can only be different as much as the system allows. The culture industry tries to act like a social cement that prevents society from falling apart and prevents the resistances. The individuals with different point of views are not killed, but they are excluded from society for not obeying the system. The culture industry products do not promote imagination and do not require an active way of thinking.

Mass cultural products such as soap operas and movies provide entertainment and an escape from work to the society in their leisure time. Only way to escape from work process is to focus on the leisure time. The theorists claim that the entertainment does not serve the publicity needs of the product concerned, but advertises the system as a whole. That is, the mass culture products creates an illusionary world in which everyone has the chance of raising their level and hard work would pay off eventually. Therefore, the industry covers the bad examples within the society, and lead the society to consider poor people as lazy. Instead of showing reality, they create a pseudo reality with endless promises.

The theory assumes a passive audience who takes whatever the system gives them. However, the consumption of the mass culture products is not passive, especially in a world where we talk about user participation. The audience gives feedbacks to the mass culture products and determine what's good and what's bad on their own and in addition create their own content. Therefore, popular culture and media in general can be used by audience to satisfy their needs as Elihu Katz suggested. (Katz, 1959) Denoted by Katz in 1959, uses and gratification theory added a different perspective to the media and communication studies. Most of the media theories revolve around the question 'What do media do to people?' However, Katz suggested asking the question, 'What do people do with the media?' This theory suggests that media users play an active role in choosing and using the media. And users take an active part in the communication process and are goal oriented. Katz suggests media is useful "To match one's wits against others, to get information and advice for daily living, to provide a framework for one's day, to prepare oneself culturally for the demands of upward mobility, or to be reassured about the dignity and usefulness of one's role. (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974, p. 20)

Despite emerging in 1959, the theory is valid more than ever with the switch to Web 2.0. The passive audience of the 20th century became the active audience of traditional media has become active by creating their own content, and giving visible feedback to the content creators with the help of Web 2.0. The theory basically advocated a more active role for the viewers. Now users are active regarding not only choices and reading texts but also they are active in the creation process of the cultural elements. However, the medium of the modern age still receives criticism by Marxian scholars. Christian Fuchs states that "Productive forces of capitalism organized around informational networks." (Fuchs, 2008) and Van Dijk also criticizes the web optimism and claim that Web 2.0 users are more passive users than active creators. (Van Dijk 2009).

2.2. Sharing is caring: user-generated content

On the contrary of Katz's theory of Uses and Gratification, early traditional communication theories such as "Hypodermic Needle/Magic Bullet Theory" suggest that the audience is passive along with the inability to add value to the information coming from the mass media. Computer-mediated communication has enabled more dynamic user environment on the web, the users are not passive as the early media effects theories suggested. (Postmes T, Lea M, Spears R, Reicher SD, 2000) With the emergence of Web 2.0 applications, the users began to share their ideas on forums contributing to the given information on the web leading to a more collaborative environment. Therefore, the meaning of user which used to refer to "consumer" only has been changed meanings and evolved into "prosumer" referring to the users contribute to the web content. Jose van Dijck referred these users as "active internet contributors, who put in a 'certain amount of creative effort' which is 'created outside of professional routines and platforms'". According to van Dijck, the term "prosumer" coined by various academics is perfectly representing "how users' agency hovers between the bipolar categories of producer versus consumer, and of professional versus consumer". (Van Dijck, 2009)

Generally, user-generated content (UGC) refers to everything that internet users add value, that is, the content created by a user, that is, it could be considered as amateur content. Blogs, Wikis, social media posts on Facebook, videos on YouTube, and images on Instagram, reviews on TripAdvisor and many more are the most popular collaborative content crafted by third-party users on the internet. Since user-generated content has become so crucial on the web that Time Magazine chose the 2006 person of the year "You" referring to the users contributing to the web content. "It's a story about community and collaboration on a scale never seen before. It's about the cosmic compendium of knowledge Wikipedia and the million-channel people's network YouTube and the online metropolis Myspace. It's about the

many wresting power from the few and helping one another for nothing and how that will not only change the world, but also change the way the world changes. (Time Magazine, 16 December 2006)”

In addition, Hartley stated that two thirds of the user-generated content makes up the content coded in Most Responded/Discussed category which is dramatically high than mainstream media production. The content of YouTube consists of anime music videos, instructional walk-throughs, short films, movies, fan videos, hyper creative mash-ups and the most responded/most discussed category, vlogs which forms 40% of the user generated content of YouTube. The reason why vlogs are popular among the users is that the communication style reminds the audience of face-to-face communication. However, not all vlogs necessarily produced in bedrooms or living rooms, some of them sponsored by corporates.

2.3 Video sharing hype: YouTube, brief history

YouTube has become a crucial platform for the internet over the years. According to recent data, After Google and Facebook, YouTube is the third most visited website in the world. (Alexa, 2016). Since its launch in 2005, there is no denial that YouTube has become the largest video sharing website on the internet, holding about 10% of all internet traffic (Cheng et al., 2007), and responsible for more than 72% of all online videos. (June, 2009). YouTube reached more than 100 million US viewers; at that time it was estimated that more than 20 hours of video are uploaded to YouTube every minute (Arrington, 2009)

Currently, YouTube is visited by over a billion users, nearly 33% of which is the users online in general. Watching hundreds of millions of hours of videos, the users generate a substantial amount of views. The range of reach can be measured by that even YouTube on mobile alone is being used by 18-34 and 18-49 year-olds than any cable network in the U.S. ("Statistics - YouTube", 2017). With the languages it offers, it addresses nearly 95% of the total internet

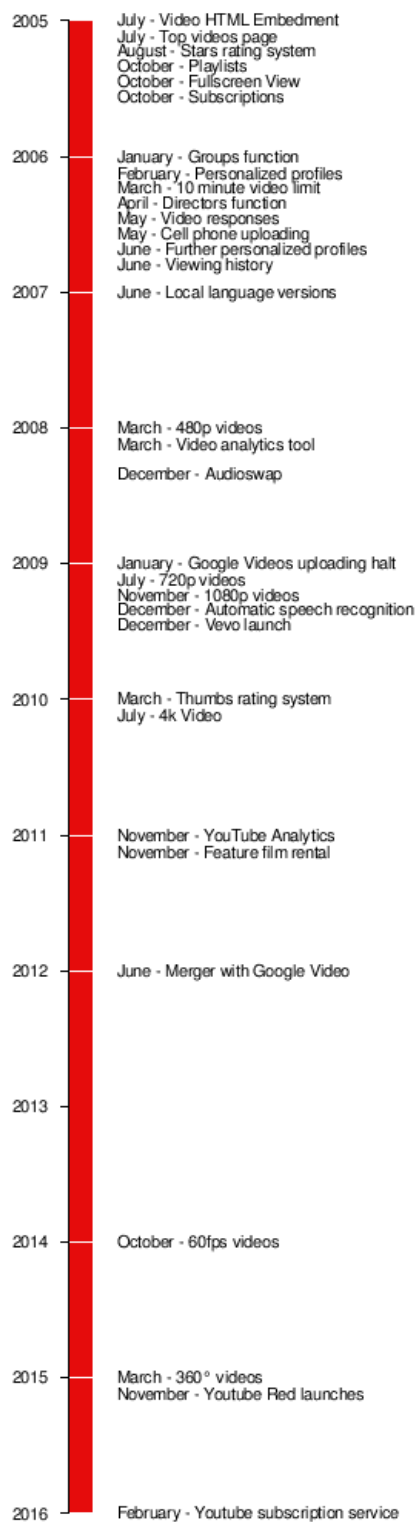


Figure 1

population which is a great example of going global.

Besides the global website, YouTube also launched local

versions to decentralize the experience in more than 88

countries. Another great example for YouTube's

globalization is the YouTube Space production facilities

in Los Angeles, New York, London, Tokyo, Sao Paulo

and Berlin where they help users to create high quality

content with the help of strategic plans, guidance and

workshops. When it comes to its incredible popularity, in

digital world, there is nothing more powerful thing than a

video in 21st century (YouTube Rewind,2012), and

YouTube is the perfect tool to reach millions of videos,

therefore internet users started to visit YouTube.com more

and more over the past years. The increasing use of

YouTube has also an effect on popular culture's

formation. According to the findings of Increased Use of

Video-sharing Sites conducted by Lee Rainine through

the survey of 2,054 American adults (age 18 and older)

conducted between October 24 and December 2, 2007

stated "48% of internet users said they had ever visited a

video-sharing site such as YouTube. A year ago, in

December 2006, 33% of internet users said they had ever

visited such sites. That represents growth of more than 45% year-to-year. 15% of respondents

said they had used a video-sharing site "yesterday" – the day before they were contacted for

our survey. A year ago, 8% had visited such a site “yesterday.” Thus, on an average day, the number of users of video sites nearly doubled from the end of 2006 to the end of 2007.”

According to the world wide known website, YouTube is the 3rd most visited website worldwide and it seems to be one of the websites that won't be coming down from the top of the list. (Statistics Brain, 2016) Given the recent statistics, 1,300,000,000 people in total are enjoying YouTube where 300 hours of video are being uploaded to every minute and almost 5 billion videos are being watched daily. In a day, YouTube enjoys 30 million visitors approximately. According to the statistics on the ethnicity, 80% of YouTube's views are from outside of the U.S which shows the global success of the platform. It has gained such importance that even 9% of the small businesses operating in the US use YouTube. (YouTube, 2017)

This multi-purposed medium can be used as a main entertainment medium with the cute cat videos, on the other hand, it can be a news medium with live streams and even be a wild card in the presidential elections. (YouTube, 2008) However, the convergence of Data- Content- Information Technologies (Jenkins, 2006) continues to evolve. One of the two popular point of views is that YouTube killed the TV stars, but the other argues the otherwise. Youtube can be seen as a platform where offline and online coexist. Setting up its way with the motto “Broadcast Yourself”, as most of the successful technologies of 21st century entered the world market, the adventure of YouTube has begun in a humble garage located in California, USA, in 14 February 2005. Taking advantage of Web 2.0 (DiNucci, 1999), 3 former PayPal employees, Chad Hurley, Steve Chen, and Jawed Karim worked on an online platform where people can communicate. The first video uploaded on YouTube was a video titled as “Me at the zoo” by one of the founders, Jawed Karim. Thus, promoting self-made videos opening up to the world, the platform had started initially as a user-generated content website where users are allowed to share their own. Gradually YouTube gained a considerable momentum among

internet users and drew Google.Inc's attention. In October 2006, Google purchased YouTube for US\$1.65 billion and that is how the company entered the capital world. The purchase created a massive echo leading the nomination of "You" as the person-of-the-year, highlighting the rising trend of video production by millions of web users. The rising of YouTube also proved that the Web is no longer 1.0 but switched to "Web 2.0" (O'Reilly 2005) where users can get more than what they are offered by contributing the content through blogging, uploading music, reviewing movies, interacting one another.

Offering contribution to its users, YouTube is intended for user-generated content with its user-friendly read-write interface. The user's journey on YouTube can be considered as a meaning-making process. By making content sharing easy and part of the communal discourse, platforms such as YouTube prioritize their members' sense of belonging and identification with the community and, in return, loyalty to the platform. (Chau, 2010) Let alone producing, sharing, copycatting, commenting, even watching a video on YouTube is considered as contribution to the community because the views provides a chance to be featured on the homepage which is one way of how a video becomes popular and reaches the point of becoming viral on YouTube. The journey usually starts with a user watching a video, and having enough motivation to comment or share and spread the word with one's network on social media. If the video is interesting enough, it creates a spark and spreads in incredibly high speed and eventually leads to a popularity fire. One of the first videos to create this kind of effect was aforementioned The Diet Coke and Mentos experiment video where 2 liters of coke and 4 Mentos mixed and created a huge geyser uploaded in June 14th 2006 by Fritz Grobe and Stephen Voltz of EepyBird attracted 14,000 views in a short time such as 16 hours. However, not necessarily all highly social videos become virals. According to Grobe and Voltz, they owe their success to finding an element that people of the community connect themselves with, and that makes the video extra-contagious, they claim in YouTube

Revolution: Generation YouTube Documentary. Therefore, it is safe to say that YouTube's collective culture is an example of structure of feeling, and it is the emotions of average audience that trigger viral sensations. However, Professor Jonah Berger suggests that there is a scientific and psychological logic behind viral. Basically digital word-of-mouth and social networks lay the groundwork of viral concept, because the society is usually aware of the fact that the corporate companies can be manipulative so they are waiting for a trusted source to say "This is good". Professor Berger also suggests that word of mouth is like a searchlight through social network to find the person that might be the most in the particular idea.

YouTube's most popular content to establish some baseline knowledge about the range of audience are making of the website. YouTube videos are not only in digital platforms but also in living rooms discussed by family members, offices showed off by colleagues, therefore we should take everyday life into account when considering the popular culture on YouTube. However the videos we talk about may not be purely created by users, what it meant by that is that there are two YouTubes. One of them is taken over by mainstream media, corporates created accounts and trying to keep up with the modern world through sharing their content online, the other dominated by the amateur users broadcasting themselves in their bedrooms, homes as in the motto "Broadcast Yourself". According to a survey, the most popular content on YouTube looks to be weighted, just slightly, in favor of user-generated videos stated by Burgess and Green. (Burgess and Green, 2009) Burgess and Green considers the relationship between the amateur and professional as problematic for considering YouTube as a platform for convergence. On the other hand, there are scholars who are not sure about the Youtube's integrity and see Youtube-like platforms as "capitalist social media". "George Orwell was describing an animal kingdom, in which some animals are "more equal than others" (Orwell 1945, 85). On capitalist social media such as Google, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, some users are more equal than others – which means that there is inequality." (Fuchs, 2017) In

addition, Jose van Dijck also argues that the “Most Viewed” or “Most Watched” categories on Youtube are “prone to manipulation” as it may be auctioned off to the highest bidder as we seen on the example of Google search. (Van Dijck, 2013) Therefore, they suggest that the popular culture of Youtube may not be authentic. However, it is still a platform where each user can upload their own content and with the concept of viral, there is still a chance that an ordinary user may appear on the most viewed or most watched category.

3. RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 Research Question

Since its foundation, Youtube is a critical media platform for popular culture because of the fact that it has become a platform where everyone can make their own contribution to the online content by simply watching a video and increasing the views of a video. After the Google purchase, Youtube has become a corporation. In 2010, the company started to publish the year in review videos called “Youtube Rewinds” where they promote the most watched videos of that year. However, the style of the videos and the elements promoted changed over time when Youtube turned videos into their own branding activations. So, the popular culture elements and the creators promoted are not purely organic. However, the users still can express themselves through “React to Youtube Rewind” videos where they can freely criticize the content promoted.

This research examines and try to answer the following question:

- How does youtube represent popular culture? How did it change over time?

3.2 Research Methods

3.2.1 Qualitative Research

A qualitative research method such as critical multimodal analysis would be the best way to look a bit deeper into the subject and find an answer the question.

To make sense of the discourses in the texts, the researcher should draw a contextual frame where there is historical and social context explained, according to Van Leeuwen. (Van Leeuwen, 1999) In the analysis, I tried to provide the background information of the popular culture elements promoted to give a comprehensive analysis on the semiotics on the videos. The reason why critical multi-modal analysis has been chosen for this research is that it focuses on not only visuals but also music. Critical multi-modal analysis has taken its roots from Critical Discourse Analysis and “Halliday’s functional grammar which start with the idea that linguistic and visual choices reveal broader discourses articulated in texts”. (Way, 2013, 4) Therefore, the modal focuses on the visuals on the video clips but also on the music which is usually ignored in the content analyses. Since the videos are closely related with popular culture, the discourses used in the video can be considered as the reflection of the social values and the ideas contributing (re)production of social life.

The aim of the analysis is to reveal how Youtube represents itself through popular culture on Rewind videos which are branding marketing activations for a corporate company implicitly and explicitly, and how these videos has been changed over time regarding production style, background music, popular culture elements promoted. In this research, the Rewind videos are analyzed as a multi-modal site of communication where visuals i.e. popular culture references and music are viewed as semiotic research material. This model also focuses on what was being excluded or added on the videos promoted as “popular culture”. For the visual analysis, this thesis adopts a social semiotic approach developed by Kress and van Leeuwen,

Machin. (Kress and van Leeuwen 2001; Machin 2010, 2007; van Leeuwen 1995, 1996, 2005). To unearth “the world being communicated” (Machin 2010, 92), the settings of the videos are also explained in the analysis. Machin’s three broad categories of participants is useful for the participants positioned in the video to see what kind of participants represented, how their actions and the agency represented. (Way, 2013) First, participants can be positioned differently in relation to viewers through gaze, angle of interaction and distance. Gaze can be distinguished by participants directly addressing viewers in a ‘demand’ image which creates symbolic interaction, suggests power and demands a response (Kress and van Leeuwen 2001, 1278). Alternatively, participants in ‘offer’ images do not gaze at viewers, omitting contact and the power to address, and are offered as information available for scrutiny (Kress and van Leeuwen 2001, 124). The ‘kinds’ of participants can be considered using three criteria. Firstly, participants represented individually draw viewers close, thereby humanizing them as opposed to group shots which may create homogenous ‘types’ or anonymous groups (Machin 2007, 11819). Secondly, participants can be categorized culturally and socially, these being either positive or negative depending on context. Thirdly, not representing certain participants visually has ideological repercussions. Finally, how participants’ actions and agency are represented is considered. Participants who are ‘activated’, that is, doing something, connotes power especially if there is ‘agency’ (actions which do something to someone/something). Opposed to being activated, participants can be ‘passivated’, that is having something done to them which connotes weakness. The music itself is also analyzed using a semiotic approach developed by van Leeuwen (1999) and Tagg (1982, 1983, 1984, 1990) and furthered by Machin (2010).

3.2.2 Data

This research mainly focuses on the popular culture references on Youtube Rewinds and how they changed over time. In addition, how Youtube represents itself as a platform to the users is also valued. The research clips and the comments of the viewers are chosen accordingly.

Youtube releases a year in review videos called “Youtube Rewinds” where events happened on that year in question are viewed in a video. The videos are rich in popular culture references and a lot of Youtubers, traditional celebrities and viral stars. The videos are uploaded each December of every year on Youtube Spotlight channel and also featured on the homepage of Youtube. Since 2010, Youtube has released 6 videos respectively “2010 YouTube Rewind: Year in review”, “YouTube Rewind: Year in Review 2011”, “Rewind YouTube Style 2012”, “Youtube Rewind: What does 2013 Say?”, “Youtube Rewind: Turn Down for 2014”, “YouTube Rewind: Now Watch Me 2015” and “Rewind 2016: The Ultimate 2016 Challenge”.

4. 2010 YouTube Rewind: Year in Review

On 12–13 December 2010, the first YouTube Rewind video was uploaded as “2010 YouTube Rewind: Year in Review” to YouTube Trends and YouTube Spotlight channel on the following day. The video featured the top 10 most watched/popular videos on YouTube for marking the end of the year. The video is produced as a compilation of the “Most Watched” 10 videos of 2010. As of August, the 2010 Youtube Rewind: Year in Review has been watched 3,795,603 times. (Youtube, 2017)

4.1 Textual analysis

In the 2010 Rewind. Year in Rewiev, communication with the viewer is mainly textual, there is no voiceover. The Rewind video starts as “The Top Ten Videos of 2010” along with the Youtube logo, and follows as:

“10 videos, over 250 Million views combined from your TV screen to the silver screen. They changed how we make music, from parodies of stars to making new stars. Videos that blew our minds and made dreams come true... You picked the videos. These are Top 10.”

In this text, Youtube states that the internet changed our ways to do things and sells the idea that everyone can be famous on the internet by giving reference to Justin Bieber, who has become a huge viral star back in 2009. Furthermore, by saying “You picked the videos”, Youtube makes the viewers feel valued and gives the idea of a democracy in the platform even though there hasn’t been a poll to select the videos, the videos are selected via their views.

4.3 Visuals



Figure 2

In the video, there are no participants but the short video clips of the most watched videos. In the beginning of the video, YouTube logo is represented in a TV set which gives the idea that the traditional media has now begun to converge with the digital medium. By showing its logo, Youtube nonverbally ensures that the video is produced by Youtube with the marketing purposes.

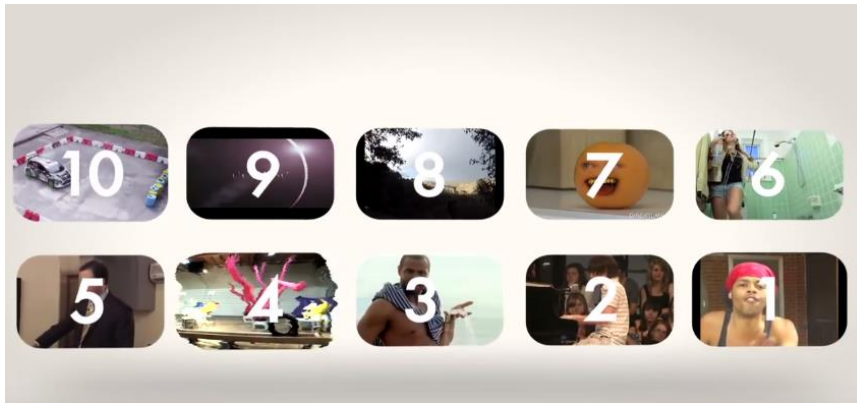


Figure 3

On TV set, after the logo is presented, a collage of popular videos of 2012 flashing fast follows. The selection of the videos was based on the views more than 250 million, however, as Van Dijck states the “Most Popular” category is prone to change. Again, we see a collage of videos again, finally stops in “Yosemitebear Mountain Double Rainbow 1-8-10” aka Giant Rainbow video by the user Yosemitebear62 and “The Man Your Man Could Smell Like” TV commercial by Old Spice. This coexisting of an amateur and a professional contributions to the culture implies that YouTube started as a platform for amateurs, however, it could be a place for a professional element as a TV commercial or a movie scene. In the video the narrator also states that the users can find everything from “their TV screen to their silver screen”. The video also implies that the user contribution and the silver screen changed the way people make music. The video also mention the copycats who make their contribution by shooting parody videos of the popular videos and help the popularity snowball growing more and more.



Figure 4

In the comments under the video, some viewers claim that following videos which are full productions are better than the Top 10 most watched videos compilation structure. On the other hands, a lot of viewers are very critical and concerned about the content promoted in the following years. They claim that the content was more “creative and original.”



Figure 6

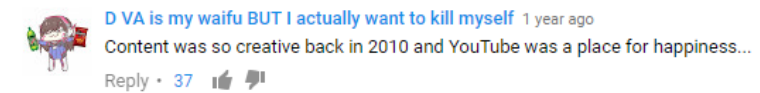


Figure 5

4.3 Music



Figure 7

Although no mash-up background music from the popular songs of 2010 was featured unlike the other Rewind videos, the video mentions the contributions and how these contributions influenced the music industry by saying “they (the contributors) changed how we make music.” referring to the most watched video of 2010, Bed Intruder Song uploaded by the user schmoyoho and implying the user contribution among the most popular videos.

5. YouTube Rewind 2011: A Year in Review

The second Rewind video was uploaded on 20 December 2011 as "YouTube Rewind 2011" under the collaborative production of YouTube and Portal A Interactive.

5.1 Textual Analysis

In Rewind 2011, the communication with the viewers is mostly verbal and the textual communication is lower comparing to the Rewind 2010.

5.2 Visuals



Figure 8

What was different from a previous year was that the top 10 Most watched videos on YouTube was presented by a hostess for the first time. Becoming a huge viral at the end of 2010, Rebecca Black was decided to host the video. In this video, Rebecca Black is used as a participant because her viral success. In 2011, as the hostess of the YouTube Rewind 2011, YouTube featured Black who became an online celebrity with her song named "Friday". "Friday" was considered ridiculous and absurd by many users and got the 2,783,760 dislikes

and she is among Top 10 most disliked videos. Even though, she was widely hated, Youtube decided to feature her as the hostess for commercial reasons.

The style of the video remained same featuring the top 10 most popular videos on YouTube in 2011. The Rewind Video was still a compilation of videos but what was different is that for the first time, YouTube put an online celebrity forward and highlighted the importance of the user interaction on the platform even though it was purely due to the dislikes. Black was on the Top 10 list of that year with the music video of hers “Friday” due to its virality and everybody online was talking about it in a good or a bad way, but they were simply talking about it.

The video starts with a warm hello from the host Rebecca Black standing in front of the YouTube corporate logo created with many screens which implies the millions of screens of the users contributing with their views, comments, or videos and help YouTube keep rising. Most of the time, Rebecca Black is shot in a close-up: face, head or detail shots. These personal perspectives, which highlight her corporate credentials through her smart casual dressing style give viewers a point of identification and connote intimacy with her. (Machin and van Leeuwen 2005, 132). Through gazing at the camera all the time, her position across the camera suggests power and demand an approval from the viewers. (Kress and van Leeuwen 2001, 127_8; Machin 2007, 111). She demands approval by using the “we” language including the viewers in the video.

She refers to the publishing of the YouTube rewind video as “a very special event where we take a look back at the most watched videos of 2011.” Youtube implies we are one through popular culture, and we can relate to the same things, also gives the idea that the video reflects the collective memory on what we laughed, cried and what we find cute as the compilation of related popular videos flashes in the background.

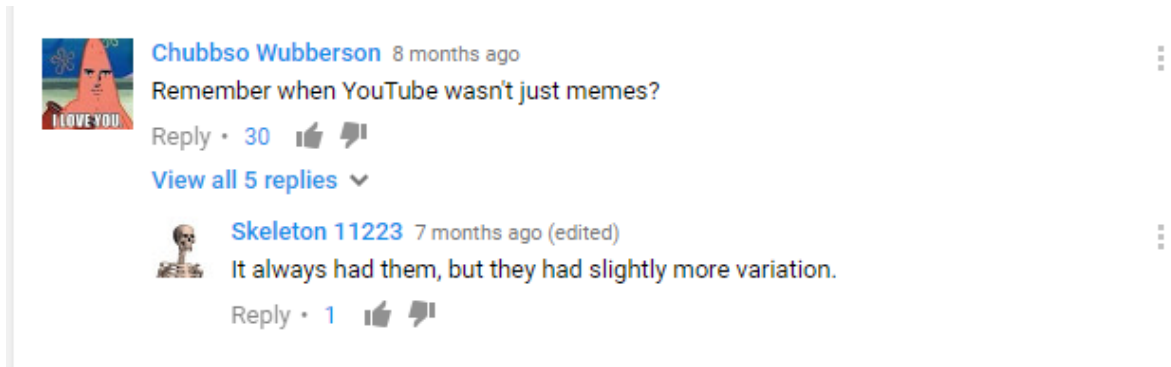


Figure 9

Under the video, Youtube received criticism from the users through comments about the featured videos in the following years, this comment implies that Youtube features memes nowadays not the original content.

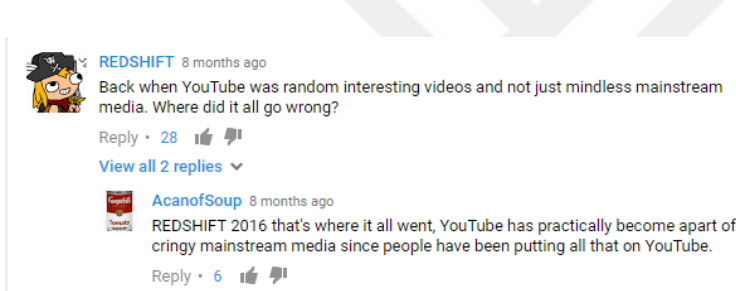


Figure 11



Figure 10

In addition, users also think that Youtube has become “a part of the mainstream media” and that is why the content shown on Youtube has also changed and has become more and more similar to mainstream media. However, what separates Youtube from a traditional medium such as TV is that user feedback is visible as seen above, users are active on the contrary of the theory “Culture industry” by Adorno and Horkheimer. Youtube is still a platform where users can raise their voice and be critical about the content, therefore the platform is not purely commercialized.



Figure 12

The video also criticized for not being professional and the following videos were praised because Youtube turned the Rewind videos into full-productions and “step up their game”.

5.3 Music

Before revealing the top 10 most watched videos on YouTube, the video features a compilation of videos featuring the song “Levels” by Avicii which was honored with a Grammys Award in the category “Song of the Year” that year. By using one of the popular songs in that year, Youtube tries to relate to the viewer’s taste and create a familiarity when watching the video.

6. Rewind YouTube Style 2012

In 2012, YouTube turned Rewind videos into full-scale productions, and featuring the content creators for the first time.

When the calendar marks the end of the 2012, it can be claimed that there’s been a drastic change on the style of the YouTube Rewind videos. Comparing to 2010 and 2011 Year in Review videos the hallmark of this Rewind video is that the video is not fictionalized as a top 10 list, but an “entertaining” sketch. However, this was not the only crucial change in the style of the videos. In 2012, seeing the success of putting YouTubers forward, for the first time in the history of YouTube, the platform promoted several content creators YouTubers(make-up channels, lifestyle vlogging, gamers, entertaining, musicians) the most popular music, videos, mashup, and videos, breaking news, and internet memes from the year. So, the YouTube

Rewinds has passed the point of being only a digital production and evolved into a video where we can see the tiny reflection of what the society's been through, and not only in the digital platforms along with what's popular on Youtube. The video claims that it's time for the amateur contributors to take back YouTube. Furthermore, it suggests the idea that Rewind 2012 has major significance for amateur content creators of YouTube to rise and shine again.

Attributing "Gangnam Style" by PSY in the title of the video, "2012 Rewind YouTube Style 2012" was uploaded to YouTube on 18 December 2012 as the collaborative production of YouTube and Seedwill.

6.1 Textual Analysis

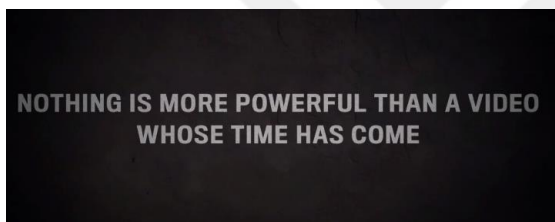


Figure 13



Figure 14

In the beginning of the video, a caption similar to famous interpreted quotation "Nothing is more powerful than an idea whose time has come." by Victor Hugo but a bit altered to mark the significance of a video in 2012 appears. The caption goes by "Nothing is more powerful than a video whose time has come/whose time is 2012", implying the change on the internet environment, that is, the clear switch from Web 1.0 to Web 2.0 which enables user contribution and consequently leads to a more organic popular culture than the traditional media where the audience contribution is limited. By changing the word "idea" into "video", the producers highlight the fact that each video is an idea and an expression of thought in digital world, thus by enabling the contribution, a freedom is given to the users to some

extent. Therefore, the implication is that the power has been taken over by the user contribution.

6.3 Visuals



Figure 16



Figure 15

After the caption, the members of Walk off the Earth appears with a guitar. The reason why they appear on the Rewind is due to their viral success. Setting their way as copycats of popular culture, the amateur music band gained popularity overnight and created a huge viral both in USA and across the ocean with their cover music video “Somebody That I Used to Know - Walk off the Earth” also known as “5 Peeps 1 Guitar”. The band covered the popular song “Somebody That I Used to Know” by Gotye ft. Kimbra which was already a hot topic back in 2012.

In a short period such as 4 months, the band’s performance video where all five members playing the song with only one guitar has been watched over 175 million times online in 2012 and has drawn the attention of Gotye and Kimbra who originally perform the song Somebody That I Used to Know. Following their online success and celebrity endorsements, Columbia Records signed the independent band in February 2012. Thus, the band has left their amateur user status and has taken a step through to become professional users on YouTube and step into the industry. Walk off the earth is an example how YouTube can promote users and allow

them to be noticed by corporates and be professionals. As the band starts perform their song, their clothes change into PSY's suit as they continue their viral performance. While they're performing, PSY appears and breaks their guitar and starts singing his viral song "Gangnam Style". Park Jae-Sang aka PSY is a South Korean singer spread to the world with his hit song called Gangnam Style from his 6th album Psy 6 (Six Rules), Part 1. Although he was already popular in his home country and known for his entertaining, humorous performances, and he stated that Gangnam Style was intended for South Korea only to give a little joy to the country for its hard times, and the global success was surprised him in YouTube Revolution: Generation YouTube Documentary produced by National Geographic. On 15 July 2012, Gangnam Style was uploaded to YouTube. By 21 December 2012, the music video surpassed one billion views on YouTube leading to an international viral due to his exceptional dance and catchy lyrics despite the language barrier. By exceeding one billion views, Gangnam Style has its name written in golden letters in YouTube's history. Therefore, PSY has started to be considered as "the King of YouTube." On December 31, 2012, Psy performed in a globally televised New Year's Eve celebration with American rapper MC Hammer on-stage in front of a live audience of over a million people in Times Square, New York City. (Bora, 2013)

In addition to his international fame, the music video has been watched so many times that it forced YouTube to upgrade its previously 32-bit integer to 64-bit. From their Google+ account, YouTube authorities posted "We never thought a video would be watched in numbers greater than a 32-bit integer (=2,147,483,647 views), but that was before we met PSY. "Gangnam Style" has been viewed so many times we had to upgrade to a 64-bit integer (9,223,372,036,854,775,808)!" (YouTube, 2014) Thus, the industry has changed how Youtube.



Figure 18



Figure 17

YouTube's feature of PSY in the Rewind reflects how global popular culture exist in the digital platforms regardless of language, time and location. After PSY's appearance, in the setting of his "Gangnam Style" we see the one of the most watched users, Alphacat dancing to the song as the former president of United States of America Barack Obama, referring to his first presidential campaign success in 2012 through his videos posted on YouTube. His use of new media tools, similar to Mr.Kennedy's use of TV as the rising medium of that time, has changed the process and audience of politics forever.

"In 2012, the Obama campaign turned towards YouTube to engage voters, leveraging their YouTube channel, regular video uploads, TrueView ads, and YouTube homepage mastheads. The campaign was able to grow their YouTube community, drive voter engagement, and ultimately help President Obama win the election." (Think with Google, 2013)

By using YouTube for his political campaign, Obama was a milestone in YouTube, yet internet history. For the first time, YouTube has served to politics rather than entertainment.

With the help of technology, YouTube in particular, and the right audience, Obama's videos has reached 200 million views on YouTube. YouTube's news and politics manager, Ramya Raghavan stated "Campaigns are starting to take more ownership of their presence on

YouTube.” Referencing the success of Obama on the video, Alphacat aka Iman Crosson started to produce parody videos of Barack Obama U.S presidential candidate then. In a short period, like many of the viral copycats, his videos became viral in US and invited to Fox News. In addition, he stated that he "went from unemployed to self-employed in literally a matter of a month." Not only becoming famous himself and cross over to the professional side, by opening an agent focusing on young talents cross over from online to mainstream, he indirectly contributes commercialization of YouTube.



Figure 19

On 00:36, an elevator appears featuring KassemG dressed as Ryan Lochte, and DailyGrace with a bow and arrow as Katniss Everdeen from Hunger Games. KassemG, also known as, Kassem Gharaibeh started making YouTube videos when he realizes the power of viral by witnessing his friend Cory William’s success from first hand. Before being famous, Gharaibeh was working in a technology market and performing his stand-up show on the weekends in local venues. Keeping taking bold steps to his fame, his funny videos “California On” and “Going Deep” where we had interviews with a couple of porn stars became virals and helped him to be featured in Rewind due to their originality. American competitive swimmer, Gharaibeh attributed to Lochte’s success at the Summer Olympics in London in

2008 by portraying Ryan Lochte. Lochte won a gold medal in 400-meter individual with a degree of 4:05.18 in Summer Olympics 2012. Featuring Ryan Lochte's success with a viral star of the digital world in Rewind 2012 indicates that YouTube attempted to be a platform where amateur and professionals coexist without one eradicating another. Similarly in the same frame (00:36), we see another of the professional industry represented by an online celebrity who is DailyGrace aka Grace Helbig portraying Katniss Everdeen from a famous trilogy Hunger Games. Written by Suzanne Collins in 2008, Hunger Games trilogy has been adapted to the silver screen in 2012. The first movie titled "The Hunger Games" was a box office success in addition to the book series' selling more than 26 million copies in print and taking its place in the US bestseller list. Featuring a Hollywood movie in the Rewind videos, Youtube seems to give value to the "commercial products" along with the amateur content.

The YouTube celebrity portraying the heroine of Hunger Games, Grace Helbig is one of those users who accelerated her the steps through the fame with the help of her YouTube channel and her loyal subscribers. Before YouTube, Helbig was offered to host her own video blog on My Damn Channel website owned by Rob Barnett who found her vlogs through her profile. The vlog gradually evolved into DailyGrace, and on 11 October 2010, the show got its own YouTube channel where every day she posts new content. As one of the most watched YouTubers in 2012, DailyGrace got the chance to be featured in Rewind 2012.



Figure 21

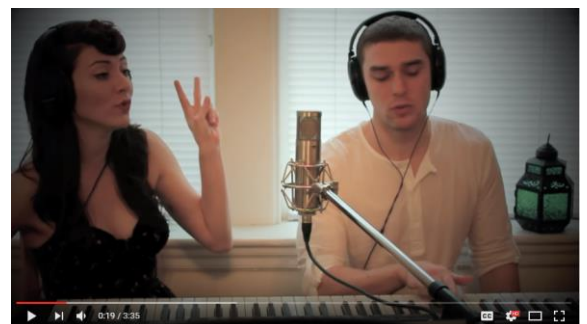


Figure 20

PSY, Walk off the Earth and Justin Bieber are not the only ones who owe their fame to YouTube. Karmin, the music duo consisting of Amy Renee Noonan and Nick Noonan. Karmin is known for their covers of popular songs such as “Look at Me Now” by Chris Brown ft. Lil Wayne, Busta Rhymes which attracted more than 250 million views on YouTube and promote by Ryan Seacrest’s blog. Copycatting the popular culture and showing their talent through their channel, their voices heard by Epic Records, and the viral duo was signed in 2011 followed by their first album which marks their crossing over to the professional industry. The duo portraying Karmin is The Key of Awesome, (formerly known as Barely Political or Barely Productions) started off as a comedy video channel on YouTube in June 2007. The founders Ben Relles and Mark Douglas created the channel “The Key of Awesome” which produces parody videos being watched over 2.6 billion times.



Figure 23



Figure 22

In the following scenes, Annoying Orange in a space suit wearing PSY’s sunglasses and singing PSY’s Gangnam Style appears, and it is featuring a milestone for human kind, Felix Baumgartner’s jumping from stratosphere to earth. Having more than 5 million subscribers on YouTube, Annoying orange is a web comedy series produced by Dane Boedigheimer in 2009. The subject on the show is a talking orange who mess with other fruits on the show by asking his catchphrase “wazzzuup”. The first video reached out 1 million viewers in a short time such as only two weeks, and that motivated Boedigheimer to keep sharing his videos he made

in his humble garage. His videos kept reaching millions in matter of days and the channel went viral. After going viral after its first video on YouTube, annoying orange became a TV series, followed by a video game, and it stepped into the commercialized world with its toys, accessories. The highlight of the year that Annoying Orange drawn attention is Felix Baumgartner's being the first man ever breaking the speed of sound in freefall. Under the sponsorship of Redbull, on October 14th 2012, Baumgartner jumped to the earth from stratosphere. Not only crucially to NASA's data, the event also helped YouTube to break live view record with 8 million views. When Neil Armstrong stepped on the moon, it was streamed live on TV in 1963. When

Baumgartner jumped from the space in 2012, the YouTube contributed to his fame and the community by streaming the event live, and he helped YouTube to set a milestone in the digital world.

A compilation of some of the popular culture memes in 2012 such as Felix Baumgartner's jump, Ken Block's Gymkhana Five: Ultimate Urban Playground by DC SHOES, dancing Lindsey Stirling with her violin, YouTube's #1 Korean dance team Waveya, Overly Attached Girlfriend Laina, a piece from PSY's music video, Walk Off the Earth's viral video, Kony 2012 short documentary film produced Invisible Children, Minecraft game, the youngest rapper MattyB appears before FreddieW appears in a scene from the popular game called Minecraft developed by Mojang AB company.



Figure 24

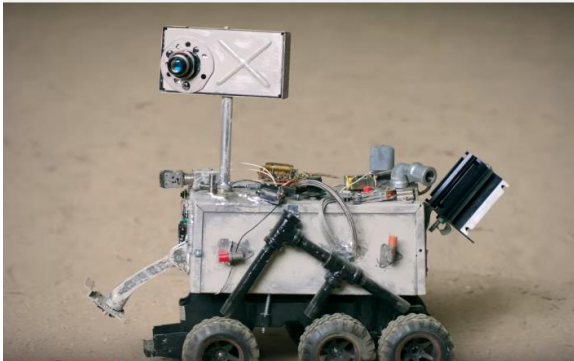


Figure 25

When the crowd is dancing to the song, Curiosity which is the rover that NASA sent to Mars to collect data and landed on Mars on 6 August 2012.

In the video, the duo playing the NASA team is Smosh consisting of Ian Andrew Hecox and Daniel Anthony Padilla. The duo shortly has become one of the most popular channels on YouTube after they created their channel. They didn't know what was going to come when they posted their "Pokémon Theme Music Video" in 2005, and attracted more than 20 million views, becoming the most-viewed video at that time on YouTube.



Figure 27



Figure 26

Carly Jae Repsen reached out to millions and gained international fame when a fellow singer who is also an internet celebrity, Justin Bieber not only tweeted about her song “Call me maybe” but also shoot a viral video where himself, Ashley Tisdale, and Selena Gomez dancing to the song. When the song itself became viral, Bieber’s manager signed Jepsen to his record label Schoolboy Records. Started off as a viral, Jepsen is one of those who crossed to the mainstream media’s side and started releasing albums and going on world tours.



Figure 29



Figure 28

What is really important here, Jepsen is featured with Justin Bieber in the Rewind video, as well, marking their close cause& effect relationship. Indeed, the original video where Bieber and his friends lip-sync and dance and made Jepsen famous also featured in the Rewind video.

Justin Bieber can be one of the most clear examples how Internet can change one's life on a major level. Bieber's cover videos on the internet were discovered by accident when a music producer accidentally clicked one of his videos in 2007. According to Jan Hoffman from New York Times, the Beliebers, the fan base of Justin Bieber, has taken its roots from Bieber's subscribers on YouTube. To feel more connected with the fans more, his manager Scooter Braun decided to keep his videos non-professional, and thus create intimacy with the subscribers so that they feel like he is theirs. Therefore, he continued to build his fame on YouTube before opening up to the mainstream media world.



Figure 31



Figure 30

Towards the end of the video, the whole cast is seen together dancing, that is, all the references from professional industry and amateur content are shown together before a compilation of all the most watched videos of 2012 flashes and end the video. At the end of the video, a sketch is shown where all the popular culture references are together and they are shown to be having fun all together.

Generally, through Rewind 2012 video which has become a branding study when the company turned into full-productions, Youtube fictionalizes itself as a platform where online

and offline coexist. By promoting many amateur content creators who have become professionals, it suggests the idea that everyone can be noticed and be famous on Youtube.

In the video, participants always make eye contact with the viewer, demanding an approval of the idea that Youtube is fun and everyone can join the community. (Van Leeuwen 2001, 127_8; Machin 2007, 111).



Figure 32

Last but not least, the of the most important change of the style in Rewinds is that for the first time the users contributed to the video featured at the end of the video with “Behind the Scenes” video showing the production process of the Rewind YouTube Style 2012.

Rewind 2012 was criticized in the comments for not being simple as 2010, and 2011 Rewind by viewers. However, some users comparing 2012 to the following videos are mostly concerned about the originality of the content creation process after they started to produce the videos a bit more professional.

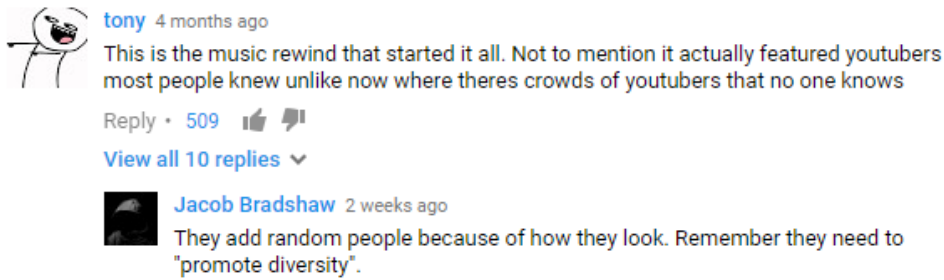


Figure 33



Figure 34

Figure 35

6.4 Music

Here music plays a leading role, and as important as the references featured in the video.

Furthermore, it reinforces the idea articulated in the video.

The music in the video is a mash-up song which means a musical track comprising the vocals of one recording placed over the melody of another. The mash-up is composed of the acoustic version of “Gangnam Style” by Walk off the Earth, “Gangnam Style” by PSY, and “Call Me Maybe” by Carly Jae Repsen.

7. Youtube Rewind 2013: What does 2013 Say?

2013 is the year when Youtube produced a video with the record number of participants and record number of songs comparing to the prior videos. Rewind 2013 is one of the richest in popular culture references among 6 videos.

7.1 Textual Analysis

In Rewind 2013, the communication with the viewers is mostly verbal, and the textual communication is lower except the Blurred Lines scene where #REWIND2013 hashtag reads, and ending credits comparing to the Rewind 2010, and 2012. The hashtag encourages viewers to use it and contribute to the content by commenting or creating their own.

7.2 Visuals

On the video, there is a highly use of the Rewind video, once in a 5 scene Rewind logo is shown implicitly and explicitly. Showing its logo over and over again, Youtube reinforces its company image and in fact Rewind videos are branding videos produced with the purpose of marketing through the elements of popular culture.



Figure 37



Figure 36

The video starts with Kid President lighting up the Rewind logo who is a viral star with his video titled “Meet Kid President” which introduced a character who has catchphrases such as “If it doesn’t make the world a better place, don’t do it” and “I’m not in a party. I am a party.” on October 4th, 2012 and continues with Ryan Higa holding the logo who is also a huge viral star with his parody videos such as “How to be Gangster” ,and “How to be a ninja” gained over 40.2 million views and 99,000 comments. Both Higa and Kid President are gazing at the camera, demanding an agreement on Youtube is fun. In other scenes, they are gazing off camera, which means they are in offer images. (Kress and van Leeuwen 2001, 124). In these offer images, they are both paying attention to the logo.

In the following scenes, a group of vloggers are dancing with horse head masks on, Back in 2012, horse head mask has become a hype and millions of users uploaded their content on Youtube and rapidly its popularity grew.



Figure 38

In the next scene, “Blurred Lines” music video by Robin Thicke ft. T.I., Pharrell” was given reference to. The song was the second most listened on the music charts. (Billboard, 2017) The group of participants looking at the camera are activated and one of the girls looking at the camera seductively recreating the music video and drawing attention of the viewer.



Figure 40



Figure 39

The following scene, the famous vlogger Jenna Marbles appears with a sledgehammer on her hand looking powerful. By licking the sledgehammer, she gives reference to Miley Cyrus who did the same in her music video “Wrecking Ball”.



Figure 42



Figure 41

After she wrecks the wall with the wrecking ball giving reference to the above mentioned music video, she is gazing off the camera with holding a Rewind logo. Another Miley Cyrus reference is given by Hannah Hart, Rhett and Link with their costumes giving reference music video “We Can’t Stop” by Miley Cyrus. Both songs were in the top 20 in the music charts. (Billboard, 2017)



Figure 43

In the following scenes, Jimmy Fallon with his band The Roots are playing “Get Lucky” by Pharrell Williams ft. Daft Punk with classroom instruments while Youtubers watching them.

In this scene, Youtubers are passive gazing off camera and Fallon and the band are activated as they make eye contact with the viewers and express power over Youtubers.

As the video continues, some video clips are shown inside TV screens. Girls Generation and vlog channels such as Fine Brothers, Annoying Orange are featured inside TV screens. Some of them are activated as they are gazing to camera and connect with the viewers.



Figure 45

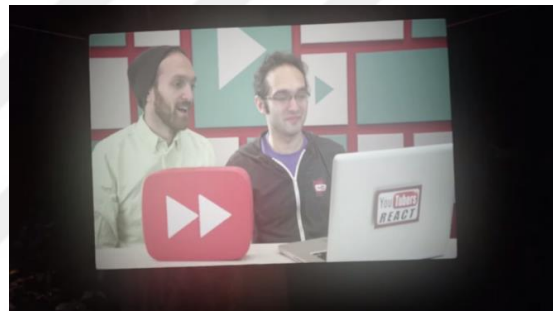


Figure 44

Furthermore, TV screens may refer to the traditional media now being converging with Youtube-like media.



Figure 46



Figure 47



Figure 48

Through familiar TV show characters such as Cookie Monster from Sesame Street, Youtube tries to make a connection with the viewers through collective memory and provide familiarity. Cookie Monster activated with a gaze and demanding approval from the viewers by saying” Rewind! Me love Rewind”.



Figure 49

On the next scene, we see the Rewind logo on a flag. Youtube tries to represent Rewinds as independent videos from the company, however, the corporate logo contradicts with the image tried to be given.



Figure 51

Similar to the Sesame Street reference, Youtube features popular TV show “Breaking Bad” and gives the feeling of familiar to the viewers. The duo from Smosh who are portraying the main characters from the show directly look at the viewers and demand a reaction from the viewers.



Figure 50



Figure 52

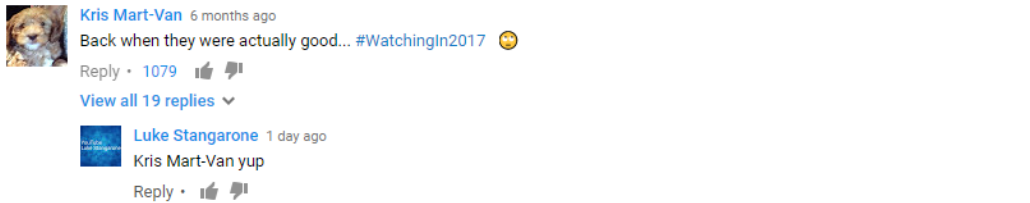


Figure 53

Youtube Rewind 2013 also received criticisms from viewers in the comments section, they generally think that Rewind videos evolved into bad productions. Furthermore, imply that they can't connect with the popular culture elements featured because they are not relevant.



Figure 54

However, some of the users still think the production is good and worth to watch again and again as years passed.

7.3 Music

Here music plays a leading role, and as important as the references featured in the video. Furthermore, it reinforces the idea articulated in the video. The mash-up mix remixed by DJ Earworm with the songs The Fox (What Does the Fox Say?) by Ylvis, Blurred Lines by Robin Thicke,

Can't Hold Us by Macklemore & Ryan Lewis, Get Lucky by Daft Punk, Gentleman by PSY(deleted from the mix later because of the copyright infringement), Harlem Shake by Baauer. By mashing-up popular songs, Youtube ensures the rewatchability of the video because of the mix.

8. Youtube Rewind 2014: Turn Down for 2014

8.1 Textual Analysis



Figure 55



Figure 56



Figure 57



Figure 58

In Rewind 2014, textual communication is stronger than prior videos. Along with the logos, the word “Rewind” is shown from time to time. Notwithstanding, texts also used for the indication of location such as Japanese script used in scenes.

At the beginning, the tape put into the Walkman reads as “Rewind 2014, Awesome Mix”.

Youtube tries to convince the viewers that the music used in the video is really good from the beginning.

One of the scenes where a vlogger reading a newspaper, newspaper reads as “Apparently, 2014 was awesome!” referring to the text in the beginning and reinforces the idea given at the start.

8.2 Visuals



Figure 59

The video starts with PewDiePie's dance and jumping towards the floor after putting on the Rewind Mix. PewDiePie directly communicates with the viewers by gazing into the camera, and demanding reaction. (Kress and van Leeuwen 2001, 124).



Figure 60



Figure 61

In the following scenes, the participants rarely gaze at the camera but mostly gaze off, offering references and the logo similar to the other Rewind videos. Again, with the logo, Youtube reinforces its image as a corporate company, even though it is held by an amateur content creator.



Figure 62



Figure 63



Figure 64

Rewind 2014 is rich in popular Talk show hosts, traditional celebrities such as Jimmy Kimmel, John Oliver and Conan O’Brian.



Figure 65



Figure 66



Figure 67

Due to the mobile phones with the front camera, the concept of selfie i.e. taking self-photos emerged. Back in 2014, Chainsmokers released a song called “Selfie” and the song has become #1 in Dance Charts. (Billboard, 2017)



Figure 68



Figure 69

By including participants from different ethnicities and locations, Youtube tries to give an image of a global platform with content creators from different parts of the world. In addition, by giving that image, Youtube also claims that it is a platform where literally everyone can express themselves. With the time and space independency Web 2.0 brought to us, Youtube users can reach and contribute with their content from every country in the world.

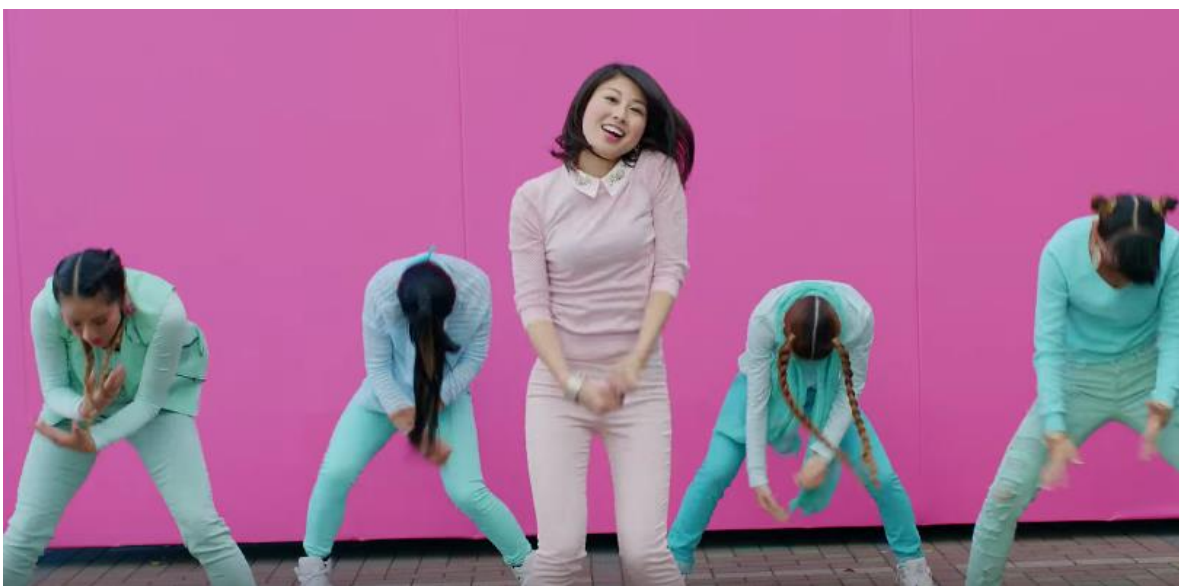


Figure 70

Aside from music and internet celebrities, Youtube also chose the colors according to the spirit on 2014. The background color in the visual is Radiant Orchid which was selected as the color of the year by Pantone in 2014. By using Radiant Orchid in the background, Youtube tries to connect with every viewer from every level.



Figure 71



Figure 72

Ice Bucket Challenge is a game in which the dared person must pour a bucket of ice water over the head and challenge 3 people to do the same in the 24 hours. If a person can't do the challenge, he or she should donate money to an Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis aka ALS charity organization for research and treatment. By featuring Ice Bucket challenge, Youtube also

highlights the charity organization events and supports the concerns of the society along being a fun platform because each participant have a Rewind logo item in their hands.



Figure 73



Figure 74

Centering the vloggers in the frame along with the dancers, it is implied that the vloggers are now celebrities just like singers with dancers. In both scenes, the participants are activated and gazing to the camera and expressing power.



Figure 75

For the first time, Youtube paid a tribute for a late musician in Rewind production. In 2014, last Michael Jackson album was released and Youtube commemorate Jackson in the video through his unique dance moves. The dancers are gazing off the camera, they are offering the Jackson image for the viewers.



Figure 76



Figure 77

In the following scene, the music channel owners are passivated by gazing off the camera, however they seem to be having fun so they offer fun to the viewers when they are not looking into the camera.



Figure 78

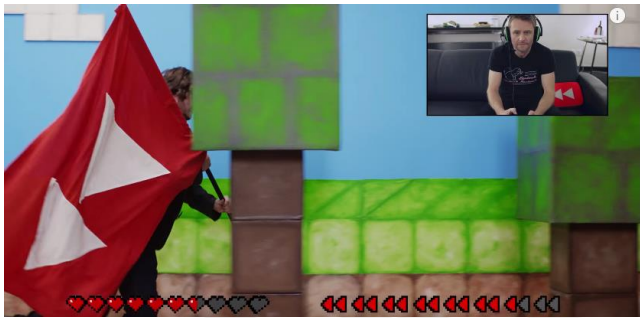


Figure 79



Figure 80

Next scene, we seen the internet celebrity Hannah Hart carrying a flag with Rewind logo on it. Hannah gazes off to the camera and offers Youtube's corporate image to the viewers and at the same time, it reinforces the idea of independency and democracy in the platform. In addition, its independency is saluted by the traditional media.

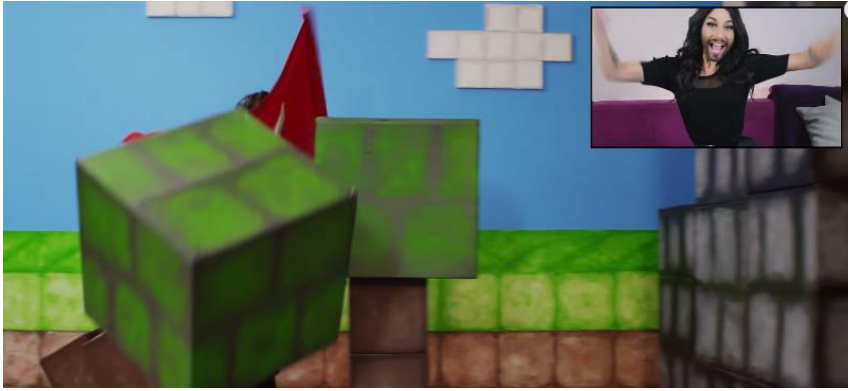


Figure 81

By featuring Conchita Wurst, Eurovision Song Contest 2014 winner, Youtube ensures the viewers that it is a platform where diversity and all kinds of sexual orientations are welcomed. It fictionalizes itself as a website where all kinds of people express and represent themselves as who they are.



Figure 82

Similar to Rewind 2013, through familiar TV show characters such as Big Bird from Sesame Street, Youtube tries to make a connection with the viewers through collective memory and provide familiarity. While Big Bird is passivated through offering the Rewind logo and gazing off the camera as the host expresses himself as “I love big bird” directly to the viewers.



Figure 83

Figure 84

Towards the end, the “Let it go” scene comes up with a snowing setting and Bethany Mota dancing with a team. Bethany Mota is activated and looks directly into the camera, expressing power. By featuring “Let It Go”, Youtube tries to appeal to all kinds of people including kids. Again, it reinforces the idea that it is a platform for everyone.



Figure 85

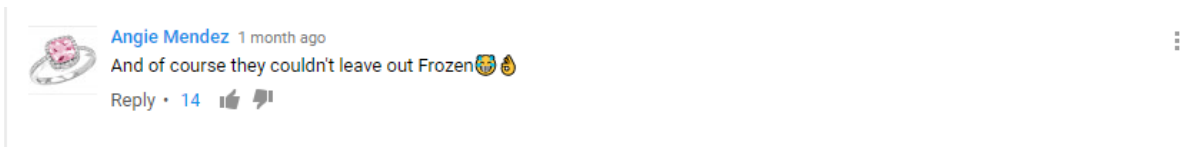


Figure 86

For Rewind 2014, viewers commented as if they see their favorite vloggers, and some of the users commented on the popular culture references featured and their popularity during the year.

8.3 Music

Here music plays a leading role, and as important as the references featured in the video as the prior Rewind productions. Furthermore, it reinforces the idea articulated in the video. The mash-up mix remixed by DJ Earworm with the songs Turn Down For What by DJ Snake ft. Lil John, Fancy by Iggy Azalea ft. Charli XCX, Bang Bang by Jessie J, Ariana Grande, Nicki Minaj, All About That Bass by Meghan Trainor, Happy by Pharrell Williams. By mashing-up popular songs, Youtube ensures the rewatchability of the video because of the mix.

9. YouTube Rewind: Now Watch Me 2015 | #YouTubeRewind

Comparing to all the previous Rewind videos, Rewind 2015 is the video which includes most meme references, most vloggers after Rewind 2016.

9.1 Textual Analysis



Figure 87



Figure 88



Figure 89



Figure 90



Figure 91



Figure 92



Figure 93

In Rewind 2015, the texts are used to communicate with the viewer to convince them that Youtube is a global platform by including different languages and scripts on the screen.

9.2 Visuals

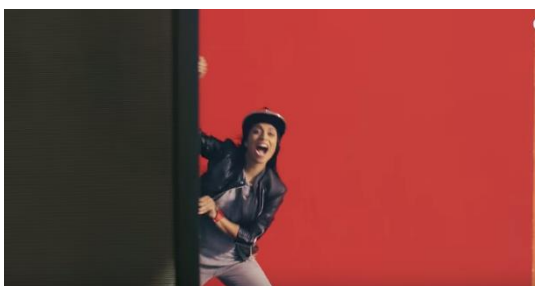


Figure 94

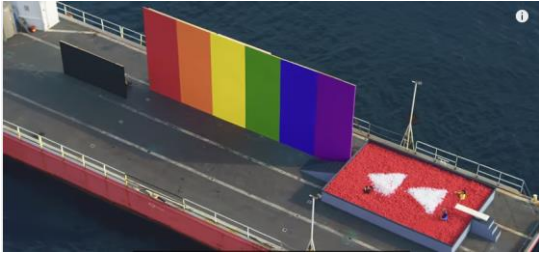


Figure 95

On one of the first scenes, the famous vlogger Superwoman appears. First moment she appears, she gazes at the camera and then gazes off, offering the “Pride flag” which comes afterwards. By featuring the pride flag next to the Rewind logo, Youtube as a corporate company explicitly supports LGBTQ community on the platform, in the way more explicitly than the way they promoted Conchita Wurst who is a transgendered singer in Rewind 2014.



Figure 96

In the following scenes, OMI who has become viral in 2015 with his song “Cheerleader” is gazing off the camera offering the Rewind logo. It is implied that as a corporate company also supports professionals and encourages them to create their channels and keep them updated

with their music videos, behind the scenes, videos which can interact with the fans on the platform.



Figure 97



Figure 98

In addition to Superwoman and other amateur vloggers, Youtube also featured “100 years of...” channel in Rewind 2015. When they are dancing to the song “Now Watch Me” by Silento, their clothes change according to the time period. The dancers are looking at the camera, expressing their power to the viewers as amateurs on Youtube.



Figure 99

As the video continues, Youtube highlights the fact that it is a diverse platform by featuring A Spanish-speaking channel, Hola German, an English-speaking channel, DailyGrace and a showman from a traditional talk show, James Corden. All three of them together shows how Youtube is composed of different kinds of channels.



Figure 100



Figure 101



Figure 102



Figure 103



Figure 104

In 2015 video, Youtube communicates with the viewer directly with a gaze more comparing to the other Rewind videos. In the scenes where the viewer is directly addressed is a featuring of Shia LaBeouf's "Just Do It" Motivational Speech where he is aggressively addressing to the watchers to particularly make their dreams come true and expresses a powerful idea.

The participant are as aggressive as LaBeouf and express their power to the viewers by directly addressing and gazing to viewers. The participants' attitude may reflect Youtube's attitude on the market which is aggressive and powerful.



Figure 105

Dressed up in the colors Black-Navy and White-Gold, two groups are shown in a dance off featuring the “Dress” meme which could not be understood if it is Black-Navy or White-Gold and went viral in a very short time. The dance off symbolizes the competition among Youtubers when they try to get more and more subscribers.



Figure 106

One of the most important popular culture reference given in Rewind 2015 is the “Back to the Future” scene. 21 October 2015 was the day when Marty McFly travels to the future in Back to the Future II released in 1989. Youtube paid a tribute to the famous movie released before the digital world by putting a screen where the day of foundation of Youtube is written. When PewDiePie and Zoella hit the Rewind button gazing off the camera, the screen offers viewers to the foundation day of Youtube. While literally rewinding back to the foundation day, chronically all the popular culture references mentioned in the previous videos such as Ice Bucket Challenge, Felix Baumgartner’s space jump, viral music video Friday by Rebecca Black, Double Rainbow, Mentos and Coke experiment, and many more are mentioned.

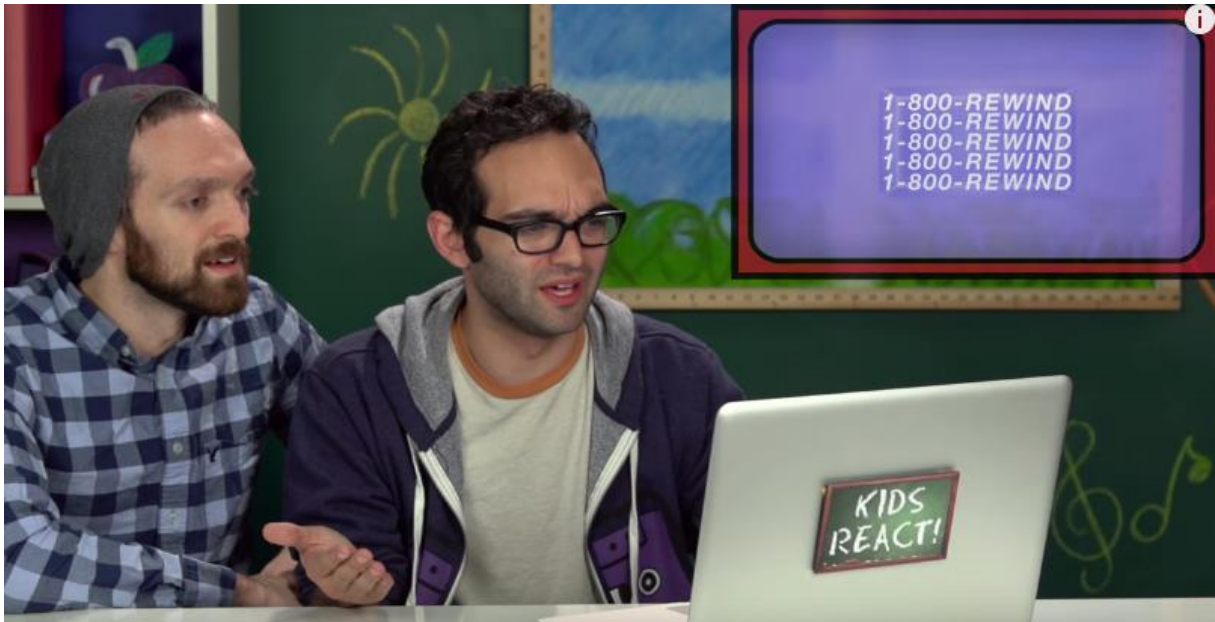
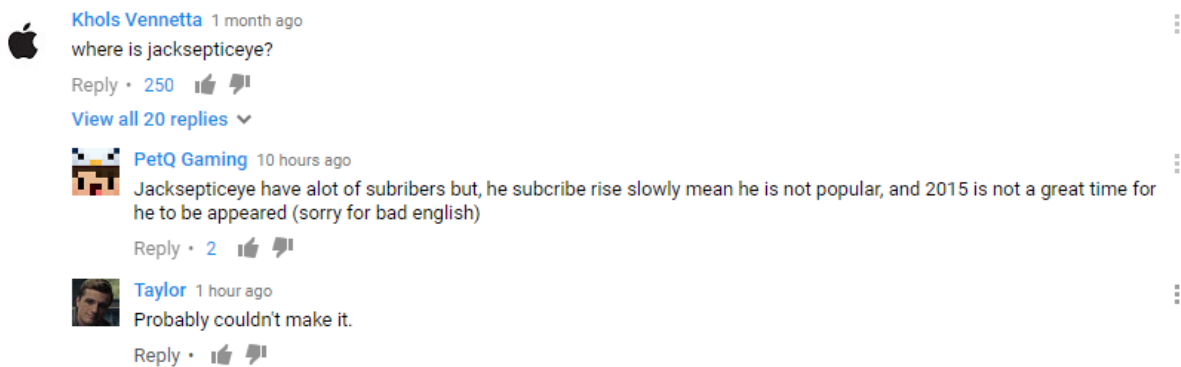


Figure 107

At the end of the video, Fine Bros appear watching and reacting Rewind as “How did they not included PewDiePie?” Here, Youtube addresses to the comments made under the Rewind videos so far. Youtube hears the users saying “I want my favorite vlogger, he/she is a part of the culture too.” Thus, Youtube is still “your tube” in a way due to the reach of users’ voices.



In Rewind 2015, the viewers criticized the production because they couldn’t see their favorite vloggers and are not satisfied with the video due to the failed establishment of familiarity.

9.4 Music

The music used in Rewind 2015 is a mash-up production created under the collaboration of

Avicii and The Hood Internet. The mash-up includes “What Do You Mean?” by Justin Bieber,

“Cheerleader” by OMI, “Now Watch Me (Nae Nae)” by Silento, “Lean On” by Major Lazer, “Can’t Feel My Face” by The Weeknd and Avicii’s original mix. Featuring many different genres in Rewind draws attention to how diverse YouTube is. Furthermore, this time, by adding an original mix from a famous DJ, Youtube ensures the rewatchability of the video.

10. YouTube Rewind 2016: The Ultimate 2016 Challenge / #YouTubeRewind

Over the years, more and more creators are featured in Rewind videos. For 2016 Rewind, YouTube included more than 200 content creators, viral stars, and mainstream and internet celebrities making the video the most crowded and extensive production in the history of Rewind.

In the title, #YouTubeRewind is mentioned to create a long tail and gather all the reactions under the same roof. The theme for this 2016’s video was challenges due to the fact that the concept of challenge was everywhere online and millions of people tried and posted their challenge videos online feeding the trend over and over again with different kinds of challenges. The video is also crucial regarding the number of creators included, the number implies of how many times YouTube helped a content creator cross over and become socially prominent. For the first time in Rewind history, in addition to Behind the Scenes, YouTube created a Rewind quiz about the most watched creators, memes included and also included an interactive guide to learn more about the data, trends, and background information of all of the references. Since Rewinds have become an annual event, "YouTube Rewind: The Ultimate 2016 Challenge" has become the most rapid video to attract 100 million views on YouTube, just 3 days after its release.

Since the Rewind videos have become major productions in 2012, YouTube prefers to include the most watched content creators from every part of the world. The scenes were shot in London, Los Angeles, Mexico City, and Tokyo.

10.2 Visuals



Figure 108

The video starts with Dwayne Johnson aka “The Rock” who is a widely known professional actor wearing a red fanny pack. The color red reflects the red on the logo of YouTube, and the fanny pack is attributed to a photo of Johnson taken back in 90’s.



Figure 110



Figure 109

The photo has become an internet meme when he posted it to his official Instagram account on July 16th, and the post attracted more than 300,000 likes. In addition, one of the BuzzFeed News Reporters, Brad Esposito wrote an article titled This Photo of Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson Is Everything You Need to Know About The '90s and contributed to the widespread of the meme for those who didn't follow Johnson on Instagram.

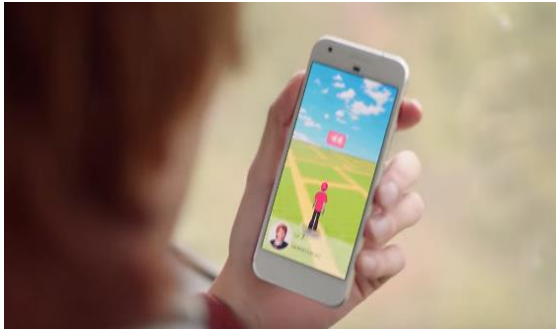


Figure 112



Figure 111

The application on the phone refers to a popular game called Pokémon Go launched in 6 July 2016, and created a super-hype around the world. The augmented-reality application uses real locations via GPS and smartphone camera to seek and catch Pokémons. When the release was announced with a trailer posted on YouTube, it attracted over 13.6 million views in a week and became popular especially among young people. The game has become unavoidable since the moment it was released and led to “Pokémon Theme Song” to reach 44 million views on YouTube in 2016.

In the video, instead of Pokémons, the content creator users are seeking for the Rewind logo, which is also hidden in some scenes as “Easter eggs” in the video for viewers to find and unlock the special videos where the users have more exclusive scenes. The Easter eggs also refer to the Pokémon themed Easter update for the Google Maps application for a widespread challenge called “Pokémon Challenge” on 1 April 2014, April fool's day.



As the video continues, Dan and Phil referencing the Children from the famous Netflix TV Show Stranger Things. The content creators Dan and Phil's "Photo Booth Challenge" video where Phil starred as a guest attracted more than 8.5 million views and 28,000 comments in two years and the duo has become a viral on the internet. The point where they crossed over is the time when they started to host BBC Radio 1 Request Show where they talk about featured Internet news segments, interviews and music videos in early 2013. Later the show named after the duo as "Dan and Phil" in late 2014.

The show the duo features in the video is Stranger Things. The first trailer for Stranger Things was released via YouTube, where it garnered more than four million views within the first month. In addition to its Netflix's promotion on social media, the official accounts of the show has more than 780,000 likes on Facebook as of August 2016. The audience of the show has created fandoms of inspiring memes, parody productions where copycats recreating the



Figure 114



Figure 113

. In 2016, one of the biggest beauty trends has become radical hair colors from grey, pink, purple to neon colors. The video also featured beauty vloggers with radical hair colors dancing and enjoying the highlights of 2016.

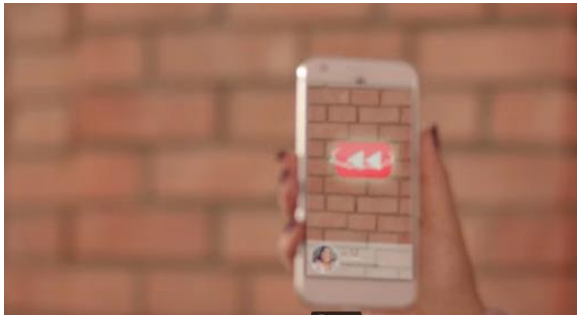


Figure 116



Figure 115

The technology highlighted in the video over and over again is augmented reality. Augmented reality is a 21st century technology which enables digital information on objects or places in the real world to maximize the user experience. That's also what differs augmented reality from virtual reality.



Figure 117

Hydraulic Press was featured in Rewind due to the increasing popularity on internet during 2016 when Hydraulic Press Channel was created and the first video where a golf ball was crushed with using the Hydraulic Press device posted on YouTube on in late 2015. When the video attracted more than 1 million views and nearly 1.6 million subscribers (as of May 2016)

who want to see what they will in the next video, the channel and the Hydraulic press device went viral. Furthermore, each episode attract more than millions of views on YouTube and defined as satisfactory and eye-pleasing by its subscribers. The bagels crushed by Hydraulic Press on the video are called “Rainbow Bagels” created by Scott Rosillo. Even though Rosillo was making these bagels for 20 years in his bakery in Brooklyn, USA, they became viral when it attracted over a million views online and triggered copycats with how-to videos.



Figure 118

One of the amateur popular culture references is The Orbeez Challenge. In the video, the Orbeez’s pouring down from a dipper on the “Work from Home” setting. Basically, Orbeez are little colorful balls which grow up to 300 times more than their original volume when add water. They became a concern of popular culture when content creators made challenge videos with swimming pools, bathtubs filled with these little colorful balls. All the challenge videos together surpassed over 2 billion views during 2016.



Figure 119



Figure 120

The appearance of Casey Neistat refers to his video where he snowboarded in the streets of New York City during a heavy snow fall when the streets were blocked with snow in 2014. The original content attracted more than 15 million views following its upload on February 2014. However, before the snowboarding viral, Neistat had already had a production company where he and his brother created viral videos before YouTube.



Figure 122



Figure 121

There is no surprise when it comes YouTube to feature Justin Bieber on Rewind every year. Since Rewind videos first started to be produced, Justin Bieber was included each and every one of them. For 2016's Rewind, his viral music video "Sorry" is featured with its setting and dances. "Sorry" attracted over 2 billion views as of late 2016. When it attracted so many

viewers on YouTube, the parodies were inevitable. The copycats including some of the most watched channels have made more than 9.020.000 parody videos on YouTube.

When it comes to music, language and borders are not important one might say. One of the best examples of this claim is Latin Singer Nicky Jam appearing when the white curtain falls on 01:08. Notwithstanding the language barrier, Nicky Jam’s reggaeton hit “Hasta el Amanecer” music video has been viewed over 1 billion times and has become the 3rd most watched music video of 2016. Although he is in the industry, he made a grand room for himself in a digital platform such as YouTube thanks to his loyal fans streaming his song over and over again. Furthermore, including Nicky Jam on the Rewind reflects not only the diversity of users but also creators on YouTube in terms of nationalities and highlight a possible emergence of “global popular culture”.



Figure 124



Figure 123

On 01:38, a group of frozen people appears on the screen, doing the Mannequin challenge which is one of the most widespread meme of 2016. Mannequin challenge takes its roots from a prank made in New York Grand Central Station when the whole terminal stood still for one minute back in 2008.

The concept unearthed when the Twitter user @pvrity uploaded the version where a student group in Florida pretending to be mannequins. The video attracted over 4.400 retweets and

4.100 likes in the following week of its upload. Not only circulating on Twitter, but also the video was shared on news sites. Freezing people while they're in action, the mannequin challenge was accepted from old to young, citizen to presidential candidates, contributing 4.590.000 results appear on YouTube as of May 2017.



Figure 125



Figure 126

When the screen goes back to the construction site setting and the music changes to “My Boo” by Ghost Town DJ’s, British-Nigerian gamer Olajide Olatunji aka KSI, and British South African vlogger Caspar Lee dance to the hit song. The reason why a song from 1993 when YouTube didn’t even exist is included in the video is a post by user 11.007 with on Instagram in early 2016. The video was copycatted by another user leading original video to get 6.000 likes and the trend to become viral on Instagram. By the time it was April, the hashtag #RunningManChallenge was fed by 2,922 posts. When the trend spread on YouTube, non-stop Running Man Challenge videos were posted, leading to 15,100,000 results from not only amateur content creators, but also professionals. At the end of the scene, a whole group of content creators is shown doing the challenge. This may represent the spread of the challenge to the digital world.



Figure 128



Figure 127

The boy with the signature White Vans getting out of the van is nobody other than Daniel Lara. Although Daniel Lara is not a content creator at all, he went viral when his friend Joshua Holz took a video of him with his White Vans, and address him as “Damn Daniel”. The video was funny and interesting enough to surpass 50 million views in early 2016. When Holz tweeted the original “Damn Daniel” video, it got over 16.000 likes within 48 hours, Mashable reported. For the sake of free advertising, Vans offered him a lifetime supply of Vans sneakers when he made a cameo on Ellen Show. Furthermore, some companies also tweeted about the meme mentioning the whiteness of the Vans and Daniel. Dan was invited to star in one of Vans commercial. Thus, an internet meme got commercialized, and Youtube got one step closer to become a commercialized corporate company by featuring a commercial viral.



Figure 130



Figure 129

After the van goes into the tunnel, the music changes to “PPAP” by Pikotaro, Pikotaro and Asian content creators dancing together. Following the steps of a previous viral star PSY, Pikotaro’s “PPAP” aka “Pen-Pineapple-Apple-Pen” attracted 172 millions of views with its strange choice of costumes, made-up lyrics, and ridiculous melody. Pikotaro has also praised by other viral stars such as Justin Bieber, It is reported that Bieber tweeted PPAP is his favorite video on the internet. In 24 hours, his tweet retweeted 43.000 times and liked more than 75,000 times.



Figure 131



Figure 132

As the video continues, a group of people consisting of content creators try to open a door held by Hodor. Hodor is a fictional character from George R. R. Martin’s s famous novel “Game of Thrones” adapted HBO television series “Game of Thrones”. In the series, he is known for his catchphrase “Hodor”. The character quickly caught on online among the Game of Thrones viewers, leading to numerous memes. His catchphrase is even included in Urban Dictionary with the help of user submissions. Holding the door on the Rewind video, Hodor is placed as a gatekeeper and the content creators are trying to break the walls and share their content and keep their online presences.



Figure 134



Figure 133

As the major highlight of the video, the Bottle Flipping Challenge is chosen. Although the challenge was not a newness, it went viral in May 2016 when a high school student called Mike Senatore threw a water bottle at the talent show held in his high school. The video uploaded on YouTube attracted more than 6 million views. The challenge has been repeated millions of times, 7,340,000 times to be exact, on YouTube. Putting an amateur content on the center of the video, YouTube encourages every user on YouTube to share their version of the challenge and offering the image of life-changer with the concept of viral. On the video, the landing of the bottle on the Rewind logo gives the hint of the extent of the influence it is created during 2016.



Figure 136



Figure 135

Towards the end of the video, the amateur content creators appear in the setting of Kanye West's "Famous" music video where nude celebrities included. The music video attracted more than 20 million views and it has become one of the most discussed music video of 2016.

Featuring the content creators asleep in their most natural condition, the video enhances the genuineness of the amateur content creators and maintains the image that amateur creators are ordinary people just like the viewers.



Figure 137

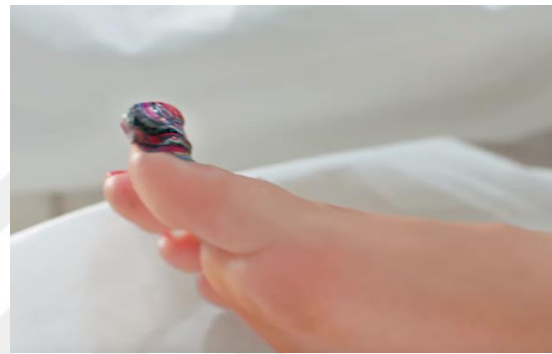
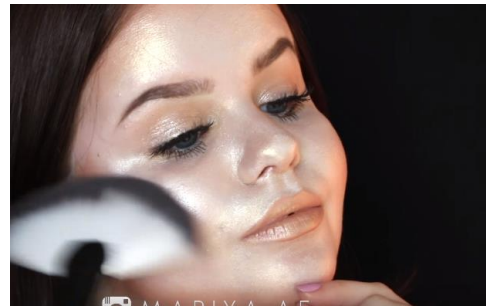


Figure 138

Featuring "100 Layers Challenge" on Rewind 2016, YouTube is also a platform for beauty trends and how-to videos, but it may lead to beauty frenzies from time to time. One of the best instances is the videos where 100 layers of different make-up products applied over and over again. The trend evoke curiosity and triggered 2.870.000 videos where creators applied different products 100 times, sometimes more than 100 times out of sheer curiosity same as the viewers' motivation to watch the videos.



One of the most discussed beauty trends of 2016 was the Highlighter challenge. The challenge was triggered by a YouTube creator decided to apply her make-up with only using highlighter. When the original video hit millions of views with the help of beauty enthusiasts and curious viewers, hundreds of creators also took the challenge and posted how-to videos on YouTube.



Figure 139

Figure 140

With 2016 Rewind, Sia joined to the professionals featured with little cameos in Rewind. The video in she reveals her hidden face with Ellen and her audience was clicked more than 7 million times on YouTube and went viral. When the numbers of views of Reveal video and her music videos combined, Sia earned a cameo. Slightly visible face of Sia on Rewind gives reference to the big reveal video.



Figure 141

On 03:40, in the setting of a spinning class, the amateur content creators including Rhett and Link, Hannah Hart feature “Side to Side” music video by Ariana Grande with a specific dance move called the “Dab” that went viral with the help of collaborative performance of Cam Newton and rapper Migos, and the performance a presidential candidate on Ellen Show. The dance move spread quickly on the internet and triggered many more videos where the move featured and fed over 5,000,000 results on YouTube.



Figure 142

Towards the end of the video, one of the great professional musicians of all time, David Bowie was featured by an amateur vlogger Alex Wassabi. Sadly, it was not due to the views of the music videos or the virality of his music, but paying a tribute to his passing away. Even though Bowie was purely an element of mainstream music, YouTube included his different

style due to the nature of popular culture, which is about what makes the society sad collectively in addition to entertainment.



Figure 143

The Korean dance moves include in the video represent the culture of KPOP which is purely industrial sector managed by special agencies. Although KPOP genre, short for Korean Pop Music, emerged in South Korea, the genre caught up on other parts of the world such as Latin America, North America, Asia, and created a global Korean influence through with help of use of catchy English phrases in chorus through videos posted on YouTube. Featuring Korean dance moves in Rewind represents not only the variety of content creators, but only the audience.



Figure 145



Figure 144



Figure 146

The last but not least reference from professionals of Rewind 2016 is Car pool Karaoke by James Corden, the host of Late Late Show with James Corden on CBS. The Car Pool Karaoke is a part of the TV show where Corden invites famous professional musicians to join him to sing their songs while he is driving through the streets of Los Angeles. Although the show airs on CBS, the videos uploaded The Late Late Show with James Corden channel on YouTube attract millions of views from different parts of the world where CBS is not available. On Rewind, amateur content creators sit next to Corden instead of professionals. In addition to Corden, different YouTube personalities from different parts of the world sing along to the song in the setting of Car Pool Karaoke. Replacing professionals with amateurs, Youtube fictionalizes itself through the idea that what matters on YouTube is still “You”.

While the Rewind video ends, a list of YouTubers who contributed and made cameos in the video is included as in order of appearance. Giving credit to the contributors, YouTube highlights the importance of both amateur and professional creators helping YouTube to keep its one of the most visited website status.

Over the years, YouTube Rewinds have been receiving a lot of criticism because of the high percentage of non-YouTubers appearing in the video. What YouTube did to fight with the idea was marking the convergence of amateur and professional content through the text appearing at the very end of the video “Dedicated to all the moments that brought us together this year, and to love and understanding in 2017”. Thus, not only addressing the criticisms, YouTube also highlighted the fact that popular culture cannot be reflected by one platform and thus included all the moments mattered to the society in 2016.

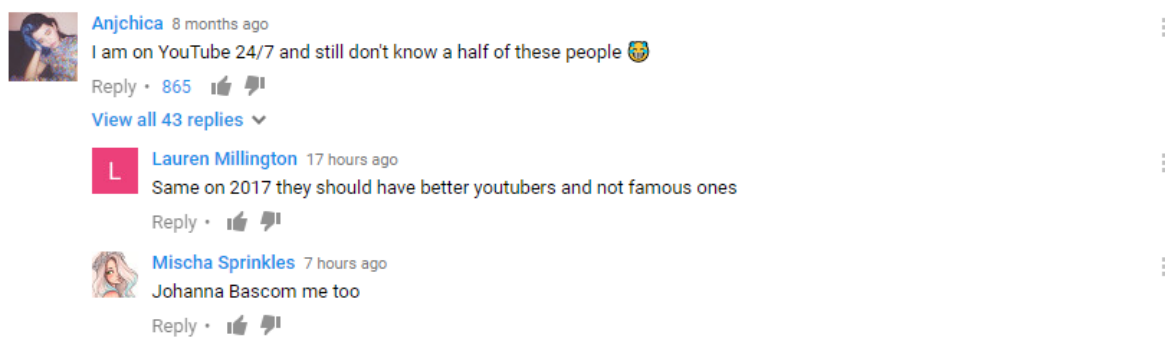


Figure 147

The concern of the viewers is that YouTube only features “good-looking” people and they believe that this is not the real YouTube.

10.4 Music

The music used in Rewind 2016 is a mash-up production created under the collaboration of Major Lazer and The Hood Internet. The mash-up includes “Sorry” by Justin Bieber, “Work from Home” by Fifth Harmony feat. Ty Dolla \$ign, “Hasta el Amanecer” by Nicky Jam, “My Boo” by Ghost Town DJ’s, “PPAP” by Pikotaro, “Light it Up (feat. Nyla & Fuse ODG)” by Major Lazer, “Closer” by the Chainsmokers ft. Halsey. Featuring many different genres in Rewind draws attention to how diverse YouTube is. Furthermore, the music of some of the most watched music videos are not included in the mash-up, the video music settings are used to give reference and create visual familiarity.

5. CONCLUSION

According to research findings, Youtube shows a rising trend of memes and use of amateur content creators in its rewind videos. Consequently, the platform creates a sense of familiarity for the viewers and tries to show the fact that even though there is also a rising trend of professional content on Youtube, Youtube is still “You”. In addition, Youtube sells the image of “It could be you” by promoting amateur content on the Rewind videos. By this, Youtube aims to improve engagement and enrich the content on the platform.

Youtube also addresses to the criticisms about featuring professional content on Rewind videos as “That is what popular culture is all about, the things that bring us together and feel the same”. Youtube defends itself against the corporate company criticisms via effective popular culture use. As Frankfurt schools suggests Youtube’s use popular culture is similar to use of art for profit. By using popular culture, its music, the events from life, it creates a familiarity and gives a chance to the viewer to see featured content in one video. However, using popular culture is a marketing strategy for Youtube and consequently, Rewind videos are a part of branding activation

By using popular culture as its own branding strategy, Youtube shows symptoms of being a corporate company. The platform tries to create an image through Rewind videos and convince the viewers that it is an amateur platform. Through popular culture phenomena went viral, Youtube includes the amateur internet culture on the platform, by featuring the amateurs on the videos gives the idea of “Keep interacting, this could be you.”.

When we look at the views, we may assume that people watch Rewind videos because they don’t want to be left out from the popular culture on Youtube and they want to feel relevant. In addition to the those motivations, some users want to be famous and their channels to be

features. So, here we can relate to Katz's modern version of uses and gratification theory.

Thus, the audience also uses popular culture to feel relevant or secure a place on the platform.

In Rewind videos, the communication is mostly verbal and the participants are mostly gaze off offering the image of Youtube. When they are gazing to the camera, they usually deliver an important message as Machin suggests in his modal. Having fun is the most important theme in all videos and not a single person was showed as bored or uninterested in the theme promoted in the videos.

In time, the diversity on Rewind videos are increased by featuring African American, Asian, Indian and people from many more countries. Including a LGBTQ person in the video shows that LGBTQ is welcomed on the platform and it is explicitly shown with the Pride flag.

Comparing to 2012, the following videos include more popular music and more memes to connect with the viewer and promote something that everybody can relate to.

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