The Soothing Role of Language in Crises Management

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ABSTRACT
Language is a structured system of sounds associated with symbols for conveying meanings with an implied sense. Language a means of spoken and written forms with which the human beings of a social group and their counterparts exchange ideas, thoughts, feelings, express themselves as part of both biological and cultural existence in a given biosphere. Language is also an organic tool which has the functions of heuristic and holistic characteristics. Human societies are prone to experience crises irrespective of their economic or technological advances that have been achieved. The paradox of the modern world –more advancement with more crises throws a potential challenge before mankind. The intellectual advancements, the technological advancements coupled with economic advancements have seemingly been proved to be hollow and brittle in the time of global pandemic of Corona in the first quarter of 21st century, particularly the learners in higher educational institutions are at higher risk of overcoming these crises. At a time when a universal crisis looms large, language plays a key role in soothing the human spirit and resuscitates the life for further marching.
KEY WORDS: Language, Organic tool, heuristic, holistic, paradox, soothing, resuscitates

Language is a vital part of human connectivity, progress and happiness. All the species have their own ways of communicating systems. Humans are the only ones that have mastered cognitive language communication. Language enables us to share our ideas, thoughts and feelings with others intrinsically. It is a powerful organic tool. Language impacts the daily lives of the humans of any race, creed, community and region of the world. It plays an imminent role and leads to have both psychological and sociological changes and growth.

Language is a principal method of human communication, consisting of words used in a structured and conventional way and conveyed by speech, writing, or gesture. Human societies are prone to wade through crises. Crises vary from psychological, physiological, emotional, cultural and social. The turning point for better or worse in an acute disease or fever paroxysmal attack of pain, distress, or disordered function emotionally significant event or radical change of status in a person's life a midlife crisis the decisive moment (as in a literary plot) an unstable or crucial time or state of affairs in which a decisive change is impending especially **:** one with the distinct possibility of a highly undesirable out come a financial crisis the nation's energy crisis, political crisis etc.. All these kind of crises have their impact on the human mind, progress and happiness.

The Corona virus - COVID-19 pandemic is the defining global health crisis of our time and the greatest challenge we have faced since World War Two. Since its emergence in Asia late last year, the virus has spread to every continent except Antarctica. We have now reached the tragic milestone of one million deaths, and the human family is suffering under an almost intolerable burden of loss, causing unprecedented emotional and economic loss and crises.

"The climbing death toll is staggering, and we must work together to slow the spread of this virus. We are already at work together with our UN family and other partners, on three immediate priorities: supporting the health response including the procurement and supply of essential products under WHO's leadership, strengthening crisis management and response, and addressing critical, social and emotional impacts"-UNDP Administrator Achim Steiner. His words indicate the enormity of loss to human societies across the globe.

Crisis management is a situation-based management system that includes clear roles and responsibilities and process related organizational requirements. The response shall include action in the following areas: Crisis prevention, crisis assessment, crisis handling and crisis termination. The aim of crisis management is to be well prepared for crisis, ensure a rapid and adequate response to the crisis, maintaining clear lines of reporting and communication in the event of crisis and agreeing rules for crisis termination.

The techniques of crisis management include a number of consequent steps from the understanding of the influence of the crisis on the corporation to preventing, alleviating, and overcoming the different types of crisis. Crisis management consists of different aspects including:

● Methods used to respond to both the reality and perception of crisis.
● Establishing metrics to define what scenarios constitute a crisis and should consequently trigger the necessary response mechanisms.
● Communication that occurs within the response phase of emergency-management scenarios.
(including chalking out methods in simple and suitable language)

A crises mindset requires the ability to think of the worst-case scenario while simultaneously suggesting numerous solutions. Trial and error is an accepted discipline, as the first line of defense might not work. It is necessary to maintain a list of contingency plans and to be always on alert. Organizations and individuals should always be prepared with a rapid response plan to emergencies which would require analysis, drills and exercises all in simple, motivational language paradigms.

The credibility and reputation of organizations is heavily influenced by the perception of their responses during crisis situations. The society and communication involved in responding to a crisis in a timely fashion makes for a challenge in fields. There must be open and consistent communication throughout the hierarchy to contribute to a successful crisis-communication process.

The related terms emergency management and work continuity management focus respectively on the prompt but short lived "first aid" type of response (e.g. putting the fire out) and the longer-term recovery and restoration phases (e.g. moving operations to another site). Crisis is also a facet of risk management, although it is probably untrue to say that crisis management represents a failure of risk management, since it will never be possible to totally mitigate the chances of catastrophes' occurring.

The Oxford English Dictionary defines crisis as a vitally important or decisive stage in the progress of anything; a turning-point; also, a state of affairs in which a decisive change for better or worse is imminent; now applied especially to times of difficulty, insecurity, and suspense in politics or commerce.' It also refers to a critical decisive moment when things are usually uncertain, difficult or painful; a time when something very important for the future happens and when actions must be taken to avoid complete disaster or breakdown

Language as a form of social behavior is prone to respond to social events and situations in some particular definite ways. Hence, language use is defined in terms of the social context that produces it. In other words, individual and social groups use language forms and patterns that are the most relevant and appropriate to their experiences as well as their sociopolitical and cultural situations. In the times of crises, language reflects not only the physical social realities and events, but also the language users' affect and personal judgments in responding to the situations. Thus, speakers and writers express evaluative and affective stances when they communicate their intentions or make propositions in texts.

Language use in crisis situations in the context of this paper, is different from language use by social actors in a crisis or in a war situation such as speeches by Presidents, army generals or soldiers in a civil/transnational war. It is also different from language use in public speeches and statements by warring parties. People affected by social crises or terrorist attacks and others who, though not directly affected by the crises, respond to the news about the crises by posting comments and responding to posted comments on the Internet; (and some of the comments are highly emotional). This way, the commentators identify with the direct victims of the attacks; thus, they form an online community of victims in the era of internet.

Just as war is associated with some particular non-neutral features and characteristic of language use conflicts and social crises also do indeed place some constraints on language use. Individuals under some severe social crises are arguably most likely to use some flaming words consciously or unconsciously to express themselves in the kind of discourse they produce. They are

also susceptible to representing certain persons, social groups or governments negatively by the use of labels, coinages or other forms of evaluative constructions.

In the wake of social, emotional and political upheavals now spreading like wildfire throughout, we hear noble slogans and soothing words about the will of the people being expressed and their desire for democratization, socialization and humanization. We find such sentiments slipping comfortably from the lips of poets, politicians, pundits and demagogues across the pages of the press, as they seek to reassure us that this is just the natural longing of the human spirit to participate in our ideals of human society and democracy. In the wake of soaring human crises in the backdrop of Corona it is appropriate to consider the role of language today, and particularly the challenge the pandemic poses with respect to the learners in the higher educational institutions and the discomfort underlying current global upheavals. The words of Irish poet Brother Richard provide a great comfort, hope and revival of life even the pandemic is perishing the humans..

Yes there is fear
Yes there is isolation
Yes there is panic
Yes there is sickness
Yes there is even death
But
They say that in Wuhan after so
Many years of noise
You can hear the birds again…

The healing power of language can never be undermined. In the above simple words mankind can get more clarity, hope and rejuvenation of life. These simple but gripping words are not only soothing but provide strength to human life and society. The words of Aditya Jadhav are yet another example of language how it can empower the human society:

He captured the world, every village, every city
Invincible and dangerous than anybody ever has been
But, little did he know of the secret
Army
Of the heroes clad in white and green..
So powerful, so motivational so inspiring for the entire mankind.

in the slogans alluded to above, as is the case with much communication today, one might notice how there is quite a bit of talk but very little being said? Well, it's true. Language has been truncated, if not trivialized in the modern world, stripped bare of its depth and power. Where words once were heard as pregnant with signification, in our rationalized, digitized, and abridged vocabulary of the West all that has changed for the worst. Now a strictly calculating and logistical principle holds sway. Words have been reduced to mere symbols in an equation, placeholders in a syllogism, each having a single unambiguously identifiable referent, and only one. A must equal A, and it can never equal B; let alone A, B and C all together at once. There must only be one precise "signified" for each "signifier" – everything disambiguated – following both the formal demands of objective science and the legalistic requirements of hierarchical control.

But if you look back into the obscure and shadowy origins of language, you will find that before the written word there was only speaking, with oral traditions passed down from generation to generation. The written word emerging a little less than six thousand years ago, only fully appeared coincident with the birth of cities, with the organization of empires and their apparatus — with civilization and history. We began making history only when we began to write that history!

This was another momentous invention of domesticated life. With the birth of cities on the heels of big agriculture, it was necessary to develop uniform (if not abstract) systems of economic, social, and political control to handle the gathering together of diverse and unrelated village, clan and tribal members, now as urban strangers – within and well beyond the city walls. This demanded a severe change in the nature of human communication, including the removal of polysemic ambiguity inherent in primal speech, and the articulation of a strictly univocal, disambiguated, written code.

Such linguistic rationalization was only effected with the invention of the syllogism, early on perfected by the Greeks, and recast by scientists, legislators, and politicians down through the ages. According to syllogistic reasoning, universal statements were to be related to particular circumstances within a coherent structure leading to unambiguous legal and scientific conclusions.

But long before such sweeping linguistic changes took hold, our pre-historical speaking and proto-historical writing were much involved with myth. Passed on from originally oral sources, myth had a textural depth, ambiguity, and resonance that was still packed with meaning. Not only did the mythic word call up multiple referents, but also the copula between those diverse referents was

extremely strong. To speak the name of something was in fact to invoke its existence, to experience its power as fully present. It was not then as it is now, where a metaphor or a simile merely suggests something else. For a preliterate gatherer-hunter, to identify your totem was to become one with it, and to feel the presence of your clan animal within you.

Even revisiting one of the earliest known written languages, Old Kingdom Egyptian, one finds oneself immersed within a polysemous, poly-textural world whose non-alphabetic characters still bear this sort of weight and significance. Hieroglyphic writing retained almost as much multi-referential power as did the preliterate word of far-older, oral traditions. Hieroglyphs not only allowed of multiple meanings; they also embodied the power of the signified within the signifier, whether it was etched on a tablet, a sarcophagus, or the temple wall.

Such was the wealth, potency, and openness of primal tongues. Over millennia of civilization, these languages were destroyed, forced into univocity and impotence. Stripped of their resonant depth, words were flattened-out under the cold and calculating logic of imperial and imperious histories. Words became slaves to the exacting requirements of syllogistic reasoning, eventually defining the direction of all civic life – social control grounded in rigid laws and specious principles artfully constructed to protect increasingly arrayed power hierarchies.

Chris Hedges has correctly noted that empires often communicate in two languages, one of imperatives and decrees, the other employing a gentler vocabulary of transcendent values and high-sounding ideals. Yet, they both do violence and are controlling in their own right, leading ultimately to the same end – disempowering the body politic ("Recognizing the Language of Tyranny," *Berserk Magazine*). So just maybe in their hearts and in their ears, the peoples to our east have finally identified one source of their suffering — in the words they hear and the relentless assault of syllogisms that keep them enslaved within a language of violence. He states further, 'Their burning issues likely have much more to do with their bellies than with their tongues. But perhaps the political and economic deprivations imposed by such hierarchies have been masked by a linguistic straightjacket foisted upon citizens increasingly forced to live in a world made empty by the violence of the word as much as by threat of the sword',

A key catalyst of today's "global crisis" may be found in this emptying out of language, leading inexorably to an emptying of human experience – a hollowness that finds its only fulfillment in the proliferation of novel distractions and diversions as they consume and ravage all available resources, leaving nothing of value in their wake. Or perhaps, it finds solace only in rebellion. It is worth considering especially in light of Hedges final warning about any "centralized power."

Communication is foundational to crisis management. It provides clarity and direction for employees, customers and partners in an otherwise uncertain and confusing time. The key role of strategic communication during a crisis is to stabilize and advance the organization by inspiring confidence, earning trust and engaging stakeholders. Clear, consistent communication is vital to successfully maintain business continuity and recover.

Organizations can leverage the power of communication to successfully emerge from a crisis. Beehive's business continuity and communication roadmap (*Ready, Respond, Recover and Restore*) helps leaders effectively use strategic communication in crisis management to lead through the uncertainty of a crisis and towards a successful future.

The role of strategic communication in the *Ready* phase is to lay the groundwork necessary for organizations to respond effectively and sustain trust. This phase happens before a crisis when a company proactively identifies high-likelihood crisis scenarios and develops plans for managing them. How well an organization prepares its crisis communication strategies impacts how well it can navigate an actual crisis.

The crisis management plan created during this phase should define the dedicated response teams with clear roles and communication responsibilities. It should include an internal and external stakeholder inventory with each audience's preferred communication channels. Creating templated communication materials for these channels allows organizations to quickly customize and deploy communications if a crisis strikes. Leaders should receive communication coaching during this phase to learn how to respond clearly, authentically and transparently to future crises.

Organizations move to the *Respond* phase of crisis management when a crisis strikes. The role of strategic communication during this phase is to provide timely, credible information that keeps stakeholders informed. Communication also serves

as a tool for building trust. Organizations that share authentic, transparent and consistent messages are more likely to gain trust, maintain their brand perception and retain loyal customers, employees and partners.

Strategic communication in a crisis creates a connection between businesses and their stakeholders. Organizations that use a feedback loop during crisis management can better understand how their key audiences are feeling and demonstrate empathy for what they're experiencing. Acting with empathy and delivering simple and factual information across various channels helps organizations dispel confusion and worry. Taking control of the crisis narrative and meeting stakeholders where they're at helps businesses stabilize and manage the immediate crisis.

Business houses use strategic communication during this phase to assess new opportunities and provide clarity to stakeholders on how the future might look. Even if it starts to feel repetitive, proactive and consistent communication is vital during this phase because stakeholders may still feel uncertain, even as the organization begins to stabilize and recover. Leaders can use communication to define and articulate the company's future vision while keeping people informed about the company's improved stability.

Internal messages during this phase might focus on motivating employees to think and act differently because of the crisis. Externally, the company may still address the crisis but start preparing customers for what the future holds. Learn where stakeholders are at and how their expectations have changed by leveraging monitoring and listening tools and engaging stakeholders in two-way communication. These insights help the organization identify what adjustments might be necessary as the business recovers. Change is common during this phase, and incorporating change management communication strategies into the business plan can help effectively propel the organization forward.

The role of strategic communication in the *Restore* phase is to move the business forward with confidence for sustained growth. It's an opportunity for an organization to re-align its communication to its purpose, mission and values and provide rationale for any changes made as a result of the crisis. This communication helps the company establish meaningful connections with stakeholders that will positively differentiate its brand and culture.

Organizations in the *Restore* phase begin shifting messages from crisis-focused to future-focused. Leaders play a critical communication role during this phase by inspiring and motivating employees. It's also an important time to express gratitude to internal and external stakeholders who supported the business through the crisis.

Organizations that use communication effectively during a crisis to authentically connect with stakeholders have the best opportunity for long-term success. Companies build trust when they communicate with authenticity, transparency and clarity. People who trust organizations are more likely to support and advocate for the brand. Strategic communication in a crisis gives organizations the confidence to advance business plans and re-enter the market to serve their stakeholders in meaningful ways.

Effective communication in any given circumstances or crises of any intensity provides soothing effect, heals the user as well the receiver, restores normalcy, provides impetus for further movement. Thus the heuristic and holistic impact of the right usage of a language resuscitates and replenishes both individual and societal life.

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