An Investigation of the Dialogical Communication Capacities of Turkish GSM Companies Websites

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ABSTRACT

This article investigates the practice of dialogue through the websites of Turkish GSM companies. This study is theoretically derived from the relationship management perspective and is methodologically based on the dialogic communication principles of Kent and Taylor. The study examines the official websites of 3 Turkish GSM companies: Turkcell, Vodafone Turkiye and Turk Telekom. A preliminary content analysis was conducted in a pilot study to determine if there were distinctive features of Turkish GSM companies’ websites that should be evaluated in the respective dialogic categories. Based on the results of the preliminary content analysis, a more comprehensive content analysis was performed to determine public relations practices offered via the internet.

KEYWORDS

Communication, Dialogical Communication, Public Relations, Reputation, Reputation Management

INTRODUCTION

Every day political groups, nonprofit organizations, and companies from all over the world get on an extensive network called the Internet and also operate the World Wide Web (WWW). Almost all businesses, products, events and public interests are mentioned somewhere on the WWW (Kent & Taylor, 1998). Considering the magnitude of the internet, with its potential to affect the image and reputation of a company, its content and presentation are effects of strategic concern for a lot of companies. (Atlı, Vidović, & Omazić, 2018). Furthermore, the continuously increasing research on the use of the Internet as a dialogic tool has been extensively focusing on analyzing the opportunities for the distribution of information and communication between organizations and their communities on their websites (Capriotti & Kuklinsk, 2012). Businesses are always competing to develop innovative tactics which amaze their target audience (Singh, 2013).

In today’s world, the internet may be the only way to reach out to the historically isolated communities of diasporic groups who like others are located in cyberspace. Therefore, technology does not have to distance the organization from its communities and internet communication may include a more personalized touch which makes public relations more effective (Kent & Taylor, 1998). Since ubiquity of dialogue has become a popular concept in public relations, it makes sense to have a common understanding of the meaning of the term. Academia has used the term dialogue in an effort to describe successful public relations. Therefore, Kent and Taylor’s (2002) public relations theory provides the groundwork for public relations experts to competently talk and sustain conversations with their populations (Kent. & Taylor, 2002). In the last decade, the world of online communication has progressed dramatically. WEB 2.0 and social media have generally enhanced PR practices and

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many experts have recognized their potential to reach out to target populations (Wright & Hinson, 2010). Contrary to WEB 1.0 which focused on a read-only interface, WEB 2.0 and social media focus on a read-write interface where the value is contributed by a large volume of users (Lytras, Damiani, & de Pablos, 2008). Obviously, WEB 2.0 and social media are interactive communication tool with the potential to reinforce organization-member relationships and contribute to the achievement of organizational goals positively (Keller, 2013).

“Dialogical Communication” context research investigated a limited range of fields in the literature (i.e., non-profit organizations, governmental, Financial, Educational, and Social Media Platforms). (Bentley, 2012; Özdemir & Yamanoğlu, 2010). A study on GSM (Global System for Mobile Communications) companies has not been conducted so far.

Today the mobile communications market is one of the fastest growing markets in the world. Mobile industry continues to grow as a ripple effect of the opportunities presented by emerging markets (Boynudelik, 2011). There are currently three mobile communications operators in the GSM market in Turkey: Turkcell, Vodafone Turkiye (previously known as Telsim) and Turk Telekom (previously known as Aria & Aycell-Aeva). The total number of mobile subscribers is 69 million with 91.1% penetration ratio in which Turkcell is the leading operator with %50.77, followed by Vodafone with %28.75 and later by Turk Telekom with %20.48 market shares according to the number of subscribers as of 2013 (ICTA, 2013).

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The Concept of Dialogue

Etymologically the term dialogue goes all the way back to the Greek term “dialogos” (Tella & Aaltonen, 1998) for which ‘logos’ can be translated as ‘word’ or ‘meaning’ and ‘dia’ as ‘through’ or ‘across’ rather than ‘two’. Therefore, dialogue refers to both the quality of the relationship that occurs between two or more people and to the way of thinking about human affairs that highlight their dialogic qualities. Dialogue can identify the attitudes which participants approach each other with, the ways they talk and act, the consequences of their meeting and the context which they meet within (Cissna & Anderson, 1998).

The concept of dialogue is rooted in a variety of disciplines such as philosophy rhetoric, psychology, and relational communication. Philosophers and rhetoricians have long considered dialogue as one of the most ethical forms of communication and as one of the central means of separating truth from fiction. According to Theologian Martin Buber who is considered to be the father of the modern concept of dialogue, it is “a relation between persons that is characterized in more or less by a degree of inclusion” (2002 (1947): 97)-as cited in (Lee, 2014). His meditations on dialogue’s fundamental significance or its existential or ontological meaning, do not take the shape of general philosophy (Tella & Aaltonen, 1998).

Some other features related to the concept of dialogue were used in a variety of disciplines. In psychology, the parameters of quality communication and the relationship development after that between and among persons and also the formulation of client-therapist relationship is established by the foundation of dialogue (Laing, 1969; Rogers, 1994; Lee, 2014). In literature, the abstract rigor of dialogue-and its influence on rhetoric, semiotics and interpersonal communication can be traced to Russian literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin, who viewed all language, and all ideas communicated through language, as dynamic and relational. Even though Bakthin’s specialized in texts and language use, his ideas about dialogue as reciprocal interaction have influenced rhetoric, semiotics, education, interpersonal communication and subsequent branches of communication studies including public relations (Lee, 2014; Gardiner, 1992).

Public relation is a relatively newer adopter of dialogue, but the term has become a common one in public relations and is equated with effective public relations (Lee, 2014). In public relations
The Ethics of Seeking Body Perfection, with Continual Reference to Heidi Montag
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