

The VASS Method of Communication: Romanticising the Professionally Unscripted Ad-libs

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***Abstract:** The proposed research paper aims to elaborate on a communicative strategy that can enable scripted and unscripted professional interactions. To be impressive, and to offer content that has depth, is to understand professional communication. VASS is a method of communication that I have conceptualised to summarise the heavy factors of creating, memorising and improvising communicative instances in both personal and professional spaces. The paper discusses a method that is systematic and derives inspiration from effective communicative strategies that have been prominent in the 21st century. To speak effortlessly and fluently on unscripted topics is a desire for many youths, and the proposed methodology may aid their attempts to be authentic and vibrant amongst a crowd of generic conversations.*

Keywords: Communicative Strategy, Visual aids, Subjectivity, Specification, Professional Relational Dynamics

1. Introduction

Ever growing introverted instances, especially in the post-covid era, are forcing many Gen-Z youths to deny aspects of communication for which they are not prepared. Social shyness, awkwardness and denial have gradually seeped through many individuals who wish to conceptualise and concretise what they have to speak or write in unscripted or scripted conversations, especially in a professional space.

With the dominantly increasing concept of on-campus placement drives, matters of communicative angst have twirled towards precise questionnaires that are endlessly asked about career and personality to a multitudinal group of freshers at a stretch, which is tiresome and tedious nonetheless. Communication, in its rawness, is closer to an attempt to transfer ideas, thoughts and emotions from one source to another. More often than not, it is wrapped taut around the intent to develop relational dynamics. If an individual developed friendship with another human being at any stage of life, one of them would have initiated a conversation with the other. Without that communicative initiation, whether it be an inquiry of where the canteen was located or about the means of commute to and from college, their relation would have never been recognised, let alone culminated.

It is often surprising to many socially shy individuals that communication is beyond the verbal, and densely includes a deep accord with the visual and the vocal. If one positions a subtle doubt on the claim that meaning is carried forth by mediums other than words, it can be easily comprehended and verified by shrieking harshly at the top of one's voice while praising father's cooking at home after dinner, or reclining back on a chair in an interview while earnestly answering the questionnaire. Albert Mehrabian, a researcher of body language, was the first to break down the components of a face-to-face conversation and he found that communication is primarily 55% nonverbal, 38% vocal, and only 7% words.

Such ratio of the role of verbal and nonverbal in a face-to-face conversation always-already surfaces as a profoundly surprising fact to many young individuals in the contemporary era as major communicative functionality is through mails, messenger apps, or social media platforms that heavily involve typing. Thus, nonverbal negotiations have declined sharply for many and their inclusion in communication appears more as an optionality rather than a necessity. A calm and distinct social awkwardness in interaction has crept in many individuals who stand in metros or classrooms, for example, and await a favourable moment to converse rather than create one.

The concern is not entirely personal suffrage. It has pinnaled professional ad-libs and scripted interactions to be uncomfortable, undesirable and untackable, especially when they are face-to-face and beyond the preparedness and comfort of typing which allots plenty of time to think, rethink, and reconstruct the randomised flow of thoughts. Locating oneself in the dire situation of conversing without preparation has a haste and gap which is similar to the one endured even in prepared instances like interviews, group meetings and discussion, the agenda and questionnaire of which is usually served in advance or at least holds a probability of being asked.

The VASS method offers an improved chance at negotiating not only prepared occurrences of interaction or content development, but its gradual practice and decor in daily routine heightens competence of negotiating unscripted professional ad-libs as well. VASS stands for an effective communicative strategy for formulating content where emphasis is on Visually-Aided Subjectivity and Specification while trying to conjure thoughts, ideas and emotions, and channelising them through words in articulation or writing.

2. Visually-Aided

There is a two-dimensionally essentiality to visually-aided thinking: it gives observational depth to the content that is being developed, and it helps in retaining content, like a memorised speech to be delivered in an orientation program. An individual prepares a speech on poverty, for example, and the approach is to define poverty, government claim on property, quotes on property, and thus, the thought process gradually succumbs to an individual's thought process churning on words. It is like the repetition of the sentence in the question itself while writing the first line of an answer during the college examinations. It is an easy approach but depends heavily on remembering the sequence of words, the chronological development of writing, and becomes generically hollow. But the dynamics would be altered slightly if the speech was prepared through visual thinking. The individual may recline back, imagine what poverty looks like to her, and then proceed to a space like a traffic signal where beggars are most commonly found by her and she wishes to initiate her content from that image itself. Her development of thought will retain that thought even when she will be delivering that speech, many weeks later, because that image is part of her reflexive thinking and is easy to retain.

Instructions to make instant noodles, for instance, are written boldly on the pack itself but they always-eternally use tender images to depict the process where there is a source of heat, a pan, procedure of pouring ingredients visually demonstrated and the completion of the process as well. The directions are very well writ but the retaining factor of making instant noodles shall remain a recollection of the visual demonstration printed on the packet. Recollecting childhood memories through the images of maternal grandmother's house is the reason that childhood experience remains intact and taut to such an extent that one can write about it at length even though many, many years have been added to their catalogue of memories.

A fifteen minute presentation to be delivered in front of a client holds similar dynamics. What prominently worsens the situation is when the presenter dedicates his energy in retaining the chronology of words. First line of introduction, then first line of product description, and then first line of conclusion are usually memorised in a parrot-fashion which have a higher

probability of being forgotten amidst the hustle, bustle and anxiety of meeting a client who has arrived from a foreign country especially for the presentation. Remembering words would be existentially more tedious while describing childhood or the product. Visually-aided thinking provides a platform to recollect and retain data that is varied and dynamically categorised which seldom, or never, leads to confusion or stuttering. If the first line of the product description paragraph is forgotten by the presenter, for example, then there is a concrete chance that the sequentiality of the paragraph in itself will be deeply compromised.

To introduce a product, one may break the image of the product into parts, like those diagrams in the biology and physics books, assign functionality to each part like the screen or the fuel tank, its bulleted specifications and start from the top/left/bottom of the product and proceed in a clockwise or anticlockwise mannerism while delivering the details. To introduce a person, one may place that person in an office space through imaginary images, put a name plate with designation on the table, hang 3 plaques on the wall highlighting the prestigious awards earned by the person, position a calendar on the side table highlighting the year 1982 which is the year the person started working as an engineer, and other such designated triggers of information by being creative and innovative to suits one's own fondness.

The visual dissection of content to be remembered and the visual dissection of thoughts, ideas and emotions when content is to be developed, are aesthetically similar in their communicative dynamics.

3. Subjectivity

Amongst the diverse types of writing, descriptive writing is a marvel for professional and personal communicative methodologies as they blend facts and fiction, which is the true beauty of human experiences. To comprehend it fully, one must grapple with its dynamics in experiential reality. Suppose an individual notices a dead-lock on a traffic signal because of an accident. She then visits a tea shop around the corner, orders a tea for herself and casually inquires about the cause and concern of such an accident. She might hear a narration from someone sipping tea that two cars colliding is no big occurrence in a metropolitan like Delhi. What will interest her though, would be reiteration of the event that is not exclusively argumentative or expository in nature. That means that the account should not be holistically opinionated or factual. It should cover the reality of what happened along with an attempt to recreate the same.

The tea-seller herself chose to describe the events with the swift movement of her hands while depicting the swirling speed with which one car dramatically nudged another car (depicted with a soft movement of the shoulder) and then bumped into a motorcyclist (demonstrated through an exaggerated clap) who was thrown into the air, and who stood almost immediately, unharmed by the bitter surprise of the car playing hide and seek with him. An event's singularity, one should comprehend, is deciphered through connotations and denotations. The congestion at the traffic signal is a singular event in the spatio-temporal curvature but one person observes it through the opinionated disenchantment that he has with the city and one observed it solely to reiterate it to customers who will flock her shop throughout the day.

A painting in an art gallery is an event that will be aesthetically deciphered by individuals where few might claim it imposes patriarchy and many might associate it post-war-trauma that affected a huge population after the world wars. A concert is an event that holds singularity but if the reporter holds minimalistic knowledge or liking of music, or even if she does but is inexperienced, the content developed about the event shall be denotative derivation from the totality of the event, not its entirety or even distant connotative attempt as it will lack fundamental concepts of music, its functionality and deliverance.

Along with the visual-aid of recollecting how the event progressed, how the crowd swayed or how the motorcyclist was flung into the air, the mere intent of subjectivity ensures authenticity. Depth of description is enabled by visual-aids and the weight of authenticity, organicity and originality is asserted by the subjectivity of an individual. It is similar to a less than perfect assignment that a student earnestly attempts with regard to his/her understanding of the subject, and is easily noticed by the teacher who is evaluating majority of assignments that are impeccable in their content which in turn leads to a doubt that it might have been compiled from a web browser rather than the webbing of one's own understanding.

4. Specification

In an interview, on being enquired about commuting, a candidate answered that she has travelled far to reach the placement campus. However, another candidate specified that the travel of more than 28 kilometres was tiresome for him. 'A crowd gathered around the accident-site' and 'Nearly 200 people bundled together as the traffic crawled' are sentences which arguably hold a small variation but the variation does succeed slightly in offering specification that is highly observational and enchants the dislocation of the audience, be it a reader or a listener. For the audience to confidently dislocate from the current position and actually relocate to the accident-site, there should be specific building blocks where they will be setting their metaphorical feet and watching the event alongside the speaker. It is a common strategy employed, for example, by stand-up comedians.

The dislocation and relocation of the audience, be it while reading a novel about wizards studying in a distant campus or a comedian explaining humorous blabbering of hawkers in a local Delhi market, is a crisp amalgamation of VASS method itself. Audience can witness the magical campus even though it does not exist, strongly agree with the connotative authenticity of the writer about magic and also know the power of each and every, specific child wizard in the imaginary campus.

The VASS method emphasises a dominant impression where the writer does not tell but rather shows. Vivid sensory

details enhance the affiliation of meaning the reader can hold and choose through denotative and connotative capacities. Through the intent of specification, instead of saying that the relation between person A and person B is no longer good, one can state their relation has turned bitter. Success is always already described by its sweet taste. Rather than telling the reader, what is offered is the sense of taste, for example, and what one associates with it, and thus, success is associated as desirable because it is sweet and not despicable through the taste of bitterness.

Specification decorates heavily through sensory description which uses sight, sound, smell, touch and taste to sketch an impression. Consider three statements: 'he gave her a hug', 'he gave her a warm hug', and 'he gave her a cold shoulder'. The association is etched through the specification which shows the warmth of a hug instead of telling whether it was a comfortable, affectionate hug or a denouncing rejection through body language of shoulder. It is the close association with what is being said or written that the audience accepts as clutches to relocate themselves towards the thoughts, ideas and/or emotions that are being described.

5. Empirical Verification of VASS methodology

If a candidate is asked about their graduation experience in an interview and the candidate replies, 'It was a good experience ma'am, I learnt a lot and had fun as well. It has improved me as a human being'. It is a strongly compiled and composed content as an answer. To consider a different answer, however, through the VASS method would modify such a reply to be slightly more aesthetic. If the candidate approaches the reply through the VASS methodology, their reply would be attuned and morphed as a visual approach of their college campus. The candidate would obviously visualise the college space, and with each space like the classroom, playground or canteen, a different idea, thought and/or emotion may be experienced.

The depth and scaling of these experiences, for example, is foddered by the step of tapping in visual-aids of the campus space which would provide two prominent things- a multidimensional vibrancy to what the content can negotiate while avoiding being a singularity of experience being called campus, college or graduation, and a memorising pattern when the individual enters the placement drive after being prepared to tackle a question about campus life as it has a higher probability of being asked to freshers and interns.

Then the subjectivity of the candidate would move away from being generic and towards a personalised connotative experience of college by being authentic and organic through statements which would sway more like 'Initially I was...' or 'It boosted my self-image that was distraught after JEE'. Through prominent social media platforms and recruitment portals, many employers of leading multinational corporations have recently emphasised that they professionally crave for an authentic resume which has mundane human errors of spacing or grammatical mistakes as they hold heavy a view of application which is original, and not oriented or compiled by an AI driven engine.

The singularity of the designation for which the candidate has applied for is staunchly similar to the singularity of being a student. Through an interview process of more than 300 students in a single stretch, jingled versions of monotonous experiences of college life being 'good' offer a generic attempt made by each consecutive candidate. The sheer moment a candidate articulates an authentic experience which is truly subjective, the negotiation is broadly unconcerned whether the answer is correct or incorrect, but the answer is definitely much appreciated as it is staunchly organic and not processed through templates that are easily and endlessly available on innumerable online platforms.

One may consider a probable statement like 'I believe I have spent the best half-century of months of my life in college; the clamouring lectures, bustling canteens and stinking toilets; they make me glow with a warm memory of my college days'. It decorates as an impressive attempt to justify the expectations aligned with the interview question, and creates a subtle association through specifications that can relocate the panlist(s) to their own college days which were majorly dedicated to the classroom, canteen and playground spaces. They might even smile or smirk.

It is a softly exaggerated articulation solely to emphasise that a slight, yet prominent, caressing effect of specification can effort into an impressive charm, especially when the monotonous nature of conversations, in most professional spaces, has worn down authentic interactions. 'I have been teaching for many years' and 'I have more than two decades of teaching experience' is a difference in content that enables subtle escalation in articulation strategy.

6. Conclusion

The VASS method is an intent to efficiently negotiate communicative situations that are scripted and especially those that are unscripted. Visual-aids provide depth, vibrancy and scaling of memory to content, while subjectivity offers authenticity and originality that is organic, and specification ensures an improved chance of association, possible relocation of the audience and long-lasting impression.

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