

Research on the Development of Slogans under Public Health Emergencies

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Abstract

Since the founding of New China, many public health emergencies have occurred, and the slogans that emerged from them have changed and developed through the ages in terms of contextual characteristics, carriers, and fields of existence. This paper mainly uses online data survey method and literature research method to explore and analyze the characteristics and development of Chinese epidemic prevention slogans under the Patriotic Health Campaign in 1952, Hepatitis A in Shanghai in 1988, Atypical Pneumonia(SARS) in 2003, Influenza A (H1N1) in 2009, Avian Influenza H7N9 in 2013, Novel Coronavirus(COVID-19) in 2020 as examples. On the basis of comparative analysis, we hope to find more convincing and influential slogans to form a good and harmonious anti-epidemic atmosphere in the context of the normalization of the epidemic.

Keywords

Public Health Emergencies; Slogans; Development.

1. Introduction

Since the founding of New China, slogans have played an important social function. According to Han Chengpeng (2008) [1], slogans have a goal-oriented function, a socialization and education function, and a mobilization and motivation function. China has long been known as a "slogan country", and slogans are like a bridge that connects the ideology and discourse authority of the government at one end and the production and life of the people at the other end, which have a direct impact on the people. Governments and administrators at all levels often use short and powerful slogans for social management or activity organization to achieve their social functions. It can be seen that slogans are the window to shape the image of the government and the country, and play an important role in the long-term governance of the country and the people's well-being. Meanwhile, as a public policy discourse, slogans also reflect the governing philosophy, management style and even power structure of managers. The development of slogans in public health emergencies reflect the government's health prevention policy, the inheritance and changes of the Chinese government's health prevention philosophy and management system, and the improvement of the national educational level and economic development level.

This paper mainly collects slogans through online data survey and literature research, and uses case study, discourse analysis and comparative analysis to analyze and interpret the slogans under public health emergencies in China, explore the development of their vocabulary, codes, rhetoric and carriers, and find the inner evolution pattern, so as to help the development of standardized and diversified emergency slogans under public health emergencies in China. The purpose is to provide reference for shaping a good government image and creating a good social atmosphere.

2. Changes in Prevention Slogans: a Linguistic Description of Governance Policies

2.1. The Social Function of Slogans

As the end of the State authority, slogans propagate government policies, indoctrinate and regulate people's thoughts and behaviors in the simplest but most powerful sentences. Since the founding of the New China, with the continuous improvement of the economic level and people's living standard, slogans have also been changing and developing in content and form, with more standardized terms and more diverse forms. In order to grasp the creation and propaganda of slogans in public health emergencies, we collected 224 slogans through web and divided them into six categories according to their propaganda functions: Dissemination of policies (including dissemination of epidemic prevention policy and philosophy, governance methods, etc.), Persuasion, Mobilization, Caution, Intimidation and Encouragement. Dissemination of policies includes "群防群控, 科学防治, 战胜非典", Persuasion includes "早预防, 早发现, 早隔离, 早治疗", Mobilization such as "人人都来参加爱国防疫卫生运动, 彻底打败美帝国主义的细菌战!". Caution and Intimidation are similar in form but different in degree. Intimidation includes "串门就是互相残杀, 聚会就是自寻短见" and Caution includes "外地来人要报告, 故意隐瞒恐坐牢". Encouragement includes "科学与爱必胜". 总量 Statistical analysis of the above slogans yielded the following data:

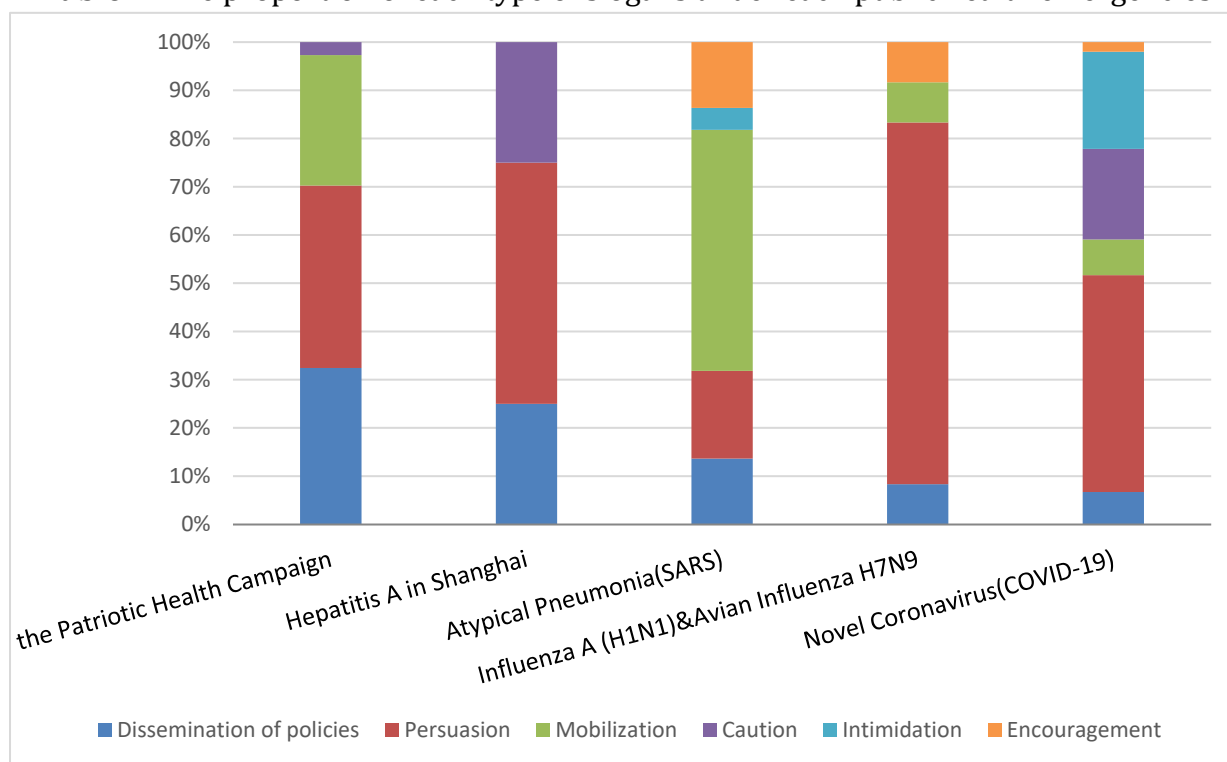
Table 1. Statistical analysis of the above slogans yielded

	the Patriotic Health Campaign	Hepatitis A in Shanghai	Atypical Pneumonia (SARS)	Influenza A (H1N1)	Avian Influenza H7N9	Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)	Summation
Dissemination of policies	12	1	3	1	0	10	27
Persuasion	14	2	4	1	8	67	94
Mobilization	10	0	11	0	1	11	35
Caution	1	1	0	0	0	28	30
Intimidation	0	0	1	0	0	30	31
Encouragement	0	0	3	1	0	3	7
Summation	37	4	22	3	9	149	224

According to the above table, in the total slogans for public health emergencies over the years, the slogans in the Persuasion accounted for about 42%, accounting for the largest proportion. Mobilization slogans accounted for about 15.6%, Intimidation slogans accounted for about 13.8%, Caution slogans accounted for about 13.4%, Dissemination of policies slogans accounted for about 12%, and Encouragement slogans accounted for about 3.1%. In order to explore the evolution of the social function of epidemic prevention slogans, we tabulated the proportion of each type of slogans under each public health emergencies as Table 2.

The above table shows that Dissemination of policies slogans gradually decreases. Persuasion slogans occupy the main position in all public health emergencies. Encouragement slogans and Intimidation slogans appear more often in Atypical Pneumonia (SARS) and subsequent public health emergencies. Caution slogans and Mobilization slogans have a stable proportion in all public health emergencies. The number of Mobilization slogans increased rapidly to 50% in Atypical Pneumonia. This is because Atypical Pneumonia was highly transmissible and had a high mortality rate, so the slogans needed to alleviate people's panic and call on people to unite and improve the level of health prevention.

Table 2. The proportion of each type of slogans under each public health emergencies



2.2. Textual Presentation of Slogans

According to Norman Fairclough's discourse analysis theory, there is a three-dimensional model of discourse analysis: first is text, including vocabulary, grammar, semantics and discourse organization; second is discursive practice, including how producers create texts and how receivers interpret and consume them; and third is social practice. It means whether the existing discourse order is reproduced and reconstructed, and what influence is given or received to established ideologies and rights. [3] Among them, sociocultural practice is the foundation, discursive practice is the path, and symbolic text is the final presentation. We will select the textual level in discourse analysis to analyze the slogans of public health emergencies.

1. Transitivity

In the discourse practice, the causality and responsibility of the "transitivity" are always explicit or ambiguous. [3] About 79.5% of the slogans of public health emergencies reflect transitivity, such as "不喝生水喝开水(the Patriotic Health Campaign slogan)" "勤通风, 勤洗手, 勤洗脸, 勤饮水 (Atypical Pneumonia slogan in 2003)" "注意饮食卫生, 预防 '病从口入' (Avian Influenza A H7N9 slogan)" "不聚会, 少出行, 戴口罩, 防疫情" "为了家里老小, 请打新冠疫苗" "疫情还在, 口罩勿摘 (Novel Coronavirus slogan)". These slogans omit the actor, and the default actor is the entire population, spreading more widely with stronger appeal. The slogans like "构建防非坚固长城, 确保人民健康安全 (Atypical Pneumonia slogan)" and "复工复产要推进, 疫情防控不松劲(Novel Coronavirus slogan)" blur the subject of responsibility for epidemic prevention. These slogans make the government which has public power to integrate into the camp of the people and build a more harmonious and united social relationship.

As the Novel Coronavirus spread quickly and widely, most people in the villages were not highly civilized in terms of hygiene and were reluctant to cooperate with the epidemic prevention requirements such as home isolation and wearing masks, so series of Intimidation slogans emerged. For example, "带病回村, 不孝子孙". It blurs the boundary of authority and the identity of those responsible. Anyone who may carry Novel Coronavirus is called an "unfilial person", which is undoubtedly a kind of intimidation to the village people who put family ethics

and morality first. For example, the slogan "出门打断腿，还嘴打掉牙" emphasizes the necessity and non-resistance of home isolation, and expresses the consequences of disobeying the epidemic prevention requirements. It do have a deterrent effect to a certain extent but gives people an illusion of violent law enforcement by village cadres, reflecting the simplicity and brutality of public management and the lack of civilized standards of slogans.

2. Nominalization

"Nominalization" refers to the materialization of actions or processes into entities, blurring time, conditions, situations and participants to obscure the root of rights and avoid attribution of responsibilities. A nominalized text tends to describe an artificial, subjective event or change as an inevitable and altered fact. [3]

In the evolution of public health emergency slogans, the "Nominalized" discourse evolved toward a more scientific and standardized direction, which had a fixed effect and made the content of the slogans more reasonable. The initial slogans such as "远离禽类一小步，人类进步一大步(H7N9 Influenza slogan)" describe "away from poultry" as the basis for human progress, blurring the correlation between the two sides and creating a causal relationship that did not exist to call on people to avoid contact with poultry and avian flu. Later slogans such as "疫情就是命令，防控就是责任(Novel Coronavirus slogan)" emphasize that the epidemic is an order from the government and prevention and control is an administrative responsibility, describing prevention and control as a national governance responsibility that cannot be delayed or neglected, giving the people psychological comfort and action protection.

3. Metaphor

When we represent things through a particular metaphor, we are constructing our reality in a particular way. [3] Looking at the slogans of public health emergencies, we found that the slogan creators have always used "war" as a metaphor for the government and people's epidemic prevention process, and the metaphors have become more and more frequent and far-reaching, almost reaching the level of convention.

For example, "坚决与危害川南人民的传染病作斗争！(Patriotic Health Campaign slogan)", which regards infectious diseases as the enemy and calls on the masses to fight against them. Another example is the series of slogans such as "抗击非典，人类必胜" and "众志成城，抗击非典(Atypical Pneumonia slogan)". The object of "fight" should be the enemy, but here the object of fight is SARS pneumonia, and 27.3% of the slogans in SARS have SARS pneumonia as the object of fight. Another example is "家家动员，人人参与，打赢疫情防控战(Novel Coronavirus slogan)", which directly uses "the war against the epidemic" as the name of the war. The concept of epidemic prevention and control as a war has been rooted in the minds of the public. The metaphor of war constructs a reality that all members of society need to work together to resist epidemic invasion, which helps the viewers of the slogans, i.e. the people, to pay more attention to health and epidemic prevention.

2.3. Form and Carrier of Slogans

In the past public health emergencies, the form and carrier of slogans have been diversified. In terms of the form of slogans, traditional culture, popular culture and folk life have been incorporated into the creation of slogans. For example, the slogans "现在请吃的饭都是鸿门宴" and "一人睡觉全家光荣，全家睡觉精忠报国" combine historical and cultural allusions that have a general consensus, making it easier for the slogan audience to understand the epidemic prevention requirements. The slogans "这个春节莫瞎串，冠状病毒早防范", "武汉回来莫乱窜，左邻右舍捏把汗" and "武汉回来莫乱跑，传播肺炎不得了" are combined with dialects, making slogans spread among the people in the region (Hubei Province)easily, and also promoting the development of the dialect in line with the society and the times. The slogans "

不带口罩你试试，试试就逝世" and "预防千万条，口罩第一条" are a combination of Internet phrases and movie lines and other popular culture, showing a diversified style of discourse.

In the spring of 1952, when the U.S. launched germ warfare against China, a "patriotic health campaign" was launched in China. A large number of posters were created and printed by the patriotic health campaign committees, health authorities and health clinics (as shown in figure 1). These posters combined hygiene concepts, preventive measures and epidemic prevention slogans to promote the development of mass hygiene and epidemic prevention campaigns.



Figure 1. Posters

Since the reform and opening up, the design of slogans has become increasingly refined, localized and stylized [4], and the carrier of slogans has been innovated in both economically developed and less developed regions. The carriers of Hepatitis A slogans in 1988 used newspaper traditional paper media and handwritten banner slogans (as shown in figure 2 and figure 3).



Figure 2. Handwritten banner slogans(a)

Figure 3. Handwritten banner slogans(b)

With the development of modern media technology, computers, television, and the Internet have promoted the diversification of social life, and the carriers of public health emergencies slogans have expanded from handwritten banners to printed banners, Internet posters, bulletin boards, and publicity pages (as shown in figure 4 and figure 5).



Figure 4. Bulletin boards



Figure 5. Publicity pages

3. Conclusion and Recommendations

Long before the establishment of New China, during the Agrarian Revolutionary War, Chairman Mao Zedong pointed out that "some very simple slogans, drawings and lectures made the peasants as if each had attended a political school for a while, and the effect was very wide and quick." The evolving slogans have shown their role in "changing the customs and transforming the country" and have achieved fruitful results.

After the statistical analysis above, the author summarizes the development of the slogans for public health emergencies into three stages: the germination period, the development period and the prosperity period. The budding period started with the patriotic health campaign in 1952, and due to the low literacy level of the masses, with an illiteracy rate of nearly 80%, an emergency language landscape combining simplified character slogans and posters emerged to assist the masses in understanding and cooperating with the national health and epidemic prevention policy. With the gradual improvement of people's living standard and literacy level, Shanghai hepatitis A slogans in the form of newspapers and handwritten banners were used to promote the concept of health epidemic prevention in 1988. In the early stage of the SARS outbreak, the government did not pay enough attention to it, and the dissemination of slogans mainly relied on handwritten banners and paper. The slogans of 2009 H1N1 influenza A and 2013 H7N9 avian flu inherited and developed the slogans of the "SARS" period. The development of slogans in the "SARS" period, colorful posters and community bulletin boards combining the slogans and knowledge of epidemic prevention emerged. The boom period was represented by the New Crown Pneumonia in 2020. During this period, due to the massive outbreak of the epidemic worldwide and the popularity of the Internet, the government to the public were concerned about the development of the epidemic, and there was a spurt in the creation and propaganda of slogans. In addition to the slogans posted by the government in large shopping malls, transportation hubs, schools and hospitals, grassroots people also created a number of "hardcore slogans" on their own initiative, enriching the slogan system for public health emergencies.

We believe that in the future, the creation of slogans should be less violent and more integrated with traditional culture and pop culture, and closer to the psychological expectations of the people. At the same time, we should also pay attention to the civilization and standardization of slogans, improve their persuasive power and influence, and better serve the national health epidemic prevention cause.

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