Semiotics as Strategy

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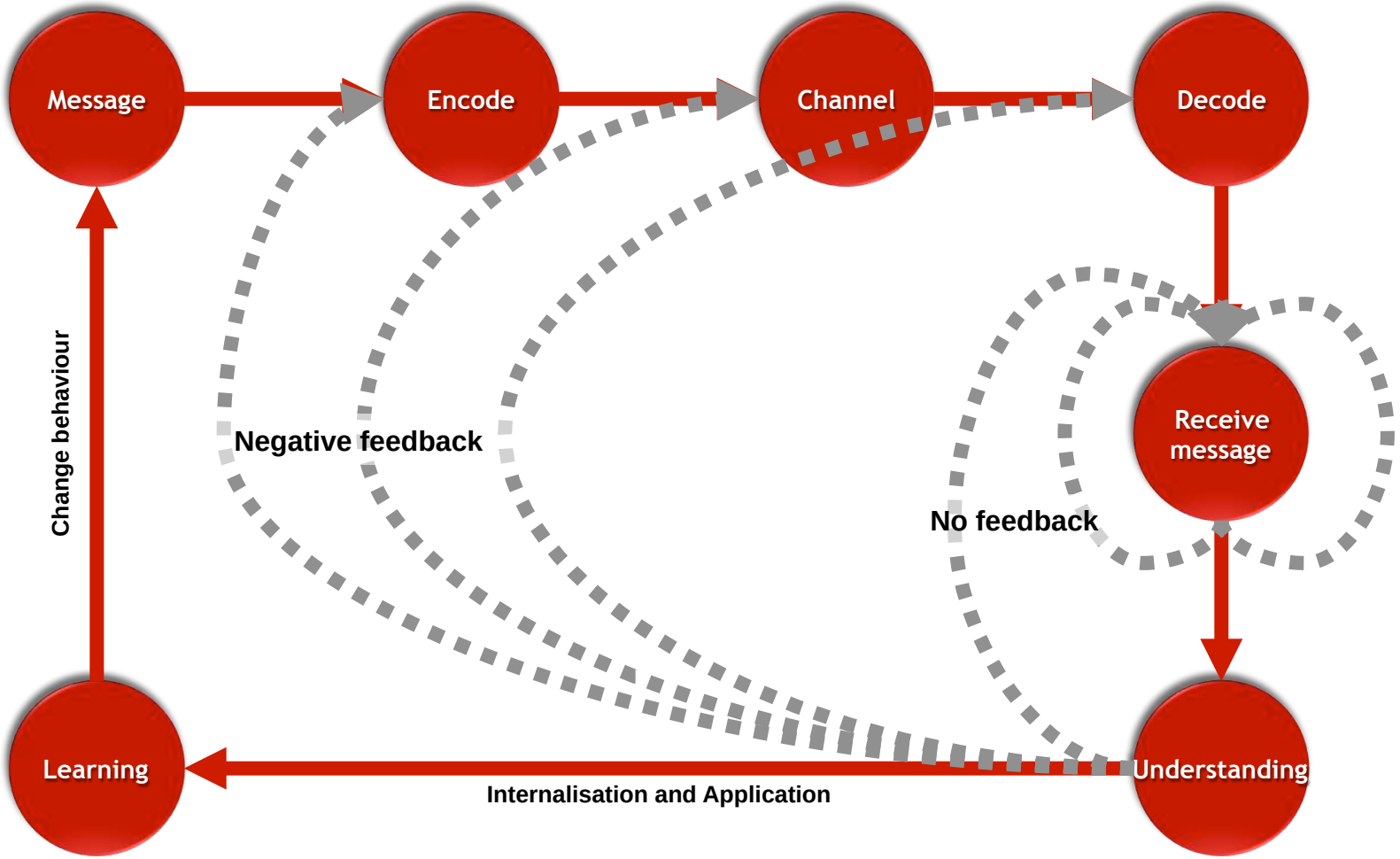
Managing the message



Smith and Blackman - Bled, Slovenia; Nov 2001

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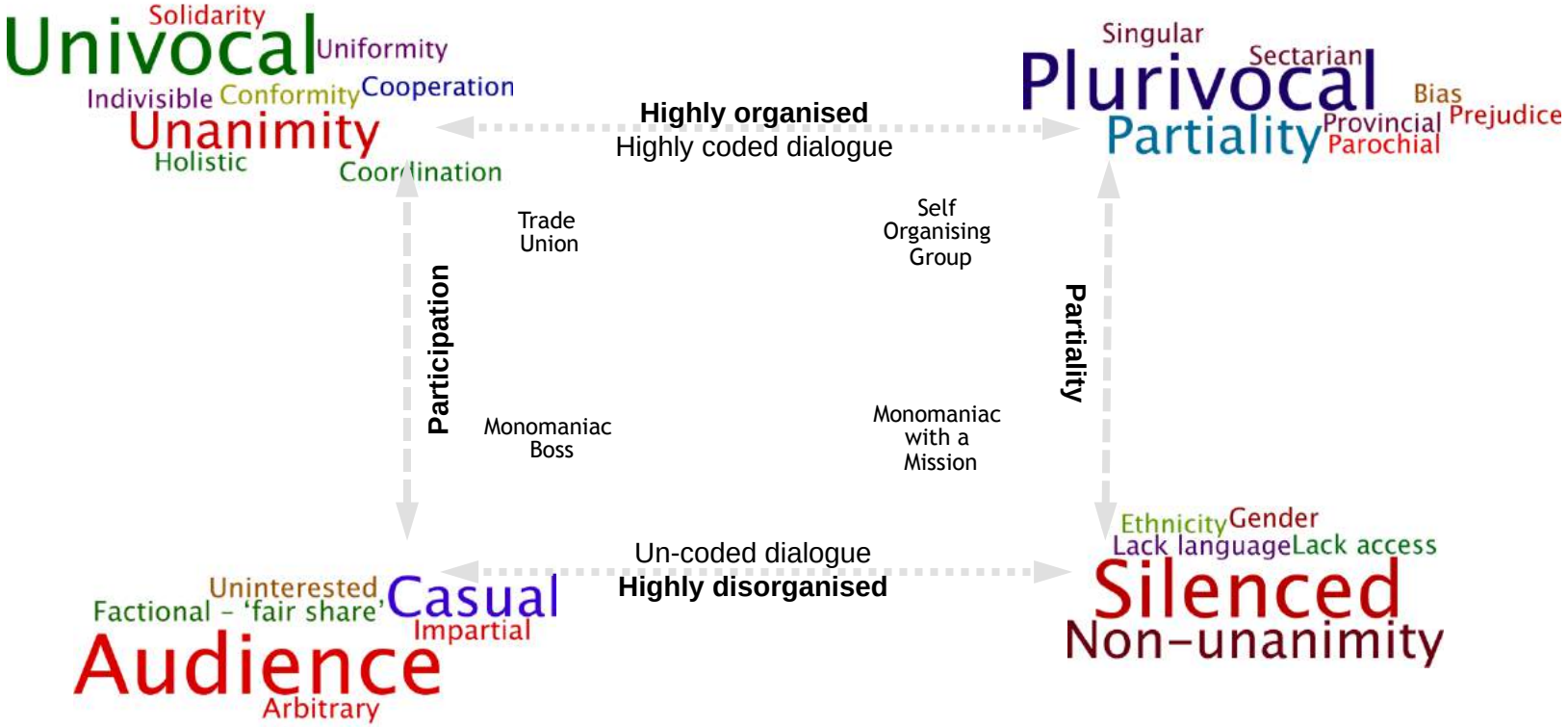
Semiotics of Strategy Conversation



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Case Study – Large IT (CRM) Project

- Lack of attention to codes
- Strategy conversation implicit rather than explicit state
- Large number of actors ‘taking a position
- This plurivocal paradigm quickly morphed into new
- This new story became the new univocal voice
- As a consequence cynicism and doubting was on a totemic scale

Case study signs

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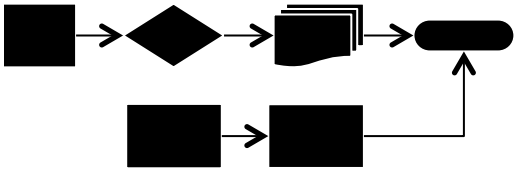
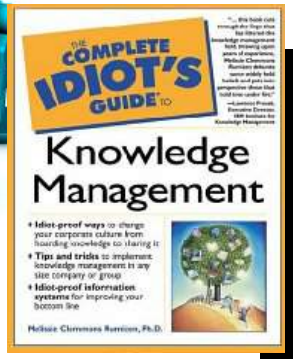
Case Study – Process re-engineering

- This failure immediately led to a new strategy discourse
- New semiotics were developed by staff to codify processes
- New signifier's helped staff to signify better their activities
- Allowing staff to develop new codes and conventions helped to maintain a univocal voice
- Symbols were more believable

Case study signs

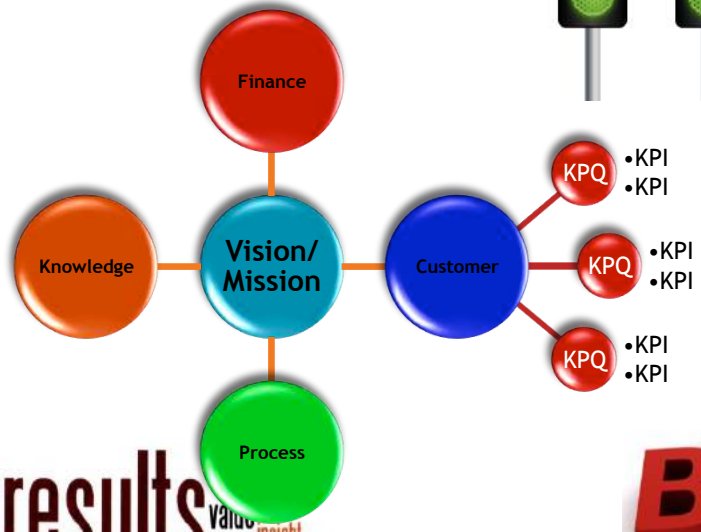




Case Study – Balanced Scorecard

- Univocal paradigm to moderate a stramash of plurivocal voices
- New signs and a new narrative to facilitate participation
- Introduce a more holistic franchise
- Conversation was deconstructed and a new one formed
- Deconstruction opened the door to the plurivocal
- New univocal voice began to coalesce
- Caucus grew as understanding of new signs gained a growing convention of syntax

Case study signs



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