

Effective Communication Strategies In Business: The Use Of Ambiguous Sentences To Avoid Communication

RA Nabila Allya Salsabilla¹, Havis Aravik², Choiriyah³, Fadilla⁴,
Dwi Noviani⁵, Emilia Sari⁶

^{1,2,3,4}Sekolah Tinggi Ekonomi dan Bisnis Syariah (STEBIS) Indo Global Mandiri

⁵Institut Agama Islam Al-Qur'an Al-Ittifaqiah Indralaya

⁶STIQ Al-Lathifiyyah Palembang

Email: ranabilaallyas@email.com, havis@stebisigm.ac.id, choi@stebisigm.ac.id,
dilla@stebisigm.ac.id, dwi.noviani@iaiqi.ac.id, emilia@stiqlathifiyyah.ac.id

Abstrak

Komunikasi bisnis merupakan aspek fundamental dalam kelancaran operasional dan pencapaian tujuan organisasi. Namun, masih banyak ditemukan penggunaan kalimat yang ambigu dalam praktik komunikasi profesional, yang menyebabkan miskomunikasi, salah tafsir, hingga konflik kerja. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pentingnya penggunaan kalimat yang tidak ambigu sebagai strategi komunikasi efektif dalam lingkungan bisnis. Metode yang digunakan adalah pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif melalui studi literatur dan analisis studi kasus komunikasi di lingkungan kerja. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penggunaan bahasa yang tidak jelas atau multitafsir berdampak negatif terhadap pemahaman pesan, koordinasi tim, dan pengambilan keputusan. Sebaliknya, penyampaian pesan dengan struktur kalimat yang sistematis, bahasa yang baku, dan pemilihan diksi yang tepat mampu meningkatkan efisiensi kerja, memperkuat relasi profesional, dan membangun budaya komunikasi yang sehat dalam organisasi. Penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa kejelasan bahasa dalam komunikasi bisnis bukan hanya persoalan teknis linguistik, tetapi bagian integral dari manajemen strategi organisasi. Oleh karena itu, dibutuhkan pelatihan komunikasi, penyusunan pedoman kebahasaan, serta kesadaran kolektif dalam membangun komunikasi yang profesional dan produktif.

Kata Kunci: *Komunikasi Bisnis, Kalimat Tidak Ambigu, Strategi Komunikasi, Efektivitas Kerja, Miskomunikasi*

Abstract

Business communication is a fundamental aspect in ensuring operational efficiency and achieving organizational goals. However, the frequent use of ambiguous sentences in professional communication practices often leads to miscommunication, misinterpretation, and workplace conflict. This study aims to analyze the importance of using unambiguous sentences as a strategy for effective communication in business environments. The research employs a descriptive qualitative approach through literature review and case study analysis of communication within the workplace. The results show that unclear or ambiguous language negatively impacts message comprehension, team coordination, and decision-making processes. On the other hand, delivering messages using structured sentences, standard language, and precise diction significantly enhances work efficiency, strengthens professional relationships, and fosters a healthy communication culture within organizations. This study

emphasizes that clarity in language is not merely a linguistic concern but an integral part of strategic management in business. Therefore, communication training, language guidelines, and collective awareness are essential in building professional and productive workplace communication.

Keywords: *Business Communication, Unambiguous Sentences, Communication Strategy, Work Effectiveness, Miscommunication*

Introduction

Communication is an important element in all aspects of human life, including in the work environment and the business world. In the context of modern business, communication is not just a process of conveying information, but the main means of building professional relationships, conveying work instructions, establishing cooperation, and creating trust between companies and customers, partners, and individuals within the organisation. The effectiveness of a business communication will greatly affect the smooth operation, productivity, and image of the company itself.

Indonesian as the national language and official language of the country has a central role in supporting the smooth communication, both in the scope of government and the business world. The Indonesian language used in business communication is required to be formal, straightforward, and easily understood by various parties. However, in practice, it is not uncommon to find ambiguous or inappropriate language use in the business world, especially due to the influence of informal language or slang that is increasingly commonly used in everyday communication, including in professional communication. This phenomenon poses its own challenges, where ambiguous sentences can lead to multiple interpretations, misunderstandings, and even unnecessary work conflicts.

In today's digital age, where business communication is mostly done online through media such as email, instant messaging, virtual meetings, and other digital collaboration platforms, the risk of miscommunication is higher. This is due to limitations in capturing non-verbal expressions and social context, as well as low attention to the structure of the language used. Therefore, clarity and precision in

language become crucial aspects in maintaining the effectiveness of business communication.

Communication problems that often occur in the business world include errors in constructing clear and unambiguous sentences, the use of terms that do not fit the context, and low awareness of differences in the cultural and linguistic background of the recipient of the message. If not anticipated, this can lead to disruptions in workflow, erroneous decision-making, and a decline in the quality of working relationships, both internal and external.

The results of the study show that ineffective communication, especially due to inappropriate language use, can be an obstacle to achieving business goals. On the other hand, the use of correct language and communication strategies tailored to the cultural context and technical conditions can strengthen teamwork, facilitate business negotiations, and improve overall organisational efficiency and effectiveness.

As such, understanding and implementing effective communication strategies in business is an urgent need, not only for individual professionals, but also for entire organisations. The use of unambiguous sentences, appropriate word choice, and awareness of audience diversity are integral parts of the communication competencies that must be possessed in today's world of work and business.

Literature Review

1. Definition of Business Communication

Business communication is the process of exchanging information, ideas, and messages carried out in a professional context to achieve certain goals such as work coordination, promotion, customer service, and inter-agency relations. Business communication is an activity that aims to convey messages to target audiences both internally and externally in order to build mutually beneficial relationships. This communication includes oral and written communication conducted in various forms such as meetings, reports, emails, presentations, and digital communication media. In this context, message clarity is very important because wrong or unclear information can cause miscommunication, reduce work efficiency, and even cause internal and external conflicts within the organisation.

2. Language and Message Clarity in Business Communication

The use of precise, straightforward, and unambiguous language is an important foundation in business communication. Effective communication must fulfil the principle of 'common meaning' between the sender and receiver of the message. This means that the message conveyed must be understood precisely by the recipient as intended by the sender. The use of ambiguous sentences or the use of non-standardised terms can lead to multiple interpretations, which in turn can hinder communication and work processes.

In the digital era, written communication in the form of emails, short messages, and official documents is dominant. Therefore, the ability to compose sentences that are effective and do not cause multiple interpretations is an important competency for professionals. sentence structure in business communication must be structured systematically, use appropriate diction, and avoid slang or slang that is not in accordance with the professional context.

3. Effective Communication in the Work Environment

Effective communication in the world of work does not only rely on the clarity of the message, but also involves understanding the cultural context, company norms, and the media used. states that in organisations, effective communication can increase productivity, strengthen teamwork, and build healthy relationships between employees. Ineffective communication on the contrary can cause frustration, conflict, and reduce performance.

Communication effectiveness is strongly influenced by the way the message is delivered, the media used, and the perception of the recipient. For example, in online communication, technical errors such as signal interference or body language limitations demand accuracy in word choice and sentence structure so that the message can be conveyed properly.

4. Ambiguity in Communication and its Impact

Ambiguity in communication refers to unclear messages that can lead to multiple understandings. Ambiguity occurs when messages lack clarity of intent or are improperly structured. In a business environment, ambiguity can lead to various negative impacts such as misunderstandings in work instructions, failure in the negotiation process, and errors in decision making.

In addition, ambiguity can damage professional relationships and reduce trust in the work team. Therefore, communication in business should avoid nonstandard phrases or terms, and pay attention to the context in which language is used, both in written and oral communication.

5. Communication Strategy in the Business World

Communication strategy in business is a planned approach to delivering effective messages to target audiences. Marketing and internal communication strategies must consider the use of media, audience segmentation, and the messages conveyed. In the context of internal organisations, a good communication strategy will ensure that every employee receives and understands information in the same way, thus creating harmony in carrying out tasks.

A communication strategy model often used in business is the SOSTAC (Situation, Objectives, Strategy, Tactics, Action, Control) model, which emphasises situation analysis and systematic messaging. Integrated and well-coordinated communication is the key to success in achieving organisational goals.

Research Methods

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach that aims to understand and describe in depth the phenomenon of using ambiguous sentences in business communication and its impact on communication effectiveness in a professional work environment. This method was chosen because it allows researchers to explore contextually and interpretatively various communication dynamics that cannot be measured quantitatively. Data were collected through literature studies and case studies. The literature study was conducted by reviewing various references such as scientific journals, communication theory books, and relevant articles to gain a

conceptual understanding of effective communication strategies and the use of unambiguous language. Meanwhile, case studies were conducted by analysing real examples of business communication practices, both in the form of written documents such as emails or work reports, as well as observations of professional interactions in the work environment. The data analysis process was carried out systematically through three stages, namely data reduction to filter out important information, data presentation in descriptive narrative form, and conclusion drawing to formulate the main findings that answer the problem formulation. To ensure the validity of the results, this research uses data triangulation techniques, namely by comparing information from various sources and linking it to existing communication theories. With this method, it is hoped that the research can produce a complete picture of the importance of language clarity in business communication and formulate effective and applicable communication strategies in an increasingly complex work environment.

Result and Discussion

The results of this study show that the use of non-standard language and ambiguous sentences in the context of business communication has the potential to cause various negative impacts, both on the smoothness of the work process and on the quality of professional relationships within the organisation. In the world of work, communication is the main tool for conveying ideas, directions, reports, and negotiations concerning the interests of the organisation. However, in reality, not all individuals in organisations have sufficient awareness and competence in crafting effective communication messages, especially in written communication. This is exacerbated by the trend of using informal language or slang that is unconsciously carried over into professional communication, whether through emails, instant messages, or work presentations. As a result, there is a mismatch of meaning between the sender and receiver of the message, leading to miscommunication or even failure to understand.

Through a literature review and observation of real-life cases in the workplace, this research identified that many problems in business communication stem from the use of phrases with unclear intentions. For example, the use of phrases such as 'please follow up soon', without a specific timeline or explicit division of tasks, often leads to different interpretations among employees. In some cases, this has led to delays in task completion, overlapping work, or even internal conflicts stemming from incorrect assumptions. In remote work organisations, the use of written language is dominant and more prone to misunderstandings as it is not accompanied by nonverbal communication that usually helps in capturing the full meaning of the context.

The study also showed that differences in cultural background, education level, age, and communication habits influence how individuals understand a message. In companies with cross-generational teams, for example, it was found that younger generations (millennials and gen Z) tend to use contemporary terms or abbreviations that are not always understood by more senior colleagues. Conversely, the use of overly formal language styles by the older generation is sometimes perceived as too stiff or uncommunicative by the younger generation. In this context, different perceptions between team members become a challenge in creating harmonious and efficient communication.

The study also noted that the use of Indonesian language in accordance with linguistic rules is proven to increase the effectiveness of communication in organisations. Sentences that are arranged systematically, use appropriate diction, and avoid double meanings are easier to understand and are able to convey messages accurately. In internal communication, the use of standardised language creates a standard of professionalism and represents the credibility of the company. In addition, communication designed with attention to language structure, message purpose and audience characteristics has been shown to strengthen teamwork, speed up decision-making and reduce the risk of miscommunication.

Apart from the language aspect itself, the results also underline the importance of an overall communication strategy. A communication strategy designed with a systematic approach, such as the SOSTAC (Situation, Objectives, Strategy, Tactics, Action, Control) model, allows organisations to plan messages, select appropriate

media, set clear goals, and evaluate the results of their communications. Research shows that organisations with internal communication guidelines tend to experience fewer miscommunications and are quicker to resolve conflicts that arise.

Furthermore, the research highlights that individual awareness of the importance of straightforward and unambiguous sentences needs to be instilled early on through business communication training. Employees need to be equipped with an understanding of the importance of conveying information clearly, adapting language style to the situation, and ensuring that the message is received and understood as intended by the recipient. Organisations that invest in communication competency development tend to have more solid work teams, a more collaborative work culture, and more efficient operational processes.

The results of this research emphasize that the use of unambiguous sentences is one of the main factors in creating effective business communication. The use of proper and correct language not only helps in conveying accurate information but also enhances the professional image of both individuals and organizations as a whole. Therefore, it is important for every businessperson and professional to pay attention to linguistic aspects in every form of communication, both oral and written, in order to minimize the potential for misunderstandings that could hinder the achievement of organizational goals.

Communication plays a central role in carrying out every business activity. It not only serves as a tool for conveying messages but also forms the foundation for coordination, decision-making, building interpersonal relationships, conflict resolution, and establishing the organization's image and reputation. In this context, the effectiveness of communication becomes one of the determining factors for the success of an organization in carrying out its functions. This research specifically discusses the importance of using unambiguous sentences as part of an effective communication strategy in the business world. The use of ambiguous sentences not only makes the message unclear but also poses a risk of misinterpretation, task execution errors, and even failure to achieve communication goals. This becomes very crucial, especially in organizations with complex work structures, intensive

collaborative systems, and high cross-departmental and cross-cultural communication.

In various observed case studies, it was found that miscommunication within organizations often stems from inefficient sentence structures or inappropriate word choices. Phrases like "to be followed up immediately," "if there's time," or "waiting for confirmation" are examples of sentences that are too open to interpretation. In a dynamic and fast-paced work environment, sentences like these cause differences in perception among individuals, leading to delays in work, dissatisfaction from superiors, or even conflicts among coworkers. Therefore, in the professional world, clarity in conveying intentions and deadlines is essential, for example, by replacing vague statements with sentences like "Please send the report by 3:00 PM WIB today." This sentence is not only clear in terms of time, but also conveys the urgency and responsibility that the recipient must fulfill.

Another fact found in this study is that communication challenges are also exacerbated by cultural diversity, age, and educational background within an organization. Cross-generational communication, for example, shows differences in language style preferences. The younger generation tends to use informal, concise communication styles, sometimes even mixed with foreign terms or digital slang. Meanwhile, the senior generation prefers a formal, complete communication style that follows standard language structure. This mismatch, if not managed properly, can lead to miscommunication and even conflict among team members. Similarly, in a cross-cultural context, differing interpretations of the meaning of certain words can lead to confusion. A word that sounds neutral in one culture may be considered offensive or impolite in another culture.

In communication theory, this phenomenon can be explained through the concept of semantic noise by Shannon and Weaver, which states that communication disturbances can occur due to a mismatch in meaning between the sender and the receiver of the message. Ambiguous sentences are a real form of semantic noise that most commonly occurs in business communication. When the sender of the message does not pay attention to the aspects of clarity and audience context, the likelihood of the message being misinterpreted will be very high. This is also in line with Howard Giles' communication accommodation theory, which emphasizes the importance of

adapting communication styles to different audiences. In the workplace, the ability to adjust language style becomes the key to maintaining effective communication among team members, superiors, subordinates, and external partners.

The research results also show that organizations that have internal communication guidelines tend to be better able to avoid miscommunication. These guidelines usually include the use of agreed-upon words and terms, writing style in emails, official communication templates, and communication standards in meetings. For example, companies that adopt the principle of “clear, concise, and straightforward” communication tend to have a healthy, open, and non-multi-interpretable communication culture. This is important, especially in online communication, where non-verbal signals such as intonation, facial expressions, or body language cannot be conveyed directly. In this condition, only written language is the main determinant of the success of conveying meaning. Furthermore, an effective business communication strategy must also include training and coaching for employees to get used to using appropriate and effective language in conveying ideas, reports, or work instructions. This training not only trains the skills of writing emails or speaking in meetings, but also forms a critical mindset in composing messages logically, concisely, and free from ambiguity. Employees need to understand that good communication is not measured by the length of the sentence, but by the extent to which the message can be understood completely and accurately by the recipient. In this training, it is also important to raise awareness of the importance of message confirmation (feedback) so that a complete two-way communication process can occur.

At the strategic level, organizations need to integrate communication strategies into their management systems and work culture. One relevant approach is the SOSTAC model, which helps companies to systematically plan communication: starting from situation analysis (Situation), goal setting (Objectives), communication strategy determination (Strategy), description of delivery tactics (Tactics), implementation (Action), to the evaluation and control process (Control). In this context, the use of unambiguous sentences is at the tactical and implementation stage,

where the effectiveness of the communication strategy is highly dependent on how the message is encoded by the sender. If the sentence structure used already contains the potential for ambiguity from the start, then the risk of communication strategy failure becomes very high. Therefore, effective communication in an organization is not only the responsibility of the communications or public relations department, but the responsibility of all elements of the organization. Every individual, from staff level to top management, must have the awareness and ability to communicate appropriately, efficiently, and contextually. This awareness must be part of the organizational culture so that every work process can run in a coordinated and harmonious manner. Good communication not only ensures that messages are delivered, but also creates an inclusive, open and conflict-free work environment. Considering various relevant findings and theories, it can be concluded that the use of unambiguous sentences is a fundamental element in an effective communication strategy in the business world. This is not just a matter of grammar or linguistics, but is directly related to the quality of work, productivity and integrity of relationships between individuals within the organization. Therefore, developing professional communication that is oriented towards clarity of message should be a top priority in human resource management and organizational culture.

Conclusion

This study examines the importance of using unambiguous sentences in business communication practices as part of an effective communication strategy in a professional work environment. Based on the research results obtained through literature studies and real case analysis, it can be concluded that sentences that are structured unclearly or ambiguously are at high risk of causing misunderstandings, multiple interpretations, and miscommunication between the sender and recipient of the message. In the business world that demands accuracy, efficiency, and speed of decision-making, miscommunication like this can have fatal consequences for smooth operations, professional relationships between individuals, and the achievement of organizational goals.

Effective communication depends not only on the content or message to be conveyed, but also on the method of delivery, sentence structure, and the right choice

of words according to the context of the audience. Unambiguous sentences—which are characterized by a systematic structure, straightforward language, and clarity of intent—have been shown to improve message understanding, strengthen work coordination, and minimize the potential for conflict due to differences in interpretation. In an increasingly complex and cross-generational and cross-cultural work context, clarity of language becomes increasingly important so that all members of the organization have the same understanding of the message being conveyed.

In addition, awareness and ability to use good and correct language in business communication still need to be improved in many organizations. There are still many individuals who unconsciously mix formal and informal language in work situations that require assertiveness and clarity. Therefore, an effective communication strategy must include language training, the preparation of written communication guidelines, and the habit of using standard and professional sentences in all forms of business communication. From the results of this study, it can also be concluded that organizations that have clear and consistent internal communication standards tend to be more successful in building a healthy and productive communication culture. Communication that is built on clarity of message and understanding of the audience not only speeds up the work process, but also creates an inclusive, respectful, and conflict-free work environment.

References

- Bachtiar, A. (2022). Strategi Komunikasi Politik PDI-P Menjelang Pemilu 2024 di Masa Pandemi COVID-19: Refleksi Partisipasi Politik Masyarakat di Era Modern Dalam Mewujudkan Demokrasi. *Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi*, 1(3), 241–254.
- Firdaus, T. I. (2023). Representation of the Hedonism of the Main Character in Kevin Kwan's Chinese Novel Rich Girlfriend. *Syntax Idea*, 5(7), 883–892. <https://doi.org/10.46799/syntax-idea.v5i7.2416>
- Kurniawan. (2017). Pemanfaatan Media Sosial Instagram Sebagai Komunikasi Pemasaran Modern Pada Batik Burneh Puguh Kurniawan Universitas Trunojoyo Madura. *Kompetensi*, 11(4), 217–225. <http://journal.trunojoyo.ac.id/kompetensi/article/view/3533>

- Kusniadji, S. (2016). Strategi Komunikasi Pemasaran Dalam Kegiatan Pemasaran Produk Consumer Goods (Studi Kasus Pada PT Expand Berlian Mulia Di Semarang) Suherman. *Jurnal Komunikasi*, 8(1), 83–98.
- Miftah, M. (2019). Strategi Komunikasi Efektif Dalam Pembelajaran. *Jurnal Teknodik*, XII(2), 084–094. <https://doi.org/10.32550/teknodik.v12i2.473>
- Mulitawati, I. M., & Retnasary, M. (2020). Strategi Komunikasi Pemasaran dalam Membangun Brand Image Melalui Sosial Media Instagram (Studi kasus deskriptif komunikasi pemasaran prodak polycrol forte melalui akun instagram @ahlinyaobatmaag). *Komunikologi: Jurnal Pengembangan Ilmu Komunikasi Dan Sosial*, 4(1), 23. <https://doi.org/10.30829/komunikologi.v4i1.7616>
- Vebrina, K. Y., Kinasih, L., Muddalifa, K., Wulandari, L. P. R., Rosid, M. H. Al, & Arum, D. P. (2024). Strategi Komunikasi Efektif Dalam Bisnis Penerapan Kalimat Yang Tidak Ambigu Untuk Menghindari Gagal Paham. *Journal of Management and Innovation Entrepreneurship (JMIE)*, 1(3), 492–497. <https://doi.org/10.59407/jmie.v1i3.609>

Effective Communication Strategies In Business: The Use Of Ambiguous Sentences
To Avoid Communication

**RA Nabila Allya Salsabilla, Havis Aravik, Choiriyah, Fadilla⁴, Dwi Noviani,
Emilia Sari**