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Discerning Communication Ethics in Ancient Jain Literature: Revelation from Jain Āgamas

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Abstract

Communication, as a fundamental human function, plays a crucial role in shaping personal development and social harmony. In the contemporary era of rapid digital interaction, where misinformation, impulsive expression, and ethical lapses in speech are increasingly prevalent, the need for a value-based framework of communication has become more urgent than ever. This paper explores the concept of communication ethics as presented in ancient Jain literature, particularly the Jain Āgamas, which offer a profound and systematic framework for mindful, restrained, and responsible speech.

Drawing upon key canonical texts such as the *Praśnavyākaraṇa Sūtra*, *Sthānāṅga Sūtra*, *Upāsakadaśāṅga Sūtra* and, *Daśavaikālika Sūtra*, the study analyses the principles governing right communication, including truthfulness (*satya*), non-violence (*ahiṃsā*), restraint (*gupti*), and carefulness (*samiti*). A significant teaching from the *Daśavaikālika Sūtra* states: “बहु सुहिं कन्नेहिं बहु अच्छीहिं पिच्छ । न यदिद्रे सुयं सव्वं भिक्खु अक्खाउमरिहइ ।” (8.20). This verse underscores the importance of careful listening, observation, and verification before speaking, emphasizing discernment in communication and its relevance in addressing misinformation, especially in the digital age.

The paper further explores the applicability of these principles in modern contexts, particularly in social media communication, where ethical lapses often lead to conflict and psychological distress. It demonstrates that Jain communication ethics not only regulate speech but also promote emotional balance, empathy, and mutual respect. The study concludes that integrating these timeless principles can foster responsible communication, reduce social discord, and contribute to a more harmonious and ethically conscious society.



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Keywords: Jain *Āgamas*, Communication Discipline, Jain Ethics, Modern Communication, Speech Ethics, Non-violent Communication,

Research Questions

What are the key principles of communication preached in “Jain *Āgamas*”?

Are the principles from “Jain *Āgamas*” relevant and applicable in the context of modern communication?

What guidance does “Jain *Āgamas*” provide to overcome modern-day challenges? And how do they help to improve personal and professional life?

Objective

The primary objective of this research is to identify and analyse *sūtras* from Jain *Āgamas* that relate to communication ethics and skills. The study critically examines these *sūtras* and maps them onto specific dimensions of communication such as truthfulness, restraint, empathy, tolerance, and responsibility. It further explores how these ancient principles can address modern communication challenges, especially in the digital era marked by speed, impulsiveness, and emotional reactivity. By bridging Jain canonical wisdom with contemporary communication dynamics, the research aims to establish the enduring relevance of Jain ethical communication in promoting inner peace, professional integrity, and social harmony.

Methods and Materials

This research adopts a comparative and analytical approach, examining Jain canonical teachings alongside modern communication theories. The primary sources include:

Praśnavyākaraṇa Sūtra, *Sthānāṅga Sūtra*, *Upāsakadaśāṅga Sūtra* and, *Daśavaikālika Sūtra*, by Madhukar Muni

Introduction

In the contemporary world, communication plays a central role in shaping personal relationships, professional environments, leadership effectiveness, and social coexistence. Despite remarkable technological advancements that have enhanced the speed and reach of communication, instances of misunderstanding, conflict, and emotional disconnection have also intensified. This paradox underscores the urgent need for communication skills that are not merely technical but are grounded in ethical awareness, emotional balance, and personal responsibility. Jain philosophy offers profound insights into this domain by emphasizing restraint in speech, truthfulness, compassion, and non-violence (*ahimsā*) as essential components of meaningful communication.

A fundamental question arises: do we truly recognize the importance of how we speak to others? Speech is not merely a medium of expression; it reflects one’s inner values, discipline, and moral refinement.



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Classical Indian thought consistently affirms the ethical dimension of speech. In the *Ramayana*, Lord Rama, as portrayed by Sage Valmiki, is described as *mitabhāṣī*—one who speaks sparingly, appropriately, and meaningfully. Such measured expression reflects clarity of thought, self-control, and ethical integrity. Similarly, philosophical traditions beyond India also emphasize the harmony between intention and expression, echoing the Indian ideal of *Trikāraṇa Śuddhi*—the purity and alignment of thought, word, and deed.

Within this broader ethical context, the Jain *Āgamas* present a uniquely rigorous and disciplined framework for communication. Speech (*vāc*) is regarded as a form of activity (*yoga*) that carries karmic consequences, just like physical and mental actions. Thus, communication is not seen as a neutral or casual act, but as a moral and spiritual responsibility. The *Āgamic* texts consistently caution against harsh, false, impulsive, or harmful speech, while advocating for expression that is truthful, mindful, restrained, timely, and compassionate. Such communication not only prevents harm to others but also facilitates inner purification and self-development.

At the same time, effective communication must remain sensitive to social and cultural contexts. The well-known maxim “Be a Roman while in Rome” highlights the importance of adaptability in human interaction. Jain philosophy accommodates such practical wisdom, provided that ethical principles are not compromised. When communication harmonizes ethical sensitivity with contextual awareness, it becomes both socially effective and morally sound.

This paper examines communication ethics through an integrated lens of modern perspectives and Jain philosophical insights. It begins with a conceptual understanding of communication and its relevance in contemporary life, followed by an analysis of selected *Āgamic sūtras* that emphasize ethical speech and disciplined conduct. Special attention is given to the principle of non-violence in communication, illustrating how words can either heal or harm. The study further explores the role of communication in shaping self-identity, demonstrating how mindful speech contributes to character formation, self-awareness, and interpersonal harmony. Through this interdisciplinary approach, the paper establishes communication as a transformative tool for ethical living and holistic personality development in the modern world.

Understanding Communication

Communication can be considered one of the building blocks of the society¹.

Communication is a foundational element of human society. Derived from the Latin *communicatio*, meaning sharing or making common, communication involves the exchange of information, ideas, emotions, and values to create mutual understanding. It underpins knowledge transmission, relationship-building, cooperation, and social cohesion, making it essential in both personal and professional life.

¹ Gabriel Angelo, *The 7 Effective Communication Skills* (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2014), pp. 1–3.



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Communication manifests in multiple forms: verbal (spoken and written), non-verbal (gestures, facial expressions, tone), visual (images, charts, videos), and digital or electronic (emails, social media, video conferencing). It may be formal or informal, interpersonal or intrapersonal, group-based or mass-oriented. Regardless of form, ethical responsibility remains central to its effectiveness.

Modern communication theory highlights the “Seven Cs” of effective communication: clarity, conciseness, correctness, completeness, concreteness, courtesy, and consideration. These principles align closely with Jain ethical teachings, particularly the emphasis on mindful, truthful, respectful, and purpose-driven speech.

Developing communication skills enhances clarity of expression, confidence, emotional intelligence, conflict resolution, leadership, and teamwork. Conversely, careless or unethical communication often results in misunderstanding, conflict, and psychological distress.

Findings and Discussions

Analysis of *Āgamic Sūtras* Emphasizing Ethical Speech and Conduct

Jain *Āgamic* literature treats speech (*vāc -yoga*) as a powerful moral force capable of shaping both social harmony and individual spiritual progress. Speech is never regarded as ethically neutral; rather, it is evaluated on the basis of intention, truthfulness, awareness, and its impact on others. Several *Āgamic sūtras* strongly caution against careless, false, and harmful speech, emphasizing its psychological, social, and karmic consequences. These insights remain strikingly relevant in contemporary personal, educational, and professional contexts, where communication plays a decisive role in shaping relationships and self-identity.

I. Ethical and Psychological Consequences of False Speech

The *Praśnavyākaraṇa Sūtra* explicitly condemns false speech in the verse:

“अलियवयणं... अयसकरं, वेरकरगं, मणसकिलेसवियरणं”²

(*Aliyavayaṇam ... ayasakaram, verakaragam, maṇasakilesaviyaraṇam*)

This *sūtra* succinctly states that false speech results in loss of honour, generates enmity, and causes mental disturbance. It offers a profound ethical insight that communication carries moral, social, and psychological consequences. Untruthful speech leads to ethical degradation, disrupts interpersonal harmony, and disturbs the mental equilibrium of both speaker and listener.

In contemporary contexts such as educational institutions and workplaces, this principle is clearly observable. The spread of rumours, false accusations, or misleading information can damage reputations, weaken trust, and create emotional distress. Such communication functions as a subtle form of violence,

² Madhukar Muni (Ed.), *Praśnavyākaraṇa Sūtra*, Verse 1.2.44 (Beawar: Āgama Prakāśana Samiti, 2021), p.49. See Also Amaramuni, *Sūkti Triveṇī* Vols. 1–3 (Sanmati Jñānapīṭha, 1968), p.100.



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aligning with the Jain view that false speech violates the vow of truthfulness (*satya*) and constitutes *himsā* at the psychological and relational level.³

The three consequences mentioned in the *sūtra* further deepen this understanding. *Ayasakaram* (loss of reputation) indicates erosion of credibility and trust, which in Jain ethics reflects a decline in inner integrity. *Verakaragam* (generation of enmity) highlights how falsehood breeds conflict and social disharmony, contradicting the principle of *ahimsā*. *Maṇasakilesaviyaraṇam* (mental disturbance) points to the internal effects of lying, such as anxiety, guilt, and cognitive dissonance, which disturb inner peace and clarity.⁴

This Jain perspective finds strong resonance in Western ethical and psychological thought. Immanuel Kant rejects falsehood as morally impermissible since it undermines human dignity.⁵ Aristotle views dishonesty as a vice that corrupts character,⁶ while utilitarian thinkers emphasize that deception reduces overall well-being by fostering mistrust and instability.⁷

Modern communication studies further affirm these insights. Trust and credibility are foundational to effective communication, and dishonesty leads to loss of professional reputation and relational breakdown.⁸ Psychological research also demonstrates that lying increases cognitive load, stress, and emotional instability, thereby disturbing mental coherence.⁹ These findings closely parallel the Jain concepts of *ayasakaram*, *verakaragam*, and *maṇasakilesaviyaraṇam*.

Thus, Jain philosophy anticipates modern ethical and psychological frameworks by asserting that truthful communication fosters trust, emotional balance, and social harmony, whereas false speech leads to inner disturbance and social fragmentation. Ethical communication, therefore, requires alignment of thought, word, and intention, grounded in *satya* and *ahimsā*. A communicator who practices such discipline cultivates trust, clarity, and ethical strength, transforming communication into a means of self-development and spiritual growth.

II. Distortion of Truth and Ethical Communication: An Āgamic Perspective

The *Praśnavyākaraṇa Sūtra* highlights a subtle yet significant dimension of unethical speech—not merely falsehood, but the distortion of truth through biased praise and unjust criticism:

“असतगुणुदीरका य सतगुणनासका य”¹⁰ (*Asatagunūḍīrakā ya satagunānāsakā ya*)

³ Tatia, Nathmal, *Studies in Jain Philosophy* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1951), pp. 120–125.

⁴ Dundas, Paul, *The Jains* (London: Routledge, 2002), pp. 94–100.

⁵ Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 37–38.

⁶ Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), Book IV, Chapter 7, pp. 112–115.

⁷ Mill, John Stuart, *Utilitarianism* (London: Parker, Son, and Bourn, 1863), Chapter II, pp. 9–12.

⁸ Hybels, Sandra, and Richard L. Weaver II, *Communicating Effectively* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2015), pp. 21–25, 276–280.

⁹ Vrij, Aldert, *Detecting Lies and Deceit* (Chichester: Wiley, 2008), pp. 63–70, 98–102.

¹⁰ Madhukar Muni (Ed.), *Praśnavyākaraṇa Sūtra*, Verse 1.2.53 (Beawar: Āgama Prakāśana Samiti, 2021), p.69.



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This verse explains that dishonest individuals attribute virtues to the unworthy while concealing or undermining the genuine qualities of the deserving. Such communication does not always involve explicit lies; rather, it manipulates perception and distorts truth. Jain ethics regards this as a grave moral lapse because it harms individuals, weakens social trust, and reinforces inner delusion.¹¹

Philosophically, this form of speech constitutes *asatyavāda* (falsehood) rooted in *mithyā-darśana* (wrong perception). By glorifying the undeserving and suppressing truth, the speaker promotes attachment, ego, and ignorance, thereby deviating from ethical discernment.¹² Ethical communication, therefore, demands not only factual accuracy but also fairness, sincerity, and moral responsibility.

This teaching is highly relevant in modern institutional contexts. In workplaces, favouritism and strategic flattery often result in undeserving individuals being praised while sincere contributors are overlooked. Such practices distort evaluation, reduce morale, and create environments of distrust and injustice.¹³ From a Jain perspective, this constitutes subtle *himsā*, as it harms dignity, truth, and psychological well-being. Western ethical thought offers parallel insights. Aristotle views such behaviour as a failure of justice and virtue, leading to moral corruption.¹⁴ Immanuel Kant condemns it as a violation of moral duty, where individuals are treated as means rather than ends.¹⁵ Utilitarian thinkers further argue that such distorted communication diminishes collective well-being by fostering resentment and inefficiency.¹⁶

However, Jain philosophy uniquely emphasizes the karmic and spiritual consequences of such speech. Distorting truth binds the soul to ignorance and obstructs ethical clarity and spiritual progress. Communication thus becomes a decisive factor not only in shaping social relations but also in one's inner evolution.¹⁷

From a modern communication perspective, this *sūtra* underscores the importance of fairness, transparency, and integrity. Ethical communication is not merely persuasive but just and responsible. Individuals who acknowledge merit truthfully and avoid biased praise foster trust, motivation, and organizational health. Conversely, distortion of truth damages credibility and weakens leadership effectiveness.¹⁸

Thus, the *Praśnavyākaraṇa Sūtra* presents communication as a moral discipline requiring discernment and ethical courage. By cautioning against the distortion of truth, it affirms that words shape perceptions,

¹¹ Dundas, Paul, *The Jains* (London: Routledge, 2002), pp. 108–112.

¹² Tatia, Nathmal, *Studies in Jain Philosophy* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1951), pp. 86–92.

¹³ Hybels, Sandra, and Richard L. Weaver II, *Communicating Effectively* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2015), pp. 305–310, 332–336.

¹⁴ Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), Book V, pp. 128–135; Book IV, pp. 112–115.

¹⁵ Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 38.

¹⁶ Mill, John Stuart, *Utilitarianism* (London: 1863), Chapter II, pp. 10–14.

¹⁷ Tatia, Nathmal, *Studies in Jain Philosophy* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1951), pp. 95–100.

¹⁸ Adler, Ronald B., Rodman, George, and du Pré, Athena, *Understanding Human Communication* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 35–40, 312–318.



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values, and identities. Ethical communication, therefore, is foundational to social harmony, professional integrity, and spiritual growth.

III. Ethical Regulation of Speech: A Systematic Āgamic Framework

A comprehensive ethical framework governing speech is articulated in the *Sthānāṅga Sūtra*, where communication is treated not merely as a social function but as a morally accountable discipline. The text identifies six forms of speech that must be consciously avoided:

“इमाई छ अवयणाई वदित्तए—

अलियवयणे, हीलियवयणे, खिसितवयणे, फरुसवयणे, गारत्थियवयणे,

विउसवित्तं वा पुणो उदीरित्तए।¹⁹

...मोहरिए सच्चवयणस्स पलिमथू...”²⁰

(*Imāim cha avayaṇāim vadittae—*

aliyavayaṇe, hīliyavayaṇe, khisitavayaṇe, pharusavayaṇe, gāratthiyavayaṇe,

viusavitam vā puṇo udīrittae.

moharie saccavayaṇassa palimatthū...)

The verse prohibits six types of speech: false, insulting, scolding, harsh, careless, and speech that rekindles resolved conflicts, further warning that excessive talkativeness destroys the essence of truthful speech. This classification presents a refined ethical taxonomy, emphasizing that communication is judged not only by truthfulness but also by intention, tone, timing, and psychological impact.²¹

From a Jain perspective, all these forms violate *satya* (truthfulness) and *ahimsā* (non-violence), as speech can inflict harm as effectively as physical actions. Harsh words, accusations, and impulsive expressions stimulate passions such as anger and ego, disturb mental balance, and bind negative karma. Moreover, excessive speech undermines *mauna* (disciplined silence), which is essential for self-restraint and inner purification.²²

The relevance of this teaching is evident in modern professional contexts. For instance, when a leader responds to failure with insults, harsh criticism, generalizations, or by revisiting past mistakes, communication becomes destructive rather than corrective. Such behaviour damages self-esteem, weakens trust, and fosters fear and resentment within organizations.²³

¹⁹ Madhukar Muni (Ed.), *Sthānāṅga Sūtra*, Verse 6.100 (Beawar: Āgama Prakāśana Samiti, 2021), p. 532.

²⁰ Ibid. Verse 6.102, p.534.

²¹ Dundas, Paul, *The Jains* (London: Routledge, 2002), pp. 156–160.

²² Tatia, Nathmal, *Studies in Jain Philosophy* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1951), pp. 102–105.

²³ Hybels, Sandra, and Richard L. Weaver II, *Communicating Effectively* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2015), pp. 36–42, 296–302.



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Western ethical thought supports this *Āgamic* insight. Aristotle emphasizes virtues like moderation and kindness in speech,²⁴ while Immanuel Kant stresses respect for human dignity, rejecting communication that degrades others.²⁵ Utilitarian ethics further highlights that harmful speech reduces collective well-being by increasing conflict and dissatisfaction.²⁶ Modern psychology also confirms that aggressive communication leads to stress, anxiety, and emotional harm.²⁷

In contrast, Jain philosophy proposes a constructive model of communication grounded in humility (*vinaya*), awareness (*apramāda*), and restraint. Speech should be truthful, beneficial, pleasant, and measured. Such mindful communication promotes harmony, emotional balance, and ethical growth.²⁸

Thus, the *Sthānāṅga Sūtra* elevates communication from a mere skill to a disciplined ethical practice. By regulating speech through awareness and restraint, Jain philosophy offers a timeless framework that aligns closely with contemporary ideals of emotionally intelligent and responsible communication.

IV. Ethical Restraint in Speech: Mindfulness Beyond Truthfulness

The *Upāsakadaśāṅga Sūtra* presents a refined and nuanced dimension of Jain communication ethics by asserting that truth alone does not justify speech; rather, the moral worth of communication depends equally on intention, emotional impact, and appropriateness of expression. This teaching is conveyed by *Bhagavān Mahāvīra* to Gautama:

“तए णं से भगवं गोयमे महासययं समणोवासयं एवं वयासी—

एवं खलु देवाणुप्पिया! समणे भगवं महावीरे एवमाइक्खए भासइ,

पण्णवेइ, परूवेइ—नो खलु कप्पइ देवाणुप्पिया!

समणोवासगस्स ... संतेहि, तच्चेहि, तहिहि,

अणिट्ठेहि, अकतेहि, अप्पिहि, अमणुण्णेहि बागरणेहि वागरित्तए” ॥²⁹

(*Tae ṇaṃ se bhagavaṃ Goyame mahāsayaṃ samaṇovāsayaṃ evaṃ vayasī—*

evaṃ khalu devāṇuppiyā! samaṇe bhagavaṃ Mahāvīre evamaikkhae bhāsai,

paṇṇavei, parūvei—no khalu kappai devāṇuppiyā!

samaṇovāsagassā ... saṃtehi, taccehi, tahiehi,

aṇiṭṭhehi, akatehi, appiehi, amaṇuṇṇehi bāgaranehi vāgarittae.)

²⁴ Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), Book II, pp. 25–30; Book IV, pp. 108–113.

²⁵ Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 37–38.

²⁶ Mill, John Stuart, *Utilitarianism* (London: 1863), Chapter II, pp. 10–13.

²⁷ Goleman, Daniel, *Emotional Intelligence* (New York: Bantam Books, 1995), pp. 56–62, 82–85.

²⁸ Wiley, Kristi L., *The A to Z of Jainism* (Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2009), pp. 186–190.

²⁹ Madhukar Muni (Ed.) *Upāsakadaśāṅga Sūtra*. Verse 8.264 (Beawar: Āgama Prakāśana Samiti, 2023), p. 199.



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The passage conveys that a lay follower should not speak words which, though true, are harsh, unpleasant, hurtful, or disturbing to others. This teaching marks an advanced ethical position in Jain thought, moving beyond mere factual correctness (*satya*) to emphasize compassionate restraint. It recognizes that truth expressed without sensitivity can become a form of *himsā*, causing psychological harm and disturbing inner peace.³⁰

Accordingly, Jain philosophy stresses *vācā-saṁyama* (discipline of speech), where words are evaluated not only for their accuracy but also for their emotional resonance and relational consequences. Even truthful speech, when driven by anger (*krodha*), pride (*māna*), or carelessness (*pramāda*), binds karma and disrupts harmony.³¹ Ethical communication, therefore, requires mindfulness, empathy, and self-regulation.

This *Āgamic* insight finds strong relevance in contemporary communication theory, particularly in the concept of emotional intelligence, which emphasizes empathy, appropriate tone, timing, and awareness of others' feelings.³² In modern interpersonal and professional contexts, effective communication is not defined merely by honesty, but by the ability to convey truth in a manner that preserves dignity and fosters trust. Leaders and professionals who practice such restraint create psychologically safe environments and promote cooperation and mutual respect.³³

Western ethical thought supports this perspective. Aristotle highlights moderation and virtue in speech as essential for character formation,³⁴ while Immanuel Kant emphasizes respect for persons, discouraging communication that harms dignity.³⁵ Modern approaches such as nonviolent communication also stress expressing truth with compassion and awareness.³⁶

From a psychological standpoint, mindful speech reduces emotional reactivity, enhances reflective thinking, and supports mental well-being.³⁷ Jain philosophy further connects this restraint with spiritual growth, as silence (*mauna*) and thoughtful expression aid in self-purification and meditative awareness.³⁸ In the digital age, characterized by instant and often impulsive communication, this teaching assumes even greater significance. It cautions against unfiltered expression and reinforces the ethical responsibility attached to every spoken or written word.

³⁰ Dundas, Paul, *The Jains* (London: Routledge, 2002), pp. 162–166.

³¹ Tatia, Nathmal, *Studies in Jain Philosophy* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1951), pp. 88–94.

³² Goleman, Daniel, *Emotional Intelligence* (New York: Bantam Books, 1995), pp. 96–102, 117–120.

³³ Hybels, Sandra, and Richard L. Weaver II, *Communicating Effectively* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2015), pp. 289–295, 320–325.

³⁴ Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), Book II, pp. 25–30; Book IV, pp. 108–113.

³⁵ Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 37–38.

³⁶ Rosenberg, Marshall, *Nonviolent Communication* (Encinitas: PuddleDancer Press, 2003), pp. 3–10, 21–24.

³⁷ Adler, Ronald B., Rodman, George, and du Pré, Athena, *Understanding Human Communication* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 82–88, 105–110.

³⁸ Wiley, Kristi L., *The A to Z of Jainism* (Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2009), pp. 203–207.



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Thus, the *Upāsakadaśāṅga Sūtra* elevates communication from a functional skill to a discipline of consciousness. By insisting that even truth must be governed by compassion and awareness, Jain philosophy offers a timeless framework for ethical, emotionally intelligent, and socially responsible communication, contributing to both interpersonal harmony and inner development.

Concluding Synthesis: Jain Ethical Vision of Communication Skill

Taken together, the above-discussed *Āgamic sūtras* present a systematic and integrated philosophy of ethical communication in Jain thought. They collectively establish that speech (*vācā*) is not a neutral or merely technical act but a morally charged form of conduct that directly influences individual character, social relationships, and spiritual progress. The Jain scriptures consistently warn that careless, false, harsh, excessive, or emotionally insensitive speech generates ethical degradation, psychological disturbance, social conflict, and karmic bondage.

The *Praśnavyākaraṇa Sūtra* exposes the destructive consequences of false and distorted speech, demonstrating how untruth undermines credibility, breeds enmity, and disturbs mental peace. The *Sthānāṅga Sūtra* offers a structured ethical framework by categorically prohibiting six forms of harmful speech, emphasizing that uncontrolled or excessive verbal expression erodes the very essence of truthfulness. The *Upāsakadaśāṅga Sūtra* further refines this ethical vision by asserting that even truthful speech must be restrained if it causes unnecessary pain or emotional disturbance, thereby elevating communication from factual correctness to compassionate awareness.

From the Jain ethical perspective, ideal communication is governed by *satya* (truthfulness), *ahimsā* (non-violence), *apramāda* (vigilant awareness), *vinaya* (humility), and *saṁyama* (self-restraint). Such communication nurtures inner discipline, emotional balance, and moral clarity, while preventing subtle forms of psychological violence that disturb both the speaker and the listener. Speech, when purified by intention and mindfulness, becomes a tool for harmony rather than harm.

When viewed in light of modern communication theory, psychology, and leadership studies, these *Āgamic* teachings demonstrate striking relevance. Concepts such as emotional intelligence, constructive feedback, conflict-sensitive dialogue, psychological safety, and ethical leadership echo the Jain insistence on mindful, compassionate, and responsible speech. In an age marked by rapid digital communication, impulsive expression, and ethical erosion in public discourse, Jain philosophy offers a timeless ethical framework that guides individuals toward responsible communication rooted in self-awareness and empathy.

Thus, Jain *Āgamic* wisdom transforms communication skill into a discipline of consciousness, where words are aligned with ethical intention, emotional sensitivity, and spiritual purpose. By integrating these ancient insights into contemporary personal and professional contexts, communication emerges not merely as a means of expression but as a powerful instrument for personality development, social harmony, and inner purification.



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Limitations of the Study:

While this research provides valuable insights into the communication discipline outlined in the *Jain Āgamas* and its relevance to modern communication challenges, certain limitations are acknowledged:

- 1. Textual and Interpretative Limitations:** The research relies mainly on available translations and commentaries of the *Jain Āgamas*. Differences in interpretations across sects, scholars, and linguistic traditions may influence the understanding of specific communication-related *sūtras*.
- 2. Limited Scope of Study:** The focus of the research is confined to communication discipline, while the *Jain Āgamas* also address broader monastic and ethical themes such as conduct, penance, and spiritual development, which are not explored in detail.
- 3. Contextual Applicability:** As the texts were originally intended for monastic life, adapting its strict communication principles to modern contexts such as corporate settings, digital media, and political discourse presents practical challenges that are not fully examined in this study.

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Internet Resources

[Jain Quantum Query Language \(JainQQ\)](#)

[Jain eLibrary](#)