



## FORMING A CULTURE OF COMMUNICATION IN THE FAMILY: PROBLEMS AND STRATEGIES

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### Abstract

Effective communication is the foundation of strong relationships, including the family unit. Within the family, open and honest communication is essential for fostering understanding, promoting trust, and sustaining meaningful connections. Forming a culture of communication in the family involves establishing healthy communication habits that facilitate effective dialogue and active listening. This article explores the importance of building a communication culture in the family and provides key strategies for creating an environment that encourages open and respectful communication.

**Keywords:** *communication, culture, family relationship, family-related matters*

### Introduction

Communication is the cornerstone of any successful relationship, and this is particularly true within the family. Forming a culture of communication within the family is essential in fostering strong bonds, resolving conflicts, and nurturing the emotional well-being of all its members. "The influence of the family on the development of children's mind and speech is one of the areas that is currently receiving special attention. Many researchers of our country and abroad have conducted scientific investigation on the importance, influence and immutability of the family in the formation of the child's speech and personality, and are still in process" (Davlatova, 2022). In this article, we will explore the importance of communication in the family and discuss strategies to cultivate a culture of communication.

### Communication in Uzbek Context

First of all, it would be appropriate to define the term "communication", by addressing to different reliable sources and dictionaries. Communication is defined as "the process of passing information and understanding from one person to another" (<https://getuplearn.com/blog/what-is-communication>). To put it in other way, the word "communication" is derived from the Latin word 'communicate', which means to share, impart. According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary, communication is "a process by which information is exchanged between individuals through a common system of symbols, signs, or behavior" or "exchange information" (2023).

Communication in any language plays equal role in strengthening family relationship and developing culture of family communication. There are some families, especially representatives of younger generation, who effectively communicate in English language, since "English has now become a significant part of foreign language teaching" (Nematovna R.G., 2022), which consequently leads to developing culture of family communication. According to Rahmanova & Ekşi (2023), "Russian and English, while both considered as

foreign languages, have quite different spread and growth patterns. Nevertheless, each of them has played and still plays a significant role in society". Therefore, communication in majority of Uzbek families occurs in Russian language, as it was "a lingua franca and was frequently used as a second mother tongue" before Uzbekistan was proclaimed independent (Rahmanova & Eksi, 2023). Additionally, communication can be used in both languages - native Uzbek and Russian (or even English) in Uzbek families. Majority of post-Soviet era countries' people are considered bilinguals, due to the fact that all of them acquired Russian at the level of their native language. Consequently, communication in bilingual families occurs in both languages, as "bilinguals can produce words by selecting them from their L1 and L2 lexicons. Some bilinguals are even more proficient in their L2 rather than L1 due to everyday output in L2. They can control both languages equally and switch from one to another automatically" (Rahmanova, 2020).

Briefly speaking, the most important thing in developing culture of communication in family does not depend on its processing in one particular language, the result might be same when communication is used in two or even three languages at the same time.

### **Forms of communication**

Language is frequently employed in social interactions like communication. Eye contact, gestures, smiles, and other nonverbal cues are examples of nonverbal communication that is equally significant. The purpose of communication, whether verbal or nonverbal, is to transfer thoughts, feelings, and emotions, or just to deliver information. People often strive to communicate well. However, miscommunication or breach of communication might occur since people have difficulties expressing themselves clearly or the listener has difficulty processing the message appropriately. Typically, we consider communication to be a two-way process that involves both the listener and the recipient. Yet communication gets more complicated in a family setting. This is due to the fact that the family functions as a system, and when one component of the system malfunctions, it affects the entire system.

### **Culture of Communication in the Family**

There is no doubt that the best families are often ones that have good communication. There is only one reason for that - communication. First and foremost, communication is vital for building and maintaining strong family relationships. When family members regularly communicate with each other, they develop a sense of trust and loyalty. Open lines of communication allow individuals to express their feelings, needs, and concerns, creating an environment where everyone can be heard and understood. This enhances the emotional connection within the family, enabling family members to provide support, empathy, and love to one another.

Furthermore, effective communication plays a crucial role in resolving conflicts within the family. Conflicts are inevitable in any relationship, but how they are resolved determines the family's overall well-being. By maintaining open lines of communication, family members can address conflicts in a healthy and respectful manner. Regular discussions allow individuals to express their perspectives and work towards finding a compromise or solution together (Uktamovna H, 2019). This not only fosters conflict resolution skills but also teaches family members the importance of actively listening and valuing each other's opinions.

Cultivating a culture of communication in the family also leads to better emotional well-being. When family members feel free to express their emotions and share their experiences, they develop a sense of belonging and acceptance. Effective communication allows for the sharing

of joys, sorrows, achievements, and challenges. This emotional support system strengthens family bonds, builds resilience, and enhances the overall quality of life for each family member.

### **The Benefits of Communication in the Family**

There are many benefits of communication in the family, and the following are just few of them:

#### *1. Strengthening Family Bonds:*

According to research by the University of Illinois Extension, strong family relationships are nurtured through effective communication. Engaging in meaningful conversations and actively listening to one another creates a sense of belonging and strengthens the emotional bonds within the family unit.

#### *2. Enhancing Emotional Well-being:*

Healthy communication channels allow family members to express their thoughts, feelings, and concerns. Drapeau et.al. (2006) claim, that regularly communicating and addressing these emotions can foster a supportive environment that promotes emotional well-being.

#### *3. Developing Conflict Resolution Skills:*

Communication forms the basis for resolving conflicts within the family effectively. By fostering an open communication culture, family members can develop a strong skill set for addressing conflicts constructively, leading to better problem-solving outcomes (Towers, 2009).

### **Strategies for Creating a Culture of Communication**

Now that we understand the importance of communication in the family, let us explore some strategies to nurture a culture of communication. Firstly, setting aside regular dedicated times for family conversations can be beneficial. Whether it is dinner time or a weekly family meeting, having designated slots allows everyone to come together, share their thoughts, and discuss any family-related matters. This provides a space where family members can connect and actively engage with each other.

Secondly, active listening is key to effective communication. Active listening involves providing undivided attention, using verbal and nonverbal cues to signal interest, and seeking clarification when necessary. Encouraging family members to listen attentively without interruptions or judgments fosters understanding and empathy. This enables everyone to truly comprehend each other's viewpoints and respond thoughtfully. Another helpful strategy is encouraging the use of "I" statements instead of "you" statements during conversations. Using "I" statements helps individuals express their feelings or concerns without sounding accusatory, thus reducing defensiveness and promoting productive discussions.

Thirdly, holding regular family meetings to discuss important matters, share achievements, or address concerns is also beneficial for enhancing family communication. These meetings promote a sense of inclusivity and allow every family member to participate in decision-making, reinforcing the value of their opinions (Stinnett & DeFrain, 1985).

Fourthly, promoting expressing emotions openly and honestly is one more strategy to strengthen communication in a family. It is recommended to encourage family members to show empathy and support to one another when discussing their feelings. This can create an emotionally safe space and strengthen emotional connections within the family.

Lastly, embracing technology can also aid in creating a culture of communication in the family. While face-to-face conversations are important, utilizing video calls or messaging platforms

can help bridge geographical gaps and keep family members connected with one another. Encouraging regular communication through technology ensures that no family member feels isolated or excluded and strengthens the sense of belonging within the family unit. To put it differently, creating an environment where communication is free from judgment and criticism is important. It is suggested to encourage open dialogue by providing opportunities for family members to express their opinions and thoughts without fear of retribution.

### Conclusion

To sum up, forming a culture of communication in the family is crucial for building strong relationships, resolving conflicts, and nourishing emotional well-being. By engaging in open and respectful dialogue and actively listening, families can promote trust, understanding, and meaningful connections. Setting aside quality time, establishing open communication channels, and encouraging the expression of emotions are just a few strategies that can contribute to creating a culture of communication in the family. Additionally, by following strategies such as setting aside dedicated times for family conversations, actively listening, using "I" statements, and embracing technology, families can create an environment that encourages open, honest, and respectful communication. Establishing this culture not only enhances familial bonds but also sets the foundation for a healthier and happier family life. By embracing above-mentioned practices, families can create an environment where everyone feels heard, valued, and connected

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