

## THE CONCEPT AND PRACTICE OF RIGHT COMMUNICATION IN BUDDHISM

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The purpose of communication is to provide information to others through speech, signals and writing. Receiving and spreading of information are based on communication. Some social conflicts and disharmony that we encounter arise due to wrong communication. We should avoid wrong speech because it is harmful, and use right speech to bring forward benefits to society. The concept and practice of Buddhist communication refers to wrong speech and right speech. This research focuses on a critical analysis of communication as reflected in the Pāli canon and its commentaries including Buddhist scholars' views. There are three basic aspects of communication: harmful communication, harmless communication and beneficial communication. Harmful communication: false speech, divisive words, harsh words, and useless words should be avoided because they destroy the harmonious existence and prevent the development of individual and society. Wrong speech which results in increasing unwholesome mental states and decreasing wholesome mental states should not be cultivated. Buddhist communication means to impart right and harmless information to society. Right communication is regarded as the fourth percept refraining from false speech, divisive words, etc. and is also part of the noble eightfold path. Right speech involves respect for Truth. Right speech that leads to a decrease of unwholesome states and an increase in wholesome states should be cultivated. Speaking at the proper time, saying what is true and beneficial with loving-kindness is said to be well spoken, not badly spoken, blameless and beyond reproach by the wise. We must say the truth as truth or untruth as untruth as the Buddha advised in the *Brahmajāla Sutta*. We should reflect on our speech, before, during, and after speaking as the Buddha admonished Rāhula as recorded in the *Ambalaṭṭhikārahulovāda Sutta*. The facts highlight the concept and practice of right communication in Buddhism. While wrong communication leads to social conflicts and destroys harmony in society, right communication results in mutual respect and harmonious development of the individual and society. Whatever we say, we must apply our knowledge correctly, and enhance our potential ability to become excellent communicators for the well-being of society and liberation from suffering.

*Keywords:* Communication, Wrong speech, Right speech, Society, Harmony