It is well established that communication facilitates cooperation in social dilemmas, in which cooperation increases social welfare. Another social aspect of communication is that it leads to higher generosity and more egalitarian outcomes, even when not accompanied by an efficiency gain. Do people become less selfish following communication because they care more about others, or for strategic reasons? In an experiment studying the ultimatum game with pre-play communication, I show that the protocol of communication can induce different processes resulting in higher cooperation. When communication is restricted to social content, participants incorporate others’ welfare into their preferences. When strategic communication is allowed, participants respond to social norms, sometimes at the expense of the welfare of others. A second experiment is designed to eliminate all strategic effects by using a three-person dictator game with one-way communication. The results show that a positive general impression leads to higher allocations. The unique design reveals effects that were hidden in previous studies. Causal relationship is established through external ratings of the communication.