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**INTERGENERATIONAL FAMILY TALKS: VALUE-
COMMUNICATIVE ANALYSIS**

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Abstract

In the article, intergenerational family talks in the value-communicative aspect are examined. The analysis object is axiological contents of fragments of dialogic interaction of grandmother and granddaughter, characterized by trust and frankness. In accordance with the aim statement directed to revealing and summarizing axiological reference points of the interlocutors, successive series of speech acts of the communicants are isolated as tactical and strategic lines of their speech behavior. Method of linguistic and communicative analysis of dialogic interaction developed by representatives of the Ural School of Colloquial Studies is aimed at a result in the field of cultural studies: value communicative fragments of talks allow isolating meaningful communicative values of interlocutors belonging to different generations: frankness and tact, other-centrism, speech support and refraining which do not infringe the communicants' rights. Existential and everyday life communication topics reveal differences in "axiosphere" of the communicants, nevertheless, despite an intra-family "vertical" of relations and signals of "questioning" communication, designated value attitudes contribute to harmonization of speech interaction.

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1. Introduction

In modern Russian studies there are different approaches to family values: systemic and structural, communicative and pragmatic, linguistic and cognitive, socio-psycholinguistic, rhetorical, ethno-linguistic, speech genre, linguistic and cultural, etc. Description objects for linguists are such concepts as “family”, “relationship”, “marriage”. Researchers conclude that “...Russian consciousness conceptualizes the family in particular, defining it as the basis of the world outlook and world order, an integral, indestructible unity with the power of moral influence” (Vepreva, Izkovich et al., 2019, p. 2406). Researchers study frames of family feasts and quarrels, the family language, situation-role and genre kinds of family communication, cultural scenarios of family speech interactions both cooperative and conflict, linguistic and cultural types of family members, family axiosphere (Baykulova, 2015; Kupina, 2019a), and emphasize the importance of the elderly’ experience, “their appeal to descendants, the transfer of information about themselves and their time..., advices and wishes” (Dementiev, 2020, p. 132).

Foreign family studies consider intergenerational relations of family members in the context of family identity and unity, family practices and rituals as factors of transmitting intra-family norms, speech and behavior stereotypes, regulations of family relationships and socialization of junior members. Scientists consider mechanisms of forming family culture in the aspect of transmitting and saving the family experience, analyze family histories and their impact on the family psychological climate, study traditional and new forms of family pastime, reveal various causes of breaking family relations and direct open interactions of communicants. The review of foreign family studies shows relevance of the search for factors which contribute to “family unity, communicative space to transmit the family history, experience, traditions, beliefs, and values” (Gorodilina, 2017, p. 11).

Thus, family life through its various manifestations is considered as a fundamental way of human existence which remains “a living symbol of family spirit” (Ilyin, 2012, p. 123).

2. Problem Statement

Ontological primacy and axiological precedence of the family put it higher any other social community. However, modern reality is characterized by undermining of ideals of family life, the serious crisis of family values which manifests itself in lowering the image of a “family person”, depreciation of such notion as marriage sanctity, the loss of high images of husband and wife, intergenerational distancing and weakening of next-of-kin relations, family conflicts. «Subjects of family conflicts may be spouses, parents and children, grandchildren and senior generation” (Mikhaylova & Mikhaylova, 2018, p. 51).

Search for technologies of describing the ways of cooperative speech interactions of people bound by parenthood, matrimony, consanguinity, discovery of value contents in the family communication in the light of national speech ideal are relevant problems of Russian studies, still not solved.

Surge of interest of modern linguists in the family speech world has been observed in connection with the formation of communicative and cultural concept of studying colloquial speech within the modern trend of colloquial speech science. The sphere of informal speech communication, including that in the family, is a polygon for crystallizing and transmitting, from generation to generation, national models and norms of speech interactions which constitute a significant part of spiritual culture of Russian people – the

communicative culture. This kind of spiritual culture is associated with moral categories and evaluative activities of communicants, the communicative ideal (Dementiev, 2013).

The Russian speech ideal is considered in domestic philosophy, rhetoric, linguistic culture works by Averintsev (1996), Mikhalskaya (1996), Skovorodnikov (1997) as a value and mental phenomenon giving the general principle and particular reference points for perfect speech communication. In a certain degree, it is the continuation of the antique rhetoric culture, and its successor – the Eastern Christian branch of Byzantine culture. Russian speech practice is based on values of Orthodox culture. At the same time, modern reality authorizes new priorities and principles based on the boundless freedom of self-expression, extreme individualism, “success ethics”, and “enjoyment esthetics” (Leskin, 2011); «reflects disorder of the value-based picture of the world flowing from contradictory nature of the actual modern life which allows that the national verbal ideal is subjected to interventions of alien cultures and requires that all components thereof be comprehended» (Evyugina et al., 2019, p. 1077).

Cultural approach, associated with communication and genre approach, “gives the possibility of complex description of informal communication of a certain community” (Vepreva, Shalina et al., 2019, p. 926). Studies of family communication in the aspect of its value contents are especially significant, in order to understand how well the mechanisms of effective functioning of an intra-family “vertical” are regulated, in what forms the life experience of members of a family circle as a meaning – value forming category is saved and transmitted, how communicative solidarity manifests itself among close relatives.

3. Research Questions

In our research we put a number of questions which give the direction for speech material analysis. In what way can the coordination of communicative actions of interlocutors belonging to different generations, with different living and speech experience, be performed? How do tactics of speech supporting and restraint influence the intergenerational dialogue? What communicative values can unite interlocutors in a harmonious intergenerational communication?

4. Purpose of the Study

The research is aimed at revealing axiological specific features of intergenerational family communication. Study of “questioning” dialogic units, and detection of ways to harmonize speech actions of communicants in an informal intergenerational communication appear to be an important task.

Seven detailed dialogues (total decryption volume is 1,75 printed sheets) between the grandmother and her granddaughter living separately served as the research material. Their communication is regular and informal. In the analyzed text-talks, household and existential issues are present naturally, which helps to reveal axiological contents of the communication.

5. Research Methods

The research is based on the method of revealing value information of a colloquial dialogue, suggested and determined in works of Matveyeva (2018a, 2018b), and developed in works of scientists of the Ural School of Colloquial Studies. This method relies upon the traditions of linguistic axiology

developing the general theory of evaluation and evaluative meanings, however, the focus of the researcher's attention is shifted in it towards the aspect of studying speech behavior of the communicants and the way of implementing value meanings in complex dialogue units. An analysis structural unit is the notion of *value communicative fragment* suggested by Matveyeva (2018a, 2018b), which is a dialogue unity in the form of communicants' several speech steps (speech acts) joined together on intentional and thematic foundations, and which allows inducing their judgments not about ideological values, but the communicative ones, interpreting evaluative judgments of interlocutors about each other. Technology of communicative and pragmatic analysis allows characterizing successive series of communicants' speech acts as tactical and strategic lines of speech behavior. Completion of the analysis procedure suggests comparison of the obtained data with reference principles of speech behavior formulated by foreign researchers Grice (1985) and Leech (1983), the principles of cooperation and politeness implemented in a specific set of maxims. They are the strategic principles of a harmonious communication, they correlate with the ideas of Russian people about the speech (wider – communicative) ideal, and are specified by means of the cultural constants such as kindness, truth, modesty, frankness, communicative trust, etc. (Borisova et al., 2018).

6. Findings

Results of the research are presented by the analysis of representative value communicative fragments of an intergenerational dialogue interaction between senior and junior member of a family circle: *Gd.* – granddaughter (21 years old, a student) and *Gm.* – grandmother (74 years old, a pensioner).

In the cited conversation of the grandmother and the granddaughter which takes place in the country during the harvest, ordinary and important issues are intertwined: dinner and health of the next of kin; garden and first love; bath and family duty; adultery; potatoes and fateful life turns. Such versatility does not make the dialogue torn and spasmodic – dynamic speech fluency, harmony of thematic changes are provided due to agreement of illocutionary intentions of the communicants – speech support and refrain which provide coordinative speech actions and psychological balance of the interlocutors.

Gd. How is your health/ granny? Mom said / they called you an ambulance yesterday //

Gm. Oh / nonsense // So / heart bothered a little //

Gd. Wow nonsense! Because of nonsense, they do not call an ambulance / And today ran into the garden / Well, you can't!

Gm. Yeah I feel good // What am I now / lying on the couch and watching TV? Now I only clean one bed / cleanliness will make me feel better//

Gd. I will clean everything / You better make dinner then//

The initiator of the talk is *Gd.*, which is anxious because of her granny's health and extreme "garden activities". However, the latter holds back the initiated topic and speech pressure of *Gd.*, which results in a modal evaluative "swordplay" of the communicants: *Oh / nonsense ↔ Wow nonsense!; Well, you can't! ↔ Yeah I feel good // What am I now / lying on the couch and watching TV?* The *Gm.*' replica, switching the talk to another topic, contains a rational and argumentative component (it is more important for the grandmother to be active and useful for her beloved people, not to lie on the couch), so it does not interrupt the natural dialogue development and the speech partners' psychological balance. The *Gm.*' voluntary

escape from the illness topic is received tactfully by *Gd.*, which does not want to break borders of her *granny*'s personal space, she abandons the mentor tone and the topic unpleasant for her interlocutor. "The endeavor to listen to the companion, understand her position, and, at the same time, defend her own independent point of view; the limited usage of categorical imperatives" is observed (Itskovich & Kupina 2018, p. 161). The wellbeing of the grandmother, and care for her physical and mental health determine the choice of concession tactics: *I will clean everything / You better make dinner then//*, which provides the fluent dialogue development. "The controversy ... does not turn into a scandal, but it does not allow changes in the existing role hierarchy" (Kupina, 2019b, p. 166).

Gm. Good/ Only for dinner, it's necessary to dig up potatoes //

Gd. I'll dig up //

Gm. You don't know/ where to dig//

Gd. Granny/ I don't know where we have potatoes / or what ?!

Gm. Of course / you know / but you need to dig it from the edge / not to be confused // How then will we dig in September?

Gd. But I'm not going to dig it in the middle //

Gm. Anyway let's go together //

Gd. Let's //

On the one hand, the change of the topic's borders makes the rhythm and melody of the talk fluent, which we can observe as approximately the same volume of replicas, on the other hand, it makes the grandmother's leadership more prominent, for she is an experienced gardener and the future harvest guardian. Obligation modality, which contains "indication of the need of any physical or mental action, as well as the abandonment of it" (Aznacheeva & Mamonova 2019, p. 16) in its semantics, is created by impersonal predicative words *necessary*, *need* combined with the infinitives, so it forms a communicative value attitude for subordination of the younger family member to the senior and more experienced one. Communicative tension, determined by the family hierarchy, is neutralized by the speech support in the form of pickup of the stimulating replica. The pickup tactics performs the function of communication harmonization: *Gm. Anyway let's go together // – Gd. Let's //*.

Gm. It's a pity / that you are not sent for potatoes now // Such a romance lost!

Gd. We dig it in the gardens anyway //

Gm. It's not the same// We used to come to potatoes in the field and dig all day / until it got dark // Then we sang songs // And ate these potatoes //

Gd. Well / it's great/ that you had all that! Although last year, we and the guys in the garden helped each other dig / it was great too! Do you remember?

Gm. Remember /of course! How quickly everything was done // There would always be such helpers!

Gd. The coolest were / baked potatoes //

Gm. The coolest/ as you say / this is when you all grimy dig up a carrot / immediately clean it with a knife and eat / And no infection, no disease // And now / here give you unwashed carrots / you don't even think about eating it //

B. Well yeah // Maybe now we have more infections //

B. Well/ why are we talking about diseases?

B. I don't know/ it's you that spoke about diseases //

Memories of the past which are experienced in the present are associatively woven in the topic of harvesting potatoes. Taxonomic opposition “you had ↔ we have” (...*you had all that //; we and the guys ...*), and temporal opposition “before ↔ now” (*It's a pity / that you are not sent for potatoes now*) indirectly designate intergenerational confrontation. Signals of historic retrospection are expressed by the words with memorial semantics (*remember*), the present tense forms in the meaning of the past. They help feel the spirit of the time elapsed. The cultural scenario “go for potatoes” is again relevant in *Gm.*'s memory: *We used to come to potatoes in the field and dig all day / until it got dark // Then we sang songs // And ate these potatoes //*. The granddaughter does not depreciate the events of her grandmother's youth, her labor enthusiasm, as evidenced by the encouragement tactics: *Well / it's great/ that you had all that!* The historic retrospection associated with the closest past (*Although last year, we and the guys in the garden helped each other dig //*) strengthens the communicants' optimistic modus as the experiencing of personal self-value: *it was great too! //; There would always be such helpers!*

Coordination of the speech actions of the grandmother and the granddaughter is performed also by means of iterations of key words of the partners' last replicas: *Gd. Do you remember? – Gm. Remember/ of course//; Gd. The coolest were / baked potatoes // – Gm. The coolest/ as you say ...//*. Symptomatically, the evaluative slang *cool*, which is natural for the granddaughter's speech, does not cause stylistic rejection and discontent of the grandmother, which demonstrates the absence of language purism. The slang word, used in the structure of meta-language reflexive and mirrored by the grandmother, creates the common communicative meaning of intergenerational solidarity in a natural way.

The following dialogue fragment develops according to the “questioning” communicative scenario, but, due to the communicants' mutual efforts, the topic switching is performed, and the conversation moves on harmoniously. A young man, whose behavior does not correspond to the general cultural stereotype of courtship for a girl in the grandmother's opinion, becomes the object of the topic of romantic relationships:

Gd. I want to get daisies for my room better //

Gm. Let Igor get them for you / What is he thinking about? How long has he given you flowers?

Gd. Well/ for my birthday//

Gm. All summer has passed // So many flowers have already faded / and he gave you flowers for your birthday only //

Gd. Well /he is not romantic / granny //

Gm. What from this?! You know each other for 5 years / He knows well / how much you love flowers //

Gd. Well, I don't know, granny / why he does not present flowers / I'm not going to beg him / am I?

Gm. Well, you can ask once / Nothing awful / Maybe / he doesn't understand / how to court for you //

Gd. Well, he doesn't like such things / He's better to cook for me or buy a hat //

Gm. Also good //

Gd. He believes / love must be shown by care //

Gm. But what about romance?

Communicative tension is created at the intentional level. Pay attention at the anaphoric role of the communicative particle *well* which stands for the tension signal in four synsemantic replicas. The right to correct the behavior of the friend who violates the general cultural behavior model is defended by the elderly family member, and is not encouraged by the younger one. Direct evaluations which are more common among old people, as they have more life experience, appear as the consequence of the socio-cultural communicative attitude to tell the truth in person in every case of dissatisfaction: Gm. *Well, you can ask once* [to present flowers] / *Nothing awful* / *Maybe* / *he doesn't understand* / *how to court for you* //. Obsessive didacticism of the grandmother is embarrassing the granddaughter, the latter believes that communicative equality and self-esteem are more important: Gd. *I'm not going to beg him / am I?* "Desire of the woman to be self-sufficient, to create equal relations with the man, leads to the change of traditional models of female behavior prevailing in the Slavic culture" (Vepreva & Pazio-Wlazłowska, 2019, p. 184). The grandmother looks for an excuse for the granddaughter's pragmatic position which is not typical for a young girl (Gd. *He's better to cook for me or buy a hat* // – Gm. *Also good* //): the female nature (*But what about romance?*) is won by a peasant approach to life (Gm. was born and grown up in the country, preserves mental behavioral stereotypes of folk culture).

Memorial genres can become the factors of overcoming the intergenerational alienation and forming family identity, e.g. family stories about fateful life events of loved ones.

Gm. *I and my boy / when I was a milkmaid / he came to me when I was working / I ran away from the work / left my friend for myself // And we stole with him on a motorcycle in the field / Got full of flowers / and returned in the evening already / True, I had to leave flowers on a bench near the house / because mom would have guessed right away / that I was not at work and would swear terribly // He then / remember / took offense at me because I left them / and they withered // And they say after all / that love fades with flowers //*

Gd. *How amazing! Love is different for everyone //*

Gm. *Any love can be made as you want / The main thing / to do it right / This is your life //*

Gd. *Well, it doesn't always work out the way you want //*

Gm. *These are excuses / As for me, I escaped from the crown / I ran away from your grandfather on the wedding day with another guy / that one from the field on a motorcycle / He was my first love // I was young / thought / that I could do / what I wanted / I like so much now to remember the time of youth / because it is still a certain freedom of feelings / the flowering of beauty //*

Gd. *Really? Why have you never talked about this?!*

Gm. *Well, I don't know / Little you were still // <...> by the way / I didn't talk about this to Nikitka and Lizka (older brother and sister of Gd.) /*

Gd. *Grandma! / I look / what a windy // you are /*

Gm. *I'm not windy / I'm amorous //*

Gd. *Dear me / granny // What details I learn about you when I am 21 years old!*

"Return to the past is an attempt to fill one's life with meaning <...> an attempt to gain a footing" (Varaksina, 2012, p. 62). The following replica of Gm., for whom the youth memories have a psychological effect, is representative: ... *I like so much now to remember the time of youth / because it is still a certain freedom of feelings / the flowering of beauty //*. The Gm.' communicative set to reveal intimate memories,

to transmit her own cultural experience, makes stronger the sensation of family and gender identity. The grandmother and her granddaughter appear here not only as interlocutors, but as women with different experience of love relationships. The grandmother's frank stories about her first love, a daring crown runaway, obedience to her father, and return to her groom, not only contain communicative intrigue, "warming up" the granddaughter's interest in the topic (*How amazing! Really? Why have you never talked about this?!*), – these reply replicas perform the functions of thematic and personal supporting. Discovery of the Other as a carrier of certain social and psychological properties (*What details I learn about you when I am 21 years old!*), recognition of oneself in the Other generate the existential sensation of surprise, joy, feeling of self-value, communicative propinquity: *Gd. Grandma! / I look / what a windy // you are // – Gm. I'm not windy/ I'm amorous //*

Usually, transfer of family life experience is carried out along the communicative vertical – from the senior to the junior, their status-role positions are conventionally asymmetrical: "Generational dialogue between children and elderly persons, which provides the sense formation, is carried out during the transmission of the experience of the latter" (Ermolaeva, 2012, p. 56). Dialogue fragments with super-existence issues demonstrate the communicative equality of the speech partners in development and evaluation of the speech object.

Gd. <...> How amazing! Love is different for everyone //

Gm. Any love can be made as you want / The main thing / to do it right / This is your life //

Gd. Well, it doesn't always work out the way you want // <...> I'm so sad actually now //

Gm. Why?

Gd. Well / there are just so many people / who find their man / fall in love / and then one of them just leaves / for various reasons / for different circumstances // And they can't fall in love anymore and only those moments in memory / with dearest one //

Gm. Oh / of course / it's sad // I can't even imagine / how painful he was / But he understood // They got me together // Now this is different / and it may even be good //

B. Why may it?

B. Well / because it is unknown / how I would have lived my life / if I had stayed with Tolya // And with Gena everything was fine / True! Thanks to my dad for Gena / I didn't need anything / I had beautiful daughters / then grandchildren // What could be better?

The ideas of the grandmother which personifies authority and wisdom of the senior generation are expressed in the form of an existential set: *Any love can be made as you want / The main thing / to do it right //*. In the utterance, modality of will expression is associated with optative modality which means "emotionally colored abstract achievement to any reality in the present, past or future" (Belyayeva, 1985, p. 102), and it is corrected by the granddaughter by means of soft holding back: *Well, it doesn't always work out the way you want //*. Confidential nature of the dialogue fragment devoted to the issue of unanswered love and unhappy fate, reveals subtle psychological state of the speech partners pouring out the souls to each other: *Gd. I'm so sad actually now // – Gm. Oh / of course / it's sad //*. Soft regulating of the partner's speech actions, trustful and intimate tone, deep frankness, proportional contribution to the dialogue development are signs of a heart-to-heart talk. This is a specific genre of Russian conversational communication underlying the communicative ideal. Also, it is characterized by switching "from personal

to socially significant, from everyday life issues to their comprehension in philosophical and ethical key...” (Borisova et al., 2018, p. 78).

Gd. Have you had any romance?

Gm. Sometimes / I did not complain // Of course / he (about her dead husband) walked around the women / was the case / but we were the family / and I turned a blind eye to it //

Gd. Well unfaithfulness / it's the worst / what could be //

Gm. The worst thing that can be / is to lose a loved one // And I forgave him / Just everything / what he did for his family's good / outweighs that bad act / I always thought about the family / And I understood / if he couldn't save it / so I must save it //

Gd. Granny / you have such power / I wish I could become as wise and strong as you //

Gm. You will become / Clever you are already / wisdom will come over the years //

Gd. I don't know / how clever I am //

Gm. My granddaughter can't be silly //

Cultural specificity of the modal component reveals “psychological states and relations of persons, passed through the prism of the system of communication values, which had been saved in the nation for centuries, and acts in the real time” (Borisova et al., 2018, p. 170). Notice the didactic modality of family attitudes as the prevailing modality of the conversational fragment: *Family is the main thing in human life; For the sake of the family, one must forgive everything, even unfaithfulness; Woman is the moral support of the family*. Modality utterances emphasize the basic national value - other-centrism, which manifests itself in the family sphere as socio-centrism, as holiness of a “family person”: *we were the family; I always thought about the family //; ... for the sake of the family //; ... the family...must I save //*. The grandmother justifies the expectations imposed on her by the social and communicative role of the senior mentor, wise life teacher: *Gd. I wish I could become as wise and strong as you //*

7. Conclusion

Judging by the collected material, harmonious intergenerational communication is provided extralinguistically thanks to regular and informal speech contacts. In addition, it is confirmed linguistically: in the majority of value communicative fragments the volumes of replicas of senior and junior communicants are equal, not one of them claims to “capture” communicative advantages. The interlocutors have equal rights to use means of regulating the dialogue interaction: both the grandmother and the granddaughter reveal in their speech techniques of supporting as well as those of holding back. Both have the right to object. Herewith, dialogues with conflict potential, when the senior or junior family member expresses directly value attitudes not corresponding with the attitudes of the speech partner, are regulated by means of topic shifts.

The analysis shows that in the examined dialogues meaningful communicative values are frankness manifesting itself in various forms (sincerity, confession, directness, spontaneity), and tactfulness (ability to observe the sense of proportion in developing unpleasant topics, and in emotional assessments). In the intergenerational communication, coexistence of these value communication attitudes which appear to be controversial in the aspect of contact intensity degree, contributes to speech interaction harmonization.

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