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Kamola MIRZABABAYEVA,
PhD doctorant of NUU
E-mail: kamolka1089@gmail.com

Under the review of Dj.Djumabayeva professor of NUU

GENERATIONAL THEORY AS A KEY TO UNDERSTANDING COMMUNICATION PROCESSES IN SOCIETY

Annotation

The article analyzes the characteristics of communicative acts across different generations. It outlines the fundamental components of a communicative act and examines the concept of "generation," providing criteria for identifying distinct generational groups. Furthermore, the article delves into the historical and psychological differences between Generation X and Generation Y, highlighting their distinctive features in communication contexts.

Key words: Communication, communicative act, generation, theory of generations, features of generations.

ТЕОРИЯ ПОКОЛЕНИЙ КАК КЛЮЧ К ПОНИМАНИЮ КОММУНИКАЦИОННЫХ ПРОЦЕССОВ В ОБЩЕСТВЕ

Аннотация

В статье анализируются характеристики коммуникативных актов разных поколений. В ней описываются основные компоненты коммуникативного акта и рассматривается понятие "поколение", даются критерии для определения различных поколенческих групп. Кроме того, в статье рассматриваются исторические и психологические различия между поколениями X и Y, выделяются их отличительные черты в контексте коммуникации.

Ключевые слова: Коммуникация, коммуникативный акт, поколение, теория поколений, особенности поколений.

AVLODLAR NAZARIYASI JAMIYATDAGI ALOQA JARAYONLARINI TUSHUNISHNING KALITI SIFATIDA

Annotatsiya

Maqolada turli avlodlardagi kommunikativ aktlarning xususiyatlari tahlil qilinadi. U kommunikativ AKTning asosiy tarkibiy qismlarini bayon qiladi va "avlod" tushunchasini o'rganadi va alohida avlod guruhlarini aniqlash mezonlarini taqdim etadi. Bundan tashqari, maqolada X avlod va Y avlod o'rtasidagi tarixiy va psixologik farqlarni o'rganilgan, ularning aloqa kontekstidagi o'ziga xos xususiyatlarini farqlanadi.

Kalit so'zlar: Aloqa, kommunikativ harakat, avlod, avlodlar nazariyasi, avlodlar xususiyatlari.

Introduction. Generational theory offers a unique lens through which to understand communication processes in society. It suggests that individuals born in distinct generational cohorts develop unique worldviews, values, and communication styles influenced by the historical, social, and cultural contexts in which they were raised. This literature review explores the key contributions to generational theory and its relevance to understanding communication dynamics in various societal contexts, including the workplace, family, and media.

Society is a complex communicative system, which is far from being only a static sum of social institutions: in fact, it is being revived day after day or creatively recreated with the help of certain acts of a communicative nature that take place between its members.

Literature review. Generational theory, as defined by sociologists and social psychologists, posits that individuals within a specific generational group share common experiences and values that shape their communication behaviors. One of the earliest and most prominent theorists, Karl Mannheim (1952), introduced the concept of the "generational consciousness," arguing that a generation's collective experiences—such as wars, economic crises, or technological advancements—shape its collective identity and modes of interaction. Mannheim's theory of generations suggests that these generational characteristics can significantly influence communication styles, social behavior, and societal values [1].

The communication gap between generations has become an important area of study in understanding the challenges that arise in personal and professional interactions. According to Zemke, Raines, and Filipczak (2000), generational differences in communication can lead to misunderstandings, especially in workplaces where multiple generations collaborate [2].

Generational theory also plays a crucial role in understanding broader societal communication patterns, particularly in media consumption. As highlighted by Twenge (2006), the advent of the internet and social media has changed the way each generation communicates and interacts with information. While Baby Boomers may rely on traditional media like newspapers and television, Millennials and Gen Z are more likely to engage with digital content, often consuming news and entertainment through social media platforms like Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok. This difference in media consumption is a reflection of broader shifts in how each

generation approaches communication, information, and social interaction [3].

Moreover, generational theory offers insight into intergenerational communication in the family and community contexts. According to Bengtson (2001), family communication is influenced by generational attitudes and values, which can create both tension and cohesion. As older generations may hold more traditional views, younger generations often embrace more progressive perspectives, leading to differences in how they communicate and negotiate family roles and responsibilities [4].

In organizational settings, the effective integration of multiple generations can lead to both challenges and opportunities. A study by Kopperschmidt (2000) highlights that understanding generational differences is critical for improving workplace communication, especially in teams composed of individuals from different generational cohorts. Organizations that recognize and embrace generational diversity can create a more inclusive environment where communication flows more smoothly and effectively [5].

Research by Chaudhuri and Ghosh (2012) also emphasizes that organizations need to adapt their communication strategies to accommodate the preferences of different generational groups. For instance, while Baby Boomers may prefer formal, written memos, Millennials may favor more collaborative tools such as instant messaging and collaborative platforms like Slack or Microsoft Teams [6].

Research methodology. Communicative acts involve the smallest units of verbal interaction between speakers, shaped by their intentions (the focus of consciousness and thought on a specific subject) and strategies for achieving communication goals. Each dialogue exchange influences the interlocutor's response, making the stimulus-replica and reaction-replica together constitute the minimum structural unit of a communicative act [7].

Over time, the core structural components of communicative acts have evolved considerably, shaped by a range of social, economic, geographical, and other influences. This article examines generational change as one key factor driving significant transformations in the units of speech interaction.

The foundational element of communication is information—data about objects and phenomena in the environment, including their parameters, properties, and states, as perceived by information systems during the processes of life and activity [8].

Communication is the process of exchanging information between two or more participants. The model of the communicative act discussed in this article is based on an activity-based polysubject approach, which includes the following elements:

Subjects of communication – active participants in the communicative process, who, within a single communicative unit, function both as communicators and recipients.

Encoding – the process of transforming and presenting the transmitted message in a form compatible with a specific information transmission channel.

Message – the smallest unit of language that conveys an idea or meaning suitable for communication. It serves as a form of presenting information, consisting of a set of signs or primary signals that carry information.

Communication channel – the medium through which a message is transmitted between the subjects of communication.

Decoding – the process of reconstructing the original form of the presented information, during which the recipient interprets the message's meaning.

Feedback – a stage where the roles of sender and recipient reverse. The original recipient becomes the sender and undergoes the same stages of information exchange to deliver a response, while the initial sender assumes the role of the recipient.

Situational framework – external circumstances that influence the nature and specifics of communication.

Purpose of the subject of communication – an intrinsic factor for each participant that shapes the content of the transmitted information, impacts interpersonal relationships, and affects the duration of the interaction.

Barriers – obstacles that hinder the effective and accurate transfer of information between communication partners [9].

A generation is less a group of individual communicators and more a collective representation of the defining traits of an era. A generation typically consists of individuals born around the same period, sharing a similar age range and often common or related experiences, activities, and memories [10].

Generational gap developed by William Strauss and Neil Howe, describes recurring generational cycles. According to Strauss and Howe, a generation is identified based on three key criteria:

Members of the same generation share a historical context, encountering pivotal historical events and social trends during the same life stages.

They exhibit common beliefs and behaviors.

A shared awareness of these commonalities fosters a sense of belonging among members of the generation [11].

Analysis and result. The generational theory by Strauss and Howe was originally designed to analyze Anglo-American history but has since gained widespread recognition in many countries, including Russia. The authors of this concept argue that generational values across countries are often similar due to shared global events and phenomena, such as the advent of the Internet and the proliferation of mobile communication technologies.

While Strauss and Howe suggested that generational shifts occur in a relatively uniform manner worldwide, it is crucial to interpret this theory through the lens of local historical and cultural contexts. For instance, psycholinguist Evgenia Shamis and psychologist Alexey Antipov have adapted the generational theory to align with key milestones in Russian history, providing a framework that reflects the unique characteristics of Russian generations [12]:

1. Generation X, born in 1963–1984.
2. Generation Y or "millennium", born in 1985-2000.
3. Generation Z, MeMeMe, born in 2000-2020.

At the moment, generation Z is on the way to becoming an active subject of public life, for this reason, generations X and Y will be taken as the basis for considering the characteristics of generations in the process of a communicative act

The defining events of the Generation X era include the continuation of the Cold War, perestroika, the stagnation and collapse of socialist regimes, the opening of borders with increased freedom of movement, globalization, as well as periods of economic decline followed by growth. This generation grew up witnessing radical changes in the global system and adapted to the challenges that accompanied these transformations.

Generation X individuals are characterized by resilience and self-reliance. They are pragmatic, resourceful, and proactive, often described as "go-getters." Accustomed to instability, they rely on themselves, always have a backup plan, and handle difficulties with composure and preparedness. Their approach to challenges is marked by persistence and diligence, making them highly efficient and productive.

For Generation X, career, education, and material success are of significant importance. They strive for achievement but often prefer established methods over exploring untested paths.

Key qualities of people born between 1964 and 1984 include:

Self-reliance and pragmatism

Individualism and adaptability

Willingness to change and work on self-improvement

Professional self-development and receptivity to constructive criticism

Ambition for career growth and a high standard of living

High efficiency, productivity, and a responsible attitude

Tolerance and openness to diversity

Their ability to adapt, coupled with a focus on personal and professional success, defines this generation as a cornerstone in navigating transitional periods in history [13].

The text outlines the differences in communication practices and challenges between two generations: Generation X (born 1963-1984) and Generation Y (born 1985-2000). It explores how these differences are shaped by factors such as the educational process, geographic location, personality traits, and the specific communication channels used by each generation. Here's a summary of the main points:

Generational Differences:

Generation X (1963-1984) grew up with fewer technological innovations, leading them to rely more on verbal and non-verbal communication channels (e.g., face-to-face interactions).

Generation Y (1985-2000), on the other hand, became more accustomed to technological advancements, such as the internet and social media, and therefore prefers artificial communication channels (e.g., digital platforms).

Encoding and Decoding of Messages:

The process of encoding and decoding messages is universal, but it varies based on the code (language or symbols) used. If the sender and receiver share the same understanding of the code, communication is clearer and more effective.

The communication channel (e.g., face-to-face conversation, social media) significantly influences how the message is received.

Communication Channels:

Natural channels (verbal and non-verbal) are more frequently used by Generation X due to lower technological access and less frequent use of digital tools in their formative years.

Artificial channels (e.g., the internet, social networks) are more common for Generation Y, whose environment and social interactions have been heavily influenced by technology.

Content of the Message:

The content and style of communication vary based on the generation. Generation Y, having grown up during times of economic instability and social unrest, often uses more informal language and slang, including criminal jargon, compared to the more conservative communication style of Generation X.

Feedback:

Feedback is a critical element of communication, helping both the sender and receiver assess understanding and agreement with the message.

Communication within the same generation is generally more productive because individuals share common values and experiences.

Cross-generational communication may face challenges due to different life experiences, which can affect how messages are perceived and understood.

Situational Context:

The situational frame of communication—whether formal or informal—also affects how messages are interpreted. Generation Y, particularly those who frequently engage in online communication, is often in a more informal situational frame, while Generation X may lean towards more formal or traditional communication styles.

In essence, the generational divide influences both the method and content of communication. Generation X is more likely to rely on face-to-face interactions and conservative language, while Generation Y embraces digital communication and informal styles. The effectiveness of communication also depends on the shared

context, feedback, and common understanding between the sender and receiver.

The text examines how the goals of communication subjects—Generation X (1963-1984) and Generation Y (1985-2000)—influence the nature and effectiveness of intersubjective communication, particularly the balance between communication goals (information exchange) and pragmatic goals (personal needs and objectives).

Here's a breakdown of the key points:

Communication Goals vs. Pragmatic Goals:

Communication goals refer to the basic need for exchanging information for the sake of communication itself. This goal is inherent in all people, regardless of generation, because humans are biosocial beings.

Pragmatic goals refer to the personal, inner motives that drive someone to communicate in order to fulfill specific needs or desires. These goals are shaped by the individual's personal characteristics, which are in turn influenced by their generational context.

Generation X (1963-1984):

Members of Generation X are described as self-reliant and independent, often preferring to solve problems on their own rather than seeking help from others.

Their communication tends to be passive when it comes to achieving their goals. Instead of relying on communication with others to achieve objectives, they focus on demonstrating individual productivity and efficiency.

This approach means that Generation X's intersubjective communication is often less about collaboration and more about individual effort and self-sufficiency.

Generation Y (1985-2000):

Generation Y is characterized by their pragmatic goal orientation, where they seek immediate results and are more aware of the resources available from others to meet their needs.

They are more likely to engage in synergistic communication, where collective effort and the integration of individual resources and skills contribute to achieving a shared goal.

The result is that members of Generation Y are more likely to use intersubjective communication—communication between people—to achieve their goals. They recognize the value of cooperation and collaboration in achieving greater efficiency.

The text highlights various barriers to effective communication, which can distort or block the transmission of information. These barriers can arise from several sources, including

generational differences, individual characteristics, and the overload of information in modern society. Here is a summary of the key points:

Key Barriers in Communication:

Imagination Limitations: A person's ability to imagine or conceive certain concepts can be a barrier, depending on their experiences or education.

Vocabulary Barriers: Differences in the vocabulary of the sender and the recipient can impede understanding, depending on each person's linguistic capacity and familiarity with certain terms.

Understanding Ability: The recipient's ability to grasp the meaning of words can vary, especially if their cognitive or educational background differs from that of the sender.

Memory Capacity: The amount of information a person can remember also affects how effectively they can communicate or absorb information.

General Barriers: Barriers can also arise due to logical, phonetic, semantic, or stylistic differences, further complicating communication.

Generational Differences in Barriers:

While many of these barriers are influenced by individual education and characteristics, generational differences also play a role:

Generation Y (born 1985-2000) has experienced significant information overload, leading to clip thinking, which means they tend to filter and process information in small, superficial chunks. This coping mechanism, while effective in managing the overwhelming amount of information in the digital age, can sometimes reduce the depth of understanding.

Generation X (born 1963-1984) encountered information overload later in life, meaning their adaptive strategies are not as finely tuned, making it harder for them to process large amounts of information efficiently.

Conclusion. While communication barriers exist across all generations, the way they are experienced and managed can vary. Generation Y has developed mechanisms to handle the information overload typical of the digital age, but this can lead to a more superficial understanding. On the other hand, Generation X faces challenges in adapting to these new communication dynamics. Additionally, the authority barrier is more prominent for Generation X, while Generation Y tends to be less affected by traditional sources of authority, allowing for a potentially more flexible communication process.

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