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Language, Self, & Roles

Lifespan Communication Approach


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Key themes— Pecchioni et al Chapters 3 & 7

- Communication Development
 - Early childhood: emphasis on nonverbal communication & early language acquisition
 - Middle childhood: emphasis on language development and early primary foundations of social and relational skills
 - Later childhood: continued emphasis on language development with increasing emphasis on social development
 - Adolescence: primary emphasis on social skills development and early adult role development
 - Adulthood-early: Expanding personal communication competencies including communication in roles of: intimate-partner, worker, new parent
 - Adulthood-middle: Increased emphasis on competencies as parent of children in later childhood & adolescence ; worker in higher status positions
 - Adulthood (later): Declines in verbal fluency, vocabulary, verbal performance; style contrasts (Communication Accommodation Theory)

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Twenty Statements Test (TST)



Grace & Kramer, 2003

- Idiocentric—Statements about personal qualities, attitudes, beliefs, states, traits: I am happy.
- Large Group—statements about membership in groups with many people: I am a student
- Small group—statements about membership in groups with few members: I am a husband (family)
- Allocentric—statements about interdependence, friendship, responsiveness to others, concern with the viewpoints of others: I am a sociable person.

Pecchioni et al CH 4 & 5

Family as Lifespan Group

Unique Qualities of Family

- Nonvolition
- Totality of personhood
- Lifetime influence
- High level of intimacy and privacy
- High level of commitment
- Expectation of "permanence"
- Unique purposes (nurturance, reproduction, socialization, support, etc.)



Family as a Lifespan Group

- Socha (1999). Communication in family units: Studying the first group. In L. Frey (Ed.), *The Handbook of Group Communication Theory and Research* (pp. 475-492). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
 - Family as a life-long group and life-long influence on communication development (relational, group, organizational, media literacy)
 - Context of communication "firsts"
 - Structural-functional approach
 - Role
 - Patterns (cohesion-adaptability; conformity-conversation)
