

AB60

Intergenerational interaction in public transport

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This work is supposed to study the phenomenon "to (not) cede a seat" to elderly people in public transport (usually "to cede a seat" is understood as "manifestation of respect" by participants of a situation, and is estimated from daily prospect in this context).

The research is based on interviews and materials of the participant observation of passengers behavior in public transport in 2009-2015 in Moscow and Saratov. Theoretical basis is Gofman's researches on Face-Work.

Any person, who suddenly feels unhealthy and demonstrates it to others, will be likely to be given a seat unconditionally. Nevertheless, a 60 years old person looking strong and conscious, without any physical troubles (even if he or she might be retired) would be hardly invited to take a seat. The logic to concede a place is based not as much on the principle of the "respect for age(ing)", but more on the "compassion for the ailing elderly". Most part of conflict situations is based on different understanding of legitimate reasons for conceding a place – the vigorous behavior of an elderly person might not be compatible with a behavior scheme to which he or she intentionally refers.

The conceding a place to the elderly person is a rule conditioned by the observer's context. On one hand, "conceding a place" is still a socially expected norm, on the other, the rule is regularly broken.

There are two main strategies "not to concede a place":

"I see but I can not" - a strategy of an "urgent business" when a person pretends being "occupied with something important". This strategy can be divided into a short-term ("to play for time") and a long-term ("to expose the impossibility") options.

"Inattention" strategy - I "do not see", that theoretically does not allow to consider that the sitting person refuses to show respect as he or she is not "really included" in a situation. With regard to this strategy, we can mention: "looking out of the window", "falling asleep", "listening to music" and various options of manipulation with the cell phone.

In practice most ways to avoid conceding a place combines both options in different proportions.

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