Axiological Sphere of Dialogue of Cultures: Phenomenon, Architectonics, Ontogenesis

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Abstract: Defining the phenomenon “axiological sphere of dialogue of cultures”, the author considers it as many-sided, integrated phenomenon. The article proves that values as spiritual phenomena form certain axiological sphere that influences the way representatives of different cultures are engaged in a dialogue as well as the quality and emotional intensity of the dialogue, the result of the dialogue to be reached - tolerance in attitudes, certain prospects of future interaction, new horizons of the knowledge of true senses of Love, the Good, the Truth, Beauty, Happiness, Pleasure, etc. Architectonics of axiological sphere of dialogue of cultures is presented in horizontal, vertical and time dimensions. The author's understanding of the becoming and development of axiological sphere of dialogue of cultures is connected with the mechanism of translation from one cultural-symbolic language to another as a result of which knowledge is interiorized and, finding personal senses, becomes a part of personal consciousness.

Key words: Axiological sphere · Dialogue of cultures · Education · Ontogenesis

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays value and worth of communication are taken axiomatically, as being a social creature a human being is in constant interaction with other people. XXI century introduces certain corrective amendments into the developed over several thousand years assumptions about the content and methods of interaction, since development of the information society changes values of dialogue. Manuel Castells in his world famous work proved that modern multimedia, such as the mass-media, radio and TV, have become audiovisual environment with which we interact incessantly and automatically [1]. At the same time, direct communication between people is decreased as “TV frequently means “presence” of other people in the house - precious thing in the society where more and more people live all by themselves” [1]. Experimental research by H. Small and G. Vorgan testifies that the Internet-generation has seen fast evolution of human brain, IQ level of modern people has increased; their minds develop multi-task skills and cognitive abilities. As for the by-effect of such “digital brain evolution”, it is isolation of a separate person from the society, as a result, sudden, instant relations between people become very rare. “A Stanford University study found that for every hour we spend on our computers, traditional face-to-face interaction time with other people drops by nearly thirty minutes ” [2]. The authors refer to the present generation as “digital”, paying attention to the fact that these children have not seen the world without computers, they feel absolutely confident in the world of wide web, but many of them find it difficult to enter a dialogue, to prove their position. For this reason we consider important to define the phenomenon “axiological sphere of dialogue of cultures”.

To consider the concept “axiological sphere of dialogue of cultures” phenomenologically, we would like to begin with those postulates which are well-recognized and proved in modern science. Then we will proceed to those spheres of knowledge about cultural and pedagogical phenomena connected with dialogue of cultures in poly-cultural, poly-confessional and diverse world which have not been studied thoroughly enough. Such logic corresponds to the third rule “Discourse on the Method” by René Descartes: “… to stick to certain order of thinking, start from simpler subjects that are easy to understand and gradually proceed to cognition of the most complex ones…” [3].

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One of the long-held assumptions about dialogue is to treat it as a verbal exchange between two, three and more interlocutors. M.M. Bakhtin looked at it from another angle: “Dialogical relations are relations (semantic) between any statements in speech dialogue” [4]. This idea was further developed in works by V.S. Bibler who emphasized that in dialogical relations each person stands for a special world of culture, certain value orientations are revealed. One appears to be a self-determined individual developing in the horizon of one’s personality and constantly entering interactions with different dialogue participants. The processes of interaction between interlocutors become the source of their self-development, presenting one’s own point of view on these or other phenomena and life values. In dialogical relations, achievements of culture are realized and generated; understanding of other cultural values takes place. Dialogue becomes the method of personal agreement upon them, acquisition or denial, reaching mutual understanding [5].

Asymmetry of dialogue is expressed in distinction of semiotic structure (language) of dialogue participants as well as in alternate orientation of messages, as Y.M. Lotman stated [6]. Participants of dialogue alternately take roles of the message transmitters and recipients. The author’s idea that without semiotic distinction dialogue is senseless, but exclusive and absolute distinction makes it impossible is quite interesting. According to the author, the condition for a successful dialogue is mutual interest of participants to the situation and their ability to overcome inevitable semiotic barriers. In poly-cultural space of the modern world overcoming such semiotic barriers is connected with the necessity to switch to “a foreign” language in terms of facial expression, gestures, understanding cultural background of another mentality.

Considering cultural changes in the society, Ronald Inglehart and Christian Welzel directly connect them with prevailing values and beliefs of people. “Cross-cultural variation proves to be surprisingly coherent and a wide range of attitudes (reflecting people’s beliefs and values in such different life domains as the family, work, religion, environment, politics and sexual behavior) reflects just two major dimensions: one that taps the polarization between traditional values and secular-national values; and a second dimension that taps the polarization between survival values and self-expression values” [7]. “The map of the world”, created by the authors, evidently shows in what way social and economic development of the countries changes their positions in two value dimensions: due to the workforce move from agrarian sector to industrial one, in people’s outlook, as a rule, there occurs a shift from traditional values to secular-rational; when service industry prevails over industrial sector, there occurs a second scale shift in the sphere of value orientations - transition from survival values to the values of self-expression. Significance of the research results received by Ronald Inglehart and Christian Welzel consists in the found out connection between the level of economic welfare of the country and inter-generation difference in values. Thus, they cite data that in rich postindustrial societies significant intergenerational differences can be observed: young people as a whole put greater emphasis on secular-rational values and values of self-expression than representatives of senior age groups. On the contrary, in the countries without significant economic growth over the last 50 years and with low income of the population, big intergenerational differences do not emerge: representatives of younger and senior age groups have almost identical parameters on the scale of traditional/modern values. This result allows assuming that differences between generations are connected not with the age of people itself, but with changes of historical kind. Values of self-expression are revealed in all spheres of life: family (alternative types of family, gender justice), work (workaholics), society (tolerance, civil participation), nature (environmental protection), relations with the authorities (real democracy, “responsiveness” of elite) and the senior generations (greater independence in the choice of walks of life) and self-knowledge. As values of self-expression directly influence feeling of happiness, there are more people who feel happy in those countries where there are more opportunities for self-realization, achievement of life success.

Dialogueness as a special quality of personality is formed during all human life, enabling an individual to perceive arguments and experience of another person, to find compromise in interaction. A new culture of dialogue and people interaction is formed in terms of deeper ideas on dialogue of cultures and the person is treated as the special world of culture (gender, age, professional, etc.). From this point of view, interaction between people at the intercultural level springs from the dialogue of individual outlooks. There are two kinds of interaction: 1) cultural-direct when people interact with each other via dialogue at the level of language; 2) cultural-indirect when dialogue occurs by means of cultural phenomena - signs, symbols, objects, images, etc. Cultural senses can be revealed during dialogue when there is trust to the interlocutor as they open personal attitudes, highest values and aspirations of each interaction participant.
Having outlined the points of view of scientists on the concepts “dialogue” and “dialogue of cultures”, we can proceed with studying axiological sphere of dialogue of cultures. The concept “axiological sphere” is defined by L.N. Stolovich, M.S. Kagan and other scientists as follows:

- Unity of various displays of value consciousness of the person;
- Public system of views, outlooks, ideologies, etc. which unites diverse ideals;
- Standards of human ideas and understanding functioning of culture and the natural world that express value attitude to objects, things and phenomena [8, 9].

Architectonics of axiological sphere of dialogue of cultures represents the given phenomenon from the spatial point of view, as axiological sphere is not simply a set of these or those values in consciousness of an individual, but an integrated system of value connections and attitudes to the world of the nature and society. It is quite difficult to systematize all those values which enter axiological sphere of dialogue of cultures and it is, probably, impossible, as in the poly-cultural world values of each person and cultural community (the nation, people, professional team, age group, etc.) are specific and unique. Nevertheless, it is possible to get general understanding because the values which enter axiological sphere of dialogue of cultures have socio-cultural content since they provide positive interaction, mutual understanding between people. The vertical axis of axiological sphere of dialogue of cultures presents hierarchy of values: from the need for safe, tolerant interaction, dialogue with representatives of one’s “circle” to self-expression in creativity, love, dialogue with the recognized authorities. Cultural wealth of self-expression in axiological sphere of an individual who is ready for a dialogue, stipulate coordination and interpenetration of people’s value systems. The alchemy of mutual understanding is born in this interpenetration where verbal expression is not required, where the meaning is understood “without any words”.

The horizon of axiological sphere of dialogue of cultures includes values of direct dialogue “here and now”:

- Values of nonverbal interaction: friendly look, gesture, movement;
- Mental values: validity of information, signs and symbols;
- aesthetic values: beauty of clothes, word, text, gesture, facial expression;
- Cultural values of community: toys, books, land, family, leisure, network communication, media-resources.

Axiological sphere of dialogue of cultures is actually centered on dialogue as the spiritual phenomenon uniting various cultures. Further on, following one another like parts of a “nested doll”, values of nonverbal interaction, spiritual, mental, aesthetic and cultural values of community are included. And these value spheres have the individualized hierarchy. The subject of the dialogue is most clearly designated and uniformly understood by dialogue participants. Moving from the center causes greater dynamism, uncertainty, optionality. However, it is periphery where common standpoints, general understanding of the situation of interaction between dialogue participants are produced. In this case, the values on periphery move closer to the center, taking up more personally significant position. The dialogical activity stimulated by understanding of axiological sphere of such kind, leads to faster “maturing” of peripheral sites and development of general understanding of various situations of interaction. Such situations can be of both personal and social, state significance.

The sphere of values (axiological sphere) of dialogue of cultures separates internal space of individual preferences of a person from the external space of culture. In many respects, these spaces are isomorphic but they have different energetic filling and various hierarchy. The border between these spaces is perceived as a mental, imaginary line that separates something that is “mine”, “clear”, “safe”, “harmonious” from “another’s”, “diverse”, “dangerous”. Axiological spheres of a person and the mankind are constantly moving, developing and entering the processes of interrelation and interpenetration. Using the language of images, axiological sphere can be seen as the area which is at the level of personal heart and has certain degree of stability. But in time dimension it is changed under the influence of new events, information, means of interaction with the world, etc. Thus, socio-cultural situations cause domination of certain values: power, pride, dignity, love, beauty, truth, the good, patriotism, etc. Physiological condition of the body determines domination of values of health, rest, activity, passivity. Aspiration to career success causes orientation to the values of purposefulness, working capacity, perfectionism.
Axiological sphere of dialogue of cultures organizes space and time of human life. The external world which is beyond axiological sphere is exposed to axiolization - its subjects and phenomena get certain significance and join the sphere of personal values. The border of axiological sphere not only separates internal space from the external, but also connects these spaces, acting as the “membrane” through which the information either freely gets in and flows or is torn away. Such border belongs to both spaces, enables to provide “transition” of values into the external array and back in the dialogue. This border is bi- and poly-lingual. Therefore, for example, if we need tolerance as spiritual value to be included into internal space of axiological sphere of dialogue of cultures of a person, it should be translated from the language of culture into the language that is clear and acceptable for an individual.

Sign-symbolic nature of values in axiological sphere of dialogue of cultures makes it possible to speak about the Universe of signs. Charles Sanders Peirce was the first to believe that the entire Universe is filled with signs or even consists exclusively of signs [11]. The Universe of signs unites and connects people, sets uniform value reference points of life and development of the mankind which are included in the concept “axiological sphere”. Moreover, according to N.S. Rozov: “value consciousness is likely to take the role of the leading form of outlook in the coming historical epoch”. [12] In such form of outlook, values leave the subordinated position; they incorporate and enable to reconsider the whole variety of present outlooks as they become really essential in communication and search for productive compromises between representatives of different outlooks. Value-oriented consciousness, according to his point of view, is the form of outlook based on values which meets the requirements established above.

The content, nature and key orientation of axiological sphere of dialogue of cultures of children and youth are determined by the nature and specificity of axiological sphere of the public environment, as it was already stated above. If to single out axiological sphere of the dialogue of cultures similarly to biosphere (V.I. Vernadsky), semiosphere (Y.M. Lotman), conceptosphere (D.S. Likhachev), it is necessary to mention that it stands for not just a set of values, but also their interrelation, interaction, which provide integrity of the world outlook and culture of the world transformation. Neither cultures of dialogue nor dialogue of cultures exist outside axiological sphere because those values which form value-notional world image of the person stipulate the method of one’s interaction with oneself, other people and the world as a whole.

Studying modern axiological paradigm, M.A. Belyaeva [10] proves that it is based on the dynamics of interaction between two directions: 1) focus on absolute realm of values acquired as a result of active creativity; 2) focus on independence of personal life and the world of values. Ontological nature of personal axiological sphere has objectively-subjective nature. In the dynamics of interaction between objective life and a person-subject of the present world, two kinds of changes occur: in feelings and mind of an individual. Values are interconnected through feelings and reasoning: change of one value leads to the change of others. The changing socio-cultural space is now characterized by rational account, depersonalized technologies and manipulations; from the second angle – by lack of individualization, spiritual dependence, alienation; from the third - by life clichés, simplification, averaging, uniformity, that lead to focus on everything that is daily, routine and transient. Such situation stipulates steadfast attention of scientists to gnosiological nature of axiological sphere of a person which is inseparable from one’s cognitive and practical activities. The process of values comprehension and assertion in people’s minds refers to a typical cognitive situation assuming an object and a subject, purposes and problems as well as methods, forms and results of cognition and value acquisition. As for the best criterion for values acquisition by a person, it is connected with one’s practical activities which reflect the depth of mastering and efficiency of their display in real behavior. The key aspect of the given process in modern conditions is that the crisis of values with possible “zero situation”, on the one hand and “extra-natural” need of a person for life-meaningful values, on the other hand, increase the importance of cognitive and practical activities of a person and one’s responsibility. The activity of a person that is aimed at world-transformation, world-creativity, promotes creative perfection of the social and natural world.

Formation and development of axiological sphere of dialogue of cultures occurs during all human life, under the influence of the society, nature and educational system. In this respect, education is of crucial importance, as it renders systematizing, structuring influence on spontaneously formed methods of children’s interaction with information, other people, oneself. In the Federal Law “About education in the Russian Federation” (2012) the concept education is treated axiologically for the first time: “Education is the uniform purposeful process of educating and training, being socially significant welfare and carried out for the sake of an individual, family, society and the state; it also stands for a set of acquired knowledge, skills, abilities, value guidelines, experience of
activity and competences of certain volume and complexity with the view of intellectual, spiritually-moral, creative, physical and (or) professional development of a person, supplying one’s educational needs and interests” [12]. Such understanding of education has been formed over last years in many pedagogical researches. Let us provide some examples. Moral-aesthetic and cultural-cognitive values have become the subject of research by R.M. Chumicheva who developed the content of education focused on penetration into spiritual layers of the child’s personality [13]. The author proved that education content should be filled with the values of culture that give birth to individual personality in preschool childhood when the child learns to be part of the society, gets experience of interaction and acquires methods of dialogue with other people. Owing to nurturing and education, one’s value guidelines are formed, the ability to enter a dialogue is formed. According to the researcher, the main kinds of values include cultural-cognitive, humanistic (conscience, duty, honor), moral (compassion, empathy, nobleness, creation), aesthetic (everything that is beautiful and harmonious).

In our researches we came to the conclusion that in ontogenesis, origin of axiological sphere of dialogue of cultures is connected with the mechanism of translation from one cultural-symbolic language to another. As a result, knowledge is interiorized and, finding personal senses, becomes a part of personal consciousness. Axiological sphere of a preschool child has sensual basis and its form is the concept. In preschool childhood the kernel of axiological sphere is formed in child’s consciousness, including those basic values which will be mostly saved during all further human life. At younger age such values are: “self”, close people (mum, daddy, grandmother, grandfather), objects of culture (clothes, utensils, furniture, etc.), norms of cultural dialogue (hello, good-bye), defining interaction with the world of the society; fantastic images-partners in games; active movement, being necessary life feature. At this age the important components of axiological sphere of dialogue of cultures also include toys (a pyramid, a cube, a ball, soft toys) owing to which sensory standards are formed and elements of the world (Earth, Fire, Water, Air), stipulating orientation of a child in the world of alive and lifeless nature. Due to dialogue interaction with adults and peers about the specified values, a child develops the picture of the world which is characterized by spirituality, unity of real and figurative objects; elementary connections between the objects and phenomena in reality; bright emotional coloring. It is possible to conclude that already at younger preschool age correlation between axiological dialogue of cultures and worldview, outlook, world transformation is established.

At the age of 4-5, children’s axiological sphere of dialogue of cultures expands because of formation of the values connected with gender assignment “I am a boy, a girl”, with understanding of the importance of toys, allowing to develop role games (various types of transport, construction sets, dolls of boys and girls with a set of clothes, etc.). Cultural interaction with adults and peers becomes the central value that determines achievement of result of dialogue or subject-related kinds of activity. Successes (failures) in comprehending the world around bring approval (disapproval) of important adults (mum, daddy, grandmother, grandfather, tutor) and form experience of self-estimation. The game image becomes quasi-subject of dialogue and activity and movement allows exploring near and far space.

Dialogues with peers enable children of preschool age to acquire, consider and experience gender-role values developed throughout history, culture and traditions of people. As N.E. Tatarintseva states it: “Development of sex-role values is mediated by interaction, dialogue, cooperation of a child with adults where dialogue becomes the condition and mechanism of getting to know the sense of gender-role values and induces the child’s self-expression, self-realization, self-control of “male” (“female”) individuality, promotes self-development of personal qualities” [14]. Among gender-role values, the author mentions cultural-cognitive, humanistic, regulatory-communicative and aesthetic values that guarantee tolerant, harmonious, valid, benevolent mutual relations between boys and girls. Inclusion of the given gender-related values into axiological sphere of dialogue of cultures allows presenting the given phenomenon as many-sided, integrated structure.

Developing axiological sphere of dialogue of cultures gives origin to physio-philosophical picture of the world that draws clear distinction between the real and figurative, imaginary; it reveals clear understanding of sign and reality; emotional differences in relation to positive and negative events; fragmentary-situational demand in productive kinds of activity.

At the senior preschool age [6-7] axiological sphere of dialogue of cultures is expanded owing to inclusion of such values as “I am a personality” (I have the rights, responsibilities, I act as the citizen of the country, I have the realized needs, interests, etc.); learning process
accessories become significant social subjects (books, equipment for experiments, logical games, etc.); objects and natural phenomena become personally significant, make sense as subjective objects of interaction; fantastic heroes acquire features of an ideal, become models to follow in imagined and real situations; movement becomes universal method of getting knowledge about the world around, oneself and personal health. Research by L.V. Abdulmanova, devoted to physical culture of a child, is based on axiological approach. It has proved that physical education content should include some knowledge about the values that determine significance and make sense of movements, state their purpose (moving in space, change), character (fast, skilled, smooth), orientation (creative, destructive), elementary practical connections between movements and changes in life and in the nature. On the basis of such knowledge-values, the substructure of axiological sphere of dialogue of cultures, connected with the values of nonverbal interaction [15] is formed.

We develop a complete technology of pedagogical support for the worldview evolution, focused on complex development of child’s personality, ability to perceive the world around completely, as value-colored, interconnected and interdependent space. As for the purpose of education, for a child it becomes to realize one’s applicability, an opportunity to become a real individual, free and unique doer in life. Dialogue interaction focused on interlocutors’ axiological spheres development provides comprehension of cultural values [16].

Further on in human life axiological sphere of dialogue of cultures will retain relative stability (some invariance during certain time), will be reduced (some values will be excluded, depreciated) or expanded (insignificant values will gain special importance). The vector of changes in axiological sphere is determined not only by educational, but also by socio-cultural, political, economic factors. Development of axiological sphere of dialogue of cultures becomes background for world outlook evolution, providing one’s participation in near and far, native and universal culture. Education creates conditions for the generalized, complete assumption of a child about oneself in the world of people, nature, culture. Children develop certain concepts-values that can be expressed in such categories, as essential, general, necessary, internal, external, reason and consequence, a part and the whole. The given concepts-values act as method and means of mental reproduction of the situation of interaction, independent search for reference points in solving the problems that arise during dialogues.

Moving up the steps of the pyramid of knowledge about the world, acquiring values of dialogue with the world, realizing deep interrelations of life, children, teenagers and then adults can become able to comprehend the value of their own life. Integration of knowledge about the world and oneself as its part in the axiological sphere will allow the person to create complete world image, where no elements exist separately in consciousness and everything is penetrated by invisible connections of values. And then the complete Universe becomes the native Land where each object or phenomenon (nature, society, culture, multimedia, etc.) takes its place, is dear, beloved and desired.

Thus, defining axiological sphere of dialogue of cultures, it is necessary to turn to the field of value senses generated in cultural genesis and having specific meaning depending on national, professional, gender, age features of dialogue participants. It is also necessary to take into account mechanisms (translation of cultural texts, the world categorization, rules of having a dialogue, etc.) and technologies of their acquisition by an individual in educational system (culture-oriented, projecting, multimedia and interactive). Values seen as spiritual phenomena form axiological sphere that influences the way representatives of different cultures enter a dialogue as well as quality and emotional intensity of the dialogue, the result that will be reached in the dialogue - tolerance in attitudes, certain prospects for future interaction, new horizons of knowing the true meaning of Love, the Good, Truth, Beauty, Happiness, Pleasure.

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