

## Appendix 15S

# Ageism and Adultism in Language and Communication Patterns

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Patronizing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Talking down to young people and elders.</li><li>2. Making fun of young people or elders.</li><li>3. Using patronizing language or tones.</li><li>4. Using language based in stereotypical thinking about young people and elders.</li><li>5. Lecturing or interrogation as primary forms of communication with elders or young people.</li></ol>
Baby Talk	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Includes a "simplified speech register characterized by a high pitch and exaggerated intonation" (Caporael &amp; Culbertson, 1986).</li><li>2. It is resented by young people and elders.</li><li>3. Young people and elders negatively evaluate people who speak in this manner to them.</li><li>4. Young people and elders find this communication pattern "disrespectful, condescending, and humiliating" (Giles, Harwood, &amp; Williams, 1994).</li><li>5. Young people and elders generally assume that baby talk reflects an expectation of lack of competence.</li><li>6. Baby talk is also used when talking to pets and inanimate objects.</li></ol>

Over-  
Accommodation  
(Kite & Wagner,  
2002)

1. Similar to baby talk, over-accommodation is a patronizing manner of speaking based on the stereotype that loss of hearing, decreased cognition, and intellect automatically accompanies old age.
  2. Over-accommodation is characterized by a dismissive attitude toward the thoughts, concerns, and feelings expressed by older people.
  3. Over-accommodation is likely to occur independent of the cognitive state or physical health of elders.
  4. Over-accommodation is also directed towards young people who are assumed to be less experienced, knowledgeable, and/or whose ideas are not seen as valuable.
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## References

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- Caporael, L., & Culbertson, G. (1986). Verbal response modes of baby talk and other speech at institutions for the aged. *Language and Communication*, 6, 99-112.
- Giles, H., Fox, S., Harwood, J., & Williams, A. (1994). Talking age and aging talk: Communicating through the life span. In M. Hummert, J. M. Wiemann, & J. Nussbaum (Eds.), *Interpersonal communication in older adulthood: Interdisciplinary theory and research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Kite, M., & Wagner, L. S. (2002). Attitudes towards older adults. In T. E. Nelson (Ed.), *Ageism: Stereotyping and prejudice against older persons*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.