

**LATIP 2021****International Conference on Language and Technology in the Interdisciplinary Paradigm****VALUE ASPECTS OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE NOVOSIBIRSK  
REGIONAL RUSSIAN-GERMAN HOUSE**

Elena Leonidovna Plavskaya (a)\*

\*Corresponding author

(a) Novosibirsk State Technical University, K. Marx Avenue, 20, Novosibirsk, Russia, plav@inbox.ru

**Abstract**

Cross-cultural communication in the modern world unites countries and peoples in active cooperation; in this connection, the issues of interethnic interaction are more acute than ever. Contemporary Russian ethnocultural organizations exist in difficult conditions of political, economic and social challenges. On the one hand, they broadcast the particularities of small cultures, and on the other, they exist in the all-Russian and global cultural space. The need to preserve their ethnic identity and, at the same time, be understandable to representatives of another culture in whose territory they exist, leads to a knowing of the importance of establishing a dialogue, the language of which would be available for everyone. The basis of the language for such a dialogue can be the reliance on a universal human system of values that are relevant in any era in any culture. Analysis of the activities of associations and creative teams of the Novosibirsk Regional Russian-German House demonstrates a conscious orientation towards the world of universal human values, which allows one not only to preserve and develop the original culture of Russian Germans but to include it in a wide cultural context, identifying and strengthening their inextricable connection. Broadcasting vital, social, political, moral and religious values through art, education, local history studies, volunteer projects allows one to revive, preserve and popularize the cultural heritage of the Russian Germans.

2357-1330 © 2021 Published by European Publisher.

*Keywords:* Ethnocultural organizations, Intercultural communication, Novosibirsk Regional Russian-German House, Values



## 1. Introduction

Values accompany a person throughout the entire existence of a culture. They regulate people's behaviour, making it possible to fill an individual's life with meanings. A special place among the values is occupied by the so-called universal human values, which are life guidelines, regardless of a person's belonging to a certain type of culture. The history of world culture demonstrates a person's desire for survival, for knowledge of the truth, for free creative self-realization, for the search for justice and aestheticization of life, which allows us to assert that universal human values are relevant in any era in any culture.

The founders of the theory of values are considered to be Windelband (1995) and Rickert (1998), who for the first time began to consider values as cultural phenomena. In modern domestic cultural studies, such authoritative scholars as (Drobnickij, 1966; Kagan, 1997; Vyzhlecov, 1996) and others have dealt with the problem of values. According to one of the modern famous researchers of the axiology of culture Dokuchaev (2009), values necessarily link a person with the entire world of culture and social relations in their historical development: "Value, culture, man and society and their history are phenomena that have one ontological status" (p. 15). Values also reflect attitudes towards things, phenomena, events and processes (Gurevich, 2015; Karmin, 2014).

## 2. Problem Statement

The axiological approach seems to be very promising in assessing the structural and substantial features of the activities of various organizations. As is known from the scientific literature, an organization is considered to be a form of sustainable association of people pursuing certain group goals and satisfying the interests and needs associated with their collective existence, which is ensured by a relatively stable level of orderliness in the structural structure, separation of functions and coordination of actions of the subjects of society (Culturology, 1997). It is obvious that the existence of an organization is impossible outside the culture in which it is located. This is confirmed by the fair statement of Persikova (2006) that the phenomenon of culture is of great importance for a single individual, a group within an organization, the organization itself and society as a whole.

At the same time, according to the famous anthropologist and researcher of the problems of intercultural communication Hall (1977), culture has an acquired character, its various components are interconnected, and common value orientations serve as a unifying factor for the representatives of a particular culture to realize their uniqueness. Therefore, understanding the value attitudes of a particular culture and the readiness to accept them make it possible to establish communication especially effectively in a situation of intercultural communication. This kind of communication becomes the main one in interethnic organizations, where often not only the problem of communication in a foreign language arises, but also the need to follow uniform standards, rules and norms that take into account the peculiarities of both one's own and another's culture.

### 3. Research Questions

Intercultural communication in the modern world unites countries and peoples in active cooperation of political, economic and cultural nature, in this connection, the issues of interethnic interaction are more acute than ever. Globalization, characterized by the erasure of ethnic and cultural boundaries, is becoming a real test for national cultures. The need to preserve the native language, traditions and customs of their culture, the desire to comprehend and defend their own cultural identity leads to the emergence of various cultural initiatives. In them, carriers of national culture assert their identity; establish a link between generations through the revival and promotion of their native language, the implementation of projects in various types of art and museum-expeditionary work.

Russia is historically distinguished by its ethnic diversity. One of the peoples, who have long to this day living on the territory of our country, are the Russian Germans. The first mentions of Germans in Russia date back to the 10th century, when Princess Olga invited Archbishop Adalbert of Magdeburg to become a preacher of Christianity in Russia. In the 17th century, the German Sloboda appeared in Moscow, the inhabitants of which, for the most part, were German merchants, craftsmen and specialist officers. The mass settlement of Germans in Russia began in the middle of the 18th century after the publication of the Manifesto of Catherine II «On Permission to All Foreigners Entering Russia, to Settle in Which Provinces They Want, and on the Rights Granted to them». The main reason for inviting foreigners was the huge uninhabited territories, which, according to the empress, needed competent development. After a century and a half, such development of unpopulated territories has become relevant for Siberia. The history of German settlers in Siberia dates back to the 1900s, when, within the framework of the Stolypin reform, the first Mennonite settlers came from Ukraine to Siberia.

In modern Russia, there are more than 500 different societies that unite Russian Germans in more than 60 constituent entities of the Russian Federation. These societies are represented by meeting centres, Russian-German houses, Renaissance societies, regional national-cultural autonomies, creative, linguistic, historical unions and associations.

Currently, Russian Germans are scattered throughout the Russian Federation. Moreover, their number in different federal districts is significantly different. In total, more than 500,000 Russian Germans live in the Russian Federation. The largest number of them currently live in the western part of the Siberian Federal District and number approximately 190,000 people. The second largest number of Russian Germans is the Ural Federal District, where 95,000 people live. In third place are the Volga, South and North Caucasian federal districts, the number of Russian Germans in which in total reaches 85,000. There are about 75,000 Russian Germans living in the eastern part of the Siberian Federal District and the Far East. And, finally, the region with the smallest number of Russian Germans living in it is the Central and North-western Federal Districts, where the number of Russian Germans is approximately 55,000.

These federal districts have a large number of ethnocultural organizations, such as meeting centres for Russian Germans, youth clubs, preschool language groups, ethnocultural camps and Russian-German houses. Russian-German houses are the largest organizations among others. In total, there are currently 6 Russian-German houses in the Russian Federation. Since the largest number of Russian Germans lives in

the western part of the Siberian Federal District, it is no coincidence that 4 out of 6 Russian-German houses are located in the cities of Western Siberia – Omsk, Tomsk, Novosibirsk and Barnaul. The remaining 2 Russian-German houses are located in Moscow and Kaliningrad.

A large number of Russian Germans live in the Novosibirsk region. It ranks third in Russia in terms of the number of Russian Germans. According to the results of the last all-Russian population census in 2010, Russian Germans were the second largest nationality in the Novosibirsk region. The main activities of the Novosibirsk Regional Russian-German House are in the plane of the revival and preservation of the ethnocultural potential of Russian Germans. For this purpose, annual forums, international scientific, practical and language conferences, festivals and Days of German Culture, youth and children's language camps, concerts, exhibitions, seminars and much more are organized.

#### **4. Purpose of the Study**

The aim of the study of this article was to prove the hypothesis that universal value attitudes play an important role in preserving the ethnocultural potential of German culture on Russian territory. This assumption was based on reliance on the mission of the Novosibirsk Regional Russian-German House, announced by him on the official website of the organization. This statement emphasized the desire to integrate into the contemporary Russian cultural space without losing the German ethnic identity. Thus, the purpose of the creation of Novosibirsk Regional Russian-German House in 1989 was «the revival, preservation and development of the German language, culture, traditions and customs of Russian Germans, as well as the development of interregional, international and interethnic cooperation» (Novosibirsk Regional Russian-German House, n.d.). To confirm this hypothesis, an analysis of projects and activities of the Novosibirsk Regional Russian-German House was carried out. In our opinion, adherence to universal human values is ensured by the activities of creative associations in the field of various types of art, club associations of interests, taking into account the age factor, as well as by conducting historical and regional studies.

#### **5. Research Methods**

The analysis of the activities of the structural subdivisions of the Novosibirsk Regional Russian-German House was carried out using the classification of the value system proposed by well-known Russian culturologist Erasov (2000). The system of values, according to Erasov, assumes their division into: 1) vital – life, health, safety, welfare, etc.; 2) social – family, discipline, hard work, enterprise, wealth, equality, patriotism, etc.; 3) political – civil liberties, legality, constitution, peace, etc.; 4) moral – kindness, love, honor, decency, respect for elders, love for children, etc.; religious - God, Holy Scripture, faith, etc.; 5) aesthetic – beauty, harmony style, etc. (Erasov, 2000, p. 65).

#### **6. Findings**

The study allows us to assert that the activities of associations and creative teams of the Novosibirsk Regional Russian-German House have a conscious orientation towards the world of universal human values, which allows, on the one hand, to preserve and develop the original culture of

Russian Germans, and on the other, to include it in a wider context of the all-Russian and global culture, revealing and strengthening their inextricable connection. At the same time, the activities of the Novosibirsk Regional Russian-German House demonstrate a deep awareness of the need for ethnic mobilization among Russian Germans. According to researchers of ethnocultures, ethnic mobilization «presupposes an emotional-value attitude to the past, which is imagined and constructed by representatives of the creative intelligentsia» (Martynova, 2019, p. 369). It is on the emotional-value attitude to the past that the activities of all club associations and creative teams of the organization in question are based.

The main source of information on the activities of the Novosibirsk Regional Russian-German House is its website. It is important to note that the organization's activities are also regularly and in detail covered in almost all social networks, such as VKontakte, Facebook, Instagram, Odnoklassniki, TikTok, Yandex.Dzen, and has recently had its own YouTube channel. The website of the Novosibirsk Regional Russian-German House introduces the main directions of its activities. Thus, linguistic, informational, youth and social work, scientific and historical research, ethnocultural work, as well as international partnership and cooperation are widely represented. The organization itself sees its mission in the development of culture, education, cultural tourism in the Novosibirsk region, the promotion of a healthy lifestyle, interregional, international and interethnic cooperation, the organization of project activities, the development of the youth movement, participation in federal projects (Novosibirsk Regional Russian-German House, n.d.).

The development of artistic culture and the establishment of aesthetic values are served by a large number of creative teams of the Novosibirsk Regional Russian-German House, including the vocal and instrumental ensemble «Gute Laune», the folklore ensemble of Russian Germans «Begeisterung», the choreographic ensemble «Free Ballet» and the accordion quartet «Edelweiss». The composition of these groups consists mainly of professional artists, graduates and teachers of creative universities of Novosibirsk, which ensures a high level of performance of works and the stylistic breadth of the presented repertoire. An exception is the «Begeisterung» ensemble, whose members are elderly people, mainly Russian Germans, who are mostly engaged in art at an amateur level. This circumstance seems to be important in the preservation and development of the culture of Russian Germans, since it contributes to the popularization of the German language among its speakers: most of the ensemble's repertoire consists of folk and author's musical works and theatrical scenes in German.

It unites culture and education, and, accordingly, carries a great socio-value and moral-value load, the School of German Culture of the Novosibirsk Regional Russian-German House. Its activities are represented by three areas: linguistic, artistic and aesthetic and socio-pedagogical. The first offers individual and group lessons in German for both adults and children. The artistic and aesthetic direction is represented by theatrical, choreographic, vocal, musical direction, as well as by the studio of painting and decorative and applied arts. The socio-pedagogical direction includes an early development school, a game communication club and an ethnocultural weekend club for children. All these activities are aimed at the revival, preservation and development of the German language through immersion through it into German culture. The activities of the School of German Culture affirm the values of the family, respect for elders, and love for children. Study sessions contribute to the development of such important personal

qualities as discipline and hard work in the younger generation, and classes in various types of art allow you to see the world around you through the prism of beauty and harmony.

A special structural unit of the Novosibirsk Regional Russian-German House, which revives, preserves and develops the culture, traditions and customs of Russian Germans by combining the past, present and future, is the Information Scientific and Methodological Centre for the preservation of the cultural heritage of Russian Germans. It includes a library, an exhibition hall and a museum of the history and ethnography of Russian Germans, which contains several thousand exhibits and archival documents. The exposition of the museum presents household items, tools and crafts; there is a fragment of the interior of the house of German colonists. The museum is not only open to the public, but also conducts excursions, lectures and club work with visitors. The Information Scientific and Methodological Centre promotes, first of all, social values, since knowledge of family history is the basis for the continuity of generations and respect for the cultural heritage of one's people.

One cannot but note the important fact that, since education among Russian Germans has long been closely associated with religion, religious publications occupy a special place among the exhibits of the museum of history and ethnography. We are talking about the Bible, as well as the so-called «Spruchs» – embroidered paintings with proverbs, sayings and adages from the Bible, which could previously be seen in every German home. Such artefacts clearly demonstrate the importance of religious values in the life of Russian Germans in the past and a tribute to them in the present.

One of the dominant activities of the Novosibirsk Regional Russian-German House is work with young people. Thus, the organization has a youth club «JugendVitamin», which introduces young people to the German language, culture, history and folk art. The work of the youth club has a pronounced vital-value, family-value and political-value orientation. The club organizes and conducts entertainment events and national German and Russian holidays, trainings, seminars, contests, discussions, language courses and ethnolinguistic camps for young people from among Russian Germans, as well as school exchange projects between students of Novosibirsk and German schools. Particular attention is paid to promoting a healthy lifestyle and respect for the environment, as well as fostering a tolerant attitude towards the cultures of peoples of different nationalities. This is how its representatives characterize the activities of their club association on the official website of the Novosibirsk Regional Russian-German House: “We are versatile: dancers, Russian and German philologists, singers, athletes, financiers, models, programmers, photographers, electricians, signalmen, schoolchildren, students and in general, all those who are interested together! We are happy to organize events together with grandparents. We often host German guests in the club. We are ready to learn and share experiences. We love to have fun with all our hearts!» (Novosibirsk Regional Russian-German House, n.d.).

The club is open not only to young people from among the Russian Germans, but also to anyone interested in German culture and the German language. Ethno-cultural, linguistic, event-driven, social, volunteer, project and environmental directions of the club's activities allow its members to take part in almost all events of the Novosibirsk Regional Russian-German House, to participate in organizing and holding traditional holidays, and to implement their own projects. Particular attention in the projects of the «JugendVitamin» club is given to the theme of the continuity of generations and respect for the cultural heritage of its people. It is obvious that participation in such events allows young people to

realize their national identity and learn to preserve the family values of the Germans in Russia. The club presents several such directions: the theatrical studio «Spiel», the school of leadership skills «Guentiger Wind», the school of guides to German places in Novosibirsk «Reisebahn».

## 7. Conclusion

According to Ivanov's fair opinion, today it is the absence of a solid value hierarchy, clear criteria for distinguishing between good and evil, and spiritual prospects for the development of mankind that turns into social and ideological chaos (Ivanov, 2014, p. 104). Contemporary Russian ethnocultural organizations also exist in difficult conditions of political, economic and social challenges. On the one hand, they broadcast the values of small cultures, and on the other, they exist in the all-Russian and global cultural space. The need to preserve their ethnic identity and at the same time be understandable to representatives of another culture in whose territory they exist, leads to a knowing of the importance of establishing ways of dialogue, the language of which would be available for everyone. The analysis of the activities of the subdivisions of the Novosibirsk Regional Russian-German House allows us to conclude that the basis of the language for such a dialogue can be reliance on the universal human system of values, which are always relevant for everyone. This strategy allows Russian Germans to preserve their identity, and the Russian population without German roots – to understand and accept the original culture of their fellow citizens of German origin.

Broadcasting vital, social, political, moral and religious values through art, education, local history studies, volunteer projects allows not only preserving, but also popularizing the cultural heritage of the Germans in Russia. At the same time, the very fact of the existence of a special ethnocultural organization – the Novosibirsk Regional Russian-German House – is of great importance, since knowledge about the history of one's people goes beyond the framework of individual families and communities and becomes the property of a wide range of people of various nationalities. And special attention to the children's and youth audience, the organization of club associations and cultural events for this age category gives confidence that the original culture of the Germans in Russia will be preserved for future generations.

## References

- Dokuchaev, I. I. (2009). *Cennost' i jekzistencija. Osnovopolozhenija istoricheskij aksologii kul'tury* [Value and existence. Foundations of the historical axiology of culture]. Nauka Publ.
- Drobnickij, O. G. (1966). *Nekotorye aspekty problemy cennostej* [Some aspects of the problem of values] // Problema cennosti v filosofii [The problem of values in philosophy]. Nauka Publ.
- Erasov, B. S. (2000). *Social'naja kul'turologija* [Social cultural studies]. Aspekt Press Publ.
- Gurevich, P. S. (2015). *Filosofija kul'tury* [Philosophy of culture]. Aspekt Press Publ.
- Hall, E. T. (1977). *Beyond culture*. Garden City: Anchor Books.
- Ivanov, A. V. (2014). Vossoedinenie vremen (razmyshlenija nad sbornikom nauchnyh statej "Russkaja filosofskaja mysl': na Rusi, v Rossii i za rubezhom" [Reunification of times (reflections on the collection of scientific articles «Russian philosophical thought: in Russia, in Russia and abroad») *Vestnik Moskovskogo universiteta* [Moscow University Bulletin]. Series 7. *Filosofija* [Philosophy]. 2014., 5, pp. 103–118.
- Kagan, M. S. (1997). *Filosofskaja teorija cennosti* [Philosophical theory of value]. Petropolis Publ.
- Karmin, A. S. (2014). *Osnovy kul'turologii* [Fundamentals of Cultural Studies]. Lan' Publ.

- Kul'turologija. XX vek. Slovar' [Culturology. XX century. Vocabulary]. (1997). Universitetskaja kniga Publ.
- Martynova, E. P. (2019). Obsko-ugorskaja jetniceskaja mobilizacija [Ob-Ugric ethnic mobilization] // *Vestnik ugrovedenija [Journal of Ugric Studies]*, 9(2), 363–372.
- Novosibirskij oblastnoj Rossijsko-Nemeckij dom [Novosibirsk Regional Russian-German House] (n.d.)*.  
<http://nornd.ru/novosibirskij-oblastnoj-rossijsko-nemetskij-dom/>
- Persikova, T. N. (2006). *Mezhkul'turnaja kommunikacija i korporativnaja kul'tura [Intercultural communication and corporate culture]*. Logos Publ.
- Rickert, H. (1998). *O sisteme cennostej [About the value system]* // Nauki o prirode i nauki o kul'ture [Natural sciences and cultural sciences]. Respublika Publ.
- Vyzhlecov, G. P. (1996). *Aksiologija kul'tury [Axiology of culture]*. SPbGU Publ.
- Windelband, W. (1995). *Preljudii. Filosofskie stat'i i rechi [Preludes. Philosophical articles and speeches]* // Izbrannoe. Duh i istorija [Favorites. Spirit and history]. Jurist Publ.