

# PRINCIPLES OF IMPROVING SOCIOLINGUISTIC COMPETENCE AMONG STUDENTS OF PHILOLOGICAL FACULTIES OF HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS WHEN TEACHING THE GERMAN LANGUAGE

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**Abstract:** The article deals with the specifics of improving the sociolinguistic competence of students of philological faculties of higher educational establishments when teaching the German language, due to the special sociolinguistic content of the stage of this competence's improvement. The content of the processes of formation, development and improvement of the sociolinguistic competence of students-philologists learning a foreign language is not identical, which is predetermined by the goals of training at each stage. The goal of teaching sociolinguistic competence at the stage of improvement is to improve the knowledge, skills and abilities of students to build their speech behavior based on the speech portrait of the interlocutor, taking into account the sociolinguistic norms of communication adopted in this social and communicative context.

The improvement of sociolinguistic competence among students-philologists learning a foreign language is connected with the concepts of social factors that influence the construction of a socially correct communicative act, verbal behavior, a speech portrait, a social dialect, and sociatives. The principles of improving the sociolinguistic competence of students of philological faculties of higher educational establishments when teaching the German language are realized in the creation of authentic and

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problematic situations of communication, activation of originative and creative activity of students, organization of collective work aimed at training skills of cooperation, applying a functional approach to studying grammatical forms and structures in German, etc.

**Keywords:** competence, sociolinguistic competence, the goal of teaching, the content of training, the principle of training, the stage of improvement, sociolinguistic norm, sociolinguistic paradigm, social factor, socially correct communicative act, verbal behavior, the speech portrait, social and communicative context, social dialect, sociative.

## I. Introduction

The content aspect of sociolinguistic competence in terms of its improvement among students-philologists learning German differs from its essence in terms of formation and development and is directly related to the concepts of social factors that influence the construction of a socially correct communicative act, verbal behavior, a speech portrait, a social dialect and sociatives.

At the stage of improving sociolinguistic competence, the actualization of a certain set of components of sociolinguistic competence - a sociolinguistic paradigm - is imposed at the top of the learning angle, which imposes on the individual a specific form of speech behavior depending on the social environment and the situation of communication. Speech behavior as a social phenomenon is formed differently depending on the given social environment and the prevailing socio-communicative context: participants in communication, the conditions of its conduction and the means of the communicative act, in which role relations, social status and socio-psychological distance between participants acquire special significance of communication.

Adequate implementation of the types of speech behavior by students-philologists learning German language, prescribed by the social and communicative context, is possible in case if they are correctly identified and the appropriate methods of their linguistic expression are chosen. Verbal and non-verbal means of expressing speech behavior in a specific social context of communication constitute a verbal portrait of representatives of social dialects, or sociolect, formation of which is based on the verbal behavior of participants in communication conditioned by the social and communicative context. Speech portrait reflects typical traits for certain social strata of society and therefore in linguistic literature is defined as a sociolinguistic portrait.

The foregoing determines the improvement of the content and objectives of teaching sociolinguistic competence of students of the philological faculties of universities learning German, based on general didactic and private methodological principles.

The set of principles for teaching the sociolinguistic competence of students-philologists is determined by different methodologists differently. However, regardless of which principles are taken as the basis for the training of sociolinguistic competence, they are all predetermined by the aims of training. We agree with N. Zh. Dagbaeva and M.F. Ovchinnikova, who argue that the general principles of teaching a foreign language, implemented in the formation of sociolinguistic competence of students, have a special sociolinguistic content [Dagbaeva, Ovchinnikova, 2012, p. 103]. Special sociolinguistic content contains well-known methodological principles and in the improvement of this competence among students of philological faculties of universities when teaching the German language.

Let us further consider the sociolinguistic content of the principles of improving the sociolinguistic competence of students of philological faculties of higher educational establishments when teaching the German language.

## II. Main part

**Principle of communicativeness.** Principle of communicativeness, or communicative orientation of education is considered one of the leading methodological principles that ensures the effectiveness of teaching a foreign language by organizing and conducting it in natural or as close to them as possible communication conditions and in this connection "the learning process is a model of real communication" [Azimov, Shchukin, 2009, p. 213]. The application of the principle of communicativity at the initial stage of the training of the sociolinguistic competence of students-philologists learning a foreign language "provides a natural need for multiple repetition of linguistic and speech material, creates a psychological readiness of students for speech communication, trains them in choosing the right speech option in learning and speech communication situations; Attaches to the norms and values of the country of the learned language, adapts to the conditions of communication adopted in the English national linguocultural community; fosters independence and cooperation, communicativeness and sociability; develops motivation for learning activity, empathy, reflection, imagination and creative abilities "[Dagbaeva, Ovchinnikova, 2012, p. 104].

With the improvement of the sociolinguistic competence of the students of the philological faculties of universities in the teaching the German  
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language, the principle of communicative activity finds its realization in the creation of authentic and problematic communication situations, the activation of the originative and creative activity of students, the organization of collective work aimed developing the skills of cooperation, the application of a functional approach to the study of grammatical forms and constructions in German, etc.

**Principle of functionality.** Improvement of sociolinguistic competence among students of philological faculties of universities when teaching the German language is promoted by teaching the means of expressing sociolinguistic content through the prism of their functional load. Language units, whether phonetic or lexical-grammatical, in the improvement of sociolinguistic competence are subject to train from the point of view of their correlation with various registers of communication, taking into account their social labeling, i.e. taking into account their functions, which they perform in a particular social and communicative context.

**Principle of the syntactic basis of training.** According to the principle of the syntactic basis of training, "from the initial steps of training the student should be able to construct a sentence, use it as a minimal functioning unit", and "the methodical organization of grammatical material is reduced to parallel studying of syntax and morphology. The main attention is paid to the functioning of morphological forms and values, the sequence of which is determined at the stage of choice of syntactic structures, and the selection of grammatical values is consistent with the vocabulary "[Azimov, Shchukin, 2009, p. 216]. The goal of improving the sociolinguistic competence of students of philological faculties of universities when teaching the German language is to teach them to build a socially correct communicative act based on socially marked speech. The identification of sociolinguistic features of speech is possible only within the limits of the sentence as the main unit of speech, on the basis of which the improvement of sociolinguistic competence among students of philology should be based on teaching grammatical forms and the values of syntactic constructions within the principle of the syntactic basis of education.

**The principle of situational-thematic representation of the educational material (the principle of situational-thematic organization of educational material).** With the improvement of the sociolinguistic competence of the students of the philological faculties of the universities in the teaching of the German language, the creation of authentic communication situations is of fundamental importance, which allows, first, to demonstrate the features of the sociolinguistic variation of speech in [Ziyaeva S.A.](#)

various social and communicative contexts, and, secondly, facilitates the process of assimilation of the sociolinguistic material due to imitation of real communication and, consequently, increase of motivation to learning.

The principle of situational and thematic representation of the educational material in the improvement of sociolinguistic competence among students who are philologists learning German is one of the fundamentals, since the very sociolinguistic nature of the functioning of the language is primarily situational, i.e. is manifested exclusively in certain social and communicative situations.

**Principle of systematicity.** The principle of systematicity in the improvement of sociolinguistic competence among German language students is the discovery of the systemic relationships of the components of sociolinguistic competence, especially: linguopragmatic (possession of models of communicative behavior and methods of its regulation), language (the ability to use socially colored vocabulary, idioms, speech etiquette, paremia with a national cultural component), situational (the ability to vary speech depending on situational communicative context) and social-status (ability to build socially correct verbal behavior based on established relationship with the interlocutor) components as the structural components of the whole.

**The principle of complexity and differentiation.** The improvement of the sociolinguistic competence of students of the philological faculties of higher educational establishments in teaching the German language is based on the comprehensive mastery of all types of speech activity by students-philologists, as well as all aspects of the language, since "between oral and written, *productive and receptive types of speech activity*, there are differences associated with recruitment of linguistic means, the distribution of functions between *analyzers* and the essence of the processes of *speech generation* and perception, "as well as" in training types of speech and language skills is their mutual reinforcement, which facilitates the conclusion of *linguistic material* in speech and *transfer of speech skills* from one type of speech and other "[Azimov, Shchukin, 2009, p. 214].

The social coloring of speech is manifested at all levels of the language, necessitates of the differentiated teaching of students learning the German language, the skills and abilities to determine the sociolinguistic signs of spoken speech and written texts, and also independent generation of such speech in oral and written forms.

**The principle of concentrism.** In the improvement of sociolinguistic competence among students learning German, the principle of concentration  
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determines the stages of training based on the submission of sociolinguistic material on the basis of increasing complexity and aimed at the gradual expansion of sociolinguistic knowledge, skills and abilities of students. The principle of concentricism presupposes highlighting typical communicative situations in various sociolects, the identification of their basic and secondary socio-linguistic parameters, the definition of social speech markers accompanying them, and the breakdown of the corresponding sociolinguistic material to be studied for specific concentrations. With each cycle, the sociolinguistic study material becomes more complex and, in the final concentration, provides the full mastery of the abilities by the students-philologists to determine accurately the social characteristics of the interlocutor by his speech portrait to build socially correct speech behavior.

**The principle of taking the native language into account (the principle of reliance on the native language).** Of the two possible forms of implementing the principle of accounting for the native language, namely: a) latent (hidden) support consisting in the selection and submission of material in a foreign language with the setting to prevent possible interference of the native language; b) a conscious comparison of similarities and differences between native and studied foreign languages [Azimov, Shchukin, 2009, p. 219] in the improvement of the sociolinguistic competence of the students-philologists learning German, the second form is the most acceptable when introducing a new sociolinguistic material for learning, and the first one at the stage of consolidation and control. In general, the existing similarities of the native and studied languages speed up the process of mastering sociolinguistic knowledge, skills and abilities in German, and the differences require additional training for the encoding of new information.

**The principle of oral advance (the principle of the oral basis).** Audiovisual and audio-lingual training methods predetermine the organization of learning the types of speech activity in the study of foreign languages in the following sequence: listening - speaking - reading - writing [Azimov, Shchukin, 2009, p. 219]. With the improvement of sociolinguistic competence among students of philological faculties of universities when teaching the German language, this principle contributes to the intensive mastery of the features of the sound and rhythmic intonation of speech as one of the main sociolinguistic means of forming sociolects of the German language, which has a wide range of informativeness (may indicate the social status of the speaker, sex, age, social origin, relations between the interlocutors and many others), and the subsequent gradual transfer of proven sociolinguistic skills and skills by analogy to reading and writing.

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This approach to the training of sociolinguistic competence is justified primarily by the fact that most sociolects are based on the oral form of the language, and the relevance of reading and writing increases with the development of globalization and information and computer technologies.

**Principle of taking specialty into account.** The improvement of the sociolinguistic competence of the students - philologists learning German is specific in that, as future philologists, students must, on the one hand, master well the codified literary German language, on the other hand, competently understand the nuances of the functioning of the language outside the literary norms, in various sociolects and dialects. In other words, students-philologists should know the sociolinguistic features of the language not just at the level of the user, but at the level of a professional philologist.

Based on this, in the selection of sociolinguistic material, situations are widely used that envisage working out both purely professional-philological (pedagogical) speech-learning skills and the speech-based skills and abilities necessary for philologists when communicating with representatives of other sociolects of the German language.

**Principle of non-translatability.** At the stage of improving the sociolinguistic competence of the students of the philological faculties of universities when teaching the German language, the principle of continuity plays significant role, since students' sociolinguistic competence is already formed and developing students do not only understand the complex, stylistically heterogeneous texts, but also learn to recognize the hidden meaning, semantics of unfamiliar lexemes from the contextual environment. In cases of difficulty, a descriptive method of interpretation is used. Nevertheless, the native language is widely used in the educational process for comparative and translational purposes and as one of the means of controlling the degree of assimilation of sociolinguistic material.

**Principle of approximation.** The principle of ignoring the minor communicative shortcomings by teacher in the speech of students-philologists in the creation of sociolinguistic texts addressed to representatives of certain sociolects of the German language is applied to solely because of the priority in this case of the correct selection of sociolinguistic markers for a given social and communicative situation. The correction of communicative errors of a non-sociolinguistic nature by students is, if necessary, permissible after the current assignment is completed and analyzed, provided that it does not block the activity of students and develop a fear of making mistake.

**Principle of intercultural interaction.** Teaching students to be "one's own" among "aliens" involves drawing a parallel between the native culture and the culture of the speakers of the foreign language: "for a more complete understanding of the studied (foreign language) reality, it is also necessary to study the native culture simultaneously, for an adequate understanding of others is impossible without understanding oneself" [Dagbaeva, Ovchinnikova, 2012, p. 105].

Without taking into account the principle of intercultural interaction, which means "the organization of the educational process, in which the teacher takes the national and cultural characteristics of students into account in the context of intercultural interaction with the speakers of the language being studied" [Azimov, Shchukin, 2009, p. 214-15], the improvement of sociolinguistic competence among students of philological faculties of higher educational establishments when teaching the German language is impossible, because the very necessity of learning this competence is initially caused by differences in speech behavior and culture in general representatives of different sociolects of source and target languages.

**Principle of interaction of all the main types of speech activity.** Sociolinguistic competence covers all the main types of speech activity of students. At the stage of improving this competence, the material for listening is chosen from the natural speech of the speakers of different sociolects of the German language, at a rather cursory pace, with a variety of subjects and hidden subtext. Tasks and exercises for speaking are aimed at achieving spontaneity at a rapid pace, with the effective application of sociolinguistic discursive markers of speech, deliberately selected appropriately according to socially communicative situations. With the improvement of reading and writing skills and skills in the process of working on sociolinguistic material, emphasis is placed on the inclusion of discursive features of speech of representatives of sociolects, especially in Internet-communication.

**The principle of stylistic differentiation.** The style bundle of language is the basis for the formation and development of various social dialects. So, in spite of the situations in which the community communicates, for example, doctors - at the plenary session of the theoretical and scientific conference or coffee breaks between sessions - the speeches of the members of the community will be characterized by certain features of the scientific style with impregnations of the colloquial, depending on the degree of official way of the situation. Elements of scientific style in this case are the foundation for the formation of medical speech, which will have differences from speech, for [Ziyaeva S.A.](#)



example, technicians, mainly in the use of medical terminology and language means of expression of imagery, inherent in the world of physicians. Consequently, the characteristic features of the scientific style, manifested in oral and written forms of speech, are the basis of all sociolects, formed by the nature of intellectual professional activity in certain scientific fields. Accordingly, a variety of sociolects of reporters, commentators, and others combine the properties of the journalistic style. Thus, knowledge of the stylistic differentiation of the language will facilitate the assimilation of the features of speech of various social groups or communities manifested in certain sociolinguistic conditions by students, and therefore it is fully justified "to abandon orientation when using linguistic units for educational purposes only to a neutral basis of the literary language and the demand for the description of linguistic units in the unity of their linguistic and speech characteristics, the sociolinguistic conditions of the communicative situation characteristic of their different styles of speech "[Dagbaeva, Ovchinnikova, 2012, p. 104].

The essence of the realization of the principle of stylistic differentiation in the improvement of sociolinguistic competence among students - philologists learning German lies in the fact that the selected material is always correlated with a particular functional style due to the presence of stylistically colored lexical, grammatical and other linguistic units on which are stratified sociolinguistic markers of sociolects.

**The principle of minimization.** The implementation of the principle of minimization in the improvement of sociolinguistic competence among students-philologists learning German is manifested in the selection of a minimum of sociolinguistic material in accordance with the aims and stage of training. The selected minimum of the sociolinguistic material demonstrates the direct dependence of the functioning of the language on the social and communicative parameters of the situations related to communication and reflects all sociolinguistic norms typical for studied sociolects.

### III. Conclusion

Thus, the content of the sociolinguistic competence used in the improvement of the sociolinguistic competence of students of the philological faculties of higher educational establishments when teaching the German language the methodological principles of teaching foreign languages have a special sociolinguistic content, which is the basis for improving students' knowledge, skills and abilities to build their speech behavior on the basis of

the speech portrait of the interlocutor, taking into account adopted in this socio-communicative context of sociolinguistic norms of communication.

The principles of improving the sociolinguistic competence of the students-philologists learning the German language are predetermined by the goals of training and find their realization in the creation of authentic and problematic situations of communication, activation of the originative and creative activity of students, organization of collective work aimed at the development of cooperation skills, applying a functional approach to studying grammatical forms and structures in German, etc.

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