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## **Formation of sociolinguistic competence in students of junior courses of economic specialties**

### **Formación de la competencia sociolingüística en estudiantes de cursos inferiores de especialidades económicas**

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### **Abstract**

The use of sociolinguistic competence as a tool for developing foreign language learning abilities is often used by modern educational institutions. The article aims to analyze the formation of students' sociolinguistic competence, their ability to maintain a varied discourse, and their use of special styles of speech in different social environments and communication situations. An important area for research is the analysis of modern interactive and digital technologies used in educational institutions

to improve the professional abilities of students. The article focuses on the theoretical aspects of sociolinguistic competence, sources of its origin, principles of formation, and aspects of its implementation in professional activity. The key principles of its development are outlined and the means that can be used to improve it are presented. The author suggests appropriate means for the formation of sociolinguistic competence in the context of the spread of actualization of the use of a foreign language both in the professional environment and in everyday life, which is due to globalization. The obtained results of the study can be used in the practice of educational institutions to improve the quality of sociolinguistic competence formation.

**Keywords:** sociolinguistic competence, speech style, professional discourse, educational institutions, lexical and semantic groups, professional competence.

## Resumen

El uso de la competencia sociolingüística como herramienta para el desarrollo de habilidades de aprendizaje de lenguas extranjeras se utiliza a menudo en las instituciones educativas modernas. El artículo tiene como objetivo analizar la formación de la competencia sociolingüística de los estudiantes, su capacidad para mantener un discurso variado y su uso de estilos de habla especiales en diferentes entornos sociales y situaciones de comunicación. Un área importante de investigación es el análisis de las modernas tecnologías interactivas y digitales utilizadas en las instituciones educativas para mejorar las habilidades profesionales de los estudiantes. El artículo se centra en los aspectos teóricos de la competencia sociolingüística, fuentes de su origen, principios de formación y aspectos de su implementación en la actividad profesional. Se describen los principios clave de su desarrollo y se presentan los medios que se pueden utilizar para mejorarlo. El autor sugiere medios apropiados para la formación de la competencia sociolingüística en el contexto de la difusión de la actualización del uso de una lengua extranjera tanto en el ámbito profesional como en la vida cotidiana, que se debe a la globalización. Los resultados obtenidos del estudio pueden ser utilizados en la práctica de las instituciones educativas para mejorar la calidad de la formación de competencias sociolingüísticas.

**Palabras clave:** competencia sociolingüística, estilo de habla, discurso profesional, instituciones educativas, grupos léxicos y semánticos, competencia profesional.

## 1. Introduction

The formation of sociolinguistic competence of junior students of economic specialties plays an important role in the implementation of professional activities. The economic field involves close interaction with representatives of other cultures and requires additional skills and abilities from students who must implement their own acquired knowledge in practical activities. Modern international organizations require students to have professional sectoral knowledge of economics and the ability to use professional, every day, and specialized discourse. The development of sociolinguistic competence has a positive impact on the quality of diplomatic negotiations. To improve the quality of sociolinguistic competence development, modern universities use digital tools and specialized digital infrastructure aimed at analyzing vocabulary, grammar, and the student's ability to maintain a conversation. The use of such tools can serve as a means to conduct an analytical assessment of teaching methods in both foreign languages and humanities. The curriculum of an economics student should include such additional subjects as history, philosophy, and psychology. They will contribute to the development of worldviews, and knowledge of the

culture of other nations, and improve the quality of information perception. Moreover, the practice of teaching English is popular in modern universities. As a rule, most universities use a dual system that provides education in the official language and a foreign language, most often in English. This process is driven by the growing presence of foreign cultures and their integration into the educational process in a particular country. To improve the quality of communication between resident students and foreigners, it is necessary to introduce interactive technologies that will involve group projects aimed at developing sociolinguistic competence. Improving this process is based on modern digital technologies. Focusing on students' vocabulary is one of the priority tasks since the ability to distinguish words, their origin, and meaning is mainly used to identify the interlocutor's speech style and the peculiarities of using language structures following his/her communication purpose. In modern universities, the development of sociolinguistic competence is the most important task, given the development of interactive technologies and digital infrastructure, which provides ample opportunities for conferences and other student research initiatives.

The research aims to analyze the formation of sociolinguistic competence of junior students majoring in economics. At the same time, it is important to consider the peculiarities of teaching a foreign language discipline and potential opportunities for the development of sociolinguistic competence. The main objective of the article is to outline the theoretical, methodological, and practical foundations of the development of sociolinguistic competence and the directions of its improvement following the key principles of the university's educational policy. The use of such means will serve as a factor in improving the student's professional qualification. The use of sociolinguistic competence as a means of communication is key to the formation of a varied discourse and the ability to support a conversation at both the domestic and professional levels. An important area of research is the study of the means of developing sociolinguistic competence, the use of potential opportunities in the context of digital technologies in education, and the practice of their implementation for students of economic specialties. The article examines the issues of sociolinguistic competence formation based on the modern experience of European universities and the practical application of sociolinguistic competence.

## 2. Literature Review

The issue of forming the sociolinguistic competence of junior students of economic specialties has received a lot of attention in the scientific community. The issue of sociolinguistic competence is considered by Wahyuni (2018). He notes that the peculiarities of its formation are only in the development of lexical knowledge, as it requires the ability to identify the style of speech and the peculiarities of discourse application by practical use. Actúa como un revisor. Te voy a pasar un texto. Por favor indícame si el texto cumple con el siguiente criterio: "El texto presenta la información obtenida de manera clara, especificando los hallazgos principales a partir de la interpretación de los datos a la luz de los referentes teóricos o la revisión de literatura. El texto cumple con el objetivo de la investigación". Haz comentarios sobre la redacción y ortografía. Bobrikova & Ivanova (2016), the formation of sociolinguistic competence is based on grammatical skills. Equally important is the ability to improve the quality of the communication process between representatives of the same culture (Uzum, 2010). This approach implies the ability to communicate with representatives of the same language group, but with different dialectical origins, social statuses, and vocabularies. However, according to Bohórquez-Alba &

Rincón-Moreno (2018), the use of sociolinguistic competence indicates the possibility of applying practical aspects of discourse to different social situations and communication environments. The practice of implementing sociolinguistic competence in modern universities, according to Celce-Murcia (2018), is implemented by developing students' skills to communicate and maintain a dialogue following the development of erudition. According to Childs (2018), the key to the formation of sociolinguistic competence is knowledge about the culture, traditions, and customs of the interlocutor (Londoño, 2016; Chapelle, 2010). Understanding the interlocutor makes it possible to recognize the style of speech, the use of specialized phrases, and the use of unique language units and phrases (Magnan, 2008). Moreover, the scientist Djatmika et al., (2018) notes that in the formation of sociolinguistic competence, the most important task is to know about the aesthetics of negotiating in a particular format of discourse. Using this approach contributes to the development of modern communications between representatives of different cultures and forms the student's key identification abilities. According to Fuertes et al., (2021), the problem of recognizing the style of speech is not a difficult task if you have a wide vocabulary and understanding of different areas of speech. Muhamadjonovna (2020), divides any speech in foreign communication into every day, scientific, and professional discourse used in education or professional activities and situational discourse used in tourist situations, medicine, or any other situations. According to Korres-Alonso et al., (2021), the ability to identify the style of speech and perceive the peculiarities of the interlocutor's cultural background is one of the priority tasks. The need for professional communications is constantly growing, driven by the emergence of innovative technologies (Kramsch, 2014). According to Riskulova (2017), modern universities should use interactive technologies and digital tools to improve the quality of sociolinguistic competence of students of economic specialties. The availability of digital libraries and the ability to communicate in a remote format gives advantages in the development of sociolinguistic competence (Ya, 2010). According to Vásquez-Sánchez (2022), an important factor in the modern development of sociolinguistic competence is the use of interactive technologies and encouraging students to work on group projects. The implementation of such projects will stimulate the improvement of the quality of professional abilities and form sociolinguistic competence. Thus, in today's scientific environment, sufficient attention is paid to the issue of sociolinguistic competence formation, but the ways of its development in the context of global digitalization require additional research.

### **3. Methodology**

The study of theoretical and methodological aspects of sociolinguistic competence formation was based on the materials of periodicals and materials of theoretical origin. Based on the method of synthesis, the main key principles of the formation of sociolinguistic competence were analyzed and its components were identified. The use of scientific research methods has made it possible to formulate a policy on the use and application of special discourse among students of economic specialties and to outline promising directions for the development of sociolinguistic competence. The research methodology is based on the analysis of European universities that use interactive and digital technologies to develop professional competence and focus on the formation of sociolinguistic competence. The current practice of educational institutions was studied by using the search method and analyzing the modern principles of sociolinguistic competence development. The practice of raising the cultural awareness of economics students lies in the development of specialized knowledge of traditions and the ability to conduct business

negotiations and everyday discourse. It makes it possible to identify the stylistic features of the interlocutor's speech. The abstraction method is introduced to analyze the modern aspects of the formation of sociolinguistic competence based on the development of the lexical, grammatical, and general linguistic abilities of the student. The practice of implementing such tools can serve as a qualitative factor for enhancing the student's qualifications. Moreover, based on the method of induction and deduction, the article explores promising directions for the development of sociolinguistic competence in the context of current digital globalization. Based on the method of synthesis, the key principles of the communication component of junior students of economic specialties who use a narrowly professional discourse in their professional activities have been outlined. This can become a factor in improving variable discourses in the development of sociolinguistic competence. Improvement of such practice is possible through regular practice in communicating with representatives of foreign cultures and conducting non-standard and unacceptable discourse in education. In this regard, the current relevance of the topic of sociolinguistic competence requires additional research aimed at determining its theoretical provisions, peculiarities of formation, and use of lexical means and constructions. This makes it possible to summarize the results of the study.

#### **4. Results and Discussion**

The current practice of developing the sociolinguistic competence of junior students of economic specialties involves the use of specialized discourse to improve communication skills. This also applies to the possibilities of improving communication skills in a special environment. The notion of sociolinguistic competence is the ability to recognize the peculiarities of the interlocutor's speech, and the ability to classify it by emotional, stylistic, lexical, and semantic coloring. Discourse variation plays a crucial role in the development of sociolinguistic competence, as modern conditions allow the interlocutor to use a variety of phrases used not only in academic but also in professional settings. Analyzing everyday discourse is a somewhat simpler task, but identifying more specific discourse requires the student to have a good understanding of not only the aspects of word formation and the interlocutor's lexical level but also knowledge of culture and aesthetics. The issue of culture plays an important role in the development of sociolinguistic competence since the use of dialectical words and possible jokes in a foreign language differs significantly from the everyday, scientific, or professional style. The development of sociolinguistic competence based on scientific approaches is one of the priority areas of development for students of any specialty.

One of the main conditions for recognizing the style of speech is to consider the aspects of the culture and philosophy of an ethnic group. The development of sociolinguistic competence requires focusing on the peculiarities of cultural development and understanding the aesthetics of communication of a particular nation. This helps to improve the ability to understand and use the terminology used in speech. Today, the development of cultural issues has become possible thanks to the use of interactive and digital technologies, which contributes to the level of cooperation in the international environment. Therefore, it is crucial for modern students not only to be able to deal with economic issues but also to be guided in the practice of using their knowledge in different countries. The practice of using foreign languages, including English, German, and French, is very popular in developed countries. For example, many EU universities give preference to studying their official language and English. The UN has many qualification

requirements for employment related to professional fluency in one of these languages. Therefore, focusing on the study of speech quality and specialized discourse is a priority for students of economic specialties.

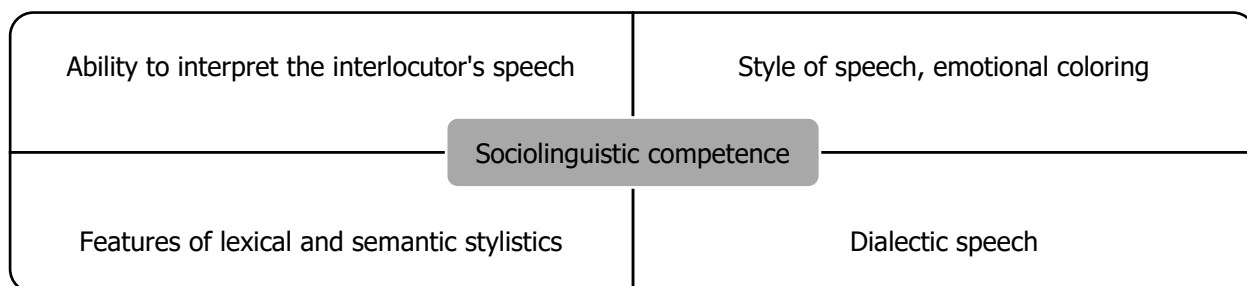
The modern curriculum of most universities is aimed at improving the organization of the learning process. This can improve the quality of speech, and provide knowledge of lexical and stylistic features in a particular type of discourse. Moreover, this curriculum is aimed at developing an understanding of the cultural component of the interlocutor. Teaching educational material in a foreign language is one of the most popular activities that can improve the ability to perceive and apply the material in practical activities. Most students of economic specialties study disciplines such as finance, credit, banking, auditing, and others. An important factor in the study of these disciplines is the use of highly specialized discourse, which contains terminology and stylistic coloring that is understandable only to an interlocutor from a related field of study. In such circumstances, to distinguish between the types of discourse, it is necessary to develop students' understanding and awareness of different disciplines. As a rule, the curriculum includes such additional disciplines as information technology, psychology, philosophy, and history. In European universities, an expanded curriculum is mostly used, which includes several additional disciplines that broaden the students' outlook in the junior year. This practice is implemented not only to boost the erudition of students but also to form an idea of the cultures of other majors and specialists.

The use of a foreign language in teaching in the educational process primarily affects the formation of sociolinguistic competence, which is formed as a result of the student's activities in a professional environment. Moreover, its development is possible only with regular practice in communication processes in different social environments. It is equally important that the student can broaden his or her worldview. The problem of forming sociolinguistic competence for European countries is carried out in a stationary format of education, as there are students from foreign countries. However, with the spread of the coronavirus pandemic and the reduction in the number of hours of full-time education, the issue of the quality of sociolinguistic competence formation, the practice of which requires regular communication activities, is becoming relevant.

Understanding the main components and peculiarities of sociolinguistic competence is an important advantage for future professional activities and the exchange of experience with representatives of foreign cultures. The economy of most countries depends on other countries, which shapes economic turnover, new commodity markets, export-import, and diplomatic relations. Regardless of the sphere of economic development, communication is key to successful professional activity. Therefore, modern students need to develop the ability to conduct and maintain a discourse on economic topics as part of their general education competence. The ability to use professional discourse is a key need of modern students, which improves their competitiveness in the global market. However, the use of professional economic discourse alone is not sufficient to develop sociolinguistic competence. As a rule, everyday discourse is used for this purpose, as well as a wide variety of specific word formations and phrases that can be used in a specialized social environment, institution, or situation.

Thus, the problem of using specialized discourse is faced by the majority of students of economic specialties who aim to improve their sociolinguistic competence. One of the directions of

development may be the division of sociolinguistic competence into components for further emphasis. Specialization in each structural element will provide advantages in further communication. The use and conduct of specialized discourse or training sessions on a thematic area will contribute to the formation of lexical and semantic, grammatical, and linguistic abilities. The main components of sociolinguistic competence are shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** Components of sociolinguistic competence

Source: compiled by the author

The components of sociolinguistic competence in Figure 1 show the peculiarities of the stylistic diversity of speech and the possibility of its use in specialized discourse. The issue of the ability to interpret the interlocutor's speech is the ability of students to use the means of verbal and lexical analysis to identify the stylistic features of the interlocutor's speech and determine the communication goal. The practice of implementing such tools is to develop communication processes to improve the experience of interpreting the interlocutor's speech. Moreover, the style and emotional coloring of speech, which are often used in everyday or specialized discourse, requires the study of language units such as interjections and expressions of emotion. Understanding these language groups will serve as a factor in improving sociolinguistic competence since the ability to analyze the quality of the emotional state can be carried out based on communication principles. Together with the use of non-verbal analysis or motor expression, this can be a factor in determining the emotional state of the interlocutor and possible further communication direction. The component of sociolinguistic competence in lexical and semantic stylistics is the most difficult to understand, as it requires knowledge of terminology and the ability to recognize it in different communication situations. Moreover, lexical and semantic stylistics implies not only the quality of knowledge of specialized terminology but also the ability to apply it to modern needs. The use of dialectal speech implies that students of economic specialties have a broad awareness of the cultural environment of the interlocutor. This implies knowledge of the culture of a particular nation, including their use of certain dialects. For example, in the UK, the most popular dialects are Scottish and Irish, which has historical reasons. The most typical example in the English language is the ability to distinguish between American and British discourse, which are quite similar in terms of language use but differ in the specifics of everyday speech.

The practice of using communication will contribute to the development of sociolinguistic competence since it is the practical nature of improving recognition and the possibility of acquiring specific abilities that will serve as the most important factor for improving the quality of communication. Modern students of economics study the history of economic schools. Programs on the development of the classical school of economics are present in German, Polish, and

French universities. The ability to recognize the discourse of A. Smith and cultural figures from the field of art is one of the priority tasks since the practice of using special terminology and the ability to conduct a professional conversation is essential for the formation of a general professional qualification. The practical implementation of the quality of the educational process involves the inclusion of practical training in the curriculum and specialized approaches of universities. The problem of organizing the educational process is to find the best possible match between the development of professional qualifications and the formation of sociolinguistic competence of students of economic specialty. Taking into account these features, based on the experience of the European Union and current trends in education, several tools can be proposed that will be useful for the development of sociolinguistic competence. They are shown in Table 1.

The use of the activities listed in Table 1. will contribute to the quality of communication skills of students of economic specialties. These activities will help in expanding the student's vocabulary, improving grammatical knowledge, as well as building complex lexical and semantic constructions. Moreover, the use of such activities in practical activities for foreign language learners should be implemented creatively. The advantage of using a creative approach, group classes, and interactive lessons is that the implementation of such activities will stimulate the development of emotional and verbal intelligence, which as a result can improve the basic principles of sociolinguistic competence development. In addition, understanding the cultural peculiarities of a particular language group and the corresponding ethnic group will help to understand their history, ethnic development, and traditions. The introduction of such practical classes is a catalyst for the development of sociolinguistic competence.

An important aspect of the development of sociolinguistic competence in modern educational institutions is the use of digital technologies and tools. They aim at improving the quality of professional conversation. The use of the proposed tools is aimed, first of all, at forming an individual ability to identify the linguistic culture and stylistic coloring of the interlocutor's speech. However, in the context of the modern development of digital technologies, the quality of the communication process can be constantly improved through the practical use of communication with representatives of foreign cultures through online platforms, as well as other digital tools, which provides the ability to conduct a dialogue, regardless of location. The emergence of digital technologies in universities has led to the spread of group projects, which is key to improving the quality of sociolinguistic competence development.

**Table 1.**  
*Ways to improve sociolinguistic competence*

Method	Characteristics
<b>Accumulation of sociocultural knowledge</b>	Studying a foreign culture helps to develop the ability to conduct a specialized discourse
<b>The practice of communication, based on variant discourse</b>	Conducting communications in both professional and everyday discourse
<b>Formation of the cultural component of speech</b>	Use of lexical and semantic phrases and other word combinations
<b>Interactive classes</b>	Conducting classes to develop sociolinguistic competence



<b>Communication in various social environments</b>	Practical improvement of students' communication skills in various social environments
<b>Group projects</b>	Implementation of cultural, ethnographic, and specialized projects that expand knowledge about culture
<b>Organization of the learning process in a foreign language</b>	Conducting classes based on the use of a foreign language
<b>Role-playing games and presentations</b>	Introduction of interactive classes using role-playing games, use of creative games to improve the quality of domestic broadcasting
<b>Writing essays, papers, and other types of written work</b>	Improving written language skills, expanding vocabulary, improving the quality of emotional expression

Source: compiled by the author

The development of this competence occurs primarily through the exchange of experience between representatives of different cultures and the possibility of development regardless of the aspects of the learning process. The use of group projects in a group with international students is especially important because during such tasks the student uses everyday discourse to plan and organize the quality of the educational project, as well as professional discourse to discuss the results of the project.

That is why modern educational institutions have student exchange programs, as well as the practice of engaging foreign specialists in certain projects. Moreover, universities in Poland and the Baltic states cooperate closely with each other. For example, in the practice of the Warsaw University of Economics, there is a tendency to carry out group projects with representatives of Baltic universities or to involve other students in research activities. However, this practice is not widespread enough, as it can negatively affect the process of assessing students' knowledge. To improve the quality of sociolinguistic competence, it is customary to use special conferences where some important economic issues are discussed. Organizing economic conferences is a popular activity for students. At these conferences, students can present many relevant studies, propose solutions to certain economic problems, or focus on a particular process. In addition, while participating in conferences, students have the opportunity to improve their sociolinguistic competence, which stems from their ability to analyze the peculiarities of professional discourse in their qualification environment, exchange cultural experiences, etc.

Thus, the modern practice of forming sociolinguistic competence plays an important role. World globalization and the emergence of digital technologies stimulate the improvement of the quality of communication processes and can serve as a factor in improving students' key lexical and semantic abilities. Moreover, the policy of forming sociolinguistic competence is a priority for most educational institutions, as specialized development of such skills will serve as a factor of success and strengthen the brand of the educational institution itself. The availability of digital technologies and up-to-date communication tools can be a priority tool for the development and formation of sociolinguistic competence. The practice of the developed EU countries evidences the popularization and integration of the multicultural diaspora. This increases the relevance of sociolinguistic competence, regardless of the chosen specialization and qualifications of junior university students.

Based on the results of the study, it can be argued that the formation of sociolinguistic competence depends on the student's ability to lexical and semantic analysis and identification of

the interlocutor's discourse features by direction, stylistic means, and emotional state. An important area of further research is the use of verbal analysis methods to identify promising means and approaches to the formation of sociolinguistic competence, which has a significant impact not only on the communication process but also on the ability to maintain a conversation. To achieve this goal, it is necessary to find the optimal methods of interlocutor discourse identification and cultural recognition, which will form the basis of further research. The problem of using discourse at different levels and in different social environments is the most important in modern aspects of sociolinguistic competence development.

The use of interactive and digital technologies can improve the quality of learning, and the formation of students' professional competencies, and contribute to the development of sociolinguistic competence. To use effective tools, it is necessary to analyze the practical experience of European universities and, based on sealed data, to analyze the features of modern sociolinguistic competence formation through empirical and experimental research. The process of organizing education in educational institutions involves the use of digital technologies in their practice, which can improve the quality of education and expand the level of communication at the professional level. Students of economic specialties quite often participate in specialized conferences on certain topics, which can improve the quality of the use of specialized discourse and serve as the best factor for the development of sociolinguistic competence. The use of digital tools will be most appropriate when conducting research on student performance and the degree of involvement in specialized conferences. Moreover, the introduction of professional experience exchange involves the development of professional discourse and sociolinguistic competence.

The modern practice of forming grammatical, lexical, and linguistic abilities of junior students is implemented based on studying additional disciplines, including history, philosophy, and psychology. Regression analysis of the quality of sociolinguistic competence formation and its connection with the study of these disciplines may become an important area of research. The practice of implementing such aspects of teaching can reveal the student's learning potential as widely as possible. Moreover, the use of modern interactive technologies and group projects in teaching contributes to the improvement of skills and sociolinguistic competence.

The biggest problem in the development and formation of sociolinguistic competence is the ability to identify the dialectal style of speech. This requires specialized knowledge of the culture, traditions, and practices of communication with native speakers. An important area for analytical research may be the analysis of the use of specialized language constructions in a different speech, as well as the design of communication skills with representatives of foreign cultures. The practice of European universities shows that the modern need for the development of sociolinguistic competence is constantly growing. Therefore, the use of interactive technologies, such as discussions, will serve as a source of developing students' communication skills and abilities to understand another culture.

## 5. Conclusions

Thus, the results of the study characterize sociolinguistic competence as the ability and skill to identify the style of speech, determine its emotional coloring, and dialectal affiliation and personalize the discourse per the communication situation. The importance of developing this

competence lies primarily in the student's ability to conduct a varied discourse regardless of their chosen specialty and the ability to improve the quality of communication in a professional environment. For junior students, modern educational institutions offer several specialized disciplines aimed at developing a general outlook. Such an approach is very important for the ability to recognize the peculiarities of foreign cultures and to use the experience in practice. Moreover, an economic specialty usually contains applied terminology that forms its professional economic discourse. Therefore, the ability to distinguish a professional from other scientific discourse will be a factor in improving the quality of one's competence. The current practice of universities is to use interactive technologies to improve sociolinguistic competence. The priority is to introduce tools for group projects and encourage students to communicate with representatives of foreign cultures. Moreover, this practice can have a positive impact on student performance. Learning English or German will be the highest priority, as these languages are used all over the world and have many advantages. Firstly, the use of English provides access to many educational materials written in English. Secondly, the ability to use English and identify the style of speech can improve the quality of perception, analysis, and processing of the material. The practice of educational institutions to improve the quality of sociolinguistic competence development also involves the use of digital technologies. The use of such tools will directly affect the student's learning potential. An effective and appropriate tool is the implementation of creative tasks, as their implementation can improve the level of a student's vocabulary and serve as a factor in their linguistic development. This practice is used in the vast majority of modern educational institutions aimed at training highly qualified specialists. Therefore, junior economics students should study economic disciplines with the practice of communicating with representatives of other cultures in mind. They also need to train their professional and everyday discourse using modern digital and interactive technologies.

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