



MILITARY TEXTS AND NEED TO NEW CURRICULA

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Annotation. This article is devoted to the urgent problem of curriculum design of ESP military English. Teaching English to military personnel is established as a major priority in the academic curricula of the Military Training Institutions. The given article considers the importance of updating military English curriculum to match the methodology of teaching and content of the course.

Key words: Military English terminology, curriculum, content, methodology of teaching, communication strategies, language skills, knowledge.

Nowadays the importance of English language in Military Training institutions of Uzbekistan is a crucial and fundamental issue. Teaching English to military personnel is established as a major priority in the academic curricula of the Military Training Institutions. After the Independence of Uzbekistan there emerged strong interest in English language, as a widely spoken language, the considerable part of which also military English. Uzbekistan needs well trained military personnel who can cooperate with its international partners worldwide, especially with neighboring countries.

Good knowledge of English is vital to a professional officer who intends to enhance his professional and academic development and who wants to pursue a career path in the Military service. In January 2017, the President of Uzbekistan visited Tashkent Higher Combined Arms Command School and gave appropriate instructions on organization of an entirely new Academy of the Armed Forces on its basis. One of the Presidential requirements to establish new institution is to train cadets who can speak foreign languages well. Only through effective communication military personnel will be able to perform a successful duty. Speaking English is essential to the military personnel who cooperate with international organizations and partake in various trainings abroad. Therefore, it is necessary to teach military English according to the officers' demands. By communicating in English fluently the military personnel will be able to accomplish their missions successfully and represent our country proudly.

English communicative competence of cadets should be developed to meet current requirements (B2 level according to CEFR). Military university graduates must have good language skills in English. Apart from this, military students ought

to have knowledge of military terminology, perfect understanding of military problems, and good communication strategies. That is why the cadets should be taught English with consideration of their future professional needs and current requirements of CEFR. The purpose of this article is to study curricula of military training institutions of Uzbekistan and compare it with other countries' curricula.

Training military students in Uzbekistan has been changed considerably since its Independence. Currently, approaches to teaching English for military purposes are different from those when it was taught by traditional Grammar Translation Method for many years. In accordance with the new curricula language teaching starts with the general English course and mainly taught during the first and second year with a slight focus on ESP vocabulary. Learners work on language aspects integrating language skills during this period. Teaching English for Specific purposes starts from the third year and continues till the graduation, for example, at Academy of the Armed Forces of Uzbekistan military English starts from the 3rd year of studying. Other ESP teaching universities' language specialists consider the 3rd year students have a good command of General English, so they can switch from every day English to specialty English. Military content is the main focus at this stage. Military English Syllabus aims at enhancing writing and speaking skills of this institution and includes the following topics:

- 1) Military Writing and Communication
- 2) Military writing
- 3) Signal messages
- 4) Formal and informal correspondence
- 5) Intelligence summaries & situation reports
- 6) Briefs and Service papers
- 7) Written operation orders
- 8) Report writing and summarizing
- 9) Operational communications
- 10) Tactical and strategical appreciations
- 11) Daily, routine and standing orders
- 12) Verbal orders
- 13) Codes and security classifications
- 14) Military abbreviations and symbols
- 15) Public speaking

Reading as being the core part of the syllabus, learners are encouraged to read semi-authentic texts relevant to their future profession. However, curriculum of military training institutions needs considerable changes not only in the content

but also in methodology of teaching and assessment. Today, it is a commonly known that many ESP teachers still put more emphasis on the delivery of knowledge about the language, while ignoring the development of students' language abilities, specialty needs. Thus, curriculum still focuses on drill and practice, and a series of small goals or objectives to be achieved.

There can be traced some similarities in ESP for military training in some countries. For example, the majority of Ukraine military universities start with the general English course and moves on to English for Specific purposes after finishing it: at Military Institute of Telecommunications and Information Technology of National Technical University of Ukraine "Kyiv Polytechnic University" military English starts from the 3rd year of studying. Ukrainian scientists consider the 3rd course as a period for productive speaking, when cadets switch from wording to the essence of speaking, are ready to understand special terminology, are deep into their specialty, and have their basic grammar and phonetic skills formed [1, p.57].

There has been many researches into the study of curricula development related to teaching ESP to military professionals. Mustafa Erhigh lights the importance of teaching English at military training institutions. He states mastering English language has become for the global military citizens of the new era since they are supposed to operate as part of joint organizational structures coordinating air, land, maritime, space, and special operations. So, foreign language teachers in military education institutions are supposed to adopt content addressing global issues by focusing on cross-cultural comparisons in order to develop students' intercultural competence; and by training students in communication skills that are essential for effective dialogue. [3, p.7]

I. Nesyn stresses the necessity of teaching military English to Ukrainian cadets with the focus on communicative competence. He states that practice shows that English communicative competence of Ukrainian cadets is not as a rule developed enough to satisfy current requirements (B2 level according to CEFR, SLL2 level according to STANAG 6001). Military university graduates must speak logically, be accurate and convincing. Moreover, military speaking requires knowledge of military terminology, perfect understanding of military problems, the ability to attract other people's attention, rephrase to avoid pauses. That is why the cadets should be taught English with consideration of their future professional needs and current requirements of CEFR that military briefing is a common, challenging and stimulating military communication situation containing relevant

and functional English language material suitable for teaching English for military purposes [2, p.5].

I. Nesyn also carried out a research and investigated the effectiveness of communicative approach, development of the creativity of the cadets. The methodology of his research includes application and analyzing exercises aiming at development and preparation of briefings by the Ukrainian cadets [2, p.8]. He suggests to use simulation activities which has a military context and communicative goal too. The following is the example of one of the activities:

Task:

a) Study the information in the card to learn more about your military role.

b) Start milling around the room greeting other guests of the briefing by shaking hands and finding out more information about each other.

For example: Introduce yourself, please. (Answers like these: Sergeant Borysenko; I am a news reporter /political representative/ military representative. My name is...).

What are your responsibilities and duties?

c) The briefing is starting and all guests sit down. Listen attentively to the briefing. Be ready to ask the questions.

The above given task matches the content and methodology of ESP teaching; furthermore, it gives the students to feel the real life task. As their future vocation depends on their proficiency of military terms and values, such tasks seem appropriate, as one of the requirements of the curriculum design is content should match the methodology of teaching. The above given task proves that this type of activity has communicative purpose and authentic one [4, p.19].

Majority of ESP practitioners suggest that today's curriculum should include the tasks, which promote reading military articles and journals, online materials. [2, p.12]. Through reading authentic materials they are encouraged to enlarge military terminology and concepts.

English language teachers of the military academies are trying to fulfill the unprecedented demand for English language competence development, they take the issue of syllabus design seriously and aim at joining both content knowledge and teaching language skills at the same time in order to ensure the effectiveness of foreign language teaching [4, p.87].

We should note that during recent 27 years of Uzbekistan's independence its defence establishment has undergone many transformations which, despite their benevolent goals, have caused problems in the whole military education system. They led to the downsizing of the armed forces and the orders for the military

personnel in the military academies. These transformations have been accompanied by chronic underfunding, personnel deficit, lack of resources and equipment. Constant changes of their goals and objectives, orientation on NATO standards or remaining outside any military alliance have caused misunderstanding among the National Defense Command Authorities about Uzbekistan's military future. In this situation the problems with ELT have emerged. They can be clearly seen at the stage of the cadets' training in the military academies.

Firstly, the requirements to the cadets' level of English have considerably grown but the number of academic hours in the military academies is not sufficient for reaching that level. If we look closer at this problem, we will notice that it comes from the secondary school where the students should acquire Level 1 in English before entering the military academy (tactical level). So, their entrance level to the military academy should be Level 1. The reality is different: almost 80% of the applicants to the military academies can hardly prove Level 0+. Those showing sufficient level are the Leavers of the specialized schools in Ukraine or abroad. Over 90% of the applicants to military academies (operational and strategic levels) cannot prove required Level 2. It means the nation-wide ELT system does not work properly.

So, after entering the military academies with the level they have, cadets have no opportunity to reach exit Level 2 (tactical level) and Level 2+ (operational and strategic levels) just because their entrance level was low. At the same time, the curriculum envisages only limited number of academic hours that is not sufficient to attain the required level. It presents serious problems for both teachers' lessons. The problem is aggravated by the lack of academic hours that can be allocated for learning English because of other subjects.

Here, we can recommend that more attention should be focused on additional classes during cadets' self-studies. There should be organized a transitional period when those cadets having not sufficient entrance level (during their first and second years at the military academy) have additional English lessons with the idea to attain this level. There should be developed a special curriculum for such cadets that makes them gradually catch up with the rest of their language group.

At the same time, when the general situation with the ELT in the secondary schools improves, tighter measures should be taken for the selection of applicants to the military academies based on their English proficiency levels. The entrance testing should be improved in order to properly select the applicants. That can raise competitiveness among applicants and improve the quality of the military personnel. Secondly, in the present day ELT system the cadets are divided into

language groups not according to their prior language proficiency levels but based on other non-linguistic factors (e.g. leadership and organizational qualities etc). Such important factors as cadets' learning styles and language aptitude are not taken into consideration at all. It is difficult that these factors play a crucial role in improving ELT in the military academies.

In conclusion it should be stated that curriculum design of English for military purposes is very vital for the development of English communicative competence, content knowledge of Uzbekistan military students. Future military officers must be fully equipped: physically, spiritually, mentally and academically if they desire to function in the world full of rapid changes. Thus, this is where their mastering of communicative English will affect their success, confidence and performance.

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