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- Concept of special language teaching, its content and purpose
- Types and formats of language training
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Institutional background and organizational structure of military language training

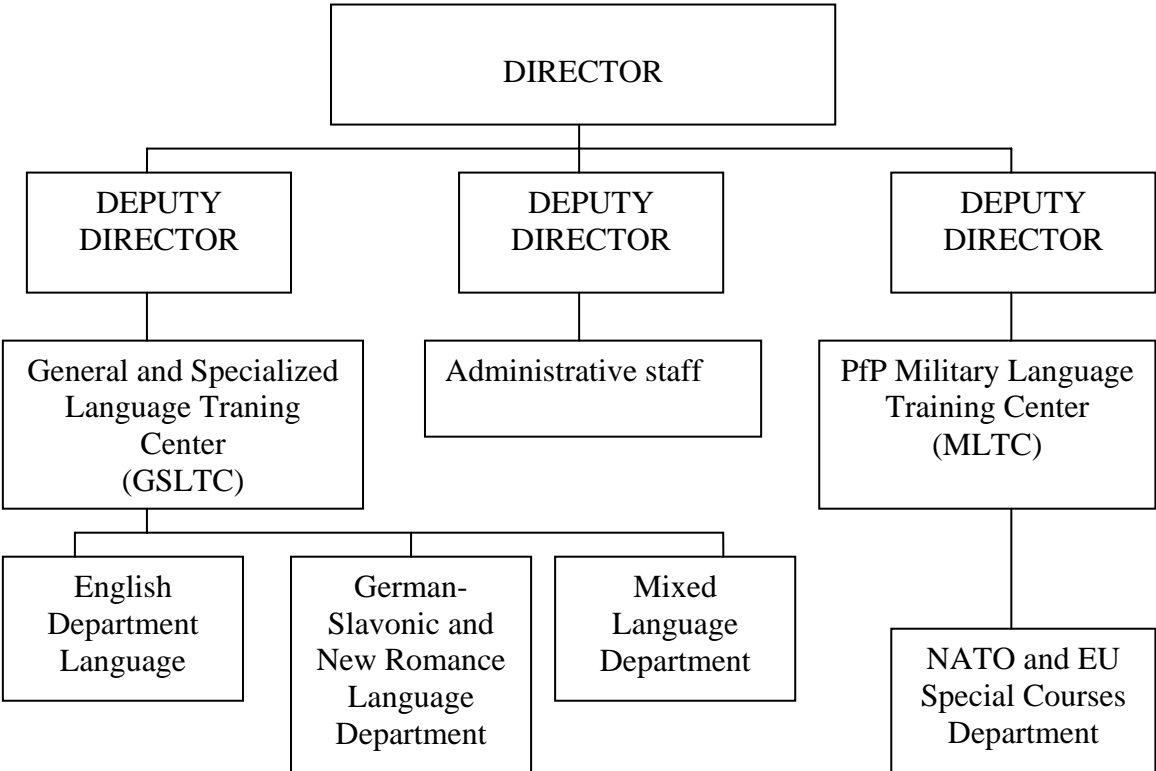
Miklós Zrínyi National Defense University was established in 1996 when two military academies integrated into the former Military College and a new educational establishment was formed. In 2000 the military technical academy joined this conglomeration and a completely new higher educational institution was born with two university faculties, namely Military Science Faculty and Military Technical Faculty. This is the only military institutional system in Hungary where officers' training takes place.

Our institution, the Language Institute, was formed according to this new framework. It has various tasks: it teaches and prepares cadets, full-time university students and postgraduates for intermediate or advanced language exams, which is an essential requirement for getting diplomas at the university. Besides teaching graduates, the Institute fulfills the requests and orders of Defense Staff and Ministry of Defense in course training where officers, NCO-s and civilian employees of MOD acquire high level knowledge in general and military language.

In 2003-2004 the Language Institute grew in responsibility and organizational structure when the previously independent PfP Military Language Training Center became part of the institute.

Consequently, from 2004 the Institute has met not only national but also NATO language requirements at higher levels.

The organizational structure of the Institute



The institute is led by a director who is responsible for all the matters of the institute, and 3 deputy directors assist the director. One is responsible for the administrative and logistic tasks of the institute, while the 2 others are responsible for the professional objectives of their centres.

The institute consists of 2 centers, the General and Specialized Language Training Center (GSLTC) and PfP Military Language Training Center (MLTC).

The GSLTC is composed of 3 departments, English, German-Slavonic and New Romance Language, and Mixed Language Department. This center conducts the training of cadets, 5-year university students, postgraduate students and pursues courses in 7 languages.

The MLTC has one department, the NATO and EU Special Courses Department and conducts course training in 3 languages.

The main difference between the two centers is that while the GSLTC meets only Hungarian needs, the MLTC meets the prerequisites of both NATO and PfP countries.

Concept of special language training, its content and purposes

Different Hungarian linguists (Pongrácz Judit, Fábián Pál etc.) tried to give definitions of special languages. Here are some of them in my translation:

“Special language equals special terminology.”

“Special language is a functional style.”

“Special language is a peculiar use of certain grammatical means and organization of determined vocabulary for the text.”

“Special languages are certain parts of national languages.”

“Special languages are only branches of a unified language but they aren’t separate languages.”

These and other definitions confirm my conviction that military language training is a special form of training during which the students acquire military terminology.

We have to underline that special language training does not mean that students acquire only their military speciality in English, it means that learning basic vocabulary and proper grammar lay the foundation for future growth in the language.

We also have to stress that special military language training is essential for professional preparation and progress, but it is impossible without appropriate general language knowledge.

The most important **purpose** of military language training is to prepare soldiers, officers, NCO-s and military employees of armed forces to communicate and operate with their NATO and PfP Partners and to fulfill their peacekeeping and peacemaking missions.

Now let's look at the topics our students have to be familiar with to take a successful STANAG 6001 or military state language exam.

Military language topics

STANAG 6001 Level 1

Services and braches (the main services and the branches of the candidate's military; the candidate's branch of services, its weapons and equipment)

Military units (the units of the candidate's service, the unit the candidate serves in, its strength, composition and tasks)

Military ranks (the ranks of the candidate's service, the candidate's rank and promotions)

Military career (the candidate's career, promotions and professional development)

Military uniform (the uniforms in the candidate's military and insignia)

Military training (the candidate's military training, military training opportunities)

Basic political-military issues (NATO, PfP, UN troops, peacekeeping, joint training exercises, military reforms)

STANAG 6001 Level 2

NATO (political goals and basic tasks, strategic concept, NATO enlargement)

Peacekeeping (the world's hot spots, participation in peacekeeping / peace support operations, international cooperation)

Military reform (reorganization, reduction and modernization of the military force, professional military, military cooperation)

Present armed conflicts (wars, conflicts in Europe and other parts of the world, causes of conflicts, conflict prevention)

STANAG 6001 Level 3

International relations (PfP, NATO, international institutions, joint operations, military exercises)

Defence policy (strategic concepts, national military strategy, military doctrines)

Defence planning (defence spending, military budget, force planning, force goals)

Non-military security challenges (terrorism, other non-traditional threats)

Armed conflicts (hot spots, low-intensity conflicts, conflict prevention)

Peace support (peacekeeping, peace enforcement, post-conflict reconstruction)

Security issues (balance of power, nuclear deterrence, arms control, collective security, regional security issues)

Infrastructure (weapon systems, military equipment, military research and development)

Military transformation (force restructuring, modernization issues)

International military law (Geneva Conventions, war crimes, legality of the use of force)

Environmental security (wartime impacts, weapons testing and disposal, other environmental concerns)

Military and society (terms and conditions of service, civil-military relations)

Types and different formats of language training

Language training at the Institute includes preparation of cadets, university graduates and course students for military language exams.

Graduates' language training

The requirement for receiving diplomas for cadets is a state language exam at intermediate level or STANAG 2222 exam. In certain field of studies (e.g. Defense and Security policy studies) and in most university branches the students have to take language exam at advanced level or STANAG 3333 exams.

The cadets during 5 semesters get 360 contact hours, while university students' number of contact hours vary from different branches from 180-530.

Course students' training

Language courses are another way of teaching a language at the Institute. Within the courses, we can distinguish between intensive and 'non-intensive' courses.

The **intensive courses** are **10-month** courses of 1200 hours, and students are exempted from work. They have 6 lessons per day, and they have to study 2 hours per day individually to attain the intermediate level state exam. These students at the beginning of the course do not have any command of the language, so they have to push themselves very hard. In these courses, from the year 2004/2005, the standard became to achieve the STANAG 6001 2222 NATO exam, which is the equivalent to the intermediate level military professional exam.

From the year 2005/2006, instead of the 1200 hour courses, the Chief of Staff has ordered a **500 hour course**. The students can only continue their studies if at the end of the 500 hours they achieve the defined STANAG level. After the first 500 hours of learning STANAG level 1, and after the second 500 hours of STANAG 2.

Within the intensive courses, another language course exists; the **3 month 300 hour course**, which prepares the students for the STANAG 6001 exam. At present, this is the course which most students attend.

In these courses, students from 10-14 countries study together with Hungarian students. The advantage of mixed nationalities is that they can practice the target language during breaks and in the afternoon as well.

We can say that in all of our English language intensive courses students prepare for STANAG level 1, 2 and 3. The goal is to enable the students of any NATO and PfP country to cooperate within NATO by the command of English standardized by the common requirements, no matter where they have studied or sat for the exam.

The **'non-intensive'** courses usually last 2 years and provide 300 hours. After the first year, the requirement is to achieve the basic professional exam, and after the second year, the intermediate level exam.

To reach a certain level, 500-600 contact hours are necessary, so it is clear that these students must spend the majority of their free time studying to pass the exam. Therefore, these courses are less effective compared to the intensive courses.

From the year 2005/2006, the 'non-intensive' courses are 500 hours long, which provides enough hours for the students to study the language.

Teacher training courses

In order to spread the methodology of STANAG teaching, twice a year a 2-week-long course is held for foreign language teachers. These courses increase the reputation of the institute making our work more valuable. In 2006, NATO has ordered three teacher training courses from the Institute, two basic and one advanced.

The most important and most popular courses internationally are the **Basic** and **Advanced Air Operational English Courses** (BAOEC, AAOEC), which are held four times a year. The course is 2 weeks long. These courses are held with the involvement of aviation experts, although the teaching itself is carried out by Hungarian colleagues.

In 2006, NATO has requested that the Institute holds the **Staff Officer Military Terminology Course** instead of BAOEC and AAOEC. We have already had two SOMT Courses and they were very successful. This kind of course is held four times in year.

At the 5-month intensive **GRIPEN courses**, the pilots and technical staff of the new aircraft are trained for the technical terminology and language.

In addition to the regular courses, we get orders for **different types** and **different level courses** e.g. **Medical English Course**, **NATO administration course MFO / Peacekeeping preparation course** etc.

What languages are taught?

Military language is taught in English, German, French, Italian, Russian, Serbian, Croatian, Ukranian and Hungarian as a Foreign Language. The majority of the courses are the English courses since they have priority in any form of language teaching.

The background of teaching

The institute has 55 full-time teachers and we employ 20-25 part-time teachers annually. Among them there are native speakers and foreign military officers who are great asset both in teaching and military orientation.

I am confident that all teachers are highly-qualified, have great experience and are professional teachers. 12 have PhD degrees and 10 are in the process. The PhD school of the University gives a good basis for their training.

Further teacher training

It is very important for our scientific activities to participate in national and international conferences, as these forums provide means for spreading the results of our research and communication. Since 1992, we have participated in BILC conferences organised for teachers and administrators working in language teaching in NATO and PfP countries. We are also regulars at a national conferences on Applied Linguistics, British Council seminars, MacMillan methodology conferences and the Hungarian Language Teaching Society meetings.

Our teachers regularly publish their research, 10-15 articles, and the studies come out each year in scientific journals.

Our teachers participate in training courses in English, French and German speaking countries. All of our teachers have had a chance to take part in refresher teachers' training courses at our NATO partners' language training institutions (DLI, Beaconsfield, Lancaster University, Bundessprachenamt, Rochefort).

Teachers regularly publish materials supplementing teaching.

In the last 5 years the following course books, notes, supplement materials have been published, all together 25 textbooks in five languages.

English language

University books

Dr. Nyecsajeva Natalia: Tool for STANAG (2004) + Teachers' book (STANAG 3333 course-book)

University notes

Dr. Kovacsne dr. Nabradi Marta: Basic Military English – multi-media distance learning material (2004)

Dr. Kovacsne dr. Nabradi Marta: Basic Military English (2004)

Barrie Lister – Panajotu Kosztasz – dr. Szipoláné: STANAG 2222 multimedia distance learning material (2004)

English department (edited by Dr. Szabo Ildiko) A collection of exercises to the ARMA military written exam – Basic and Intermediate level (2004)

Collection of words, expressions and exercises for English speaking skills, picture description and giving opinion (for students preparing for the basic and intermediate level State exam) edited by Gabor Zsuzsa

Collection of English grammar explanations and exercises (Edited by Gabor Zsuzsa) (2005)

English department: Collection of exercises for the ARMA professional military written exam – English – advanced level (2004)

Preparation for the STANAG 2 written exam – English department (edited by: Dr. Nabradi Marta – dr. Nyecsajeva Natalia 2005)

French language

Isztl Marta: General military language (1998)

Dr. Zoltan Marta: Hungarian-French military dictionary (1999)

Dr. Zoltan Marta: French-Hungarian military dictionary (2003)

Isztl Marta: Collection of exercises for the French basic level ARMA military written exam

Dr. Zoltan Marta: Collection of exercises for the ARMA military written exam – French language –Intermediate level

Dr. Zoltan Marta: Collection of exercises for the ARMA military written exam – French language –Advanced level

Fregan Beatrix: French–Hungarian and Hungarian–French borderguard collection of vocabulary (2004)

Forgacsne Gottler Viktoria: collection of texts and exercises for French military videos (2004)

German language

Jaszter Rozsa – Lukacsne Budai Judit: Collection of exercises for the ARMA military written exam – German-basic level (2004)

Jaszter Rozsa – Harmathne dr. Dudas Eva: Collection of exercises for the ARMA military written exam – German-intermediate level (2004)

Jaszter Rozsa –dr. Kurucz Imrene-Nemeth Laszlone – Szucsne Gerecs Magdolna: Collection of exercises for the ARMA military written exam – German-advanced level (2004)

Russian Language

Vecsei Gyorgyne dr. – Lopocsi Istvanne: NATO Russian language notes (2003)

Papp Zsuzsanna – Toth Mihalyne: Collection of exercises for the ARMA military written exam – Russian language – Basic level (2004)

Krivacs Gyorgyne – Sarkanyne Szabo Olga: Collection of exercises for the ARMA military written exam – Russian language – Intermediate – (2004)

Papp Zsuzsanna-Sarkanyne Szabo Olga: Collection of exercises for the ARMA military written exam – Russian language – Advanced level

Italian language

Szigetine dr. Demeter Margit: Italian-Hungarian military dictionary (edited in 2003)

Facilities

Our Institute has a highly specialized library equipped with all the necessary textbooks, dictionaries, newspapers, magazines, videotapes, DVDs and audio cassettes that our students need for their studies. We have different kinds of commercially-available course-books, e.g.: Headway, Enterprise, Lifelines, Inside Out, English File, Streamline, Grapevine, Reward, True to Life and others, for teaching General English and different types of military course-books, some of which are produced “in-house”, and some are commercially available.

These special military books are the following: Command English, Tactical English for Land Forces in Peace Support Operations, Breakthrough (The British Council’s Peacekeeping Project book), Campaign and Defence Language Institute course-books for special purposes e.g. English Skills for Staff Officers in Multinational Operations, Army Topics, Skills for Military Speaking, Leadership, Operations, Fire Support and Field Artillery, and Topics in Basic Electronics etc.

Apart from our library the most up-to-date and important resource for getting teaching materials is the internet.

We have 4 computer labs (11 seats in each) with internet access and we have obtained large amounts of learning kits, self-study materials, educational packages on CDs and distance learning multi-media materials.

Our computer labs are available for our students in the afternoons and are open on the weekends. This also helps to stop students feeling homesick by keeping them in touch with family back home.

We have 4 audio-labs (20 seats each) and well-equipped classrooms with overhead projectors, TV sets, VCRs and DVDs.

I hope I have given a clear overall picture of military language training at the Language Institute of MZNDU.

The previously mentioned facts give clear evidence that the Language Institute, besides its **main task of teaching**, carries out a whole series of **scientific** and **scientific character activities** for the sake of the scientific basis that raises the level of the institute's work.

In summary, we can say that the teachers' language preparedness, methodological knowledge, high quality of teaching, and flexible compliance for new challenges are instrumental in successful language teaching.