Summary BILC presentation; Randi Gaustad

It is widely acknowledged that the unsaid, layers of language that are implicit or silent, plays an immense role in verbal communication, and that a vast amount of the information conveyed in an utterance is never actually uttered, but left for the listener to perceive. Nevertheless, in foreign language training, and perhaps particularly in the typical intensive, steep progress courses for military purposes, we often seem to forget that this is how communication works. Due to limited time frames, learning what seems most urgent (concrete matter like vocabulary, codes, grammar) is prioritised, at the cost of what is more vague, subtle, or ambiguous. Indeed, chances are that attention will be given almost exclusively to explicit, and systemic, aspects of language.

In a world where saying without saying is a game played to perfection at all places, and all levels, being able to cope with unspoken layers of communication is paramount. This is a question not only of being decent and respectful towards your counterpart, it is also a question of security: naivety or superficiality pose serious dangers to our students, who are meant to use their language capacities to convey information and meaning reliably - for example, for their superiors to make informed decisions, to contribute to intelligence analysis, and the like. How, then, can these dangers be addressed?