

National Report – Hungary

The importance of language skills is gaining wide spread recognition both in the military and in the public sector in general. NATO-compatible military English instruction is top priority as the Hungarian Defence Forces has announced it. The field of language training co-operation with foreign and domestic partners has always been regarded important, therefore native speakers and advisors from the UK, USA as well as from Germany and France provide assistance to our staff and students to achieve good results in language training.

The growing participation of Hungary in different UN and NATO-led missions, Peace Support, Humanitarian, and Search and Rescue Operations increases the language requirements in teaching and quality control of NATO compatible military language.

Due to the downsizing of the Hungarian Defence Forces and the increasing involvement of the HDF in international missions, students find it increasingly difficult to get away from their regular assignments in order to spend time on language training.

Therefore English courses should be adapted to the needs of students by intensifying classroom training with the aid of enhanced technological standards and focusing on self-study phases during and after courses.

In the field of teaching material development, projects are designed to provide general and mainly military language self-study materials. Distance language learning should be encouraged as well.

Language training

The Hungarian Defence Forces has one basic integrated language teaching institution, which belongs to the Zrínyi Miklós National Defence University:

The Institute for Foreign Languages Studies.

The Institute for Foreign Language Studies comprises two centres: **Centre for Training General and Special Military Language (CTGSML)** and **PfP Military Language Training Centre (MLTC)**. The two language training centres have a staff of 43 with 27 permanent teachers and 16 part-time teachers. Approximately 1500 students are provided with language training every year. This year we have 11 groups for intensive language studies, 40 STANAG courses at level 2 and 3, and 8 non-intensive courses in 4 different foreign languages.

The primary mission of the two centres is to ensure the language training of both commissioned and non-commissioned officers, civil servants, and public administrators of the Hungarian Defence Forces in commonly taught European languages.

Centre for Training General and Special Military Language.

There are various forms of training at the Centre for Training General and Special Military Language. Full-time students learn foreign languages in a way similar to other institutes of higher education.

In addition to this there are ten-month-long intensive courses, 500-class courses preparing for NATO STANAG 6001 language examinations at STANAG levels 1111 and 2222, and eight-lesson per week – basic, intermediate and advanced level – in-service courses where English, French, German can be learned. Hungarian as a foreign language is taught to foreign officers and cadets.

Both centres have a very close co-operation with the Testing Centre of the Zrínyi Miklos National Defence University and prepares students for the ARMA military language examinations in English, German, French, and STANAG 6001 exams.

The Partnership for Peace Military Language Training Center

At the MLTC intermediate or higher level students are taught in only three languages: the two official languages of NATO, (English and French) and German.

Our students fall into three main categories:

The majority of the Hungarian students come from Regional Military Language Centres. In the Regional Military Language Centres, the students study general English for 26 lessons per week in small groups of 7-12 students with a standard course length of ten months during which the students have approximately one thousand contact lessons a year. After a year of language studies they take a state exam at STANAG 2222 level. In case of a successful language examination these students are allowed to continue their language studies at the MLTC for additional three months. The MLTC also introduces them to the most basic military language material.

The MLTC also receives students from the Zrínyi Miklós National Defense University (ZMNDU) Centre for Training General and Special Military Language. These students have studied general and military English either in an intensive course for a year or in a non-intensive language course for two years. They have passed a specialised military state exam or STANAG exam and possess STANAG 1111 so the MLTC can teach them advanced military language skills.

The third group of students comes from NATO and PfP countries. The number of international students is constantly growing and now half of our two hundred students arrive from PfP countries.

Certain courses are tailored to the specific needs of the students. We offer students NATO-oriented military English in the following fields:

NATO STUDIES

Origins and history
Command, organisation and structure
Strategic concept
Infrastructure, administration and financial control
Communication and information systems
Tasks of Alliance-availability and readiness of forces
Support services and preparedness
Scientific and environmental factors
National defense policy, planning and management
Indigenous factors applicable to the host country

OTHER MILITARY STUDIES

General information on land or air forces
Command, organisation and structure of each of the above forces
Administration, support services and logistics of each of the above
Courses focusing on any speciality to be designed as needed

The classes are based on the use of authentic materials dealing with NATO related subjects. Students concentrate on developing the interactive communication skills required by their future assignments.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS: Students must have a high school diploma from a school in their own country and an intermediate or higher level of proficiency in the language to be studied.

At the end of the course both our Hungarian and international students are provided with the opportunity of taking a STANAG 6001 language examination at levels 2222 or 3333.

THE FUTURE: The MLTC is increasingly focusing on the teaching of specialised military English. This year the Centre offers the students the following courses:

Staff Officers Military Terminology Training Course (under NATO code);
Teacher Training Course (under NATO code);
Advanced Teacher Training Course (under NATO code).
Military Medical English;
Teacher Training Seminar for the Language Trainers of Military Schools in PfP Countries;
Air Force English for Prospective Gripen Personnel (air/ground crew) – for Hungarian military only.

As it can be seen, both the CTGSML and the MLTC do their best in order to meet the new challenges resulting from Hungary's NATO accession, focusing on the increased language teaching requirements and quality control of NATO compatible military language.

Language Testing Centre

The Language Testing Centre was set up as an independent organisation in 2001 after the accreditation of our military language exams.

We organise three types of examinations:

- STANAG 6001,
- Military bilingual language exams (which we call ARMA) in English, French, German, Italian, Russian, Croatian, Serbian, Slovakian and Ukrainian.
- General language exams (English, French, German, Italian, Russian and Hungarian as a foreign language),

To meet graduation requirements, the Hungarian university system stipulates that students must sit for and pass a language exam at the intermediate level. The same holds true for students at the National Defence University. One exception is that students of Security and Defence Policy Department are required to pass an advanced language exam in English or French and an intermediate exam in any other languages.

Number of permanent staff of the Language Testing Centre is 8 people including administrative personnel. About 50 teachers from the Language Institute and contract teachers are involved in testing.

In January 2005 the STANAG 6001 exam was accredited by the National Accreditation Board and was recognized by the Ministry of Education. The STANAG 6001 exam became a state exam. Besides ARMA exams students can take STANAG 2222 to meet graduation requirements. STANAG exam is compulsory for the military students.

Since the last BILC conference 1966 candidates have taken STANAG exams.

The most recent large-scale project of the Testing Centre was to link the military examinations to the Common European Framework (CEF). The linking had four inter-related stages: familiarization, specification, standardization and empirical validation. The objective of the first phase was to familiarize the participants of the project with the CEF. After familiarization we turned to the development of the specification. Specification can be summarized as the description of the examination in relation to the categories and levels of the CEF. Standardization involved on one hand training in evaluating standardized performances that were made available to our Testing Centre by the Council of Europe and on the other hand it involved benchmarking local performances. The results were carefully analyzed and also correlated statistically. The final phase of the project was the empirical validation. Empirical validation includes internal and external validation of the examination system. The language examinations gave us the necessary amount of data for internal validation. The obtained data was analyzed and on this basis steps were taken to make certain changes to the test including the replacement and removal of certain items that did not work well. The final phase of the linking was called external validation, the objective of which was to verify and confirm empirically the standard-setting that was undertaken in relation to CEF levels.

The language examination certificates issued in Hungary (after the official approval from the Accreditation Board) specify the CEF proficiency levels as well.

In addition to our routine work in the Testing Centre we regularly get new tasks from the Accreditation Board. Last autumn we had to amend our *Organisational and Operational Rules* and adjust this document to the new government decree. We also had to review and modernize our bilingual ARMA language examination system, we had to introduce new task types to ensure that each language skill is measured by a separate examination task. We had to develop the new tasks, pretest them, analyze the results statistically and hand in all the papers and documentation to the Accreditation Board for approval.