

*Ya. Tarasenko, Bachelor student*  
*N. Osadchuk, PhD in Education, research and language advisor*  
*S.P. Korolov Zhytomyr Military Institute*

## **DEVELOPING INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE OF MILITARY PERSONNEL**

Today, a key issue for the success of any type of international military cooperation is constant mastering the intercultural communication competence of military personnel. Associated with the cultural differences of soldiers from different armies, it plays a special role in the context of military communication.

Although this concept has different definitions, most researchers argue that "intercultural communication" takes place between people who are aware of their cultural differences. It is also defined as an interpersonal, direct, and unmediated form of communication, which is characterized by change, due to different impacts that constantly form the values, behaviors and beliefs defining it.

Nowadays, different contingents increasingly use English language as an official language to work and train together. A key component of effective intercultural communication of military personnel is linguistic interoperability, supported with NATO Standardization Agreement (STANAG 6001), which is a scale including descriptors with language proficiency skills broken down into six levels, coded 0 through 5.

At the same time, most military educators advocate for the adoption of a "culture and language strategy" involving the development of language proficiency, culture awareness and expertise [1]. Accordingly, in order to ensure effective communication in multicultural environment, the foreign language proficiency of military members must be sustained by the possession of intercultural communication skills.

Many researchers list the following effective guidelines for developing and improving intercultural communications skills:

- being aware of your own culture;
- being other-oriented;
- being curious in dealing with different cultures;
- tolerating ambiguity;
- being behaviorally flexible;
- being emphatic;
- getting into contact with people coming from different cultures [2].

These days, the increased interaction and integration of people all over the world has also intensified the opportunities for foreign language learning with respect to the development of intercultural communication competence.

Additionally, improvements in technology and the fact that the Internet has become significantly more widespread in the world, have created opportunities for people to acquire knowledge and understanding of different cultures and languages through sharing information and becoming involved in bilateral projects, activities, discussions, etc.

Thus, through learning English language and acquiring the knowledge of other cultures (values, norms, beliefs, taboos, rituals, customs) all service members can gain the capacity for effective communication and easily adapt to specific intercultural situations.

#### **REFERENCES**

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