

**TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES
AT THE HELLENIC ARMY MILITARY ACADEMY
THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE**

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Abstract: *During the process of internationalization, interpersonal communication has been transformed into intercultural communication involving people from different cultural systems that communicate effortlessly with each other. The present study focuses on the inductive methodology that is followed at the Hellenic Army Military Academy in order to help cadets to acquire communicative skills while absorbing the knowledge of English or French language, literature, and culture. The inductive methodology gives shape to an innovative teaching approach as English and French become languages of special purposes, taking into consideration the needs and requirements of the contemporary international environment. The Hellenic Army Military Academy provides a multidimensional and of high quality, military academic training that lasts four years. Teaching foreign languages, particularly English and French meets the prospects and commitments of the Hellenic Army Military Academy and the Hellenic Ministry of Defence. Because teaching English and French and Military Terminology is accomplished simultaneously in hellenophone and allophone speaking cadets during the first two years of their academic program. Given the heterogeneous cultural and linguistic contexts, lectures are oriented towards participatory learning so that all cadets are activated to the educational process. The subjects of English and French Military Terminology and War Literature are taught during the third and fourth years at the Hellenic Army Military Academy in order to aid cadets in acquiring the necessary reading, writing, listening and oral skills that will enable them to attend the Annual Spring Program of Military Erasmus as well as the academic programs of the Anglo-Saxon universities they will go to after graduation. Authentic English and French texts and historical, political and fictional texts have been selected concerning the organization of the army, the art and act of conducting war as well as the experiences of American, English and French war veterans. By the time cadets graduate, with the help of their lecturers who assist them in the difficult task of providing them with vocabulary activities, oral, writing and listening exercises, they can speak two European languages and know the military terms, phrases and idioms that are usually found in military texts in order to use them when communicating with their colleagues abroad.*

Keywords: curriculum, foreign languages for specific purposes, educational approach, inductive methodology, multidimensional academic training, interpersonal and intercultural communication.

1. Introduction

Instructive practices, especially those of foreign languages, within the scope of a contemporary internationalizing environment, have to follow the evolutionary progress of society, focus on the utilitarian approach of knowledge and cultivate the learners' participation in the educational process. Nowadays, cadets are asked to possess skills that will enable them to “effectively understand and manipulate the resources” (Wray, 2000:75) provided by the military, war, and operational sector.

Within the frame of teaching foreign languages at the Hellenic Army Military Academy, we would like to present a short study on the many-sided and challenging work of the foreign language lecturers of the Hellenic Army Military Academy by offering examples of what is involved in practicing a foreign language and by discussing the future challenges of and resources for the enterprise.

2. Institutional, Academic Framework

The Hellenic Army Military Academy provides a multidimensional and of high quality military academic training that lasts four years, i.e. the Study Guide of the Hellenic Army Military Academy for the academic year 2017-2018 at www.sse.tue.edu.gr/.

English and French, and Military Terminology are accomplished simultaneously with regard to hellenophone and allophone speaking cadets during the first two years of their studies. Given the heterogeneous cultural and linguistic contexts, lecturers are oriented towards the inductive teaching and participatory learning so that all learners are activated to the educational process.

Teaching a language means teaching a linguistic code, i.e. imparting knowledge of a different “mentality” and so we work towards the comprehension of languages like English or French in order to generate cultural and linguistic knowledge.

At the Hellenic Army Military Academy, cadets are taught two (2) foreign languages, namely English and French:

- English is taught at B2 level (Good knowledge). The course is obligatory and involves freshmen and sophomores. It ends with the acquisition of the Certificate of English at B2 level. The certificate has to be recognized by the Greek State. It is obtained by taking an examination given by universities, like the University of Michigan in the United States and the University of Cambridge in the United Kingdom.
- Those of the cadets who succeed in obtaining the Certificate of English at B2 level have to continue with a course at C2 level (Very good knowledge). The course is obligatory and ends with the characterization of the cadets, who have obtained the C2 certificate, as qualified and linguistically competent officers who can undertake projects, missions, studies, and tasks abroad.

Those of the cadets who obtain a Certificate of English at C2 level have to continue the course of foreign languages by attending French lessons at B2 level (Good knowledge). Please note that if a cadet does not succeed in obtaining a Certificate of English at B2 level, he/she will fail to be characterized as a qualified and linguistically competent officer and will face the penalty imposed by the Chief of Staff of the Hellenic Ministry of Defence, involving a decrease in pay. French is taught at B2 level (Good knowledge). The course is obligatory and involves freshmen and sophomores.

Those of the cadets who succeed in obtaining the Certificate of French at B2 level, like the Certificate of the *Institut Français d'Athènes*, recognized by the Greek State, achieve an additional asset that helps them to build a successful career or improve career prospects.

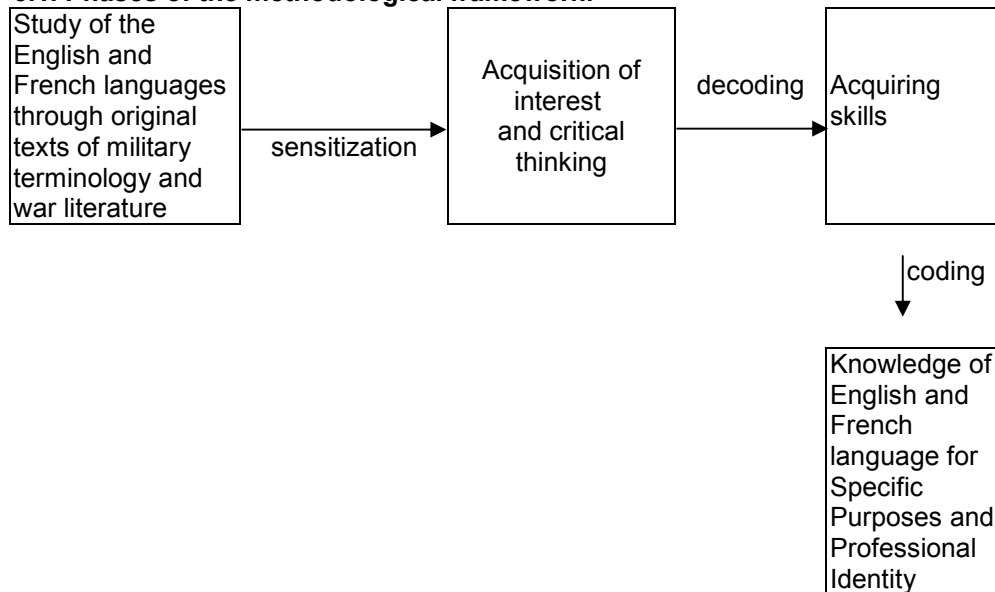
Besides English and French, cadets are taught English and French Military Terminology in which words become terms because they convey special meanings. These words carry a “special cultural load” (Galisson, 1995:490). They convey the intellect of the subject while using speech economy and avoiding periphrases because “intellect and speech are the same,” Plato says in the *Sophist*.

The courses involve the acquisition of skills, like reading and understanding English and French military texts as well as the skills of learning English and French terms and using them in oral and written form. The courses are taught during the first two years of the academic program twice per week for one hour at a time.

English is also taught to juniors and seniors as an optional course. It involves courses in War Literature, Translation, and Public Speaking. The courses in War Literature include lectures on the poetry of the Great War and the novels of World War I and World War II that help cadets to make sense of the meaning of combat and learn lessons from the old conflicts that they can use in the contemporary era. Translation *involves* converting the meaning of written or spoken military content from one language to the other; and Public Speaking teaches cadets to address large audiences, when making formal announcements, as well as the art of persuasion: “It is important to learn how to speak a language in order to resolve significant issues and interact in social and intercultural environment”. (Proscolli, 2014:30)

3. Methodological Framework

3.1. Phases of the methodological framework:



3.2. Sensitization

“There is no shorter and more substantial method to get to know a civilization, a country, and its people than learning the language, since language is the way that people of different nationalities see, organize, classify and express our world.” (Anastasiadi – Simeonidi, 1994:36)

The course books that are used to help cadets to acquire the skills of comprehension, listening, speaking and writing English and French and the skills of learning Military Terminology are written by the foreign language lecturers of the academy and published by the academy press. These books are the following: *English for Army Cadets* Volumes I and II; and *Français sur Objectifs Spécifiques* and *Textes Militaires*. Here are two examples that reveal how cadets acquire the skills of comprehension, listening, speaking and writing French and the skill of memorizing English and French Military Terminology.

Here is an example from *NATO A Workbook for Learners of Military English*.

NATO Defence Matters

I. Read the following text:

Regarding defence matters, NATO keeps underlining its solidarity and steadfast commitment to the security of all its Allies.

Throughout the last years, NATO has shown many examples of Alliance solidarity. For example, NATO renewed its commitment to a sovereign, secure and democratic Afghanistan at the Chicago Summit in May 2012. Members of NATO agreed that NATO's current combat mission will be completed by the end of 2014, when its Afghan partners have assumed full responsibility for the security of their country, and when their engagement will then enter a new phase. This new phase will involve planning a new NATO-led mission from 2015 to train, to advise, and to assist the Afghan security forces.

In Chicago, NATO also reiterated that its door remains open to those countries that are willing and able to assume the responsibilities and obligations of membership, and vowed to intensify cooperation with partners across the globe.

In Chicago, NATO presented the “NATO Forces 2020” that are more capable, more compatible, and more complementary. To help achieve this goal, NATO agreed two separate initiatives – Smart Defence and the Connected Forces Initiative.

Smart Defence is the way forward for Allies to develop and acquire critical capabilities. More than 20 multinational capabilities are already being developed – from maritime air surveillance to precision-guided munitions. European Allies take part in all of these projects; they are leading two thirds of them; and one third of the projects are purely European in terms of participation.

The Connected Forces Initiative will help NATO and partner forces to build on the experience of two decades of operations, by increasing NATO-led training and exercises, including with a strengthened NATO Response Force.

In fact, most Allies have significantly improved their capacity to deploy and sustain their forces in recent years. Their Connected Forces Initiative will help NATO to maintain these gains as well as the ability of its forces to operate together. This will be especially important after the Allied ISAF mission in Afghanistan ends in 2014.

In 2012 NATO strengthened its transatlantic bond, demonstrated its commitment to its shared values and security, and made plans to ensure a stable and peaceful future for Allies and partners alike. In 2013, NATO continued to display that same solidarity, commitment, and foresight, in order to sustain its strength and success.

II. Now, answer the following questions.

1. Discuss the current plans of NATO regarding Afghanistan.
2. What is "NATO Forces 2020"?
3. How will NATO achieve "NATO Forces 2020"?
4. What does ISAF stand for? Why is it mentioned in the text?
5. Summarize the 2012 and 2013 NATO achievements.

III. What do the following words mean? *Steadfast, sovereign, reiterate, foresight, sustain, deploy and solidarity.*

1. Steadfast.....
2. Sovereign.....
3. Reiterate.....
4. Foresight.....
5. Sustain.....
6. Deploy.....
7. Solidarity.....

IV. Fill in the gaps with one of the words above.

1. The US government remained ... in its refusal to release the two terrorists.
2. The soldiers had the ... to bring the new weapon.
3. There was a need to create ... among the president's top economic advisers.
4. Both sides ... heavy losses in the war.
5. Troops have been ... in the area to counter a possible attack.
6. NATO wants to ... the importance of protecting our homes.
7. The new Slovenian Assembly claimed full....

V. Find synonyms and antonyms for the words above.

| | <i>Synonyms</i> | <i>Antonyms</i> |
|----|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1. | | |
| 2. | | |
| 3. | | |
| 4. | | |
| 5. | | |
| 6. | | |
| 7. | | |

VI. Choose the best answer.

1. Nations carrying on warfare are called ... *bivouac / salvo / belligerents.*
2. A compulsory enrolment as soldiers is a (n) ... *embargo / restriction / conscription.*
3. A (n) ... *embargo / bivouac / salvo* is an order prohibiting ships to leave the port.
4. When POWs are kept in confinement, they are ... *interned / trained / positioned.*

5. A ... *salvo / volley / shot* is a shower of bullets.
6. The firing of many guns at the same time is a ... *volley / salvo / battery*.
7. When troops surrender to an enemy on agreed terms, they ... *capitulate / submit / arrest*.
8. A ... *bivouac / camp / tent* is an encampment in the open air.
9. A gap in fortified or battle lines is a ... *breach / booby trap / blockade*.
10. A military blockade of a city or fortress with the intent of conquering by force or attrition, often accompanied by an assault in the later phase is a *siege / siege en règle / sack*.

VII. Supply the missing prepositions.

1. NATO is a crisis-management organization that has the capacity ... undertake a wide range of military operations and missions.
2. The tempo and diversity ... operations and missions in which NATO is involved have increased since the early 1990s.
3. Approximately 18,000 military personnel are engaged in NATO missions around the world, managing often complex ground, air and naval operations ... all types of environment.
4. Currently, NATO is operating ... Afghanistan, Kosovo, the Mediterranean and off the Horn of Africa.
5. NATO is also supporting the African Union and conducting air policing missions ... the request of its Allies; it also has Patriot missiles deployed ... in Turkey.
6. NATO carries out disaster-relief operations and missions ... protect populations against natural, technological or humanitarian disasters.

VIII. Use the following words to fill in the gaps: *Enhance, focus, challenge, pose, threat and tackle*.

Terrorism

Terrorism ... a direct threat to the security of the citizens of NATO countries, and to international stability and prosperity. It is a persistent global ... that knows no border, nationality or religion and is a ... that the international community must ... together. NATO's work on counter-terrorism ... on improving awareness of the threat, developing capabilities to prepare and respond, and ... engagement with partner countries and other international actors.

IX. Listen to the following brief introduction to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) <<https://www.youtube.com/user/NATO>> and choose the best answer.

1. NATO was founded
 - a. on the Washington Treaty
 - b. in Europe in 1959
2. The original members
 - a. were twelve
 - b. were twenty eight
3. A country is invited to join NATO
 - a. on the basis of consensus
 - b. on the basis of collective defence
4. NATO
 - a. contributes to defence and security
 - b. meets certain requirements like defence and security

5. NATO supplies its members with
 - a. tailored advice and assistance
 - b. membership and affiliation
6. "To be able to uphold shared values and contribute to defence and security" refers to
 - a. aspiring members of NATO
 - b. NATO principles

Here is an example from *Textes Militaires*:

La guerre de Corée, 1950

La guerre de Corée, qui commence le 25 juin 1950, vient sanctionner la « guerre froide » que se livrent Américains et Soviétiques au lendemain de la Seconde Guerre mondiale. En 1945, les Soviétiques ont occupé le nord de la Corée jusqu'au niveau du 38^e parallèle qui marque la séparation avec la Corée du Sud, où se sont installés les Américains.

Les causes de la guerre remontent aux conditions dans lesquelles ont été établis les deux gouvernements coréens en 1948 : celui du Nord a refusé de reconnaître la légitimité des élections menées dans le Sud sous l'égide de la Commission des Nations unies ; celui du Sud se targue de la tutelle de l'ONU pour clamer qu'il est le seul gouvernement légitime de la Corée, bien que l'ONU ait seulement sanctionné la validité des élections dans le Sud. Dès lors, chacune des parties se croit légitimée à reconquérir l'autre.

En 1950, l'armée de la Corée du Nord étant mieux préparée que celle du Sud, l'URSS semble avoir calculé qu'une courte guerre surprise donnerait une victoire facile, avant que les Américains aient le temps d'intervenir en force. Les troupes nord-coréennes lancent donc leur attaque le 25 juin 1950 en franchissant le 38^e parallèle. La Corée du Nord reste sourde à la demande de cessez-le-feu immédiat formulée par le Conseil de sécurité des Nations unies. Le 27 juin, celui-ci recommande aux États membres de l'ONU d'apporter leur soutien militaire à la république de Corée (Sud).

A. Compréhension écrite

1. Quand commence la guerre de Corée?
2. Quelles sont les causes de la guerre?
3. Il est question d'une: guerre civile/guerre de religion/guerre froide.
4. Y-a-t-il d'autres pays qui interviennent? Si oui, citez-les et précisez à quel camp ils se joignent.
5. Quel est le coût de la guerre?

B. Exploitation linguistique

Les troupes de l'ONU, inférieures en nombre et mal équipées pour combattre le froid de l'hiver coréen, ont dû rapidement battre en retraite.

.....
Ces soldats américains ont pu se replier malgré les attaques incessantes des Chinois.

.....
Le président Truman a poursuivi un seul et unique but: mettre un terme à l'agression communiste en Corée.

C. Perspectives actionnelles

1. Faites un bref portrait des généraux: Macarthur, Ridgway et Clark.
2. Le général Ridgway intercepte le message secret des communistes qui l'accusent d'avoir utilisé des armes bactériologiques. Imaginez sa réaction. Faites-le parler.
3. Vous écrivez un article sur la guerre de Corée pour la revue mensuelle de votre école.
4. Traduisez le texte suivant:

En mai 2010, la question est posée: est-ce de nouveau la guerre froide sur la ligne d'armistice entre Corée du Nord et Corée du Sud? La tension est vive dans la péninsule depuis qu'une commission internationale d'enquête a publié ses conclusions, le 23 mai 2010, et confirmé que le torpillage d'une corvette de la Corée du Sud, en mars, était d'origine nord-coréenne. Certains y voient une remise en cause de l'armistice de 1953 qui avait mis fin à une guerre de trois ans commencée il y a 60 ans, le 25 juin 1950, entre la Corée du Nord, soutenue par la Chine et l'URSS, et la Corée du Sud, appuyée par les Etats-Unis et leurs alliés. Avec 2,5 millions de morts, ce conflit a été le plus meurtrier de la guerre dite «froide». <<http://bibliotheque.sciences-po.fr>.>

As far as the optional courses are concerned, cadets use poetry or novel anthologies written by the English and French lecturers of the academy and published by the academy press.

English language lecturers have compiled a dictionary on *Phrasal Verbs* (verbs followed by an adverb, a preposition or both used with an idiomatic meaning that is often quite different from the literal meaning of the individual words). They have also written a course book on *Academic Writing* in order to aid cadets in using a clear, concise, focused, structured writing style, backed up by evidence and also learn to use a formal tone and style that is not complex and does not require the use of long sentences and complicated vocabulary.

The objective of the foreign language courses is to provide an array of lessons that will help contemporary officers to face issues and deal with problems during their career in Greece and abroad, i.e. when they are stationed with NATO or involved with the United Nations Peacekeeping Operations and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

3.3. Decoding

In other words, the curriculum offers special courses not only for the personal benefit of cadets but also for their social and psychological benefits. Such benefits aid cadets in achieving the following:

- Develop language skills, i.e. comprehension and communication, in both languages;
- Transfer oral and written skills from the mother tongue to the second language;
- Have cognizance of the mother tongue and the second language;
- Adopt the views of the team that speaks English or French;
- Become a member of the team and participate in it;
- Gain information that lacks prejudice and bias;
- Succeed in academic life and progress in the military profession;
- Attend English and French university programs and apply the acquired

- knowledge to the professional environment;
- Strengthen the memory and thinking abilities in order to deal with issues in diplomatic and intelligence posts;
- Translate projects, articles, etc. from one language to the other.

These skills also help cadets to write the dissertation required in order to graduate after having attended the four-year course of the academy. In fact, all B2 holders of an English or French language certificate are allowed to write their dissertation in English or French. The topics are proposed by the foreign language lecturers and supervision is maintained at all times. Cadets have to visit libraries or surf the Net to find the necessary information that will help them to complete the thesis.

The military topics that have been chosen by English speaking cadets are the following:

1. The War Novel - From Homer to the Vietnam War.
2. Ernest Hemingway's War Novels: *The Sun Also Rises, A Farewell to Arms, For Whom the Bell Tolls, Across the River and Into the Trees.*
3. The Military Art: From Antiquity to the Gulf War.
4. Ten War Poets.
5. A Survey of Revolutionary and War Poetry.
6. Peace Keeping and Diplomacy.
7. The Arab Spring.
8. The Breakup of Yugoslavia.
9. The Most Important Battles of World War II.
10. Berthold Brecht's Anti-War Plays.

The military topics that have been chosen by French speaking cadets are the following:

1. «La personnalité du Général de Gaulle» concerning the contribution of the French general to the defeat of the Nazis in World War II.
2. «Les Forces de Défense et la Protection de l'environnement», i.e. a study on the protection of the environment during joint or combined military operations.
3. «Une étude générale des ponts et une étude détaillée du pont Bailey» that concerns the construction of bridges for communication purposes and the construction of the Bailey bridge that facilitates the transport of men and weapons in rocky terrain.
4. «La Première Guerre Mondiale et les Ecrivains Français» with regard to the language of the «poilus» used in the French war fiction and the emergence of dystopia.

3.4. Coding

In this way, cadets have the opportunity to practise the skills acquired, like, for example, comprehension or translation skills, and master the use of the following research skills:

- Analyse information from different sources;
- Find reference information on the Net;
- Improve their critical thinking skills;
- Learn to summarize passages;
- Become able to use a foreign library;
- Use oral skills when presenting the dissertation to judges.

During the oral examination of the dissertation, cadets present a summary of the

project and the results. Then, they answer questions concerning the purpose of the project. The questions help the judges to test or assess the academic validity of the project. Cadets, who participate in the process, leave a good impression on both lecturers and judges, proving that the practice of a foreign language is beneficial because it boosts creativity, builds up self-confidence, and because, according to Saussure, « la langue est instrument pour la parole et en même temps le produit de la parole » or the language is an instrument of speech and at the same time the product of speech.

4. Proposals

In the future to come, we would like to see the subject of “Academic Writing” become part of the curriculum of the Hellenic Army Military Academy and the Graduate School of the Hellenic Army Military Academy. The aim is to teach cadets and officers how to communicate their ideas effectively; how to refrain from making grammar mistakes; how to avoid using poorly expressed ideas or unclear phrasing; how to avoid repetition and how to be prepared to meet the deadline. The course will be beneficial for those officers who will choose to obtain a Ph.D. degree for professional qualifications. Theses normally report on a research project: their structure explains the purpose, the methods used, and the findings of the project. Most Ph.D. theses use a) an introduction, which introduces the research topic, the methodology, and significance; b) a findings chapter, outlining the findings of the research itself; and c) a conclusion. Such a course would facilitate the successful performance of post-graduate officers, as they are likely to find preliminary writing steps a vital aspect of the process.

In days or years to come, the curriculum should include optional courses in French war literature to help cadets to consolidate the acquired knowledge and aid them in learning French war history and culture.

It is well known that literary work on conflict supports the war effort. Alternatively, it voices disapproval of the war. Both viewpoints help cadets to develop their skills of critical thinking. Since the two wars have given rise to a literary trend referred to as “soldiers’ testimony,” and the works relate an experience stamped with the mark of industrial war and mass death, the attempt to teach French war poetry and fiction is worth the effort because it can originate a debate about the ultimate goals of war.

5. Conclusion

To conclude, it is of vital importance that the academy add a supplement to the original list of dissertation topics so as to include French projects concerning dystopias, examined in contemporary fiction, like Jules Verne’s (1828-1905) *Paris in the Twentieth Century* (1863); war stories, like the ones included in the work of Pierre Boulle (1912-1994), a spy himself in World War II; stories of diplomacy and the army, two sides of the same coin as well as intelligence, the collection of information of military or political value.

The reason is not so difficult to understand: in dystopias, diplomacy, espionage, and counterespionage, surveillance monitors activities for the purpose of influencing, managing, directing, protecting or destroying people and countries is the type of knowledge that is essential to contemporary officers.

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