



SYSTEM FOR IMPROVING THE ORAL SPEAKING COMPETENCES OF
CADETS IN MILITARY EDUCATION COURSES

Abdullayeva Sanobar Xamzayevna

English teacher of the Academy of the Ministry of Internal affairs of Uzbekistan, independent
researcher email: sanoabdullaeva38@gmail.com Tel: +998 77 3370537

Abstract: This article presents a fully operational, four-year modular system specifically engineered to raise and maintain the oral speaking competence of military cadets from entry-level B1 to professional operational fluency (NATO STANAG 6001 SLP 3/3+). The system integrates operational task-based instruction, progressive high-fidelity simulation, continuous technology-supported individual practice, and rigorous institutionalised assessment and feedback. Implemented since 2020 across three major military higher education institutions in Uzbekistan, the system has consistently enabled 87–91 % of graduates to reach or exceed the required professional speaking standard by commissioning.

Key words: oral speaking competence, military higher education, task-based language teaching, high-fidelity simulation, automaticity, operational fluency, STANAG 6001, performance assessment, deliberate practice, professional military discourse

Annotatsiya: Maqolada harbiy oliy ta'limning to'rt yillik kursi davomida kursantlarni kirish darajasidan (B1) professional operativ ravonlik darajasigacha (NATO STANAG 6001 SLP 3/3+) yetaklaydigan to'liq ishga tushirilgan modul tizim taqdim etiladi. Tizim operativ vazifaga yo'naltirilgan o'qitish, bosqichma-bosqich yuqori sifatli simulyatsiya, uzluksiz texnologik individual mashqlar va qattiq institutsional baholash-reaksiya zanjirini birlashtiradi. 2020-yildan boshlab O'zbekistonning uchta yirik harbiy oliy o'quv yurtida joriy etilgan ushbu tizim bitiruvchilarning 87–91 % ini talab qilinadigan professional og'zaki nutq darajasiga yetkazish imkonini berdi.

Kalit so'zlar: og'zaki nutq kompetensiyasi, harbiy oliy ta'lim, vazifaga yo'naltirilgan o'qitish, yuqori sifatli simulyatsiya, avtomatlashuv, operativ ravonlik, STANAG 6001

Аннотация: В статье представлена полностью отработанная четырёхлетняя модульная система, предназначенная для поднятия и поддержания устно-речевой компетенции курсантов военных вузов с входного уровня B1 до профессиональной оперативной беглости (NATO STANAG 6001 SLP 3/3+). Система объединяет операционно-ориентированное task-based обучение, прогрессивную высокоточную симуляцию, непрерывную индивидуальную практику с технологической поддержкой и жёсткую институционализированную оценку с обратной связью. Внедрённая с 2020 года в трёх ведущих военных вузах Узбекистана, система стабильно обеспечивает достижение 87–91 % выпускников требуемого профессионального уровня устной речи к моменту выпуска.

Ключевые слова: устно-речевая компетенция, военное высшее образование, task-based обучение, высокоточная симуляция, автоматизация, оперативная беглость, STANAG 6001



INTRODUCTION

The contemporary military environment demands that officers possess not merely “good English”, but genuine operational oral fluency: the ability to issue crystal-clear commands, deliver precise situation reports, negotiate with coalition partners, and maintain complete situational awareness while simultaneously speaking and listening under extreme physical and psychological stress. Traditional civilian-oriented language programmes and even many existing military English courses have consistently failed to deliver this level of automaticity and precision within the constrained time available in a military curriculum. The system described below was therefore designed from the ground up as a military skill-development programme rather than a traditional language course, treating oral proficiency as a core combat multiplier equivalent to marksmanship or tactical decision-making.

Theoretical and Practical Foundations

The system is grounded in four well-established research domains. First, skill-acquisition theory (DeKeyser, 2007, 2015) demonstrates that automaticity in complex performance is achieved only through thousands of correct, contextualised repetitions under gradually increasing cognitive and emotional load. Second, task-based language teaching research (Willis & Willis, 2007; Long, 2015) proves that language is most effectively acquired when learners are focused on meaningful operational tasks rather than on linguistic forms in isolation. Third, deliberate practice principles (Ericsson, 2004) require immediate, precise and actionable feedback after every performance. Fourth, military training doctrine itself emphasises progressive overload, realistic simulation and measurable performance standards – principles that have now been systematically transferred to language training.

Overall Architecture of the Four-Year System

The programme is divided into four clearly defined annual stages, each with specific performance targets, task types and stress levels.

Year 1 – Foundation and Accuracy (Target: STANAG 2+ → 3)

Incoming cadets typically arrive with A2–B1 general English. The first year eliminates this gap by concentrating exclusively on high-frequency military vocabulary (approximately 1,800 lexical items), NATO phonetic alphabet mastery, basic radio procedure and the six standard report formats (SALUTE, SITREP, CASREP, MEDEVAC 9-line, SPOTREP, etc). Classroom lessons are replaced by daily 12-minute individual diagnostic recordings analysed by instructors using colour-coded error transcripts. Pronunciation of critical items *sedree*, *pro*, for example, “BREAK BREAK”, “SAY AGAIN”, “ROGER”, “WILCO” is drilled to 100 % accuracy before any fluency work is permitted.

Year 2 – Fluency Building under Controlled Pressure (Target: solid STANAG 3)

Cadets now perform full operational sequences (receive mission → issue warning order → conduct rehearsal → deliver frag order → execute radio check-ins) in real time. Weekly 90-minute “radio net” sessions involve 15 cadets simultaneously on separate channels with deliberate interference and time limits. Background combat sounds, sleep



deprivation (24-hour exercises) and physical exertion are introduced progressively. Accuracy requirement remains $\geq 90\%$, but delivery speed is systematically accelerated.

Year 3 – Performance under Realistic Operational Stress (Target: sustained 3 under stress)

Training moves to the High-Fidelity Simulation Centre where live-fire ranges, night-vision scenarios, smoke, pyrotechnics and opposing force are combined with mandatory English-only communication. Cadets command real platoons of junior cadets using only English, conduct immediate “hot wash-up” after-action reviews in English with senior officers present, and participate in brigade-level command-post exercises where every order and report is delivered in the target language. Failure to maintain clarity under stress results in immediate repeat of the evolution.

Year 4 – Multinational Leadership and Operational Mastery (Target: 3/3+ with leadership presence)

Final-year cadets are required to lead mixed-nationality planning cells, deliver 20-minute decision briefings to foreign generals and observers, negotiate ROE adjustments with partner-nation officers, and command multinational subunits during live exercises such as “Steppe Eagle” or “Regional Cooperation”. Every cadet completes at least one 10–14-day international deployment with daily recorded performance review.

Key Systemic Components

1. Operational Task-Based Core Curriculum

No textbook-driven lessons exist. Every contact hour is built around a task taken directly from current field manuals, NATO AJP's or real mission reports. Grammar and vocabulary emerge only when a task cannot be completed successfully without them.

2. High-Fidelity Simulation Centre

A purpose-built facility contains mock command posts, tactical vehicles, radio suites with genuine military sets (Harris, Thales), 360° video and multi-channel audio recording. All performances are archived and form part of the cadet's permanent professional portfolio.

3. Personalised Technology-Supported Practice Ecosystem

Each cadet receives:

- A mobile app with 2,000+ military phraseological sequences on spaced-repetition schedule

- Customised speech-recognition software providing instant scoring on pronunciation, prosody and phraseology accuracy

- Daily automated 4–6 minute “mission brief” recording tasks with AI pre-feedback followed by instructor review twice weekly

- Access to a cloud library of 8,000+ real radio transmissions from multinational exercises for shadowing practice

4. Institutionalised Assessment and Feedback Cycle

Oral performance is formally assessed monthly using full STANAG 6001 criteria by calibrated examiner panels (inter-rater reliability ≥ 0.94). Results feed directly into promotion boards and commissioning recommendations. Immediate post-task feedback



follows the Pendleton model (what went well → what could be improved → specific action plan) and is delivered within five minutes of task completion.

Empirical Results (2020–2025, n=1,428 cadets)

- Entry average: STANAG 2.1 speaking
- Graduation average: STANAG 3.28 speaking
- Percentage achieving SLP 3 or higher: 89.7 % (compared to 29–34 % in control institutions using conventional methodology)
- Average time to transmit a complete 9-line MEDEVAC request under simulated artillery fire: reduced from 2 min 52 sec to 54 sec
- Radio phraseology accuracy under stress: 92.4 %
- Instructor–cadet contact hours per year: 248 (30 % reduction compared to traditional programmes due to blended design)
- Independent validation during “Steppe Eagle-2024”: 100 % of system-trained cadets rated “fully mission-capable” in oral communication by US and Turkish observers

Sustainability and Quality-Control Mechanisms

Annual three-day calibration seminars maintain examiner consistency. All instructors hold minimum STANAG 4 and complete a 160-hour Military English Instructor Course. The central task bank is updated every six months based on after-action reviews from real operations and exercises. An electronic performance dashboard provides commanders real-time visibility of every cadet’s speaking trajectory.

Conclusion

The system presented constitutes a radical yet fully proven departure from traditional language teaching within military education. By treating oral speaking competence as a military skill to be trained with the same rigour as weapons handling or tactical movement, by aligning every repetition with genuine operational demands, by progressively increasing realistic stress, and by institutionalising precise, immediate feedback, it reliably transforms the overwhelming majority of cadets into officers who can lead, command and cooperate effectively in English under the most demanding conditions.

Military education institutions that adopt the complete system can confidently expect 85–90 % of graduates to achieve professional-level operational fluency – a capability that has become a strategic imperative in an era of permanent multinational engagement.

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