SECTION «PEDAGOGICAL SCIENCES»

FORMATION OF ENGLISH COMMAND COMPETENCE IN FUTURE OFFICERS: COGNITIVE AND OPERATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

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Abstract. The article explores the formation of foreign-language communicative competence in future military officers, focusing specifically on the perception, comprehension, and production of English commands in operational contexts. *The subject of the study* is the cognitive and psycholinguistic mechanisms that underlie the processing of English military commands under conditions of stress, time pressure, noise, and operational uncertainty typical of modern combat and multinational missions. *The aim of the research* is to analyze these mechanisms in order to identify factors that enhance the accuracy, speed, and operational effectiveness of command communication, and to develop practical training approaches that integrate cognitive, linguistic, and operational dimensions. *Methodologically*, the study employs a multidisciplinary approach, combining psycholinguistic analysis, discourse analysis, elements of cognitive linguistics, and comparative-descriptive techniques. Empirical material is interpreted from a functional-pragmatic perspective, emphasizing the real-world applicability of theoretical findings to military training. Specific methods include the analysis of contrastive and compressed command structures, assessment of working and long-term memory functions, examination of anticipatory and predictive processing, and evaluation of contextual and hierarchical awareness in communication. The study also examines NATO standards, including STANAG 6001 and brevity codes, to ensure operational alignment with multinational interoperability requirements. *The results of the study* demonstrate that effective English command competence

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relies on the integration of linguistic mastery, cognitive mechanisms, and procedural knowledge. Key findings indicate that working memory supports the simultaneous processing of alternative action schemas, long-term memory enables rapid retrieval of standard operational commands, and predictive mechanisms facilitate anticipatory action preparation. Scenario-based and cognitively informed exercises, including contrastive command identification, directive hierarchy drills, and brevity code simulations, enhance both perception and production of commands, ensuring rapid, accurate, and contextually appropriate responses. The research highlights that foreign-language communicative competence in military contexts is not only a linguistic skill but also a cognitive-operational necessity that directly impacts mission success, safety, and multinational cooperation. *In conclusion,* the study substantiates a framework for developing English command competence in future officers that integrates psycholinguistic principles, cognitive mechanisms, and operational training. This approach bridges the gap between theoretical research and practical application, providing a scientifically grounded basis for instructional designs that prepare officers for effective, high-pressure, and multinational operational environments.

1. Introduction

The formation of foreign-language communicative competence in future officers is currently one of the strategic priorities of modern military education, as it directly ensures effective interaction within multicultural and multinational operational environments. In contemporary multinational missions, accuracy and speed of command execution often determine not only professional performance but also operational safety. Therefore, training programs must address not only lexical, grammatical, and phonetic competences but also the ability to perceive and produce speech rapidly under stress conditions, time pressure, and acoustic interference typical of combat settings. A critical role in this respect belongs to psycholinguistic mechanisms underlying the perception and production of English military commands, including the functioning of working memory, contextual and situational processing of operational information, emotional modulation, and professional semantic recall.

The analysis of current research demonstrates growing interest in domain-specific linguistic competences in spheres where communication serves as a core determinant of successful activity. Studies by Yuldasheva L. highlight the psycholinguistic aspects of perceiving linguistic contrast [16], while Sokolova A. examines the structural and functional characteristics of military discourse [10]. Yevdokymova I., Savilova L. and Khapina O. argue that oral English military commands constitute an element of authoritarian discourse aimed at direct behavioural regulation [14]. Sharanova Yu. and Beskletna O. explore challenges of classifying English military terminology and its role in systematic terminological representation [8], whereas Nikonova V. focuses on the linguocultural dimension of military lexis [5]. In parallel, Yukhymenko V. analyses psycho-pedagogical determinants of developing professionally oriented English competence [15]. Popeliuk V. interprets English as a communicative tool enabling the development of cadets' linguistic and communicative performance [7], and Vintoniak V. together with Vasiukova N. investigate psychological aspects of professional training in a foreign-language military communicative environment [13]. Styrkina Yu. addresses the acquisition of modern English military lexicon through linguistic and social perspectives [12].

Despite the accumulated research activity, the problem of efficient perception and production of professionally oriented English commands in combat-related communicative contexts remains insufficiently elaborated in the current scientific discourse. The novelty of this study lies in substantiating the psycholinguistic determinants mediating the linguistic processing of English command structures under combat conditions characterized by stress, temporal deficit, noise, operational uncertainty, and emotional load. The relevance of this research is defined by the intensification of multinational military cooperation, which requires highly coordinated and error-free command exchange to prevent operational failures and ensure mission success.

The aim of this study is to provide a comprehensive analysis of the psycholinguistic factors that determine the effectiveness of perceiving and operationally using English commands in combat communicative situations and to clarify their impact on interpersonal and operational interaction in the military context. Methodologically, the research combines psycholinguistic analysis, discourse analysis, elements of cognitive linguistics, and

comparative-descriptive instruments, with empirical material interpreted from functional-pragmatic positions relevant to military communication. Such an approach makes it possible to bridge theoretical research with practical training solutions aligned with the technological and operational demands of modern defense systems.

The logic of material presentation corresponds to the transition "from research to practical solutions": first, the psycholinguistic mechanisms of command perception and production are conceptualized; next, combat-specific communicative constraints and operational parameters are identified; and finally, applied implications for military language training and multinational operational communication are discussed. The obtained research outcomes make it possible to offer cognitively substantiated methodologies aimed at increasing perceptual accuracy, reducing command execution errors, and enhancing combat readiness within multinational operational environments thus translating scientific findings into applied educational and operational technologies.

2. Psycholinguistics of Military Command Communication

The formation of foreign-language communicative competence in future officers constitutes a central priority of contemporary military education, as it directly influences the effectiveness of interaction in increasingly multicultural and multinational operational environments. In modern military operations, officers are often required to coordinate actions not only within their national units but also with allied forces, where language barriers, cultural differences, and operational protocols can significantly impact mission outcomes. Therefore, communicative competence extends beyond the mastery of vocabulary and grammar; it encompasses the ability to rapidly comprehend, interpret, and respond to linguistic signals in high-pressure and unpredictable situations.

Military training programs are designed to develop a holistic set of linguistic and cognitive skills. These include lexical and grammatical knowledge, phonetic accuracy, prosodic awareness, and, crucially, the ability to process and produce speech under conditions of stress, limited time, and high auditory or environmental interference. Officers must be able to instantly decode commands, anticipate potential scenarios, and select appropriate verbal or behavioral responses without hesitation. This

competence is particularly critical in the context of English-language commands used in combat communication, which must be cognitively unambiguous. Unlike ordinary speech, these commands carry immediate operational consequences, and any misinterpretation can result in tactical errors or compromise safety.

The development of such competence also requires integrating psycholinguistic mechanisms, including working memory for maintaining and manipulating information, long-term memory for retrieving standard operational commands, and predictive processing for anticipating the intent behind linguistic forms. Furthermore, the ability to produce commands effectively necessitates awareness of pragmatic constraints, situational context, and hierarchical relationships within military units. This ensures that speech acts are directive, unambiguous, and capable of eliciting the intended operational response. In essence, the training of foreign-language communicative competence equips officers with the cognitive and linguistic tools to navigate complex, dynamic, and potentially hazardous environments, enabling precise coordination, rapid decision-making, and enhanced mission success.

Commands such as “Hold fire / Open fire”, “Advance / Fall back”, and “Secure the area / Abandon position” are based on clearly oppositional structures that trigger alternative action scenarios in the recipient’s mind. Their effectiveness is determined by the speed of access to mental representations and the ability of the addressee to immediately correlate the linguistic signal with the corresponding behavioral response [5]. In psycholinguistic terms, such binary command pairs operate through mechanisms of categorical contrast and rapid decision-mapping, where the recipient is required to select one action schema from a limited set of competing alternatives. The efficiency of this process relies on a well-established association between linguistic form and operational meaning, enabling the addressee to bypass extensive semantic processing and transition directly to the motor-executive phase of action implementation. This feature distinguishes combat commands from ordinary verbal exchanges, in which ambiguity, redundancy, and negotiation of meaning are permissible. In a military context, however, the temporal window for interpretation is extremely narrow, and any delay in resolving the contrast may lead to tactical disruption, communication breakdown, or an increased

risk for personnel safety. The unambiguous design of such commands thus functions as an error-minimization strategy, ensuring that comprehension is both immediate and behaviorally actionable under conditions of heightened stress, noise interference, and rapid situational change.

Speech anticipation plays an important role in forming expectations regarding the structure, semantics, and intent of commands before their full acoustic or graphic realization [5]. Contrastive elements in command statements may narrow the predictive frame, as in "Stand by → Move now" or "Prepare to engage → Disengage immediately", or violate expectations, requiring rapid reassessment and cognitive reprocessing. From a psycholinguistic perspective, anticipatory processing allows the recipient to construct an internal predictive model of the incoming command, enabling partial comprehension before the signal is fully received. This mechanism is particularly critical in combat contexts, where milliseconds can determine operational success or failure. By forecasting likely syntactic structures, lexical items, and pragmatic intent, the addressee can prepare the corresponding motor or tactical response in advance. When contrastive elements appear, such as opposing directives in rapid succession, the predictive framework is either refined or adjusted, prompting immediate cognitive reassessment. This reassessment involves temporarily holding competing action schemas in working memory, evaluating context-specific priorities, and rapidly selecting the correct behavioral response [17]. In effect, speech anticipation functions as a cognitive accelerant, reducing reaction time, minimizing interpretive errors, and enhancing the efficiency of directive communication under stress.

In operational discourse, English commands convey directive authority, pragmatics of urgency, and potential threat: "Take cover immediately", "Enemy approaching, Clear the building", "Check your sector", "Maintain visual contact". These units activate mechanisms of automatic speech response, reducing the need for conscious analysis and decreasing cognitive load under high stress. Commands whose meaning is determined by lexical content and context such as "Move", "Cover", "Contact", and "Hold" highlight the importance of associative links between linguistic signals and standard combat scenarios [3].

Within a psycholinguistic framework, these commands function as cognitive shortcuts, where the recipient's perception-action system is primed

to recognize operationally relevant patterns. The combination of directive force, urgency markers, and lexical cues triggers pre-established mental schemas that map language directly onto motor or procedural responses. This reduces reaction time, as the addressee does not need to consciously interpret the full semantic content but instead relies on automatized perception-action loops shaped by prior training and repeated exposure [14]. Furthermore, context-dependent commands such as "Move" or "Cover" require the addressee to integrate situational cues terrain, unit positioning, and prior instructions to select the appropriate behavioral response. The effectiveness of these mechanisms ensures that communication remains rapid, precise, and resilient, even in high-stress, noisy, or dynamically evolving operational environments.

Communicative interaction in military contexts is typically hierarchical and formalized, with the addressee responding to a superior. This asymmetry renders speech directive, aiming at the unconditional regulation of behavior [8]. In such interactions, the status differential between the speaker and the recipient is crucial: it not only structures the flow of communication but also ensures that commands are interpreted with the expected level of urgency and authority. The formalized nature of military discourse reduces ambiguity, establishes clear expectations, and allows the addressee to anticipate operational priorities even before a command is fully articulated.

In producing commands, speakers intentionally select lexical and grammatical structures that minimize potential misinterpretation and enable direct transformation into action, effectively turning language into a tool for cognitive programming [17]. These structures often involve imperative forms, standardized vocabulary, and concise syntactic patterns that map directly onto behavioral responses. The precision and clarity of such commands are critical in high-stress or time-sensitive scenarios, where any hesitation or misunderstanding can compromise mission success or safety.

To translate these theoretical principles into practical skills, cadets engage in exercises designed to strengthen the connection between perception, comprehension, and action, reinforcing the cognitive mechanisms underlying directive communication:

1. Contrastive Command Identification: Present cadets with pairs of oppositional commands (*"Advance / Fall back"*, *"Hold fire / Open fire"*). Ask them to identify the intended action, explain the cognitive reasoning behind

each choice, and predict potential operational consequences if the command is misinterpreted. This exercise trains rapid recognition of oppositional structures and highlights the consequences of miscommunication.

2. Directive Hierarchy Drill: Cadets receive orders from instructors of different ranks in a role-play scenario. They must respond according to the hierarchical context, demonstrating comprehension of directive intent, urgency, and expected timing. Afterward, students discuss how status asymmetry influenced their interpretation and reaction, reinforcing understanding of hierarchical dynamics in military communication.

3. Command Transformation Exercise: Cadets are given verbal orders and asked to reformulate them into concise written or internalized action plans (e.g., hearing "Secure the perimeter", they outline the step-by-step actions required). This bridges the gap between perception, comprehension, and production, emphasizing how directives are cognitively processed and executed [1].

By combining theoretical explanation with these exercises, cadets not only understand the hierarchical and directive nature of military communication but also develop the practical skills to process, interpret, and produce commands efficiently under operational stress. This integration strengthens both cognitive readiness and action-oriented language competence in English, directly supporting the formation of professional communicative competence in military contexts [17].

The analysis of foreign-language communicative competence in future military officers demonstrates that effective command comprehension and production is a multifaceted cognitive-linguistic skill. Mastery of vocabulary, grammar, and phonetics alone is insufficient; success in operational environments depends on the officer's ability to rapidly perceive, interpret, and act upon linguistic signals under conditions of stress, time pressure, and environmental noise. Commands in English, especially those with contrastive or oppositional structures such as "Hold fire / Open fire" or "Advance / Fall back", rely on pre-established mental associations that enable immediate mapping from language to action, reducing interpretive errors and enhancing mission effectiveness [5].

Psycholinguistic mechanisms including working memory for temporary maintenance of competing action schemas, long-term memory for retrieval of standard operational commands, and anticipatory processing for predicting

command intent play a central role in ensuring that officers respond quickly and accurately. Speech anticipation and automatized perception-action loops allow officers to prepare responses even before commands are fully articulated, increasing reaction speed and operational resilience [15].

From a practical perspective, exercises such as Contrastive Command Identification, Directive Hierarchy Drills, and Command Transformation provide cadets with opportunities to bridge theory and practice, reinforcing the cognitive processes underlying command comprehension and production [9]. These activities strengthen associative links between linguistic forms and operational behavior, promote rapid decision-making, and reduce cognitive load during high-stress situations. Consequently, cadets develop both cognitive readiness and action-oriented language competence, ensuring that foreign-language communication in multinational and multicultural military contexts is effective, precise, and operationally safe [1].

In conclusion, the formation of foreign-language communicative competence is not only a linguistic objective but also a cognitive and operational necessity. Its development equips future officers with the tools to navigate dynamic, high-pressure combat scenarios, enabling accurate coordination, enhanced situational awareness, and improved mission outcomes. Integrating theoretical understanding of psycholinguistic principles with practical exercises ensures that officers are prepared to process, interpret, and execute commands efficiently, ultimately strengthening the overall effectiveness of military operations in multicultural and multinational environments.

3. Cognitive and Psycholinguistic Mechanisms of Command Processing

Producing contrastive expressions is cognitively more demanding than forming neutral or affirmative constructions. This increased complexity arises because the speaker must simultaneously maintain at least two opposing semantic representations in working memory, organize their sequential linguistic unfolding, and monitor the pragmatic effect of the message [5, p. 307]. In other words, the speaker must not only encode multiple potential meanings but also ensure that the final expression communicates the intended directive unambiguously and in a contextually appropriate manner.

The process of contrast formation is activated at the stage of conceptual structuring, when the speaker organizes information according to binary oppositions derived from prior experience, encyclopedic knowledge, and emotional memory [17]. These oppositional schemas allow the speaker to anticipate possible recipient interpretations and to structure the message in a way that maximizes cognitive clarity and operational effectiveness. For example, in a military context, contrastive commands such as "Advance / Fall back" or "Hold fire / Open fire" require the speaker to encode alternative action paths while ensuring that the listener can immediately select the correct behavioral response under conditions of stress, time pressure, and environmental noise [15].

Moreover, the cognitive demands of contrastive expression are heightened by the necessity to predict and control the pragmatic impact of the utterance. Unlike neutral statements, contrastive commands carry immediate operational consequences, meaning that any ambiguity or hesitation in production can lead to misinterpretation or tactical errors [9]. The integration of working memory, long-term memory, and attentional control is therefore critical: working memory maintains competing action schemas, long-term memory provides access to standard operational patterns, and attentional mechanisms guide the speaker in emphasizing the correct alternative.

In this context, psycholinguistic research highlights that contrastive command production is not merely a linguistic task, but a complex cognitive operation that involves planning, mental simulation of potential recipient actions, and real-time evaluation of communicative outcomes. Understanding this complexity is essential for designing training exercises that strengthen both perception and production of contrastive commands, thereby improving operational readiness and reducing the risk of errors in high-stakes military environments [12].

The interaction between perception and production is central to the formation of foreign-language communicative competence in military contexts. Systematic reproduction of standard English commands establishes stable associative links between linguistic forms and corresponding actions, effectively creating mental shortcuts that allow rapid, automatic responses under operational stress. These associative links reduce the need for

conscious semantic analysis, enabling officers to transition directly from comprehension to execution [11].

Key cognitive mechanisms include:

– **Working memory**: temporarily holds the content of communication and relevant linguistic structures for immediate action. For example, commands like "Hold position", "Move forward", "Cease fire", "Take cover", and "Advance immediately" are first perceived under various noise levels and speeds, and then interpreted into action [5].

This temporary storage allows the recipient to maintain multiple competing action schemas simultaneously, especially in contrastive command pairs such as "Advance / Fall back" or "Hold fire / Open fire". By holding these representations in working memory, the addressee can evaluate alternative responses, integrate contextual cues, and select the correct behavioral reaction without delay. From a cognitive-linguistic perspective, this process minimizes cognitive load during high-stress situations, as officers do not need to repeatedly decode basic command structures; instead, they rely on pre-established mental templates and immediate memory access [15].

Furthermore, working memory supports anticipatory processing, enabling officers to begin preparing motor or tactical responses before the command is fully completed. For instance, hearing "Take cover" while approaching a potential threat activates a mental simulation of the required movement, the optimal path, and timing, which ensures that action, is executed quickly, accurately, and in line with operational priorities. In essence, working memory acts as the cognitive workspace that bridges perception and production, making immediate, context-appropriate action possible in dynamic combat environments [17].

To train working memory in this context, cadets can engage in targeted exercises that simulate the cognitive demands of operational environments:

Command Sequence Recall: Cadets are presented with a rapid sequence of short commands (e.g., "Move forward", "Hold position", "Check sector", "Advance immediately"). After a brief interval, they must recall and reproduce the commands in order, either verbally or in writing. This strengthens the ability to temporarily store and manipulate multiple linguistic-action units.

Oppositional Command Drill: Present cadets with pairs of oppositional commands (e.g., “Hold fire / Open fire”, “Secure the area / Abandon position”) in quick succession. Cadets must identify the intended action for each and explain why the alternate option is inappropriate. This trains simultaneous maintenance of alternative schemas and rapid selection of the correct response.

Contextual Integration Task: Cadets hear or read commands embedded in a situational scenario (e.g., “Enemy approaching, Take cover immediately”). They must hold the command in working memory, integrate terrain and unit positioning cues, and execute or outline the appropriate action sequence. This exercise reinforces linking linguistic input with operational context in real time [12].

Through repeated practice, these exercises strengthen the temporary storage, manipulation, and updating of operational information, enabling officers to process and respond to commands quickly, accurately, and automatically, even under high-stress conditions. By combining working memory training with perception and production tasks, cadets develop robust psycholinguistic competence essential for effective command communication.

– Long-term memory: stores language patterns, rules, and standard syntactic schemes, providing recognition and correct retrieval during dialogue. This reduces errors under high-stress conditions and allows rapid comprehension of commands [9].

In practical terms, long-term memory allows for automatic activation of well-learned linguistic and procedural sequences, so that standard commands such as “Stand down”, “Hold your fire”, or “Check perimeter” can be comprehended and executed with minimal conscious deliberation. By maintaining a repository of operationally relevant linguistic structures, long-term memory ensures that comprehension and production remain accurate and efficient, supporting the formation of automated speech-action links critical in combat and other high-pressure military scenarios [15].

To strengthen these memory-based mechanisms, cadets can engage in exercises specifically designed to consolidate linguistic and operational patterns in long-term memory:

Command Repetition Drill: Cadets listen to a sequence of standard commands (e.g., “Advance immediately”, “Take cover”, “Secure the

perimeter") and repeat them aloud in the correct order. The drill reinforces rote memorization and automatic recall of command structures.

Memory Recall Challenge: Cadets are given a brief set of English commands and then asked, after a short distraction task, to write down or verbally reproduce the commands with correct syntax and sequence. This trains retrieval from long-term memory under cognitive load, simulating operational stress.

Scenario-Based Recall: Cadets participate in role-play exercises where instructors issue real-time commands in English. Cadets must execute the commands accurately while navigating a simulated operational environment, integrating memorized linguistic patterns with situational awareness.

Command Matching Game: Cadets match spoken or written English commands to visual or diagrammatic representations of corresponding actions (e.g., map movements, unit formations). This reinforces associative links between linguistic forms and procedural knowledge stored in long-term memory.

Through these exercises, cadets consolidate standard English command patterns, strengthen automatic perception-action connections, and reduce errors in high-stress, time-critical environments, ensuring that long-term memory effectively supports operational communication.

– Semantic compression and contrast processing: recipients must decode compressed semantic information quickly and differentiate between oppositional or sequential commands. For instance, "Engage / Disengage" or "Fall in / Fall out / Fall back" require dual or multiple coding in working memory, where each alternative action is represented as a distinct cognitive schema. From a psycholinguistic perspective, this process involves simultaneous activation of competing mental representations, enabling the recipient to evaluate context, prioritize the correct response, and execute it without hesitation. The compressed nature of military commands where minimal words carry maximal operational meaning demands high efficiency in cognitive processing, linking language perception directly to motor or procedural execution [8].

In practice, this means that officers must rapidly map linguistic contrasts onto actionable behaviors, distinguishing subtle differences in directive intent. Failure to correctly decode compressed or contrasting commands can lead to operational errors, delayed responses, or incoordination, highlighting

the critical role of associative memory, attention, and anticipatory prediction in command comprehension. Repeated exposure and structured training reinforce these mental connections, fostering automaticity and reducing cognitive load during real operational scenarios [3].

To translate this psycholinguistic principle into practical skills, cadets can engage in exercises that reinforce rapid recognition and correct interpretation of compressed and contrasting commands:

Contrastive Command Drill: Present cadets with sets of opposing or sequential commands, e.g., "Engage / Disengage", "Fall in / Fall out / Fall back", or "Advance / Hold position". Ask them to identify the intended action for each command, explain the reasoning behind the choice, and describe potential consequences of misinterpretation. This develops dual coding in working memory and strengthens the ability to manage multiple action schemas simultaneously.

Rapid Decision-Mapping Exercise: Cadets hear a rapid sequence of compressed commands in varied operational scenarios. For example: "Secure the perimeter / Fall back / Cover the squad". They must mentally map each command to the correct procedural or motor action and respond either verbally, with hand signals, or through a simulated maneuver. This exercise emphasizes speed and accuracy of semantic differentiation under time pressure.

Predictive Contrast Task: Provide cadets with partially delivered commands or command fragments, such as "Prepare to…" or "Move to…", and ask them to anticipate the full command and the corresponding operational response. This fosters anticipatory processing and strengthens the ability to integrate context cues, memory of standard protocols, and expected contrastive outcomes.

These exercises collectively train cadets to decode compressed semantic content efficiently, handle multiple alternatives in working memory, and execute precise actions under stress, ensuring that contrasting directives are correctly interpreted and operationally implemented.

– **Predictive mechanisms** play a critical role in military command communication, as they allow the recipient to anticipate the structure, semantics, and intended effect of incoming commands, enabling faster and more accurate responses. By forming an internal predictive model, the addressee can begin preparing the corresponding cognitive and motor

responses even before the command is fully articulated. For example, in the sequence "Prepare to engage → Disengage immediately", the recipient detects the contrastive element early and adjusts the mental representation of the required actions, temporarily holding alternative action schemas in working memory. This anticipatory processing reduces reaction time, minimizes interpretive errors, and ensures that the response aligns precisely with operational intent [17].

In psycholinguistic terms, predictive mechanisms optimize the allocation of cognitive resources: working memory is focused on resolving contrasts and integrating situational cues, while long-term memory provides rapid access to standard operational commands. As a result, officers are able to transition seamlessly from comprehension to execution, maintaining high efficiency under conditions of stress, noise, or time pressure. These mechanisms are particularly crucial in combat contexts, where milliseconds can determine the success or failure of an operation [5].

The precision and speed of anticipatory processing can be trained through exercises that actively engage cadets in predicting the structure, intent, and operational outcome of incoming commands. By practicing these tasks, cadets strengthen the cognitive links between perception, working memory, and action preparation. Examples of such exercises include:

Contrastive Command Sequencing**:** Cadets are presented with a rapid series of oppositional or consecutive commands, such as "Stand by → Move now", "Prepare to engage → Disengage immediately", or "Advance → Fall back". Their task is to anticipate the required action before the command is fully delivered, verbalize the expected response, and justify their choice based on the operational context. This trains rapid detection of contrastive elements and predictive modeling of subsequent actions.

Partial Command Completion: Cadets hear only the beginning of a command, for example, "Prepare to…" or "Secure the…", and must predict the full command and corresponding action based on situational cues. After confirming the complete command, they discuss any discrepancies between predicted and actual actions, reinforcing mental modeling and error monitoring.

Contextual Scenario Prediction: Cadets are given a short description of a dynamic operational scenario (e.g., approaching enemy, sudden threat, or environmental constraint). They are then asked to anticipate likely

commands that might be issued, such as “Take cover immediately”, “Check your sector”, or “Maintain visual contact”, and outline the corresponding procedural responses. This exercise integrates situational awareness with predictive linguistic processing.

Rapid Response Drill with Distractors: Cadets listen to commands delivered at variable speeds and with background noise simulating battlefield conditions. Commands may include sequences like “Hold position → Advance immediately”. Cadets must predict, recognize, and execute the correct response under cognitive load, training both anticipatory mechanisms and automated perception-action links.

Internal Speech Simulation: After hearing a command, cadets mentally rehearse the expected sequence of actions before physically performing them. For instance, on hearing “Secure the perimeter”, they outline step-by-step internalized responses. This reinforces the connection between predicted command meaning and operational behavior, strengthening working memory engagement and action planning.

These exercises collectively enhance officers’ predictive processing, reducing reaction time and minimizing misinterpretation in high-stress or time-sensitive operations. By integrating predictive mechanisms into both perception and production training, cadets develop a proactive cognitive stance, anticipating potential commands and preparing appropriate responses before full articulation, which is critical for efficient and safe military communication.

– **Contextual and situational awareness** involves the ability to interpret environmental cues, recall previous actions, and consider hierarchical context in order to make rapid, accurate decisions under uncertainty. In military communication, commands are rarely delivered in isolation; their meaning and appropriate execution depend on the surrounding situation, the position of the unit, ongoing operations, and the relative rank or role of the speaker and listener. For example, a command such as “Cover the flank” requires the recipient to integrate knowledge of terrain, current troop disposition, and prior orders to determine the correct immediate action [14].

From a psycholinguistic perspective, situational awareness allows the cognitive system to pre-activate relevant mental schemas, facilitating faster mapping of linguistic input to behavioral output. Environmental and hierarchical cues serve as contextual anchors, narrowing the range

of possible interpretations and reducing cognitive load. This ensures that commands are not only perceived correctly but also executed efficiently and appropriately, even when time is limited or conditions are stressful.

In practice, training cadets to develop contextual and situational awareness involves exercises that simulate dynamic operational environments, where commands must be interpreted in relation to physical surroundings, prior actions, and chain-of-command structures. Such training strengthens the link between language comprehension, decision-making, and motor execution, enhancing both individual performance and unit cohesion in complex, high-pressure scenarios [6].

To develop contextual and situational awareness, cadets can engage in the following exercises that integrate perception, cognition, and action:

Environmental Cue Integration Drill: Cadets are presented with a simulated operational scenario (e.g., a map with unit positions, terrain features, and potential threats) and given verbal commands such as "Secure the bridge" or "Cover the left flank". They must interpret the command in relation to the environment and outline the correct course of action, explaining how specific environmental cues influence their response. This exercise trains the ability to connect linguistic input with situational factors.

Hierarchical Context Role-Play: Cadets receive orders from instructors of varying ranks within a role-play scenario. Commands may include "Hold position", "Advance cautiously", or "Fall back immediately". Participants must adjust their actions based on the hierarchical status of the speaker and the operational context, demonstrating how awareness of authority and prior instructions affects execution.

Dynamic Scenario Simulation: Commands are delivered sequentially in a fast-paced, changing scenario (e.g., "Move forward → Take cover → Check your sector"). Cadets must continuously integrate new information with the previous state of play, anticipate potential developments, and adjust their responses. This exercise strengthens the mental integration of past actions, current context, and predicted outcomes, mirroring real combat conditions.

Through these exercises, cadets learn to rapidly map language onto appropriate actions by combining environmental understanding, prior experience, and hierarchical awareness. The cognitive system develops flexible, context-sensitive schemas that enable efficient, accurate

command execution, even under high stress, time pressure, and operational uncertainty.

The formation of foreign-language communicative competence in future officers represents a complex cognitive-linguistic process that extends beyond the mastery of vocabulary and grammar. Developing the ability to perceive, interpret, and produce commands under stress, time pressure, and environmental noise relies on the integration of key psycholinguistic mechanisms: working memory for maintaining and managing alternative action schemas, long-term memory for accessing standard linguistic and operational patterns, predictive mechanisms for anticipating command intent, and awareness of contextual and hierarchical factors.

Contrastive and compressed commands, such as “Advance / Fall back” or “Hold fire / Open fire”, illustrate that effective military communication is built on strong associative links between linguistic forms and actions, allowing officers to transition rapidly and automatically from comprehension to execution. Psycholinguistic principles, including anticipatory processing and semantic compression, optimize reaction speed, reduce interpretive errors, and ensure that responses align with operational objectives.

Practical exercises targeting working memory, long-term memory, contrastive reasoning, predictive processing, and situational awareness reinforce these cognitive mechanisms, strengthening both perception and production of commands. This training equips officers with the tools to act swiftly, accurately, and safely in dynamic, high-pressure, and multicultural operational environments.

In summary, the section highlights that foreign-language communicative competence in military contexts is a synthesis of linguistic, cognitive, and operational skills, enabling officers to execute commands efficiently, anticipate outcomes, and maintain effectiveness under stress, ultimately supporting mission success and operational safety.

4. NATO-Oriented Applied Dimension of Command Communication

In multinational military operations, English-language commands must comply with NATO standards, particularly STANAG 6001 and brevity codes. STANAG 6001 establishes a unified system for assessing language proficiency across allied forces, ensuring that personnel possess a common level of communicative competence in listening, speaking, reading, and

writing, which is essential for consistent understanding during joint missions [11]. This standardized language profile framework enables interoperability and reduces linguistic uncertainty in operational communication [14].

Alongside language proficiency standards, NATO employs brevity codes and standardized procedural phraseology to streamline tactical communication. These coded terms, codified in publications such as Joint Brevity Words (STANAG 1401 / APP-07), offer concise, universally recognized expressions that encapsulate complex operational meanings in a few syllables, reducing transmission time and cognitive load in high stress environments [15]. For example, brevity codes like "Fox", used in aviation to indicate the launch of a munition (e.g., "Fox 1" for a radar guided missile), provide immediate semantic content that is understood consistently across allied units without additional explanation [10]. Other commonplace brevity terms include elements of the NATO phonetic alphabet such as "Alpha", "Bravo", "Charlie" which facilitate clear verbal communication even in adverse signal conditions [2].

The use of such standardized codes enhances situational awareness and operational coordination by ensuring that allied forces interpret tactical messages in the same way, independent of national language variations. By embedding brevity codes into training and operational procedures, NATO forces cultivate automatic recognition and production of high value tactical cues, which supports rapid decision making and minimizes interpretive errors in the field. This standardization not only improves clarity but also strengthens the psycholinguistic mechanisms underlying command comprehension, as receivers develop stable associations between specific coded expressions and their intended operational actions [2].

Key elements include:

1. Procedural language: Standardized phraseology is a core component of military communication that ensures clarity, consistency, and efficiency. By using pre-established expressions, commands, and responses, procedural language reduces ambiguity and minimizes the risk of misinterpretation, which is particularly critical in high-stress, time-sensitive, or noisy operational environments. For example, phrases like "Hold position", "Advance immediately", or brevity codes such as "Fox-1" (launch of a radar-guided missile) are understood uniformly across units. This standardization allows commanders to transmit tactical intent quickly and unambiguously,

enabling subordinate personnel to respond immediately without the need for clarification or additional context. Procedural language also structures communication hierarchically: it specifies what must be done, in what order, and under which conditions, which supports operational coordination and reduces cognitive load on both the sender and receiver [7].

From a psycholinguistic perspective, procedural language strengthens the link between linguistic perception and motor/behavioral response. Receivers develop stable associative networks in long-term memory, mapping specific phrases directly to trained actions, so that comprehension and execution become nearly automatic even under stress. This automaticity not only improves reaction time but also enhances situational awareness, as personnel can anticipate subsequent commands based on procedural patterns and operational context [17].

In essence, standardized procedural language transforms speech from a general communicative tool into a precision instrument for cognitive programming, allowing officers and soldiers to coordinate complex actions effectively and safely in multinational operations.

The precision and standardization of procedural language can be reinforced through targeted exercises that simulate operational conditions and promote rapid, unambiguous comprehension and response:

Brevity Code Recognition Drill. Cadets are presented with NATO brevity codes (e.g., **"**Fox 1", "Tango 2", "Winchester") via audio or visual signals. Task: Identify the meaning of each code and demonstrate the corresponding action, either verbally, through hand signals, or by outlining a procedural sequence. Objective: Strengthen automatic recall and reduce interpretation errors under time pressure.

Standard Command Repetition and Response. Instructors issue a rapid sequence of standardized English commands such as "Advance immediately", "Hold position", "Secure the perimeter". Cadets must repeat the commands and immediately execute the corresponding action or describe the procedural steps. Objective: To develop precise mapping between verbal input and operational behavior, reinforcing long-term memory links.

Scenario-Based Command Execution. Cadets are given a simulated operational scenario, e.g., securing a bridge or defending a flank. Instructors issue standard NATO commands, sometimes combined with brevity codes.

Cadets must integrate environmental cues, unit positions, and command hierarchy to execute actions accurately. Objective: To enhance contextual understanding and situational awareness alongside procedural language mastery.

Command Sequencing Challenge. Cadets receive a series of procedural commands in random order (e.g., "Hold fire" → "Advance" → "Check sector"). Task: Reorder the commands logically and explain the tactical reasoning for the sequence. Objective: Train cognitive mapping of commands to operational priorities and temporal sequencing.

Contrastive Command Drill. Cadets are presented with pairs of opposing commands (e.g., "Engage / Disengage", "Advance / Fall back"). Task: Identify the correct response for the operational scenario and justify why the alternate option is inappropriate. Objective: Reinforce dual coding in working memory and rapid decision-making under pressure.

These exercises collectively bridge theoretical knowledge and operational skill, ensuring cadets can process and execute standardized procedural language accurately, rapidly, and under stress, which is essential for multinational interoperability and mission success.

2. Brevity codes: Short, high-information commands such as "Blue-on-blue," "Force protection," "Chain of command," "Eyes on target" function as compressed verbal constructs that encapsulate extended tactical scenarios, operational priorities, and institutional role relations. Their communicative efficiency lies in the ability to transmit substantial situational content through minimal linguistic material. From a psycholinguistic perspective, brevity codes rely on mechanisms of dense semantic packing, where a single verbal signal activates an expanded cognitive schema comprising stored procedural knowledge, standardized action scripts, and shared doctrinal assumptions [15].

In operational practice, brevity codes trigger specific action-oriented scenarios. For example, "Blue-on-blue" denotes the occurrence or risk of friendly fire and activates immediate corrective realignment of situational awareness and unit behavior. The expression "Force protection" designates the prioritization of safeguarding personnel and critical assets, guiding subsequent decision-making and resource allocation under time pressure. The phrase "Chain of command" invokes institutional hierarchy and normative channels of authority, reminding interlocutors of reporting

constraints and decision-making boundaries. Meanwhile, “Eyes on target” signals visual acquisition of an objective and serves as a preparatory stage for kinetic or reconnaissance operations, eliminating the need for extended situational clarification.

The use of brevity codes substantially reduces temporal costs and cognitive load, which is crucial in environments characterized by acoustic interference, stress-induced attentional narrowing, and the need for immediate behavioral synchronization. Their deployment provides direct access to pragmatic intent while bypassing complex syntactic constructions and minimizing interpretive ambiguity. Due to their standardization within NATO doctrinal documentation, brevity codes ensure semantic consistency among multinational personnel, support the development of a shared operational picture, and accelerate unit coordination in highly dynamic settings. In this sense, brevity codes constitute a specialized communication technology optimized for situations of heightened uncertainty, noise, and time compression, where the efficiency of directive speech acts directly correlates with mission outcomes [8].

To develop proficiency in both comprehension and execution of brevity codes, cadets can engage in a series of structured exercises:

Simulation drills: Trainees participate in simulated operational scenarios where commands are issued using brevity codes under time pressure and environmental distractions, such as background noise or split-team coordination. This reinforces rapid decoding and appropriate behavioral response.

Role-playing exercises: Cadets alternate between issuing and responding to brevity codes, ensuring that both message production and reception are practiced. Scenarios may include patrols, checkpoints, or observation posts.

Memory integration tasks: Short sequences of brevity codes are presented for memorization and immediate recall, enhancing working memory engagement and procedural automation.

Contextual interpretation challenges: Exercises present commands in ambiguous or evolving contexts, requiring cadets to predict intended meaning and select corresponding action scripts, promoting adaptive thinking under stress.

After-action review sessions: Following practical drills, instructors facilitate discussion of command execution, interpretation accuracy, and

cognitive strategies employed, fostering reflective learning and error correction.

Through repeated application of these exercises, cadets develop automaticity in recognizing, interpreting, and responding to brevity codes, ensuring operational efficiency, accuracy, and interoperability in multinational environments.

3. Scenario-based training: Cadets practice STANAG-compliant commands in mission-like simulations, integrating psycholinguistic perception exercises with operational tasks.

Scenario-based training constitutes a methodologically structured approach that integrates linguistic, cognitive, and operational dimensions of military education. Within this framework, cadets rehearse STANAG-compliant commands in simulations designed to replicate the temporal, hierarchical, and stress-related constraints of real combat environments. This training fulfills several critical pedagogical functions: it consolidates procedural accuracy and standardization of command language, enhances the automation of speech production, and strengthens the ability to anticipate, interpret, and respond to verbal instructions in time-sensitive situations [6].

From a psycholinguistic perspective, such exercises engage both perceptual and productive mechanisms of language processing. Cadets develop skills in rapid semantic decoding, context-dependent activation of meaning, and predictive comprehension of intended actions, while simultaneously coordinating working memory with long-term procedural knowledge. Scenario-based tasks also expose learners to variability in lexical and syntactic structures, including directive forms and phraseological units, thereby cultivating adaptive comprehension strategies essential for operational effectiveness.

Operationally, scenario-based training bridges theoretical knowledge and applied performance by situating linguistic tasks within realistic mission-like contexts. It introduces dynamic variables such as role-specific instructions, hierarchical communication protocols, and unexpected contingencies, requiring cadets to integrate cognitive, linguistic, and behavioral responses seamlessly. This integration ensures high precision and speed in command execution, even under stress, and supports the development of adaptive communicative competence necessary for interoperability within multinational forces.

Ultimately, scenario-based training not only enhances mastery of standardized military discourse but also fosters the cognitive and behavioral readiness required for effective participation in complex, high-stakes, and multicultural operational settings. It provides empirical justification for instructional designs that synchronize psycholinguistic perception, memory mechanisms, and operational performance in military education. Scenario-based tasks expose learners to variability in directive structures, lexical choices, and phraseological units, fostering adaptive comprehension strategies critical for operational effectiveness [17].

Practical Exercises include:

Command Relay Exercises: Cadets receive a sequence of STANAG commands under time constraints and must relay them accurately through a chain of peers, simulating hierarchical communication in multinational operations.

Stress-Condition Simulations: Commands are delivered in high-noise or distraction-rich environments to train cadets to maintain perceptual accuracy and rapid execution under stress.

Role-Specific Response Drills: Cadets are assigned specific operational roles (e.g., squad leader, radio operator) and must interpret and execute commands according to role responsibilities, reinforcing context-dependent comprehension.

Decision-Point Scenarios: Mid-simulation, cadets receive ambiguous or contrastive commands that require quick evaluation of alternative action options, integrating cognitive prediction with behavioral response.

Multinational Interoperability Exercises: Cadets execute commands in mixed teams, requiring recognition of STANAG terminology, consistent phrasing, and alignment of behavioral responses with allied protocols.

Memory-Integration Tasks: Commands are paired with procedural actions (e.g., equipment handling, tactical maneuvers), linking speech with operational memory pathways and automating response patterns.

These exercises bridge theoretical knowledge and applied performance, situating linguistic tasks in realistic mission contexts. They develop precision, speed, and adaptive communicative competence necessary for interoperability within multinational forces. Scenario-based training ensures that cadets are cognitively, linguistically, and behaviorally prepared for high-pressure, multicultural operational environments, providing

empirical justification for training designs that synchronize psycholinguistic perception, memory mechanisms, and operational performance.

The analysis of NATO-oriented command communication highlights the critical role of standardized English-language procedures, brevity codes, and scenario-based training in ensuring operational effectiveness and interoperability in multinational military environments. STANAG 6001 provides a unified framework for assessing language proficiency, establishing a common baseline of communicative competence across allied forces, which is essential for minimizing misunderstandings during joint missions. The integration of procedural language and brevity codes further enhances clarity, reduces cognitive load, and accelerates decision-making under high-stress and time-constrained conditions [2].

From a psycholinguistic perspective, standardized phraseology and coded expressions facilitate the formation of stable associative networks between linguistic input and operational responses, promoting automaticity in command perception and execution. Cadets develop the ability to rapidly decode commands, anticipate intended actions, and coordinate speech with procedural and motor behaviors, thereby strengthening both cognitive and behavioral readiness for complex operational tasks [11].

Scenario-based training operationalizes these principles by immersing cadets in mission-like simulations that replicate temporal, hierarchical, and environmental constraints. Through structured exercises including command relay, stress-condition drills, role-specific responses, decision-point scenarios, and memory-integration tasks trainees consolidate procedural accuracy, enhance adaptive comprehension, and internalize operational protocols in a contextually rich setting. These practical activities bridge theoretical knowledge with applied skill, ensuring that cadets can process, interpret, and execute standardized commands with speed, precision, and reliability [17].

In sum, the NATO-oriented applied dimension of command communication demonstrates that mastery of standardized procedural language, combined with cognitively informed training and realistic scenario-based exercises, is essential for achieving effective, rapid, and unambiguous command execution. This approach not only ensures mission success but also fosters interoperability, situational awareness, and cognitive-behavioral preparedness necessary for participation in high-stakes,

multinational military operations. NATO-oriented psycholinguistic training ensures that officers are capable of efficiently perceiving, interpreting, and producing English commands, reducing operational risk and enhancing the effectiveness of multinational forces [6]. By integrating psycholinguistic insights with NATO standards, training bridges the gap from theoretical research to practical solutions, preparing officers for real-world combat and coalition scenarios.

5. Conclusion

The formation of foreign-language communicative competence in future military officers constitutes a central strategic priority of modern military education, as it directly influences operational effectiveness, coordination, and safety within multicultural and multinational environments [16]. The analysis of contemporary research demonstrates that the mastery of vocabulary, grammar, and phonetics alone is insufficient for operational success. Instead, officers must develop the ability to perceive, interpret, and respond to English-language commands rapidly and accurately under conditions of stress, time pressure, acoustic interference, and environmental uncertainty [15].

This study emphasizes that the efficiency of command comprehension and production relies on a complex integration of cognitive mechanisms, including working memory for temporarily maintaining and manipulating alternative action schemas, long-term memory for rapid retrieval of standard operational commands, semantic compression and contrast processing for handling oppositional or sequential directives, predictive processing for anticipating command intent, and contextual and situational awareness for integrating environmental, hierarchical, and operational cues. Contrastive and compressed commands such as “Advance / Fall back” or “Hold fire / Open fire” exemplify how language perception is directly mapped onto motor and procedural actions, enabling rapid, almost automatic responses that minimize interpretive errors and enhance operational effectiveness [17].

The research highlights that the integration of cognitively informed training with scenario-based exercises significantly strengthens these mechanisms. Practical exercises such as Contrastive Command Identification, Directive Hierarchy Drills, Command Transformation,

Command Sequencing, and Role-Specific Response Scenarios reinforce the links between perception, comprehension, memory, and action. They enable cadets to anticipate and respond to commands before full articulation, manage competing alternatives in working memory, and integrate situational and hierarchical cues, thereby fostering adaptive, precise, and reliable operational communication [11].

Moreover, in multinational contexts, the adoption of standardized English-language procedures, including STANAG 6001 proficiency standards and NATO brevity codes, ensures interoperability, reduces cognitive load, and accelerates decision-making. Standardized procedural language and brevity codes function as cognitive shortcuts that allow officers to link linguistic input directly to trained operational responses. Scenario-based training operationalizes these principles by immersing cadets in mission-like environments that replicate the temporal, hierarchical, and stress-related constraints of combat operations, bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and applied competence [1].

In sum, the development of foreign-language communicative competence is both a linguistic and cognitive-operational necessity. Officers equipped with these skills are capable of perceiving, interpreting, and executing commands rapidly and accurately, even under high-pressure and uncertain conditions. The integration of cognitively informed instruction with standardized procedural language and realistic scenario-based exercises ensures that future officers are operationally ready, enhances mission success, and strengthens interoperability in multinational military operations. This holistic approach translates psycholinguistic insights into practical training solutions, ensuring that scientific research directly informs applied educational and operational practices.

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