

ГРИЦУК Юлія Володимирівна,
доктор філософії, начальник науково-
дослідного відділу мовного тестування
наукового центру мовного тестування,
навчально-наукового центру
іноземних мов, Національний
університет оборони України
(*м. Київ, Україна*)

КРАВЧУК Андрій Олександрович,
молодший науковий співробітник
науково-дослідного відділу мовного
тестування наукового центру мовного
тестування, навчально-наукового
центру іноземних мов, Національний
університет оборони України
(*м. Київ, Україна*)

THE USE OF AUTHENTIC MATERIALS IN THE TEACHING OF MILITARY-SPECIFIC DISCIPLINES IN ENGLISH

The use of authentic materials in the teaching of military-specific disciplines in English within higher military education institutions constitutes one of the leading methodological approaches that integrates language training with the development of professional competence among future officers. The authenticity of instructional content enables the creation of an educational environment that closely replicates the real conditions of military communication, thereby facilitating the simultaneous development of professional and communicative skills, critical thinking, and the ability to operate effectively within a multinational military setting.

For the teacher, a key task lies in the careful selection of authentic sources directly relevant to military-professional activity and representative of real communicative situations. Such materials may include NATO official documents and reports, analytical reviews issued by international security organisations, extracts from military statutes and orders, tactical and strategic manuals, maps, weapon system guides, operational protocols, as well as conference proceedings and symposium papers. The use of authentic audio and video recordings – such as military briefings, interviews with defence experts, or field reports from international exercises and peacekeeping operations – further develops linguistic competence and enhances learners' understanding of the specific features of military professional discourse [3].

The methodological value of authentic materials lies in their ability to ensure multi-level integration within the educational process. They enable the combination of lexical and grammatical development with the practical training of skills necessary to analyse military information, make informed decisions based on foreign-language sources, and conduct professional communication in English. Moreover, authentic resources promote

intercultural competence by exposing students to various patterns of communicative behaviour characteristic of military personnel from different nations – an essential competence in the context of international military cooperation [1].

Authentic materials should not be introduced sporadically but embedded systematically as a structural component of instruction. They must be aligned with tasks of varying complexity – from basic listening and reading practice to scenario analysis, problem-solving, and professional discussions. For instance, the analysis of a NATO report may culminate in a discussion of possible courses of action, decision-making simulations in English, or the development of a team strategy followed by a briefing-style presentation. Such integration enables learners to experience English as a tool for professional reasoning, rather than merely a language of study.

The reliability and relevance of sources also require careful consideration. Instructors must continuously update their repository of authentic materials to reflect current military realities, ongoing conflicts, and recent advancements in defence technologies; this ensures both the quality and the practical value of instruction, enhancing learner motivation through exposure to knowledge directly applicable in their future officer duties. Regular renewal of materials not only sustains learner engagement but also reinforces the perception of English as a living, operationally useful instrument.

Effective implementation of authentic materials in military education requires deliberate planning and a well-structured methodological framework. Teachers must not only select resources corresponding to current professional tasks and operational contexts but also integrate them progressively into the curriculum. Complex documents – such as operational summaries, orders, instructions, or analytical reports – should be introduced through guided methodological tools designed to prevent cognitive overload and ensure in-depth comprehension [2].

One effective method is the preparation of glossaries, which can be compiled in advance by the instructor or developed collaboratively with students during class. Glossary work facilitates comprehension and promotes the active retention of new terminology. In parallel, exercises can be designed to guide learners from the basic identification and interpretation of terms to their functional use in simulated professional contexts. Initially, tasks involve defining and explaining terminology within a text, later advancing to the production of concise reports and, ultimately, to the formulation of decisions and recommendations in English.

A crucial consideration is maintaining the balance between authenticity and pedagogical adaptation. For example, an order may be presented in its entirety, while the associated tasks vary according to learners' proficiency levels. Those with limited English competence may focus on translating and interpreting key terms. In contrast, more advanced students could engage in scenario-based role-play or strategic discussions involving the execution of that order.

Such an approach transforms authentic materials from potential barriers into dynamic educational resources that stimulate the development of professionally oriented communicative competence. Learners acquire not only the ability to navigate complex military texts but also the analytical and interpretive skills necessary to process

operational information and apply it in practical situations – abilities that mirror the real demands of their future professional environment.

Interactive engagement with authentic sources goes beyond simple exposure to foreign-language materials. It requires learners' active participation in interpreting and applying such content to instructional and professional tasks. Instructors may organise work with official military reports, operational documents, briefing videos, or international defence news, constructing learning situations that closely simulate real service conditions. Learners must not merely read or listen, but critically evaluate the information in terms of its reliability, operational significance, and correlation with their own experience and national context.

Particular attention should be devoted to organising discussions based on authentic materials. These discussions serve not only as linguistic practice but also as training for professional reasoning, where cadets articulate and defend their positions in English, respond to counterarguments, and refine their communicative precision under pressure. In this process, the instructor assumes the role of moderator, directing the discussion, ensuring terminological accuracy, and developing cadets' ability to express ideas concisely and logically.

In practical terms, instruction based on authentic materials can include scenario-based exercises in which information derived from foreign sources forms the basis for tactical or strategic decision-making. For example, after analysing an international analytical report, cadets may engage in a simulated crisis-response activity. This exercise simultaneously develops linguistic competence and trains rapid decision-making in uncertain conditions.

In conclusion, the use of authentic materials in the instruction of military-specific disciplines in English represents a powerful tool for integrated learning, combining the linguistic, professional, and cultural dimensions of officer training. It fosters the development of a comprehensive set of competences encompassing linguistic proficiency, readiness to employ English in professional military contexts, and the ability to function effectively within the global security environment. Instructors should therefore systematically incorporate authentic resources into the educational process, transforming instruction into a platform for the practical mastery of English as a working tool of the modern military professional.

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