

# Communicative Competence In Teaching English To Cadets In Military Higher Education

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**Abstract:** This article explores the concept of communicative competence in teaching English to cadets in military higher education. Modern military professional activity requires not only linguistic knowledge but also the ability to use English effectively in regulated, task-oriented, and intercultural communication contexts. The study aims to analyze the theoretical foundations of communicative competence, identify its structural components, and justify its role as a central pedagogical category in military English education.

The research is based on a theoretical and methodological analysis of international and regional scholarly works, including studies by D. Hymes, M. Canale and M. Swain, L. Bachman, H. D. Brown, J. Richards and T. Rodgers, as well as the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Comparative and system-structural approaches are applied.

The findings show that communicative competence is an integrative construct comprising linguistic, sociolinguistic, pragmatic, strategic, and professional components. The article concludes that a comprehensive and systematic approach to communicative competence formation is essential for preparing cadets for effective professional communication in English.

**Keywords:** Communicative competence; military higher education; English language teaching; cadets; professional military communication; CEFR; communicative language teaching; competency-based approach.

**Introduction:** In the context of modern military higher education, teaching English is no longer limited to the formation of linguistic knowledge alone; rather, it aims to prepare cadets for real professional communication. Military service is directly associated with international cooperation, joint exercises, technical documentation, and operational communication, which makes the ability to communicate effectively in English a critical professional requirement for future officers. Consequently, the concept of communicative competence develops as a leading methodological category in foreign language education within military institutions.

This study considers communicative competence as a central theoretical construct in the process of teaching English to cadets. In military higher education, language proficiency cannot be reduced to mastering

grammatical norms; cadets must be able to understand and issue commands, conduct briefings, deliver reports, take part in international military cooperation, and appropriately use regulated service discourse in context-specific situations. Therefore, it is essential to distinguish between “knowledge of the language” and the “ability to use the language in professional practice.”

The purpose of this research is to analyze the concept of communicative competence in relation to military higher education, clarify its theoretical foundations, identify its structural components, and determine its professionally oriented characteristics within the framework of teaching English to cadets.

## METHODS

The study employs a theoretical and methodological analysis of fundamental works in linguistics, foreign

language pedagogy, and language assessment. The main research methods include:

- analysis and synthesis of scientific literature;
- comparative analysis of international, CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States), and national (Uzbekistan) approaches;
- system-structural analysis of communicative competence models;
- interpretation of normative documents, particularly the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

The theoretical basis of the research is formed by the works of D. Hymes, M. Canale and M. Swain, L. Bachman, H. D. Brown, J. Richards and T. Rodgers, as well as CEFR as a normative framework for language learning, teaching, and assessment.

In addition, the study analyzes research conducted by CIS scholars (I. A. Zimnyaya, E. I. Passov, V. V. Safonova, N. D. Galskova, S. A. Ter-Minasova, A. A. Mustafayeva, R. H. Aliyeva, J. S. Jetpisbayeva, S. S. Kunanbayeva, and others) and Uzbek scholars working in the field of military and professionally oriented foreign language education.

**RESULTS**

**Theoretical Foundations of Communicative Competence**

The concept of communicative competence originates from D. Hymes’s [7] expansion of Chomsky’s notion of linguistic competence. Hymes argued that language proficiency includes not only grammatical correctness but also the ability to use language appropriately in social contexts. This approach is particularly relevant

for military communication, which is characterized by strict regulation, hierarchy, and task orientation.

M. Canale and M. Swain further developed this concept by proposing a component-based model of communicative competence, which includes:

- grammatical (linguistic) competence,
- sociolinguistic competence,
- strategic competence [4].

Later, M. Canale emphasized the role of discourse competence, highlighting coherence and cohesion in real communication [3].

Within the CEFR framework, communicative language competence is systematized into three interrelated components:

- linguistic,
- sociolinguistic,
- pragmatic competences [5].

This model allows communicative competence to be standardized and assessed, which is essential for military education where clear performance indicators are required.

L. Bachman contributed to the field by conceptualizing communicative competence as an assessable language ability, thus justifying the need for measurable indicators in evaluating cadets’ professional language proficiency [1].

H. D. Brown and J. Richards & T. Rodgers emphasized communicative competence as the primary outcome of foreign language learning and as the core objective of communicative language teaching [2, 12] (See the table 1):

**Table 1**

**Theoretical Models of Communicative Competence and Their Key Components**

Author / Framework	Core Contribution	Structural Components of Communicative Competence	Relevance to Military English Education
D. Hymes [7]	Expanded linguistic competence to communicative competence, emphasizing appropriate language use in social contexts	Appropriateness of language use; integration of linguistic and sociocultural norms	Ensures effective communication under regulated, hierarchical, and task-oriented military conditions

M. Canale & M. Swain [4]	Developed a component-based model of communicative competence	Grammatical (linguistic), sociolinguistic, strategic competences	Supports command delivery, situational adaptation, and compensation strategies in military interaction
M. Canale [3]	Introduced discourse competence as a key element of communication	Discourse competence (coherence and cohesion in extended speech)	Essential for briefings, reports, and operational communication
CEFR [5]	Standardized communicative language competence for teaching and assessment	Linguistic, sociolinguistic, pragmatic competences	Provides measurable performance indicators for military language assessment
L. Bachman [1]	Conceptualized communicative competence as assessable language ability	Organizational and pragmatic language competences	Justifies objective evaluation of cadets' professional language proficiency
H. D. Brown; J. Richards & T. Rodgers [2, 12]	Defined communicative competence as the main goal of language learning and teaching	Integrated communicative competence as an educational outcome	Aligns military English instruction with communicative and task-based methodologies

### Approaches (CIS Scholarly)

CIS researchers interpret communicative competence as a complex integrative structure combining cognitive, speech, sociocultural, and professional components.

I. A. Zimnyaya views communicative competence as an educational outcome integrating knowledge, speech activity, and social behavior [17].

E. I. Passov substantiates the communicative-oriented teaching concept, emphasizing the modeling of real speech situations [11].

V. V. Safonova [13] and N. D. Galskova [6] enrich communicative competence with sociocultural and intercultural dimensions.

S. A. Ter-Minasova stresses the inseparable link between language and culture in successful communication [15].

Scholars from Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan highlight task-based, interactive, and CEFR-aligned approaches to communicative competence formation.

These perspectives underline the dynamic and activity-

based nature of communicative competence, especially relevant for preparing cadets for real professional interaction.

### Uzbek Scholarly Contributions

In Uzbekistan, research on communicative competence has intensified, particularly in the context of military and professionally oriented foreign language teaching.

S. S. Mengliyeva focuses on developing linguistic and cultural competence through military terminology [8].

Sh. I. Musayeva investigates intercultural communicative competence in military education [10].

Sh. X. Murakayeva emphasizes oral speech competence through interactive methods [9].

I. R. Yoqubova integrates ICT (Information and Communication Technology) into professional communicative competence development [16].

U. G. Shamenova explores strategic competence as the ability to overcome communicative difficulties and select appropriate communication strategies [14](See the photo 1):



**Photo 1. Uzbek scholarly contributions to communicative competence in military education**

However, most national studies address individual components of communicative competence rather than its systemic and integrated formation in military higher education.

#### **DISCUSSION**

The theoretical and methodological analysis demonstrates that communicative competence in military higher education should be regarded as a central and integrative pedagogical category. It encompasses not only linguistic knowledge but also the ability to use language functionally, purposefully, and appropriately in regulated professional military contexts.

International models (Hymes; Canale & Swain; Bachman; CEFR) provide a solid theoretical foundation for understanding communicative competence as a multi-component system. CIS approaches reinforce its integration with cognitive, sociocultural, and

professional activity. Uzbek research highlights the relevance of specific components but reveals a methodological gap in developing a holistic model tailored to military English education.

Therefore, this study conceptualizes communicative competence as an integrative pedagogical construct that combines linguistic, sociocultural, professional, and strategic components. Such an interpretation enables the systematic preparation of cadets for effective communication in English within regulated military-professional situations and creates a theoretical and methodological basis for improving military English teaching practices in accordance with international and national standards.

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