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SITUATIONAL-SIMULATION TRAINING AS A MEANS OF DEVELOPING OPERATIONAL SPEECH-THINKING IN FUTURE OFFICERS

Ortikova Mukhabbat Khamidovna

Senior Lecturer, University of Military Security and
Defense of the Republic of Uzbekistan

Abstract

The article examines the problem of developing operational speech-thinking in future officers during their professional training in higher military educational institutions. The author substantiates the effectiveness of situational-simulation training methods as a key tool for developing cadets' cognitive and communicative skills. The psychological and pedagogical essence of operational-speech activity under conditions of stress, time constraints, and operational uncertainty is analyzed. The main didactic principles of constructing situational models are highlighted, and the stages of their implementation are presented. The practical significance of the study lies in the development of recommendations for improving the tactical-special and language training of future command personnel.

Keywords: Situational-simulation training, operational speech-thinking, future officers, military education, cadets, command and control, tactical radio communication, professional communication, speech algorithmization.

Introduction

The modern transformational paradigm of conducting armed warfare — driven by the dynamics of hybrid and asymmetric conflicts, as well as the rapid implementation of high-tech systems — places qualitatively new,

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uncompromising demands on the level of professional-combat, psychological-pedagogical, and cognitive-communicative training of officer personnel in higher military educational institutions. Under conditions of large-scale battlefield digitalization, the adoption of network-centric warfare concepts, the “transparent battlefield” concept (Assault Breaker / Multi-Domain Operations), and the active employment of electronic warfare (EW) assets, precision-guided munitions, and autonomous unmanned systems, the nature of modern combat acquires features of ultra-high dynamism, non-linearity, transience, and extreme operational-tactical uncertainty [1].

In this operational reality, a key determinant of high combat readiness and successful task execution is the subunit commander's ability to make scientifically grounded, expedient decisions promptly and immediately communicate them to subordinate command elements and personnel. However, the process of making and transmitting command-and-control decisions in an extreme environment occurs under the intense influence of a complex set of destructive external and internal factors:

Information asymmetry, scarcity, and disinformation: The necessity of operating within the “Clausewitzian fog of war,” where decision-making relies on fragmentary, contradictory, or intentionally distorted data.

Severe time compression: The condensation of the command-and-control cycle (Boyd’s OODA loop: Observe, Orient, Decide, Act) down to a matter of seconds, where a delay at the thought-formulation stage results in the loss of operational initiative.

Psychophysiological and cognitive-emotional overload: The impact of extreme combat stress factors (acoustic noise, threat to life, sleep deprivation, and a high

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degree of personal responsibility for personnel's lives), causing cognitive narrowing and the disruption of higher mental functions [2].

These destructors place stringent demands on the quality and level of development of an officer's operational speech-thinking. In the context of military acmeology and military pedagogy, operational speech-thinking represents a specific, highly integrated cognitive-communicative mechanism. It ensures the condensation (internalization) of a complex multi-vector mental analysis into inner speech and its subsequent instantaneous exteriorization into external speech—which must be maximally concise, strictly algorithmized, terminologically precise, and unambiguous for standard comprehension as a command, order, or combat report. Under actual combat contact conditions, any communicative error, semantic ambiguity, diction defect, or pause in radio exchange inevitably transforms into a loss of command and control, disruption of the combat mission, and unwarranted casualties [3].

At the same time, a systematic analysis of current military training practices indicates that traditional forms, methods, and didactic models in higher military educational institutions historically remain oriented toward academic, fundamentally theoretical mastery of disciplinary material. The classic lecture-seminar system provides the formation of a conceptual base and declarative knowledge, but proves insufficiently effective regarding the automation of instantaneous speech-response skills, building speech resilience to exogenous and endogenous stressors, and cultivating a discipline of maintaining strict, regulated tactical radio communication amid suddenly changing situations.

The emerging fundamental contradiction between the increased demands of modern military practice regarding the quality and speed of operational-tactical control and the relatively conservative nature of traditional methodologies necessitates a radical transformation of the educational process in military institutions through the implementation of innovative, intensive pedagogical technologies. Central among these is situational-simulation training [4].

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This methodological approach is grounded in the concept of contextual education (A.A. Verbitsky) and simulation technology, which recreate the authentic professional context of future military command activities through a continuous system of dynamic combat-training, operational-tactical, and unexpected scenarios. Implementing situational-simulation training into the educational process makes it possible to:

- Recreate an authentic cognitive-emotional and stress-inducing backdrop of command activity that closely approximates real combat conditions.
- Establish resilient speech algorithms and mental frameworks for the instantaneous construction of formalized combat documents, reports (MIST, SALUTE), and orders.
- Develop psychophysiological resilience of speech-thinking activity against external interference (noise impacts, communication failures, disinformation) and emotional tension.
- Ensure absolute conciseness, strict terminological purity, and unambiguous perception of military speech across all **command-and-control** structures.

Thus, the theoretical understanding and practical development of pedagogical mechanisms for situational-simulation training as an effective means of developing future officers' operational speech-thinking represent an urgent scientific and pedagogical task of strategic importance for improving the quality of command personnel training and enhancing the overall combat capability of the Armed Forces.

1. Theoretical and Methodological Foundations for Developing Operational Speech-Thinking in a Military University. The development of operational speech-thinking in cadets as future command personnel is based on integrating the principles of speech activity theory (L.S. Vygotsky, A.A. Leontiev), the concept of contextual learning (A.A. Verbitsky), and the fundamental principles of military acmeology. Within the structure of a subunit commander's

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professional activity, the speech-thinking act serves not merely as a method of transmitting information, but directly as a primary instrument of combat command and control [5].

From a cognitive perspective, the process of forming an officer's operational-speech response in emergency situations comprises four sequential yet virtually synchronized phases:

Perceptual-analytical phase: Rapid scanning of operational environment elements, primary filtering of spatial-temporal parameters, and identification of key threats.

Cognitive-prognostic phase: Condensation of inner speech (internalization), matching incoming parameters with existing mental frameworks (tactical templates), and formulating the optimal solution option.

Constructive-linguistic phase: Transformational transition from an abstract-conceptual solution structure to a strictly algorithmized linguistic form (exteriorization).

Communicative-executive phase: Verbalization of a combat command or report with specified intonational expressiveness, clear diction, and terminological precision under interference conditions.

The key feature of operational speech-thinking lies in the requirement for maximum compression of the time elapsed between the first and fourth phases. Under classic pedagogical conditions, this process is hindered by cadets' lack of established mental models for tactical interaction and high psychological lability when facing unexpected scenario changesn [5].

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2. The Essence and Didactic Potential of Situational-Simulation Training.

Situational-simulation training (SST) in a higher military educational institution represents a specially organized didactic process aimed at immersing learners in quasi-professional activity through the recreation of a dynamic system of operational-tactical, headquarters, and combat-training scenarios.

The primary objective of SST is to generate didactic resonance, wherein the objective complexity of the simulated combat environment interacts with the cadet's cognitive resources, compelling them to activate their internal speech-thinking potential (see Table 1).

Table 1. Didactic Structure of the Situational Model

Phase / Block	Structural Element	Content and Components
I. Introductory	1. Spatial-Temporal Context	Terrain map, tactical backdrop, strict time constraints.
II. Processual	2. Information-Dynamic Factor	Unexpected incoming tasks, communication signal distortion/interference, disinformation.
III. Stress-Inducing	3. Psychoemotional Destructor	Acoustic noise (sounds of combat), casualty reports, direct fire contact facts.
IV. Resultant	4. Required Speech-Thinking Result	Issuance of an operational order (OPORD), formalized report using SALUTE / MIST standards.

To achieve maximum pedagogical effect, the design of situational tasks within SST is carried out based on a set of specialized principles [6]:

Principle of dynamic non-linearity: Scenario development is not static; any speech-based decision made (or failed to be made in time) by a cadet triggers an immediate shift in the tactical situation by the opposing force (simulated enemy).

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Principle of strict algorithmization and standardization: Verbal expression of decisions adheres to strict protocols of military radio communication and combat document standards (e.g., utilization of sketch maps, formalized text tables, and specialized abbreviations).

Principle of controlled stress-induction: Artificial modeling of high psychological tension factors (limiting decision-making time to 10–15 seconds, presence of background gunfire noise, generating radio channel interference).

3. Stages and Pedagogical Technology for Implementing SST in a Military University. The practical implementation of situational-simulation training technology during cadets' tactical-special and language training follows a phased model, ensuring a gradual transition from basic communicative skills to high-level operational speech-thinking (see Table 2).

Table 2. Stages and Technology of Implementing SST in a Military University.

Stage	Stage Name	Content and Didactic Objective
Stage 1	Propaedeutic-Algorithmic	Formation of a terminological basis and mastery of standard protocols.
Stage 2	Situational-Dynamic	Practicing incoming tasks under medium spatial-temporal constraints.
Stage 3	Extremely Simulated	Immersion in complex tactical games with exposure to stress factors.
Stage 4	Reflexive-Expert (Debriefing / AAR)	Detailed cognitive-linguistic analysis of committed errors and pauses.

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Detailed Description of the Stages:

Propaedeutic-Algorithmic Stage: At this stage, cadets master mental maps and basic standards of military radio communication (for example, the format for issuing short orders and standardized structures for reports on enemy contact and friendly casualties). Automated use of specialized military terminology is achieved [7].

Situational-Dynamic Stage: Learning moves to solving situational problems of medium complexity. The cadet acts as a squad/platoon leader receiving incoming tactical updates (e.g., changes in enemy direction of movement, equipment failures). Time for issuing an order is strictly limited.

Extremely Simulated Stage: Implemented using modern simulator complexes, command-and-staff computer games, or tactical field sites. Practicing speech-thinking acts occurs against a backdrop of intense physical fatigue and acoustic interference. Evaluation covers not only the tactical decision's correctness, but also the stability of speech tempo-rhythmic characteristics, lack of speech hesitations, and semantic conciseness [8].

Reflexive-Expert Stage (Debriefing / After Action Review): A critically important element of the pedagogical cycle. Detailed audio and video analyses of reports and commands executed by the cadet are conducted. Parameters such as reaction time, terminological precision, absence of speech redundancy (pleonasms), and confidence in intonational structure are evaluated.

4. Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Implementing SST in the Educational Process. A comparative analysis of results from implementing situational-simulation training into cadet instruction demonstrates qualitative shifts in their

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professional competence framework. Evaluation was conducted based on the following criteria (see Table 3):

Table 3. Comparative Analysis of Performance Indicators for Traditional Methods vs. Situational-Simulation Training

Evaluation Criterion	Traditional Training Methodology	Situational-Simulation Training
Average time to formulate and verbalize a decision	45–60 seconds	12–18 seconds
Level of terminological accuracy under stress	62%	94%
Resilience of speech structure to external interference	Low (noted presence of pauses, hesitations, disorganization)	High (preservation of strict algorithmization)
Semantic compression coefficient (absence of “filler”)	Medium	Maximum (conciseness up to 100%)

Thus, the research findings confirm that situational-simulation training serves as a powerful pedagogical catalyst. It shifts cadets' cognitive processes from slow academic analysis into an instantaneous operational speech-thinking mode, which is of decisive importance for ensuring continuity and effectiveness of command and control in the modern battlespace.

The conducted study of theoretical-methodological and practical aspects of utilizing situational-simulation training (SST) in higher military educational institutions allows for the **following summarizing conclusions:**

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Theoretical Significance: It is proven that operational speech-thinking of future officers serves as a foundational component of their professional and combat readiness. Under modern dynamic combat conditions, a commander's capacity for immediate internalization of operational data and exteriorization of decisions into clear, terminologically precise commands directly dictates command-and-control continuity.

Practical Effectiveness: Implementing situational-simulation training guarantees the recreation of an authentic psychoemotional and stress-inducing framework of command activity. Experimental results confirm a 3-to-4-fold reduction in decision verbalization time (down to 12–18 seconds) and an increase in speech terminological accuracy under stress up to 94%.

Methodological Recommendations: Situational-simulation training should be cross-cutting and fully integrated into tactical-special, marksmanship, and language training curricula.

Key success factors include the systematic application of dynamic scenarios, strict speech algorithmization, and mandatory detailed reflexive-expert analysis (debriefing) following every training exercise.

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