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Methodology & Experience
Методика и опит

ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES (ESP). ENGLISH FOR VOCATIONAL PURPOSES. TEACHING MILITARY ENGLISH

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Abstract. The theoretical part of this research aims to examine the general characteristics of English for Specific Purposes. It presents the origins of ESP and its classifications. The practical part focuses on teaching Military English paying special attention to each of the four language skills – listening, speaking, writing and reading. Techniques for acquiring the skill by the military personnel are also illustrated. Various types of model exercises are included. The article also compares STANAG 6001 with other international English exams.

Keywords: English for Specific Purposes, ESP, Military English, STANAG 6001, teaching

Reasons and Objectives

The current article aims to address the problem of how English for Specific Purposes (ESP), particularly Military English, can be effectively taught to develop the four language skills (reading, listening, writing, and speaking) required for military personnel to meet today's professional and international standards.

The main reasons for this research are: **1)** the growing need for giving specialized (such as ESP) language classes; **2)** the gap between general ELT and military needs; **3)** the fact that traditional English teaching does not fully address: military terminology, real-life operational communication, specific tasks (e.g. reporting, giving orders, etc.); **4)** the professional needs of Bulgaria's military personnel to use English in international missions and within NATO structures; **5)** the lack of standardized approach (although frameworks like STANAG 6001 exist, teaching methods and preparation strategies vary).

1. Theoretical Background

As a separate branch of English Language Teaching (ELT), English for Specific Purposes (ESP) has had considerable influence over the more general activities of TESOL (Teaching English to Students of Other Languages) and applied linguistics. Although it is still in its infancy in many parts of the world,

in the future a great number of people will find the exceptional benefit of an ESP course.

ESP is an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learner's reason for learning (Hutchinson, T. and Waters, A., 1992). Frequently, learners of English for Specific Purposes are much more motivated to obtain new knowledge and acquire new skills than learners of General English.

Tony Dudley-Evans and Maggie Jo St John (1998) provide two groups of characteristic features of ESP:

1) The absolute characteristics of ESP are:

– ESP is designed to meet the specific needs of the learner.

– ESP makes use of the underlying methodology and activities of the discipline it serves.

– ESP is centered on the language (grammar, lexis, register), skills, discourse and genres appropriate to these activities.

2) The variable characteristics of ESP are:

– ESP may be related to or designed for specific disciplines.

– ESP may use a different methodology from that of general English.

– ESP is likely to be designed for adult learners, either at a tertiary-level institution or in a professional work situation. It could, however, be used for learners at secondary school level.

– ESP is generally designed for intermediate or advanced students.

– Most ESP courses assume basic knowledge of the language system, but can be used with beginners as well.

2. ESP Classification by Professional Area

T. Dudley-Evans and M. St. John (1998: 6) divide ESP into two main areas: English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and English for Occupational Purposes (EOP). In the branch of EAP, English for (Academic) Science and Technology (EST) is the main area but English for (Academic) Medical Purposes (EMP), English for (Academic) Legal Purposes (ELP) also occupy an appropriate place in this classification. The branch of EOP includes purposes for various professional fields – administration, medicine, law, engineering, police, command and control, banking, finance, and others.

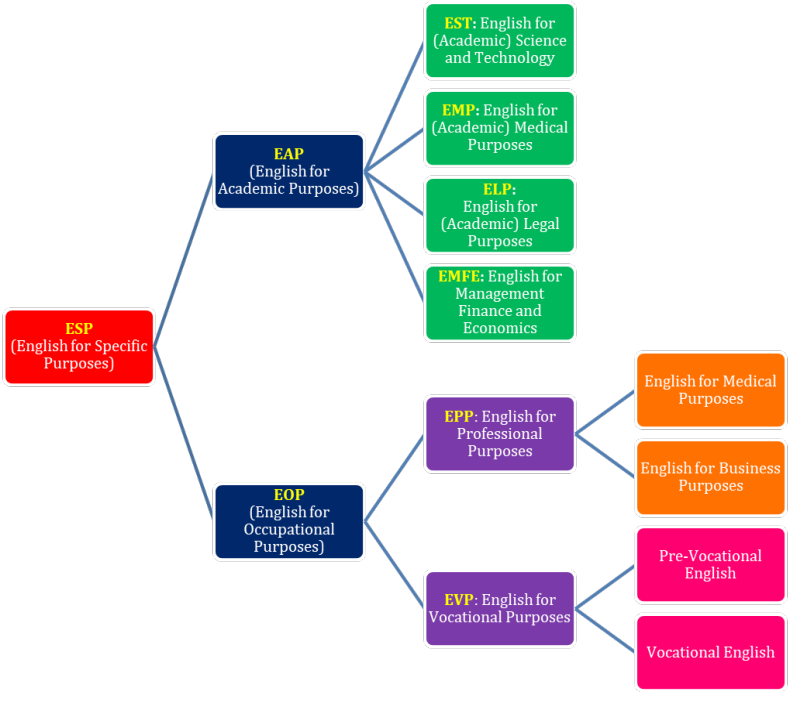


Figure 1. ESP classification by professional area
(adapted from Dudley-Evans and St John,1998:6)

3. ESP Classification by Experience

The key factor in this classification is the time these courses take place, which will affect the degree of specificity of the course content. A pre-experience or pre-study will probably not have any specific work related to the actual discipline; however, the in-service/post-experience courses will definitely provide the more specific content.

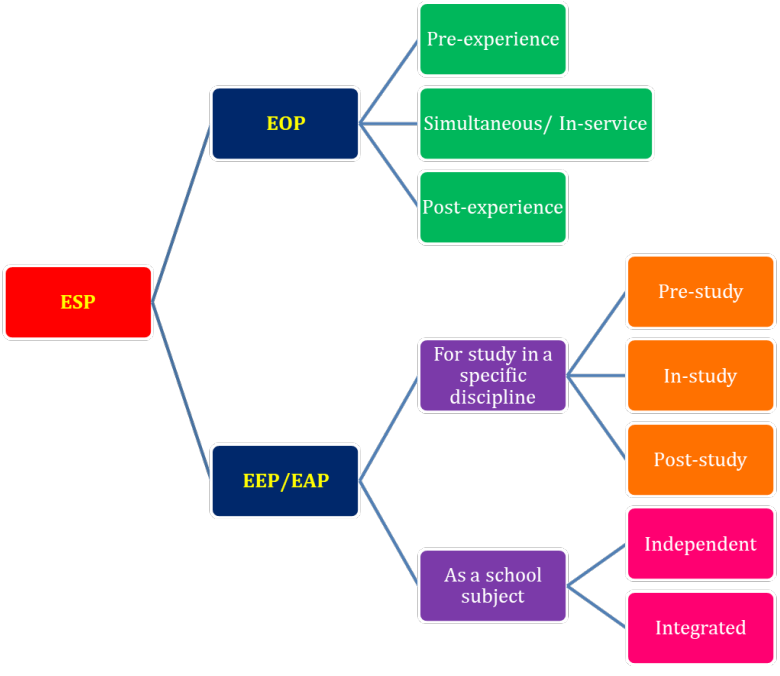


Figure 2. ESP classification by experience
(taken from Robinson, 1991, pp. 3 – 4)

4. Origins of ESP

The origin of ESP dates back to the end of the Second World War when there is an increase in scientific, technical and economic activities. There emerges the need of an international language which can be used in commerce and technology. Hence, the people who decide to learn a language know exactly the purposes of their endeavour. In the 1980s ESP is established as a separate branch in ELT and nowadays many people are aware of its importance in their academic or occupational lives.

The first significant ESP textbook, A. J. Herbert's *The Structure of Technical English*, is published in 1965. The book is designed for students who have some previous experience with learning English but need training '*in the special structures and linguistic conventions of the English used in technical and scientific writing so that they may be able to follow the current literature in English in their particular subject*' (description on the back cover).

5. The ESP Practitioner

Scientists use the term "practitioner" to refer to the ESP teacher. This comes to show that the ESP work involves much more than just teaching. T. Dudley-Evans and M. St. John (1998: 13) point out five roles the ESP practitioner plays: 1) teacher, 2) course designer and materials provider, 3) collaborator, 4) researcher, 5) evaluator.

In the near past the language instructors needed to find materials, evaluate materials, develop materials, adapt materials. In other words they had to cope with needs analysis, syllabus design, materials writing or adaptation and evaluation due to the absence of a huge amount of published ESP material.

Nowadays more and more publishers – *Cambridge University Press, Oxford University Press, Express Publishing, Macmillan* – strive to provide coursebooks with interesting texts and activities focusing on the four skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking) to satisfy the increasing needs of teachers and students. Undoubtedly, all this facilitates the work of ESP practitioners. Each coursebook is specially oriented to the particular educational needs of a given professional on the labour market.

It is not essential to be a specialist in the field in order to teach ESP. What one needs to start teaching an ESP course is interest in the subject matter because very often learners are much more aware of the content than teachers themselves. Tom Hutchinson and Alan Waters (1992) claim that ESP teachers require only three things:

– a positive attitude towards the ESP content;
– a knowledge of the fundamental principles of the subject area;
– an awareness of how much they probably already know.

6. Practical Part. Teaching Military English

Bulgaria is a full member of NATO (the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation). English is the official working language in the North Atlantic Alliance. Our country has participated in peacekeeping international missions in some of the hottest spots in the world – Iraq, Afghanistan, Cambodia, Kosovo, Mali. English fluency is obligatory for professionals taking part in such missions and it is even intended to be compulsory for everyone planning to join the military forces in Bulgaria and to participate in humanitarian assistance and international peace operations.

NATO's policy aims to introduce unified logistics system. That is why English proficiency is being imposed. Another example that necessitates learning English is the intention of the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Bulgaria to make an English proficiency level obligatory for those applying to "G. S. Rakovski" National Defence Academy – the oldest higher military institution in Bulgaria. The mission of "G. S. Rakovski" National Defence Academy is to prepare military leaders and civilian personnel in all spheres of establishing and using the Armed Forces in peacetime, in conflict solving and crisis management, and in wartime.

The spread of English as an international medium of communication indicates the need to consider special education for military English learners who include personnel from the army (term used synonymously with ground forces), navy and air force.

7. Teaching Reading Skills to Military Personnel

When teaching reading skills we should stress that reading is an activity with a particular purpose and that there is a special process running between the text and the reader which results in comprehension of the written material. A given text is composed of separate paragraphs, which are composed of different sentences. The sentences are composed of words which on their part consist of letters. All these put together encode certain meaning. In order to get out of that maze the reader uses strategies, skills and knowledge to unthread the whole meaning of the written text.

Some techniques an ESP practitioner could use in order to increase the effectiveness and the speed in the process of reading are:

– **Foresee what will happen later in the text** – learners should be taught to predict the continuation of the action by using cultural, logical, syntactic and grammatical relations. Their attention should be turned first to the task and the relevant questions and then to the corresponding text.

– **Overcome the stress coming from the unfamiliar words** – learners should be encouraged to read diverse authentic literature. That way, they will enrich their vocabulary and accept the presence of unfamiliar words whose meaning is implied in the context.

– **Learn to visualize what they read** – one of the most useful techniques during the reading process. The ability to "draw" pictures while reading helps learners understand and retain what they read more easily. Hence, later they would be able to recall and activate that information.

– **Scanning** – this is the ability learners should resort to when they need to extract information such as names, dates, quantities, measures. It is most applicable to questions like – *Who?*, *How many?*, *How much?*, *When?*, etc. Learners merely need to scan the text and localize the necessary data.

– **Skimming** – a technique used when students are intended to find the overall organisation of the text, the ideas and the attitudes of the author, the tone and the theme of the text. This type of reading is meant to lead the readers to the core of the text by focusing their attention to the key words and paragraphs by means of skimming instead of reading the whole text word by word.

– **Read books** – reading books develops language proficiency. Students find words and expressions in the context and see the correct manner in which they are used. Books improve the speed of reading and comprehending a foreign language as well.

Types of tasks an ESP practitioner teaching military English could use are:

– **Multiple choice** – questions to a text accompanied by four answers only one of which is correct. Such a task tests the abilities to read on the surface of a text as well as in depth. Learners should be told that often the correct answer paraphrases the information from the text but means exactly the same. There is an example below.

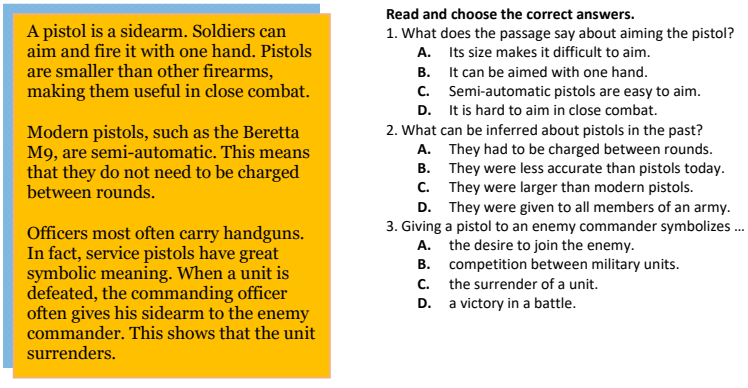
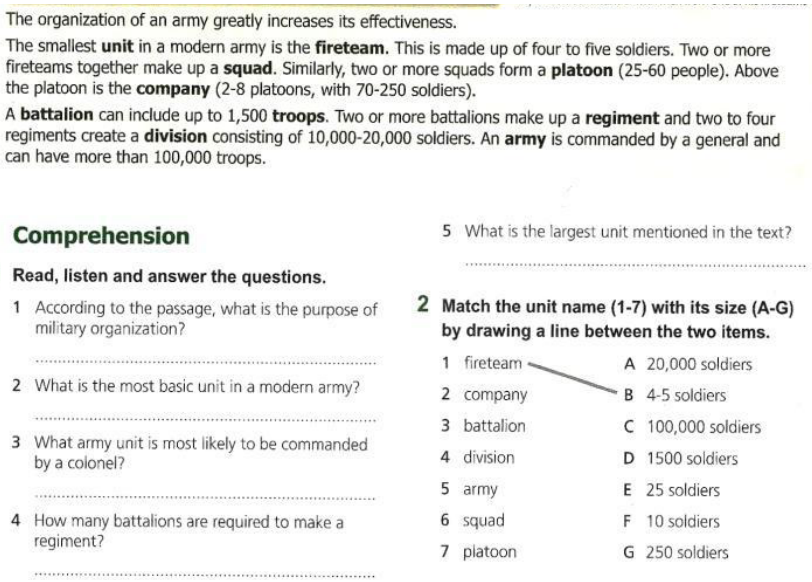


Figure 3. Multiple choice task
(taken from Command & Control, J. Taylor and J. Zeter, 2013)

– **Short answer questions** – a task type which is designed to test learners' abilities to synthesize or paraphrase what they read or to localize the information sought. While dealing with such tasks, the students should follow some steps – they read the questions first and then scan the text looking for the necessary information, having in mind that the questions are in succession corresponding to the flow of information in the text and should give short answers instead of writing whole sentences.

– **Matching** – after reading a passage, learners are expected to match information given in two columns. Usually, but not always, there are numbers in one of the columns and text in the other. Examples of the last two tasks are given in Figure 4.



The organization of an army greatly increases its effectiveness.

The smallest **unit** in a modern army is the **fireteam**. This is made up of four to five soldiers. Two or more fireteams together make up a **squad**. Similarly, two or more squads form a **platoon** (25-60 people). Above the platoon is the **company** (2-8 platoons, with 70-250 soldiers).

A **battalion** can include up to 1,500 **troops**. Two or more battalions make up a **regiment** and two to four regiments create a **division** consisting of 10,000-20,000 soldiers. An **army** is commanded by a general and can have more than 100,000 troops.

Comprehension

1 Read, listen and answer the questions.

1 According to the passage, what is the purpose of military organization?

.....

2 What is the most basic unit in a modern army?

.....

3 What army unit is most likely to be commanded by a colonel?

.....

4 How many battalions are required to make a regiment?

.....

5 What is the largest unit mentioned in the text?

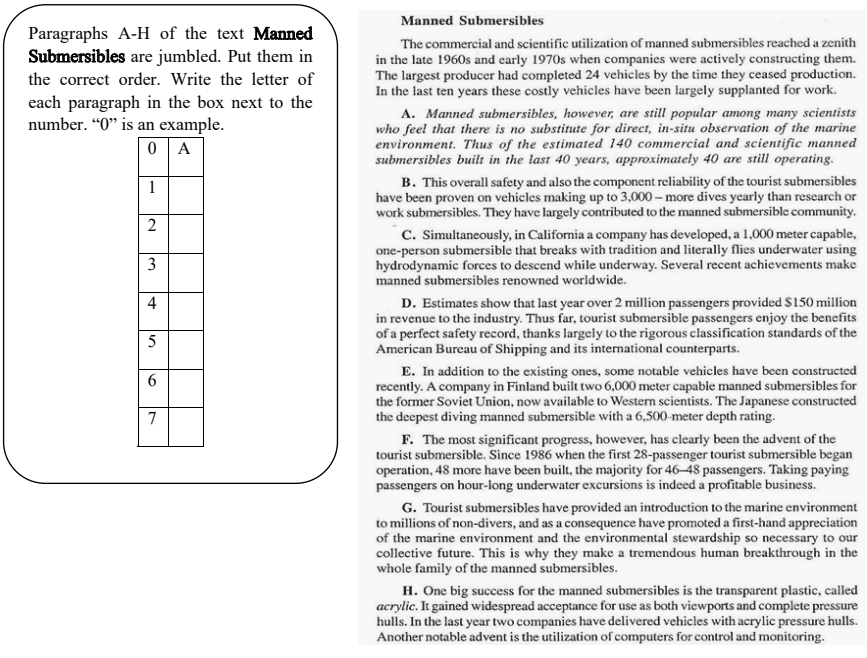
.....

2 Match the unit name (1-7) with its size (A-G) by drawing a line between the two items.

1 fireteam	A 20,000 soldiers
2 company	B 4-5 soldiers
3 battalion	C 100,000 soldiers
4 division	D 1500 soldiers
5 army	E 25 soldiers
6 squad	F 10 soldiers
7 platoon	G 250 soldiers

Figure 4. Short answer questions and matching tasks (taken from Command & Control, J. Taylor and J. Zeter, 2013)

– **Putting jumbled paragraphs together** – the most difficult reading task demanding very good language competence. The ability to discover the way ideas are organized in a text allows learners to put the paragraphs in the correct order following the temporal and logical sequence. While taught to deal with similar tasks, learners should be told to pay special attention to the linking words (such as adding, contrasting, result and time connectors) joining the different paragraphs as well as to the first and the last sentence of each paragraph which are of extreme importance to do the task successfully. Moreover, students should try to find the last (summarizing the presented information) paragraph of the text and then concentrate on the rest of them. Figure 5 shows a similar task.



Paragraphs A-H of the text **Manned Submersibles** are jumbled. Put them in the correct order. Write the letter of each paragraph in the box next to the number. "0" is an example.

0	A
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	

Manned Submersibles

The commercial and scientific utilization of manned submersibles reached a zenith in the late 1960s and early 1970s when companies were actively constructing them. The largest producer had completed 24 vehicles by the time they ceased production. In the last ten years these costly vehicles have been largely supplanted for work.

A. *Manned submersibles, however, are still popular among many scientists who feel that there is no substitute for direct, in-situ observation of the marine environment. Thus of the estimated 140 commercial and scientific manned submersibles built in the last 40 years, approximately 40 are still operating.*

B. This overall safety and also the component reliability of the tourist submersibles have been proven on vehicles making up to 3,000 – more dives yearly than research or work submersibles. They have largely contributed to the manned submersible community.

C. Simultaneously, in California a company has developed, a 1,000 meter capable, one-person submersible that breaks with tradition and literally flies underwater using hydrodynamic forces to descend while underway. Several recent achievements make manned submersibles renowned worldwide.

D. Estimates show that last year over 2 million passengers provided $150 million in revenue to the industry. Thus far, tourist submersible passengers enjoy the benefits of a perfect safety record, thanks largely to the rigorous classification standards of the American Bureau of Shipping and its international counterparts.

E. In addition to the existing ones, some notable vehicles have been constructed recently. A company in Finland built two 6,000 meter capable manned submersibles for the former Soviet Union, now available to Western scientists. The Japanese constructed the deepest diving manned submersible with a 6,500-meter depth rating.

F. The most significant progress, however, has clearly been the advent of the tourist submersible. Since 1986 when the first 28-passenger tourist submersible began operation, 48 more have been built, the majority for 46–48 passengers. Taking paying passengers on hour-long underwater excursions is indeed a profitable business.

G. Tourist submersibles have provided an introduction to the marine environment to millions of non-divers, and as a consequence have promoted a first-hand appreciation of the marine environment and the environmental stewardship so necessary to our collective future. This is why they make a tremendous human breakthrough in the whole family of the manned submersibles.

H. One big success for the manned submersibles is the transparent plastic, called *acrylic*. It gained widespread acceptance for use as both viewports and complete pressure hulls. In the last year two companies have delivered vehicles with acrylic pressure hulls. Another notable advent is the utilization of computers for control and monitoring.

Figure 5. Putting jumbled paragraphs together task (taken from Rakovodstvo za samopodgotovka za izpita za vladeene na angliiski ezik saglasno sporazumenieto na NATO za standartizacia STANAG 6001)

8. Teaching Listening Skills to Military Personnel

Listening as well as reading are the two receptive skills. Listening represents receiving and comprehending sound information. The indirect listening, e.g. listening to a recording, is not the same as the process of listening in a real face-to-face communication. Listening to a recording can cause some problems. We cannot interrupt the speaker, ask for a repetition or an explanation, neither can we plead for slower speech. All these can be avoided in the face-to-face listening process which is characterized with one very important advantage – we can follow the gestures and the facial expressions of the speaker which serve as a great benefit for facilitating the communicative process.

In order to improve their listening skills students should be advised to watch English language films avoiding the subtitles in their native language which will tune their ear to the foreign language. Another useful thing is listening to songs or to the news in English.

Techniques ESP practitioners could find useful to increase the effectiveness in the process of listening are:

– **Make suppositions** – learners should be advised to make predictions on what will be said subsequently or where the conversation turns to.

– **Visualize what they hear** – if students "draw" during the process of listening, they form a mental picture of what is being said and are able to retain and recall the information (they heard) when they need it.

– **Outline the basics** – when listening to authentic speech learners often have difficulties in recognizing words they already know. The speed of speaking also causes some problems. That is why students should try to avoid catching every single word or translating what they hear into their mother tongue and concentrate on perceiving the overall message and following the main thread.

- **Use the context** – students should always endeavour to derive the meaning of unfamiliar words from the context. On the one hand, if they are looking for specific information, they should focus on the key words. On the other hand, if they are listening to a longer speech, they should seek for marking phrases, also called markers, which help them realize when the speaker introduces a new topic, emphasizes something, gives examples or instructions, or concludes.

Types of tasks ESP practitioners teaching military English could use to improve the listening skills of their students are:

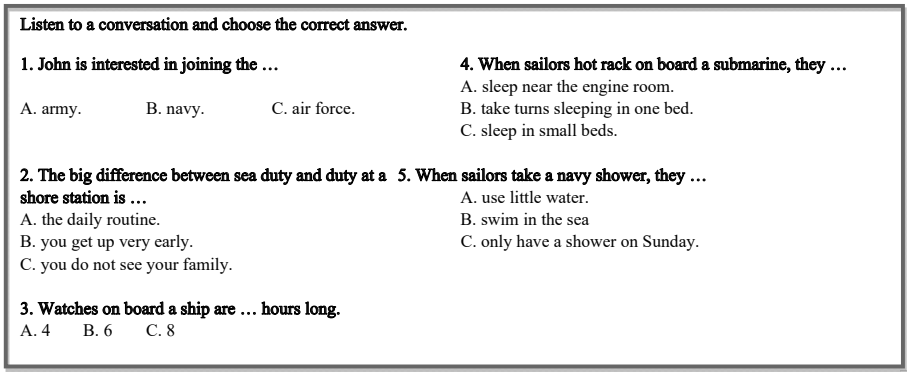
Short answer questions – it is expected that students give short answers containing the intended information instead of writing whole long sentences. This is an example.

Listen and answer the questions.

1. According to the commander, what is the objective of this mission?
2. What is the objective of Sergeant Martin's squad?
3. Which unit will be held in reserve?

Figure 6. Short answer questions task
(adapted from Command & Control, Taylor and Zeter, 2013)

– **Multiple choice** – just like the multiple choice task in the reading section, this exercise contains several answers only one of which is correct. Such tasks prove the abilities of learners to understand a speech supplied with particular information, more abstract notions, such as opinions, attitudes, as well as to draw conclusions. There is an example below.



Listen to a conversation and choose the correct answer.

1. John is interested in joining the …

A. army. B. navy. C. air force.

2. The big difference between sea duty and duty at a shore station is …

A. the daily routine.
B. you get up very early.
C. you do not see your family.

3. Watches on board a ship are … hours long.

A. 4 B. 6 C. 8

4. When sailors hot rack on board a submarine, they …

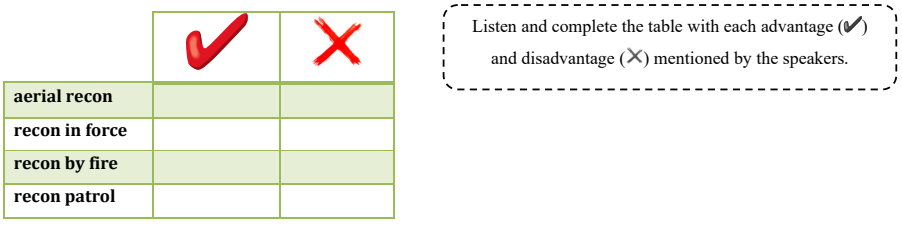
A. sleep near the engine room.
B. take turns sleeping in one bed.
C. sleep in small beds.

5. When sailors take a navy shower, they …

A. use little water.
B. swim in the sea
C. only have a shower on Sunday.

Figure 7. Multiple choice task (taken from Campaign 2, S. Mellor-Clark and Y. Baker de Altamirano, 2005)

– **Fill in the table** – learners have to fill in a table with words or numbers. Such tasks prepare students to listen for specific information. The following table is an example of a similar exercise.



Listen and complete the table with each advantage (✔) and disadvantage (✕) mentioned by the speakers.

	✔	✕
aerial recon		
recon in force		
recon by fire		
recon patrol		

Figure 8. Fill in the table task (adapted from Command & Control, Taylor and Zeter, 2013)

– **Fill in the missing information** – learners are intended to write a word, a phrase, a name, a number or other data spelled correctly. Similar tasks are used to test learners' abilities to handle detailed, precise, selective and purposeful listening. Figure 9 is an example.

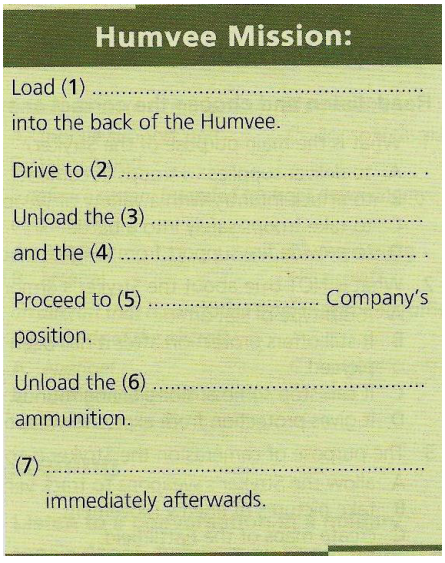


Figure 9. Fill in the missing information task (taken from Command & Control, Taylor and Zeter, 2013)

9. Teaching Writing Skills to Military Personnel

Writing and speaking are the two productive skills. They take more time and practice to master than the receptive skills – reading and listening. Learners of English have a great number of reasons for wanting to write. Some need to write to complete forms, compose emails, take or send confidential messages, write correspondence and reports, place requests, give orders, fill out checklists. Others need to master their writing skills to succeed in academic studies or to advance in their professional field.

Some techniques which could come in handy in order to increase the effectiveness in the process of writing are:

– **Ask themselves** – questions like *Why am I writing?*, *What do I want to say?*, *What am I supposed to write about?* will help students to organize their thoughts in the initial stage of writing and clarify the contents of their work.

– **Organize the process of writing** – no matter what type the written work is, learners should follow some steps: **1)** plan the format, the layout, the contents and the time available; **2)** make a rough draft of the text and edit it; **3)** check their work for grammatical, stylistic or spelling mistakes, for showing knowledge of the language rules, a wide range of vocabulary and well-structured sentences illustrating the use of cohesive markers; **4)** write the fair copy.

– **Think about the audience** – learners as writers should always think about the reader, the one who is meant to read their writing. They should take into careful consideration the style and vocabulary they use in their written work.

Some tasks ESP teachers could find useful for their writing classes are:

– **Written communication** – The first most contemporary way of communication is writing emails. Almost every work environment nowadays is connected to the World Wide Web. The armed forces, of course, are not an exception to the rule. Learners should be well aware of how to compose formal and informal emails and write correspondence in English. Examples of formal and informal style of electronic correspondence written by military professionals are given in the emails below.

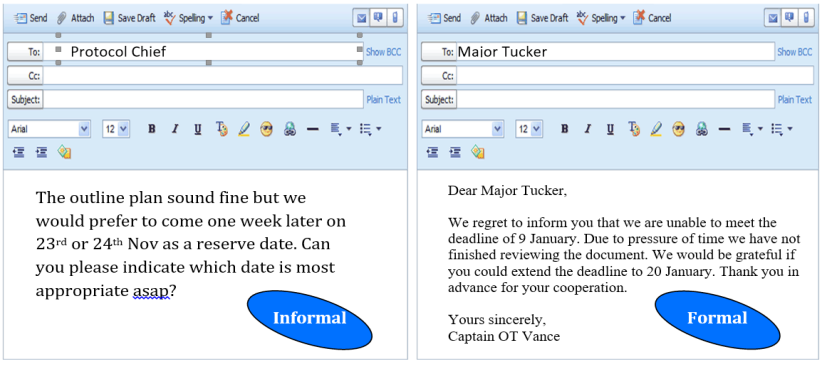
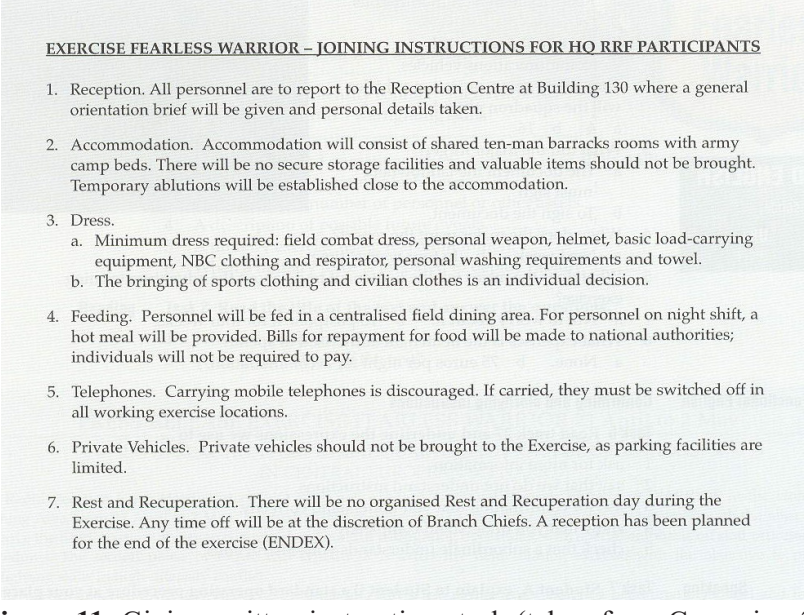


Figure 10. Written communication task (adapted from Campaign, S. Mellor-Clark and Y. Baker de Altamirano, 2005)

– **Giving written instructions** – many people working in the armed forces need to be able to give instructions to all their subordinates. A similar list of instructions typical for the officers is given in Figure 11 as an example. Modal verbs and constructions such as “must”, “should”, “be + to-inf.” are common.

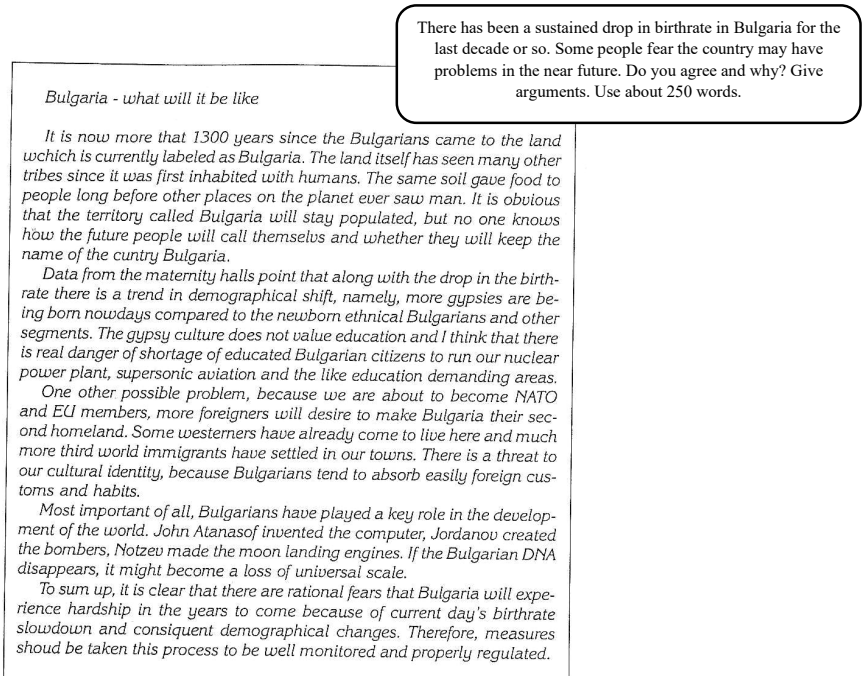


EXERCISE FEARLESS WARRIOR – JOINING INSTRUCTIONS FOR HQ RRF PARTICIPANTS

1. Reception. All personnel are to report to the Reception Centre at Building 130 where a general orientation brief will be given and personal details taken.
2. Accommodation. Accommodation will consist of shared ten-man barracks rooms with army camp beds. There will be no secure storage facilities and valuable items should not be brought. Temporary ablutions will be established close to the accommodation.
3. Dress.
   a. Minimum dress required: field combat dress, personal weapon, helmet, basic load-carrying equipment, NBC clothing and respirator, personal washing requirements and towel.
   b. The bringing of sports clothing and civilian clothes is an individual decision.
4. Feeding. Personnel will be fed in a centralised field dining area. For personnel on night shift, a hot meal will be provided. Bills for repayment for food will be made to national authorities; individuals will not be required to pay.
5. Telephones. Carrying mobile telephones is discouraged. If carried, they must be switched off in all working exercise locations.
6. Private Vehicles. Private vehicles should not be brought to the Exercise, as parking facilities are limited.
7. Rest and Recuperation. There will be no organised Rest and Recuperation day during the Exercise. Any time off will be at the discretion of Branch Chiefs. A reception has been planned for the end of the exercise (ENDEX).

Figure 11. Giving written instructions task (taken from Campaign 2, S. Mellor-Clark and Y. Baker de Altamirano, 2005)

– **Writing an essay** – many professionals studying English find this task not useful. But is it? The military English proficiency test STANAG 6001 includes such a task. Therefore, learners should be taught how to write an essay. In most cases this essay will be very much the same as the essay written in the English for General Purposes classroom. Students should know how to express opinions, give arguments and defend their point. There is an example of such an essay written by a candidate taking the STANAG 6001 test in Bulgaria. There s/he uses wide range of vocabulary, idiomatic phrases, well mastered grammatical structures. The personal attitude of the author is expressed. The written work is structured in the correct way. There is a clear introduction, main part and conclusion. There are a few mistakes, especially spelling ones.



There has been a sustained drop in birthrate in Bulgaria for the last decade or so. Some people fear the country may have problems in the near future. Do you agree and why? Give arguments. Use about 250 words.

Bulgaria - what will it be like

It is now more that 1300 years since the Bulgarians came to the land wchich is currently labeled as Bulgaria. The land itself has seen many other tribes since it was first inhabited with humans. The same soil gave food to people long before other places on the planet ever saw man. It is obvious that the territory called Bulgaria will stay populated, but no one knows how the future people will call themselvs and whether they will keep the name of the cuntry Bulgaria.

Data from the maternity halls point that along with the drop in the birthrate there is a trend in demographical shift, namely, more gypsies are being born nowdays compared to the newborn ethnical Bulgarians and other segments. The gypsy culture does not value education and I think that there is real danger of shortage of educated Bulgarian citizens to run our nuclear power plant, supersonic aviation and the like education demanding areas.

One other possible problem, because we are about to become NATO and EU members, more foreigners will desire to make Bulgaria their second homeland. Some westerners have already come to live here and much more third world immigrants have settled in our towns. There is a threat to our cultural identity, because Bulgarians tend to absorb easily foreign customs and habits.

Most important of all, Bulgarians have played a key role in the development of the world. John Atanasof invented the computer, Jordanov created the bombers, Notzev made the moon landing engines. If the Bulgarian DNA disappears, it might become a loss of universal scale.

To sum up, it is clear that there are rational fears that Bulgaria will experience hardship in the years to come because of current day's birthrate slowdown and consiquent demographical changes. Therefore, measures shoud be taken this process to be well monitored and properly regulated.

Figure 12. Writing an essay task (taken from Rakovodstvo za samopodgotovka za izpita za vladeene na angliiski ezik saglasno sporazumenieto na NATO za standartizacia STANAG 6001)

10. Teaching Speaking Skills to Military Personnel

Speaking goes hand in hand with listening. Children learn to speak their mother tongue after a long period of listening to it. Foreign language learners are like infants on their way of mastering the target language. At first, they need time to listen to that language and only then do they gain confidence to speak it.

The purpose of real communication is to accomplish a task – obtaining information, expressing an opinion, conveying a telephone message, giving orders, giving directions, etc. The goal of teaching speaking skills is communicative efficacy. Learners should be able to conduct a conversation avoiding any misunderstanding caused by grammar, vocabulary or pronunciation mistakes and confining to social and cultural rules.

Techniques for increasing the effectiveness in the process of speaking:

– **Repeat** – in the initial stages of speaking a good way of developing students' pronunciation and articulation is repeating. They should be encouraged

to listen to certain phrases or expressions and repeat them with thinking about what they mean, not just parroting. That way they will get accustomed to listening a foreign language and articulate the words in the correct manner.

– **Speak often** – in order to speak well learners need to speak often. The regular workout strengthens the muscles just like the practice improves learners' speaking skills and it improves them a lot. The mistakes are an integral part of the initial stages of commencing to speak a foreign language. That is why students should be told not to feel embarrassed when making a mistake especially if the mistake does not impede the conception of the conversation. With the practice those mistakes will disappear sooner or later and the learners will become confident foreign language speakers.

– **Watch movies** – watching movies is a great way of facing the language. Learners become witnesses to real life dialogues, discussions, conversations. They come across phrases and expressions typical for the native speakers used in their most characteristic everyday communication. Therefore, learners are getting ready for overcoming difficulties, if any, when faced with similar situations in their professional lives. They have already heard how the language is employed by the native speakers and encountered the directions for its use.

Types of tasks to use while teaching speaking skills to military English students:

Whole group/class discussion – students are supplied with a topic for discussion and are intended to implement one. In order for a discussion to run smoothly, it is advisable that learners do not interrupt each other. Expressions like *First of all ...*, *Then ..., Finally ..., For example/instance ..., I agree/ disagree ...* may be used.

***e.g.**: Discuss the different kinds of meals provided for soldiers in the field.*

Role plays and simulations – students are assigned roles and put into situations that they may encounter in real life outside the classroom. Role plays develop students' sociolinguistic competence because they should be careful with the language they use depending on the situation and the parts they play.

***e.g.**: Imagine you are a doctor on the battlefield. Explain what your job involves.*

Brainstorming – students produce ideas in a limited time on a given topic. They generate ideas freely and quickly without being criticized for what they share. This exercise is very helpful for recalling words and expressions.

Giving information task – such exercises are usually accompanied by pictures or photos and pass in the form of group or pair work. Student A asks questions and student B answers or vice versa. The two partners are not permitted to see each other's pictures. They are expected to ask and answer appropriate questions to talk about the topic and gain the necessary

information. Questions or expressions such as *I'd like to know ..., Could you, please, tell me ...", Could you tell me what this is?* may come in help. The main advantage of pair or group work is that it takes less time than an activity in which each student speaks only to the teacher.

Reporting – very often military professionals have to report. That is why there is an exemplary task based on reporting presented below. In order to give a naturally sounding report learners should know the grammatical rules concerning reported speech. Their teacher should explain to them that a present tense verb is reported with a past tense verb.

TASK: You are lieutenant Kimura. Report what Major Gerard said.

Lieutenant Kimura: What time did you receive reports of the explosion?

Major Gerard: We received a radio report from our OP at 0800 hrs.

Lieutenant Kimura: The local police chief thinks the explosion was caused by the car hitting a tree. Is that consistent with your report?

Major Gerard: There's still a lot of unexploded ordnance in that area, especially anti-personnel mines.

Lieutenant Kimura: The police chief told me there are no mines.

Major Gerard: I have an engineer report on de-mining activities and it says there are still mines in that area.

Figure 13. Reporting task (adapted from Campaign 2, S. Mellor-Clark and Y. Baker de Altamirano, 2005)

11. STANAG 6001

A STANAG (or STANdardisation AGreement) is an international military standard created by NATO to regulate equipment, procedures, tactics, training and everything else that affects how armed forces from different countries work together on operations and exercises.

STANAG 6001 is a language proficiency scale designed to compare language abilities in different countries. Language proficiency is presented by means of four digits which indicate the specific skills – listening, speaking, reading, writing.

A person with the level SLP 2121 has level 2 in Listening, level 1 in Speaking, level 2 in Reading and level 1 in Writing. The code letters that precede the four digits are an abbreviation of Standardised Language Profile.

There is not an official exam for the STANAG 6001 levels. Each country which uses the scale produces its own tests validated according to the STANAG 6001 levels.

12. Comparison between STANAG 6001 and Other Popular Exams

<table>
<tr><th>STANAG 6001</th><th colspan="2">Common European Framework</th><th>Cambridge ESOL Exams</th><th>IELTS</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">5555: Bilingual</td><td colspan="2"></td><td rowspan="3">CPE</td><td>9</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Proficient user</td><td rowspan="2">C2</td><td>8</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">4444: Full Professional</td><td>7</td></tr>
<tr><td>3333: Minimum Professional</td><td>C1</td><td>CAE</td><td>6</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="4">Independent user</td><td>B2+</td><td rowspan="2">FCE</td><td rowspan="2">5</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">2222: Limited Working</td><td>B2</td></tr>
<tr><td>B1+</td><td rowspan="2">PET</td><td rowspan="2">4</td></tr>
<tr><td>B1</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Basic user</td><td>A2+</td><td rowspan="3">KET</td><td>3</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">1111: Elementary</td><td>A2</td><td rowspan="2">2</td></tr>
<tr><td>A1</td></tr>
<tr><td>0000: Unscaled</td><td colspan="2"></td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3"></td><td>0</td></tr>
</table>

The table above illustrates the way STANAG 6001 exam corresponds to other popular English examinations. If a STANAG 6001 candidate's level is 0, they do not get a certificate. That is why Level 0 is marked as "unscaled" in the table. Moreover, it does not correspond to any Common European Framework exam. Levels 1 – 3 are assigned to candidates who are able to use the target language for everyday communicative needs and in a military-related context. Level 4 candidates are expected to use the language fluently in a specialized military context. They are supposed to be able to conduct negotiations and consultations in a multinational military environment. Level 5 from the same STANAG 6001 scale is only achieved by well-educated professionals who are native speakers of the language in question. This level is not still tested in Bulgaria.

13. The Bulgarian STANAG 6001 Test

The Bulgarian STANAG 6001 test is applied to measure the knowledge and skills – reading, listening, speaking and writing, instead of measuring the professional competence of the candidates. Candidates are assigned levels from 0 – 4. If their level is 0 they do not get a certificate. If a candidate is assigned Level 1+, 2+ or 3+, this means that they have covered all the requirements at the preceding level based on the language skills. A candidate with Level 4 is supposed to be able to use English fluently in specific military context.

What does the test consist of?

A. The Bulgarian STANAG 6001 test for Levels 1 – 3 consists of four sections, i.e. one testing each language skill.

Reading	120 min.
Listening	approx. 45 min.
Writing	90 min.
Speaking	20 – 30 min.

B. The Bulgarian STANAG 6001 test for Level 4 consists of four sections, respectively reading, listening, writing, speaking.

Reading	75 min.
Listening	approx. 40 min.
Writing	90 min.
Speaking	approx. 30 min.

Findings

One finding from the research conducted is that English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is fundamentally learner-centered, with content and methodology determined by specific goals. In comparison to general English learners, ESP learners demonstrate higher motivation and are more goal-oriented. This comes to say that needs analysis is not optional; it is the driver of the ESP course, because outcomes are tangible (career, mission, etc.).

ESP reflects a shift in language education from General competence (traditional language teaching) to Context-specific performance (ESP). ESP classification (academic and occupational) reflects functional language use. Language learning is increasingly contextualized, shifting from abstract competence to situated communicative performance.

The role of the modern ESP practitioner is expanded. ESP teachers act as instructors, designers, researchers, evaluators and collaborators. ESP teaching is multi-disciplinary and hybrid, extending beyond traditional pedagogy into curriculum design and applied research. The field is moving toward standardization and professionalization.

In the Bulgarian context, English is essential due to NATO membership. It is essential for international missions, command structures and logistics coordination. This makes language proficiency a strategic operational requirement, not just an educational goal. ESP in the military domain must prioritized because miscommunication can lead to operational consequences and safety implications.

ESP prioritizes performance and efficiency over theoretical knowledge. Each skill is taught with task-oriented strategies: reading (skimming, scanning, prediction); listening (contextual inference, visualization); writing (structured process, awareness); speaking (communicative competence, simulations).

Conclusion

This study has examined the theoretical foundations and practical applications of English for Specific Purposes, with a particular focus on its implementation in military contexts. The analysis demonstrates that ESP represents a significant evolution in language education, shifting the emphasis from general linguistic competence to context-specific, goal-oriented communication. By aligning course design, methodology, and assessment with learners' professional or academic needs, ESP offers a relevant model of language instruction.

The practical component of the study, focusing on military English, illustrates how ESP operates in a real-world context. In countries such as Bulgaria, NATO membership requires a high level of English proficiency for effective participation in multinational operations. Communication in such environments must be precise and efficient as misunderstandings can have serious consequences.

ESP can be seen as a dynamic and responsive approach to language education, one that integrates linguistic, cognitive, and professional dimensions of learning. Its emphasis on relevance and learner needs makes it well-suited to specialized fields where communication is both purposeful and significant.

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