NATO BILC PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR

BEYOND GENERATIONS

Rethinking the military learner in English language education



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One system. Two perspectives.

My experience as a learner informs how I help the system respond to changing needs.

THE LEARNER

450 hours of French

Evening English classes off campus
One-month English course at Rakovski



THE SYSTEM-LEVEL EXPERT

Plan courses

Identify needs and starting levels
Adapt proven practices
Evaluate results



Start with the capability we need.

A SHARED DESIGN CYCLE

We turn changing learner needs and service requirements into useful training.

System experts and instructors shape learning that responds to different starting points.

DEFINE

Clarify job tasks and learner needs.

→

CO-DESIGN

Adapt suitable methods together, combining evidence and instructor expertise.

→

EVALUATE

Check progress and workplace application.

The design must fit regulations, learner needs and service realities.

Use research to understand variation - not to label learners.

Generational perspectives can help us ask better questions - not predict individual ability.

GENERATION X

Different professional and learning histories

GENERATION Y

Changing work and technology contexts

GENERATION Z

Digital familiarity does not ensure proficiency

Look beyond generational labels:

- identify each learner’s starting point;
- design relevant tasks.

As learner needs and service demands change, language training changes too.

The hours show planned training input — not the proficiency achieved.

1

UNTIL 1993

60 h French
60 h Russian

Earlier language mix

2

2000–2003

400 h English/German
or 240 h English

Cohort differences

3

2005

240–450 h
English/French
varied by faculty

Different pathways

4

2008 ONWARDS

300–550 h English

English increasingly central

5

2026/27
750 h most tracks
350 h Military Medicine

Expanded input

ADDITIONAL TRAINING IN THE CURRENT MODEL

Tactical English: 60 hours • English for Medical Purposes: 90 hours • Professional Sergeant Colleges: 240 hours

From qualification to job readiness

Different starting points; one shared goal: professional performance.

ASSESSMENT

Cadets take STANAG 6001 and the state English examination.

FURTHER LEARNING

Cadets reaching STANAG 6001 2-2-2-2 may be offered a second Western or Balkan language.

WORKPLACE READINESS

Selected international assignments may include one month of focused speaking and writing preparation.

Prepare for real tasks, not only for the exam.

What we have in place — and what comes next

How the system is responding to changing needs—and what comes next.

ESTABLISHED

Targeted courses for identified language gaps

ESTABLISHED

General and specialist English; non-intensive and online options

PILOT STARTED 2026

English training NCO colleges

FROM 2027

ALCPT entry test for new soldiers: establish a baseline and identify needs

PILOT PLANNED 2027

Feedback 360°: planned digital feedback from course users

NEW CHALLENGE • JAN 2027

Prepare instructors to teach specialist subjects in English

BY 2032: a full semester taught in English — our long-term ambition.

What we adapt from international practice

International examples can help us respond to learner diversity - if we adapt them to our context.

CZECHIA

Courses at different levels, professional English and online self-study, pre test soldiers

AUSTRIA

Around one third of modules are delivered in English.

WHAT WE TAKE

Different routes for different starting levels.

WHAT WE AVOID

Do not copy models without testing their fit.

OUR TEST

Does it meet our needs and work in practice?

Study the evidence → adapt locally → measure the effect

TRAINING OPTIONS IN PRACTICE

Five complementary pathways—not a sequence

Different learner starting points call for complementary routes toward the same professional goal.

1. GENERAL ENGLISH

Build and maintain core proficiency

2. SPECIAL ENGLISH

Connect language with job tasks

3. SHORT / ONLINE

Flexible learning around duties

4. JOB PREPARATION

Focused speaking and writing

5. INSTRUCTOR SUPPORT

Prepare to teach specialist content in English

Targeted courses • non-intensive formats • online options • workplace preparation

Generations are a lens - not a label.
We respond to individual starting points.
We build professional readiness together.
We adapt what works and evaluate the effect.

Thank you for your attention!

