

EDUCATING LAND FORCES' LEADERS TO THINK FROM JIIM PERSPECTIVE

Paul TUDORACHE

"Nicolae Bălcescu" Land Forces Academy, Sibiu, Romania
tudorache.paul@armyacademy.ro

Lucian ISPAS

"Nicolae Bălcescu" Land Forces Academy, Sibiu, Romania
ispas.lucian@armyacademy.ro

ABSTRACT

Nowadays, the military forces' operational environment is shaped by dynamic changes that give its most representative characteristics such as volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity (VUCA). Based on this and taking into consideration the tendency of NATO to use more prominently its multinational military structures, we are obligated to adapt our way of teaching and training if we want to be effective in the process of educating the next leaders for future military environments. In other words, during the classes, also in the field, we should try to educate and train our cadets, at least, to think from a joint, interagency, intergovernmental and multinational (JIIM) perspective when conducting military actions, even at a small tactical level, such as the platoon.

KEYWORDS: operational environment, VUCA, JIIM, cultural capability

1. Introduction

Generally speaking, the current operational environments are constantly transforming, the involved actors, seeking to identify the most advantageous solutions to influence in a positive fashion the achievement of their own goals. By referring them to the previous operational environments, the current ones, and certainly those that are foreseen in the future, will be much more dynamic, and implicitly, very demanding for the military structures employed. For instance, in some current theatres/areas of operations (AoR) such as Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, Ukraine and so forth, military forces, and especially their leadership, have been confronted with extremely unfamiliar situations, having to carry out missions and make decisions in a

volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) environments. As a result, some modern armies, and especially US Armed Forces, learning from these experiences, introduced in its military doctrine the need for educating and developing the leaders in order to cope with operational environments whose characteristics are VUCA-like. Such perspective also covers the military forces, which, in order to operate in VUCA environments, should use joint, interagency, intergovernmental and multinational (JIIM) actions. Practically, this approach of the US Armed Forces suggests that at the level of employed military structures, the existence and use of a high degree of capability's diversification influence in a positive manner the actionable performance of military forces and, implicitly, the success of operation.

Based on these introductive aspects, the questions that we outline and are trying to answer during this article are as follow: *“Would it be useful to approach the existing learning contents from JIIM perspective at the level of Land Forces Academy cadet (year-end)? What ways could be used in educating/developing the future Land Forces leader to make him to think and act from a complex JIIM perspective?”*

2. The Need to Approach the Learning Contents from JIIM Perspective

During different international missions or exercises, at the level of some national contingents, there were situations when they encountered difficulties regarding the organizational support, operational assistance and fire support. This situation has been also manifested at the level of maneuver subunits, where,

using as example the theater of operations from Afghanistan (considered by military specialists as having VUCA – type features), from the perspective of the national capabilities employed during the missions’ fulfillment, it has been felt only inter branches aspect in supporting their combat actions, which unfortunately was not enough to achieve the actionable performance. Permanently, the tactical Ground Force Commanders (GFC), matched by the demands of operational environments, felt the real need to be supported by multiple capabilities coming from other military services, agencies, intergovernmental organizations and national contingents. This finding proves the fact that the joint, interagency, intergovernmental and multinational (JIIM) issue does not only manifest at a strategic and operational level, as we tend to believe, but also tactical one (Figure no. 1).

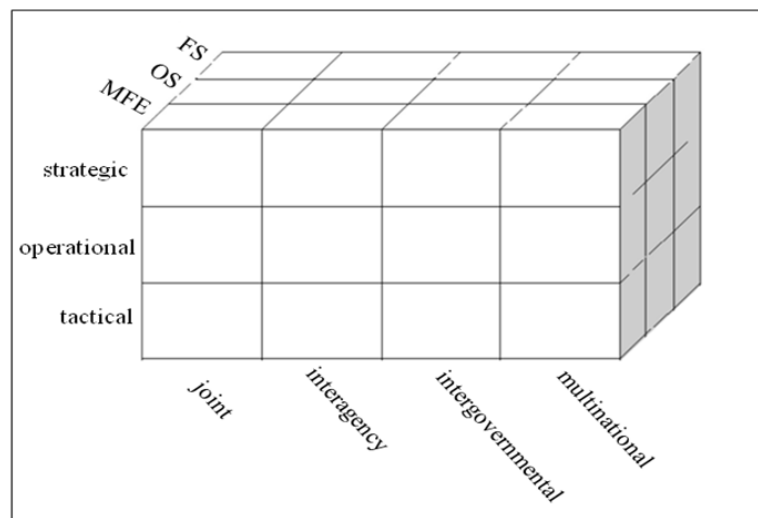


Figure no. 1: JIIM actions at tactical, operational and strategic level
(Source: Wide et al., 2011, p. 6)

To avoid confusions, some of the theoretical clarifications on the JIIM concept are needed. According to US military doctrine the JIIM variables refers to: *“joint: activities involving two or more military services in pursuit of a common end”*; *“interagency: activities involving two*

or more U.S. government agencies, including the Department of Defense, to achieve a common end”; *“intergovernmental: activities intended to coordinate efforts between the Department of Defense and local, regional, and state authorities”* and *“multinational: activities that involve U.S. Department of*

Defense organizations with the military forces of other nations under the rubric of a contingent alliance or coalition” (Wide et al., 2011, p. 4).

In order to strengthen the belief that even in the platoon the JIIM principle is applicable, using our personal experience, we will exemplify its variables on the theater of operations from Afghanistan, as follows: joint – supporting the platoon actions by indirect fire of the Close Air Support (CAS); interagency – cooperation during partnered missions with Afghan National Police (ANP) or intelligence support provided by National Directorate of Security (NDS); intergovernmental – approval by NATO authorities to engage specific targets, particularly special operations forces (SOF) platoon; multinational: providing US EOD support during the confirmation and removal of Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) discovered by the maneuver platoon.

Even though this example is specific to the stability and support operations (SASO) to which Romanian Land Forces take part permanently, we believe that the previous rule is applicable to the platoon’s full range of operations (FSO), due to the fact that today and especially in the future the hypothetical opponents will not use only one type of military action (conventional, unconventional, asymmetric), but they will correlate them in a manner so that they can make it difficult for own military forces to counter them.

Assuming that the issues presented are sufficient to answer to the first question that was addressed in the article’s introduction, the analysis will focus on identifying some ways to develop leader skills in order to enable his action in JIIM environments.

3. The Cultural Capability – a Way of Improving the Leader from JIIM Perspective

Cultural capability is a relatively new way used by the US military to increase the

performance of military structures engaged in JIIM specific environments. The development of a cultural capability of military personnel, in general, and leaders, in particular, was generated by the introduction into the US military doctrine of the seventh war function – engagement, assuming the *“capabilities and skills necessary to work with host nations, regional partners, and indigenous populations in a culturally attuned manner that allows bridging language barriers, opening lines of communication and connections with key political and military leaders in a way that is both immediate and lasting”* (TRADOC Pamphlet 525-8-5, 2014, p. iii).

As far as the theoretical radiography is concerned, the US military doctrine identifies it as *“the ability to apply culture-general knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes (KSAAAs) and culture-specific knowledge to achieve mission success in culturally complex environments”* (Implementation Plan for Language Skills, Regional Expertise, and Cultural Capabilities, 2014, p. 14) or as being *“a blend of cross-cultural and regional competencies that allows a Soldier to help forecast and favorably influence the behavior of a target group or society”* (Army Regulation 350-1, 2014, p. 141). In terms of specific components, they are represented by language and regional expertise that cover regional culture (developed using pre-deployment training), respectively cross-cultural competence shaping general culture, and being addressed through lifelong education (Figure no. 2). Between those two, lifelong education and pre-deployment training is defined a mutual dependence relationship, because with every deployment, the warrior enriches his experience, which, as we know, is a factor of lifelong education. Conversely, lifelong education supports pre-deployment training if the level obtained is high.

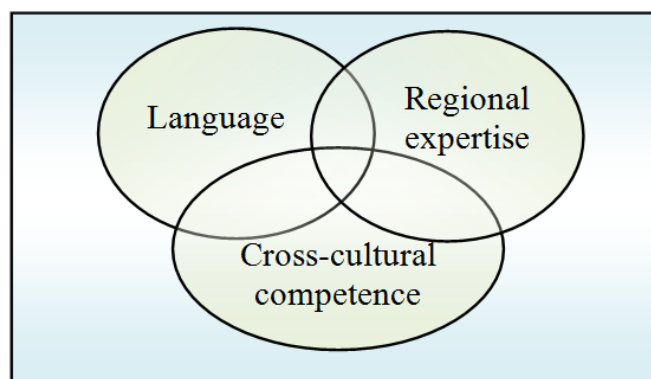


Figure no. 2: Components of cultural capability
(Source: Abbe, 2008, p. 2)

Although there are several armies currently focusing on training and developing the cultural capability of military personnel, we will focus our attention on the model applied in the US Army, currently considered to be one of the most representative, because it manages to correlate pre-deployment training with lifelong education (over the course of

military career). The model is based on the Army Culture and Foreign Languages Strategy (*ACFLS*), launched in 2009, today being applied under the name of the Army Language Regional Expertise Culture Strategy (*ALRECS*). According to *ALRECS*, the levels of cultural capability for US Army personnel are described in Table no. 1.

Table no. 1

The levels of cultural capabilities' components for Army personnel

	CULTURAL CAPABILITY		
	Language	Regional expertise	Intercultural competence
Conventional Forces	basic (selected personnel)	basic → fully proficient (over the course of a career)	
Unconventional Forces (ARSOF)	basic	fully proficient	
Linguists	master	basic	fully proficient
FAO	master		
<i>basic</i>	Basic awareness, can apply in simplest situations; Individuals require close & extensive guidance; ILR Standard: 0+/0+, ILR Goal: 1/1 (select individuals who enter in the Army with a background in foreign language).		
<i>fully proficient</i>	Through understanding, can apply in routine and non-routine situations; can work independently with minimal guidance and directions; ILR Standard: 1+/1+, ILR Goal: 2/2.		
<i>master</i>	Extensive level of expertise, can apply in highly and ambiguous situations across range disciplines; acknowledged authority, adviser, and key resource in the organization; ILR Standard: 2/2/1+, ILR Goal: 3/3/3.		

(Source: CJCSI 3126.01A, 2014, p. E-1)

These levels can be reached using both lifelong education and pre-deployment training. First one, lifelong education has an individual aspect and focuses on all components: language, regional expertise

and cross-cultural competence. To achieved the established levels it is necessary to go through four stages, accessing the next stage requiring going through the previous one and only after a specific period of time.

For instance, an officer leader belonging to conventional forces must complete the following courses:

- Basic Officer Leader Course (BOLC) – can be accessed by first and second lieutenants, at the end of which they being able to demonstrate basic cultural awareness, the ability to apply knowledge in JIIM environments with a level of acceptable competence;

- Captains Career Course (CCC) – addressed to captains, completing the course giving them the opportunity to demonstrate elementary cultural understanding and the ability to apply knowledge in JIIM environments with a level of competence serving as leaders and staff officers for tactical level;

- Intermediate Level Education (ILE) – can be taken by majors and lieutenant colonels, enabling them to demonstrate basic linguistic competence necessary to initiate and maintain conversation, and to

consider aspects of different cultures in planning and conducting military operations in JIIM environments, tactical-operational level;

- Senior Service College (SSC) – is for colonels, and at the end of which they being able to demonstrate strategic leadership in JIIM environments and to evaluate cross-cultural competence in the synthesis of strategies, campaign plans involving the use of different partners (Willoughby and Ibrahimov, 2014, p. 17).

Regarding the institutional responsibilities, Centers of Excellence (CoE) are responsible for stages 1, 2 and first half of the 3rd stage, Leader Doctrine and Education (LDE) covers the second half of stage 2 and the entire stage 3, while the last stage is for United States Army War College (USAWC).

For the other personnel of conventional forces, the needed military courses are shown in Table no. 2.

Table no. 2

Career development (lifelong learning strategy) specific to cultural capability of US Army conventional forces

Conventional forces	CoE		LDE		USAWC/USASMA
	Stage 1 recruit – end IMT	Stage 2 end IMT – 7 th year	Stage 3 8 th year – 16 th year	Stage 4 starting with 17 th year	Stage 4 starting with 17 th year
Officer	BOLC <i>competence in JIIM environments, platoon/company level</i>	CCC <i>competence in JIIM environments as leader and staff officer, tactical level</i>	ILE <i>competence in JIIM environments, tactical - operational level</i>	SSC <i>competence in JIIM environments, strategic level</i>	
Warrant Officer		WOBC	WOAC		
Enlisted (PFC, NCO)	AIT	WLC	ALC	SLC	SMA
Civilian			TBD		
basic → fully proficient (over the course of career)					
Character/Presence/Intellect (over the course of career)					
	<u>Inculcate</u> cultural self-awareness and appreciate the impact of culture on operations (Presence) <u>Recognize</u> the importance of cross-cultural competence (Character) Describe the relevance of fundamental cross-cultural skills (Intellect)	<u>Implement</u> knowledge of joint force, interagency and multinational capabilities /limitations, and legal considerations (Intellect) <u>Apply</u> cultural considerations when interpreting environment in planning and executing operations (Character) <u>Demonstrate</u> enhanced cross-cultural communications and conflict resolution skills (Presence)	<u>Apply</u> knowledge of joint force, interagency and multinational capabilities/ limitations, and legal considerations in a specific operational environment (Intellect) <u>Distinguish</u> cross-cultural competency in planning and executing operations (Character) <u>Apply</u> enhanced cross-cultural communication and conflict resolution skills (Presence)	<u>Perform</u> strategic leadership in a multicultural, JIIM environment (Presence) <u>Evaluate</u> cross-cultural competency in synthesizing strategies, estimates, and campaign plans employing unified partners (Intellect) <u>Integrate</u> critical culture elements into all unified land operations (Intellect) <u>Assess</u> the implications of a unit's actions and initiate cultural change to operate effectively within a specific environment (Intellect)	

(Source: Willoughby & Ibrahimov, 2014, p. 15)

The second part of the model, pre-deployment training has a collective aspect and focuses on the language, respectively regional expertise. Cultural training is the responsibility of TRADOC Culture Center (TCC) and is carried out by the Mobile Training Teams (MTT), while Defense Language Institute and Foreign Language

Center (DLIFLC) focuses on linguistic training using both MTT and Learning Training Detachments (LTD). Also, since 2013 have been used Regionally Aligned Forces (RAF), having the mission of training and mentoring national partner security forces. Graphically, pre-deployment training is covered in Table no. 3.

Table no. 3

<i>Pre-deployment training for US Army personnel</i>		
Responsibilities	Next deployment area	
	Language	Culture
DLIFLC	MTTs, LTDs	
TCC		MTTs
RAF	units/ US Army	units/ US Army

Locations	from DLIFLC & CoE	from TCC & CoE
-----------	-------------------	----------------

(Source: Tudorache, 2017, p. 34)

This is how, by combining harmoniously the lifelong education and pre-deployment training, the US Army assures the certainty of educating and developing the leader's skills from JIIM perspective in order to be able to operate in current and future operational environments.

3. Conclusions

Consequently, the education and development of those leaders being able to cope with VUCA-type environments should become a permanent concern for most of the armies, in general, and for Romanian one, particularly. In this regard, "Nicolae Bălcescu" Land Forces Academy has the noble role to lay the foundation of this approach, being favored by the numerous ongoing partnerships and initiatives with

cultural/intercultural specific that are carried out at the regional and international level (ERASMUS+, IMAF, CULP, EMYLIO).

On the other hand, we need to be aware that this approach can be quite difficult, because it has as the finality educating/developing a leader able to cope with unforeseen situations, when he/she feels that is not prepared to handle with. This didactic approach of "preparing leaders to be unprepared" has to be interactive and applicative, requiring teachers and trainers to possess a high level of knowledge and expertise. It is about learning others from own experience, in this way making the teaching act more attractive and performant in terms of transmitting and understanding the learning contents.

REFERENCES

- Abbe, A. (2008). *Study Report 2008-04: Building Cultural Capability for Full-Spectrum Operations*. United States Army Research Institute for Behavioral and Social Sciences.
- Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. (2013). *CJCSI 3126.01A: Language, Regional Expertise, and Culture (LREC) Capability Identification, Planning, and Sourcing*.

Headquarters Department of the Army. (2014). *Army Regulation 350-1: Army Training and Leader Development*. Washington, DC.

Department of Defense. (2014). *Implementation Plan for Language Skills, Regional Expertise, and Cultural Capabilities*. Washington, DC: Defense Language and National Security Education Office.

Department of the Army. (2014). *TRADOC Pam 525-8-5: U.S. Army functional concept for engagement*. Fort Eustis: Training and Doctrine Command.

Tudorache, P. (2017). *Capabilitatea culturală – cerință a performanței structurilor militare multinaționale în contextul mediilor operaționale specifice secolului al XXI-lea*. Sibiu: Editura Academiei Forțelor Terestre „Nicolae Bălcescu”.

Wide, M. et al. (2011). *Developing U.S. Army Officers' Capabilities for Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental and Multinational Environments*. Santa Monica: Rand Corporation.

Willoughby, M., & Ibrahimov, M. (2014). Army Language, Regional Expertise and Culture Program, *Military Intelligence Professional Bulletin (PB 34-14-3)*, 12-21.