

# Multilingualism as an intercultural phenomenon in the framework of Peace support operations

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MULTILINGUALISM  
AS AN INTERCULTURAL PHENOMENON  
IN THE FRAMEWORK OF PEACE SUPPORT  
OPERATIONS

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*"To understand somebody better*

*leads to a better understanding!"*

(Josef Ernst, 2007)



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## Foreword

There are three personal operating areas that have aroused my interests for a long time, finally persuading me to deal with this topic more closely:

Firstly, there is a direct connection to my profession as a member of the Language Institute of the Austrian Armed Forces (AAF LngInst). It was after the fall of the Iron Curtain and the collapse of the Warsaw Pact when I was called upon by the former head of the Language Institute to the language community. At the former Department of Foreign Languages, which became an organisational part of the National Defence Academy in Vienna in the year 1984, I received at the beginning of my military career some basic language training in the Czech language. The institute was restructured in 1999 and was renamed "The Austrian Armed Forces Language Institute". As a member of the Western Slavic languages Section I started my career as a teacher, interpreter and translator after graduating from the Linguistic Master Programme at the University of Vienna. Especially in the first few years after the end of the bipolar situation in central Europe and the fall of the Iron Curtain the number of cross-border contacts with our neighbours increased drastically, not only in the civilian world but also in the military area. In addition to general language training, expertise in military terminology was required, because neither qualified personnel nor appropriate material (for example specialized military dictionaries, glossaries or encyclopaedias) was available on the civilian market. Part of my activities at the Institute was also to establish linguistic cooperation with Language Training Institute of the Czech Armed Forces in Vyškov. The output of this cooperation was the Czech-German Dictionary of Czech Military Abbreviations.<sup>1</sup>

Secondly, there were personal participations in several peacekeeping missions, many duty travels abroad and other activities and cooperation with members of national and international organisations, agencies and institutions, which encouraged me to this thesis. For my first two foreign missions which I served with the United Nations on Cyprus, I applied and got the job of the Motor Transport Officer (MTO) and the second time I was the responsible as the Sector Economic and Humanitarian Officer

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<sup>1</sup> Josef Ernst, Slovník českých vojenských zkratk, Vienna 1997.

(SecEcoHumO). Such a work place does not exist in the Austrian Armed Forces at home. Especially in the second job I had been in contact every day with local authorities on the one side and the local population of both ethnicities, the Turkish and the Greek, on the other side. This was not only extremely interesting, but very often also a diplomatic challenge, because not all disputes and conflicts have been solved between the two ethnical groups. I participated in other international missions in the Middle East, where I served among others in South Lebanon, Syria and in Israel. During this time I also visited Egypt and Jordan, whose cultures deeply impressed me. Additionally it extended my knowledge and my horizon. In this region as a whole, were, and still are today, tensions between the ethnic groups. Due to these potential tensions the Middle East is still called a powder keg. Additional to political and cultural aspects, it is a fact that, the mission called UNTSO, where I served in the Middle East, was supported by military observers from 22 different nations. The fact that this is not an unimportant intercultural aspect is often overlooked. Intercultural awareness among soldiers of troop contributing countries will be addressed as well in this thesis.

Thirdly, it is the task of the language institute to prepare not only the members of the military diplomat (defence attachés) service or officers participating in international exercises, but also to train soldiers linguistically and intercultural, in particular for peace support operations. This has to be done in accordance with the relevant departments. And there is the discrepancy concerning language training and intercultural training: language training, which takes a much longer period of time, is well accepted, whereas intercultural training takes place only in a very short period of time, predominantly during pre-deployment preparation. With all these and several other experiences from the above listed activities, the desire animated me, to deal with this topic in greater detail and to go with scientific methodology deeper into this matter in order to present possible solutions. With this background and under these circumstances, the present work is to be understood. But I want to see it as a personal goal as well: to search for ways (and hopefully to find them) to offer suggestions and present recommendations for improvement in the linguistic and intercultural area. At this point I would like to express my sincere thanks to all those who have taken the time to give answers to my difficult questions in my elaborated questionnaire to the best of one's knowledge and belief. I

would like to thank all those who supported me in this work, either in content or linguistic terms, in the creation of tables and figures or when laying out the written copy.

By name I would like to express my sincere thanks to my previous superior, Brigadier general MA Horst Walther, Hofrat Dr. Christoph Brugger from the Military Psychological Service (Heerespsychologischer Dienst), MA Helmut Slop from the Centre for International Operations (CIO) for their support, Colonel Dr. Wolfgang Zecha for his advices and Mrs. Doris Hofbauer for the lay outting. Many thanks go to Ministerialrat Dietmar Hübsch, the General Secretary of the "Austrian Peacekeepers Association" (VÖP), for his assistance. My special thanks go to the Vice-Rector of the National University of Public Service in Budapest, Major General Prof. Dr. József Padányi, who accompanied me throughout the whole period of my studies. So, it was always a pleasure to work with him.

The time required for this work was also a burden for the family. Therefore, I would like to express my gratitude to my family.



## Chapter 1 Introduction

The liquidation of the Warsaw Pact and hence the resulting independence of former block-countries as well as the process of autonomy and independence of some countries, either by unification (Germany) or by separation (Czech and Slovak Republic), has changed the political situation fundamentally not only, but especially in Europe. The global financial crisis had also the requirements to meet these challenges successfully, which it immensely strengthened.

The possibilities of the third dimension, namely the Internet, both of political and infrastructural nature, are getting bigger, but also more dangerous. "Cyber war" is no longer a concept of a juvenile digital gaming world, but a concrete threat and potential danger. Through an extensive "cyber attack" in 2007 a whole country "obtained" the feeling of such threat scenario, and Estonia in particular suffered from it.

The world has seen for the first time, what danger can threaten an entire country. If it's based on electric and electronic infrastructure everything is paralyzed. How vulnerable is a country where not only the banking sector, the media and ministries as implementing agencies, but also the electricity and medical care or transport on land at sea and in the air do no longer work?

Where until recently the so-called social networks considered as communication alternative for the younger generation, has now become an almost unpredictable factor of global significance. There are hardly any companies, enterprises, politicians, artists, or even individuals who do not have an Internet website or aren't present on Face book, Twitter or a similar network. Even voting for global public opinion polls or political elections are possible on the Internet.

All these fundamental changes have to be met by the Armed Forces under the political specifications and guidelines of their governments. Almost all of them are now facing the difficult task of meeting these difficulties and entirely new threats with less financial and personnel resources than previously under different conditions and with (still) non-qualified personnel.

Unfortunately it must also be noted that the number of conflicts in our world, despite elimination of power blocs and despite many peace efforts have not become smaller. On the contrary, the prevention, mitigation and stopping of conflicts have become increasingly difficult. This leads us to the example of Syria, the youngest country of the "Arab Spring" which shows us very clearly the lack of

- the disagreement among the 'International Community' including the perception obsolete veto by now,
- the disagreement in the conflict solution for Syria even among in the Arab League countries and
- political or economic interest of one of the great powers (excluding Russia) as a solution of this particular conflict.

"Cyber attacks" on government infrastructure and banks, industrial espionage in companies and cybercrime increases every year dramatically. Many IT security and surveillance programmes on the internet have not been able to meet these threats. The "legal side" is constantly lagging far behind and can do nothing more than react.

With the global and dangerous world particularly the United States has made painful experiences: Although the United States likes to be seen as the "world police" (and is often designated in this way by America itself), they have suffered enormous losses both in Iraq and in Afghanistan. Among other things, they suffered also losses by disregarding linguistic and intercultural competence. Although I am not of the same opinion as Arendt, who claims that "... only combined knowledge, shared wisdom and mutual respect for all traditions can solve the global issues we are facing",<sup>2</sup> but it is a decisive factor, or at least a very important aspect.

The internationalization of the Armed Forces requires not only thorough competence in foreign languages and professional language training, but also an appropriate intercultural competence.

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<sup>2</sup> Arendt (1957), p. 535

Austria has a tradition of participating in international peace missions over decades, predominantly in the framework of the United Nations. More than fifty years ago, exactly in the year 1960, barely five years after the accession of Austria to the United Nations,<sup>3</sup> the first Austrian contingent (medical unit) was sent to the Central African country of Congo. Many of the 60,000-70,000 Austrian soldiers (an exact number can no longer be recalled) however, they were repeatedly abroad, some of them even fifteen to twenty times. A remarkable feature of most missions in the past, was the fact that the soldiers, although they had a good command in the working language: English (at least in management positions), but extremely rarely did they have any rudimentary knowledge of the national language(s). It was the same with the national and cultural understanding of the target region or the target country.

And this "remarkable feature" has been observed for many years: In the mission on Cyprus (1972-2001) as well as in Syria on the Golan Heights (1974-2013) and in the Balkans (since 1999) there were or still is an Austrian military contingent. But hardly anyone among the soldiers there spoke Greek, Turkish, Arabic, or any of the Balkan languages on a communicative level. Anyway, it is amazing, that the Austrian Blue Helmets, as they were also called, were and still are highly successful in their duties, as in 2002, Major General John McColl, the commander of the International Assistance Force (ISAF) remarked: "Austrians are firm, fair, skilled and friendly soldiers, excellent for Peace Support Operations".<sup>4</sup>

Occasionally there are professional or reserve officers or NCOs who speak one of the Balkan languages, due to their migration background and voluntarily signed up for a foreign assignment in this region.<sup>5</sup> However, it is forbidden by law to send such soldiers who have a personal relationship with one of the conflict parties. This is justified by a possible problem of impartiality. But it is precisely their skilful, sensitive and diplomatic action which could be extremely useful for the success of a mission. This prohibition should be reflected and reconsidered. However, this should not be investigated by the research questions in this work. The questions of

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<sup>3</sup> The admission was signed on 14 12 1955.

<sup>4</sup> See also Schmidl (2005), p. 190

<sup>5</sup> For participating in a foreign operation prevails in the Austrian military still the principle of voluntariness.



how it was previously possible to be successful, on what basis, in what areas and what measures of improvement could be made to meet the changing and increasingly difficult demands.

With a short historical review of the beginnings of Austria's participation in international missions, I should provide evidence of how the development has progressed, what changes were there, and what were the responses to this.

Austria is in accordance with Federal Constitutional Law obliged to have defence forces only ("The army is responsible for the military defence").<sup>6</sup> The Austrian participation in peace support operations, which organisation even is in charge or has the lead (United Nations, European Union, Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, NATO) depends always on a decision of the Ministerial Council decision and on a mandate of the United Nations. Under these circumstances these efforts have to be seen in order to understand why foreign languages together with an appropriate intercultural competence, are inherent to this work. In contrast, the United States Armed Forces consider foreign language skills and cultural understanding primarily as important knowledge of being able to successfully fight potential enemies.<sup>7</sup> Despite this priority, reconsideration has begun to take place in the United States, particularly from a peace support viewpoint and not from the viewpoint of the "world police" any more. This is due to the increasing number of operations that are not defined as warlike operations ("Military operations other than war"). Therefore, in addition to the conventional tactical skills knowledge in regional and local cultures is needed.

This work is also intended to show that there are not enough linguistic resources within the Austrian Armed Forces in order to carry out the ambitious goals, both in the bilateral and multilateral context. But it should also offer solving of problems and recommendations to enable military personnel to be able to interact linguistically and culturally successfully in different scenarios.

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<sup>6</sup> Bundesverfassungsgesetz (Federal Constitutional Law), Article 79(1)

<sup>7</sup> See also Deborah M. Ellis, *Integrated Language and Culture*, p. 1f

In addition to the soldier's profession intercultural sensitivity and language skills are the most important prerequisites for successful interactions in an international military environment. Because of the complexity of this research field the following hypothesis are being raised:

- *"Multilingualism and Interculturalism together constitute the guarantee for a successful interaction in Peace Support Operations."*
- *"The implementation of multilingualism and interculturalism must be in the near future included into the curricula of training activities for all professional soldiers at all levels, whether they are career courses or training seminars."*
- *"In addition to the soldier's profession intercultural sensitivity and language skill are the most important prerequisites for successful interactions in an international military environment."*
- *"I think the material and the research method support it, and they are important and reinforce the new scientific results."*

To examine these aspects in more detail is a result, inter alia, of the language institute's task, to prepare Austrian soldiers for foreign missions linguistically and in cooperation with other departments also interculturally.

Along with the surveys and the statistical evaluation of the questions given by a questionnaire on language skills, language training and intercultural aspects, combined with the reflection of the own foreign assignment experience, should provide an empirical confirmation of the measures taken to the given statements and the theoretical relationship.

In the present work we have different implications and factors referring to both sectors. Especially their impacts will be examined more closely. The presentation of these factors will show the complexity which is inherent to this topic.

It should be proved that only the combination of multilingualism together with intercultural competence largely share the success in fulfilling the mission of Peace Support Operations, not exclusively but to a high degree excessively.

This still results in a plurality of additional questions, which should also be investigated in this work:

- In what way and to what extent do multilingualism and intercultural competence support Peace Support Operations? – Thus the focus should be on the languages of the different areas of operations, the intercultural communication and the intercultural language teaching at the language institute.
- What sorts of criteria of intercultural competence are effective in a military environment? – Some fields of activities of interculturality in military situations are being examined here more closely.
- How can intercultural training be standardized and implemented in mission preparations? – These models will be presented in order to meet the requirements in these two challenging fields.
- What factors can support access to intercultural and language training? – Both, general and as well as military measures and activities should show how these possibilities can be achieved.
- How can language training and intercultural training be better linked as part of the pre-deployment preparation? – Organisational, structural and personnel measures should show how improvements can be achieved in this case.

Deriving from the main statement it will be necessary to define both, multilingualism and intercultural competence in the Austrian Armed Forces in terms of increased participation in Peace Support Operations. In addition to this, it is also important to incorporate the commitment of the increased participation in international peace missions into the defence doctrine and concepts (Military Strategic Concept, Training Concept, etc.) as part of Austria's Security and Defence Policy.

The implementation of multilingualism and interculturalism must be in the near future included into the curricula of training activities at all levels, whether they are career courses or training seminars.

To achieve the objectives of the chosen theme, the triangulation of methods was chosen in this work. This "mixture of methods" (mixed-methods designs or mixed-methods approach) consists of the

- analytically-nomological method, a statistical method with
  - standardized examination methods,
  - quantifying the findings and
  - evaluation by means of statistical methods.

Through this mixture of methods the objectivity (traceability and transparency), reliability (accuracy of data collection) and validity (validity of the results) should reach the highest possible level.

- explorative-interpretative (hermeneutic) method, a method of detecting complex areas of reality with the aim of their changing. Validity, objectivity and reliability are here the most important criteria, whereas statistical criteria don't play a dominant role. The essential tools that have been applied in this survey are in the form of interviews, discussions or questionnaires, observation and collection and analysis of documents such as weekly or duty rosters, teaching materials or portfolios.

Specifically, the following formats as a "mixture of methods" were selected and chosen in this work:

- Study, research, survey and analysis of concepts, guidelines and directives of the Austrian Armed Forces relating to the two areas;
- Study, systematization, evaluation and analysis of personal accessible research literature, such as publications (books, journals, essays and articles) as well as various research documents related to

this subject, including the summary of common and contradictory factors and own conclusions;

- Consultations with national and international military experts on this topic, in particular experts at the Austrian Ministry of Defence (BMLVS), at the Austrian Joint Forces Command (SKFü) at the Centre for International Operations (Kdo AuslEBa), the Austrian Military Psychological Service (HPD), at the Training Department of the MoD (GrpAusb), especially at the two subordinated Training Sections (AusbAbtA and B), at the Institute for Social and Human Sciences (IHSW), at the Defence Language Training Centre as part of the Military Faculty of the University of Public Administration in Budapest (Nemzeti Közszoigálati Egyetem – NKE), the American Defence Language Institute (US Defence Language Institute Foreign Language Center – DLI FLC), the Defence Centre of Languages and Culture in Shrivenham (DSLCLC), the Language Institute of the Armed Forces of the Czech Republic (Ústav jazykové přípravy Armády České republiky – UJP AČR) and the Austrian Armed Forces Language Institute (AAF LngInst);
- Reflection and classification of personal experiences on this subject during various Peace Support Operations and various positions i.e. as a Staff, Liaison or Specialized officer as well as a Military observer and finally as a Contingent Commander under the flag of the United Nations on Cyprus, as well as in Israel, Syria and Lebanon;
- Reflection of own presentations and the results of the international NATO-PfP Conference on "Multilingualism and Interculturality in a Military Environment" in 2007 in Vienna, where "Developing and Delivering of Linguistic and Cultural Competencies" the general topic was and, which was planned, organized and conducted by the Austrian Armed Forces Language Institute. The outputs and findings were published afterwards;
- Inclusion and incorporation of own articles, published in various scientific books and journals, as well as personal presentations at various national and international conferences, workshops, seminars and symposiums;

- Collecting and gathering of data and evaluation of the results of the survey conducted at the Austrian Centre for International Operations after the repatriation of the soldiers using a standardized questionnaire;
- Statistical processing of specific language training data in the Austrian Armed Forces and their analysis.

This study is divided into seven chapters, in which the political changes are presented that have led Austria's security and defence policy to a shift of paradigm. But this has not changed the situation of general global security and safety.

On the contrary, there are more conflicts than ever. In most cases there are attempts to receive a UN mandate for solving conflicts, for legalizing possible interests, such as securing supplies of raw materials. To conduct legalized operations makes explanations easier. With the formation of new coalitions actors try to oppose many new conflicts, but in time of scarcity of resources, partly caused by the global financial crisis, this is becoming increasingly difficult. Under these circumstances it is extremely difficult to act and react effectively. Organisational and personnel downsizing create a kind of vacuum in response activities.

Austerity measures cause in almost all countries, a strong reduction of the armed forces, both in material and human terms. This leads to more joint operations and to an increased multinational composition. Additional to this is the fact that it is paid too little attention is paid to conflict prevention. Therefore, the response time is cut short for a decision to participate in an operation is becoming lesser and lesser. The lack of language skills and intercultural competence in this context does not play an insignificant role.

Chapter 1 deals as an introduction chapter with the dissertation work per se, which means

- the choice and the background of the topic

- the hypothesis in connection with the linked research questions on this topic
- the various methods that have been brought in a mixture for the elaboration of this dissertation
- the structure, the aim finally and the purpose of this research
- the added value resulting from this thesis

In Chapter 2, the different types of Peace Support Operations are analyzed in terms of their definitions and their contents. Subsequently, the Austrian situation is examined; especially the factors and criteria for Austria's participation in Peace Support Operations are considered as relevant. These factors should demonstrate the need for a comprehensive access ("comprehensive approach"). In addition to the historical overview of Austria's contributions in such missions, both the current status as well as the outlook on possible future operations is presented.

In Chapter 3, the concept and the content of intercultural competence is closer investigated, especially in connection with an international military environment. Starting from the general and various terminologies a direct reference to the Austrian Armed Forces will be shown. At this stage the question is being raised whether an internal and an external interculturality also exists. Additionally, whether a kind of intercultural language teaching is already taking place or if this kind of teaching is really new.

Chapter 4 is dedicated to multilingualism, which is first subjected to a general and after an in-depth Austro-military reflection. In this chapter, the basic difference between the internal and external effects of multilingualism in the Austrian Armed Forces is worked out. To this purpose not only the Armed Forces of other countries are taken for comparison, but also the situation in the multinational state of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. Policy implications on multilingualism in the Austrian Armed Forces are presented in this chapter, influencing both, the part of the civilian sector, linked to the European Union Education Policy, as well as of the military side, linked to NATO, where Austria is involved in the "Partnership for Peace" programme (Partnership for Peace – PfP). International

organisations, in which Austria is a member and under their auspices were missions are carried out, will complete and round up this issue.

In Chapter 5, the different factors that are both for multilingualism and for the intercultural competence in the Austrian Armed Forces of crucial importance, are illuminated. They are divided into four groups:

1. national civil fundamental areas/documents
2. international organisations
3. national military guidelines and regulations
4. other factors

The intensity of the relationship of these factors with the Austrian Army is indeed different. In addition, they do not claim to be complete. The selected international organisations all have the security policy aspect in common. One of the two areas of national civilian areas dealing with the civilian education system comprises of primary and secondary school only. We aren't going to compare systems here, since the military training is a part of tertiary education, but rather to answer the question: what effect or impact do language classes in the schools have on the military?

However, individual factors were not thoroughly screened, such as the Military Service Law, because these are currently in a transitional phase and very soon they are may be obsolete.

Chapter 6 contains the empirical part of the study, which was carried out mainly in the form of a questionnaire and through personal experiences and discussions with other experts and fellow-officers. In addition to the creation and the structure of the questionnaire, the aim and purpose, the type of data collection, the key issues and the analysis and evaluation as well as the conclusions will be presented.

In Chapter 7 the summary and the recommendations arising from the conclusions are presented. Furthermore, solutions and models for improving the educational situation in the two areas will also be presented. Such solutions and models already exist in similar form in other, partly



civilian areas. Here, they were, however, adjusted to the military. At the end they are again summarized.

The primary objective of this work is to capture the complexity of the subject in general and the two areas: multilingualism and intercultural competence, in particular. At the end a new perspective to these areas should be presented, especially in the international military context, to achieve a deeper understanding and a more sensitive awareness. It is important to identify, on the one hand the complexity of interculturalism at several levels and on the other hand to work out the visibility of multilingualism. In the latter case, the field of interests should be further more specified in order to investigate to what extent interculturalism plays a role in the Austrian Armed Forces.

The present work will also show a remarkable number of factors which are inherent to these issues and the deep impacts they can have not only to the military but can also be directly linked to the civilian market. These include the fundamental changes to the Austrian Armed Forces that arise from globalization in the context of Peace Support Operations.



On 29 November 2011 a Hercules C-130 of the Austrian Armed Forces landed at the airport of Beirut. On board was the command ahead of the Austrian contingent, which prepared the replacement for the soldiers in South Lebanon. (Photo: Bundesheer/Wolfgang Grebien)

It may also provide the impetus for a broader discussion showing that Peace Support Operations require experts with professional skills, which have been rather neglected so far. This requires soldiers who know far more than their military skills. Their images and tools differ greatly from the classic war fighter. Specific requirements are needed.

This work will demonstrate to a wider audience the discrepancy between "peace supporters" and "fighters". Both politics and society as a whole have to bear in mind that they substantially share the responsibility. Nevertheless, it will also be proved that the individuals are the main factors, and therefore for the main responsible factors. Thus, the parameters are important for the individuals performing their specific duties.

The present work will also confirm what others have already assumed for a long time, in particular an increased demand of training in order to achieve both an improvement in foreign language and intercultural skills.

This should also help the military leadership to reconsider the pre-deployment training of the two areas, where an appropriate and restructured system has to be integrated into all levels of the general military education. Finally, this study will present possible solutions and models, supporting these demands.

The added value of this study is to raise awareness of these issues and to develop a better understanding of this complex subject that is viewed from different angles. This is done in particular by the involvement of other, previously unrecognized factors.

The enrichment is also seen in the attempt to amplify the reflection our own actions in the performance of tasks in the context of peace support operations and, if necessary to conceptually and practically realign it.

Another added value is also seen in the stronger demonstration of the current importance of intercultural competence in combination with foreign language skills in an international military environment, especially where military "hot spots" are. The following motto fits for internalization

of understanding which was created by the author: "To understand someone better leads to a better understanding."

An added value is mainly due to the detected and evaluated data by using scientific methods on selected topics. But it is ultimately derived from the analysis, the current conditions, precise solutions and models, which are intended to cover the increased needs identified in the training. Clearly, this should display the figure on the classification of linguistic support in three levels: strategic, operational, and tactical.

The exhaustive and detailed list, the comprehensive and extensive view as well as the display of the degree of impact criteria can detect for the first time the complexity of the two fundamentally conditional areas of linguistic and intercultural competence.

The representation of the diversity of the two regions in their concrete application in the context of Peace Support Operations such as local population and/or local authorities, members of multinational forces, members of international organisations (IO) or non-governmental organisations (NGO) and the presence of basic knowledge in both areas (multilingualism, interculturalism) as a basis of trust and work has not yet occurred in this format in the current research literature.



Communication in an international alliance is of special importance for the soldiers (Photo: BMLVS)

A special added value represents the unexamined diversity of multilingual armed forces, namely the armed forces of countries with several official languages – and consequently linguistically mixed forces (Switzerland, Belgium, Canada, etc). In the contrast to, Armed Forces with required foreign languages skills for foreign assignments and contributions to Peace Support Operations. In this case, internal and external effects of multilingualism are directly opposing, and due to the downsizing of Armed Forces in almost every European country this issue will become more important in the future.

The added value ultimately also lies in the offers which are a form of recommendations on how these challenges can be addressed in the practical implementation. The creation of a Military Language and Intercultural Portfolio (MILLIP) would be something entirely new. Currently such a Portfolio doesn't exist; the only similar format is the European Language Portfolio for schools to foster the students' mobility and the interchangeability within Europe.

The establishment of language support at the strategic, operational and tactical levels would not only be giving the current activities in this field a new structure, but would also represent a high degree of quality improvement and quality assurance. Development and supply of standardized regional intercultural and language training modules would not only contribute to short-term contributions to operations abroad, but would also be a contribution to the efficiency and quality in particular. This of course applies equally to the creation of linguistic resources.

Due to the fact that culture can have large regional differences, Joseph Soeters raised in his study the question of whether national cultural differences can influence the work, which is divided into organisational structures. Can a distinction between national and professional differences be made? In his study he has conducted an international comparison of military cultures in which they have conducted a total of 664 cadets of military academies for an interview. Involved were cadets from military academies of Belgium, Denmark, Germany, France, Great Britain, Italy,

Canada, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Hungary, United States and Belarus.<sup>8</sup> Soeters has carried out his research study based on the theory of Geert Hofstede<sup>9</sup> who characterized the national cultures according to the following dimensions:

1. Power distance: indicates the extent to which less powerful individuals expect and accept the unequal division of power. High level power distance is very unevenly divided; low power distance is a more evenly divided power. Essential here is how a society handles inequalities among people. People in societies accept a hierarchical order in which everybody has a place and which needs no further justification.
2. Individualism and collectivism: Based on both factors the protection of rights of the individual ("I") is compared with the integration in any type of network ("We"). Individualism here is considered as taking care by individuals only for their relatives and close family members.
3. Masculinity versus femininity: Here, the dominant values of the two sexes (typically male and typically female) are compared. In most of the societies Masculinity stands for achievement, assertiveness, heroism or success whereas Femininity stands for modesty, cooperation, caring for the weak and quality of life. Hofstede see both fields in the business area under the discrepancy between "tough versus tender".
4. Uncertainty avoidance: In this context the question is how much aversion is there in unpredictable situations. This dimension expresses the degree to which the members of a society feel uncomfortable with uncertainty and ambiguity.
5. Long Term Orientation versus Short Term Normative Orientation: In this dimension it's about the question how a society prioritizes its own history vs. its present and future. In the

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<sup>8</sup> Joseph Soeters (1997), Value Orientations in Military Academies: a Thirteen Country Study, In: Armed Forces and Society, Vol. 24/1, 1997, p. 7-32

<sup>9</sup> <https://geert-hofstede.com/national-culture.html> [30 04 2016]

business context this dimension is called as "normative versus pragmatic".

6. Indulgence versus Restraint: This dimension stands for the prioritizing of the two issues of feeding basic human needs in the context of enjoying life versus the regulation by strict social norms.

When Hofstede talks about national cultures, he compares in his study a number of different nations all around the world. "Military culture" as a kind of organisational culture is a specific phenomenon within this field. An organisation like the military is a social system of a different nature from that of a nation, although a nation (or a society) usually identifies (not in dictatorial regimes) itself with this organisation. Because of the unique position within a society, I would rather like to call it "Corporate culture".

The basic findings of this study proved the existence of a (common) (international) military culture. This is primarily based on the institutional aspects of military duties. In contrast to the civilian cultural working area, the attitude of officer cadets in all nations surveyed is marked more institutionally than professionally. Nevertheless, there is also some heterogeneity between the military academies of different countries. Soeters also noted that the cultural differences between the various academies are similar to cultural differences between national cultures of the countries. This means that there are national cultural differences within a profession, despite the military tends to a higher institutional structuring. Based on similar organisational structures, it is possible to overcome differences in nationalities, especially, because of its professional performance in military duties, where national culture is less of a problem. Such problems arise rather in cooperation with other professional groups, as it is often the case in peace support operations, e.g. with the police or with members of other international organisations.

A different model resulted from a different approach has been developed by Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner.<sup>10</sup> According to them people from different cultures aren't different from one another; they differ in very specific, even predictable, ways. This is because each culture has its

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<sup>10</sup> [https://www.academia.edu/7380042/Compare\\_and\\_contrast\\_cultural\\_frame\\_works\\_developed\\_by\\_Geert\\_Hofstede\\_and\\_Fons\\_Trompenaars](https://www.academia.edu/7380042/Compare_and_contrast_cultural_frame_works_developed_by_Geert_Hofstede_and_Fons_Trompenaars) [24 06 2016]

own way of thinking, its own values and beliefs, and different preferences placed on a variety of different factors. The question is what distinguishes people from one culture compared with another? This distinction follows preferences of the seven dimensions they have determined:

### 1. Universalism vs. Particularism

With the dimension Universalism vs. Particularism usually relationships are measured. The supporters of universalism think that general rules and obligations are the source of moral reference and assume that their standards are the correct ones. They want to change the attitudes of other people so that their own attitudes dominate the others. For the particularist particular circumstances are more important than rules; particular relationships are stronger than abstract rules.

### 2. Individualism vs. Communitarism

The dimension of Individualism vs. Communitarism mainly consists of the conflict between an individuals' desire and a groups' interest. Individualists make their own decisions and they think that the quality of life is the result of one's personal freedom and individual development. Communitarians believe that they are integrated into a group which gives support and assistance in exchange for loyalty. For the communitarians, community comes before the individual.

### 3. Specific vs. Diffuse

Concerning the dimension Specific vs. Diffuse, people from specifically-oriented cultures analyze elements separately, then put them back together again ("Viewing the whole is the sum of its parts"). Specifically-oriented individuals concentrate on hard facts. People from diffusely-oriented cultures are the opposite, they see each element in the perspective of the complete picture; all elements are related to each other.

#### 4. Neutral vs. Emotional

The dimension Neutral vs. Emotional (or Affective) is about the expression of emotions and the interdependency of reason and emotion. In a neutral-oriented culture people shouldn't show their feelings.

#### 5. Achievement vs. Ascription

The dimension Achievement vs. Ascription focuses on how personal status is assigned. It could also be described as a dimension Performance vs. Virtue of Categories such as gender, age, social standing or education.

#### 6. Sequential Time vs. Synchronic Time

Concerning the Time dimension, for people in a past-oriented culture future is seen as a repetition of experiences happened in the past. In a future-oriented culture, people are directed toward future prospects and the past is not considered to be of vital importance to the future. This dimension is about the discrepancy between people who structure their time sequentially. They are in opposition to people, who structure time synchronically and doing several things at the same time.

#### 7. Internal Direction vs. Outer Direction

The dimension Internal Direction vs. Outer Direction is about the internal and external control in relationship to the environment. On the one side there are people having an internal mechanistic view of nature and on the other side there are people with an organic view of nature. The latter assume that people are controlled by nature and they focus on the environment rather than on themselves.



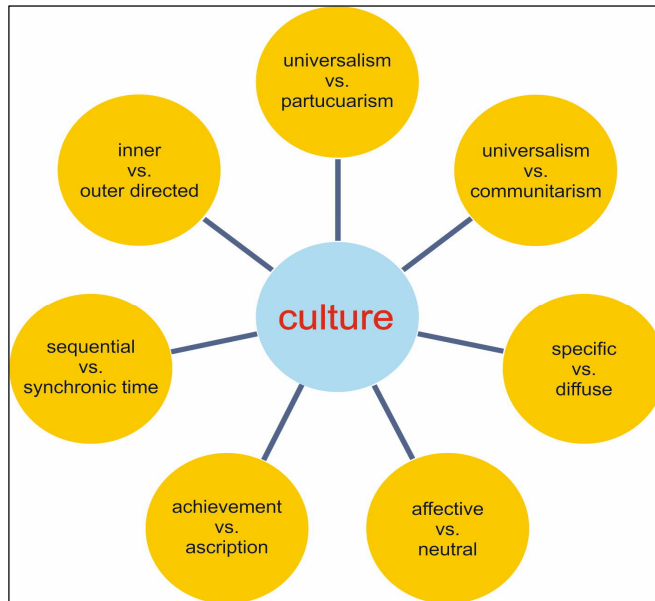


FIGURE 1: TROMPENAARS' "SEVEN DIMENSIONS OF CULTURE"

The benefit of this model is the better understanding of different cultural backgrounds, the prevention of misunderstandings and a better working relationship among people, especially if people coming from all over the world has to cooperate such as within a multinational force of peace support operations. The seven dimensions of culture is a well known and recognized theory about culture and were first published in 1997. It was created to help understanding and managing cultural differences and was the outcome of a ten years' worldwide research. This survey has identified enlighten and analyzed different cultural patterns or discrepancies and tried to bring them in line. Trompenaar's and Hampden-Turner's cultural model can best be suitable in a multicultural organisation where there are different groups of people from different cultural backgrounds coming together to achieve a common goal. Although, Trompenaar was a student of Hofstede, the two models extremely differ from each other. There are only two areas, which deal with the same (or similar) dimensions: relations between people (Hofstede: individualism and collectivism; Trompenaar: universalism vs.

particularism) and time (Hofstede: long-term vs. short-term orientation; Trompenaar: sequential vs. synchronic and inner vs. outer time).

In the past decade several studies have been written illuminating specific aspects of culture. Christopher Leeds exercised in his work a broader approach to cultural education of peacekeepers.<sup>11</sup> Some studies have examined the relationships between members of peace support operations and the local population, as well as aspects responsible for the success or failure of a mission investigated. In one of the first works in this field Marianne Heiberg has demonstrated all these relationships using the example of UNIFIL.<sup>12</sup>

Although 'Culture' ostensibly does not represent a great analytical perspective, as it is in everyday life between soldiers and the local population, it is of immense importance. Culture influences interactions very precisely wherefore a broader contextualization for the success of a mission is necessary. It is also not easy to incorporate culture in those standard categories, which are necessary for the planning and implementation of peace support operations. Culture constitutes the framework in which people "...interpret their experiences and perceive both their own actions as well as that of others as correct and useful".<sup>13</sup> Culture is therefore, not a rigid scheme of beliefs. They direct and guide the behaviour rather than restricting it. Culture is therefore, not coherent for all group members. In connection with peacekeeping, 'Culture' plays in problem-solving an important role, because it represents that basis, where people develop possibilities to build on their actions and to provide solutions.

Many studies have focused on international cooperation towards determining the organisational and cultural differences between military and civilian actors. Most of them with the result that soldiers act hierarchically, highly controlled and well equipped, whereas members of

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<sup>11</sup> Christopher A. Leeds (2001), Culture, Conflict Resolution, Peace Keeper Training and the D Mediator, In: International Peacekeeping, Vol. 8, p. 92-110

<sup>12</sup> Marianne Heiberg (1990), Peacekeepers and Local Populations: Some Comments on UNIFIL, In: Indarjit Rikhye and Kjell Skielsbaek (Ed.): The United Nations and Peacekeeping: Results, Limitations, and Prospects: The Lessons of 40 Years of Experience, London, McMillan, p. 147-169

<sup>13</sup> Rubinstein, p.36

NGOs tend to be minimally staffed and to work independently. On both strategic and tactical levels the frequent intercultural communication problems have made interoperability complicated.

Deep cultural differences are aggravating factors of horizontal interoperability (co-operation of international actors taking part in peace support operations). This is no less the case with vertical interoperability (co-operation with the local population). One of the most important things is the perception (or lack) of respect and partnership towards the local population.<sup>14</sup>

Christiane Voightländer dealt in her work "Intercultural Competence and Adult Education" (Leipzig 2002) with the question of how one can learn more about intercultural competence. Another research question dealt with the learning processes in adult education and how it can contribute to intercultural competence. Although she tries to give an insight into the diverse field of interculturality and to mediate, but by no means to offer her own approach to promote intercultural competence as a key skill required in adult education itself.

Nevertheless, creative hints for these learning processes are very much a target. In her theory development juxtaposes different approaches of intercultural education, which she sees as the starting point for the required intercultural learning in the phases of dealing with multiculturalism. For the development of intercultural competence, Voightländer illuminates the theoretical foundations indispensable for those who are responsible for teaching-learning processes. The basis for the various didactic conceptions of intercultural learning is for her (as for many others as well) the term of culture itself, to which she dedicated a whole chapter, in which she examines features and components prior to showing cultural differences in detail. She also poses the question, what aspects are essential in intercultural contacts. How do (social) interactions with strangers represent the role of behavioural strategies in contact situations? How to deal with the phenomenon of a possible "culture shock" and the usual stereotypes? Here, she gets to the bottom of intercultural communication problems and

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<sup>14</sup> See Rubinstein, p. 36. He used both terms of horizontal and vertical interoperability figuratively and not in a judgemental sense, he does not characterize either missions or the population as better or worse.

presents a possible strategy. Finally, it's about the process of intercultural learning itself, which is the most important way to achieve intercultural competence. On the one hand, the different levels of intercultural learning and on the other hand the various intercultural training are presented. Deriving from these factors she presents selected methodological approaches, possibilities of cross-cultural training in adult education as well as a variety of methods for this purpose.

Because intercultural communication in international business is an indispensable criterion for success, it's also more and more taken in account at the university level, especially universities of applied studies (Fachhochschulen), have been established conducting not only individual courses, but offering full-range Bachelor and Master study programmes and moreover, comprehensive research activities. Remaining in the central European region, the following from an Austrian perspective can be exemplified:

- The "Department for Intercultural Studies" at the River Danube University Krems offers a "European Diploma in Intercultural Competence", to which its establishment ten European partner universities contributed. In addition to these study programmes, even more individual seminars, such as "Intercultural Training Design", "Intercultural mediation" or "Islamic culture" are being held
- The International Centre for Cultures and Languages offers a university-based Diploma course of four semesters called "Interculturalism and Communication"
- The Institute for Economic Development (Wirtschaftsförderinstitut – WIFI) offers in its programme a seminar called "Intercultural Soft Skills – Collaborate Successfully" designed for local business people in order to support international relations
- The University of Salzburg offers Master's degree studies on "Migration Management" and a special course on "Islam and migration in Europe" as part of its portfolio
- The University of Applied Studies in Eisenstadt has included at least in two courses ("International Wine Management" and

"International Economic Relations") foreign language skills of one of the three eastern neighbouring languages as obligatory subjects (Czech, Slovak or Hungarian language)

## University of Vienna

The Faculty of Philological and Cultural Sciences has joined the grounds of globalization and the trend of increasing importance of multilingualism and expanding its research areas around this issue. There are three objectives of this expansion:

1. The examination of the role of multilingual issues at the faculty in research and teaching
2. The visualization of existing and partially concealed potentials
3. The exploring synergies for the purpose of possible cooperation in the field of multilingualism

In a globalized world, the subject of multilingualism becomes more and more important – a trend which may emerge at the universities and thus, also at the Faculty of Philological and Cultural Studies at the University of Vienna. For the purposes of this development professors who are working in national and international projects for multilingualism, have on behalf of the Dean initiated a project, in which the role of multilingualism issues at the faculty in research and teaching is examined. In addition to this existing project, possible hidden potentials are to be made visible.

This project should explore synergies, which can be used to initiate possible new collaborations in the field of multilingualism. For this purpose, a MindMap was created to represent the research fields at the Faculty of Philological and Cultural Sciences. This Mind Map should serve interested students to learn about existing research projects on the subject of 'Multilingualism' at the faculty and thereby possibly look for new partners for projects in these fields. Among all these different and similar research fields and projects not a single one deals with military on the one hand and with cultural competence, or as part of it, on the other hand.

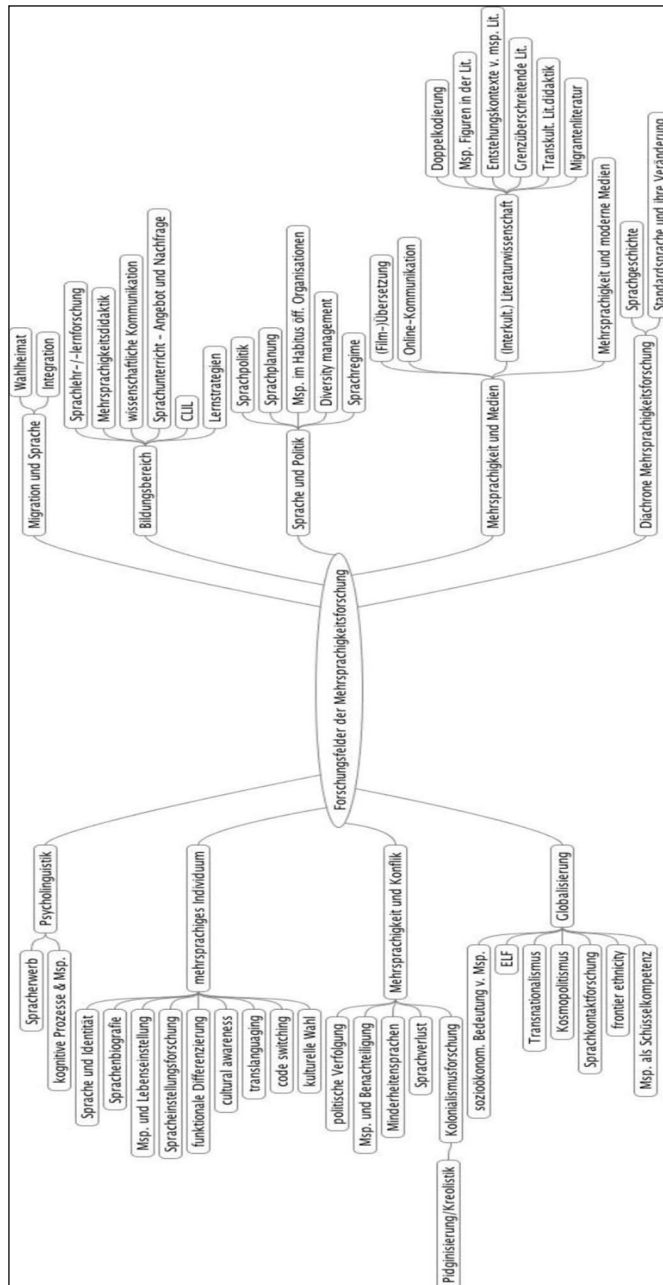


FIGURE 2: RESEARCH INITIATIVE ON MULTILINGUALISM AT THE FACULTY OF PHILOLOGICAL AN CULTURAL STUDYS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF VIENNA

In addition to the information on research initiatives the aim is also to familiarize interested people and partners for research projects. The research field multilingualism is thereby divided into five project areas:

1. Institute-own projects
2. Inter-Institutional, faculty internal projects
3. Inter-Institutional, faculty external projects
4. Projects in cooperation with other national universities or research institutes
5. Projects in cooperation with other international universities or research institutions

This initiative was launched in 2012 and the introduction of the research field "Multilingualism" has lead to various activities such as presentations, lectures, meetings or workshops on this subject on the one hand and, to promoting and supporting issue-relevant publications on the other hand.

Among others, in this context, the following activities are mentioned here:

- "Open Meetings for Multilingualism" (11 01, 14 03, 09 05 and 05 11 2012)
- Day of Action "Multilingualism live – in research and teaching" (23 11 2011)
- International symposium "German language in Austria – Theoretical and Empirical Aspects of Variation Linguistics and Multilingualism Research" (19-21 04 2012)
- "Long Night of Research" (27 04 2012)

- International conference on "Multilingualism and professionalization in educational occupations. Interdisciplinary Approaches to Current Challenges in Education " (28 02 – 01 03 2013)
- Publication "European Multilingualism. Current Perspectives and Challenges", Rosita Rindler Schjerve & Eva Vetter, Multilingual Matter, Bristol 2012<sup>15</sup>.

Multilingualism is therefore a very young field of research at the Faculty of Philological and Cultural Studies at the University of Vienna. It's also a fact that not all of the five project areas are occupied with research activities yet. The majority of the research activities either deals with theories or is directed to educational institutions. Quite a few research projects are related to the tertiary sector and no single scientific paper has any reference to the military profession.

Although, only achievements of a single faculty are presented here, but in total there are a variety of ongoing research activities at the University and also at other faculties and departments as well. With a university-wide survey on this subject, the Faculty of Philosophical and Cultural Sciences has some coordination function, at least regarding the overview and organisation of this research area shown above.

#### Within the armed forces

Beatrice Zilian examined in her thesis the 'Intercultural Education' during the training of Austrian professional soldiers and the pre-deployment preparation.<sup>16</sup> She used as a method both structure-guided interviews and a questionnaire for data collection. For better authenticity

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<sup>15</sup> See also <https://multiling.univie.ac.at> [30 03 2015]

<sup>16</sup> Beatrice Zilian (2012), Einsatzvorbereitung von österreichischen Soldaten für 'Peacekeeping missions' in den Einsatzräumen Kosovo, Syrien und Afghanistan unter Bezugnahme auf interkulturelle Aspekte [Mission preparations of Austria soldiers for Peacekeeping missions in the mission areas of Kosovo, Syria and Afghanistan in reference to intercultural aspects], Vienna 2012



the data collection was carried out in some cases on the spot in the area of operations in Kosovo in AUCON/KFOR.



The contact to the local population is an important part of peace support operations. (Photo: Bundesheer)

She also asks for the motivation of soldiers who voluntarily serve in operations and missions abroad. Zilian compares countries in which Austrian contingents are taking part in missions, specifically Afghanistan, Kosovo and Syria, with regard to their geographical location, its legal system, the local population and their ethnic grouping, as well as language and religion. To complete the picture, she gives an insight into the historical development of the regional conflict.

She dedicated a separate chapter to intercultural training in the Austrian Armed Forces and concludes that such training is not consistently available in the various courses and therefore recommends its implementation in her closing remarks. Zilian also deals with the intercultural socialization, the intercultural learning and intercultural education during peace support missions. In addition to interviews and investigations carried out by questionnaire, but due to the small number of subjects, the question must be asked whether the results are significant enough to draw appropriate conclusions. Partly it can be favoured, despite the low significance, because it is a verification of the contents of the interviews in some areas. A contradiction between hypothesis and results by the two survey methods presented Zilian firmly on the quality of

satisfaction with the pre-deployment training of cross-cultural preparation for the regions or area of operations. She found that more time and the inclusion of such content in the education and training were requested by the respondents.

Hans Lampalzer has worked extensively with interculturalism in the Austrian military in his thesis.<sup>17</sup> His aim was to point out the importance of intercultural competence in a comprehensive and practical way. For his research study he chose two target groups: students of bachelor's military college course "Military leadership" at the Theresan Military Academy of the summer semester 2011 which had to complete the "International Internship", and those of the master's degree programme "Military Leadership" at the National Defence Academy of winter semester 2011/2012 as research partners. As his approach method he chose the intervention research. The theoretical part of the work is based on a content analysis, which is underpinned by a survey of scientists and eyewitnesses. In addition, he was able to integrate the results of his investigations made in Portland, Oregon at Summer Institute for Intercultural Communication (SIIC). The empirical part of his dissertation is based on so-called in-depth interviews and feedback events with the research partners as well as entries from the research diary, from lectures, publications of articles on this topic and observations in the context of workshops and project courses. Answering the research question "How important are intercultural skills for selected target groups in the Austrian Armed Forces?" he points out differences as well as similarities between the two groups. Decisive for him were, among others, the different high level of professional experience on the one hand and the life experience of the interviewees on the other. Common to both groups the awareness of the issue itself and the total homogeneous understanding with regard to the objective of intercultural competence. Characteristic of both groups in his opinion is the functional and the efficiency principle-guided understanding, in which intercultural competence is to be understood as a "Force

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<sup>17</sup> Hans Lampalzer (2013), *Join the Army, see the World – Die Faktoren Kultur und interkulturelle Kompetenz in den Streitkräften – Analyse ausgewählter Aspekte* [The factors Culture and Intercultural Competence in the Armed Forces – Analysis of Selected Aspects], Vienna 2013

Multiplier" in the context of foreign missions. Lampalzer sees this as a contribution to increasing the efficiency of self-protection and safety during actions. Significantly it's also expressed that intercultural competence is comprehensively needed for different scenarios as well as in dealing with all interaction partners. However, the organisation's purpose of armed forces and the military socialization show according to Lampalzer, regarding to the expression of intercultural competence, natural limitations: command, obedience, formalization, the ambition for security and the responsibility for the physical integrity of subordinates are sometimes demanded in intercultural competence curiosity and tolerance for ambiguity tolerance.

Helmut SLOP has guided in July 2006 a survey of the officer's corps commissioned by the Joint Staff of the Ministry of Defence to the Military Psychological Service (Heerespsychologischer Dienst – HPD).<sup>18</sup> The survey should provide evidence, why the willingness of officers towards a foreign assignment has a decreasing tendency, affecting especially higher Command and staff functions. Reasons for the survey were ordered by the Joint Staff and should increase or optimize the conditions for personnel applying for foreign assignments. As a member of the European Union, Austria is also involved in the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) of the European Union. This results in corresponding demands, such as the increased participation of Austrian soldiers in Command posts and headquarters as well as the necessary development of forces in international operations, so-called readiness units (Kräfte für internationale Operationen – Kaderpräsenzeinheiten – KIOP-KPE). If necessary, the conditions for personnel applying for peace support operations should be optimized, especially for officers. 1044 officers, who had participated in the survey, presented a response rate of 43.5%, which can be described as very high.

As the responsible chair of this study, Slop examined the presence or intensity of intercultural sensitivity of Austrian soldiers who had returned from a mission abroad. After listing and defining the different types of

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<sup>18</sup> Helmut Slop (2006), Die Bedeutung interkultureller Sensibilität für österreichische Soldaten im Auslandseinsatz [The Importance of Intercultural Sensitivity for Austrian Soldiers in Operations abroad], Wien, Krems, Götzendorf 2006

missions abroad he deals with various stresses expected by soldiers who are deployed abroad. He is concerned, albeit with differentiated intensity, with three areas where intercultural aspects come into play during an assignment abroad:

1. Contact with the local population
2. Cooperation with members of relevant international organisations
3. Cooperation with soldiers of other nations

According to Slop's opinion, war effects coupled with local population the contact add up to the greatest risks of a possible "culture shock" that are perceived differently and can cause different reactions. Therefore, he considers intercultural competence as an important educational goal, which is based on the "appropriate knowledge about the importance of different customs and traditions".<sup>19</sup>

Slop offers in his survey also a theoretical part, which includes both the construct of intercultural competence as well as the construct of intercultural sensitivity. He traces the models of several scientists who developed them (Chen, Starosta, Lustig, Koester, Bennet, and Schneider).

In a separate chapter, results of a multi-year German research project were illuminated (Thomas et al.), wherein the importance of intercultural competence for soldiers has been studied scientifically in international operations on this basis, a general and specific (intercultural) sensibility and orientation training was developed for pre-deployment training (Thomas, Layes, Kammhuber 1997, 1998 and 1999). This project was supported by the Austrian side by data collection of the Military Psychological Service by a survey of soldiers supported after their return from the missions in Bosnia, Cyprus and Syria in terms of their inter-cultural contacts. This data Slop himself statistically processed and analyzed in the context of a project. Based on this analysis, he was able to demonstrate a high level of intercultural sensitivity among Austrian soldiers. With this survey in 2006 Slop wanted to find and determine possible parallels or changes. He was

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<sup>19</sup> Slop (2006), p. 8

keen to find out yet another answer to the question, whether there is a correlation between

1. the degree of intercultural sensitivity of soldiers and existing foreign operational experience
2. the age, education, (origin) nationality and rank or
3. the pre-deployment training and if they constitute possible factors influencing this kind of sensibility



Apart from the common working language additional aspects of interculturality in a multilateral cooperation is of great importance. (Photo: Bundesheer)

Data were collected by questionnaire, which were then read electronically and processed statistically by using the SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) programme. Respondents had the opportunity to report honestly and without taboos, where the problems are. Slop came to the conclusion that the age of the volunteers plays a major role in the expression of intercultural sensitivity. He presented a similar difference in heritage nationalities. Slightly less than half of the

surveyed officers also agree to participate in peace enforcement operations. Participation in all kinds of international missions only endorses almost 40 percent of the officers. Around three quarters of the officers who are seeking an assignment abroad are in favour of limiting the operations to those that have an immediately recognizable relationship to the security of Europe.

Furthermore, the survey showed that soldiers with higher education have a higher acceptance towards strangers. Also in the other mentioned factors of his analysis significant differences in the "ethno relativism" and evidence of "ethnocentrism" could be proved. Finally, Slop proposes, by confirming his results of previous research, as a consequence

- a more specific training and preparation than before
- new standards for the content and methodological design of future intercultural training
- to meet personal and infrastructural challenges for keeping and deepening previous intercultural competence of Austrian soldiers

For this, Slop quotes the intercultural training concept of the German Bundeswehr as a role model. The Austrian system and concept regarding the pre-deployment training Slop found that there is a number of improvements that have been carried out in this field in the meantime, but there are still many improvements to be taken into account. Slop remains in his recommendations regarding the improvement measures very general and specific training possibilities. The results, however, provide good starting possibilities not to decline in this endeavour, but to make concrete proposals, as it is also the objective of this thesis.

Despite the numerous accompanying measures taken by the leadership of the current reform process and the consequent uncertainty among the staff was a major inhibiting factor for their willingness to participate in a mission abroad. At least the recognized lack of information should be immediately corrected.

Concerning the area of language skills and training it was found in this survey that especially additional training would be required with respect to the lack of international experience at senior officers' level regarding aspects of intercultural competence. Nearly two-thirds of the officers were of the opinion that an improvement in knowledge of foreign languages when participating in peace support operations is necessary. It was also noted that perhaps enhanced support measures with regard to foreign language skills is a starting point, that could be increased in order to support the willingness of being ready for international missions.

## Chapter 2 Peace Support Operations and Austria's Participation

During the past few decades of Peace Support Operations their concepts and even their terms as well as the organisation and management have changed dramatically. Previously, these missions were carried out exclusively by the United Nations. Now other communities and organisations are engaged in these issues. These include in our hemisphere especially the organisation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), the European Union (EU), the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and numerous governmental (GO) and non-governmental organisations (NGO).

### 2.1 Definition and type of mission/operations

For several reasons this work follows NATO's terminology, definitions and explanations of peace support operations:

1. Since a couple of years it is NATO, which has taken the lead in a considerable number of operations
2. Austria's shift of paradigm affects its national security sector, changing from reactive defence forces to proactive and multinational stabilization contributions
3. The decision of Austria's government not to participate in long-standing peacekeeping missions
4. Austria's increased involvement in the NATO-PfP programme

Although Austria is a neutral country, contributions to peace support operations are not a contradiction and are in accordance with the constitution. Nevertheless, NATO terms and definitions will be related to those of other organisations such as the United Nations, the European Union or the Organisations of Security and Cooperation in Europe.



What is a NATO Peace Support Operation? The term Peace Support Operations is relatively new. In previous time it was not of great importance, because everybody was trained and everything was prepared for war fight. The NATO explanation of PSO as

“...an operation that impartially makes use of diplomatic, civil and military means, normally in pursuit of UN Charter purposes and principles, to restore or maintain peace. Such operations may include conflict prevention, peace-making, peace enforcement, peacekeeping, peace building and/or support to humanitarian assistance”

can be found in the "Allied Joint Publication (AJP) 3.4.1"<sup>20</sup>

It is also agreed that this kind of operations needed to take military, economic, diplomatic, cultural and ethical factors in account. Peace support usually happens prior, during or after an inter-state or an intra-state conflict. It takes place more often in the context with an inter-state conflict. Military activities should not (and also cannot) be seen in isolation of civilian activities. Therefore both military and civilian contributors are required to collaborate on activities.

Peace support includes a wide spectrum of efforts, which aim to prevent conflicts, to restore peace, to mediate between parties of major conflicts, to secure a ceasefire or peace settlement agreement, to prevent the outbreak of conflict and to keep the peace. Peace support efforts can incorporate conflict prevention, peacemaking, peace enforcement, peace-keeping and peacebuilding. Military (and civilian) leadership should understand how the different types of efforts relate to, complement or overlap each other. Other actors and contributors might use peace support-related terms in a different way to NATO.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> UK has taken over the definition from NATO and included into Joint Warfare Publication (JWP) 3-50, 2nd Edition, 103 a.

<sup>21</sup> United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Principles and Guidelines (2008) provide the United Nation's interpretation of peace operations

## Conflict Prevention

Conflict prevention is a peace support effort to identify and monitor the potential causes of conflict, and take timely action to prevent the occurrence, escalation, or resumption of hostilities.<sup>22</sup>

The aim of this effort is to stop the escalation of an inter-state or an intra-state conflict into an armed conflict. It should prevent an imminent conflict. This can include the provision of a strategic early warning system.<sup>23</sup>

Austria focuses its efforts on Conflict Management and divides it into three phases: Firstly, Conflict prevention or Conflict-preventing measures, Secondly, Peacemaking and Thirdly, Peacekeeping.<sup>24</sup> In addition (or complimentary) there are several other areas, which are parts of peace activities, either independently or integrated.

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<sup>22</sup> AJP-3.4.1, 1-3

<sup>23</sup> Preventive diplomacy is a historical term and was used for the first time by the former UN General secretary Dag Hammarskjöld in a report, dated back to 1959: Preventive diplomacy is defined here as the range of peaceful dispute resolution methods mentioned in Article 33 of the UN Charter when applied before a dispute crosses the threshold to armed conflict. Preventive diplomacy is defined in an "Agenda for Peace", that is, "to prevent existing disputes from escalating into conflicts". It should be noted, however, that, preventive diplomacy is closely related, and is sometimes inseparably related to such as peacemaking, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and peace enforcement. In this regard, needless to say, preventive diplomacy is just a means to resolve conflict. Diplomats sometimes mistakenly assume that preventive diplomacy is synonymous with the terms early warning or fact finding. But these form only one part of preventive diplomacy. The other essential part is early action, which involves use of the range of diplomatic approaches listed in Article 33. Indeed, early warning and fact finding are of little use if the information is not acted upon in a timely fashion to ameliorate the problem. It should also be noted that preventive diplomacy, although a type of preventive action is not preventive diplomacy. The two are quite different types of influence strategies. Preventive diplomacy is a problem solving response which attempts to reconcile disputing parties' interests through conceptual and diplomatic breakthroughs. Preventive deployment is a military response based on the idea of deterrence through threat of adverse consequences. The conceptual confusion of these strategies has been detrimental to the development of a full repertoire of responses and to the wider acceptance of preventive diplomacy (Conny Peck (1996): Preventive Diplomacy: Past and Current Practices, In: The United Nations as a Dispute Settlement System, p. 132).

<sup>24</sup> <http://www.bundesheer.at/truppendienst/ausgaben/artikel.php?id=358> [10 10 2015].

## Conflict prevention/conflict-preventing measures

The main concern is to avoid the outbreak of an armed conflict although there are different interests. The spectrum of possibilities ranges from diplomatic negotiations, the preventive deployment of forces, however, still beyond the state borders of the conflict parties. These initiatives and activities all originate at the diplomatic level. The preventive deployment of troops as a demonstrative action can be seen as a deployment for determination of the situation directly on site. These conflict-preventing measures include joint consultations, announcement for taking measurements, conducting inspections and surveillance measures. Such measures are often considered as interference in internal affairs of a country, or even as a provocation and therefore, they also can be seen as additional tensions.

Preventive diplomacy is a historical term and was used for the first time by the former UN General secretary Dag Hammarskjöld in a report, dated back to 1959: Preventive diplomacy is defined here as the range of peaceful dispute resolution methods mentioned in Article 33 of the UN Charter when applied before a dispute crosses the threshold to armed conflict. Preventive diplomacy is defined in an "Agenda for Peace", that is, "to prevent existing disputes from escalating into conflicts". It should be noted, however, that, preventive diplomacy is closely related, and is sometimes inseparably related to such as peacemaking, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and peace enforcement. In this regard, needless to say, preventive diplomacy is just a means to resolve conflict. Diplomats sometimes mistakenly assume that preventive diplomacy is synonymous with the terms early warning or fact finding. But these form only one part of preventive diplomacy. The other essential part is early action, which involves use of the range of diplomatic approaches listed in Article 33. Indeed, early warning and fact finding are of little use if the information is not acted upon in a timely fashion to ameliorate the problem. It should also be noted that preventive diplomacy, although a type of preventive action is not preventive diplomacy. The two are quite different types of influence strategies. Preventive diplomacy is a problem solving response which attempts to reconcile disputing parties' interests through conceptual and diplomatic breakthroughs. Preventive deployment is a military response based on the idea of deterrence through threat of adverse consequences. The conceptual

confusion of these strategies has been detrimental to the development of a full repertoire of responses and to the wider acceptance of preventive diplomacy.<sup>25</sup>

## Peacemaking

Peacemaking is a peace support effort conducted after the initiation of a conflict to secure a ceasefire or peaceful settlement involving primarily diplomatic action supported, when necessary, by direct or indirect use of military assets.<sup>26</sup>

Peacemaking includes predominantly diplomatic means with the aim to establish an agreement between the conflicting parties. Such goals can be either a negotiated ceasefire or peace agreement after a conflict has started. The military contribution to these diplomatic activities could be the provision of military advice to one of the actors involved or the threat and the use of coercive force to stop the continuation of the conflict.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Conny Peck (1996): Preventive Diplomacy: Past and Current Practices, In: The United Nations as a Dispute Settlement System, p. 132.

<sup>26</sup> AJP-3.4.1, 1-4.

<sup>27</sup> The term "peacemaking" is used in several different ways. According to the UN, peacemaking is "action to bring hostile parties to agreement, essentially through such peaceful means as those foreseen in Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations; Pacific Settlement of Disputes." [1] In this sense, peacemaking is the diplomatic effort intended to move a violent conflict into nonviolent dialogue, where differences are settled through representative political institutions. The objective of peacemaking is thus to end the violence between the contending parties. Peacemaking can be done through negotiation, mediation, conciliation, and arbitration. International law provides another channel through international courts. United Nations peacemaking is an extension of the parties' own efforts to manage their conflict. When they cannot, the parties, the Security Council or the General Assembly may call upon the United Nations Secretary General to exercise his "Good Offices" to facilitate the resolution of the conflict. The Secretary General may also undertake independent peacemaking initiatives by offering his "Good Offices" to parties to resolve the conflict in a peaceful way. In *An Agenda for Peace*, former United Nations Secretary General Boutros-Boutros Ghali defined peacemaking as "action to bring hostile parties to agreement, essentially through such peaceful means as those foreseen in Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations; Pacific Settlement of Disputes." These actions are carried out during a conflict, violent or

Peacemaking can be understood as an active intervention, in order to stop an armed conflict and to restore law and order for a peaceful social coexistence. This can range from diplomatic negotiations to the imposition of penalties ranging up to the deployment of armed forces. In any case, these are further diplomatic measures after an outbreak of a conflict, which should contribute to a peaceful solution. This includes offer of good services, mediation, conciliation, but also a possible diplomatic or political isolation as well as imposing sanctions. The goal is and still remains the re-establishment of law and peaceful social coexistence.

Therefore, Peacemaking is the process of forging a settlement between the disputing parties. While this can be done in direct negotiations with just the two disputants, it is often also done with a third-party mediator, who assists with process and communication problems, and helps the parties work effectively together to draft a workable peace accord. Usually the negotiators are official diplomats, although citizens are getting involved in the peacemaking process more and more. While they do not negotiate final accords, citizen diplomacy is becoming an increasingly common way to start the peacemaking process, which is then finalized with official diplomatic efforts.

However, peacemaking is not the final step in the peace process. As both the situations in the Middle East and Bosnia so well demonstrate, it takes more than a peace accord to bring peace to a region. The peace accord is just a beginning, which must be followed by long-term peacebuilding, the process of normalizing relations and reconciling differences between all the citizens of the warring factions.<sup>28</sup>

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latent. They entail the diplomatic process of brokering an end to conflict, principally through the use of mediation and negotiation skills. United Nations Peacemaking excludes the use of force, unless imposed action is taken by the Security Council to facilitate the peacemaking process.

<sup>28</sup> <http://www.colorado.edu/conflict/peace/treatment/peacemkg.htm> [12 10 2015].

## Peace Enforcement

Peace Enforcement is a peace support effort aiming to stop hostilities by application of coercive measures, including the use of troops. Such measures are usually carried out without the consent of the major conflicting parties.<sup>29</sup> The object is to restore peace and security based on UN Security Council's authorization in accordance with Chapter VII of the UN Charter.<sup>30</sup> Peace enforcement operations act within a wide range of military capabilities for negotiating the end of hostilities also by (impartial) use of force to separate the conflicting parties and to stop cruelties. The use of force is often directed against a single actor.

## Peacekeeping

Peacekeeping is a peace support effort designed to assist the implementation of a ceasefire or peace settlement and to help lay the foundations for sustainable peace. It is conducted with the strategic consent of all major conflicting parties. Peacekeeping is conducted under the authority of Chapter VI of the UN Charter, and is based on the strategic consent of the major conflicting parties following a peace settlement or ceasefire, where a cessation of hostilities has occurred. Peacekeeping can be conducted by the UN, a regional organisation or members thereof, and is likely to involve a mixture of military, police and civilian actors. Peacekeeping is multi-dimensional in nature.<sup>31</sup>

These classic missions serve to maintain a cease-fire or the separation of forces. A Peacekeeping mission or Peacekeeping Force is to be understood as an impartial third party with the consensus of the conflict parties involved. Peacekeeping operations are mainly conducted by United Nations personnel.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> AJP-3.4.1, 1-4.

<sup>30</sup> The UN Security Council has authorized coercive action on the basis of the existence of a threat to the peace, breach of the peace or act of aggression.

<sup>31</sup> AJP-3.4.1, 1-5.

<sup>32</sup> According to the United Nations, Peacekeeping has proven to be one of the most effective tools available to the UN to assist host countries navigate the difficult path

The aim is to mitigate or to reduce conflicts as well as to cease hostilities. Measures for this goal include the monitoring of demarcation lines, monitoring of compliance to a cease-fire, control of a buffer zone, disarmament and demobilization of fighting parties or armed forces, monitoring of borders, protection and assistance services and activities within the framework of aid to refugees, support of police forces, protection of election monitoring or the provision of the Human Rights Commission. In general, the mission does not include fighting except self-defence.



Austrian soldiers contribute to UN peacekeeping missions since 1960.  
(Photo: Bundesheer)

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from conflict to peace. Today's multidimensional peacekeeping operations are called upon not only to maintain peace and security, but also to facilitate political processes, protect civilians, assist in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants; support constitutional processes and the organisation of elections, protect and promote human rights and assist in restoring the rule of law and extending legitimate state authority. Peacekeeping operations get their mandates from the UN Security Council; their troops and police are contributed by Members States; and they are managed by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and supported by the Department of Field Support at the UN Headquarters in New York (<http://www.un.org/en/sections/what-we-do/maintain-international-peace-and-security/index.html> [22 06 2016]).

In this context possible peacebuilding activities may involve the assistance of the political process, the support of disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration activities and the promotion of a security sector reform together with further development. Because of the possible overlap between peacekeeping and peacebuilding activities it shows the complex nature of contemporary peace support. Armistice and peace settlements are important cornerstones for the conflicting parties to agree to a resolution for stopping the conflict.

## Peacebuilding

Peacebuilding is a peace support effort designed to reduce the risk of relapsing into conflict by addressing the underlying causes of conflict and the longer-term needs of the people. It requires a commitment to a long-term process and may run concurrently with other types of peace support efforts. It is, perhaps more than any other type of peace support effort, should not be viewed in isolation since its activities often overlap other efforts such as conflict prevention and peacekeeping. Peacebuilding strategies should be tailored to the specific needs of the country concerned, aimed at building the capacity and legitimacy of the state and civil society to a point where the need for external assistance is diminished. Peacebuilding includes mechanisms to identify and support structures that will consolidate peace, foster a sense of confidence and wellbeing, and support long-term reconstruction.<sup>33</sup>

A purely military-resourced peace support effort is unlikely to achieve sustainable peace. Peace support requires the combined efforts of military and civilian actors operating in a coordinated and, where possible, collaborative way to achieve commonly agreed strategic objectives. NATO refers to this concept as a comprehensive approach; the guiding principles are outlined in AJP-01(D) Allied Joint Doctrine. The guiding principles for the comprehensive approach are: proactive engagement; shared understanding; outcome-based thinking; and collaborative working. Part of this strategy can be diplomatic information and economic measures. Such

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<sup>33</sup> AJP-3.4.1, 1-7.



measures should be tailored to a specific context and include both incentive and disincentive measures to achieve strategic objectives.<sup>34</sup>

The desired end state is a sustainable peace through a political strategy and resolution to the conflict. For the military it is necessary to interact with the state, especially with its security forces. The question is how the relationship among the different types of peace support efforts can either be supported or possibly undermined the peace process.

For military contributions to peace support operations a legal basis is required, either by a resolution of the United Nations Security Council or by the consent of the local or regional conflict parties or actors. The main basis is a mandate by an UN resolution. Such "UN mandates" also reflect the concerns and interests of the states or organisations involved in resolving the crisis and usually the government of the state in which the conflict occurred. The understanding of the importance of the mandate and the role of the military therein is a crucial aspect for the planning process. The legal framework may also include other arrangements and laws such as the "Status of Forces Agreement" (SOFA) or national laws of host countries. NATO's participation will be based on the use of force dictated by crisis specific "Rules of Engagement" (ROE) as authorized by the Northern Atlantic Council (NAC) in accordance with the international law.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> AJP-3.4.1, 2-1.

<sup>35</sup> In 2007, the UN Secretary-General's Policy Committee agreed on the following conceptual basis for peacebuilding to inform UN practice: "Peacebuilding involves a range of measures targeted to reduce the risk of lapsing or relapsing into conflict by strengthening national capacities at all levels for conflict management, and to lay the foundations for sustainable peace and development. Peacebuilding strategies must be coherent and tailored to specific needs of the country concerned, based on national ownership, and should comprise a carefully prioritized, sequenced, and therefore relatively narrow set of activities aimed at achieving the above objectives." The term "Peacebuilding" first emerged in 1970s through the work of Johan Galtung<sup>35</sup> who called for the creation of peacebuilding structures to promote sustainable peace by addressing the "root causes" of violent conflict and supporting indigenous capacities for peace management and conflict resolution. Since then, the term Peacebuilding has covered a multidimensional exercise and tasks ranging from the disarming of warring factions to the rebuilding of political, economic, judicial and civil society institutions (<http://www.colorado.edu/conflict/peace/treatment/peacemkg.html> [15 10 2015]). As a rule, such operations are primarily aimed at the re-establishment of social

In general, peacebuilding operations comprise of:

- Peace Enforcement measures (Peace Enforcement): These measures are being taken for the restoration of peace in a conflict region (intermediate / national level) or to carry out necessary humanitarian assistance. They are usually required after the collapse of law and order of a state.
- Peace-building measures (Peacebuilding): These include measures that prevent and minimize possible new conflict outbreak after a ceasefire or truce. This could be, among other things: Trust-building measures, providing medical care or the support for economic reconstruction.
- Humanitarian assistance (Humanitarian Aid Assistance, Disaster Relief Assistance): Such assistance is considered as an independent mission or task. Humanitarian aid includes measures of all kinds, dealing with disasters, assistance in serious accidents, measures with refugee movements, as well as in cases of evacuation of the civilian population.

## International Organisations

International organisations (IO) usually refer to inter-governmental organisations, or organisations whose membership is open to sovereign states: the most well-known international organisation is the United Nations Organisation, dedicated to maintaining international peace and

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structures in order not to have a new conflict erupt again. That doesn't include only legislative, judicial and executive actions, but usually also the reconstruction of the destroyed infrastructure as a confidence-building measure. In any case, the livelihood of the population should be guaranteed and making sure that the population is not forced to migrate. United Nations peacebuilding activities are aimed at assisting countries emerging from conflict, reducing the risk of relapsing into conflict and at laying the foundation for sustainable peace and development. The UN peacebuilding architecture comprises the Peacebuilding Commission, the Peacebuilding Fund and the Peacebuilding Support Office. The Peacebuilding Support Office assists and supports the Peacebuilding Commission with strategic advice and policy guidance, administers the Peacebuilding Fund and serves the Secretary-General in coordinating United Nations agencies in their peacebuilding efforts (<http://www.un.org/en/sections/what-we-do/maintain-international-peace-and-security/index.html> [22 06 2016]).

security. Due to its international character, and the power, which is laid down in its founding charter, UN is authorized and empowered to take actions. And such actions can be conducted without the consent of the country respective.<sup>36</sup>

### Regional Organisations

Regional organisations are international organisations consisting of member states of a certain region. Such regional organisations are e.g. NATO, the European Union, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the African Union, the League of Arab States and the Organisation of American States. All these organisations are established by treaties.<sup>37</sup>

### Non-Governmental Organisations

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are mostly non-profit organisations that are designed and determined to specific tasks of humanitarian and development activities, which may include supporting humanitarian needs; promoting education; health care; economic development; environmental protection; the compliance of human rights; conflict resolution; law and order and encouraging the establishment of democratic institutions and civil society.

### The Use of Force in Peace Support

The use of force in peace support operations may help to provide a credible deterrence in order to persuade the parties involved to negotiate a ceasefire or peace settlement. This can be seen as a reactive rather than as a pre-emptive action. Nevertheless the use of force

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<sup>36</sup> AJP-3.4.1, 2-5.

<sup>37</sup> AJP-3.4.1, 2-6.

- has to be authorized by a mandate
- has to have a limited timeframe
- should avoid a prolonged engagement
- should not result in a negative humanitarian impact
- should require the consent of the parties involved

Peace (support) activities were mainly established immediately after a conflict, in order to stop either further fighting to preserve the status quo or to stabilize a situation. These missions received significant enhancements. Therefore, we can now speak about conflict management divided into several phases. Conflict management comprises of conflict prevention, including a force intervention driven intervention to stop a conflict and, last but not least, the reconstruction of a society. Inter alia, by restoring democratic structures, law and order in compliance with the human rights. Within the two terms "peacekeeping missions" and "peace support operations", which are interchangeably used and understood, there is a certain range of performance according to the objective that needs to be achieved.

For Austria (as well as for most other countries participations in such operations) the following criteria apply:

- an international mandate (predominantly by the United Nations)
- a multinational composition
- maintaining or restoring the status quo
- the approval of the host country, the conflict parties involved or at least in the interests of the population
- cause least possible damage

The phases of Conflict management<sup>38</sup> in detail are divided into Conflict prevention or conflict-preventing measures. The main concern is to avoid the outbreak of an armed conflict although there are different interests. The spectrum of possibilities ranges from diplomatic negotiations, the preventive deployment of forces, however, still beyond the state borders of the conflict parties. These initiatives and activities all originate at the diplomatic level. The preventive deployment of troops as a demonstrative action (as described above) can be seen as a deployment for determination of the situation directly on site. These conflict-preventing measures include joint consultations, announcement for taking measurements, conducting inspections and surveillance measures. Such measures are often considered as interference in internal affairs of a country, or even as a provocation and therefore, they also can be seen as additional tensions.

## 2.2 Interoperability as the basis for international cooperation

The desire, but also the restraint of many countries and Armed Forces to have better networking, for a more close cooperation and especially for common activities, has many reasons:

- First, the world became smaller, not only information goes around the world faster, even terrorism has become global. Conflicts in a corner of the world can be seen tomorrow live or on-line in your homes.
- Single countries don't want or can no longer act individually. Therefore, they are seeking for alliances. Even large countries like the United States or Russia are forced to look for allies. Almost always countries are looking for an official mandate of the International community to be on the "safe side".
- The financial crisis has also contributed to international cooperation, because of the reduction of financial means. The Armed Forces were concerned and had to consider whether or not

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<sup>38</sup> <http://www.bundesheer.at/truppendienst/ausgaben/artikel.php?id=358> [15 03 2015].

to neglect areas such as the direct defense of state borders (due to the changed political situation), or to pay more attention to other areas such as the Cyber -Terrorism or cross-border crime.

- Countries, especially neighbouring countries, are sometimes acting together. Thus, for example, Belgium and the Netherlands have already since 1996 had a joint naval command and they do common business in procurement projects. They use the same ships and helicopters. A joint air surveillance system will be put into effect very soon. These considerations go even further: The Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg are going to discuss establishing a common Benelux army for cost-saving reasons.

In addition to the will to cooperate more closely, there is also the ability required for this purpose, i.e., the ability to work together as a fundamental and central requirement. "Interoperability" is the keyword therefore. The concept of interoperability exists for quite some time and the term is used in various fields, on hierarchical levels, and is however, defined differently.



200 Austrian soldiers participate in the mission UNIFIL, a force of 15,000 soldiers from 42 different countries. (Photo: Bundesheer)

In the military political sense interoperability means the ability of Armed Forces to be able to co-operate in a multinational environment. Internationally mixed units and headquarters as part of operations or exercises of various organisations such as NATO, the EU, the OSCE, are becoming more and more "international", because more and more countries participate in it. NATO defines interoperability as the ability of systems, units and troops to support other systems, units or forces for certain services and to be supported by them by such services. Also the use of such services for achieving efficient cooperation is part of interoperability.

Concerning interoperability NATO is focusing on the practical and tactical side, where they can interoperate with Armed forces of those countries, which are participating in the programme "Partnership for Peace".<sup>39</sup> But NATO has left it to the respective non-member countries as, to what extent they want to participate.

There exists a variety of standards (STANAG – Standardisation Agreements) as common guidelines for being able to cooperate. Joint exercises and training activities and eventually joint missions strengthen this partnership. Why NATO acts as the lead is easy to answer: Due to the lack of a common European identity, little European defence capabilities, the inhomogeneity of European forces and the lack of an effective interconnection of many European countries with NATO we cannot speak of an independent European military system.

Interoperability means also Multinationality. The success of the joint efforts in peace activities and conflict prevention is based mainly on the fact that the International Community speaks with one voice and act commonly. The responsibility of peace support operations must therefore be shared by many nations – the greater the number of nations, the more chance of success the operation has. The participation of several nations under the mandate of an international organisation gives a peace support operation the universal character and the moral legitimacy, which is necessary for a needed political solution. Against this background it is not

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<sup>39</sup> see NATO Handbook. 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition, Brussels: NATO Office of Information and Press, 1998, p. 85f.

surprising that the principle of multinationality has become a central requirement for the maintenance of the capacity for joint actions.

Multinationality brings in its implementation a number of problems with it. The more national contingents participating in an operation, the greater the frictional losses are. Purely national units with the same mindset, speaking the same language and using the same radio equipment, are more efficient than multi-national organisations whose work efficiency is hampered by the heterogeneity of its members.

Interoperability is limited not only to the practical and tactical side, but can also be found at strategic and operational levels. But this will not be the concern of the present work. Another distinction is based on its functionality. The literature distinguishes the mental, structural and material interoperability.

- Mental interoperability is primarily understood as language, terminology and doctrine, as well as procedures and planning processes.
- Structural interoperability means organisation and structure of command posts, headquarters and units. In addition to this directing, communication and information systems are part of structural interoperability as well.
- Material interoperability includes primarily logistics, which also covers the equipment.<sup>40</sup>

Due to the chosen topic the emphasis is on the mental interoperability, and there especially on language and terminology.

What does Austria's situation look like in this area? Austria was among the first countries that joined the Partnership for Peace programme founded in the year 1994. Austria is actively engaged in it. A year later, in 1995, shortly after the signing of the partnership agreement (February 1995), Austria took part in the NATO-led multinational peacekeeping

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<sup>40</sup> A. Wenger, M. Mäder, Interoperabilität – Schlüssel zur militärischen Handlungsfähigkeit [Interoperability – The key for the ability to act], p. 91.



mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (IFOR / SFOR) until 2004. In 2004 it was then taken over by the European Union. Even when NATO mission KFOR was launched in 1999, Austria provided a contingent with around 500 troops, which was the largest contingent of a non-NATO country.



Members of the Austrian Armed Forces in the UN mission in South Lebanon have to work closely with soldiers from other countries. (Photo: Bundesheer/Gunter Pusch)

However, the multinationality is not without any risks: Due to the mixture, which became larger and larger, like on command posts, headquarters or the mixture of units on the battalion level, problems arise more often, especially in communications or in logistics, because here often different and incompatible systems are in use. However, different training, management methods, mentality and not to underestimate language problems often lead to delays, misunderstandings and inefficiency.

Among the most important areas of mental interoperability training is included, predominantly linguistic communication skills play a great role, primarily in English. The Euro-Atlantic region is dominated by NATO-English and its terminology. Often it is not enough to know the vocabulary, but it is also necessary to internalize the formats, the

procedures and the processes of NATO. To keep these problems to a minimum, there is hardly any subject in NATO, which is not standardized. Therefore, concerning the subject of this work, Austria has ratified the Agreement on standardizing language levels (STANAG 6001). Austria has then implemented this standard now officially into the national training.

English as a lingua franca is not enough according to the author's opinion; this issue will be dealt in more detail later in this work. The situation of linguistic interoperability in the Austrian Armed Forces can be described as good and sufficient, but still has enough development potential.

The increased organisational direction of the Austrian Armed Forces in international missions across the full range of the Petersberg tasks (humanitarian tasks, rescue missions, peacekeeping tasks and use of combat forces in crisis management, including peacemaking) must ensure the training of those skills that enable such international participation in multinational military formations, quickly and flexibly. In addition to the training of independently thinking and acting soldiers who act in the sense of the commander, also a high awareness of values, leadership and professional actions are necessary, which are based on high professional, organisational, pedagogical and didactic, but especially social skills. This means that in this context human and social scientific aspects to support the personal development have to be taken in consideration. This has to be connected to strong communication ability, even in a foreign language.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> See also Franz Groß, *Ausbildungsphilosophie für das Bundesheer* [Training philosophy for the Austrian Armed Forces] 2010, p. 3.



With 6 December 2016, Austria assumed the Chair of the Partnership Interoperability Advocacy Group (PIAG).  
(Photo: PIAG)

An area of tensions exists here, which is interpreted and implemented differently in the top military leadership, especially among education and training in the Austrian Armed Forces. Some people consider this a contradiction when it comes to operations abroad, where everything has to be subordinated to them. For other people it is an educational responsibility of the Armed Forces when it comes to the independent-minded citizens in uniform, whose education is based on academic basics already acquired in the Armed Forces. To find a positive definition, a strict allocation as well as a balance of education and training activities, is one of the major challenges.

### 2.3 Legal basis for the participation of Austria

Participation in peacekeeping operations represents one of Austria's most important contributions to the efforts of the United Nations to maintain peace and international security. The participation in such operations is not only marked by a long tradition, but it is also laid down in the Constitution.

## The Federal Constitutional Law

The mission of the Austrian Armed Forces is laid down in the Federal Constitution Article 9 and Article 79 B-VG. Article 79 of the Constitutional Law establishes further tasks of the Austrian Armed Forces are to be regulated by separate federal constitutional laws. For missions and operations abroad, not addressed by the article 79 of the Constitutional Law is, the Federal Constitutional Law about 'Cooperation and solidarity in the deployment of units and individuals to foreign countries' is the Basis.

In the Federal Constitutional Law the framework of support and solidarity beyond the State boundaries is laid down in Article 23:

- (1) Austria contributes to the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) of the European Union on the basis of title V, Chapter 1 and 2 of the Treaty on European Union and as amended by the Treaty of Lisbon. The treaty provides in Art. 3 para 5 and Art. 21 para 1 the protection and respect of the principles of the UN Charter. This includes participation in tasks according to Art. 1 of this Agreement

Article 43, Section 1 of the EU Treaty:

"The tasks referred to in Article 42(1), in the course of which the Union may use civilian and military means, shall include joint disarmament operations, humanitarian and rescue tasks, military advice and assistance tasks, conflict prevention and peace-keeping tasks, tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peace-making and post-conflict stabilisation. All these tasks may contribute to the fight against terrorism, including by supporting third countries in combating terrorism in their territories.

The Council shall adopt decisions relating to the tasks referred to in paragraph 1, defining their objectives and scope and the general conditions for their implementation. The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, acting under the authority of the Council and in close and constant contact with the Political and Security

Committee, shall ensure coordination of the civilian and military aspects of such tasks".<sup>42</sup>

In addition this includes measures involving the suspension of the economic and financial relations with one or more countries, either restricted or completely stopped. Decisions by the European Council as the basis for a common defence shall apply, according to Art. 50 paragraph 4, *mutatis mutandis*.

- (2) For decisions within the context of the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union on the basis of title V, Chapter 2 of the Treaty on European Union as amended by the Treaty of Lisbon, Article 23e Para. 3 shall apply *mutatis mutandis*.
- (3) When deciding on the introduction of a mission outside the European Union, the tasks of military advice and assistance tasks of conflict prevention and the maintenance of peace or combat forces in crisis management, including peacemaking and operations to stabilize the post-conflict situation and the vote on decisions under Article 42, paragraph 2 of the Treaty on European Union as amended by the Lisbon Treaty concerning the progressive framing of a common defence policy, the voting right has to be exercised in consensus between the Chancellor and the responsible Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs.

"The understanding, that Austria's neutrality does not longer exist in the traditional sense, is repeatedly raised by experts of the National Defence Academy in Vienna. Regularly it is mentioned that the EU and NATO will cooperate more closely. Between NATO and the EU exists, based on a contract since 2003, a "strategic partnership" as the basis for common security. The agreement allows the EU the recourse to NATO assets and capabilities to conduct military operations. However, such considerations and the related possible deployment of domestic

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<sup>42</sup> [http://www.jus.uio.no/english/services/library/treaties/14/14-03/teu\\_cons.xml](http://www.jus.uio.no/english/services/library/treaties/14/14-03/teu_cons.xml).  
[27] 06 2016

contingents to distant theatres of war are currently highly unpopular among the majority of the Austrian population."<sup>43</sup>

The Federal Constitutional Law about "Cooperation and solidarity in the deployment of units and individuals in foreign countries"

According to this Federal Constitutional Law about 'Cooperation and solidarity in the deployment of units and individuals to foreign countries' (Bundesverfassungsgesetz über Kooperation und Solidarität bei der Entsendung von Einheiten und Einzelpersonen in das Ausland – KSE BVG),<sup>44</sup> units and individuals can be sent abroad for solidly united participation

- a. in actions of peacekeeping, including the fostering of democracy, Rule of law and protection of Human rights in the context of an international organisation or the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) or in the implementation of the decisions of the European Union within the framework of the Common Foreign and Security Policy,
- b. in order to provide humanitarian assistance and disaster relief actions,
- c. to take actions of search and rescue services,
- d. to conduct exercises and training for the purposes mentioned in litera a to c.

Austria's obligations to the International Law should be taken into consideration, as well as the principles of the UN Charter and the Helsinki Final Act and the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union.

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<sup>43</sup> Margarete Kopeinig (2009), NATO und EU sind ein Zwillingsspaar, In: Kurier, 3. 4. 2009, p. 7.

<sup>44</sup> BGBl. No. 38/1997 according to BGBl. I No. 30/1998 as well as BGBl. I No. 35/1998 (day of release 22 April 1997), in section 1 para. 1.

## Federal Law on "Sending troops abroad for providing assistance"

This federal law for participating in international operations by Austrian soldiers (Auslandsentsendegesetz – AusIEG 2001) includes in its scope the following:

§ 1. (1) This Federal Law is, unless nothing else is expressed, applied to soldiers who are sent abroad in accordance with § 1 No. 1 litera a to c of the Federal Constitutional Law on Cooperation and Solidarity in the Deployment of Units and Individuals abroad.<sup>45</sup>, BGBl. I No. 38/1997.

According to this law, individuals as well as whole units participating in peace-keeping operations may be posted abroad. This can be done with an international organisation, explicitly stated the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), or according to decisions of the European Union in the context with the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). However, this federal law also includes humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, search and rescue activities as well as the participation in international exercises abroad.

## The Defence Law

Another document is the Defence Law of 2001,<sup>46</sup> which in § 2 (1), formulates the tasks of the Armed Forces: "The Armed Forces are responsible for [...]. d) The provision of assistance abroad with measures for peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, and search and rescue activities (assignment abroad)."

Thus, the Austrian National Defence Law allows the use of the Armed Forces not only on the territory of the Republic of Austria, but allows such

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<sup>45</sup> Bundesverfassungsgesetz über Kooperation und Solidarität bei der Entsendung von Einheiten und Einzelpersonen ins Ausland (KSE-BVG), Bundesgesetzblatt (BGBl.) I Nr. 38/1997.

<sup>46</sup> Wehrgesetz 2001 – WG 2001, BGBl. I No. 146, in der Fassung der Bundesgesetze BGBl. I No. 103/2002, 37/2003, 151/2004, 58/2005, 116/2006, 17/2008, 85/2009, 111/2010, 50/2012 und 63/2012 sowie der BMG-Novelle BGBl. I No. 3/2009 (edited on 21 December 2001; in effect on 22 December 2001).

activities abroad as well. The only limitation is however, that a request by an international organisation must be authorized by a mandate from the United Nations, the European Union or the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe. The tasks can only be conducted when the responsible bodies decide the posting of members of the Armed Forces abroad. For such operations abroad the so-called Troops for International Operations are prepared to go on short notice. These "Soldiers for International Operations" are contracted already in advance and trained in peacetime for Peace Support Operations. As part of the pre-deployment training, soldiers are familiarized with the specifications and details of the concrete mission in the target region. This includes the linguistic and national cultural training. On the basis of the National Defence Law, the legislation foresees that the Austrian Armed Forces are able to conduct non-military tasks as well.

## 2.4 Austria's concrete contributions abroad

The Cold War is history, but many nations still live not in peace. Regional wars and armed conflicts are ongoing and cause losses among the civilian population. The Austrian government sees peace as an international commitment. Peace support and peacekeeping tasks in today's international community become more and more important. In collaboration with the United Nations and other international organisations such as OSCE, EU and NATO Austria is also acting in the name of peace. These Organisations rely on diplomacy and economic initiatives and measures. But if this does not help, military means are used. As a member of several international organisations, Austria contributes to peacekeeping and peace support operations. As a member of several international organisations, Austria contributes to peacekeeping operations. Since 1960, more than 90,000 Austrian soldiers have participated in over 50 international peace support and humanitarian missions. Since the end of the Cold War, the number of missions has increased significantly. In addition to classical peacekeeping missions humanitarian disaster relief operations are becoming increasingly important. So, Austria has a long tradition in peace support, predominantly under the umbrella of the UN.



In 1960, Austria was asked to support the UN mission in the former Belgian colony of Congo. In December of the same year a medical contingent was sent there, but the members were captured immediately after their arrival, because they were considered members of former colonial soldiers. Very soon the contingent was freed by Nigerian UN troops and was able to conduct their tasks. This mission lasted a few years only and was focusing on medical support for UN Forces, the local population and refugees.



For the first time a medical unit was sent in December 1960 to Kongo.  
(Photo: Bundesheer/HBF)

Since the mid sixties of the last century until now, Austria has been participating in numerous PSOs, such as the operation on Cyprus, the Golan Heights, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Kosovo, Afghanistan, where Austria deployed troops and other areas like the Middle East, the Western Sahara, Georgia, etc. where we sent military observers. In addition to that Austria provided aid to humanitarian catastrophes like in Pakistan, Iran, Sri Lanka and Albania. The contribution of the Austrian Armed Forces in PSOs is based on the Charter of the United Nations and the Article 23f of the Austrian constitution, which approves Austria's participation in common foreign and security policy measures.

The Austrian Armed Forces has been taken part since 1960 with contingents (AUCON – Austrian Contingent) in the following international peacekeeping and peace support operations:<sup>47</sup>

- 1960-1963: the Congo – ONUC (Opération des Nations Unies au Congo)
  - o 5× UN medical unit, 232 troops
- 1964-1973: Cyprus – UNFICYP (United Nations Forces in Cyprus)
  - o 1× UN medical contingent, 55 troops
- 1972-2001: Cyprus – UNFICYP (United Nations Forces in Cyprus)
  - o 1× UN battalion, 283 troops
- 1973: Egypt – UNEF (United Nations Emergency Forces) II
  - o 1× UN battalion, 602 troops
- 1974: Syria and Israel - UNDOF (United Nations Disengagement Observer Force)
  - o 1× UN battalion, 720 men
- 1976: Italy
  - o 1× Disaster relief unit of the Austrian Armed Forces assisting victims after the earthquake in Friuli
- 1988: Armenia
  - o 1× Disaster relief unit of the Austrian Armed Forces assisting victims after earthquake in Armenia

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<sup>47</sup> In the overview below however, the participation of individual military observers in several other UN missions is not included.



After almost forty years participation in the UNDOF mission has Austria withdrawn its contingent from the Golan Heights. (Photo: Bundesheer/Wolfgang Grebien)

### Changes after 1989

The collapse of the Warsaw Pact and the fundamental political changes in many Eastern European countries also had a radical impact on their armed forces. Very soon they declared the willingness of international participation to the United Nations in Peace Support Operations.

The Austrian Armed Forces played a crucial role, especially in the know-how transfer, concerning the United Nations missions abroad. For example, a lot of foreign professional soldiers attended foreign language courses at the Language Institute or peacekeeping courses at the Centre for International Operations.<sup>48</sup> In the early days these soldiers were partly even

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<sup>48</sup> Members of Armed Forces of Eastern European countries took part in the UN Observer Course as well as in the UN Staff Officers Course.

equipped and eventually incorporated into the organisational structure of the Austrian contingents. There was among other things a mixed Slovenian-Hungarian-Austrian battalion on Cyprus or a mixed Slovak-Austrian battalion on the Golan Heights, which served for more than ten years together.

- 1991: Iran – UNAFHIR (United Nations Austrian Field Hospital in Iran)
  - o 1× Auxiliary mission by the Austrian Armed Forces for supporting a refugee camp to support and assist the Kurds
- 1996: BiH – IFOR (Implementation Force)
  - o 3× Transport platoon, ~ 300 troops
- 1996-1999 and 2004: Bosnia and Herzegovina – SFOR (Stabilization Force)
  - o 1× Transport unit, 180-250 troops; (2004: 1× company, 150 troops)
- 1996-2001: Bosnia and Herzegovina – UNMIBH (United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina)
  - o 1× Logistic company and other logistic elements, 259 troops
- 1999: Albania ATHUM / ALBA (Austrian Humanitarian Contingent in Albania)
  - o 1× Auxiliary mission of the Austrian Armed Forces with the task to support a refugee camp
  - o 1× Field hospital and engineers for water purification
- 1999: Turkey
  - o 1× AFDRU contingent (Austrian Forces Disaster Relief Unit), 113 troops, for humanitarian assistance after a heavy earthquake
- 2002: Afghanistan – ISAF (International Security Assistance Force)
  - o 2× contingent
- 2003: Iran
  - o 1× Disaster relief contingent AFDRU (Austrian Forces Disaster Relief Unit) for efforts after an earthquake disaster

- 2005: Sri Lanka
  - o 1× Disaster relief contingent AFDRU of 60 troops for purification of drinking water after the tsunami catastrophe
- 2005: Afghanistan – ISAF (International Security Assistance Force)
  - o 1× Austrian security contingent during the elections of approx. 100 troops
- 2005: Pakistan
  - o 1× Disaster relief contingent AFDRU of 60 troops for purification of drinking water after an enormous earthquake
- 2007: Greece
  - o several planes, helicopters and soldiers to fight numerous wildfires (26 troops)
- Since 2007: Nepal – UNMIN (United Nations Mission in Nepal)
  - o two men for ceasefire monitoring, election observation and organizing the Constitutional Assembly
- 2008-2010: Chad – EUFOR Chad/RCA and MINURCAT (Mission des Nations Unies en République Centrafricaine et au Tchad)
  - o 1× contingent of 160 troops (until 15 March 2009)
  - o 1× contingent of 126 troops (until 31 December 2009)



Chadian Soldiers prepare for training during an exercise in N'Djamena. The annual exercise involving more than 20 nation forces promotes multilateral sharing of information, and develops interoperability among partners. (Photo: US Embassy)

## The current state

In the following five missions Austria participates with a contingent of troops:

- Since 1999: Kosovo – KFOR (Kosovo Force)
  - o 1× Infantry battalion, 517 troops
- Since 2004: Bosnia and Herzegovina – EUFOR Operation Althea,
  - o 1× Infantry battalion, 379 troops

A very important mission is our deployment to EUFOR. Austria started its commitment to this Task Force in 1995 (at that time called IFOR), then continuing under the name SFOR and now operating since 2004 under the name EUFOR. In December last year Austria took over,

for the first time, the lead of a brigade-sized Multinational Task Force North (MNTF N), including troops from 13 nations. Around 300 Austrian troops are serving in this task force, among them an aviation unit consisting of three helicopters.

- Since 2011: Lebanon – UNIFIL (United Nations Interim Forces in Lebanon)
  - o 1× Transport and logistics company with 171 troops
- Since 2013: Mali – EUTM (European Union Training Mission)
  - o 1× Medical contingent with 16 troops (only 6 men are included in the graphical overview).

In addition to the various missions where the Austrian Armed Forces contribute with a contingent of troops, there are Austrian military observers and staff officers serving in various missions and headquarters all over the world (see overview). The current number of such officers is in total 64.<sup>49</sup>

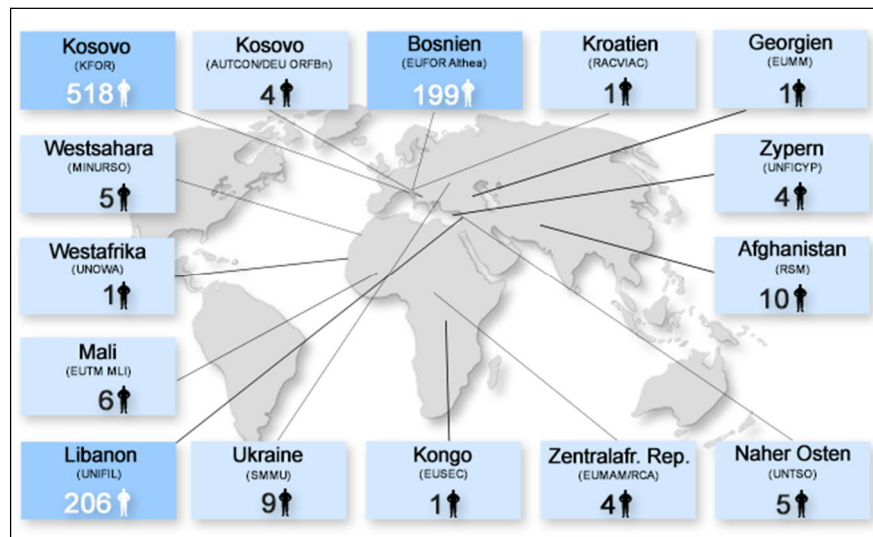


FIGURE 3: CURRENT MISSIONS OF THE AUSTRIAN ARMED FORCES (BMLVS, AS OF MARCH 2015)

<sup>49</sup> The number varies due to rotations and replacements during the year.

Area of Operation	Head-quarters	No	Task/Mission
Bosnia and Herzegovina EUFOR-ALTHEA, European Force Operation Althea	Sarajevo	206	To stabilize the military aspects of the Peace Agreement of Paris and the permanent military presence, in order to prevent a renewed threat to peace
Kosovo KFOR, Kosovo Force	Priština	507	Maintaining security in Kosovo on the basis of UN Resolution 1244 (1999), among others by monitoring and security tasks
Republic of Central Africa EUFOR RCA, European Forces Republic of Central Africa	Larissa	4	Stabilization of the situation on the basis of Decision 2014/73 / CFSP of the European Union.
Lebanon UNIFIL, United Nations Interim Forces in Lebanon	Naqura	179	To ensure the safety of the population. The mission in Lebanon is based on UN Resolutions 425 (1978), 426 (1978) and 1701 (2006).
Ukraine OSCE, SMMU, Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine	Kiew	9	This OSCE mission has the task to monitor the ceasefire between government forces and rebels.
Kosovo AUTCON/DEU ORFBn, Operational Reserve Force Kosovo	Kosovo	6	Contribution to the operational reserve (Crises Response Force) to support the stability of the Western Balkans.



Afghanistan RSM, Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan	Kabul	10	Support of the Afghan Transitional Authority in for maintaining the security in Kabul and its surrounding areas.
Democratic Republic of Congo EUSEC, European Union Security Sector Reform Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Kinshasa	2	Advice and assistance for Security Sector Reform in the Democratic Republic of Congo.
Western Sahara MINURSO, Misión de las Naciones Unidas para el Referendum en el Sahara Occidental	Laayoune	3	Monitoring the ceasefire agreement on the basis of UN resolutions 690 (1991) and 1359 (2001).
Croatia RACVIAC, Regional Arms Control Verification and Implementation Assistance Centre	Zagreb	1	In October 2000, the originally German-Croatian Disarmament Research Centre RACVIAC was founded for preventing the resurgence of fighting and clashes between the ethnic groups. RACVIAC stands for dialogue and cooperation.

Cyprus UNFICYP, United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus	Nicosia	4	In order to prevent the resurgence of conflicts between the Turkish and Greek ethnic group and to restore Law and Order.
West Africa UNOWA, United Nations Office in West Africa	Dakar	1	Actions and measures of the UN in order to support peace and security in the Western African region. Strategies against unemployment of the youth and proliferation of small arms.
Middle East UNTSO, United Nations Truce Supervision Organisation	Government House Jerusalem	5	Keeping the peace on the basis of UN Resolutions 48 (1948), 50 (1948) u. 73 (1949).
Georgia EUMM, European Union Monitoring Mission	Tiflis	1	Since October 2008, the EU deploys troops according to decision of the EU Foreign Ministers on 15 September 2008 for an observer mission to Georgia. The object of the mission is to monitor the ceasefire between Georgia and Russia.

Mali EUTM MLI, European Union Training Mission Mali	Bamako	8	Since 2013 a multinational training mission of the European Union was established there with the aim to provide, basic training and advice to Malian Armed Forces.
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TABLE 1: AUSTRIA CURRENTLY SERVES 14 DIFFERENT AREAS OF OPERATION (AOO)  
CHART: BMLVS, OCTOBER 2015

A main pillar of Austria's success in foreign countries relies on our reservists. As Austrian career soldiers cannot be ordered to go abroad, the PSO-system of Austria depends very much on the willingness of reserve soldiers to take part in such missions. This does not only mean that it helps us to get the manpower required on the table of organisation but also that the reservists bring with them a lot of experience from their civilian professional activities. "Civilian know-how meets and boosts military skills" has become very widespread slogan within the Army and society. This is why currently 50% of the Austrian forces operating abroad consist of reservists. The experiences the Austrian Armed Forces have made in international PSOs so far:

- The framework conditions and the character of Peace Support Operations have changed and become more complex
- Troops have to deal with an increased multinationality
- In order to be successful (e.g. in peace enforcement operations), peace support missions have to be based on robust Rules of Engagement
- Peace Support Operations require a more intensive intelligence and reconnaissance

- In order to gain control of escalating situations, nations need rapidly deployable forces
- As every crisis has its own character we need tailored forces when we want to counter it successfully



Operation in Northern Africa: Austrian Special Forces help people in crises regions. (Photo: Bundesheer)

### Future perspectives

The transformation of the Austrian Armed Forces, which had been discussed and designed by a civilian and military joint commission in the years 2003 and 2004, should be completed in its implementation of 2010. Triggering moment was the development in terms of security policy after the collapse of the Warsaw Pact, the enlargement of the European Union and the accession of former Warsaw Pact countries to NATO. The task of this joint reform-commission was the elaboration of recommendations for the mission, structure and outline of the "new" Austrian Armed Forces in order to meet the commitments for the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). The Austrian Armed Forces should not only be able to participate in the European Crisis Management, but should also be able to take part in

operations of the International Crisis Management in the full range of the so-called Petersberg tasks. This includes not only traditional peacekeeping and peace-keeping missions, but also robust peace-enforcement operations.

The reform should have led to both a stronger professionalization and modernization as well as to streamline the organisational and operational structure, but unfortunately the realization of the reform gradually slowed down and halfway it finally stopped completely. There were several causes for the unsuccessful implementation:

- First, there was, despite the recommendation of the Commission, neither the money for the necessary "start-up financing" yet nor the defence budget was increased in total to the forecasted amount of 1.1% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Austria with its defence budget of approximately 0.7% in 2010 and currently less than 0,6% falls at the end of the European scale.
- The consolidation and streamlining of units, garrisons and barracks was not conducted according to military criteria, but was massively undermined by regional and provincial political interests. This is due to the strong dominance of the federalism (federal state vs. provinces) in Austria.
- The training had not been brought to the current state of the art by mission-oriented criteria, but for many years it was "set back" under the primacy of academization. Thus, there is a constant tension between 'education' and 'training'
- A new and necessary service law, which should include shorter employment contracts, still awaits the detailed elaboration. This would be urgently needed to replace the 'outdated' Staff personnel by young, dynamic and internationally mobile personnel.
- The reduction of those personnel, who lost jobs due to the transformation of their workplaces, is progressing very slowly and after more than a decade, there are still several thousand soldiers and civil servants, who are still in charge, but without any chance of further personal development. Another release of personnel, and

this is still the plan for the future, is to be considered as very problematic.

- The political parties had a very emotional discussion concerning the retention or abolition of conscript service in Austria. Finally, this had a bad and negative impact on the reputation of the Armed Forces as a whole. This and various other factors as well have influenced the transformation and have made it apparently unsystematically, haphazard and unprofessional. Therefore, the morale of the Staff personnel was destroyed or at least decreased dramatically. For the loyalty, which is a fundamental cornerstone in the military, it was like a sledge-hammer blow.
- Although the referendum in January 2013 resulted in more than 60% in favour of the retention of the conscript service, the defence budget is still steadily decreasing. Now the military leadership considering whether or not Austria will or is able to maintain its foreign missions in this extent. In this context, a broad political debate is missing on the future tasks of the Austrian Armed Forces, whose situation by the financial resource scarcity is increasingly precarious. Above all, the question is raised to what extent the tasks listed in the constitution still can be fulfilled. First reductions have already been made, so instead of the previous 1300 troops only around 930 troops and observers are currently serving abroad in different missions and operations.

In the meantime, the more complex and robust missions became the norm rather than the exception.



Based on the operation in Chad, Austria can build on new experiences in Africa. With the mission EUFOR in Chad the medical supply plays an important role. (Photo: Bundesheer)

## 2.5 Summary

Austria provides with these efforts an essential contributing part to maintain peace and international security. Since 55 years, more than 90,000 Austrian soldiers served in over 50 international peace support operations. Austria's active participation in foreign deployments has to be seen as a commitment, which forms the key part of the Austrian Security Strategy. The Austrian Armed Forces' main concern within the Partnership for Peace programme is the achievement of interoperability for multinational operations. The Austrian Armed Forces have gained long-term experience within multinational forces. They participate in multinational operations led by NATO, UN, EU, and OSCE.

Such an intensive and comprehensive contribution to international peace support required a professional planning and an efficient

management. As an accredited PfP-Training Centre the Austrian Armed Forces International Centre (AUTINT) is responsible for the specific preparatory training. The training activities comprise inter alia,

- crisis response operations training
- major parts of task-oriented operations and "pre-deployment training"
- administrating aptitude testing



The separation from the family represents a special burden for the soldiers.  
(Photo: Bundesheer)

The AAF International Centre acts also as the rotation centre for operations and, the national logistics and resupply centre.

A few years ago, after a decision made by the Austrian government, a change in the participation of AAF in peace support operations took place: Instead of contributing to classical UN-led peacekeeping missions only, Austria is now participating in the whole spectrum of peace support operations, even robust ones. In future, Austria will focus its security and defence policy to the prevention of crises and conflicts. In conclusion,



Austria's contribution to peace support operations has been very ambitious so far and will remain so in the future.

The remaining of Austria's obligatory national service (currently six months), was (and still is) of great importance for Austria's international operations, because about two thirds of the soldiers in operations abroad are reservists, and the change to a professional army might have resulted in a serious reduction of personnel.

## Chapter 3 Intercultural competence in a military environment

The concept of intercultural competence was formerly just a slogan, which was only used in business. However, this issue has become a central component in the performance of duties in a multinational military environment. Through Austria's proclamation to become more involved in international peace support operations, the encountering of different (civil and military) cultures has become common. The range of communication contacts, civilian and military nature, is very broad, ranging from the medical support of the local civilian population up to the meeting with trigger-happy rebels. To act accordingly in all these intercultural contacts, is one of the biggest challenges modern soldiers have to meet in today's area of operations abroad.



Austrian KFOR soldiers being in talk with local people.  
(Photo: Bundesheer/Gunter Pusch)

With the inclusion of the fulfilment of the so-called Petersberg tasks under the ESDP and CFSP (operations for stabilizing, combat missions for peace enforcement) foreign missions have now obtained, particularly for Austria, which has participated so far only in classic peacekeeping missions, a new dimension. While Austria was participating in the past only in

missions, in which all parties had already agreed to a deployment before sending a peacekeeping force, this is currently not always the case. Additional to the activities of the "humanitarian blue helmets" are now possible combat situations as part of the mission, which soldiers have to face. But even in such dangerous situations it can be very helpful, or even a matter of survival, to act in an intercultural way competent.

The following example will help to clarify this: Once a group of Austrian soldiers in the Chad mission was confronted during a patrol stopped by a rebel group and the situation almost escalated into crossfire. Especially due to the lack of language skills or any communication, the soldiers' couldn't resolve the situation. None of the rebels spoke English or French and the Austrian soldiers' didn't speak any of the Arabic dialects used in this region. The Austrian patrol leader made a last attempt and took out of his pocket and his language survival booklet, which was prepared in advance by the language institute for such purposes.<sup>50</sup> The patrol cautiously made the attempt to communicate by means of images contained in this guide. In doing so, the precarious situation, where everyone was standing with arms ready to shoot, helped the rebels to relax. When the rebels saw the pictures, they found them amusing. Finally, the situation was "cleaned up". Both sides had given here, consciously or unconsciously, a good portion of trust in advance in order to prevent the situation from escalating.

The correct interpersonal dealing with people, who have a different cultural background, increases the self-confidence of the soldiers in their actions and behaviour and ensures the acceptance of "the others". In operations abroad, intercultural competence is also an essential prerequisite for the fulfilment and for self-protection. Superiors demand and promote intercultural competence of their subordinates in a way they behave safely

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<sup>50</sup> For the operation in Chad other methods had to be developed apart from the conventional ones, because after receiving the task to create a language fibula a first search detected, that there are more than fifty official languages and just as many dialects in Chad. Added to this was the fact that the Austrian soldiers were deployed in the Eastern region of Darfur, where they constantly met with refugees flocking from Sudan and belonging to entirely different ethnic and (Arabic) language groups. Therefore, this booklet was created for communication by means of images and pictograms.

and respectfully to both the population of the respective area of operation as well as the members of other nations. Superiors train their troops for cooperation in multinational units and formations.

The intentional use of empathy is the key to developing intercultural competence. We can use empathy to apprehend experience that is inaccessible to us in our own cultural worlds. We can generate our feeling for a different culture in such a way that our behaviour becomes "adapted" to the other cultures. Culturally adapted behaviour is not generated solely by employing cognition with the appropriate attitude, as is sometimes supposed in intercultural theory. It is necessary to generate the feeling for other cultures. With that feeling, behaviour appropriate in the other cultural context can flow naturally from our embodied experience, just as it does in our own culture. As a following step we have to create methods, which are usable in intercultural training and other developmental efforts that will allow learners to recognize a feeling of their own cultures and to use techniques for understanding the embodied feeling of other cultures.

To be able to act cultural adequately in a cultural foreign operation area requires a high degree of sensitivity of a foreign culture and their support, which is largely determined by intercultural competence. Thus it is an important instrument for the success of missions abroad. The heterogeneity in cultural, political, economic, social, religious and military terms within such a common social acting context cannot be ignored. Previously, combat techniques and a clear picture of the enemy for the fulfillment of tasks were crucially. Today the soldier serving abroad faces the difficult tasks of preserving peace, which was laboriously gained in a mostly chaotic conflict with several parties and to provide development assistance.<sup>51</sup>

Additional to this is the international military cooperation, which is characterized by sometimes very different military cultures. This means that different notions of hierarchy, leadership and understanding of leadership are in existence. Furthermore, the fulfilment of tasks of the troops deployed in the country with foreign culture for them, unusual habits and exceptional climatic conditions is difficult. A variety of stressors is added,

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<sup>51</sup> Bennett & Castiglioni (2004): Embodied ethnocentrism and the feeling of culture: A key to training for intercultural competence, p.260.

such as one's own risk, high workload, separation from the family and painful experiences on the spot.

Operational intercultural encounters are usually for soldiers difficult to understand and not always clear, sometimes even threatening. In order to assess the risk in an appropriate manner, it is important for soldiers to be able to perceive and evaluate culture-specific behavioural patterns differentiated. They are therefore often in a multiple intercultural situation, where they need intercultural competence. Operational leadership requires at all levels a maximum of flexibility, decisiveness, cooperation and intercultural competence as well as an acting on short notice. This is in leadership practice a multifaceted requirement of different acting areas. Especially the complexity of specialized and personal leadership in a multicultural environment requires a military leader who can make use of the variety of individual expertise to support his decisions on a broad basis of information. This includes especially the early personal confrontation of cultural challenges of the respective operation abroad. The soldier is requested to act appropriately, competent, sensitively and interculturality to the situation. This sometimes exceeds a traditionally trained soldier as a citizen in uniform. In particular, in a militarily relevant intercultural situation, it is no longer enough to reflect on their own and to take the stranger note. Among the intercultural conditions leadership is becoming more complex. A simple transfer of good leadership principles from one cultural context to another is often very difficult.

### 3.1 Interculturality and its determination

Interculturality in general refers to conditions, possibilities and consequences of interaction between cultures, i.e. in the encountering of your own culture with a foreign one. The separating subject and the common ones play a crucial role. One of the leading researchers in this area is the German-Iranian philosopher Hamid Reza Yousefi, who defined interculturality as "the name of a theory and practice that deals with historical and current relationship of all cultures and people as their means and instruments as basis of their total equivalence. It is a scientific discipline, as long as this theory and practice is investigated methodically."

In this sense and context the philosopher made a separation between a historical, a systematical and a comparative interculturality.<sup>52</sup>

Interculturality is becoming increasingly important in the modern world as more and more people migrate from one country to another to escape from conflict, persecution or poverty, or to reunite families. Interculturality is often problematic, because racism and xenophobia are widespread and locals and migrants often compete for limited resources or employment opportunities.



Such contact situations require a special sensitivity. (Photo: Bundesheer)

But interculturality also has benefits, including cultural enrichment and creativity. The Lauder Business School in Vienna provides a quite stringent definition of "Culture" and "Interculturality" including a comprehensive approach, which represents the basis of their international bachelor and master programmes ("International Business Administration" and "International Management and Leadership"):

"Culture often serves as an all encompassing category, under which any human and societal behaviour can be subsumed, or as a soft, non-rational

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<sup>52</sup> Hamid Reza Yousefi, *Phänomenologie des Eigenen und des Fremden Eine interkulturelle Perspektive*, p. 26f.

and hard-to-measure factor of influence. Being conscious of the difficulties of defining culture, LBS conceives of cultural factors ex-negativo as those that are not determined either socio-economically, politically or physically. Diversity includes cultural (e.g. language, religious affiliation, traditions), socio-economic (e.g. social origin, residence, education, professional experience, income, family status), political (e.g. national origin, world view), and physical factors (e.g. age, mental and physical abilities), and is critically increased by gender which intersects with each of the aforementioned determinants".<sup>53</sup>

In this context two other terms are used in the discourse and in the literature: *Multiculturalism* and *Transculturality*. Where are the differences and is there a relationship between these three terms?

Multiculturality is the existence of impacts of several cultures; cultural diversity refers to the social structures either of an organisation or of the society itself. In the spirit of multiculturalism, it is assumed that it does not come to the merging of different cultures, but they exist side by side. *Interculturality* is understood as the encountering of two or more cultures, in which it comes despite of cultural differences to mutual interferences. The concept of transculturation in contrary to interculturalism and multiculturalism assumes that cultures are not homogeneous fields, which are clearly distinguishable and divisible from each other. Due to the globalization cultures are increasingly linked and mixed. Transculturality exactly describes this aspect of the developing way of cultures from clearly definable ones to a global culture. In comparison to this, *Pluriculturality* describes the existence of many different cultures without any interaction or mixing.

All three subjects (except pluriculturality) share the critical discourse about identity concepts, which are exclusively based on own ones, the critical discourse on the egocentric view and the critical examination in dealing with foreign and own patterns. But this requires the willingness to understand and (possibly) to change own interpretive, argumentation and behavioural patterns. One should put himself into a critical relationship of his own culture to in order to clarify the connections and developments

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<sup>53</sup> <http://lbs.ac.at> [22 06 2016].

about the cultural and linguistic state of the art. The concept of interculturality is also in a certain competitive relationship to concepts of multiculturalism and transculturality. Multiculturalism focuses on the coexistence within a society, whereas transculturality tries to understand "Culture" beyond the opposing position of one's own and foreign culture. Transculturality focuses in a stronger way than Interculturality on mixture and common things.

Martyn Barrett has identified in his book the following characteristics as the core features of interculturalism:

1. "Interculturalism shares a number of features with multiculturalism. In particular, interculturalism values cultural diversity and pluralism, which in turn necessarily entails the implementation of reasonable cultural accommodation. Interculturalism also places emphasis on integration and social inclusion. In addition interculturalism is concerned with tackling the underlying structural political, economic and social disadvantages and inequalities that are often experienced by members of minority groups. Therefore, interculturalism builds upon the foundations of multiculturalism.
2. Interculturalism proposes that intercultural dialogue requires a culturally neutral legal and institutional framework, as well as institutional structures that actively support and encourage intercultural dialogue.
3. Interculturalism requires action to be taken throughout society to eliminate all forms of racism and xenophobia. Such action should be taken by public authorities, civil society organisations and the mass media, all of which should also aim to provide objective information about cultural minorities and migrants.
4. Another potential barrier to successful intercultural dialogue is the difficulty of communicating without a lingua franca.
5. Concerning the importance of language skills of a target country or region, interculturalism advocates that the members of minority cultures need to learn the language of the other culture to enable them to participate in intercultural dialogue. At the same time, there should be provision for mother-tongue instruction not only because the use of minority languages is a basic human



right, but also to ensure that such languages are protected and can continue to contribute to the cultural wealth of the broader society.

6. Interculturalism proposes that intercultural dialogue should not only operate at the interpersonal level, but it should also operate at the community, organisational, institutional and international levels. Dialogue not only reduces prejudice and enhances mutual understanding and respect between individuals, but it can facilitate mutual understanding between different communities, between different organisations and institutions, and between different countries".<sup>54</sup>

Interculturalism, according to Berrett in summary,

- values cultural proposes and pluralism
- places an emphasis on intercultural dialogue, interaction and exchange
- aims to generate a strong sense of a cohesive society
- proposes that all citizens should be equipped with intercultural competence
- proposes that structures and policies should be developed to support intercultural inter-action and dialogue.<sup>55</sup>

Interculturality is understood as the encounter between hegemonic and non-dominant cultures as well as frictions, overlapping, interdependencies, potentials for conflict and mutual interference caused by this. Here, both cultural commonalities and differences are taken into account. Interculturality is likewise present in spheres which have apparently been universalized as a result of technical standardisation and globally shared challenges. Furthermore, it places emphasis more on the interaction between people, groups, businesses and organisations, and the corresponding norms of communication, negotiation and conflict

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<sup>54</sup> Martyn Berrett (2013), Interculturalism and multiculturalism: similarities and differences, p. 26-39.

<sup>55</sup> Barrett (2013), p. 28.

management, rather than just on a knowledge of other cultures. On the one hand, this notion of Interculturality is clearly distinct from multiculturalism and its political and legal claims of separate cultures, which exists side-by-side. On the other hand, it should be distinguished from the concept of transculturality with its emphasis on transcultural fusions and hybrid forms. The notion of interculturality at hand underscores the conflictual encounter of divergent culture-based ideas and patterns of behaviour. In a similar vein, opportunities of shaping these contacts and confrontations deserve greater attention.

In the project 'Equal opportunities in business' interculturality is defined as the "description of differences between individuals, arising from membership of various cultures or groups".<sup>56</sup> I think that this definition of the term "Interculturality" is too vague, because there are other relevant factors: First, the entire range of common features (still be found), from which the differences in the confrontation derive, is missing. The declaration is intended – even if this is not explicitly mentioned here – to address more or less intercultural communication, but is itself only a part of interculturality. Therefore, it seems to be a possible solution, wrapped in such a way, that already problems and conflicts can be avoided or even solved by the diversity. On the contrary, not all problems and conflicts between individuals from different cultures have their roots in this diversity. Of course, it is necessary to know the cultural background of the other person, his cultural and social background, his education, age or sex, in order to develop an understanding of the necessary respect and tolerance. However, it is only the willingness to develop which is decisive. Unfortunately, in this context clichés and stereotypes are often observed and noticed. Very often observers with negative behaviour will be generalized such as "All Italians are lazy and unpunctual" or "Germans are pedant and straight" etc.

Therefore, interculturality is a phenomenon, which is exposed to constant changes and developments. And different aspects play here an important role, in addition to the above mentioned social, economic, political or legal factors. Each individual has with his own history, his own

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<sup>56</sup> [http://www.zara.or.at/materialien/gleiche-chancen/elearning/bd/e\\_interkultur.htm](http://www.zara.or.at/materialien/gleiche-chancen/elearning/bd/e_interkultur.htm)  
[21 03 2013].

life his own culture. In this culture geographical, ethnical, moral, ethical, religious and historical affiliation is included. This cultural affiliation can also be called a cultural identity that individuals can encounter in interpersonal relationships, who don't have the same cultural identity.

What does Intercultural Competence really mean?

Due to globalization in communications and economy on one hand and the internationalization of the armed forces on the other hand, Intercultural Competence is brought more and more into the focus. In economic contract actions the need for such a competence is no longer a secret, especially in cultures, where the neglecting or the non-compliance of certain standards of behaviour has a negative effect. There are already studies on failed contracts due to mostly unconscious wrong behaviour or non-compliance with a minimum of cultural standards. What is true of the economy has to apply even more for the military, mostly for the soldiers in an unknown region and sometimes under difficult conditions. For the increasing importance and awareness of this area many of the negative incidents which occurred in the military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan have contributed to this image.

The "intercultural" part in the term of intercultural competence involves literally "culture". The perception, comprehension and interpretation of the concept of culture is so numerous and varied as their essays and publications about it. While inter alia, Baumer has dealt in his study with the general theory by presenting the culture as a character in three levels (visible, conscious and unconscious level),<sup>57</sup> Stupka has taken this in conjunction with the military.<sup>58</sup> Baumer defined Intercultural Competence as follows: "Intercultural competence in the narrow sense includes

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<sup>57</sup> Thomas Baumer (2002), Handbuch Interkulturelle Kompetenz, Volume I and II, Zürich 2002.

<sup>58</sup> Andreas Stupka (2010), Militärkultur. Über das Wesen der Begrifflichkeit, in: Militärkulturen, Contributions to the identically named Seminar 'Military cultures', 4 to 6 May 2010, p. 19-29.

social-communicative and psychosocial skills, so in general skills to recognize intellectual aspects of a task, to assess them and appropriately to cope with."<sup>59</sup>

To understand the concept of intercultural competence, it is necessary to understand related concepts to it, including the concepts of identity, culture, intercultural encounter and competence. Cultural identities are a special type of social identity. The term Culture itself is difficult to define, because members of cultural groups are always internally heterogeneous.

Defining culture in means that groups have their own distinctive cultures. This includes nations, ethnic groups, work organisations, generational groups, families, etc. For this reason, all people belong on the same time to many different cultures. The question how individuals relate to the cultures to which they are belong or affiliated is complex. Cultural affiliations have an impact not only how people perceive themselves and their own identities, but also how they perceive others, and other ways of acting, thinking and feeling.

Competence usually is understood as a matter of skills, but in this context as a combination of attitudes, knowledge, understanding and skills applied through action in any relevant situation. Competence is the capacity to respond successfully to types of situations which present tasks, difficulties or challenges for the individual, either singly or together with others. Intercultural encounters are one such type of situation.

Intercultural competence therefore enables one, to:

- understand and respect people who are perceived to have different cultural affiliations from oneself;
- respond appropriately, effectively and respectfully when interacting and communicating with such people;
- establish positive and constructive relationships with such people;
- understand oneself and one's own multiple cultural affiliations through encounters with cultural "difference".

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<sup>59</sup> Baumer (2002), p. 79.

Communication and interaction in face-to-face intercultural encounters require individuals to draw upon their plurilingual competence. How people interpret and communicate, intercultural encounters are formed by the languages and cultures which they bring into those communication situations. Intercultural competence is never complete but can always be enriched.<sup>60</sup>

Intercultural competence is generally understood as the ability to communicate effectively with people from different cultures. It is based on the knowledge of the country, the people who live there, but also on intercultural sensitivity and self-confidence. Intercultural competence of a human being can only be assessed in the respect of the skills he or she possesses. One way to understand the culture of another country is the identified gap between how we deal with things at home and in other places. Through this awareness, it might be possible to restrict problems that may arise due to cultural differences. It is therefore necessary to accept that "others see and handle things differently". The strategic policy also has to be consistently adapted to the operational requirements of different cultures.

"Intercultural competence is the ability for successful communication with people of other cultures. The bases for a successful intercultural communication are emotional competence, together with intercultural sensitivity. Basic needs are sensitivity and self-consciousness: the understanding of other behaviours and ways of thinking as well as the ability to express one's own point of view in a transparent way with the aim to be understood and respected. The goal of assessing intercultural competence is to find out if a person has this ability or the potential for it. Cultures can be different not only between continents or nations, but also within the same company or even family: every human being has its own history, its own life and therefore also (in a certain extent) its own culture resp. cultural affiliation (geographical, ethnical, moral, ethical, religious, political, and historical). Intercultural competence is needed as the basic ability for any interaction! It is not only necessary to have social skills, but also to improve the sensitivity and understanding for other values, views, ways of living and thinking, as well as being self-conscious in transferring

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<sup>60</sup> Barrett (2014), p. 12-17.

one's own values and views in a clear, but appropriate way. Intercultural competence helps understanding others and achieving goals".<sup>61</sup>

A (slight) different approach to Intercultural Competence provides Darla K. Deardorff, who presents a number of definitions (approaches) of intercultural competence models:<sup>62</sup>

"Intercultural competence describes the skills to interact effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations on the basis of certain attitudes and beliefs as well as based on reflection skills and special capacities to act".<sup>63</sup> and

"Intercultural competence is the ability to develop targeted knowledge, skills and attitudes that lead to visible behaviour and communication that are both effective and appropriate in intercultural interactions".<sup>64</sup>

On the basis of this definition she adapted the constituent elements of intercultural competence:

1. Knowledge: Cultural self awareness; culture specific knowledge; socio-linguistic awareness; grasp of global issues and trends.
2. Skills: listening, observing, evaluating using patience and perseverance; viewing the world from others' perspectives.
3. Attitudes: Respect (valuing other cultures); openness (withholding judgement); curiosity (viewing difference as a learning opportunity); discovery (tolerance for ambiguity).

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<sup>61</sup> Definitions according to (1) "Exploring Intercultural Competence: A Construct Proposal", Alvino E. Fantini, Ph.D., School for International Training, Brattleboro-Vermont/USA and (2) CICB Center of Intercultural Competence, Kloten Switzerland.

<sup>62</sup> D. K. Deardorff (2006-1): Policy Paper zur Interkulturellen Kompetenz, In: Interkulturelle Kompetenz – Schlüsselkompetenz des 21. Jahrhunderts? Bertelsman Foundation, Germany, p. 13-24.

<sup>63</sup> Deardorff (2006-1), p. 5.

<sup>64</sup> D. K. Deardorff (2006-2): The Identification and Assessment of Intercultural Competence as a Student Outcome of Internationalization at Institutions of Higher Education in the United States, In: Journal of Studies in International Education 10, p. 241-266.

Bennett has also developed a "Model of Intercultural Sensitivity", where people without any experience – or even with disinterest and denial can come to adapt and integrate the differences of other cultures into their owns.<sup>65</sup>

1. Denial of differences: People fail to develop the opportunity to interpreting cultural differences. They cannot differentiate cultures as categories, because they don't recognize the existence of cultural differences. To place here a positive vision of intercultural interaction is one of the challenges.
2. Defence against differences: Here, people evaluate persons with different cultural behaviours or values negatively. To avoid cultural contrasts and to provide reassurance and information about similarities should be an appropriate way.
3. Minimization of difference: The assumption of similarity is invoked to avoid recognizing one's own cultural patterns. Learners have now to develop cultural self-awareness and to reconcile unity and diversity to achieve a first challenge. Understanding categories of their own culture, including values and beliefs, have to be developed.
4. Acceptance of difference: People accept that all behaviours and values, including their own, exist in distinctive cultural contexts and that patterns of behaviours and values can be discerned within each context. They refine analysis of cultural contrasts and reconcile relativity and commitment.
5. Adaption of difference: In this context adaptation means the application of acceptance. This can proceed by allowing one to reorganize experience in a way more like that of the other culture. People should develop a cognitive and intuitive empathy. The challenge is to develop cultural identity.

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<sup>65</sup> See also [http://www.idrinstitute.org/allegati/IDRI\\_t\\_Pubblicazioni/47/FILE\\_Documento\\_Bennett\\_DMIS\\_12\\_pp\\_quotes\\_rev\\_2011.pdf](http://www.idrinstitute.org/allegati/IDRI_t_Pubblicazioni/47/FILE_Documento_Bennett_DMIS_12_pp_quotes_rev_2011.pdf) [22 06 2016].

6. Integration of difference: The experience of Integration may occur when individuals intentionally make a significant, sustained effort to become fully competent in other unknown cultures. The aim is to resolve the multicultural identity.

Concerning identification and assessment of intercultural competence Darla Deardorff, an executive director at Duke University in North Carolina, has developed an "Intercultural Competence Model", starting with individual attitudes (respect, openness, curiosity and discovery) and knowledge & comprehension (cultural self-awareness, deep cultural knowledge, sociolinguistic awareness) with the desired internal outcome (adaptability, flexibility, ethno-relative view, empathy) and ending in the desired external outcome (Effective and appropriate communication & behaviour in an intercultural situation).<sup>66</sup>

A slightly different approach took K. G. Ross, who listed the key factors of Cross-Cultural Competence in his study "Toward an Operational Definition of Cross-Cultural Competence from Interview Data".<sup>67</sup>

- mental models/perspective-taking
- interpersonal skills
- willingness to engage
- openness to experience and challenge
- relationship-building

The key question for Ross is "Can a person develop an understanding of the culture in a manner that allows them to take the perspective of a member of that culture and use it to predict behaviour and attitudes?" Being able to understand, cognitively, the perspective of another person or

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<sup>66</sup> <http://www.education.uw.edu/cirge/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Darla-INTER-CULTURAL-COMPETENCE-MODELS-deardorff-09.pdf> [22 06 2016].

<sup>67</sup> K. G. Ross, C. A. Thornson (2008): Toward an operational definition of Cross-Cultural Competence from the literature, p. 12-13.



group is not sufficient for competence. According to Ross, "Cross-cultural competence (CCC) is the expertise which enables an individual in the military to perform in any number of cultures to achieve organisational goals (in contrast to more specific regional knowledge and language skills)".<sup>68</sup>

If in business matters for many organisations or companies intercultural competence often presents a competitive advantage, than in peace support operations it means the successful achievement of objectives, particularly through conflict-free communication. Peace support operations are organized and conducted by mostly mixed-structured units with many different diversities (ethnicity, race, professional background, religion, political views etc.), including ethnic cultures and institutional background (military, civilian, police). The operational success of a mission often depends on the people involved and their ability to respectfully interact and to effectively communicate with each other. The same is true for communication with local authorities and local population, which has its own norms and traditions.



Trust is the basis for an efficient cooperation. (Photo: Bundesheer)

This (intercultural) communication with local authorities and the local population is crucial for those people whom they propose to meet. The question is how to improve intercultural communication not to make

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<sup>68</sup> Ross (2008), p. 1.

elementary mistakes? When language skills are unequal, clarifying one's meaning in many ways will improve communication:

1. Keep Sentences and Paragraph Shorts: Keep the sentences and paragraphs as short as attainable in order that your audience or reader will perceive them simply.
2. Taking Preparation: The foremost necessary ability for effective verbal communication is to require preparation for writing or presentation. Someone should take necessary preparation before delivering his speech or writing one thing for the audience.
3. Avoid sexist and racist words: Sexist and racist communication occurs once sexist and racist words are utilized in communication.
4. Avoid jargons: straightforward and simple to know words ought to be used. Ambiguous words and jargons ought to be avoided and accent shouldn't be used.
5. Avoid using slang and idioms: choosing words that will convey only the most specific denotative meaning;
6. Use word or technical words carefully: word or technical word ought to be used with due caution. If you use technical words, you must provide clarification.
7. Listen carefully and, if in doubt, ask for confirmation of understanding (particularly important if local accents and pronunciation are a problem);
8. Recognise that accenting and intonation can cause meaning to vary significantly;
9. Respect the local communication formalities and styles, and watch for any changes in body language;
10. Investigate their culture's perception of your culture.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> <http://bizcommunicationcoach.com/how-to-improve-verbal-communication-skills-in-business> [22 06 2016].

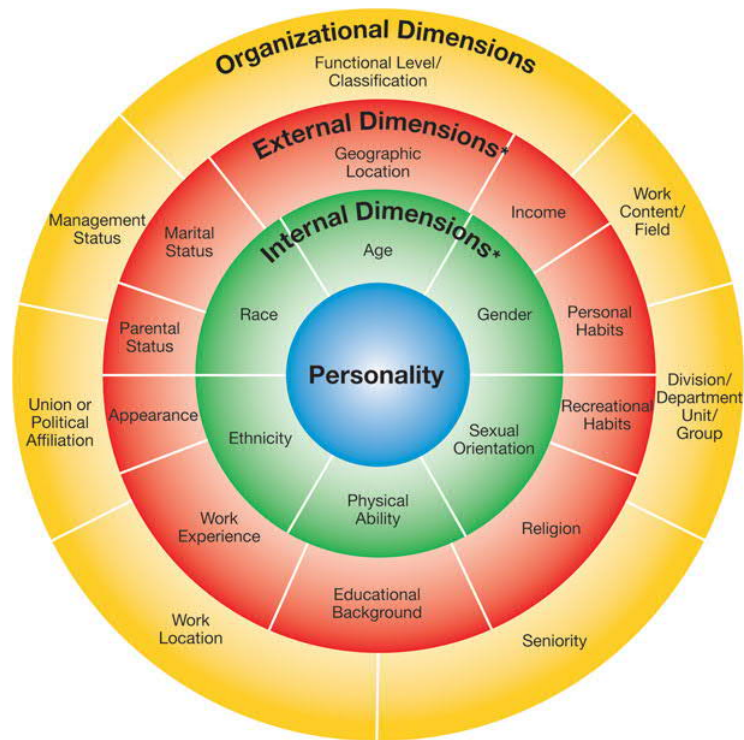


FIGURE 4: GARDENSWARTZ & ROWE: FROM DIVERSE TEAMS AT WORK

Diversity comprises several levels and elements. The graphic of Gardenswartz & Rowe<sup>70</sup> shows in its innermost core that personality and individuality is what distinguishes us from others. In the second (green) ring are factors quoted such as race, ethnicity, age, gender etc., which we cannot change. The next ring reflects our personal circumstances and individual selected matters such as geographical location, work style, educational background, etc. In the outer ring, the organisational aspects of diversity are shown, that is, the workspace, the duration of the membership of an organisation or part of the organisation in which we work. Other aspects are about classification level, management status or trade union

<sup>70</sup> <http://www.gardenswartzrowe.com/why-g-r> [26 06 2016].

membership. In reality, however, there is very little thought given to the peacekeeping missions working environment.

Intercultural competence is far more than just like a contemporary fashion trend or just a slogan. Scientifically Intercultural competence can be classified as an interdisciplinary field, with which all soldiers serving abroad are confronted. Also honesty and respect towards the others are important basic conditions for human interactions. I think, it is not the culture in the military, but the military culture itself is a kind of culture, which is subjected to additional criteria.

What is actually meant by "military culture"?

If we search for the definition of culture and its theoretical consideration, very soon one reaches after the national or state region. The military is directly linked to the state: it is approved by the sovereign, it is structured, provided with legal basis, entrusted with tasks and is training soldiers for this purpose. All this is done by the state itself. As the armed power of the state, the military it is generally used for the preservation of the state and its safety. To what extent a military develops in a country is permitted by the sovereign. This can be called military culture. However, I am not of the opinion of Stupka, who thinks that "the discipline determines the essence of any military culture".<sup>71</sup> I am of the opinion that the temporal component is the crucial characteristic of military culture. It is therefore defined in a broader sense than the so-called "military traditions". The temporal dimension is also inherent to the military tradition, but behaviour, customs and practices remain limited to the military.

Various military cultures have in common governmental structures, but they differ in their forms, characteristics and shape. This ranges from the conscript system, which remains in only a few countries, and goes beyond the anchorage and recognition of the military in society as well as official national performance. In Austria e.g., it is possible to be a professional soldier and a member of a political party at the same time. Compared to Armed Forces in other countries this is really unique.

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<sup>71</sup> Stupka (2010), p. 28.

Military cultures of various countries and armed forces are considered to be similar. However, as a rule, they only differ in their shape. This ends in a certain degree of difficulties which have been encountered in recent international missions: Multinational forces, as they are deployed today around the world, are composed of many nationalities and ethnicities. Their composition ranges down to the lowest command level, the tactical level. This often appears in direct meetings of diverse and partly different military cultures. The behaviour of a soldier is oriented to the military organisational structure. The chain of command is strict and everyone knows his place in the hierarchy. This hierarchical organisation is imminent to the military. It is structural and process-oriented and accustomed to command. It is also adapted to discipline as well as to "Command and Control". Armed Forces operate in units, others as individuals.

Furthermore, it is also necessary to start from an intercultural competence that is required when duties are to be fulfilled in the multinational network. Stupka refers to this as "intercultural military culture" and calls for their inclusion as an integral part of the preparation for deployment in a multinational framework. However, the prerequisite for this is the knowledge and the internalization of your own military culture. To justify the internalization of the military culture together with discipline is, in my opinion, considered too strictly. Because the two paradigms; loyalty and obedience, although presenting the basis, have to be to considered from both sides, the side of the superior and the side of the subordinates. Also from the political side everything should be done to expect loyalty and obedience from the military. From the military side this should not be seen as a dictate or a compulsion, although obedience is one of the fundamental rules within Armed Forces. Benevolence and care, as anchored in many guidelines, also apply at the political level, when we talk about the primacy of politics. How this has developed over time in individual countries can be called a military culture. The soldier as a responsible citizen constitutes part of the military culture within the military.

Horst Walther, a former head of the Armed Forces Language Institute, has been trying to sketch a (unpublished) definition of military culture: "Military culture is the sum of military strategic objectives, management structures, procedures and leadership, management tools, terminology and jargon, traditions, values

and customs as well as armament and equipment towards the respective socio-economic background" (April 2015). He enumerates several (sub) areas, where in my view a very important criterion is disregarded, in particular 'Education and Training'. It is understandable that in these areas, "tradition", "value systems" and "customs" implies cultural elements, but it isn't comprehensive. Education (the Austrian Armed Forces are committed to it and also see themselves as an institution with an educational mission) as part of the officers and non-commissioned officer training, including already cultural contents that can be subordinated. Without further investigating of education and training in this context, this definition does not work in the narrower sense.

I am in accordance with the understanding that perception and confrontation of your own culture with a foreign culture, is an essential criterion. It also deduces that not only training is part of the military but Armed Forces have also an educational mission. To meet this educational task, it would be highly advantageous to provide a corresponding evaluation system. It has existed for many years in particular in the pre-deployment training for operations: it is a proven selection procedure, where not only professional and physical requirements are being tested, but also foreign language skills. In terms of intercultural competence, initial studies have already been carried out, but complex and validated checks still seem to be far away. Although during the pre-deployment training there is a briefing on geography and culture of the target country, linked to a linguistic component in the form of a tailor-made and mission-oriented or regional-oriented language booklet.

There are already several studies from the civilian area, as those of Black and Gregersen (1999),<sup>72</sup> according to which 10-20% of the expatriate managers and by G. Stahl (1998)<sup>73</sup> up to 70% of the managers and professionals cancel their stay abroad prematurely. Reasons for such an early repatriation are inter alia, the lack of language skills, indisposition and uncomfortable, acclimatization difficulties or orientation problems.

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<sup>72</sup> J. S. Black, Hal B. Gregersen (1999), The right way to manage expatriates. Harvard Business Review 77(2), p. 52-60.

<sup>73</sup> G. K. Stahl (1998), Internationaler Einsatz von Führungskräften [International Deployment of Executive Staff], München 1998.

Conversely, certain strategies, such as knowledge acquisition, changes of the own behaviour, assimilation, de-escalation of conflicts, the ability to compromise or willingness for contacts, are criteria for a possible success.

The Training and Doctrine Centre of the American Land Forces (US Army Training and Doctrine Command – TRADOC) has developed a working definition of culture in a military context. According to it, culture is "... the set of distinctive features of a society or group, Including, but not limited to values, beliefs and norms, That ties together members of That society or group and that drives action and behaviour".<sup>74</sup> Several operations and combat missions have shown the American military that the importance of culture, intercultural competence, language skills and regional knowledge as part of the soldiers' education and training requires a closer focus. By detecting the change in this military way of thinking the discussion about the role of culture in modern American warfare has started. It was created as a core outcome of this discussion, the so-called "Defence Language Transformation Roadmap" (2005). This document provides possibilities for the creation of a basic language and cultural expertise for officers, for civil servants as well as for enlisted personnel. Also objectives are mentioned in training of foreign languages, but those for the intercultural competence remain without reply.

The U.S. Marine Corps has developed its own guide for culture and intercultural competence. This guide defines five dimensions of culture:

1. Natural environment
2. Economic system
3. Social structures
4. Political structures
5. Beliefs and symbols

While this concept provides a framework describing the culture, it does not present an explanation for all of these cultural elements within a society. The concept also does not address the importance of languages.

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<sup>74</sup> TRADOC (2008): Army Culture and Foreign Language Strategy, p. 11.

Language is in fact a core dimension of culture in several ways. Speech development greatly influences the cultural development. Language is also important because it gives a feeling of legitimacy to the leadership of a country as well as for foreigners who want to interact with both the leadership and the citizens of a country.

Citizens of a country are more likely to support anybody who speaks their language. Therefore, any approach to legitimacy and mediation of culture, which does not include the language, fails. For TRADOC it was important separating intercultural competence from regional expertise. As a result of this an updated definition of culture was elaborated, which was released as the so-called VBBN (Values, Beliefs, Behaviours, and Norms) model: "Culture is defined as values, beliefs, behaviours and norms that characterize a dynamic social system used by a particular group".<sup>75</sup>

### 3.2 The three-dimensional model of multilingualism and intercultural competence

The concurrence of different nationalities, languages and cultures is in the Area of Operations (AOO) a complex issue, and can generally be explained in three dimensions: 1. Members of multinational forces, 2. Members of governmental, non-governmental and international organisations and, 3. the local population and local authorities.

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<sup>75</sup> R. Hajjar (2007), A Proposed Strategy for Building a Cultural Vapability in the US Army. Sierra Vista AZ: TRADOC Culture Centre White Paper, p. 2.



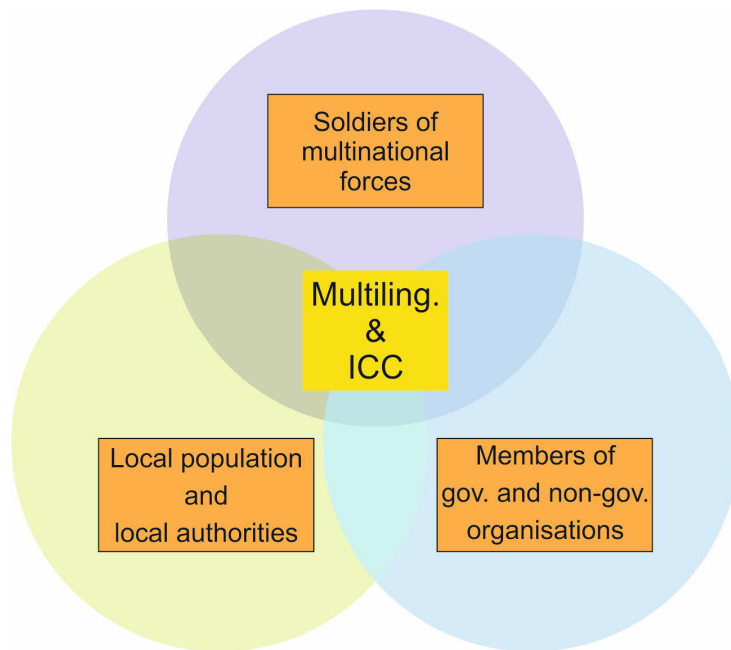


FIGURE 5: THE THREE-DIMENSIONAL MODEL "MULTILINGUALISM AND INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE" (GRAPHIC: ERNST)

Linguistic and cultural differences can lead to misunderstanding or misinterpretation of instructions or in leadership procedures such as the Decision making process. They can cause a social misconduct in a particular environment or situation causing additional problems in cooperation with different units due to different traditions or views. Among differences we should distinguish between professional (military) and national culture on the one hand and linguistic differences on the other hand. It is therefore necessary to examine the significant role of culture and why communication difficulties among different professional cultures arise. The use of language is also divergent between these professional cultures. Certain terms and expressions are used differently and may sometimes be difficult to understand by outsiders. Therefore, misunderstandings can easily arise. Traditional performance also plays a significant role: The military has other ways of performing procedures than civilian authorities, police, non-governmental organisations, agencies or other institutions.

## Multinational forces

Almost all peace support operations are now built by multinational contingents. This leads to differences in language and professional culture. These differences are not crucial, because of the worldwide similar (military) organisational structures. In such multinational forces, the number of troop-contributing countries (military and police forces) is increasing and getting bigger, often going far beyond the number of twenty. On this stage a list of such missions are presented (in brackets the number of countries): UNFICYP (23), MINURSO (34), MINUSMA (58), UNMIL (50), MONUSCO (53), MINUSCA (48) or UNMISS (59). Comparative studies have shown that, in many Armed Forces, both the language training as well as the country's cultural instruction plays a subordinate role and standards are not always established. If we are to work effectively in multinational headquarters, missions or operations, we have to understand the complexity presented by national cultural differences. Cultural differences can disrupt situational awareness, decision making, coordination, and communication in multinational settings.



Multinational peace forces also mean different military cultures.  
(Photo: Bundesheer/Wolfgang Grieben)

## Members of governmental and international organisations

In the cooperation between the military and such organisations most problems and even serious problems arise: not only the organisational and operational structures often diverge, but also the will to cooperate is not always present, sometimes such cooperation is even rejected. Misunderstandings can arise due to different handling of situations. The military is operation-oriented and operates in peace support operations mostly in groups and is also armed, whereas members of international organisations are unarmed. International organisations have, in contrast to the military, not only a different reporting system, but also different procedures to solve problems. Often, military and civil organisations are only linked together at the top, but problems in coordination, mutual understanding as well as in the cooperation itself can even be caused at low-level activities. But in unstable situations only the military can eliminate the lack of safety and security.

Many participants in Peace Support Operations are of the opinion that cooperation between the military and civilians is problematic. One of the reasons is the differences between the various cultures, the different knowledge and level of education. The lack of knowledge in customs and working procedures of others often generates resentment, unnecessary competition and confusion, although actually all of them are aiming for the same objective. Military personnel are accustomed to coordinate or to be coordinated, while humanitarian organisations tend to work in their own area, often attempting to work totally independently.

## Local population and local authorities

This model is illustrated by the example of the Middle East: At present time there are three large operations with armed forces and one peacekeeping mission where the members are unarmed military observers: the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), the United Nations Disengagement Force (UNDOF) on the Syrian side on the Golan Heights, the Multinational Force & Observers (MFO) in the Sinai Peninsula and the observer mission UNTSO (United Nations Truce Supervision Organisation) where the members are stationed in several

countries of the Middle East, in particular in Lebanon, Syria, Israel and Egypt. The United Nations Liaison office in Jordan was closed several years ago.

UNTSO (United Nations Truce Supervision Organisation): This observer mission was established in 1948 due to the unrest and clashes between Israel and the neighbouring Arab countries to monitor the agreed ceasefire.<sup>76</sup> UNTSO is currently the oldest UN mission and has its headquarters in the former Government House in Jerusalem. The mission area covers the countries of Egypt, Syria, Israel and Lebanon. The liaison office to the royal family of Jordan was closed years ago. The staff personnel currently consist of 142 military observers (259 would be possible), 89 international (administrative) and 146 local staff. Observers in Lebanon are supporting UNIFIL; those in Israel and Syria are operationally subordinated to UNDOF ("under operational control"). Austria has been participating in this mission since 1967 and currently there are five Austrian Military Observers.

UNIFIL (United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon): 1978 originally established as an observer mission by the UN Resolution 425. Mission was expanded in 2006 by another UN mandate (Resolution 1701) to an armed and robust operation. While the first task of UNIFIL was to monitor the withdrawal of the Israelis, with the extended mandate UNIFIL has now to secure the Southern part of Lebanon, in particular to prevent proliferation of arms, in particular to Hezbollah, a radical group of extremists fighting against the existence of Israel. The armed forces comprise 14,410 soldiers from 38 different countries, 50 military observers of UNTSO, 279 international and 590 local staff. The headquarters of UNIFIL is located in the small southern Lebanese city of Naqura. Austria has been participating in this operation since November 2011 with a logistic unit ("Multirole Logistic Unit" – MLU) comprising approximately 170 troops.

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<sup>76</sup> "To observe and maintain a truce or cease-fire demanded by the Security Council and to assist the parties on both sides in the supervision of the observance of a cease-fire, truce or other arrangement accepted by the parties." – Resolution 50 (1948) of 29 May 1948.



FIGURE 6: ILLUSTRATION OF THE THREE-DIMENSIONAL MODEL WITH THE EXAMPLE OF UNTSO (GRAPHIC: ERNST)

- UNIFIL**
- ARM, AUT, BGD, BLR, BEL, BRA, BRN, CAM, CHI, CRO, CYP, ELS, ESP, FIJ, FIN, FRA, GER, GHA, GRE, GUA, HUN, IND, IDO, IRL, ITA, KEN, MAL, NEP, QAT, KOR, SLE, SRB, SVN, SLA, TRK, TZA

- MFO**
- AUS, CDN, COL, CZE, FJI, FRA, ITA, USA, NZL, NOR, URY

- UNDOF**
- BTN, FIJ, IND, IRL, NEP, NDL

UNDOF (United Nations Disengagement Observation Force): Established in 1974, the contingent deployed there has the task to supervise the disengagement agreement between Israel and Syria on the Golan Heights by UN Resolution 350 (1974). Currently (as of June 2015) the contingent includes 789 troops from six countries, 53 international and 105 local staff. Except to the UNTSO mission UNDOF is also one of the oldest UN missions. Austria has been contributing to this mission since October 1973 with an infantry battalion in the strength of 600 troops. They were transferred to the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) II, which were originally deployed in Cairo after the Yom Kippur War between Israel and Egypt. After the critical development of the security situation in Syria, where the rotation team was heavily attacked, Austria's government decided to withdraw the contingent by the end of 2013. Just before, Japan, Canada and Croatia had already withdrawn their contingents due to the lack of decisions for solutions. After the attack by rebels on UN troops, Syrian Armed Forces were not longer able to ensure the necessary protection. After almost 40-years Austria left the UN mission area on the Golan Heights.

MFO (Multinational Force & Observers): The force is mandated to monitor the implementation of the Israeli-Egyptian peace agreement and to prevent the outbreak of new hostilities. The contingent consists of 1682 troops from 12 different nations. The MFO is actually an independent international organisation with peacekeeping duties, deployed to the Sinai Peninsula since 1981. The MFO generally operates in and around the Sinai Peninsula. Australia, Canada, Colombia, Czech Republic, France, Hungary, Italy, New Zealand, Norway, the United States, Uruguay and Fiji are contributing to this operation. It is criticized especially from the Egyptian opposition, because the presence of foreign forces, which MFO is, the sovereignty of Sinai is not fully guaranteed.

### 3.3 The acquisition of intercultural competence in the Austrian Armed Forces

Austria's numerous and varied efforts in peace support and humanitarian missions didn't become only a tradition, but has affected the Austrian soldier to obtain an extensive expertise which Armed Forces of many other countries envy and its staff personnel is frequently contacted for their opinions and views. Due to several factors, such as the shift of security policy paradigm, the contractual commitment for solidarity and assistance, the commitment to increased foreign engagement or the membership in several organisations which are being committed internationally, was followed by the political desired in changing the contribution to peace support operations: Instead to participate in a few and longstanding missions, is now Austria's policy the focus on more frequent and shorter-term participation in peace support operations, which however, may also be more robust, now.



An officer of the Royal Jordanian Forces delivers regional studies for Austrian soldiers. (Photo: Bundesheer/Günther Barnet)

In addition to the organisational and infrastructural challenges there were substantive changes, which we have to take into account. This includes interculturality, whose importance was soon recognized and implemented at several levels. First, directly through the Centre for International Operations (see below) during the phase of pre-deployment training, particularly for missions in which soldiers participate for the first time. This is supported by the implemented organisational element of a psychological service, whereby certain professionalism is ensured. Also in other military training institutions intercultural contents in the format of courses, seminars or lectures were elaborated.

Communication, integration and cooperation activities taking place in daily contacts with members of other nations, with representatives of local authorities, with the local population and with staff of international organisations, as a prerequisite for effective cooperation. No matter is whether these activities occur in official or non-official communication contacts or among concrete cooperation. Cross-cultural training, such as role-play or simulation, doesn't currently exist, at most not more than a general theoretical course. Cultural-specific training, such as everyday life duty, the history of a particular culture or specific intercultural processes take place partly during the pre-deployment training before soldiers are being sent abroad.

#### Austrian Armed Forces International Centre

The department, which was directly confronted with the new situation, is the Austrian Armed Forces International Centre (AUTINT). New operations and unknown area of operations require changes in the pre-deployment training. Depending on the mission the pre-deployment training is specifically tailored to meet these requirements. General military training is followed by an "area of operations-specific basic and team training" as well as the so-called Force Integration Training for cooperation with soldiers of other nations. For special functions there are special training programmes such as the Civil-military (CIMIC) Course for cooperation with civil organisations, the Liaison, and Negotiation Course for Peace Support Operations (LNC PSO) for members of a Liaison



Monitoring (LM) or Liaison (and) Observation Team (LOT) in order to communicate with the local population and the local authorities.

During the pre-deployment training, there are enormous temporal constraints due to the numerous tasks that ought to be accomplished. Soldiers are usually under stress in tense and unstable situations, but also under a lot of psychological pressure, because they are separated from the family for a long period of time. Therefore, it is hardly possible to pass on all information sustainably that is necessary to internalize all these "intercultural factors". Unfortunately no further intercultural education exists itself in the area of operations, neither individually nor within the contingent.



Operations in conflict areas require military skills as a prerequisite.  
(Photo: Bundesheer/Harald Minich)

The course "Experts on Mission" – Specialisation: Liaison, Co-operation, Coordination for Peace Support Operations "(EoMC / LCC-PSO) is actually a serial of courses for Liaison and Observation Teams (LOT), for members of the Field Intelligence Service (FieldHumInt – Field Human Intelligence), for the Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) and for psychological warfare (PSYOPS – Psychological Operations).<sup>77</sup> The aim is to ensure the education in various disciplines and different management levels as a liaison officer either in a multinational organisation or as a

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<sup>77</sup> Curriculum of the course "Experts on Mission" according to GZ93719/147-AusbA/2013, p. 3-5.

member of a joint team. All this knowledge and skilled capabilities need to be carried out and targeted at negotiations and related activities to achieve an effective intelligence gathering and exchange of information with relevant persons, institutions and organisations. Liaison officers should be capable after this course, to contribute to the current situation. These courses include subjects as "The Role of International Organisations in Peace Support Operations", "Cultural Awareness", "Security Sector Reform", "Protection of Civilians", "Gender Issues", "Basics of Communication Skills", "Communication Skills in Theory and Practice", "Working with Interpreters", "Behaviour under Threat and Stress", "Historical and Security Background", "Behaviour Management" and "Mediation". As part of the course, which includes a total of 166 teaching units, are also linguistic issues.

Another course related to this topic, is called "Combating Trafficking in Human Beings Course for Peace Support Operations" – CTHBC / PSO.<sup>78</sup> In this two-week course, the participants obtain the ability to perceive the international trafficking in human beings as a violation of human rights, to recognize the impact on the security and stability, to assess the potential threat to force protection and to take appropriate measures against possible cases of human trafficking. Specific leadership-oriented contents are getting to know and developing methods and techniques for the investigation of the organized human trafficking. One of the goals is that also participants can adjust themselves to the cultural differences of potential victims of human trafficking.

The basic course "Civil-Military-Cooperation (CIMIC BC) gives in these two weeks a basic knowledge to be able to perceive and fulfil mission-oriented tasks as CIMIC personnel. Contents of the course are e.g. to learn how to make use of interpreters, how are negotiation or co-operation with representatives of international organisations, non-governmental and other organisations in theory and practice carried out, how are meetings organized and finally how to deal with the media. The

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<sup>78</sup> Curriculum of the Course "Bekämpfung von Menschenhandel in friedensunterstützenden Operationen" [Combating Human Trafficking in Peace Support Operations] according to GZ S9719/175-AusbA/2011.

course will be held in English therefore, communication and language skills of the participants should also increase.<sup>79</sup>



Soldiers practice the right behaviour in case of an incident already at home. (Photo: Bundesheer/Pusch)

Except these task-based or position-based courses there is not a real structured development of intercultural competence. In several armed forces local commanders are responsible for developing cultural awareness. But this de-centralized system is also lacking of a structured concept. Soldiers receive briefings or handouts and language booklets were distributed to get maybe some rudimentary language training, which are generally limited to a few basic phrases during their pre-deployment training. Any other cultural information is left to the soldier's own initiative. In general, soldiers do not get more than a "tourist" level of understanding which does not appropriately prepare them to be culturally competent.

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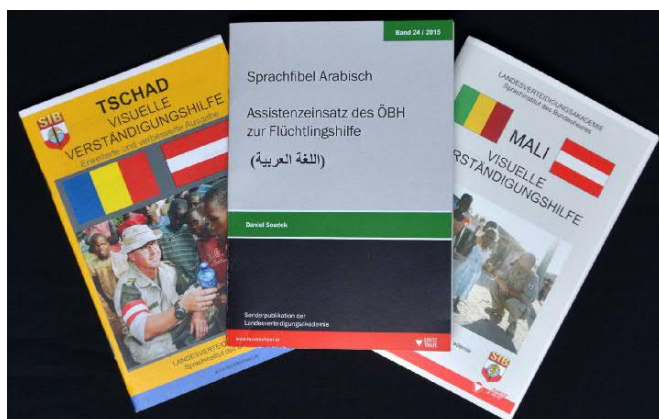
<sup>79</sup> Curriculum of the CIMIC basic course according to the directive GZ S92719/124-AusbA/2009, p. 2-3.

Of course, there will be, according to Austria's new Military Strategic Concept, neither large concentration of troops nor long-standing operations in the future. Therefore, it is necessary to have well trained and prepared soldiers quite in advance. In-depth analyses are required to figure out where are most likely future areas of operations and to develop at least intermediate levels of cultural understanding in advance. The institutionalization of cultural competency is an imperative.

## Austrian Armed Forces Language Institute

The involvement of the Austrian Armed Forces Language Institute during the pre-deployment training as the institution giving a few lessons in regional-specific and language-specific facts and information, gives the impression of an additional great development potential. The implementation of regional training seminars and the frequent exchange of experience with the training staff have made the institution an indispensable element.

Therefore, the Language Institute has, among other things, contracted representatives of the Institute of Arabic and Oriental Studies from the University in Vienna in order to attract qualified personnel for specific training lessons.



Language booklets support the soldiers linguistically in operations abroad. (Photo: Bundesheer/Stefan Kratochvil)

Being aware of the importance of intercultural competence, the staff of the Language Institute is also to be supported and promoted in this field. The spectrum is broad and impressive: A thesis, which deals with this subject, has already been completed; another one is at its final stage. Another young teacher is engaged in a university master's programme for transculturality. The head of one of the Sections, chairs for many years seminars in the field of leadership behaviour. The large number of participations at professional conferences, symposia and workshops is not only to raise awareness in the field of interculturalism, but also because of the great interest in it. Meanwhile, the attention to these activities at the Institute goes apparently beyond the borders and several employees of the Institute give lectures abroad or publish articles in foreign journals. Recently, the Institute received a letter of request if the Institute could take over the chair of the "EU Military Training Disciplines for Language and Culture". This request is already an award in itself, because the Institute is seen as a professional and effective working institution. Unfortunately, this failed due to human and financial resources.

#### Non-Commissioned Officers Academy

During the Corporal's and Sergeant's general training at the Non-Commissioned Officers (NCO) Academy (Heeresunteroffiziersakademie – HUAK) a basic knowledge of intercultural competence can be detected in some courses and seminars. Those seminars include lectures on "Training Methodology and Leadership Behaviour", "Political and Professional-ethical Education" or "Personality Development". Specifically, there is a mission-oriented training course ("Basic Course for NCOs for Peace Support Operations"). In addition to this some lessons for "International Humanitarian and Disaster Relief" can also be found concerning customs and traditions of conflicting parties. Another training seminar called "Intercultural Competence at Home and Abroad", which is carried out in cooperation with the Institute for Religion and Peace and contains this field of training.

## Theresan Military Academy

The Theresan Military Academy (Theresianische Militärakademie), which had to align the officers' training in the context of the internationalization, began to take cross-cultural contents in their curricula. The opening of the training for civilian students and the inclusion of several weeks' internship abroad during the study has strengthened these efforts and is accelerating its implementation.

In terms of contents these courses are aiming mostly at interventions, which is mainly orientated to military geography and not for specific cultural affairs. The relevant ethnic groups in the target regions, their cultural objects or behaviours are not being addressed in these lessons. It is about strategies to successfully intervene with changing scenarios. The history of the specific country or region of operations is not mentioned. A reconsideration of the curricula takes place in the new Military Strategic Concept in terms of intense involvement in Peace Support Operations and not to adapt them as much to Peacekeeping Missions.

Appropriate measures and contents would include:

- a more intensive and broader exercise of role plays
- intensifying the exchange of operational experiences through lectures
- a better differentiation according to functions in the mission area (checkpoint duty, liaison and reconnaissance team, medical team etc.)
- the provision and discussion of pertaining literature trying not to transfer everything on to the participants to do independently
- briefings and presentations of experiences employing personnel and comrades who have acquired the necessary experiences and already served several times abroad
- creating (regional) linguistic improvements, especially for longer assignments abroad

- providing an additional training after returning from the area of operations for possible further assignments
- strategy for solving the problem of a so-called "culture shock"

At the basic education the necessary structure and depth is missing. In practical exercises not all of the students have the opportunity to participate actively in it. Likewise, the phase for improvement is missing. The existing knowledge of foreign languages skills are hardly adapted to communicate successfully and interculturality. The incorporation of experienced military native speakers is completely absent. Despite the internship abroad, the PSO-course, the semester abroad and some curricula the structured theoretical and practical teaching of interculturality is missing. Although there is a so-called de-briefing after the two foreign assignments, there is no specific "intercultural reflection". Thus, no "lessons learned" are possible for future prevention of misunderstandings during meetings with members of other nationalities.

At the Institute for Further Officers' Training (Institut für Offiziersweiterbildung – IOW), which is an organisational part of the Theresian Military Academy, a course is offered, which contains intercultural matters and which is helpful for officers serving in a mission or operation abroad: The "Junior Staff Officers Course" (JSOC). This course is designed to prepare officers for deployment in peace support operations as a member of a battalion or in an international headquarters. Among other things, these include interculturality relevant tasks such as

- co-operating with both superior authorities and subordinate command posts
- working together with members of other international agencies, associations and small units, civil and military authorities, the local population in the area of operations and other mission-relevant organisation
- representing the interests of a peace support operation and Austria's interests in area of operations

For these (sub-) tasks the following necessary skills and qualifications that go beyond the requirements in Austria and which are required abroad:

- Fluency in English in the appropriate and required level for the function
- Knowledge of the basics of conflict management and peacekeeping
- Knowledge of specific tasks in the context of peacekeeping

As social skills for officers serving abroad the requirement is to be able

- to conduct bilateral meetings with international staff members in order to build good and effective working atmosphere and,
- to negotiate and execute mediation talks, including the use of interpreters and all possible representatives in the area of operations, i.e. the civil and military services, government agencies, organisations and institutions (and dealing with all of these in English).

The goal of this training, carried out in English language, is to obtain all those capabilities, knowledge and skills to enable the candidates to carry out the tasks of international headquarters as part of the peace support operation.

Another "training module" of this institute is the seminar "Intercultural Competence": The educational objective of this seminar is that the participants after completing it "... can distinguish the concept of culture a whole theoretically, historically, philosophically, religiously and ideologically. The participant should be able to describe the interaction of cultures and become more familiar with it. Finally, he should be able to deal with the thoughts and actions as well as the peculiarities of other cultures".<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Curriculum "Interkulturelle Kompetenz" (2014), according to the directive GZ S93719/50-AusbA/2014, p. 4.



The seminar can be attended on a voluntary basis and is seen as an additional tool to the military and security training with regard to the increasing internationalization of the Armed Forces' tasks. It is recommended predominantly for those who are interested in a foreign assignment in the near future. The training module can also be credited as an elective module for the higher officers' training.

#### National Defence Academy

At the National Defence Academy (Landesverteidigungsakademie) there are several research institutes. One of them, the Institute of Advanced Military Leadership is responsible for the higher and further officers' training, is conducting the General Staff Officers' Course (Generalstabslehrgang – GLehrg), the Master programme "Military Leadership", the "Basic Course for Higher Officers" (Grundausbildungslehrgang – GALG) and the "Course for Senior Quartermasters" (Intendanzlehrgang – IntLehrg) where occasionally lectures on intercultural competence are given. But the other research institutes (Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences, Institute for Strategic Studies and the Institute for Peace Support and Conflict Management) deal with intercultural matters more intensively, e.g. "Intercultural Aspects during the Pre-deployment Training and the Reintegration of Soldiers" or other separate events on this topic. As examples we could mention workshops such as "Intercultural Competence and their Need for Commitment and Leadership", "Interculturality as an Instrument for Commitment and Leadership" or the symposium "Interculturality and Diversity".

### 3.4 Intercultural Language Training – is this really new?

Basis of intercultural communication in foreign language teaching is primarily the language itself. The avoidance of stereotypes and prejudice should be given priority. Very often are members of ethnic groups or nationalities associated to this. Attributes such as the "hard-drinking" Russians or the "amorous" Italians are mostly interpreted negatively in this context. It would therefore be advisable to confine oneself to the general cultural differences. Mother tongue and the target language should be

compared not only contrastively, but also interculturally. This means that there are apart from linguistics, etymology and also ethnology, history, literature (resp. literary translation), as well as cultural studies, which should give space to language analysis. Similarities and differences appear much more through such analytical comparisons with several languages.

As an example of a German-Czech linguistic comparison with cultural impact would be the verb "may". In Austria the use of "may" is much more common than in Czech language ("May I ask you something?" "May I offer you ...?" etc.) whereas in Czech language mostly "can" is used ("Can I ask you something?" or "Can I offer you...?"). At a first glance here, the German version appears to be more polite, because in several cases the verb "can" sounds harsh or even blatantly rude. In Czech they would in many cases consider the use of "may" as exaggerated politeness - and thus, negatively dismissive – when applied sometimes "may" sounds ridiculous.

Intercultural language teaching differs from intercultural learning. Intercultural learning is learning from each other and together in multi-ethnic learning groups. By contrast, intercultural language teaching is a situation where members of a target region are placed into a relationship with members of their own culture and language. On the next level, which is the more challenging, are language lessons, in which members of different cultures and languages learn a specific target language. The question is which language processes take place here? When does a language become dominant or which language will receive the "power" as a reference language? Thus, the lessons can be even used as a place for intercultural communication.

Intercultural language teaching should include specific tasks that support this kind of learning, such as

- contrasting vocabulary and idioms as well as the
- confrontation with foreign literary works, films and print media
- research on the Internet

- cross-border cooperation projects
- contacts to native teachers and students

The Austrian Armed Forces Language Institute has for this reason not only native speaker teachers as permanent staff, but also several other contracted guest teachers. Cross-border teaching takes place in some languages via electronic media (Skype, virtual classroom, etc.) as additional and supporting tools.

According to Krappmann the development of a comprehensive didactical concept in teaching foreign languages is essential. Such a concept should give advices, proposals and motivation for comparing your own world with the world of the other country's language. It is intended to stimulate thinking and encourage discussions about what is "strange" in the other world. Collecting such experiences is – according to Krappmann – linked to the following four identity competencies:

1. Consciousness of your own identity and representation of this identity (it is the ability to recognize one's own position and be able to represent it);
2. Empathy (it is the ability to put oneself in the position of another);
3. Role of distance (is the ability to withdraw from one's own position and to be able to look at it from a different perspective);
4. Tolerance of ambiguity (which is the ability to tolerate and accept opposing demands and contrasting expectations).

Therefore, if "...someone has such capabilities, we can talk about intercultural communication or competence, i.e. being able to communicate and interact successfully with people of other cultures".<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> Krappmann (1998), p. 132-174.

### 3.5 Summary

Intercultural competence enables people to navigate and adapt to different cultures and includes except language skills, beliefs and customs (cognitive components) also body language and gestures (physical components) as well as confidence and openness (emotional components). The crucial issue for the military is selecting, training and deploying soldiers, who have these qualifications and are able to (inter)act in different cultures. The acquisition of (at least) a second language (other than English) on the one side and correctly conducted cross-cultural negotiations on the other side play a key role.

As conflicts are immanent for peace support operations abroad, negotiations (mainly) with the local population and mediating among conflict parties is of great importance. Military leaders and even individual soldiers can act more effective if they understand cultural particularities of the region or of the parties involved. Although the leadership of the AAF is aware of this problem, very little has been done in this field so far. A few seminars for specific operations, such as ISAF in Afghanistan, have been established. But in general, for the most other operation abroad, only the presentation of the language survival booklets together with some regional cultural hints ("dos and don'ts") were given. There have been conducted already a few workshops and conferences about this issue, but very few decisions and measures came into power.



Although English is the lingua franca additional skills are necessary for successful interaction in an international military environment. (Photo: Bundesheer)

For developing intercultural competence the system has to be changed fundamentally. For the correct interacting with different cultures soldiers have to be confronted firstly with their own culture, with the culture of the county and the military culture of the forces where they serve. After the acquisition of these soft skills, the next step can be done: putting their own (personal, national, military) culture into a relationship with other cultures. And for this, the training and the awareness raising for achieving intercultural competence have to be conducted as early as possible, at all levels and for all military ranks.

## Chapter 4 Multilingualism and its implications in the Austrian Armed Forces

Multilingualism has especially in the Austrian military a century long-standing tradition. The Habsburg Monarchy was a multiethnic state in which the joint (imperial and royal) Army was one of the most important connecting links in the Empire. Although the continuous language training at all levels had the objective of ensuring the communication within this multiethnic army, the contemporary propagated and practicing multilingualism has there its origin.

An additional "initial spark" of multilingualism in the Austrian Armed Forces was mainly the membership to the United Nations and the immediate follow-up participation in peacekeeping missions under their mandate. The next step of multilingual development extended over a longer period of time and involved several areas that led to that extensive expansion, as we find it today. This includes the gradual expansion of the corps of the Austrian defence attachés in the world. This group of representatives of the Ministry of Defence contributes through the training of language of the particular target countries to the linguistic diversity and multilingualism in the Austrian military. The main part of this training is carried out by our own staff personnel. Where such personnel are not available, this training is conducted by guest teachers on a contract basis.

During the "Cold War" an important role played the geopolitical situation of Austria on the border of the two major power blocs NATO and the Warsaw Pact (WAPA). The languages of the eastern neighbours of Austria were of a particular interest and importance. The reason for the training of military personnel in these languages, however, was not to achieve the ability to communicate with members of those armed forces, but rather in the ability to understand these languages passively. Distrust was the purpose for this driving force.

This has fundamentally changed after the political revolution in Europe. It was the big number of military contacts between the new and independent countries and Austria, which made it possible to transfer this expertise into the field of peace keeping missions of professional soldiers of the Austrian Armed Forces. This was done by participation of foreign

military personnel in various training exercises or exchange of experiences. But for these activities English as a working language became very important and the knowledge of the neighbouring foreign language skills, if there were such skills ever present in this group of people, at best, were serving for clarifying and explaining the situation. The neighbouring foreign languages received a great upswing due to the numerous new bilateral relations by mutual visits, joint events or cross-border exercises. At that time trust was the driving force behind the training for the purpose of active use of languages.

Budgetary reasons due to the financial crisis brought about the closer move-together within the European Union. Therefore, a closer cooperation between European countries was required. The accession of the Central and Eastern European countries to NATO and the EU were decisive parameters for the restructuring of the military attaché corps. Some military missions in neighbouring countries were closed down and replaced by so-called Rowing Attachés ("travel attachés") who are carrying out their military-diplomatic duties from Vienna. In return new military representations and military diplomatic position were established. This restructuring process started with the opening of an Austrian military representation in China, followed shortly afterwards by an Austrian Defence Attachés in Egypt, Iran, Israel and Algeria. The opening of an Attaché office in Saudi Arabia is currently still in process. This was accompanied by a sudden need for training of new languages. The creation of military-diplomatic missions in now three Arab countries, the cooperation agreement with the Royal Armed Forces of Jordan, the deployment of two Austrian contingents to Chad and Lebanon as well as the reconsideration of military support in Syria by Austrian soldiers on the Syrian Golan Heights have given the Arabic language a new dimension and a specific importance.

#### 4.1 Multilingualism and its determination

In literature and science, the term "multilingualism" is not only used differently, but also differently defined and interpreted. Therefore, it appears necessary to look into the term more closely in order to distinguish

it from others, i.e. the distinction between "bilingualism" and "multilingualism".

In the general linguistic use of the term, it defines a person who speaks several languages, so the person is multilingual. As such, the term is understood and used. Scientists usually are not satisfied with this, because the content of the term is not sufficient to express the many facets and nuances correctly and precisely. In the scientific literature there are quite a lot of controversial definitions, so this step seems to be necessary to assume a coherent name, definition and a basic understanding of the term.

### Multilingualism in the understanding of Europe

One of the initiators, who have dedicated themselves to this subject in a comprehensive manner, was the European Council (EC), the European organisation for promotion of the economic and social progress. The European Council has formulated in this field its language policy goals, which – combined – promoting and fostering other European modern languages, in order to support the increasing of communication and interaction possibilities. In addition to this multilingualism mobility and mutual understanding should enhance, in particular the youth.

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), which is part of the European Language Portfolio, (a basic folder of different documents) multilingualism is explicitly diversified from the term "multilingualism": "While plurilingualism refers to a concrete person who speaks several languages, the term multilingualism is considered as a social spectrum of several languages, which exist in a society. Plurilingualism can be achieved by a correspondingly large and attractive range of schools; However, multilingualism on the contrary stresses the expansion of the cultural context through language experiences. Languages and cultures acquired by multilingualism cannot be separated accurately. Rather one can speak of a common communicative competence in which all acquired languages have a certain contribution to it".<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> See also Gemeinsamer Europäischer Referenzrahmen für Sprachen: lernen, lehren, beurteilen, Goethe-Institut Inter Nationes et al. (Ed.), translated by Jürgen Quetz, Langenscheidt: Berlin et al, 2001, p. 17.



The focus of the European language policy is language diversity, which is a cornerstone of the European identity. The European language policy is aiming for the goal to promote and support in addition to the equality of national languages also minority languages. Supposedly, but also the real dilemma is the fact that all European languages represent a national identity on the one hand, but do not contribute to a common European identity. The equality of languages causes enormous costs. But its also impossible to implement English as the common European language, which is de facto already the lingua franca as the primary working language.

These two factors are interdependent, but it seems there is no way out. The question in this context is: Should be there a way out? Because if one looks closer the European Charta for multilingualism from 2006, it should be noted that a general working language and national languages do not exclude each other.

Therefore,

- multilingualism is a precondition for a political Europe
- the diversity of languages ensures diversity and comprehensive representation of the way of thinking
- multilingualism is part of freedom
- multilingualism is a tool to strengthen the persistence of nations as an opportunity for the perception of citizen right in Europe
- Multilingualism is an essential source of a common European awareness
- multilingualism is one of the answers to the "shock of civilizations" and the various forms of political, cultural and economic hegemony
- multilingualism promotes the progress of science
- cultural and linguistic diversity and the right to language are inextricably linked
- multilingualism promises economic progress in a peaceful world

- each employee must have the right to work in the language of the country in which he lives
- the education systems must allow a multilingual education
- the media has to be open to different cultures<sup>83</sup>

## Multilingualism in science

The importance of multilingualism has not to be seen only through a single individual, but also as a big advantage for the society. Therefore, in addition to the individual multilingualism a territorial and institutional multilingualism also exists.

Individual multilingualism exists according to C. M. Riehl in different forms which are either based on the socialization of the situation or depend on the date of acquisition.<sup>84</sup>

Territorial multilingualism is considered as a status, where several official languages are spoken in a country, and these languages are spoken in more or less regionally delimited or demarcated areas. As examples we can mention Switzerland with German, French and Italian, the former Czechoslovakia with Czech and Slovak language, Belgium with Flemish and French or Finland with Finnish and Swedish. Here, a significant part of the speakers is monolingual and not necessarily multilingual. And finally, Austria with several officially acknowledged minority languages (Hungarian, Slovene, Czech, Slovak, Romani and Sign language). Territorial multilingualism includes those countries in which recognized minorities can maintain their languages.

Institutional multilingualism proceeds from the use of several working languages in institutions and organisations (NATO, UN, OSCE, and EU). However, administrative authorities in countries with recognized

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<sup>83</sup> See <http://51959387.fr.strato-hosting.eu/plurilinguisme/images/Fondamentaux/charta-de-kurz.pdf> [13 02 2013].

<sup>84</sup> <http://51959387.fr.strato-hosting.eu/plurilinguisme/images/Fondamentaux/charta-de-kurz.pdf> [13 02 2013].

minorities (languages) in which multilingual officers provide service can be considered as Institutional multilingualism. In deduction of the forms mentioned the term multilingualism can be perceived in a narrower and broader sense, both in the social and individual multilingualism.

For Katherina Koehn individual multilingualism applies to a person who "has two or more languages internalized in a way, so he or she is able to communicate with a monolingual native speaker in his own language without any problems".<sup>85</sup>

Barbara Haider already talks about multilingualism within the use of the mother tongue, because she assumes that each person usually speaks several varieties of its own language, depending on the environment or situation or the use of high-level language, colloquial language or dialect.<sup>86</sup>

Daniel Coste defines multilingualism in contrast to multilingualism as the knowledge of a number of languages, or the co-existence of different languages in a given society. Multilingualism could also be described as a mere juxtaposition of languages. By contrast, he sees the multilingualism of a person in the expansion of its language experience in its intercultural context, i.e. a communicative competence, to which all language experiences contribute.<sup>87</sup>

At the Center for Language Teaching Research (Institut für Sprachlehrforschung) the concept of multilingualism is considered not only as a condition or state, multilingualism is also

- a feature or characteristic: This feature can apply for both individual persons (individual) as well as for groups of people or companies (institutional). A person is multilingual, if he or she is able to communicate with others according to the needs. As a feature at institutions (organisation, school, company, government) multilinguality is accepted only if there are multiple official languages at disposal and actually used;

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<sup>85</sup> See Katharina Koehn (2012).

<sup>86</sup> See Barbara Haider (2010), p. 207-208.

<sup>87</sup> See Daniel Coste et al. (2001), p. 22.

- an educational product: After the acquisition of a second foreign language one speaks about multilingualism as an educational product;
- an acquisition process: at the acquisition of languages arise synergies by similarities between languages, which can be used by transfer processes;
- a process of use: multilingualism arises by using several languages in a professional environment. However, this is closely connected with great difficulty, because frequently misunderstanding and problems occur due to insufficient knowledge of the most relevant terminology.

#### 4.2 The "multilingual" army of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy

The Austro-Hungarian Monarchy counted at the time of its greatest expansion over fifty million inhabitants and in it lived many nationalities. Therefore, the expression "multinational state" (Vielvölkerstaat) was in common use. The right to use the different national languages led to violent political conflicts that eventually found a legal end in the introduction of the "General Governmental Law" of 4. 3. 1849. According to this law, for the following ten languages equality was granted: German, Hungarian, Czech, Slovak, Polish, Ruthenian (Ukrainian), Serbo-Croatian, Slovenian, Romanian and Italian language. Serbian and Croatian were entered separately in the statistics of the Austrian army in 1870, in subsequent documents only Serbo-Croatian was used.

Since the army, however, has always been a supranational and apolitical entity, the principle of equality did not apply to the army. Nevertheless, within the Habsburg army the languages had the status of a "national language". Since the imperial and royal Army was always seen as a solid and common link of the monarchy, that is, as a supranational element, there were hardly any confrontations due to fixed guidelines for languages almost until the end of the monarchy. This had to do with the

organisational structure of the army: The "military fundamental or main organisation" represented the regiment, which was the "homeland" of the individual soldiers, and they saw it the same way. Regiments were usually located regionally, ensured with their corresponding military districts for supplementing their replacements. However, the ethnic boundaries didn't correlate entirely with the military-organisational boundaries. This was the reason, why many regiments were not ethnically consistent homogeneous. Although the military statistical yearbooks contain numerous statistics on the ethnic composition of the imperial and royal Army, but unfortunately there are no details on how this came about.

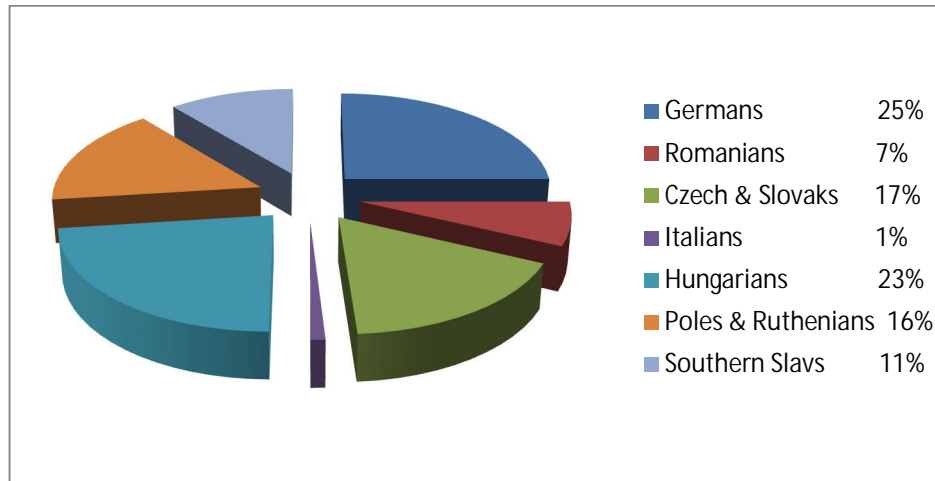


FIGURE 7: DISTINCTION OF THE SOLDIERS OF THE IMPERIAL AND ROYAL ARMY ACCORDING TO THEIR NATIONALITIES IN THE YEAR 1910<sup>88</sup>

This statistical breakdown gives, however, no information on the distribution of nationalities on the branches. The division was in fact very unequal. So there was, for example, an excessive number of Czechs in the infantry or Hungarians and Poles in the artillery. Serbs and Croats were found, however often at the border regiments.

<sup>88</sup> In: *Militär-Statistisches Jahrbuch für das Jahr 1910* (Vienna 1911), p. 143f; cit. after Deák (1995), p. 219.

Nationality	1897		1910	
	Professional officers	Corporals Sergeants NCOs	Professional officers	Corporals Sergeants NCOs
German	77,7	28,3	78,7	25,2
Hungarian	8,0	18,4	9,3	23,1
Czech	5,5	14,4	4,8	12,9
Slovak	0,1	4,3	---	3,6
Polish	3,0	9,5	2,5	7,9
Ruthenian	0,2	7,9	0,2	7,6
Croatian and Serbian	3,6	7,0	2,4	9,0
Slovenian	0,6	3,0	0,5	2,4
Romanian	0,6	5,8	0,9	7,0
Italian	0,7	1,4	0,7	1,3
Absolut figures	15.650	1,309.127	17.808	1,409.459

TABLE 2: THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ETHNIC DISTINCTION OF PROFESSIONAL OFFICERS AND TROOPS IN THE IMPERIAL AND ROYAL ARMY<sup>89</sup>

The supranational demands on the Army complicated the communication in everyday duties tremendously. Some voices from the officers' corps were in favour of the formation of a multinational army. "If there would have been a unified body of troops, led and directed by local officers

<sup>89</sup> In: Militär-Statistisches Jahrbuch für das Jahr 1897 (Vienna 1898), p. 143 and 148; Militär-Statistisches Jahrbuch für das Jahr 1910 (Vienna 1911), p. 145-146; cit. after Deák (1995); p. 221.

communicating in their own languages, misunderstandings would not have occurred so often".<sup>90</sup>

For the recruits, the mother tongue had been registered. However, it is not known how "mother tongue" was defined. Nationality in the military was coequal with language – stating the mother tongue is assigned to a nation. In the army statistics, there was no way to specify a language other than the most common. At that time, many people were bilingual or even multilingual. It is very likely that these statistics only specified mostly colloquial language or the language was chosen by the authorities.

According to the language policy of the Imperial and Royal Army there were three "area languages":

- Service Language

This was the language of the written and oral intercourse of the military authorities and command posts among themselves, which was also referred to as "correspondence style". In the Imperial and Royal Army, in particular in the Austro-Hungarian Land Forces, in the Austro-Hungarian Navy and in the Imperial Royal Homeland Security Forces (Landwehr), this was the German language. In the Royal Hungarian Army (Honvédség) the Hungarian language and, in the Croatian-Slavonian 'Landwehr' (Homeland Army – Hrvatsko Domobranstvo) the Serbo-Croatian language were the official ones. Duty correspondence between the Hungarian Ministry of Defence and the Croatian 'Landwehr' was conducted to Budapest in both languages, from Budapest in the Croatian language.

- Regimental or colloquial language

Languages have been set as regimental languages, which were spoken by more than 20% of the recruits of the regiment. Throughout the army there were 142 regiments and independent battalions with only one regimental language, 163 with two and 24 regiments or battalions with three regimental languages. Out of the total number of 329 regiments and battalions, there were only 31 that were purely German speaking regiments. In 90% of the regiments or battalions regimental language was not identical

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<sup>90</sup> Christoph Allmayer-Beck (1987), p. 93f.

with the service language. One could certainly speak of a living multilingualism in the Austrian-Hungarian army.<sup>91</sup>

- Command Language

This was not really a language in the conventional sense, rather a linguistic tool with the most common commands. Approximately eighty phrases, orders or commands were in use. They were given in German, first, to have a minimum level of consistency, and secondly because all the officers had to learn German as the service language. All recruits were trained and drilled moderately in these commands.

The officers, who had been trained at the military academy, had to learn several languages, which were spoken in the monarchy. Their deployment after graduation from the academy to a specific language-related regiment was not automatically linked. Even if an officer came to a regiment whose language he had learned, frequently it happened that this was still a "multilingual" regiment or a regiment where the recruits had little or no education at all and spoke the regional dialect only.<sup>92</sup>

The common scenario, the young officer had to learn after his graduation the regimental language within three years to a level where he is able to communicate with the recruits. In many cases, he reached at least the lowest level of the required language skills which were marked in the personal files as "suitable for duty". If a young lieutenant could not provide the required knowledge, he got a second chance. In failing the language test again he was either dismissed or had problems in continuing his career. Therefore, officers were using especially in field training and exercises – in contrary to the Prussian army – corporals and sergeants who came from the region and spoke the local language as "interpreters".

Fatal impacts occurred in World War I due to inadequate language training in connection with the corps reserve officers: After heavy fighting many young professional officers were killed in action at the beginning of the war. Their positions were replaced by reserve officers who had less or

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<sup>91</sup> Adam Wandruschka, Peter Urbanitsch (1987), p. 98f.

<sup>92</sup> See also Schmidl (2010), p. 87f.



no local language knowledge at all which led to severe communication problems ending in enormous losses.

Also the transition to a more "modern" warfare, concerning the linguistic diversity, had a negative impact. The dissolution of closed and static mostly infantry fighting formations and the move to more mobile combat formations required a change from the rigid command language to a more extensive and linguistically more independent commanding language. It was much more difficult, because such formations were more mixed and therefore, linguistically not pure any more. And at the end this also had led to an enormous number of losses.

Language	Percentage 1870	Percentage 1904
Italian	32,76	47,0
Czech	30,18	33,6
Hungarian	19,77	19,3
Polish	17,62	15,3
Serbo-Croatian	17,36	8,8
Romanian	8,95	8,5
Ruthenian	5,14	7,8
Slovenian	5,11	7,3
Slovak	--- <sup>93</sup>	6,9

TABLE 3: THE DEVELOPMENT OF CAREER OFFICERS' LINGUISTIC KNOWLEDGE IN THE AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN ARMY (EXCEPT GERMAN) WITHIN 34 YEARS

The presentation of the non-comparability of multilingualism of the Austro-Hungarian Army of the Habsburg Monarchy with the multilingualism of today's Swiss, Canadian or any other army or for that

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<sup>93</sup> At that time Slovak was not recognized as an independent language yet.

matter with the current Austrian Armed Forces will be dealt in the following chapter.

### 4.3 Multilingual forces – a possible comparison with Austria?

In this chapter, the situation will be presented in countries where several official languages are in use. Countries, which are also confronted with this problem in their armed forces, questions will be asked like, "How do they deal with multilingual armed forces?" or "How can the situation be compared to the situation in the Austrian Armed Forces?"

#### 4.3.1 Switzerland

Switzerland is a constitutional state of multilingualism. That's due to the cantonal division. In addition to German, French and Italian are also official languages. Rhaeto-Romanic is another Swiss official language, but in a very limited extent. This means that in Switzerland all official documents (laws and decrees) must be translated into these three mentioned official languages. But also various texts, whatever kind, which refer to the whole country, are offered in all three languages. Interesting in this context is the establishment of a consultant for language policy in 2010, whose main task should be to ensure the equal dealing with official languages in national politics. Noteworthy is another fact, that Switzerland, although it is not a member of the European Union, is involved in the fields of multilingualism and language policy in the European Union. The Institute of Multilingualism at the Fribourg University in Switzerland deals scientifically with this issue. Their research interests also include the field of employment. Since 2011 the Scientific Competence Centre for Multilingualism is subordinated to the Institute of Multilingualism. The Competence Centre supports and fosters research projects in the field of multilingualism.

Due to the fact that the Swiss army is a federal matter, members of all four national languages are represented. Until the recent past, the Swiss army was mainly organized at canton level, but by the restructuring and

modernization of the armed forces this structure became obsolete. Due to the downsizing, a mixture of units had become necessary, because not only the number of troops was reduced, but also barracks and units were closed down. Some units have been specialized. This was also associated with a greater mobility and flexibility. For these reasons a strict linguistic cantonal separation could no longer be maintained. There is, moreover, in spite of this shortage situation, neither a concept of language policy nor guidelines on how to deal with multilingualism. Nevertheless, there are still a large number of military personnel who have skills of one or another language and are able to communicate.

A research team for this purpose however, concludes that multilingualism and understanding within the Swiss army is neither maintained nor sufficiently promoted. Although the militia system in spite of the different languages works quite well, this is mainly due to the acquired language skills in the civilian life. The situation at the professional soldiers' corps looks rather poor. In exercises that are mainly conducted by militiamen usually non-German speaking soldiers adapt themselves to the language of the exercises, which are usually carried out in German. Career officers however, have rather poor knowledge of other national languages. While multilingualism and the esprit de corps of the Swiss Army are in the focus of identity, at the same time their service abilities depend on knowing a second language. This is heavily criticized. Nevertheless, free language courses are recommended.

#### **4.3.2 Belgium**

Similar to the Swiss cantonal structure at the administrative-political level in Belgium the territorial principle ("Territorialiteitsbeginsel") exists. This principle was incorporated into the language laws of 1962-63, in which the areas were determined. According to this each province specifies a single language as the service language.

All residents of a given area have to adapt linguistically and only this language is permitted in the public sector, i.e., administration, judiciary, police or army. In Belgium there are three languages, of which the Dutch are horizontally separated in the north from the French speaking

population in the south. To the east of the French-speaking population's area are still small German-speaking parts of the country. Into a separate scheme Brussels Capital Region ("Brussel-Hoofdstad") was structured. Brussels' Capital Region is located in the Dutch-speaking region and is considered as a bilingual region. Belgium is not a bi-lingual or a multi-lingual country, but in Belgium there are monolingual areas.

The current geographical-linguistic situation in Belgium:

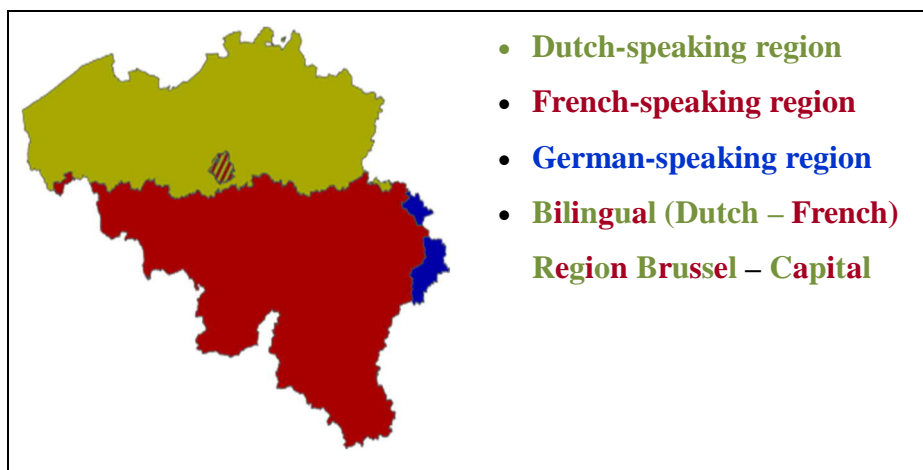


FIGURE 8: THE LANGUAGE BORDERS IN BELGIUM<sup>94</sup>

The language border in Belgium not only separates two "general" or "ordinary" languages, but also provides a boundary between two language families: those of Germanic and Romance languages. Their roots are found in the history, but this is not discussed here. So, there are three official languages in Belgium, but their legitimacy is not extended to the whole country, it is territorially limited.

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<sup>94</sup> <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:BelgieGemeenschappenkaart.svg>  
[28 04 2013]

In the Belgian Armed Forces the use of languages was regulated fundamentally by a separate law.<sup>95</sup> Again, the reason dates back into history, as the vast majority of ordinary soldiers during World War II were Flemish and the majority of the officers were French-speaking. The consequence was that their instructions were not clearly understood by the Flemish soldiers and this resulted in losses. With this law, the armed forces were divided organisationally into Dutch-speaking, French-speaking and bilingual units. In accordance with Article 19, paragraph 1, the training of the soldiers is carried out in their mother tongue, alongside the units pure Dutch and pure Francophone existed until the beginning of 2010 a linguistically mixed unit, the 1st Battalion Para, but it was eliminated as part of a transformation phase in the Belgium army. Even the small German-speaking areas were taken into account, according to which a German-speaking soldiers served in bilingual administrative units, which were also in turn divided into monolingual sections (Art. 19, para. 5). Until 1994 there was also a purely German-language unit: The 3rd Battalion of the Ardennes Hunters in Vielsalm.

Officers have to obtain – also depending on the duration of service – in addition to their Dutch or French mother tongue also "an effective knowledge of the other language". A language test is intended for officer candidates (Art. 1), for promotion as sub-lieutenant (2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant) (Art. 3) and for the appointment as Major (Art. 5). For the German language special rules are provided (Art. 2). The language conditions for non-commissioned officer candidates are less strict (Art. 8).

Concerning the common parlance itself, "in every single-language unit for training commands at all levels, administrative, management and all other official contacts the language of this particular unit is used" (according to Art. 22). Specific rules are provided for bilingual units, for

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<sup>95</sup> The law of 30 July 1938 which cancels the previous language laws of the army, solved the language problem within the Belgian Armed Forces in that way, where the army was split into Dutch-speaking, French-speaking and bilingual units. Specifically, the law provides: "The whole training of the soldiers is carried out in their mother tongue" (Article 19, para. 1.). To determine the mother tongue is indeed task of the community in which the soldier is living, but the soldier can always prove that his mother tongue is another. The law foresees the possibility for German-speaking soldiers to form their own units. "Administrative companies" are organized bilingually, but divided in monolingual sections (Art. 19, para. 5).

contacts with the Ministry of Defence, for the language used in military hospitals and other services (depots, arsenals, etc.). Announcements and communications, addressed by the authorities to the general public will be carried out according to the coordinated legislation on the use of languages in administrative matters.<sup>96</sup>

### 4.3.3 Canada

Canada is not only a parliamentary monarchy with Queen Elizabeth II. at the top (who is represented by the Governor General), but is also a parliamentary democratic state. As such the state of Canada has two official languages: English and French. Indigenous languages are not recognized, but the minorities are permitted to have lessons and training in their own languages. Canada consists of ten provinces, of which only New Brunswick has decided to be voluntarily officially bilingual. However, Quebec is officially the only monolingual province (French).

In the other eight provinces English is the language, the vast majority generally accept as a working language at authorities and courts, but this is only de facto the official language, because in many areas, certain services and education both languages are offered.

All this is governed by two documents:

1. the National Language Law, which was passed by Parliament in 1969 and forms the basis of official Canadian bilingualism. It granted English and French their equal language status in the federal administration.
2. the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms,<sup>97</sup> where people generally have the right to use either the English or French

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<sup>96</sup> [http://www.dglive.be/desktopdefault.aspx/tabid-1059/1544\\_read-19739](http://www.dglive.be/desktopdefault.aspx/tabid-1059/1544_read-19739) [13 02 2013]

<sup>97</sup> Constitution Act; 1982, Part I, Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, No. 16. (1) English and French are the official languages of Canada and have equality of status and equal rights and privileges as to their use in all institutions of the Parliament and government of Canada.

language in communications with Canada's federal government and certain provincial governments.<sup>98</sup>

The Canadian Forces, established in their current form in 1968, were originally structured alongside the services, in Army, Navy and Air force). Now they are organisationally a whole. Canada is closely involved with its armed forces as a member of NATO in their structure and participates not only in their exercises, but also within the framework of the United Nations on humanitarian missions and peace support operations.

With regard to the language policy within the armed forces, a critical report in 1952 had examined why French-speaking Canadians did not come forward for the Navy. It had been noted that this was due to the lack of language skills in English. Due to this, English language lessons for Franco-Canadians (as well as vice versa for French Anglo-Canadians) were introduced in the Canadian military. Ten years later, in 1962, a re-evaluated report stated that only 2% (!) of English-speaking graduates were bilingual.

Although the population ratio in Canada is about 40:60% of the Franco-Canadians vs. the Anglo-Canadians, only 15% of French-speaking officers are in the rank of a lieutenant, 12% carry the rank of a Captain or a Major, 9% are lieutenant colonels and only 8% colonels or generals.

A change in this situation followed in 1969, when Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau passed a language law, which provides all government agencies to be set up bilingually. In 1971 it was laid down in the White Book of the Ministry of Defence, where it was noted that the military is supporting and promoting national identity and interests play an important role. Such an army should also reflect the bilingual and bi-cultural nature of the country. Accordingly, a bilingual institution should be created to enable all graduates a "functional bilingualism". Today, this is mainly carried out and ensured by the Canadian Forces Language School. But nevertheless there was certain scepticism, because in times of war, the opponents stated, a common language is also an issue of safety and security. Such a "lingua franca" in an army that is characterized by duplicity (in other armies also by multiplicity) of languages, is usually the language of the officers, like

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<sup>98</sup> In the Northern Canadian province of Nunavut Inuktitut the Inuit language is also the official language.

German language in the Habsburg monarchy or English language (or Hindustani) in the British-Indian Army.

The institutionalization of bilingualism is considered to be the only way to obtain the full support of the Canadian society. But if the international tensions that have already massively decreased since the end of the Cold War, still continue to decline, it is to be feared that it might be the end of supporting the expensive bi-lingual programme. Some opponents of bilingualism in Canada in general and in the armed forces in particular argue that the demand for Franco-Canadians to preserve their language, and it being a key factor for the preservation of their culture, isn't substantial. Taken overall, however, it can be noticed that currently the multiculturalism of the Canadian Forces is a much smaller problem than bilingualism, because the proof of performance in the second official language for many professional soldiers, especially for professional officers, is a key precondition for a successful career.<sup>99</sup>

#### **4.3.4 The former Czechoslovakia**

Before independence came about in 1989, Czechoslovakia was a member of the Warsaw Pact. After collapsing of this communist alliance numerous negotiations were held and in 1993 a consensual and peaceful separation into the two states of the Czech Republic and Slovakia took place. Until then Czech and Slovak were the two official state languages, in which all official documents were translated, as a consequence also in the military. Due to the close similarity between both languages – even though they are from the linguistic viewpoint two separate and independent acknowledged Slavic languages – there were no communication problems in daily life matters. Basically, the language that dominated in a garrison or in a federation depended on the respective numbers of members of the two ethnic groups.

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<sup>99</sup> See also Jeffrey de Fourestier, Official languages in the Armed Forces of multilingual countries: A comparative study, In: European Journal of Language Policy Vol. 2, No. 1/2010, p. 91-110 and <http://www.cfls-elfc.forces.gc.ca/pol-dir/index-eng.asp> [14 03 2013].



With the separation, many professional soldiers had to decide in which army they wanted to continue to serve, mainly because of the possible loss of their position. This separation also affected the languages, because now each of them became more "independent". Although not all could linguistically adapt themselves to the other ethnic group, the use of the mother tongue does not generate any tensions on the other side. The author of this thesis knows several Slovak officers who serve in the Czech army - and vice versa and, there are no problems at all.

Due to the crisis and the extensive cost-cutting measures, from which both armies suffered, considerations were increasingly taken into account to cooperate more and more closely, because both countries are members of NATO and the European Union (although the Czech Republic does not belong to the European Monetary Union). Even from this perspective, both countries are partners and cooperate already in many areas. Different devices, such as the use of different types of aircraft in the Air Force, make it difficult to interact. The easy linguistic interoperability on the other hand is one of the great benefits of cross-border cooperation.

In language training and in multilingualism another adverse trend is noticeable in both armies: Most of other foreign languages, other than English, have gradually fallen victim to cost-cutting measures. Therefore, no more German language training is offered in the Slovak Armed Forces and only on a minimum level in the Czech Armed Forces. The situation is very similar, where Russian has (despite the complete rejection at the beginning of its independence) outstripped German and has become the second most common language. And this in spite of the fact that the Czech Republic shares with Germany and Austria, two German-speaking neighbours, a relatively long border.

#### 4.4 Summary

Multilingualism in armed forces, even if in the above listed countries cannot be compared in many areas, including the former Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, should actually be analysed individually. Concerning all features in common, multilingualism and all efforts for this purpose are all directed

inwardly. They all have exclusively internal communication goals. So, if an "Austro-Hungarian" officer had to learn four languages during his study programme at the military academy, this was only for the purpose of being able to communicate within his regiment. Czech language was at that time a role model, because it was assumed that Czech language would make it easier to learn another Slavic language. In the Canadian Forces, language skills of the other ethnic group (English or French) to a certain communicative level are mandatory. Due to the breakdown of the cantonal distinction in the Swiss Army multilingualism has also become an important issue. A few orders and commands in Czech and Slovak have linguistically produced some articles, but however, had no impact on the military daily operations. But all of them serve the internal interactions posing the question:

How to communicate internally without conflict, without penalizing members of other ethnic groups or How to collaborate freely without suffering or risking successful fulfilment? So, this interoperability concerns one's own forces and the actions are inwardly directed. Modern armed forces however, which are deployed globally and work together with multinational contingents, require other language skills than those of our own citizens. The linguistic interoperability, to which Austrian soldiers are prepared and trained for, is based on an external effect: How can they cooperate with soldiers of other nations in a common unit or in a mixed headquarters in order to fulfil their tasks of a given mandate as effectively as possible? How to communicate with the local population and authorities of the target country or within the area of operation in a way that benefits all? For this reason, a comparison of "multilingual armed forces" is not legitimate, as long as it does not refer to that linguistic viewpoint of inward orientation or outwards direction.

## Chapter 5 Influencing factors of multilingualism and intercultural competence in the Austrian Armed Forces

The graphic below presents the description of all factors on the two related areas, is the attempt to show the complexity, on which this topic is based on. It should be stated that, even if only one or two of these factors undergo a change, this will also have an impact on the whole system.



FIGURE 9: EVEN CIVILIAN FACTORS CAN HAVE SERIOUS IMPACTS ON THE INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE AND MULTILINGUALISM IN THE MILITARY (GRAPHIC: ERNST)

Although not all factors can be listed and dealt with, but the most important ones are quoted here, which might in any way affect the two areas of intercultural competence and multilingualism. To bring this closer for better understanding, it has been grouped topically, which is highlighted in colour in the graphic: The two green factors represent civilian areas, the yellow marked factors show international organisations and the factors in blue colour illuminate and analyze military areas. The military factors are generally based on official laws, regulations, decrees or other internal guidelines relevant to this thesis. Purple stands for factors that couldn't be assigned thematically to any of the groups listed.

## 5.1 National civilian factors

There are two areas of the civilian sector referring to language training in the Austrian Armed Forces. These are, firstly, the Austrian language policy and secondly, the civilian education system deriving from the policy. There, the foreign language teaching covers a broad and varied spectrum.

### 5.1.1 The national civilian language policy

The society, and here Austria is among other countries at the top, is linguistically and culturally increasingly diverse. On the one hand there is the internationalization, both in the economy as well as in the media; on the other hand there is the massive migration taking place right now. Austria is a country of immigrants and has already made extensive experiences in its history in this respect:

- During the reign of the Habsburg family until the end of the monarchy in 1918 (Vienna alone had at the end of the monarchy approximately 300,000 inhabitants more than today)
- In 1956 after the uprising in Hungary;
- In 1968, after demonstrations and the invasion in former Czechoslovakia;

- After the war in former Yugoslavia;
- At present, from the conflict and war regions in Syria, Afghanistan, and Chechnya or from African countries;

Concerning immigration in Austria and impacts on the school system the statistics indicate very clearly: 20% of all pupils in compulsory schools (lower secondary education) have as their first language another one than German. In Vienna, there are even more than 50% of the population who have migration background.<sup>100</sup>

The Austrian language policy takes the real existing multilingualism and linguistic diversity as an opportunity to promote it and to take advantage of it. This support should take place structured and content based. Such a promotion takes place in Austria with the seven officially recognized minority languages (Slovenian, Czech and Slovak, Burgenland-Croatian, Romani language, Hungarian and sign language). The statistics give, however, no information which Austrian citizens have as the first language another than the German language, because many migrants of the recent years and decades, and there are a lot of them, are already in possession of the Austrian citizenship.

Not an entirely uncontroversial area is school education for immigrants in their native language. On the one hand the language of the host country should be learned as quickly as possible, on the other hand, the acquisition of the first language for the personal cognitive and emotional development is extremely important. This has scientifically already been proven.

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<sup>100</sup> BMUKK (2009), p. 23-24.

	Number of teachers	Number of lessons	Number of pupils
Albanian	23	417,0	2.438
Arabic	13	193,0	1.120
Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian	140	2.761,0	10.907
Bulgarian	3	33,0	206
Chinese	3	18,0	87
Dari	1	14,0	76
French	2	7,0	38
Italian	1	2,0	10
Kurdish/Kurmanci	4	18,5	52
Kurdish/Zazaki	2	6,0	30
Pashto	1	13,0	77
Persian	4	62,0	382
Polish	9	121,0	797
Portuguese	3	16,0	85
Romani	3	61,0	203
Romanian	3	56,0	302
Russian	9	70,0	413
Slovak	9	64,5	305
Slovenian	2	4,0	19
Somali	1	9,0	36
Spanish	7	29,0	176
Czech	3	16,0	63
Chechen	6	93,0	531
Turkish	161	3.102,5	15.338
Hungarian	9	41,0	229

TABLE 4: TURKISH AND BOSNIAN DOMINATE THE SCHOOL EDUCATION IN NATIVE LANGUAGES (SOURCE: FEDERAL MINISTRY FOR EDUCATION AND WOMEN)

Approximately 21% (33,920) of the pupils have attended mother-tongue teaching in the school year 2013/2014. Such teaching depends on the number of pupils who apply for it, and the available teaching staff. In the above mentioned school year such mother tongue instructions in 25 languages were offered. The majority of this type of teaching takes place in Vienna. Pupils with Turkish migration background dominate this kind of education and 15,338 pupils received Turkish lessons, followed by Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian (10,907).

Austria practices a very active language policy, which is reflected in the creation of private institutions and implementing many activities. This includes the establishment of the European Centre for Foreign Languages (ECFL) in Graz, initiated by the Council of Europe. This 'Pan-European' language institution has evolved from an originally eight to a 34-member institution. Other institutions are the Association for Language Didactics (ALD) or the Austrian Language Competence Centre (ALCC) with its central task, to promote innovative language teaching. In 2003 the Austrian Language Committee (Österreichisches Sprachenkomitee – ÖSKO) as a network of language policy actors were established. The Centre for Languages, Plurilingualism and Didactics (CLPD) at the University of Graz and the Centre for Multilingualism and Intercultural Education (CMIE) at the Pedagogical College of Carinthia have evolved from local to regional institutions.

The activities include in particular the regular and widespread participation in the European Day of Languages, the adaptation and implementation of European or international standards, such as the European Language Portfolio (ELP) or the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

Concerning the content, Austria contributes very much to the language policy development process, such as Language Education Policy Profiling (LEPP) of the Council of Europe as an instrument for the development of a national language profile. In connection with this, the current language policy should be reflected, evaluated and subsequently updated. Austria is a country where several languages are of central importance:

- German as the national and official language

- Minority languages recognized by the Constitution
- Heritage languages (of people with migration background)
- English as the international working language

By promoting and developing multilingualism, Austria wants to provide equal possibilities in education and business for everybody. Austria's policy sees in such possibilities an active contribution to social and cultural cohesion and hence also for security in the country itself.

### **5.1.2 The civilian education system in Austria**

The education system in Austria is generally ensured by the federal government and carried out by two ministries: the Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture (Bundesministerium für Unterricht und Kunst – BMUKK), which is responsible for standardisation of types of schools and curricula and the Federal Ministry for Science, Research and Economy (Bundesministerium für Wissenschaft, Forschung und Wirtschaft – BMWWF), which is responsible for the control of universities and colleges. In this context, the Ministry of Education takes on among others the following tasks:

- establishing schools
- maintaining schools, except compulsory schools (elementary and secondary schools, schools for special needs, polytechnic school)
- approval of schools
- teachers training
- recognition of foreign certificates (nostrification)

The basic structure of the Austrian education system dates back to the 19th century and still has a corporative character. Based on the distinctive federalism in Austria the provinces are responsible for managing the compulsory schools (primary and secondary schools, cooperative and new



secondary schools, polytechnic and vocational schools) and their teaching staff.

Austria also follows both the Bologna Process, which aims at a common European Higher Education Area (EHEA), as well as the Lisbon Strategy, which has a competitive knowledge-based European economy as its aim.

However, the Bologna Process has led to a change where universities are becoming more and more the status of a school and not any more a humanistic educational institution based on the idea of Humboldt. Even in secondary education (Allgemein Höhere Schule – AHS, Berufsbildende Höhere Schule BHS) the academic freedom is analogously severely restricted. The final exam is now centralized, education is standardized and standards of testing compliance are controlled. There is a fear that is just more prepared for the tests in order to survive they can. The Austrian school system is currently undergoing a major transformation, on the one hand due to the above mentioned out-dated administration, on the other hand, to meet the current national and international requirements. However, it is based in each case in accordance with the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED 1997).<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> [http://www.unesco.org/education/information/nfsunesco/doc/isced\\_1997.htm](http://www.unesco.org/education/information/nfsunesco/doc/isced_1997.htm)  
[15 03 2015].

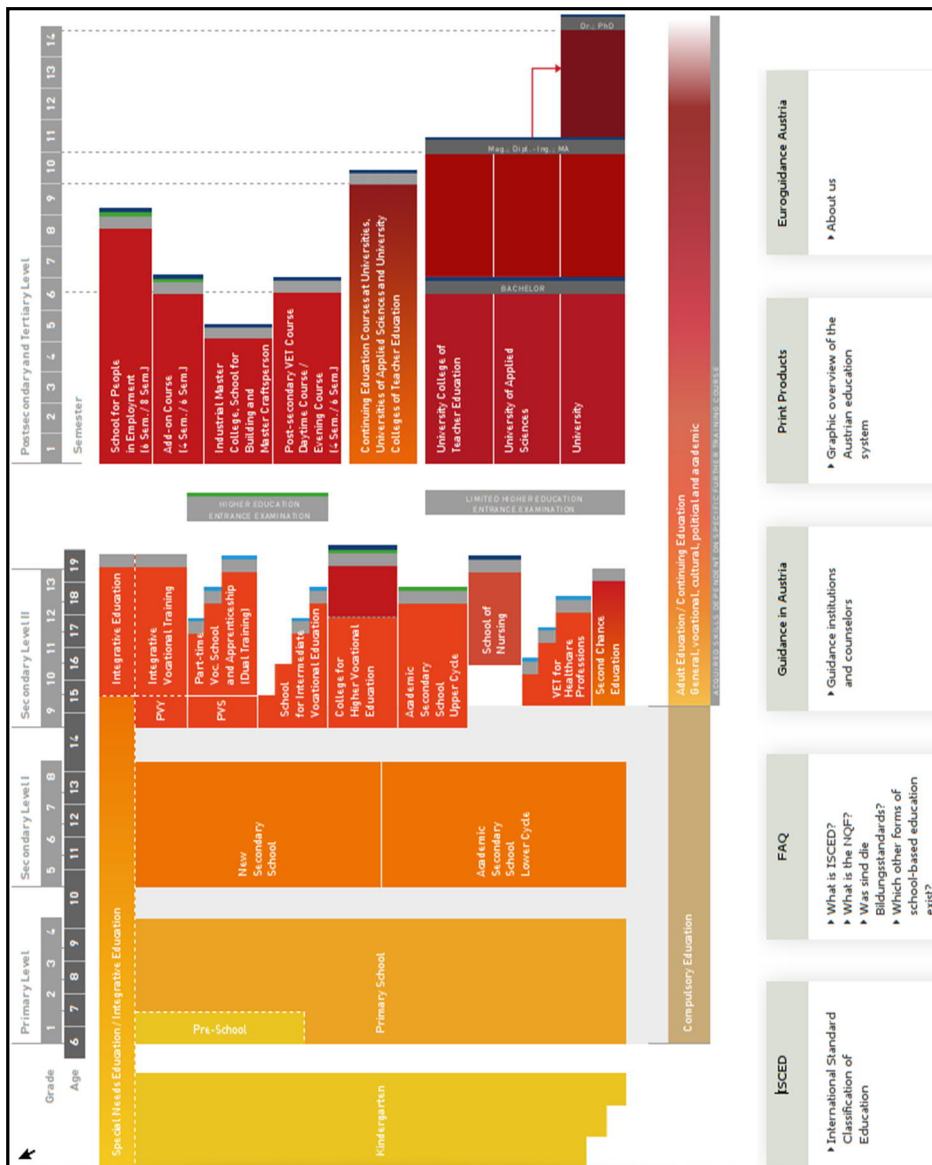


FIGURE 10: THE AUSTRIAN SCHOOL SYSTEM IN ACCORDANCE WITH ISCED CLASSIFICATION

According to the standard ISCED (International Standard Classification of Education) school education is differentiated into the following levels:<sup>102</sup>

Level 0 covers pre-school education by kindergarten, nursery or preschool. This level covers the ages 3/5 to 5/7 years.

Level 1 includes basic education, with which the teaching or compulsory education begins. This is based on a class-teacher system, which means that a single teacher teaches the class in most subjects, usually in all subjects except religion and handicraft. In Austria this is the elementary school (Volksschule).

Level 2 includes the lower or intermediate level (Sekundarstufe I). On this level teaching is carried out by teachers that specialize in one or more subjects. Each subject is taught by a different teacher. The term "secondary education" corresponds to the term intermediate education and goes beyond nursery and primary school. This kind of education covers educational training till the end of compulsory school attendance, in general, the 7th-9th school year, ages ranging from 10/12 to 14/16.

Level 3 includes upper level (Sekundarstufe II) and serves the general or vocational training. With the completion of level 3 the graduate is entitled to work in a particular career field and/or to attend a university. The age group ranges from 15/16 to 18/20.

Level 4 includes the post-secondary education. Those who have completed the secondary education, are then able to qualify, and can be assigned to the tertiary sector. After finishing this level, it provides access to additional programmes such as Gymnasium, colleges, high schools, etc., or a combination of general and vocational programmes.

Level 5 is the first stage of tertiary education which takes its programmes for usually at least 2 years and requires a degree of secondary education. These are mostly practical courses at technical schools, vocational high schools or other higher educational programmes except those for universities.

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<sup>102</sup> <http://www.bildungssystem.at/en> [26 06 206].

Level 6 is the tertiary educational level and comprises Bachelor programmes or similar programmes at universities and Pedagogical colleges.

Level 7 comprises Master programmes or similar programmes of the tertiary education level at universities.

Level 8 comprises the highest university education such as doctoral programmes and postdoctoral lecture qualifications.

A great need for reform of the current education system is at level I of secondary education. One of the biggest challenges is the unification of the various types of schools (lower level of general secondary school), where the first steps already have been taken. No later than 2018/19 all secondary schools will be replaced by the so-called New Secondary School (NSS). In addition to already existing New Secondary Schools, there is a very similar type of school in Vienna: the Cooperative Secondary School (CSS). In the New Secondary School one should respond on the individuality of each child more than before. The various skills and talents should be promoted in different ways. A key point is the establishment of learning groups. Basic principle of the New Secondary School is an internal differentiation in the main subjects German, mathematics and English (or another foreign language). A distinction is made between basic knowledge and "in-depth general education" that corresponds to the educational goal of the lower level of secondary school.

In particular, the New Secondary School provides:

- new, cooperative and open methods and techniques of teaching (teaching in small groups, teachers teach in teams called tandem teaching)
- practical, research-based and topic-centred teaching
- interdisciplinary, project-based and independent learning
- remedial courses and individual fostering programmes

- reducing the number of students per class to 25 each

The Cooperative Secondary School shouldn't replace one of the two existing types of schools (Academic Secondary School Lower Level and General Secondary School). It is, as the name puts it, a cooperation of both. At such compulsory schools teachers teach together. Curriculum of the Academic Secondary School Lower Level applies here. Currently, Cooperative Secondary Schools are designed as school experiment or project. They are not comprehensive schools. Objectives of this type of schools are to break down the traditional separation in Austria into a lower secondary and upper secondary education, by combining the two systems. At the same time, aspects of general education are combined more closely with those of vocational preparation. It should help students to receive basic general knowledge within four years and being prepared for their future careers, or the following lower or upper secondary school.

Concerning foreign language teaching in Austrian schools around 90% learn one and 10% two foreign languages. Comparing the secondary level with the European average, which is about 55%, Austria is at a relatively low level. In contrast, learning at upper secondary level more than 63% of the students learn two, and even 12.4% learn three or more foreign languages. In this area Austria is well above the European average. English and French dominate the teaching of foreign languages, followed by the neighbouring and minority languages. Within the framework of school autonomy other languages can be offered.

The biggest impact at the civilian education system for the military sector is in the admission of future professional soldiers into an employment relationship: Basically for future non-commissioned officers the degree of lower secondary education (Academic Secondary School Lower Level, General Secondary School, New Secondary School or Cooperative Secondary School) is a prerequisite. For all types of schools in English level B1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) is required. The differences between these types of schools, which give priority to certain subjects such as music, sports or computer science, are not so serious and usually do not create big problems. If NCO-candidates do not reach this level at the admission

process, there is a wide range of foreign language training activities that make up for these deficits.

Somewhat different is the situation for future officers: The diversity of secondary level II (upper level) is extremely big and ranges from gymnasium with priority programmes (humanistic, scientific, modern languages, sports or musical branch) through vocational high schools to those which count many technically oriented schools, to the type of academies with a focus on commercial training. Common to all is a final exam called "Matura" (Graduation). This exam is in principle the minimum requirement for admission to the Military Academy.

Through the Bologna Process, which promotes the freedom to choose among educational paths is now also under certain conditions for NCOs, in order to be entitled to follow an officer's career. The so-called Study Entry Exam (Berufsreifeprüfung – BRP) makes one eligible, and includes professional experience in their rating (grades).

The variety of types of schools at this level also generates different skills in a foreign language itself: It is quite understandable that other qualifications are produced in a modern language-focused school, where five hours of English per week are on schedule, than at Technical High Schools (Höhere Technische Lehranstalt – HTL), where there is only one or two hours of English per week. Those latter graduates do not always fulfil level 2 in a foreign language according to STANAG 6001 (about B2 according to CEF), which is usually the required criterion for the military academy. But for those, who have lower skills than required for an officer's career, are still possibilities of language support during the preparation period for the admission procedure.

## 5.2 International organisations

### **5.2.1 The European Union and its language policy**

The European Union with its 28 member states comprising approximately 500 million citizens presents with its internal economic market the largest economy in the world. From an originally pure

economical understanding the European Union was a political power. With French Guiana, Martinique, Guadeloupe, the Canaries, Madeira or the Azores, European Union includes also overseas territories.

In the European Union are currently 24 languages recognized as official languages. Out of these official languages French, English and German are used as internal working languages in order to facilitate communications among the employees. In the European Parliament speeches can be submitted in all of these 24 languages, which are then interpreted simultaneously. The European Union has a policy of linguistic diversity. This is also laid down in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of 2000<sup>103</sup>, where the linguistic diversity is respected. The tension is based on the fact that on the one hand Europe is to grow increasingly together to form a solid structure, but on the other hand, for national identities, European and national languages that ought to be preserved and promoted as well. Provided for the EU, the two identities are no contradiction. In particular, to increase the chances of every EU citizen, whether in business, education or culture, he or she should be able to speak besides his or her mother tongue also two other languages. For this reason alone, there are extensive and intensive language programmes. In the strategic framework "Education and Training 2020" language acquisition is classified as a priority objective. The effective communication in a foreign language is one of the eight core competences to improve education and training.

When considering the diversity of languages in Europe several categories are distinguished by languages:

- Official and National Languages: Here, the number 24 (see above) stands in contrast with the number 47 of the Council of Europe
- Indigenous Minority Languages or Regional Languages
- (New) Minority Languages by migration, which have partly a larger number of speakers than some autochthonous minorities
- European Sign Languages that differ considerably from one another

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<sup>103</sup> Chapter III, Art. 22.

The main document for the language policy of the European Union is the Treaty on the European Union (TEU), of which two articles refer to this issue:

Art. 2:

The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail.

Art. 3:

1. The Union's aim is to promote peace, its values and the well-being of its peoples.
2. The Union shall offer its citizens an area of freedom, security and justice without internal frontier [...]
3. The Union shall establish an internal market [...]. It shall respect its rich cultural and linguistic diversity, and shall ensure that Europe's cultural heritage is safeguarded and enhanced.<sup>104</sup>

The European Union has in its documents "Multilingualism" designated as the cornerstone of Europe's (economic) competitiveness. This key element includes therefore the promotion of mobility and intercultural understanding. Because of the propagated multilingualism, Europe has initiated an enormous number of programmes and projects in this area. According to this language policy, European citizens should have a command in two other languages additionally to their mother tongue. The aim is to build such an environment for achieving this ambiguous goal of multilingual European citizens. For the fostering of a multilingual society the following main measurement were taken:

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<sup>104</sup> <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:12012M/TXT&from=EN> [27 06 2016].



1. Erasmus-Programme for Education, Training, Youth and, where the promotion of language learning and linguistic diversity is one of the specific objectives.
2. Creative Europe Programme as additional educational and training programmes and financial assistance for language projects, in which support is provided for the translation of books and manuscripts
3. Other support as e.g.
  - a. the set up of an Action Plan for the promotion of language learning and linguistic diversity, divided into three areas: lifelong language learning; improving the teaching of foreign languages and creating a language-friendly environment.
  - b. the establishment of the European Centre for Modern Languages in Graz (Austria) for encouraging excellence and innovation in language teaching and learning
  - c. the initiative of the European Day of Languages (26 September) for raising awareness of the importance of foreign languages
  - d. the introduction of the European Indicator of Language Competence as a tool to compare language competencies
  - e. the establishment of the EU Civil Society Platform on Multilingualism as an online observatory for multilingualism. This platform (project) provides policymakers, teachers and learners with a toolkit for benchmarking and enhancing their activities in learning sectors

The importance of the languages in Europe and the equality reflect also the fact, that all official documents are translated into all official languages of the European Union and every Member of the European Parliament has the right to speak in the official language.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/atyourservice/en/displayFtu.html?ftuId=FTU\\_5.13.6.html](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/atyourservice/en/displayFtu.html?ftuId=FTU_5.13.6.html) [27 06 2016].
















Language	National Language of a member state	Spoken as mother tongue (Percentage of the population)	Spoken as a foreign language (Percentage of the population)	Speakers in total in the EU (Percentage of the population)
German	 Germany  Austria  Luxembourg  Belgium  Italy	18 %	14 %	32 %
English	 United Kingdom  Ireland  Malta	13 %	38 %	51 %
French	 France  Belgium  Luxembourg  Italy	14 %	14 %	28 %
Italian	 Italy	13 %	3 %	16 %
Spanish	 Spain	9 %	6 %	15 %
Polish	 Poland	9 %	1 %	10 %

TABLE 5: THE SIX MOST WIDELY SPOKEN LANGUAGES IN THE EUROPEAN UNION<sup>106</sup>

The declared aim of the European Union is certainly the preservation and promotion of linguistic diversity. 2004, this was first introduced in the area of responsibility of a commissioner. In 2007, a single Commissioner's

<sup>106</sup> <http://www.insidermonkey.com/blog/6-most-widely-spoken-languages-in-europe-344648> [26 06 2016].

office for language matters was established and Leonard Orban was nominated as its first chairman. In 2010, multilingualism returned to the Education Department.

There are a number of measures that will help to foster the promotion of foreign language teaching, such as the implementation of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), the European Language Portfolio, the European Language Passport or the setting up of its own Language Competence Centre. Measures have also been taken in the translation field, for example, developments in the field of machine translation, such as SYSTRAN or EUROTRA. Likewise, in the technical field of terminology work in form of databases (IATE – Inter-Active Terminology for Europe) a remarkable progress took place. In addition, an extensive programme has been launched in other countries for language learning, for example, SOCRATES or ERASMUS. Following the example of the European ERASMUS programme also a military ERASMUS programme to promote mobility and increase of education opportunities was launched.

### **5.2.2 The European Union under the Common Foreign and Security Policy**

Although the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) was institutionalized already in 1991 by the Maastricht Treaty on European Union, but came into effect de facto not until 1999. Only recently, the regulations of the CFSP were revised for this purpose, in Articles 11-28. With the Treaty of Amsterdam (1997) the Head of states and Governments established the post of a High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy ("Mr. CFSP"), represents the European Union in this area as a Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The European Union is considered as a comprehensive peace, security and solidarity community and forms the central framework for the Austrian security policy. Austria has committed itself as a member country of the European Union and to contribute to the further development and expansion of the CFSP and the Common Security and Defense Policy and is willing to contribute to the security policy of the EU in all

dimensions. For contribution to the CSDP, Austria puts its emphasis on the balance between civilian and military capabilities for crisis management. In 2004, the "planning goals 2010" were adopted and according to this operational units ("Battle Groups") can be created in a maximum strength of 1500 troops and should be available on a short notice. They are built on a rotation basis of every six months. Austria also supports the pre-accession of other countries to the Union with the aim of adopting the standards of the European Union.

Austria provides according to this "military planning goal 2010" a so-called framework Brigade with the required support elements (combat, operational and management support) as well as Special Operation Forces. In the first half-year of 2011, Austria has participated in such a Battle Group with a company. In the second half-year of 2012, Austria has taken over even the logistic leadership of another Battle Group.

Austria has been involved up to now in the following military ESDP missions:

- in the military operation ARTEMIS and EUFOR RD Congo in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)
- in the military operation CONCORDIA in Macedonia (FYROM)
- military mission EUFOR Tchad/RCA in Chad and the Central African Republic
- military operation ALTHEA in Bosnia and Herzegovina;
- EUSEC RD for security sector reform in the Democratic Republic of Congo

These commitments and investments have in both areas of this work, multilingualism and intercultural competence, direct effects, in general to education and to specific mission preparation: The soldiers are informed about the mission not only about the mandate, goal and purpose of the tasks associated, but also interculturally and linguistically prepared for the respective region. Thus, since many years, language booklets have been elaborated with often used vocabulary (phrases, idioms, military jargon) and country- or region-specific facts. Austria still expresses a vital interest in a

peaceful Balkan region, continues in the current language policy concept of the Austrian Armed Forces, which provides permanent staff for South Slavic languages. This includes also bilateral cooperation programmes with the Armed Forces of these countries. Activities according to this cooperation programmes are the exchange of students and teachers, mutual assistance for the elaboration of military dictionaries or the mutual exchange of experience and expertise.

The European Union has recognized very early that education and qualifications represent central factors in a world dominated by international contacts. This includes also the knowledge of languages. Already in 2008 the European Commission created a Roadmap on the implementation of multilingualism based on a European Council Resolution. The roadmap encourages linguistic diversity and intercultural dialogue and provides a "Policy Handbook", which was released in 2011. The advantage of language skills plays an important role in competitiveness and increases flexibility and mobility tremendously. Nevertheless, there are still some EU member states, in which students have an extremely low level of language competence (France: 14%, UK: 9%). Countries were therefore encouraged to strengthen their efforts to achieve the declared objective, in particular to have in addition to the mother tongue also knowledge of two other languages. Although the definition of this goal already dates back more than ten years and the Union extensively supports language acquisition in the form of student exchanges (Erasmus programme), speech competitions, bilateral and multilateral school projects, conferences and symposia etc., the results are unfortunately very little. The economic crisis has hit some countries especially hard, contributed to the slowdown of these efforts.

There are a number of documents from the European Commission, which deal with language policy matters within the Union. Thus, for example, the Commission's Announcements (20 11 2012) wherein the "Priorities for the Member States" in addition to a variety of recommendations improving the situation, the "increased understanding of

transversal skills [...] and languages" can be found.<sup>107</sup> The latest survey report on language skills in the Union state at the top that

1. the results of foreign language teaching in the countries of the Union are extremely poor
2. there are big differences between member states in the implementation of the objectives. Sweden and Malta take here, each with 82% of those students who have the language level of an "independent user", the top places
3. English is de facto the first foreign language and the most widely taught language, and not only in the European Union, but throughout the world. It plays a key role in everyday life. Nevertheless, to be proficient in more than one foreign language will make the difference in the future and a competitive advantage
4. member states should set up measures to make the teaching of foreign languages more effective, specifically quantified by higher number of hours and quality by use of new, modern and innovative teaching and learning methods

Regarding the implementation of the Council of Europe's objectives in the field of foreign language education, wasn't because of the EU laws. And how it will be carried out is of a national issue. Austria has, however, decided to follow this way, and that's why the EU's language policy has a direct impact on the Austrian civilian school system and, subsequently, to the military as well.

But sometimes there are large differences between the Council of Europe's vision and the reality in Austria. Although these differences do not touch the work itself, it shows how differently they deal with the question of minority languages. At the same time the "recommendations" of the European Union don't seem to get sufficient acceptance in some

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<sup>107</sup> "Mitteilung der Kommission an das Europäische Parlament, den Rat, den europäischen Wirtschafts- und Sozialausschuss und den Ausschuss der Regionen" [Report of the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Steering Committee and the Steering Committee of the Regions (20 11 2012), p. 17.

countries, for example in France, where French is the sole official language. On the contrary, the right to use the mother tongue for the acknowledged minorities is laid down in Austria's Federal Constitution.

The language policy of the European Union is aimed at the preservation of linguistic diversity and contributing to the promotion and support of language skills. Already in 2000, it has set itself the goal of becoming the most competitive and dynamic economy by 2010, which should be based on knowledge. This programme with this objective is known as the "Lisbon strategy".<sup>108</sup> According to this strategy the member states were called upon to take the necessary steps to meet the commonly agreed targets

- in the area of Education and Training, e.g., to establish a European framework, which should define the new basic skills through lifelong learning such as foreign languages
- in the area of fostering the social integration, e.g., to promote a better understanding of social exclusion and to develop measures as a priority addressing specific target groups such as minorities.

Among the most important cornerstones of this strategy is the educational policy, where the learning of languages is of crucial importance.

To achieve this programme, the following three areas should help:

- Improving the quality and effectiveness of education and training systems in the European Union
- The increasing access to education and training for all
- The opening of general and vocational education and training towards the wider world

One of the thirteen "sub-targets" is the improvement of foreign language training, in particular the methods and ways of teaching foreign

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<sup>108</sup> This strategy was the output of the European Council Meeting held on 23 and 24 March 2000 in Lisbon to agree the new knowledge-based strategy.

languages, the early acquisition and the possibility to promote the acquisition and use of foreign languages.<sup>109</sup>

At the end, European Union citizens should communicate at least or in addition to their mother tongue in two other languages. With such a competence the role of languages should be strengthened when it comes to employment and competitiveness.

### **5.2.3 NATO and the programme "Partnership for Peace"**

NATO has renewed in 2010 the continuation of its defensive alliance by its Strategic Concept. The focus in the concept lies in the broadening of the tasks of international crisis management. NATO is working together in several partnership programmes with different countries: The programme "Partnership for Peace" (PfP), where partner countries can work together with NATO according to their own chosen extent or the "Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council" (EAPC). Additional partnership programmes exist with the European Union, the United Nations, Russia and other global partners.

Austria has not only been a member of the Partnership Council since 1997, but has signed in February 2005 the framework document of the Partnership for Peace programme, which did not pave the way for NATO membership, but for the participation in this 'Peace programme'. Basically, the states are free to decide to what extent they want to cooperate with NATO in accordance with this document. It is definitely not a defensive alliance; therefore, there is no obligation to provide assistance. Such obligatory assistance is solely linked only to NATO member countries. Mainly it comes to implementations of NATO standards, especially in the procurement of new equipment to joint exercises and to joint participation in peace support operations. Just one year after the signing and ratifying the document, Austria has participated in a NATO-led mission.

Austria's primary objective under the auspices of this partnership was to improve the ability to cooperate with other countries for the purpose of

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<sup>109</sup> [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/summits/lis1\\_en.htm](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/summits/lis1_en.htm) [27 06 2016].



implementation of the mentioned peace support. Exercises and task-based training should help to overcome difficulties in implementing support also in humanitarian and search and rescue operations. The overarching goal, pursued by Austria with its investments in NATO led operations, is primarily to stabilize the situation on the Balkans. The participation of Austrian forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina has been conducted since 1996 and in Kosovo since 1999. The Austrian Forces provide there the largest troop contingent.



French troops intervened after Islamists seized parts of Mali in 2012.  
(Photo: Getty Images)

The NATO Partnership also provides the ability to assess the quality of military units in accordance with internationally common standards. Such an evaluation is not only there to draw conclusions about the individual soldier, but rather to optimize training and pre-deployment preparations. This suggestion is reinforced by using various NATO PfP Training Centres. Such centres for the three areas of peace support operations, language training and intercultural preparation are at the following locations:

- Peace Support Operations Training Centre (PSO TC) in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

- Peace Support Operations Training Center (PSO TC), Foreign Languages Department (FLD) at the Military University in Veliko Tarnovo, Bulgaria;
- Finnish Defence Forces International Centre (FINCENT) in Tuusula
- The Multinational Peace Support Operations Training Center (MPSOTC) in Kristoni, Greece
- Peace Support Operations Training Center (PSOTC) in Zarqa, Jordan
- Language Institute, also in Zarqa (but not on the same site as PSO TC), Jordan
- Partnership for Peace Training Centre (KAZCENT) in Almaty, Kazakhstan
- Continuous Training Center (CTC) at the Military Academy in Chisinau, Moldova;
- Crisis Management and Multinational Operations Department (CMMOD) in Bucharest, Romania
- PfP Language Training Centre – PfP LTC in Ajševica, Slovenia
- Swedish Armed Forces International Centre – SWEDINT in Granhammar, Sweden;
- International Centre of the Swiss Armed Forces (Training Center – SWISSINT) in Stans, Switzerland
- Partnership for Peace Training Center (PfP TC) in Ankara, Turkey



The Bureau for International Language Coordination (BILC) is an advisory and consultation body in language matters to NATO and partner countries. The conference 2017 took place at the Language Institute in Vienna.  
(Photo: Bundesheer/Christian Fahrngruber)

In addition to these training centres with their special focus on international assignments all forces have integrated in a similar form mission-oriented education activities either in the various career courses or offers them separately. The Austrian Armed Forces Centre for International Operations – AUTINT) in Götzendorf near Vienna belongs to this "association" of certified PfP Training Centres and provides (as the other centres too) courses and seminars for international participants too. The tasks of the Centre and the pre-deployment training for soldiers include specific information about the Area of Operation (AOO) as well as facts about the region, the population and the cultural situation.

For the participation in NATO led operations the same rules as in EU missions apply: There are the same activities for both areas: intercultural competence and language training. In addition, Austria is pro-actively engaged in the standardisation and implementation process by ratifying the standardisation agreement for languages (STANAG) 6001, which describes the language skills at different levels and in the four skills (writing, listening,

speaking and oral). For consultation and standardisation the Bureau for International Language Coordination (BILC) is responsible.<sup>110</sup>

As a participant in the NATO Partnership for Peace programme and as a member of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), Austria has a vital interest to shape the developments. It will therefore observe the new instruments and new challenges of NATO continuously and analyze them for its own security. For this purpose, activities for partner countries are carried out, including participation in non-Article 5 missions.

#### **5.2.4 The United Nations**

The United Nations Organisation (UNO) is dedicated to all aspects of security as a universal organisation. The main objective is and remains the restoration and maintenance of peace and international security. In addition to this, the United Nations also promotes friendly relations among nations and the strengthening of international cooperation in scientific, social, cultural and human areas. The United Nations has indeed the longest experience in the field of peacekeeping, but crisis management tasks, especially conflict prevention and peace building, are being increasingly supported.

Austria has now been more than 70 years (since 15 December 1955) member of the United Nations, to which it has a very special relationship. Not only because Vienna's fourth location for sub-organisations of the United Nations alongside New York, Geneva and Nairobi, but because Austria has obtained with its previous commitment within the international community a high reputation.<sup>111</sup> The appointment of the late Federal

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<sup>110</sup> BILC serves not only NATO member countries, but also partner countries as a consultative and advisory body in language training and language testing issues. For this purpose, conferences, seminars and workshops are organized and held each year in different countries.

<sup>111</sup> The United Nations has the following organisations or offices of those dislocated in Vienna: the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the Organisation of the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO), the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the Preparatory Commission for the Organisation of the Treaty on the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban (CTBTO)

President Dr. Kurt Waldheim as Secretary-General for two periods (1972-81) and Austria's three-time election to the UN Security Council (1972/73, 1991/92 and 2009/10) is an impressive proof of its reputation. But there are also the many peacekeeping missions in which Austria has been involved since 1960, which have led to this excellent reputation. As a neutral country, the United Nations missions were the only way to contribute internationally for many years. Very early on, in particular in 1960, Austria participated for the first time on such a mission.



Like other neutral and non-aligned states, Austria has extended its relationship with NATO. Austria is a member of the Partnership for Peace (PfP) since 1995 and participates in the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) since 1997. Austria contributes inter alia to various operations with a UN mandate under NATO command. (Photo: BMeiA)

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PrepCom) and the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL), the United Nations Postal Administration (UNPA), the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA), the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Register of Damage Caused by the Construction of the Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (UNRoD), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the Scientific Committee of the United Nations to study the effects of radioactive radiation (UNSCEAR), the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV / AIDS (UNAIDS).

The White Book 2010 on the Security Policy of Austria, which is based on resolutions of Austria's National Assembly and the Government, contains concrete statements about the continuation of participation in peace support operations by the deployment of Austrian soldiers:

- "Strengthening of democracy, human rights and the rule of law, notably by active support of such projects [...] of the United Nations"
- "Takeover of more responsibility for international peace and security [...] in a global context"
- "Support for international efforts to peacekeeping, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation"

What language policy does the organisation of the United Nations now have and is there an impact on the Austrian Armed Forces?

Due to a General Assembly resolution in 1946 English and French are the two working languages of the United Nations. In another General Assembly resolution, which was adopted on February 1, 1946, the general guidelines have been established with respect to the languages. In this resolution, the Assembly decided that

- Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish are the UN official languages, plus English and French as working languages are available in all United Nations bodies, with the exception of the International Court of Justice;
- speeches held in one of the two working languages, are to be interpreted into the other working languages;
- speeches held in one of the three other official languages, should be interpreted into both working languages;
- each representative may give a speech in a language other than the official languages of the United Nations. However, he/she must organize himself/herself the interpretation of his/her speech into one of the working languages. Interpretation into the second

working language by an interpreter of the Secretariat may be based on the interpretation given in the first working language;

The General Assembly has added in a 1973 resolution the adoption of Arabic as an official language; 1983 Arabic became an official language of the Security Council. Although the United Nations is a world organisation, for practical reasons not all of the world's languages are officially used. In fact, it is limited to six mentioned official languages: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish. This is set out in Resolution 2 adopted by the General Assembly in the year 1946. In 1999 the position of a "Coordinator for Multilingualism" was created, whose functions shall be performed by the Undersecretary for Public Communication. The position of the Coordinator and Under-Secretary General was carried out by the Austrian diplomat Peter Launsky-Tieffenthal.

All communication in peace support operations is performed mainly in English, this has however no impact in terms of mission preparation and pre-deployment training of Austrian soldiers. Although there are now a number of proposals for the improvement of English education for missions led by the United Nations or for operations carried out under a UN mandate, there is no intention to change the language policy. Thus, English is still the working language for such operations.

Austria, with its decade long tradition of participation in UN missions will continue to contribute militarily, especially in peace keeping and peace building operations. A challenge will be to strengthen the peacekeeping forces in their robustness, assertiveness, equipment and training. Likewise, the support of the UN crisis management in its entire spectrum is a declared objective for Austria.

### **5.2.5 The Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe**

This international organisation with the abbreviation OSCE (formerly CSCE – Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe) committed to the safeguarding of peace and post-conflict reconstruction, with the involvement in three major areas:

1. The political-military field, especially in conventional disarmament and conflict prevention and in creating confidence-building measures
2. The economic and environmental area and
3. The humanitarian and human rights field

The foundation of the organisation dates back to 1975, where the predecessor organisation "Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe" with the final act of Helsinki was established. The organisation was 1995 renamed to the current name and comprises all together 57 States. Around 2,500 employees are deployed in 22 departments throughout Europe. Currently, about 1,000 people working in 17 field operations. The organisation has its headquarters in Vienna, from which not only a certain amount of obligations derive for Austria, but also a tremendous interest in contributing to the development of this multi-dimensional organisation. Austria will continue to participate in accordance with its military strategic concept in all its consultations and missions and to support the efforts to strengthen its role as a platform for the exchange with other security organisations. For Austria, the headquarters of the OSCE in Vienna represent a high security value.

Due to self-initiated missions and operations led by the organisation itself, the OSCE passes a code of behaviour for carrying out operations and established it in their "Training Standards for Preparation of OSCE Mission Staff" (2002). In order to generate a pool of selected, qualified and trained experts by a separate division, two training modules are offered as part of a preparation programme for Intercultural Communication:

- Module 1: International working environment
- Module 2: Intercultural awareness

Already in the introduction of this training document, the general reference aims towards the desired goal:

"Joining an OSCE mission involves becoming part of a multicultural team in a foreign society. Under such circumstances the ability to accept and respect cultural differences becomes essential not only



to maintain the effectiveness of the team but also to build a good rapport with the host society and thus be in a position to influence change".<sup>112</sup>

As learning objectives are given, inter alia

- in Module 1:
  - o Understanding of cultural assumptions
  - o Understanding of cultural influences on the working style, teamwork and the communication
  - o Being able to communicate critical information clearly
  - o Understanding of risks for an effective team work due to low communication awareness
  - o Being familiar with the strategies of de-escalation in interpersonal conflicts
- in Module 2:
  - o Understanding of the influences of a diplomatic status on the personal performance
  - o Overcome a possible "culture shock"
  - o Capability to obtain general rules for maintaining a professional profile

The extensive international involvement in the political-military field forms the basis for the generation of a linguistic and intercultural competence of those Austrians who participate in OSCE field operations. This interaction between the OSCE and Austria in general and the Austrian

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<sup>112</sup> OSCE – Training Standards (2000), p. 44.

Armed Forces in particular have existed for many years. But this does not exclude that there is still a great potential for improvement.

## 5.3 National military factors

### 5.3.1 The national military language policy

The language policy of the Austrian Federal Army has a strong historical dimension, which has evolved over long periods of time as it presents itself today: The re-organisation of the Armed Forces after the Second World War and the ten-year's occupation until 1955 included for Austria's neutrality also a new framework. However, still some years passed before first steps for systematic language training were made. In the early sixties, such language training was carried out at the Military Academy in Wiener Neustadt as part of officer-cadets' training as well as at the General Staff Officers Course at the former Staff Academy (now National Defence Academy) in Vienna, where officers and NCOs linguistically are being trained enabling them to participate in special courses abroad.

The former language policy stipulated at the Theresian Military Academy officer-cadets to learn a foreign language as an elective subject. The choice of languages available was determined: either one of the so-called world languages English, French or Russian or one of the languages of our neighbouring countries, i.e., Italian, Serbo-Croatian,<sup>113</sup> Hungarian, or Czech language.<sup>114</sup> Another limitation in the choice of languages was for those cadets who were selected for training as pilots or air traffic controllers. They could choose English only. Due to the lack of success

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<sup>113</sup> At the time of the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia a language Committee determined in 1954 in Novi Sad stated that Croatian, Serbian, Montenegrin and Bosnian are considered as one language with multiple centres. Slovenian and Macedonian were not included due to strong language differences.

<sup>114</sup> Despite the recognition of Slovak as the second official national language, the dominant language was Czech, internally and externally.

language training in most of the neighbouring languages had been stopped a few years later.<sup>115</sup>

Austria, and in particular the Austrian Armed Forces, are participating actively in the "European Military Higher Education", which explicitly mentions in the Report 2010 languages and language training. It states that the language training in military educational institutions has increased during the past decade rapidly and a high level has been reached in passive knowledge. The increase in specific structures, such as language centres, or technical courses carried out in foreign languages were a greater challenge in the development as it was considered before. In this aspect, member states were advised and encouraged at the same time to teach European languages. In particular, they should be taught as a second foreign language, because it's a fundamental requirement for improving the interoperability. As a central concern, members should be encouraged to teach a second foreign language to interact with each other.



Although there is a strong focus on task requirements, language skills of the area of operations (AOO) are not particularly trained.

(Photo: Bundesheer)

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<sup>115</sup> Foreign languages teaching took place during the first two years of the three-year officer's training, each once a week in the amount of two to three lessons. Since there were hardly any possibilities to continue language training after graduation from the Academy, and very soon even the basic skills were forgotten, this was the reason for stopping this kind of language training.

With regard to the exchange, the Austrian Armed Forces have introduced a standard practice for years: In the officers' training a second foreign language is mandatory. Also the Military Strategic Concept emphasizes the cooperation with our neighbours, from which the presence of language skills can be deduced. Therefore, provisions were made in the organisation of the language institute twenty years ago. The Language institute provides permanent staff for all neighbouring languages. And all of them have a special expertise: In addition to a university language education they have military background knowledge at a high level, either as a career officer or NCO. To achieve and maintain this level the Language institute supports among other things, an extensive programme of cooperation with the language training institutions of the armed forces of neighbouring countries.

The current language policy in the Austrian Armed Forces strongly focuses on operational and task requirements. The policy is based on several documents, from which either linguistic or already finalized and arranged tasks derive. The following sub-chapters refer to these issues.

### **5.3.2 Austria's Security Strategy**

The conditions for the security of Austria have changed fundamentally in the past decade. Therefore, the Austrian government has in 2015 decided to elaborate a new security strategy. A central concern was that Austria's international commitments as a member of the European Union was laid down in the constitution. This Security Strategy presents new threat-scenarios, whereby national defence has to be re-defined. The original nature of military threat towards states from the outside, which is then countered by troops on the border, do no longer determine the security policy aspects. Such conventional threat-scenarios have become unlikely in the near future. The security situation in Europe in general and in Austria in particular, is determined by new threats, risks and challenges. Those include international terrorism, threats to critical infrastructure (including governmental ICT systems), illegal migration, drug and human trafficking, climate change or resource scarcity. Austria's Security Strategy is based on the following principles:

- *Comprehensive security*, where commercial and military security aspects are linked to each other
- *Integrated security*, which is an adequate balanced division of work of all members involved
- *Active security policy* aims predominantly at prevention, i.e. not to let threats or conflicts arise
- *Solidary Security Policy* considers the link between Austria's security with the security of the European Union

In case, that Austria's security strategy includes all actions at national, European and international level, certain analysis can be clearly deduced to the topic of this work. "Due to its geographical location, cultural and political networking, as well as due to its traditional, internationally recognized active foreign and security policy for Austria certain possibilities arise for participation in the field of internal and external security, both bilaterally and within the framework of international organisations".<sup>116</sup> Even in this paragraph the implied terms "foreign policy", "bilateral", "international", "specific measures in active presentations" incorporate foreign language and intercultural matters. "Solidarity" also includes communicating with others. This also reflects the fixed relationship of Austria's security and the security of the European Union. However, other international organisations for security policy development in Europe are addressed as well. If security issues can be solved in the future only through international cooperation, language and intercultural competencies are becoming increasingly important. Particularly in an international co-operation in terms of a "comprehensive approach", such competencies are essential.

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<sup>116</sup> "Die Grundlinien der Österreichischen Sicherheitsstrategie" [The Basic Lines of the Austrian Security Strategy] <https://www.bka.gv.at/site/3503/default.aspx> [21 09 2015]



Language and intercultural competencies are the basis for successful international cooperation.  
(Photo: Bundesheer)

The Lisbon Treaty, the deepening of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) were the basis for generating the European Crisis Management. The composition of the so-called "Battle Groups" or "Civilian Response Teams", which are ready and available forces, are the outcome, among others, of these new policies.

### **5.3.3 The Military Strategic Concept 2015**

The Military Strategic Concept (MSC) of 2015 represents the evolution of the last Military Strategic Concept of 2006 and mainly includes improvements in the international commitments of Austria.<sup>117</sup> It contains concrete references of language matters which can be understood as

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<sup>117</sup> [http://www.bundesheer.at/pdf\\_pool/publikationen/milstratkonzzept.pdf](http://www.bundesheer.at/pdf_pool/publikationen/milstratkonzzept.pdf) [27 06 2016].

orders, quoted the following: "General mission-preparation of the Austrian Armed Forces in 2018 for deployment [...] to other countries", "Contributions in the framework of the international community, as a possibility in crisis prevention", "...to the instability of the strategic environment in Europe", "Appropriate contributions to international crisis management" (page 11), "Task performance within the international solidarity to various international organisations" (page 39), "Conflict follow-ups (i. e. deployment of observers)", "Contribution to international security cooperation", "Operations for stabilization and reconstruction led by international organisations, the OSCE or the EU CFSP" (page 40), "Separation of conflicting parties", "Defending the European Union" (page 41), "Peacekeeping missions abroad under a mandate of the United Nations", "Assistance in disaster relief abroad" (page 42).

Some parts of the Military Security Concept are clearly understood as an order for language services, e.g. "...skills, which ensure interoperability in cooperation with international partners" (page 57), "Operation-based and task-based education and training support are the foundations of personnel commitments" (page 58). In the chapter "Cooperation orientation" several statements indicate the necessity of improvement of language and intercultural training. Austria will "... collaborate with actors of international organisations and with preferred partners [...] for duties in an international context; these are the EU, the UN, NATO and the OSCE" (point 2.13.3, page 61), "Important partners are as well the Bundeswehr [...] and the Armed Forces of neighbouring countries" (page 62), "The [...] international cooperation has to serve the improvement of education and training support, compensating and maintaining required skills for[...] multilateral synergies", "The sustainable use of modern training tools and methods has to be supported" (page 64).

#### **5.3.4 The White Book 2012**

The regularly updated White book provides an overview of the various tasks and missions of the Austrian Armed Forces. It gives information on the Austrian security and defence policy and provides an outlook on the development of the Armed Forces in terms of material and personnel. There is also stated that the positive development of the geopolitical situation has brought about substantial improvements in the European

strategic zone for Austria. At the same time, new risks and threats have been added: Cyber attacks, organized crime, international terrorism, human trafficking, natural disasters, civilization risks and instability on the European periphery. Though, the central task of the Austrian Armed Forces is still the defence of our country's border, it is immediately followed by military engagement abroad. The quantitative focus of the reporting period 2008-2010 were the missions on the Western Balkans.

Due to the instability in and around Europe the security situation mustn't be considered in isolation. For the comprehensive security provision, Austria has set the following political-strategic goals which are connected to the overall topic of this thesis:

- Strengthening democracy, human rights and the rule of law, notably through the active support of relevant projects of the European Union, the OSCE and the prevention of the escalation of conflicts and its arising, particularly in the security-related environment in Austria
- Acquisition of more responsibility for peace and security in the European and global context
- Support the international efforts for peacekeeping, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-crisis rehabilitation
- Establishment and development of an efficient civil-military cooperation for the fulfilment of security policy tasks at the national level as well as a prerequisite for a credible and effective common foreign and security policy of the European Union<sup>118</sup>

In the White Book the efforts for international contribution have also been laid down despite of the neutral-oriented foreign and security policy. Specifically, the stability process in the Western Balkans and the integration process around the African Union are listed here. The Middle East still represents high military risks at the European periphery.

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<sup>118</sup> Weißbuch [White book] 2012, p. 12.



Austria's security policy is based primarily on the prevention of conflicts within the framework of the European security structure. The principle of solidarity is based on the close interdependence of Austria's and European Union's security. The European security is based partly on a complementary cooperation with NATO on the active inclusion into the security system of the United Nations, the contributions of the OSCE and the Council of Europe.

Out of all the information shown in Chapter 2 ("Austria's security policy in an international context") and in Section 4.2 ("Foreign missions") it can be deduced directly from both the language area as well as from the intercultural field.

### **5.3.5 The Partial Strategy Defence Policy 2014**

The "Partial Strategy Defence Policy" (Teilstrategie Verteidigungspolitik) specifies Austria's security strategy for the military sector and the new defence policy concept in Austria.<sup>119</sup> It replaces the old strategy, dating back to the year 2005. Object and purpose are to show which kind of Armed Forces in the future are required to continue guaranteeing military security – time horizon of about ten years. Although it is noted in the chapter on military security and risk situation that a direct conventional military threat of Austrian territory is unlikely. For instance, the classic tank battle cannot be foreseen at least in the medium term. Therefore, non-conventional forms of organized violence by the state or by non-state actors are becoming increasingly important for Austria. The new Partial Strategy determines for the first time "probable operational military tasks" of the Armed Forces. The prioritization of the tasks of the Armed Forces means a change of paradigm. The "probable operational military tasks" are those tasks which have to be carried out most probably or permanently only by the Armed Forces and require different degrees of readiness of the troops. All tasks are equally important but differently urgent.

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<sup>119</sup> [http://www.bundesheer.at/download\\_archiv/pdfs/teilstrategie\\_verteidigungspolitik.pdf](http://www.bundesheer.at/download_archiv/pdfs/teilstrategie_verteidigungspolitik.pdf) [27 06 2016].

The strategy states very clearly that the security of Austria and those of the European Union are linked very closely. There is no safe Austria without a secure EU and no secure EU without a stable European neighbourhood.

By pointing out that

- the international missions are defined as an essential element for the defence of national security
- international assignments contribute to the protection of Austria's security interests
- the South Eastern region of Europe remains of vital interest for Austria's security
- the international commitment to Eastern Europe, to the Black Sea region, the Middle East and to Northern and Sahelian Africa is to expand<sup>120</sup>

All of this has to be seen as being part of Europe with common interest. Single-handed actions should be the exemption. Cooperation and partnerships are the manifest of the strategy for future common training, common operations and common armament and procurement.

From all of these statements, especially referring to common operations, specific tasks can be deduced for the Language Institute, which are necessary for the mission of the Austrian Armed Forces. In the following part below linguistic activities can be found of the Language Institute corresponding to the respective responsibilities of the Austrian Armed Forces:

1. Teaching and learning events: This includes basic and further training in languages such as English, French, Arabic, Italian, Slovenian, Croatian, Serbian, Bosnian, Ukrainian, Spanish, Czech and Slovak. It also comprises linguistic pre-deployment training for the missions in Northern Africa, KFOR/EUFOR in Arabic,

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<sup>120</sup> <http://www.bundesheer.at/cms/artikel.php?ID=7421> [15 03 2015].

English and Russian. Training of other languages as part of the officers training, language training for military diplomatic personnel, German language training for non-commissioned officers and migrants.

2. Terminology work, which represents the basis for language training and for interpretation and translation as well.

3. Interpreting and translating, which take place whenever it is dealt with "participation in international organisations", the "Defence Policy Regional Strategies" or the "Defence Policy Performance Profile", especially where the knowledge of English is not enough.

### **5.3.6 Guidelines for languages at the military**

#### The Catalogue of speech requirements

Catalogues of requirements describe the necessary function-related skills to perform the tasks both for missions as well as for the administrative daily duties.

As a cross-sectional matter these catalogues determine capabilities of groups of people on the one hand and on the other hand they represent the basis for planning military training. In addition to this, other documents have to be taken into account such as the "Partnership goals" according to the Partnership for Peace programme, usually in connection with the Planning and Review Process (PARP).<sup>121</sup> The Lisbon Treaty calls for a

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<sup>121</sup> As part of this process the partnership goal G 0355 was adopted for the language skills (according S92237/6-Transf/2012: 1. Improve English language skills of all personnel (military and civilian) who are to cooperate with NATO forces staffs in NATO-led PfP operations, exercises and training, or with NATO staffs. These individuals must be able to communicate in English Effectively, with added emphasis on operational terminology and procedures. 2. Continue to Ensure That All personnel planned for participation in NATO or other multi-national Headquarters, and MoD, Joint Forces Staff and other staff personnel who are routinely Involved in NATO issues, have English language skill at a minimum as follows (listening, speaking, reading, writing): A Officers: SLP 3-3-3-3 b NCOs: SLP 3-2-3-2 3. Ensure That the Following personnel subject to deployment on NATO-led operations and exercises or training must have

gradual improvement of military capabilities and duty to provide assistance in case of an armed attack. Furthermore, there is also a solidarity clause in case of terrorist attacks and disasters. This increased internationalization presents additional challenges to the language. This means in particular that the working language English is often not enough. The emphasis in language training should be placed on teaching the military terminology.



Only a few sentences in the target mother tongue for creating a good communication atmosphere between soldiers and the local population. (Photo: Bundesheer)

In addition, intercultural competence for all soldiers and multilingualism among officers is to ensure a deeper understanding of culture of the population in the area of operations, as well as of the members of other nations is required. The Military Strategic Concept has explicitly pointed out that "... comprehensive language skills for soldiers at all levels are required".<sup>122</sup> Maintaining and improving of language skills is a lifelong learning process. Therefore, multilingualism should be promoted among officers. Measures have to be taken to maintain language skills, in particular knowledge of the military terminology. At the NCO's level the precise

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the minimum English language skills as follows: a. Officers: SLP 3-3-3-3. b. Appropriate NCOs, O 5 and above likely to have frequent contacts with personnel of other nations: SLP 3-2-3-2. C. Enlisted personnel of all services planned to operate tactical communications or operate on NATO communications networks: SLP 2-2-2-1.

<sup>122</sup> Military Strategic Concept, p. 52.

knowledge of the service language German has its first priority and secondly, English up to the level 2 according to STANAG 6001.

The "Catalogue of Language Requirements" describes not only the core processes, but also the classification of languages according to their functionality, the skills, the needs and deductions. The core processes include language training, language services such as interpreting and translating, the examination system<sup>123</sup> and the terminology work. For carrying out tasks, languages are classified according to their functionality. This means, what language skills to what degree of a certain level are necessary, depending on the respective communication situation. In relation to its purpose of mission of the Austrian Armed Forces, following classification was based on:

1. Management and working languages as tools of security policy integration and the leading of multinational operations
2. Area of operation languages as tools for communication in the area of operations with the populations and, if English is not sufficient on site, with other nations
3. Neighbouring and regional cooperation languages as tools for cross-border cooperation, good neighbourhood and the exchange of military culture
4. Information and intelligence languages for gaining and gathering militarily relevant information as well as for concrete cooperation
5. Languages for military diplomacy as tools for diplomatic communication matters

Further education and training needs in foreign languages, which can be derived from the catalogue of language requirements as mentioned, are

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<sup>123</sup> The Austrian Armed Forces has in the field of language testing implemented NATO standards based on the mutual programme Partnership for Peace, whereby mutual recognition of diplomas should be facilitated.

assigned for members of the Ministry of Defence itself, certain Departments of the Ministry of Defence (Counter-Intelligence Agency, Army Intelligence Office, Office for Armament and Military Technology and the Military Personnel Office), the academies (National Defence Academy, Theresan Military Academy, NCOs' Academy) and branch schools (Military School for Land forces, Army Logistics School, Air force and Air Defence School), tactical and operational headquarters such as Command Operations Support, as well as the organisations and departments (brigades, battalions, centres).

In addition to this, there is language training in the framework of international co-operation agreements (based on so-called Memoranda of Understanding) with foreign armed forces as well as the education and training for internal and external language teachers and linguists.

### Guidelines for language training

The instruction guidelines for language training ("Durchführungsbestimmungen für die Sprachausbildung" – DBSpraAusb 2013) regulates the principles, training basics, skills and specific processes of language training for members of the Ministry of Defence, the Austrian Armed Forces and the military authorities in Austria and abroad, both in the military and civilian environment, as well as those members of foreign armed forces.<sup>124</sup>

These instruction guidelines regulate the practical implementation of the language policy in the Austrian Armed Forces based on the catalogue of language requirements. This implementation takes place at different levels and in different ways:

- at the language institute as centralized language training
- at the academies and branch schools as integrated language training in career courses of basic and advanced training

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<sup>124</sup> DBSpraAusb 2013, § 4 Geltungsbereich, p. 4.

- decentralized language training at the units, garrisons and barracks of the Armed Forces either independently or in courses
- as external language training in civilian training centres at home and abroad as well as in military training institutions abroad<sup>125</sup>

To ensure linguistic interoperability language matters in the Austrian Armed Forces comprise the four core processes language training, testing, interpreting and translation as well as terminology work. For the two latter core processes separate guidelines are introduced.



Military terminology is a key element of the language training and is being thought from the beginning on. (Photo: Johannes Luxner)

### Centralized Language Training

In the central language training, the emphasis of the training relies on the languages English, French and German. The need for foreign language training apart from this focus is based on the requirements of the Ministry of Defence and operational requirements of other departments. The wide range of centralized language training activities include

- language courses for specific purposes (TES – Tactical English Seminar, STF – Seminaire Tactique Francaise, AOC – Air Operational Course, TLE – Technical and logistical English for air

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<sup>125</sup> Especially for military diplomatic personnel.

forces maintenance personnel, AES – Aviation English Seminar, English Seminar for Secretarial Staff)

- the linguistic preparation for Austrian defence attachés abroad
- linguistic and intercultural training for specialized positions in the areas of operation
- tutorials for maintaining acquired language skills
- German for foreign military personnel based on bilateral cooperation programmes
- training seminars for foreign German language teachers
- enhanced training for English and German language instructors

Furthermore, cross-language courses (didactic, methodology), military terminology courses and seminars, training of language instructors and interpreters, are centrally planned, coordinated and carried out by the Language Institute.

#### Integrated language training

Planning of integrated language training at the academies and military training schools is conducted by themselves in accordance with the relevant guidelines and regulations. The AAF Language Institute supports this training by coordination between training contents and the testing system, by teaching materials and the necessary testing (at the beginning by placement tests and tests and at the end of a course).

#### NCO Academy

For learning foreign languages the knowledge of German is essential. Therefore, required skills at different levels (Corporals, Sergeants and NCOs) are being tested.



For all professional NCOs of the Austrian Armed Forces foreign language skills in English are mandatory. Depending on the qualification level (squadron leader, platoon leader, Specialist Sergeant, Staff Sergeant, Sergeant Instructor) corresponding foreign language performance profiles are defined, which have to be achieved by this group of professional soldiers. Therefore, a Standardized Language Proficiency (SLP) according to NATO STANAG 6001, which was implemented by Austria, 1+/1+/1+/1 is required. For the highest NCO qualification a SLP 2+/2+/2+/2+ is the prerequisite. This proficiency level is also required for the admission at the Military Academy. This kind of language training is part of the careers training at the NCO Academy.

A second foreign language for NCOs is only provided if there is a need, for example for the position as an Assistance Attaché abroad or for intelligence purposes.

### Theresan Military Academy

According to the reorganisation and restructuring of language training in 2010, it takes place as part of the officers' training at the Theresan Military Academy. The Academy has in a certain segment the status of a University of Applied Sciences ("Fachhochschule") and training is recognized as a bachelor's degree programme called "Military Leadership" (FH-BASg MilFü), which takes six semesters. Two foreign languages are compulsory: English for all (but only a few modules in English military terminology are offered) and a second modern foreign language as an elective subject.

#### English

For a successful completion of the foreign English language training during the bachelor's programme a SLP of 2+/2+/2+/2+ according to NATO STANAG 6001 is required.

Although there is no structured lessons for further acquisition in the English foreign language in the curriculum, but there are a number of activities, which helps to achieve this level, in case, or unless the officer-cadet does not have the skills already at the beginning:

- Standardized and implemented modules of English military terminology (British military terminology, phrases, idioms, etc.) in all six semesters
- Courses or course components as well as other activities in English (e.g. Peace Support Operations Course – PSOC)
- Completion of the six-week "International internship" (Internationales Berufspraktikum – IBP) abroad; basically in English
- English-language lectures and presentations by guest lecturers in specific subjects (e.g. the courses "Common Security and Defence Policy", "Operations in an multinational environment", "Operational Task Force in a multinational environment"
- Participation in international exercises
- Informal communication with international participants (students)
- Foreign language support and encouragement as needed or required

The officer-cadets (Offiziersanwärter – OA) are indeed checked usually during the admission procedure with respect to their knowledge of foreign languages, but little knowledge of English does not constitute an exclusion criterion. Recommended for a smooth conclusion, however, a minimum level of 2/2/2/2 is required.

### Second modern foreign language

The cadets have to choose a language, predominantly a language which they already have knowledge of and where the training can continue and develop the existing language skills. If there isn't any language knowledge existent – because of graduation from a technically-oriented school (i.e., Technical High School), a general, and vocational or secondary school, where no second modern foreign language is included in the core subjects then – the teaching of French is carried out at the Academy. A limitation is given to the second language training in terms of building a homogeneous group, but not by specific languages. Due to the fact that the Austrian civilian school system offers a large spectrum of foreign languages, the number of cadets with additional language skills is relatively high. So far, one or more groups in French, Italian, Spanish and Russian could be formed every year. In 2011 could be formed even an advanced Croatian language group. In 2012, Arabic language training for beginners started as a special project.

With the compulsory learning of a second foreign language for professional officers the Austrian Armed Forces follows the European multilingualism policy (mother tongue +2 languages). Language training (and testing) in the Austrian Armed Forces is based on the NATO PfP Agreement (STANAG) 6001, which Austria has ratified and implemented in its curricula and guidelines. This standardized document describes the four language skills (Reading, Listening, Writing, and Speaking) in the respective levels. With the study year 2016/17 it is planned to eliminate in the Bachelor programme the learning of a second foreign language. At this stage it is not decided yet, whether there will be a replacement, a new structure for it or different languages, e.g., to meet the new challenges and commitments (especially due to Austria's new policy to increase its engagement in Africa).

### National Defence Academy

At the National Defence Academy in Vienna higher officers' training takes place. These include the General Staff Officers' Course, Staff Course for Senior Quartermasters, Military Staff Course for officers graduated

from the university (military linguists, pedagogues, chaplains, doctors, pharmacists etc.). Two courses have become part of the University of Applied Sciences Master's degree programme "Military Leadership" (FH-MAStg "MilFü"). For all these groups of officers, the Standardized Proficiency Level 3 in English (professional) is the prerequisite. An advanced education in a second foreign language is carried out in a structured format, at present only at the General Staff Officers' Course.<sup>126</sup>

For all these groups of people, level 3 (professional) in English is the prerequisite to be admitted to one of these courses, because in these courses English act as a second working language. The criterion for this is the SLP 3/3/3/2. Within these courses especially the technical language training is to be forced. In particular, English is used in the context of international education. Currently, teaching a second foreign language in a structured format takes place only at the General Staff Officers Course, which is a three-year programme. This course will be adjusted every time by a new regulation to current needs. In previous courses the participants could choose a second foreign language individually (in the respect to a possible future position in a particular country abroad, such as a military attaché, lecturer or liaison officer). At the ongoing General Staff Officers' Course exclusively French is taught.

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<sup>126</sup> Anforderungskatalog [Catalogue of Requirements] (2012), Attachement 1, p. 2.

### Decentralized language training

For the troops of the Austrian Armed Forces respective Commanders and Heads of Services are in charge of the career training of their subordinates and employees in their area, which also includes language training. Language training is coordinated at the Training division at the Joint Forces Operations Command. The procedure for a requested language course is the following: a commanding officer of a brigade or battalion or the commandant of a garrison or barracks applies for language training and, the application will be examined by the AAF Language Institute. The Institute then checks the number and the homogeneity of the students, the facilities on site and the teaching staff and when appropriate, the course will be approved. The Institute also ensures the supply of teaching and learning materials. Supervision and testing is also carried out by the AAF Language Institute. Thus guarantees a high quality. The range of language activities at the units and garrisons is wide: it ranges from linguistic preparations for career courses, tutorials for maintaining of language skills through specialist language training prior to posting a unit abroad in a multinational exercise.

#### **5.3.7 Comments on the language policy in the Armed Forces**

Language matters in essence are in the Austrian Armed Forces a cross-cutting matter and an essential prerequisite for ensuring interoperability with other forces on the one hand and for the provision of the necessary linguistic skills to fulfil the tasks in the workplace in the peace organisation to the extent necessary on the other hand. Profound language skills, as it was noted in the Military Strategic Concept, thereby builds a cornerstone and is to be formed at all levels and has to be promoted. This requirement is the minimum language level for the individual groups. Objective is the earliest possible acquisition of these skills in order to ensure the job-related position.



Such Language booklets are designed for basic communication.  
(Photo: Bundesheer)

During the general military basic and advanced training, basic and advanced language training or additional language training fit into the criteria for the implementation of the Bologna process and the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) in the Austrian Armed Forces and is part of usable knowledge and skills in the civilian education system. For the linguistic education and training the civilian sector is of great interest, because useful knowledge and skills are present. Therefore, the full recognition of acquired language skills in the civilian educational "landscape" operates in the sense of increasing the motivation to learn. In many language training institutions of other forces such recognition is either already been implemented or is automatically connected to college status.

With compulsory learning of a second foreign language the Austrian Armed Forces also follows the European policy of multilingualism (Native +2 other foreign languages).

### **5.3.8 The Defence budget**

The Austrian Armed Forces since its inception has always been kept short of money. It is, despite chronic underfunding, only thanks to the highly motivated soldiers and a civil servant, that such extraordinary work is done. Abroad, everybody is amazed about the little defence budget, but moreover the great achievements both nationally and internationally were performed. The Ministry of Defence receives approximately EUR 2 billion as an annual budget, which represents 0,55% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). This amount of money has to cover the costs of personnel, the procurement of weapons and the entire administrative and infrastructural management. Despite massive downsizing of the Armed Forces, in particular by dissolution of units, barracks and garrisons, the ratio of the budget between staff, operating expenditure and investments has changed considerably. The costs of the personnel are steadily increasing, leaving less and less money available for investments.

The half-hearted demands for more money from the military side have hardly achieved effect. The economic crisis has also delivered the politics a good reason to stop the flow of money. On the contrary, austerity package had to be carried out, whereby the consequences were fatal. For example, fuel was a quota for the vehicles, unless they have already been sold. Instead of this, civilian buses had to be rented to transport the soldiers on training grounds and shooting ranges. Until then, well-functioning structures were dissolved and heavy equipment was sold at lowest prices. Exercises during night time are hardly performed because there is no money for overtime. Fighter pilots, who were trained for several million Euros, were not allowed to fly any longer, because operating the few aircraft was too expensive. The list of deficiencies could go on for a long time, but these savings do not bring the desired effect. With the constant adjusting of the budget to the training a permanent levelling of quality goes hand in hand down. The old proverb "in times of crisis to invest in human resources", has been criminally forgotten. Instead of creating incentives, the last remnants of motivation are actively destroyed. The positions of commanding officers or other leading posts are no longer attractive enough to compete for. Unfortunately, such signals of de-motivation are neglected. The social status of professional soldiers as employees of public service has already slipped to the end of the recognition ladder. The conversion of

military to civil jobs purely out of financial reasons speaks for itself. The provided budget has a higher priority than anything else. Other criteria for content and quality are no longer in demand.

The savings in the military, which are in reality a "dismantling of the armed forces", go all the easier, because this has no direct financial impact or immediate implications for individuals. Because there is no war around Austria or even very unlikely an armed conflict in the near future, so, why do we need a strong military? Such questions have been asked very often in the public. None of the current political parties supports the military as a solid cornerstone of the society.

According to the European Defence Agency (EDA) beside Austria only Ireland, Luxembourg and Malta spend less than 1% of their Gross Domestic Product on defence. Finally, the budget for the Austrian Armed Forces was in 1989, about one percent. Since then the defence budget has been steadily deteriorating.

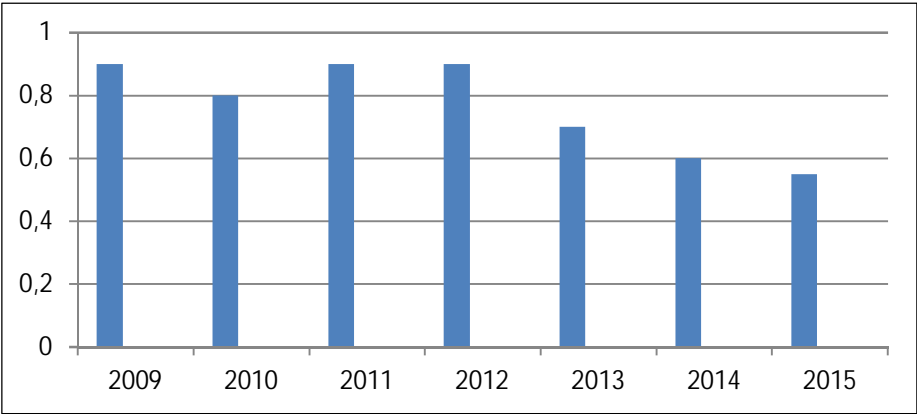


FIGURE 11: DEVELOPMENT OF AUSTRIA'S DEFENCE BUDGET

Most European countries are struggling with a diminishing budget for its armed forces. Switzerland is often used for comparison with Austria. Although in Switzerland there is a critical and passionate debate about the country's defence as well, but one thing is indisputable: the budget for the national defence hasn't been reduced. On the contrary: the elected



representatives of the Swiss Confederation will raise the budget significantly in order to procure some new combat aircraft. As the Swiss newspapers 'Neue Zürcher Zeitung' reported, also the Senate as the second chamber of the Parliament of the Swiss Confederation supported the increase of the Swiss defence budget to 4.16 billion Euros from the National Council. That's about twice of Austria's defence budget. Despite the fact that Switzerland is a much smaller country than Austria and less closer to conflict regions, it is worth noting also that the Swiss Parliament didn't grant debates about possible compromises when equipping its army with new aircraft and gave a clear rejection. Likewise, the Swiss Parliament decided in favour of the desired strength of 100,000 troops with weapons, the whole equipment and the preservation of the militia system, which was demoted in Austria to a minimum. Common to both countries is the retention of the conscript system.



FIGURE 12: DISTRIBUTION OF AUSTRIA'S DEFENCE EXPENDITURES BY RESOURCE COSTS 2000-2010 AS A PERCENTAGE. RESEARCH EXPENDITURES ARE SO LOW THAT THEY WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED (UNODA).

Another interesting study of the evolution of the defence budget of selected European countries shows a graphical representation by resource costs of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), Austria undertook only a moderate change from the operational to the procurement and construction costs. However, the expenditures for

research and development as part of to the defence budget was observed over the entire period to be so small, usually less than 0.1%, so, that this proportion even had to be omitted despite rounding up the calculated percentages in this specification. The proportion of operation costs to the defence spending declined between 2000 and 2010 by 3% from 86% to 83%. In turn, the costs of procurement and construction increased by 3% from 14% to 17%.

The end of the Cold War has led to fundamental changes in the field of security policy in Europe in general, and the national defence areas in particular. Conventional conflicts were mostly replaced by asymmetric threats. The impact of recent refugee crises can even currently be reasonably estimated.

The challenges lie in the availability of financial resources for the efficient fulfilment of new tasks, such as frequent expectant operations abroad. The steadily growing range of new tasks which should be ensure with proportional and continuously dwindling resources appears to be almost impossible. It will not only lead to further loss of capacities, but will also despite higher professionalization, have to accept a reduction in quality. The Austrian Armed Forces will be further streamlined, the procurement of modern weapons and new equipment will take longer time in delivering, and cost-intensive units will be closed down. As well as the propagated "Pooling and Sharing" funded by the European Union under the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) will not bring the desired effect and is threatened by national interests of individual member states to fail.

Legislative changes have directly affected the Language Institute as such, e.g. the conversion of the recruitment of guest teachers from freelance contracts to service contracts (through language schools or institutes). This change suddenly made lessons by 20% (!) more expensive. Since the budget simply has not been increased, the offer of language training activities has to be reduced. Furthermore, the budget for scientific journals, technical language journals and other teaching and learning materials was reduced by 80%, whereby a blatant loss of quality can be expected. By non-payment of overtime the staff personnel is to be granted

for this so-called compensatory time off. This also means less "output", as these professionals are not available for these hours.

At the beginning of October 2014, announced cost-cutting measures also directly affect the Language Institute. Already the reduction of personnel by 20% represents a large incision. The question is how this downsizing of personnel will take place? The plan is not to fill vacant workplaces, not to replace workplaces after retirement or after leaving the position due to career reasons. Thus, many tasks and jobs can no longer be met.

### **5.3.9 The Civil Service Law**

The Civil Service Law is currently undergoing major changes and is partly facing effects that are already dramatically. Due to the gradual increase of age of retirement the assigned budget has to be spent increasingly on personnel costs. By prolonging the aging staff personnel younger people (and therefore cheaper) cannot either move up or be included or admitted at all. This situation is exacerbated by closing down departments, units or garrisons. Senior staff is statistically seen more often ill than the younger staff, and so they are missing in training lessons, in the courses and seminars. Absent personnel has to be replaced by other staff or guest teachers have to step in. Therefore, additional costs are incurred.

The proposed change of the Service Law, including the introduction of so-called part-time careers, would affect at the earliest after ten years. A further change in the law will be not to admit military personnel (in case of the Language Institute military language teachers, interpreters, and translators) as permanent staff in an employment relationship as officials would also be effective only after the period of time of about ten years. Although these are medium-term savings measures, but the current situation requires effective emergency measures.

The planned reform of military ranks foresees less high(er) ranking senior officers and less senior NCOs in the future (whereby the system should save a lot of salaries). This probably no longer seemed attractive enough for many prospective customers to adopt this profession.

Especially, because of the significant reduction of the salary by lowering the positions jobs are not an attractive profession anymore.

Although a return to the crucial tasks of the Armed Forces is being propagated by the General Staff, a conversion from military to civilian jobs is planned simultaneously. To fulfill military tasks by civilians is obviously a contradiction. This conversion is also based on saving measures, because a soldier serves 41 hours per week, a civil servant only 40. Additional to this, a soldier receives a "military allowance" for preparation military tasks in case of wartime. A civil servant has only 40 hours per week to work for what he gets paid for. There is also no allowance for military activities and for keeping the uniform and the equipment in a good shape. This savings would also affect the Language Institute massively, because half of the staff of the Institute is military.

The problem is that it's extremely difficult to find qualified personnel for the position of (military trained) language teachers or linguists. But it is precisely the combination of university-graduated language professionals and collaborators with military background. They have not only the most important quality criterion as language specialist with a university degree, but also the military basis as an officer or at least as an experienced non-commissioned officer. This creates the unique feature of the Language Institute itself. The next logical step in this so-called reform (or transformation) would be the entire transfer of language training and other language services (terminology, translation and interpreting) to the civilian area. What losses of quality the Institute will face, can't currently even be reasonably estimated.

#### 5.4 Other factors

In addition to the civilian and military factors, there are still a number of other factors that have implications for the foreign language or intercultural area in the military. The most important may be cited and examined here.

### **5.4.1 Transformation of the Armed Forces**

Although Austria is still suffering from the aftermath of the economic and financial crisis, it is favoured by the stable security situation in Europe. The current ongoing migration wave to and through Austria (still) does not change anything. Conventional military attacks are not expected in the near future. Nevertheless, there are a number of new challenges that need to be met. However, the situation is unstable in some regions on the periphery of Europe. Therefore, Austria has defined and restructured its forces according to the new security strategy. Despite of this – or perhaps because of it – there are the following planned and relevant measures to the present thesis:

- The creation and deployment of a "Peacekeeping Battalion" in the context of the international engagement
- Border surveillance
- Human and Disaster Relief
- Cyber security
- Solidarity activities for the European Union (in the framework of CSDP)

In all these areas foreign languages and intercultural skills play an important role. The intensity of these measures and activities will show in the future, whether or not the current resources can still ensure all the given tasks of the military. There have been already many extensive restrictions and reductions in various areas, most probably not the last ones.

### **5.4.2 Neighbouring countries of Austria**

Austria's neighbouring countries are from the military point of view of special importance. With the Armed Forces of all the neighbouring countries of Austria (Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Slovenia, Hungary, Slovakia and Czech Republic) bilateral agreements for close cooperation

(based on a Memorandum of Understanding – MoU) were signed at the highest military level. In all these cooperation programmes, among many other activities, language matters, whether it's training, testing, interpreting, translation matters or terminology work, can be found. The spectrum ranges from teacher and student exchange to mutual consultations at commission tests, the elaboration of teaching and testing materials or the common elaboration of terminological publications.

There are a lot of recurring statements found in the White Book 2010 under the chapter 'Strengthening of bilateral relations', such as "Within the framework of bilateral cooperation a number of projects will be carried out about language education [...]".

Therefore, the Language Institute has for all languages of our neighbouring countries highly qualified linguistic specialists as permanent staff available. Not only from the historical viewpoint, but also for reasons of security policy, there is as well such permanent special language Staff for Bosnian, Serbian and Croatian available. The military background knowledge of these language specialists ranges from basic knowledge through to the successful graduation of the General Staff Officers Course or the Commanding Officers Course in the country concerned.

### **5.4.3 Type of missions**

A big difference exists between the deployment of officers as military observers or supervisors of elections on the one hand and the deployment as a member of a contingent of armed soldiers on the other. Military observers or "election observers" are generally deployed to monitor peace or ceasefire agreements or elections. They are able to assist in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants, in support of humanitarian projects or in the development of civilian police-related structures. Not only directives are commonly different, but also the performance. Military observers and election observers, as opposed to contingent members, are either totally unarmed or as a maximum equipped with a handgun for self-defence. They have to meet increasingly communication tasks and contacts with the local population and local

authorities and with governmental (GOs) and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

Observer missions are usually internationally mixed and thus ethnically even down to the smallest organisational elements. In many Armed Forces this has been already taken into account when it comes to training, taking often place in a multinational framework. The multi-nationality is for many military observers deployed a major challenge, because not all members of Armed Forces have a good Command of English, which is an important prerequisite and an essential basis for professional and effective communication. In this context it's interesting that, e.g. the German Bundeswehr have tested Anglophone military native speakers at the end of an international training due to the fact that their language use is limited or they speak or use a strong dialect.

The cultural differences are present every day, especially in the life of military observers. Therefore, trust is the basis of any cooperation. And the trend towards further internationalization is continuing. Personal experiences through repeated participation in observer missions in the Middle East in the years 1990/1991 and 1998/1999 could confirm this. Members of this mission called UNTSO (United Nations Truce Supervision Organisation) were made up at that time of 25 nationalities in total, ranging from observers officers from the American countries Chile, Argentina, USA, Canada to several European countries (Finland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands, Czech Republic, Italy, France, Estonia, Russia or Switzerland) as well as nationalities from the Far East such as Nepal, Bhutan, China, Australia or New Zealand. Concerning the tasks of observers in UNTSO, which is dominated by week-long patrols and observation activities, carried out usually by two officers, two general rules were introduced:

1. A military observer should never serve with the same fellow-officer again
2. A military observer should never serve together with an fellow-officer of the same nationality

#### **5.4.4 The local population in the area of operations**

To generate the most accurate picture of the situation, a permanent contact with the local population as well as a high level of intercultural sensitivity is required. The contact with the population and the local authorities require special attention and mindfulness. In many regions, where peace support operations are carried out, race, religion, language, gender, age, educational level, professional background often play a much more significant role than in the European world. Most of these criteria can be identified in an appropriate form. But there are a number of intercultural hints that are not as such immediately perceptible. Times, work ethic, the sense of justice, cleanliness or clothing are often things that are sometimes contrary or at least deviating from their own ideas. Prejudices are formed quickly and sometimes lead to misunderstandings. The lack of information, ignorance or intolerance is usually reasons for this.

Language skills, no matter to what extent (the more extensive the better) are a key factor on the way to a better mutual understanding. Important would be the knowledge of the structure or the hierarchy of the local authorities and the persons acting together with the practices, so as not to accidentally make mistakes that can lead to unpleasant situations. The mere knowledge of the question "Who is allowed to enter into a negotiating conversation with whom?" could already be crucial. A respectful approach is already expressed through gestures and body language. For example, kissing on both cheeks and hand-in-hand walking of men, as is common in the Arab world, is not without taboos in Europe. Likewise, an inappropriate behaviour would be if a hand-shake with the wife takes place first in front of the husband or, even worse, in the presence of other men, as well as asking about someone's wife (and not after the whole family). At an official ceremony or a diplomatic meeting not to be dressed properly or appropriate to the event is considered (also in our environment) discourtesy. The so-called dress code can sometimes be irritating

The current operational environment is usually an asymmetrical and part of those operations which are not combat operations (Military operations other than war), generally include the so-called "winning-the-hearts-and-minds" of the population. This task cannot be accomplished



without understanding the particular culture of the autochthonous population. Peace support operations must therefore rely on the ability of soldiers to communicate with members of the local population, usually belonging to different cultures and speaking different languages. The need for skilled linguists exceeds the supply by far. The American "Tactical Questioning Handbook", which was developed specifically for the soldiers in the Middle East, indicates for dealing with the local population the following: "...know as much about the local culture and customs and a few phrases in the local language".<sup>127</sup> But this does not have much chance of success without any general cultural education or training.

One of the challenges inherent in the achievement of vertical interoperability is to bring the local population and the members of the mission to share the understanding and the reasons of the actions and activities. In cultural encountering are not so much the superficial cultural forms that are common to a society, but the symbolic background which is based on these forms. Likewise, for cognitive and affective systems in which they are incorporated, symbolic background is essential. These superficial cultural forms that we know as so-called "travel tips" are mostly just a list of things that someone should do or refrain from the contact with a culturally different group ("dos or don'ts"). This focus on things as counting, for example, what gestures you should note or you should avoid (never show the sole of your shoe towards another person or do not eat with your left hand, etc.). These are stereotypical instructions that appeal to superficial elements of culture. And usually they seem strange from the viewpoint of those who use them.

Although there are sufficient descriptions on intercultural mistakes, some way beyond "normal" corrections should be found in the practice to connect these things with the deeper cultural level. Especially after armed conflicts, in which members of the local population have been traumatized by atrocities, it is important to communicate in such a way that people see themselves (again) as respected and worthwhile human beings. Achieving a vertical interoperability in integrated peace support operations also depends on the ability of the peacekeepers, in interacting in a sincere and genuine partnership with local people. Furthermore, members of the local

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<sup>127</sup> Tactical Questioning Handbook, p. 11.

population, who work for the operation, should be reasonably employed. They are often employed for "lower" work for which they are generally overqualified. As an adequate employment they can assist as "cultural instructors" and serve as a liaison between the operation and the general public with real responsibilities. Respect and partnership are the key factors for a true collaboration. In many peace support operations, the placement of these values in their actions did not succeed. This has led to negative impacts to several areas of social life, as well as in the field of law or policy. Rubinstein offers for an open-minded handling of these issues seven principles as an aid to teaching these values:<sup>128</sup>

1. Respect and partnership as the central symbols of interoperability
2. Be aware of the meaning of symbols
3. Pay attention to symbols
4. Avoid assigned topics
5. Conflict management and culture
6. Ensure cultural expectations
7. Update yourself on the local power structures

## 5.5 Summary

Among the most important factors at the beginning of a peace support operation is the factor of time. The period of time between the political decision of participating in an operation and the concrete deployment of troops is becoming increasingly shorter. To ensure the linguistic interoperability, especially beside the general working language English, there is hardly enough time to prepare. Considerations in this regard already existed in the past, e. g., in the peacekeeping operations in 1992 in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Kosovo: There were virtually no linguistic capacities available at the participating nations, who were

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<sup>128</sup> Rubinstein (2008), p. 545f.

responsible for bilateral communication between the local population and the local authorities on the one hand and on the other hand there were not enough local interpreters at disposal.

In some participating countries such as Austria, the regulation existed not to deploy so-called heritage speakers, in order not to threaten the neutrality in the area of operation. Despite these difficulties, the deployment in those regions, however, had the advantage that in those countries, many people live who have worked in Austria for several years before. The former Yugoslavia was in fact the only country of the former communist and Eastern oriented states, where it was allowed for citizens to take residence or to work abroad as so-called guest workers. For this reason, there were many former Yugoslavs who more or less spoke German well and were able to communicate in this way with the members of the Austrian (as well as the German and Swiss) contingent.

Just this circumstance during these deployments in the Balkans has led to a rethinking of the rules about heritage speakers, especially, because many of these former guest workers remaining in the sixties and seventies in Austria had received Austrian citizenship. And their sons and grandsons have then done as Austrians their national military service.

In the meantime, the regulation about the non-deployment of such heritage speakers is not that strict any more. Although for operations abroad the principle (by law) of voluntariness is still in effect, it is possible for soldiers with migration background to serve in the target region or country of his/her background. Several soldiers currently serve as heritage speakers in different functions and positions in the missions KFOR and EUFOR ALTHEA. It gives the military leadership in the area of operation a powerful linguistic and intercultural "tool". Those people serving in the Austrian Armed Forces do not know only the target language, but have as professional soldiers a profound military background. Additional to this, they are trained and aware of Austrian administrative procedures. Commanding officers can draw back to a pool of specialist that they can rely on.

Other contributing states to these missions, especially the United States, Great Britain and Denmark, have taken a different path in order to meet this problem: They have, e. g., organized for Russian-speaking

military personnel from NATO member countries, who served during the Cold War for intelligence and liaison functions, special retraining courses to have at lower communication level of Serbo-Croatian speakers available. Due to their Russian education they have two advantages: the knowledge of a similar grammar and almost same language structures of another Slavic language and, the knowledge of the Cyrillic script, as it's used by the Serbs. Several hundred military personnel of various nationalities have been subjected to such "Crash courses", thus a multilingual knowledge base for operational survival could be created.

Austria in general and the Austrian Armed Forces in particular have carried out the assistance abroad not only because of its constitutional establishment, but also conducted it with great enthusiasm for decades and have repeatedly proved the readiness for this impressive demonstration. With headquarters of several United Nations organisations and because of the official seat of the OSCE in Vienna, Austria has a direct access to peace support operations of the two organisations. For peace support operations Austria has assumed to be a role model for other countries for many years and has actively supported many forces in their participation efforts. Through the massive budget constraints in recent years, the full extent of the recent commitments abroad can no longer be accomplished despite political declarations of intent. Also because of the leaving from long-standing and pure peacekeeping missions only within the United Nations, such as on Cyprus (UNFICYP) or on the Golan Heights (UNDOF), and the turning to shorter interests of peace support operations and other international organisations. Alliances have broken new ground in quality assurance and innovative ways and methods that should be considered. In the area of logistics or in operating air transports solutions have already been found, following the motto 'burden sharing'. In the field of education however, such solutions were achieved only partially through participation in international courses.

It was mainly the two wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, which brought the importance of intercultural competence and the enormous deficit of language skills to the fore by many negative incidents. Modern warfare, especially from a distance using drones, satellite-based reconnaissance and remote-controlled missiles have contributed to it. Many participating armed forces found it mentally difficult to make the transition from armed

conflicts and also against the civilian population to then support peace and infrastructure restoring missions. For most of them the necessary winning of 'hearts and minds' of the population was strange. It took several years to become aware of the importance of intercultural competence and linguistic challenges. Even after recognizing these deficits many measures and initiatives were not really successful, a continuous concept and related structures were missing. In many cases, the two areas were simply ignored, also in the Austrian Armed Forces. Research efforts have also been made by members of the Language Institute to promote this rethinking. Although initial progress can be seen, but a stringent approach and a structured plan for the implementation of (inter-) cultural awareness training, which is forward-looking and focused on the potential of new language training application areas, is missing.

It is therefore the establishment of a continuous intercultural awareness of all those who are involved in peace support operations and the creation of a comprehensive training programme which is highly necessary. Austria as a traditional country of immigration that (approximately more than one third of the Viennese population has migration background) could scoop from, to achieve these skills from a huge multilingual and multicultural reservoir. Unlike other countries, especially the United States or Great Britain as popular and preferred countries of immigration, the understanding of the current multiculturalism is based on the Habsburg Monarchy as a multiethnic state. The geographical situation of Austria in the heart of Europe with its eight neighbouring nations, where six different languages are spoken and their citizens belong to different cultures, makes an important contribution. Another remarkable fact is the constitutionally recognized minorities in Austria. In addition, Austria is a highly popular tourist destination visited every year by millions of tourists. These circumstances explain the great understanding and deep empathy Austrian citizens have for other cultures. According to the language policy English is at all Austrian schools a compulsory subject, which allows at least a possible basic international communication. In many secondary and high schools, a number of other foreign languages are offered. In addition to acquired language skills in schools, specialized military language (terminology) training can be continued in the Armed Forces. The deployment of troops in areas of operations where the local population and the local authorities often have

only little knowledge of English brings new challenges, especially for rarely taught languages, such as African languages little-known in Europe. The provision of elaborated language booklets and the introduction to the geography and culture of the region concerned within the framework of pre-deployment training appears still rudimentary and unsatisfactory to act linguistically and intercultural competent. Therefore, this part of the training is still of little value, because it could be dealt with only in a superficial way due to the lack of enough time. The lack of a thorough and comprehensive training thus has a direct impact on the effectiveness of participation in a peace support operation.

American soldiers can choose from a variety of language training options, e.g. from a range of language educational institutions. Thus, the Joint Language University provides as language learning and language support platform learning materials from different areas. The soldiers have access to language courses, authentic texts and hundreds of audio samples. They may order or borrow computer-based training modules on CDs in various languages in order to improve their knowledge through self-study. But even here there is a lack of motivation too little time available. That is why it often lingers only on good will.

Although much has been already done in the Austrian Armed Forces in order to raise the cultural awareness and language skills of soldiers in peace support operations, the chosen path is the right way indeed, but there is still great need for improvement. In the training curricula for future officers and NCOs as well as for other career courses parts of the two regions have already been established, but concrete training takes place only in the pre-deployment training which is very concise and therefore very simple and superficial in form. Thus, the incompetence remains. Perhaps the cultural awareness and the importance of language skills in the training manuals found too little consideration. There are usually a few cultural factors or considerations that need to be taken in account such as:

- The recognition of social customs such as class distinctions or clothing
- The avoidance of personal political affiliations on the one hand and the necessary basic knowledge of the political situation on the other hand

- The respect for religious customs

It raises the question of why such a concept and a stringent, structured training programme have not yet been implemented. Does the problem lie within the military or the society itself? The question so far has not been really explored comprehensively. Possibly, by the experiences gained in the previous missions abroad, where the need didn't really seem to appear in the many years abroad for Austrian soldiers. Or maybe does the mentality of a soldier play a special role? Does it generally occur that soldiers coming from a small country like Austria don't come across as dominant or arrogant, unlike the members of a superpower, but rather try to communicate on an equal level and in a friendly atmosphere? Condescending behaviour is immediately observed in sensitive cultures in developing a cultural awareness it is counterproductive towards a foreign population. These include the reluctance to learn another language. Here too, neither in America nor in Britain in comparison to other countries, foreign language learning is not popular and not being fostered. The USA is one of the very few countries, where students can get a college degree without attending a single foreign language course. Until recently, the most widely taught languages in the United States were the sign language and Hebrew. These languages were now replaced by Spanish due to the high number of immigrants of Spanish-speaking Mexicans. Britons and Americans are not so keen to travel like the Europeans, as well as working or studying abroad, because they keep the language barriers insurmountable. The fact that they can entertain themselves in English abroad without any major problems doesn't seem to suggest the need for it. In the military the situation is similar: Britons like Americans still operate large garrisons and barracks abroad, which are in some cases even national territories (such as the Sovereign Base Areas Akrotiri and Dhekelia on Cyprus). They can visit with their families many places and inside the bases soldiers will find everything they need for their daily life. This ranges from large shopping malls, kindergartens and school facilities at all levels or entertainment and even sports venues. Many families of soldiers living in such garrisons often don't get into any contact with the local population if this doesn't occur by their own initiative. Therefore, the learning of the host country's language is not considered necessary.

The changing of these settings is slow and recognized only in some areas. Only after sending troops to Iraq and Afghanistan attention was finally paid to that increased deficit. However, the language and intercultural initiatives came here too late in order to meet these short- and long-term requirements. The likelihood of successful completion of a peace support operation should be seen through a fundamental cultural awareness which is far better than a short preparatory training before each posting abroad.

Planning with a view to interoperability is of fundamental importance if an integrated peace support operation should be crowned with success. In order to achieve (horizontal) interoperability among international actors, it is necessary to adapt organisational and cultural differences between the members of the military, the NGOs, the UN or other institutions and harmonize in order to achieve a mutual respect and equal partnership in connection with the planning and implementation of an operation. In addition, the manifold advantages and understanding of an integrated operation must be transferred into actions that are understood by the local population. This requires a focus on teaching local cultures.

The crucial point of a profound culture to the vertical interoperability is the involvement of the local population in a way to feel respected and treated as equal partners. For sincere respect and equal partnership between international actors and the local population make it necessary, that earlier actions are contextualized in conjunction with historical experience. In order to achieve and to improve effective cooperation with the local population, certain rules must be observed. By observing these rules, an integrated operation may support the link between the strategic, operational and tactical levels, which are necessary for the success of such a mission.



## Chapter 6 Empirical Study

### 6.1 Epistemological interest

Both at the Language Institute itself as well as in other departments of the Austrian Armed Forces, which have a direct relationship to language education, are discussions going on about different aspects of language education and its improvement. But even outside the area of responsibility often individuals feel called upon to comment the effectiveness, the usefulness etc. of the system. While in most cases they refer to the quantity or the utilization of existing staff and not on the quality and uniqueness, which is often given here. The promotion of multilingualism as an investment in human capital in times of crisis is nevertheless present in many minds. In some areas this will be implemented through concrete measures, but additional initiatives for establishing a deeper consciousness is required.

As Rück in her thesis could demonstrate conclusively (also on the basis of evidence of numerous foreign linguists) that "multilingual learners have in contrary to monolingual learners [...] a higher potential to Language Awareness".<sup>129</sup> Although this finding was made in foreign language teaching in schools, it cannot be projected on the job-related foreign language education or in the continuing education and training as part of tertiary education as well. Experiences have shown that language awareness is accompanied by a certain acceptance as soon as the communication skills level 2 has been reached according to NATO STANAG 6001 (Standardisation Agreement), which is similar to the B2 according to Common European Framework for Languages (CEFL). This is reinforced by a practical period of use, such as a foreign assignment in military administration, in a mission or a course participation in the target language country.

Language awareness depends very closely on personal motivation, which is not the subject of this thesis however, even though it would be a

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<sup>129</sup> Rück (2007), p. 51.

very powerful force multiplier for this purpose. Observations have shown that – the more "exotic" a language is which someone is interested in, the more intense will then try to learn this language. In particular, after the first period of time, where those who did it from an euphoric viewpoint, already dropped out. But this applies not only to languages of geographically distant countries such as Chinese or Arabic, but this also includes languages of some neighbouring countries like Czech, Slovak or Hungarian language. As most speakers of these nationalities who work in neighbouring countries (such as Austria or Germany), already speak German quite well, there is no need to have to convey own countrymen these languages at the level of communication skills. Coupled with the difficulties of learning one of these languages themselves, gives such languages the impression of certain isolation, and thus to be "exotic". With a good command of an "exotic" language such as Arabic, Chinese, Czech or Hungarian, moreover, in a discipline as the military is, not only does it occupy a valuable niche position, but may be beneficial for the career.

## 6.2 Research Approach

The empirical part of this thesis, concerning language skills, follows the quantitative-qualitative methodology of language research. The dichotomy of these research paradigms is sometimes described in the literature as inconsistent, misleading or as too vague and is therefore problematic. Therefore, in the foreign language research the term "explorative-interpretative" generated and called by Grothjahn versus "analytical nomological" became already common.<sup>130</sup> Under the analytical-nomological paradigm is understood "the verification of general possible hypotheses", in order to subsequently apply them to the reality. Characteristic of the exploratory-interpretative paradigm, however, is a "high degree of openness to the respective object" with the aim to develop categories, types or general hypotheses. However, the boundaries of the two paradigms are not always strictly separated from each other.

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<sup>130</sup> Grotjahn (1993), p. 228.

In the foreign language research the consensus prevails about the two paradigms that are to be seen as complementary, but can be joined together. There are already countless research studies that affect both multilingualism and interculturalism. In a predominant extent these works, however, are to be found in the civilian sector, especially in the educational and economic environment. Both topics have already been processed in connection with the military, almost hardly or not at all in the common context. Therefore it was a particular concern of mine, to combine the two topics in an even closer way.

Armed forces of many countries are compared to Austria structured not only very differently but also have due to the special national-political background, another range of tasks that must be met. Neutrality and non-alignment, maintaining the conscription or international obligations are just some of these factors, among which the topics of the Austrian Armed Forces need to be considered in more detail.

### 6.3 Research methodology: Questionnaire survey

The investigation by questionnaire includes the two topics "Multilingualism" and "Interculturality" and can be described as a typical research strategy. Such a method has become very common and uncontroversial. But in contrast to the usual procedure both elements, the exploratory-interpretative and analytical-nomological should come into play here.

The second most common way, in particular the carrying out of semi-structured interviews was for the following reason deliberately not used: In the interview soldiers of lower ranks – even if there was no superior-subordinate relationship – it seems likely that answers are given that appear "militarily desirable". Among other things, there is still a significant number of professional and militiamen (reserve and non-commissioned officers) who seek for another assignment abroad and therefore to be fear, too critical or negative in their comments. This appears with the written survey by questionnaire objectivity, as well as comparability to be more assured.

Privately conducted interviews with such a large number of test persons would hardly be possible due to time constraints. Even during the three days of the "check-out" after returning from a mission abroad, all repatriates were not available. Because of the many administrative matters, the medical discharge examination programme, the returning of equipment, the delivering of reports, a de-briefing, as well as the post-operation psychological survey (possible also consulting) there was not sufficient time for individual interviews, especially, when friends or relatives are waiting in front of the barracks to pick up their son, friend or relative. A concentrated conversation at this stage would also not be feasible.

#### 6.4 Structure of the questionnaire

The questionnaire, which was used in the study, comprises a total of 39 questions on 10 pages. In addition to the prefixed notion of a personal letter, brief background information on Austria's participation in peace support missions will be given. Furthermore, participants were informed about the goal and the purpose of this study, in particular to achieve an improvement in the announced linguistic and intercultural training and preparation. Notes, as the questionnaire is completed, will help avoid potential problems in the implementation.

The 39 questions were divided into the following three areas:

1. General questions (1-7)
2. Questions about multilingualism (8-26)
3. Questions about interculturality (27-39)

With the letter, the test persons should be convinced in the importance of this study and not to put down the questionnaire after the first few questions. The questionnaire should be filled out honestly and conscientiously till the end.

The anonymity that would have been really protected by not mentioning the name would have been thwarted by sending the questionnaire by email or via post office or by the presence of the author himself. Confidentiality and anonymous handling of the data test persons were guaranteed by a written note at the bottom of the letter. The written thanks in advance should also encourage the employees to participate in this survey.

## 6.5 Description of the Sample

The test persons surveyed include 138 exclusively male professional and militiamen between the age of 18 to 50 years and older. The piloting of the questionnaire was carried out in three variants:

1. Through the distribution of the "Association of Austrian Peacekeepers" (Vereinigung Österreichischer Peacekeeper – VÖP), this has a membership of around 2,000 persons. The composition of testees was brought for the present investigation was somewhat ambiguous, because among the members are on the one hand civilians who have no military background at all or in some cases here, never completed an assignment abroad. On the other hand, among them were soldiers whose mission abroad already dated back decades and the situation of the past with today's situation due to the repeated and substantial changes cannot even come close to being compared. In the absence of such a question after the last operation or mission no inferences and derivations could be made in some areas.
2. The questionnaire was also handed out to a part of the contingent after its return from the Golan Heights in Syria as part of the cyclic rotation. Due to a combat incident on the way to the airport in Damascus, in which two soldiers with gunshot wounds had to remain (but they received immediately medical treatment there), and due to the delay only 25 out of the 88 repatriates voluntarily participated in this questionnaire survey. Worth mentioning in this context was the fact that three female soldiers were part of the

contingent, but didn't want to be involved in the data collection. Even if it was not a research subject of this study, it would have been interesting to see whether there were gender differences or gender anomalies. The question here would be whether such a small number can ever be described as significant, and therefore allow serious and meaningful conclusions. This concern is further reinforced by the fact that most female soldiers involved in operations abroad in specialized applications are often deployed as military medical personnel.

3. By dispatching the questionnaire to officers who were personally known to the author and that he knew, have completed at least one or several assignments abroad. Therefore, the total anonymity was not really necessary.

## 6.6 Results

### 6.6.1 General

The question about the age (Question No. 1 "*How old are you?*") appears at first to have innocuous introduction character, but was made so deliberately, to give possible conclusions according to the age structure, for example, experiences or recommendations (in conjunction with Questions No. 6, 21, 22, 26, 30 and 31).

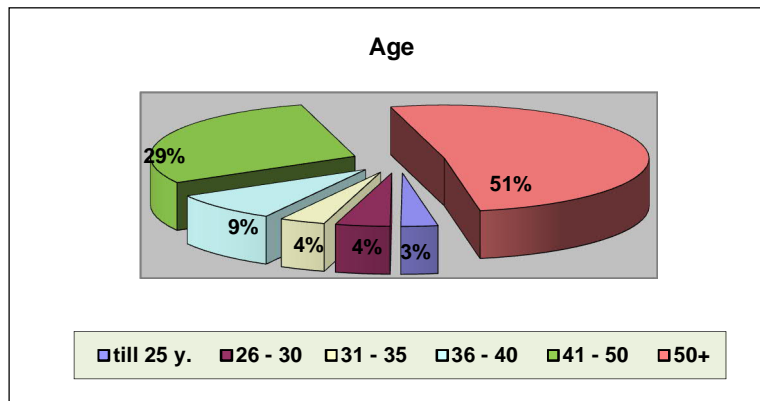


FIGURE 13: AGE STRUCTURE OF TEST PERSONS

The question about the function (Question No. 2 "What job did you have abroad?") was offered automatically after the return of questionnaires not only for comparison, but had to be used for selection. Due to the small number of lower military ranks (sergeants and corporals) and civilians, the two groups could not be taken into account the many other questions. In the absence of such significant derivations and conclusions this would not be very significant and expressive, even impossible in some areas.

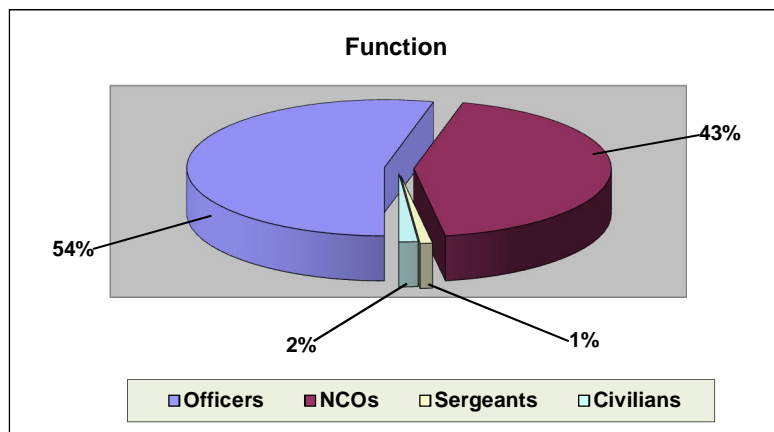


FIGURE 14: DISTINCTION OF SOLDIERS SERVING ABROAD

By Question No. 3 ("How often have you been in missions abroad?"), the number of missions of the test persons has been detected. Half of the testees, who have already completed more than three assignments, represent an extremely high number. Although the majority of the Austrian "peacekeepers" do not belong to the group of multiple peacekeepers, but this clearly shows that those test persons with multiple assignments represent a treasure trove of experience and are highly interesting persons for such a study.

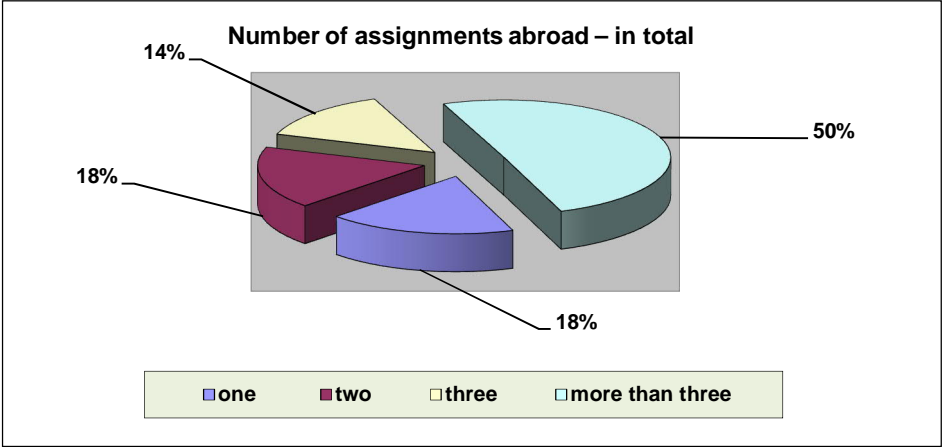


FIGURE 15: QUANTITY OF MISSIONS ABROAD 1



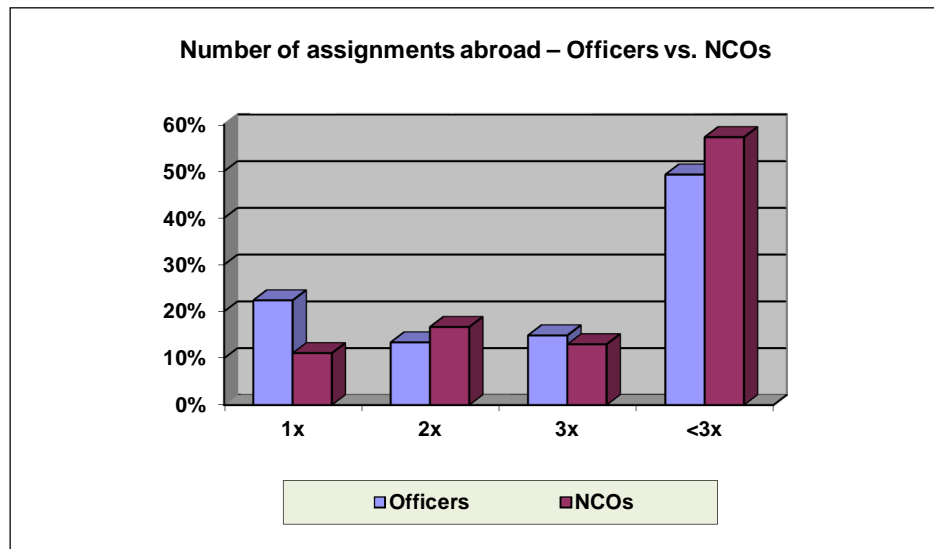


FIGURE 16: QUANTITY OF MISSIONS ABROAD 2

When asking about the motivation (Question No. 4 "What was your intention/motivation for participating in PSOs?") for foreign assignments, which remains in Austria on the voluntary basis, multiple answers were possible. Possible answers were: adventure, money, to meet people and country, to apply what we have learned and being trained for under combat conditions or, simply comradeship. The results showed notable differences between officers and NCOs: While officers have a high interest in other cultures, the financial incentive plays an important role for non-commissioned officers, sergeants and corporals.

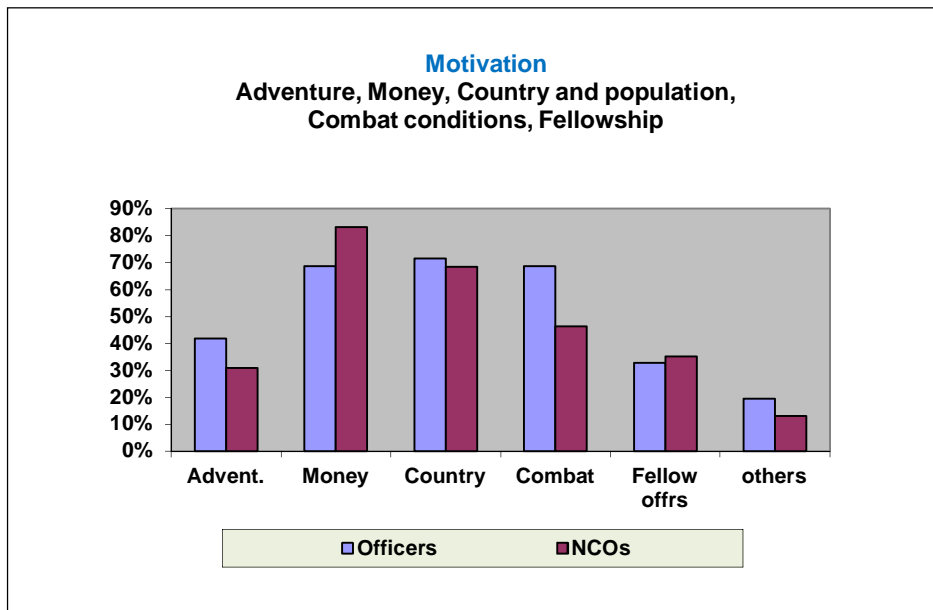


FIGURE 17: MOTIVATION FOR FOREIGN MISSIONS

Question No. 5 (*"For which organisations have you been in an operation abroad?"*) shows with 85% a still overwhelming participation in United Nations peace keeping missions but already followed by NATO-led operations, where 39.1% of the test persons participated. Only 4.3% have contributed to OSCE mission abroad. This is probably related to the small number of such activities of the OSCE, which is usually limited to monitoring missions in order to support or monitor elections.

Question No. 6 (*"If you could choose where you would like to work in a foreign assignment"*): The evaluation of this question revealed an interesting comparison between officers and non-commissioned officers: While only 4.5% of the officers want to serve in a purely Austrian contingent, this figure reached at the NCOs level the fourfold. In the sub-question for a service in an internationally mixed contingent the figure is almost evened out (37.3% versus 37.0%). Totally in contrast was the case at the next part of the question for a purely international contingent: Only 37.0% of non-commissioned officers stated that they want to serve in such

a contingent, but 47.8% of the officers. This shows a clear trend towards internationalization, but also to more openness in cooperation with members of other armed forces. Of course, the consistently better English skills of officers make the situation easier for them.

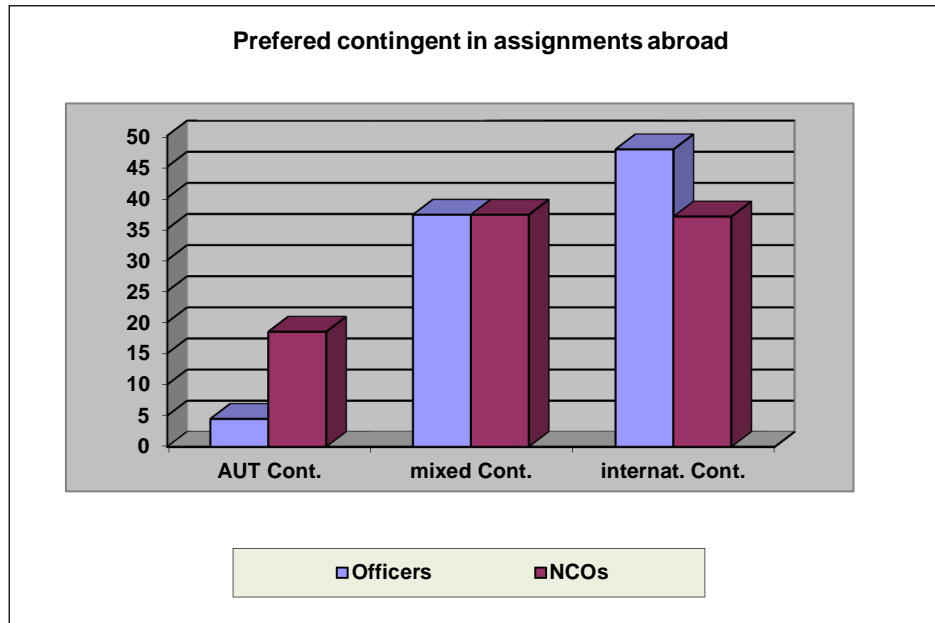


FIGURE 18: HOW "INTERNATIONAL" A CONTINGENT HAS TO BE ABROAD?

Another confirmation of these results are based on the next Question No. 7 (*"In what unit/posting did you serve in PSOs?"*): 56.7% of the officers have served in a headquarters (of an observer mission, a brigade or a multinational force) or 55.2% have served in a battalion staff, whereas only 42.6 % and 35.2% of non-commissioned officers.

The figure of only 3.0% (officers) and 5.65% (non-commissioned officers) in participating as observers for monitoring elections reaffirmed the small number of such specific missions.

## 6.6.2 Linguistic area

A remarkable feature of the Question No. 8 (*"What proficiency language level have you reached or completed in English before your deployment?"*) is the fact that 3 officers (4.5%) with no skills and 1 officer (1.5%) with very little skills in English were sent abroad. In the case of non-commissioned officers and sergeants, the percentage is even higher: 7 non-commissioned officers and sergeants (13.0%) had no skills and 11 non-commissioned officers and sergeants (20.4%) had some knowledge of the English language.

19.4% and 74.6% of the officers had "very good" or excellent language skills, whereas 25.9% of non-commissioned officers and sergeants had "good" and 38.9% of them had "excellent" language skills.

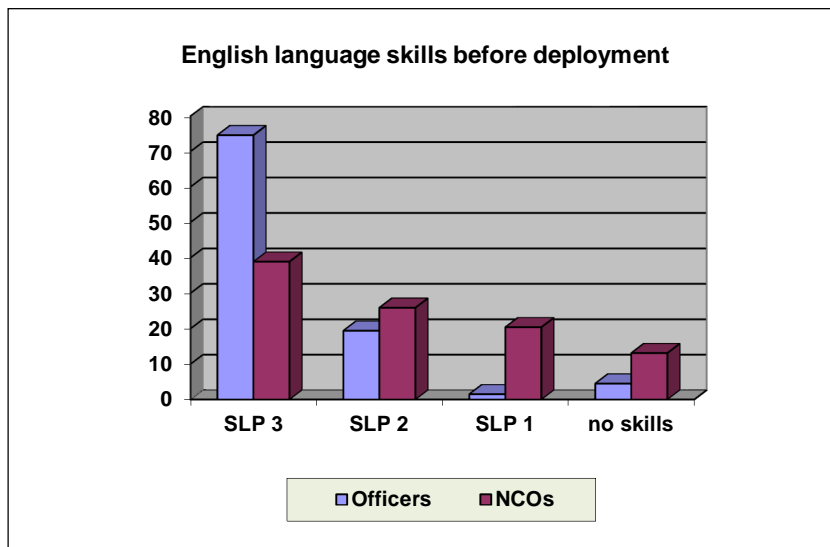


FIGURE 19: ENGLISH SKILLS VARY WIDELY BETWEEN THE TWO GROUPS

Asking about the biggest problems in the language test Question No. 9 (*"What part of the language test has caused you the most difficulties?"*) the tested persons should have given an answer about their deficits in language learning to take appropriate measures to meet ascertained shortcomings. As a result, it was interesting and a surprise that

not the writing comprehension (what is often assumed) was the biggest problem, but the listening comprehension. In both groups of the test persons the figures were twice as high as that of the writing comprehension.

The use of English language in contact situations with other foreign soldiers was content of Question No. 10 (*"With what kind of contacts could you use your language skills?"*). They could choose among the most common possible communication situations: telephone calls, briefings, unprepared duty communication situations, everyday communication situations in general, official meetings, informal meetings, communication situations with the local population or authorities and others). 79.1% of the tested officers and 68.5% of the non-commissioned officers and sergeants quoted, that they have regular contacts with other foreign soldiers.

Contacts with the local population or with local authorities, where they had to speak English, had 82.1% of the officers and 70.4% of the non-commissioned officers and sergeants.

Although the figures are higher concerning officers, the percentage of contacts as whole, in which language skills are required, is very high anyway.

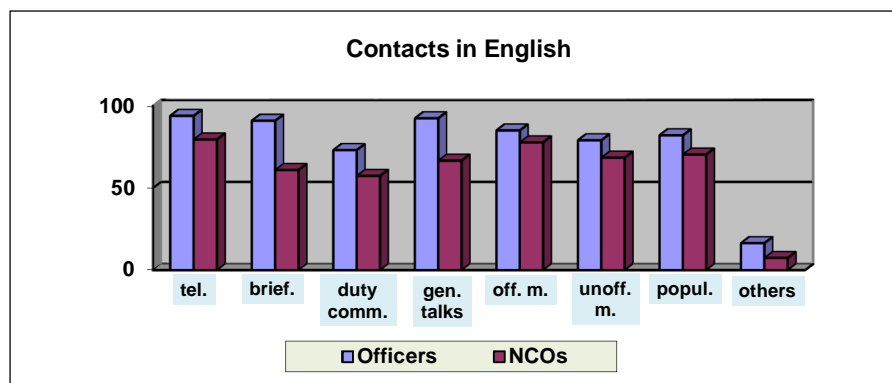


FIGURE 20: CONTACTS WITH THE NECESSARY LANGUAGE SKILLS

An interesting conclusion revealed Question No. 11 (*"How do you estimate your English language skills in fulfilling your working tasks during your Tour of duty abroad?"*) of personal assessment of English skills at the four skill areas (writing, listening, speaking, reading) in the function during the assignment abroad: 74, 6% of the tested officers who were provided with a valid certificate of level 3 (excellent) in English posted abroad indicated (by skills) to be fluent:

- 53.7% in listening
- 62.7% in reading
- 59.7% in speaking
- 53.7% in writing

The situation with the non-commissioned officers and sergeants was similar: 38.9% of them had a Standardized Language Proficiency (SLP) level 3 prior to their posting. The figures in detail:

- 33.3% in listening
- 35.2% in reading
- 35.2% in speaking
- 22.2% in writing

The question of how useful language (survival) booklets and communication fibulas of the respective mission areas created for many years by the Language Institute are Question No. 13 (*"Did the so-called Language Survival Booklet help you during your Tour of duty abroad?"*), has to be shown differentiated in the evaluation and assessment, since two thirds of the subjects stated that they have not been provided with such a booklet neither has it been available at all. This maybe can be explained by the fact that the majority of surveyed persons were older than fifty years. So, they were participating in operations abroad at a time, where such language fibulas did not exist yet. With the remaining test

persons, there are some major differences with one exception between officers and non-commissioned officers or sergeants: 18% of the officers and 39% of the NCOs/sergeants indicated that those booklets were very helpful. For 68% (officers) and 60% (NCOs), they were occasionally helpful and for 15% (both groups) not helpful. This confirms the provision and distribution of those language booklets is an excellent measure for ensuring first contacts with local population to create a smooth and positive atmosphere. Of course and, this was shown as well, all these booklets still have a certain potential for development.

Question No. 12 (*"What kind of language skills other than English, you have yet?"*) was asking for additional language skills. The result brought amazing results: In total language skills of 18 different languages were given (multiple answers were possible). The answers revealed the following list (ranked by frequency, in brackets the number of persons):

French (35)	Russian (18)	Italian (16)	Spanish (11)
Arabic (18)	Serbian/Croatian (7)	Hungarian (4)	Greek (4)
Turkish (3)	Albanian (2)	Slovak (2)	Bosnian (1)
Swedish (1)	Slovenian (1)	Afrikaans (1)	Polish (1)
Urdu/Hindi (1)	Malay/Indonesian (1)		

69 (59%) tested persons out of 139 subjects reported of having knowledge of one or more foreign languages other than English. Some of these details were given according to their own assessments ("school knowledge", "obtained during an extended stay abroad", "fluent" or "biliteracy"), partly according to official standardized exams ("Level 1, 2 or 3" according to STANAG 6001 or level A, B or C according to CEFL). Stated information, e.g., "some common phrases, proverbs and catchwords", was not taken into account here.

According to the EU programme, receptive skills in foreign languages are also of importance. It may be sufficient in several situations to understand a text (in a newspaper, on a poster or inscriptions itself) at least passively.

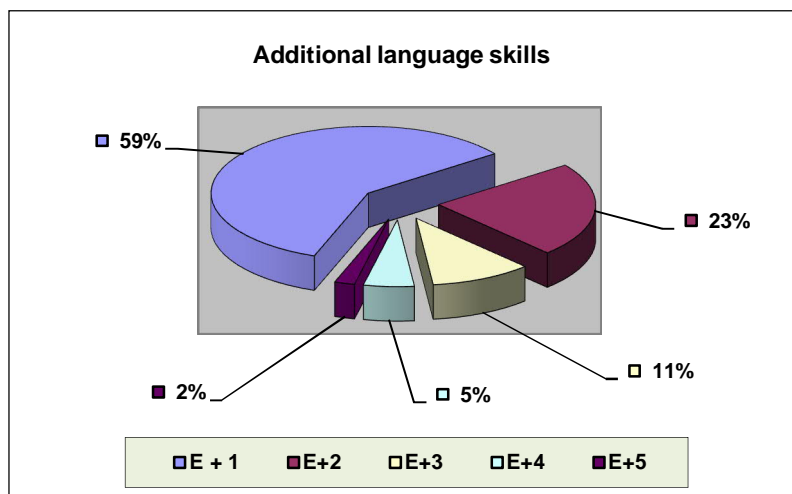


FIGURE 21: THE NUMBER OF SOLDIERS WITH ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE SKILLS IS REMARKABLY HIGH

Amazing are the answers to Question No. 14 (*"Could you use other languages other than English in an official or informal situation abroad?"*), where they almost coincided with those of question No. 12. An impressive proof is the fact that English is the lingua franca, but not exclusively. Results show that over 42% of all test persons (47.8% of officers and 38.9% of non-commissioned officers and sergeants) occasionally to frequently communicated in other languages than English. 58 (42%) out of the 139 subjects stated, they could use their additional language skills during their assignment abroad. Multiple answers to this question were possible.

The difference of 11 test persons, who reported that they could not benefit from their knowledge of foreign languages, was probably because they had no opportunity during the foreign assignment, to contact speakers



of the target language country. Greek knowledge is almost certainly in Cyprus a great advantage; in Chad however, it will be of little use.

However, it was not surveyed, whether those language skills are of native nature or obtained by learning, e.g., in schools. Furthermore, due to the lack of a concrete question about applicability of language skills, it was not asked for, in which areas (local population, local authorities, members of other nations or international organisations) language skills other than English were used.

It would also have been interesting whether and to what extent the relevant non-English language skills could be applied. French, e.g., is beside the national language the second official language in those countries, where Austria deployed contingents such as Lebanon, Syria, Chad or Mali. It is the same situation with Russian in Caucasus countries or Greek and Turkish on Cyprus. The official language in Syria, Lebanon, Mali (besides Bambara), Jordan, Egypt and Chad is Arabic. On the other hand, the knowledge of the indicated languages Swedish, Slovak, Polish, Slovenian and Hungarian can be presumably used in communicational contacts only with members when of other UN contingents or international organisations.

Asking about the importance of English language skills Question No. 15 (*"What kind of linguistic field was of great importance for you during your Tour of duty?"*) in the respective function, 17.9% of all officers indicated that this was of average importance, but for 82.1% of the tested officers it was of high to very high indication of importance.

In connection with Question No. 18 (*"What language other than English, you would still like to learn or improve?"*) testees were asked about their own needs and wishes concerning multilingualism. Amazing answers and results came to light: More than 50% of the surveyed officers have keen interest in French and one in four is interested in Italian, Spanish or Arabic – or more of them. And one in five expressed a desire to learn a Balkan language or improve already existing knowledge. For non-commissioned officers and sergeants, the question yielded completely different results. The interest in French, Spanish and Italian was in some cases far to low, in contrary to the officers, non-commissioned officers that

have a great interest in Arabic or in a language of Balkan countries (29.6% vs. 25.4% and 22.2% vs. 20.9%).

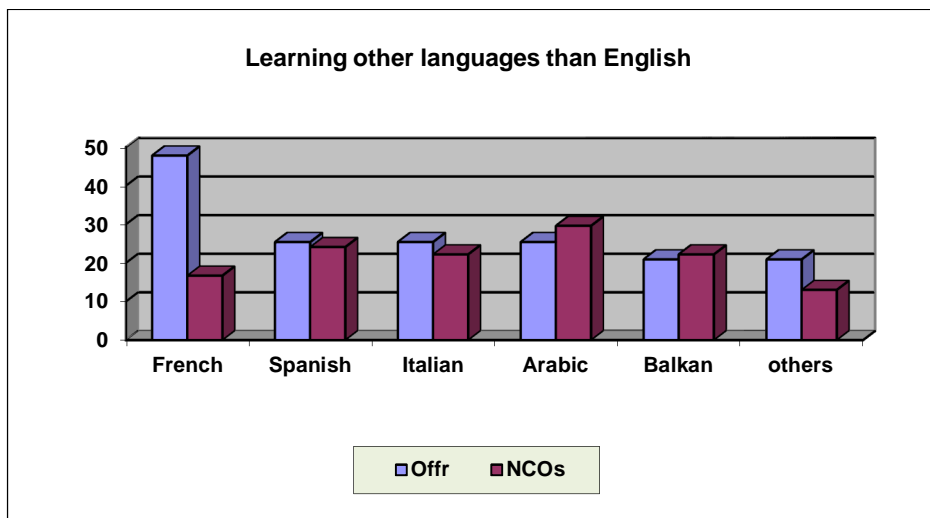


FIGURE 22: THE DESIRE FOR OTHER LANGUAGES IS STRONG

The results of Question No. 15 (Importance of specific English language skills), No. 17 (Reasons of poor language skills), No. 19 (Achievement of language levels), No. 21 (Course recommendation), No. 22 (Reason for the choice of language training), No. 23 (Teacher-based language training), No. 24 (Interest in ICT for language training) and No. 25 (Focus on specific use of ICT in language teaching) should especially show the areas in which language training can be optimized and whether the surveyed soldiers are open to new and innovative (ICT) methods.

Question No. 26 (*"How have you been trained to be prepared for the [military] mission and your job/duties?"*) showed that over 51% of the tested soldiers 'fully' or 'somewhat' agreed that the information they were given by their superiors, 72.4% were also provided by information of comrades who had worked abroad before. Surprising is the answer that almost 28% of the tested officers didn't get any information or very little about the tasks and/or area of operation.

However, alarmingly high is the number of those (38.4%) who fully agreed or rather, that the information on the mission were minimal, and more than 30% even said that information were inadequate.

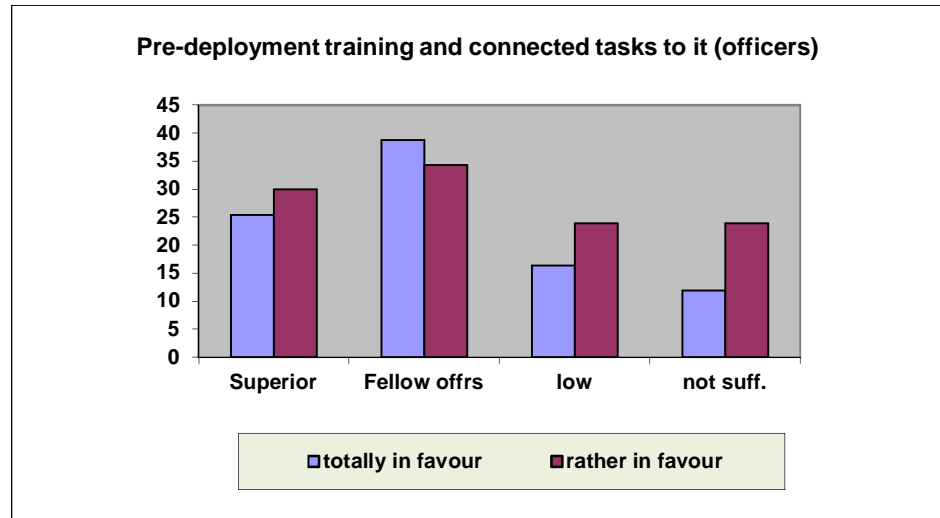


FIGURE 23: THE OPINION GETTING INFORMATION WAS PARTIALLY NEGATIVE.

### 6.6.3 Intercultural area

Question No. 27 (*"Briefly describe what you understand by interculturality"*) should be applicable if the test persons know about the concept of interculturality and communication and, if so, to express it in their own words. The result of this question was quite clear: A significant part, in particular 42 persons (30%) could (or would) not give an answer to this question and additional 10% gave the impression that they have only little knowledge at this issue. Answers like "Interculturality is the language of the country of assignment", "Interculturality is the general handling of different ethnicities" or "Private and military understanding in operations abroad" bear witness to the only vague idea of it. By contrast, the remaining 60% of the testees proved with their answers, their understanding of the core of interculturality. Although the vast majority of testees answered the electronic questionnaires alone, many answers were almost identical. Only a small group of volunteers has answered the

questionnaire immediately after repatriation from the area of operations. By the presence of the author the individuality of each person was still ensured. The indication during the introduction of the questionnaire handling, that "copying" of answers does not affect future assignments and does not support a correct analysis of the survey, was sufficient for the sole completion of the questionnaire.

To illustrate the understanding of 'Interculturality' the most given answers are listed here: "Interculturality is... "

- "...the coming together of people from different origin and different characteristics"
- "...interaction between members of different cultures"
- "...a peaceful coexistence of different cultures with mutual tolerance"
- "...communication with members of other cultures"
- "...co-existence with people of other countries, cultures and religions"
- "...interaction of various cultures for collective achievement of objectives"
- "...the ability to adapt to a foreign culture to communicate and relate to"
- "...interaction of different cultures, including non-verbal forms"
- "...understanding of cultural differences"
- "...to understand and respect customs and practices and the way of life of others"

Regarding to (intercultural) pre-deployment training Question No. 28 (*"How have you been prepared for the area of operation, in particular country, population, political situation?"*) the situation does not look much better: 24.6% of the testees stated that the mission preparation was extensive and sufficient, for 52.2% pre-deployment

training comprised only some basic data and 21% of the tested persons rated it as low to inadequate.

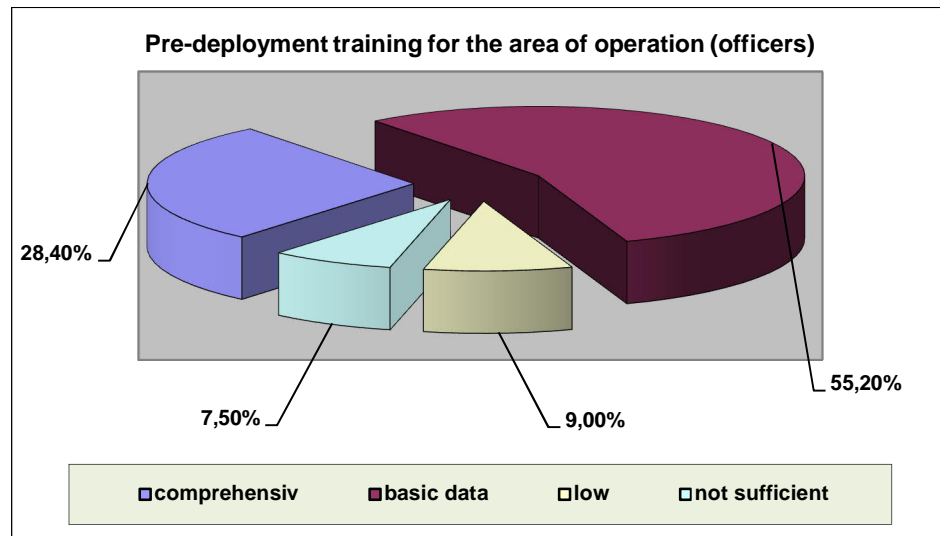


FIGURE 24: PRE-DEPLOYMENT TRAINING HAS STILL GREAT POTENTIAL FOR DEVELOPMENT

The answers to this question coincide partially with the results, which Zilian brought in his thesis about similar issues. In comparison with non-commissioned officers and sergeants (51.9%), officers try much more intensely (77.6%) to inform themselves about the area of operation Question No. 29 (*"Did you inform yourself about the country, population and tasks before you were sent abroad?"*).

Question No. 30 (*"Do you think that in the pre-deployment training should be more emphasis on cultural similarities and differences?"*) reflects not only the result of the question No. 28, but enhances it even further: Nearly 9 out of 10 officers were in the spectrum of possible answers between "a little more wouldn't hurt" and "definitely more".

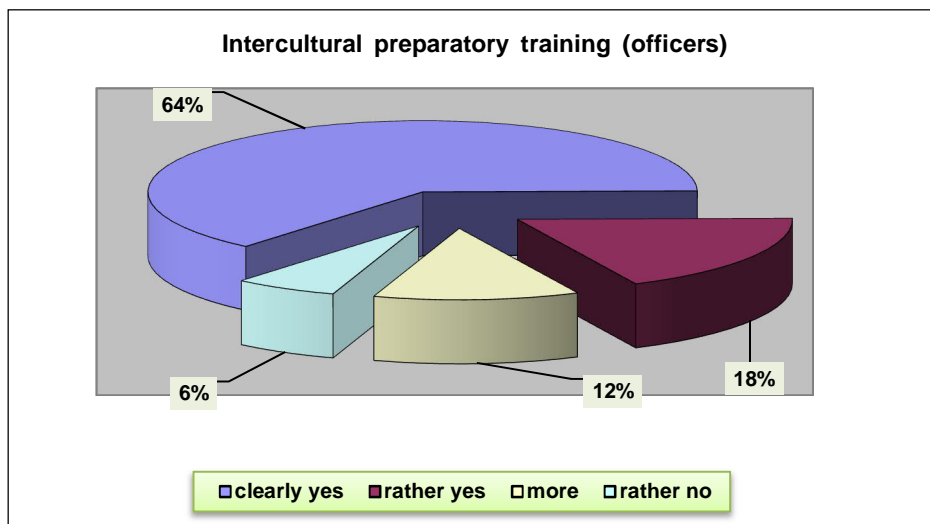


FIGURE 25: FOR MOST INTERCULTURAL PRE-DEPLOYMENT TRAINING IS NOT SUFFICIENT

The importance of the four specified sub-regions of Intercultural Training in Question No. 31 (*"What is important for you in intercultural training?"*) differs only in one point a little more from the others: Do's and Don'ts (95.5%), Regional geography and culture (89.6%) and Political Background of the target country (91%) are almost the same, the dealing with stereotypes; however, 52.2% is regarded as less important.

Question No. 32 (*"What is your opinion about cooperation and coexistence with soldiers of other nations?"*) should investigate, how Austrian soldiers are set towards multi-national co-operation: Results were clear: 100% of the officers and 98% of the non-commissioned officers and sergeants are (at least) positive of cooperation with members of other armed forces, for the majority cooperation and coexistence are even desired.

This is also the result of Question No. 34 (*"How often did you have contact with people of other nations in your position?"*), where the frequency of contacts with members of other nations was asked. Almost all (98.5%) indicated that there were such contacts every day. It is

therefore probably in the nature of things that when there are daily contacts with other nationalities - this is considered positive - both on duty and off-duty. Less than half of the testees (46.3%) had formed friendships and maintained contacts even after their assignments abroad.

## 6.6 Summary

This case study should serve as an example to reinforce my goals, associated with this work, and to underpin. They should also help us to understand, to facilitate the most important aspects of multiculturalism and promote. Nevertheless, the study does not represent the end point, but on the contrary it is intended to stimulate further research activities. The culture and sense of identity was already widely lit and from different angles and analyzed. Nevertheless, I believe that there is still room for improvement here. Neither the results of this survey nor the recommendations resulting therefore, shall replace the current training of soldiers in the armed forces, which are intended for peace support operations, but they complement and improve, if necessary. In some areas, they would (still) be implemented.

I also found (concerning personal and national, in part, the military culture) in some areas of the study out, that particularly in the base area, the understanding of their own culture has so far been neglected. This is the tolerant attitude of self-discovery and reflection, which is necessary for the safe and effective acting in military operations. In addition, the study provides an insight into different (intercultural) communication situations, which Austrian professional soldiers in bilateral and multinational and multilingual groups face. The analysis of this confirmed some suspicions, but this also implies new challenges (yet) unknown deficits. Many soldiers participating in international exercises in multilateral organisations have different cultural backgrounds. If the military leadership does take this into consideration, the achievement of common objectives could be hampered. An appropriate and professional training is not self-evident, but a necessity that should the commanders and supervisors to be aware of. The success of an operation depends namely mainly from subordinates from which to understand the cultural complexity, accept, internalize and apply.

## Chapter 7 Summary of Conclusions and Recommendations

Most peace-support operations, whether carried out by the United Nations, NATO, the European Union or the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, are multilingual. The trend and intention is to let as many member and partner countries as possible to participate in peace support operations. Many countries represent also many languages and cultures. Many current locations and regions with their different languages, dialects and cultures characterize such missions. Peace forces are therefore, not only marked by its multilingual character, such as internationally composed headquarters and units, but also through task-related contacts with the local population. Therefore, such operations are to be considered at several levels.

The working language in United Nations peace support operations is exclusively English. NATO led operations, even though both English and French are NATO official languages, are also mostly conducted in English. French units were originally obliged by law, to use French, wherever it is possible. However, the extremely high costs of translators and interpreters, caused language skills to improve massively. Therefore, for French soldiers deployed abroad, the working language English is not a big problem anymore.

Russian continues to be used by military personnel of Eastern European countries as a lingua franca – as long as they have learned this language in school. For the younger generation, who has English as a compulsory foreign language in school, Russian is not an issue any more.

While English is the common working language in military communications, it causes various Anglophone accents and diverse language strategies in order to be still able to work together effectively. In addition to linguistic diversities also cultural differences are of major challenge. Peace support operations are linguistically far more complex than any other type of armed conflict. They affect contacts with two opposing sides, but almost by definition they relate to armed forces that are independent of combatants and therefore able to act impartially. Such peace forces are generally placed from several countries where the



participating soldiers often belong to different cultures than the local population of the area of operations. At the same time peace support operations depend much more on languages as "normal" conflicts, as they have been engaged to enter into a dialogue with the conflict parties or to motivate them to such among themselves. The relationships within a broader civilian community should be encouraged. Interventions by the United Nations, the European Union or NATO have during or after conflicts in general, the redesign of the region as a goal. In a peace mission, the pursuit of solutions with other means is much more pronounced and the importance of effective communication with the local population and local authorities is therefore of greater value.

However, language differences are not just a matter between parties, but also among members of peace forces. Soldiers are required to regularly collaborate with others, with whom they share neither language nor culture. Operations, in which only one country or a few soldiers of the same language participate, will be no longer carried out. Multinational operations involve close cooperation of soldiers with different language and the challenge to achieve a continuity, which in a military context is expressed as interoperability. Although there are six official United Nations languages and two official languages of NATO, English has become established as the working language in international military organisations and structures. The use of English as a lingua franca for the command structures and the working methods of the military, is indeed of immense importance, but does not reach far into the social life of the soldiers. Within its own environment, the language of the own culture is maintained and socialized with one's own community.

Undoubtedly, the linguistic diversity most likely still appears in higher command posts or headquarters, where the different units and sub-units at any given time are represented. But it is also striking that the majority of social interactions between members of the same linguistic community take place.

English is not always the common working language in missions and operations, where e.g. French troops are deployed. France participated in the mission UNPROFOR (United Nations Protection Force) and, France was the largest troop-contributing country or 'lead nation' in the operation

MINURCAT (Mission des Nations Unies en République et au Tchad Centrafricaine) in Africa. French is publicly also spoken in Belgium, Canada and Switzerland and Luxembourg as the second official language. In Tunisia and Morocco you can find nationwide French native speakers. With the absence of France from the NATO command structures from 1996 to 2009, the use of French for communication was abandoned among NATO contingents. After the return of France to the command structures French soldiers were practically forced to use English as the language of communication. In this situation, French soldiers were exposed to the tension between language-political and operational priorities. Because of the high costs of interpreters and translators, which would have been paid to both sides to the superior as well as to the subordinate units, the French side decided to train comprehensively their soldiers in English. With the achievement of appropriate language capacities in English another discrepancy appeared: linguistic differences concealed other differences, in particular the military culture in certain countries, for example, the concepts of "Command and Control", which cannot easily be translated from one language to another. Concerning the recommendations given below, all of them are developed for to improve the teaching and learning of foreign languages within the Austrian Armed Forces as well as to raise the awareness and sensitivity for interculturality to achieve intercultural competence.

## 7.1 New scientific results

1. The analysis of primary and secondary sources, based on personal experiences and field investigation the thesis shows the interdependence of language and culture in peace support operations, the necessity of intercultural and linguistic competency and the low effectiveness of specific military training prior to deployment.
2. The specification of the broad spectrum of the two research fields' factors and the establishment of a self-developed three-dimensional model demonstrate the close interplay of multilingualism and intercultural competence in theory and in practice. By studying and analyzing historical (Austro-Hungarian army) and modern examples

the thesis justified the incomparableness of those armed forces with the current situation in the Austrian Armed Forces.

3. The thesis proves the need of change in the way of thinking and approaching the "new" peace support operations. By doing this, it demonstrates a tool to boost the security level of the military personnel involved in these operations. With several recommendations the thesis provides alternatives and additional tools to the current system. Due to the new security challenges, laid down in several official documents, this system must be re-evaluated. With this change the leadership of the Austrian Armed Forces can make steps to establish professional capabilities and furthermore, more operational interoperability under the patronage of UN, NATO, EU or OSCE-led missions and operations.
4. On the basis of a comprehensive overview the thesis provided a complex picture on this topic by examining with scientific thoroughness and proved its importance in today's commitment of Austria's contribution to peace support operations. Furthermore it suggested making some modifications in the current Austrian training programs, simultaneously it also illustrated that a comprehensive intercultural and language training reform can only be carried out by a profound concept and a number of specific measurements at all levels and different services and branches. The thesis provides further recommendations, alternatives and tools to the current system that would improve these soft skills and increase its effectiveness.

In my dissertation, I have tried to deal critically with both the theoretical (and practical) issues of intercultural competence and multilingualism. I have succeeded in doing, determine the connections between theory and practice, to investigate and evaluate. Since some of these interfaces have been so far, revealed not, or in a still insufficient extent, I would thus reach an awareness or consciousness change, especially in the political and military leadership.

In the field of multiculturalism, I could not handle all problem areas, especially the relationship between the general organisational culture, military culture and society, and between foreign languages and identity in the international arena. Here are broad areas of research ahead of us who wait their processing to enable our soldiers to be able to better and more effectively perform their daily work in the framework of a peace support operation. These possible deficits must be identified, analyzed and eliminated.

The increasingly strong mix of international organisations in the context of peace support operations is a fact. Based on this multinational mix and suspected deficits socio-cultural and socio-linguistic questions were asked in this survey. The results and recommendations are intended not only to improve the immediate preparation for use, but to bring about a comprehensive approach at all levels and for all groups of people. This requires awareness of the military leadership, without which realization is impossible.

With the general military training and committed knowledge of the English language certainly a first and good base was created. However, each mission is unique in itself and to assess specifically at a possible participation. Here it is important to consider not only the military aspects, the specific cultural differences and the linguistic peculiarities of the use of space. These new challenges is so early and to wear as quickly as possible into account. This is called the "duality of complexity" – task and adaptation. This usually comes through the interoperability of a multinational military formation expressed. Conflicts due to misunderstandings and confusion can be avoided by appropriate training and conflict resolution. This extensive training and the acquisition of profound cultural knowledge and a minimum level of communication and conflict management, additionally to the current training is extremely time-consuming. Therefore, the recommendation was made to conduct this training in modules and outside the immediate mission preparation.

## 7.2 Recommendation 1: Introduction of a Military Language and Intercultural Portfolio

### 7.2.1 Civilian Portfolio

In the civilian educational environment<sup>131</sup> there are currently three versions of such a portfolio available:

- Course portfolio: In such a portfolio documents, materials and certificates of a (usually single) course will be collected;
- Portfolio as a proficiency file: includes the learning biography in order to document the development of the learner. This folder contains materials or documents in a certain order to be used as test, evaluation or showcase portfolio;
- Portfolio as a "planning and optimizing file": includes certificates, job descriptions, awards, confirmation letter of attended language learning activities to plan personal learning strategies and/or to possibly improve personal job seeking.

Distinguishing features of a portfolio are the development of a systematic learning strategy, the reflection and evaluation of oneself, the learning content and learning experiences. Therefore, portfolio work goes far beyond merely collecting and storing documents. Actually, it is a process that begins with the definition of the relationship towards collecting the documentation and continues with the selecting of these documents for the portfolio. Then, the reflection and the resulting measures and activities for new learning objectives are done. The presentation of the final portfolio then forms the end, whereby this presents only a snapshot at a particular time. Portfolio work should actually support lifelong learning (LLL) and promote the capacity for self-assessment.

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<sup>131</sup> Portfolios exist also as Financial, Marketing, Design, Arts portfolios or in the field of information and communication technology.

### **7.2.2 Military Portfolio**

A civilian language portfolio such as the European Language Portfolio (ELP), focuses primarily on the promotion of multilingualism, mobility and reflection on the school level. On the contrary, the Military Language and Intercultural Portfolio (MILLIP) goes far beyond the civilian portfolio. While the (civilian) "Euro Pass" supports as part of the job seeking European portfolio, the MILLIP pursues primarily the (foreign) operational capability. Only with the planned implementation and termination of temporary employment contracts such a portfolio may also be helpful in finding a civilian workplace. While in the Austrian Armed Forces prevails the voluntary principle for foreign missions, promoting mobility is of minor importance. Only with application of several interested parties or candidates for one and the same foreign function can this come to fruition. An individual is indirectly forced however, because soldiers will only be given a permanent employment when they have served in an assignment abroad. In these cases, such a portfolio acquires a more important value. Basically however, it can be stated that this Military Language and Intercultural Portfolio combines education and military.

If in the civilian sector, the self-assessment should also serve to apply for a job than there is a risk of not being very "honest" and stating more than what is actually present in knowledge and skills. Through the mandatory foreign language training of all professional soldiers, the NATO military standard for languages (STANAG 6001) follows the detection of (structured, formal and standardized) acquired language skills, and not only of the English language. Due to the military hierarchy, almost all foreign language activities can be confirmed by the direct and permanent or temporarily allocated superiors. This not only achieves greater transparency in the description of qualifications, but it may also give certain objectivity.

Concerning foreign languages in this respect only a rudimentary basic approach in the form of personal legal administration of language training activities in the personnel file of the relevant staff through the so-called personnel department exists. In this personal file all the entered data and facts are relevant for the career. Typically, this includes courses that end with an examination and thus may be for a future or other higher posts of interest. Conveying refresher seminars, trainings, conference or symposium

participations, both domestically and abroad, to language-specific events, are not always and not automatically included in this act. The situation is similar in the intercultural field: In the personnel file, the respective participation in missions is recorded. However, there is no substantive specification or personal description about it.

Based on the European Language Portfolio,<sup>132</sup> which also contains options for introducing intercultural aspects, the MILLIP should be structured adult-oriented on one hand, and provide a special focus on intercultural aspects on the other hand.<sup>133</sup> The multilingual and multi-cultural competency is defined in the Common European Framework as

"The ability to use languages for the purposes of communication and to take part in intercultural interaction, where a person is understood to be a social actor, who has gradually different skills in several languages and experiences of several cultures. However, this is not seen as levelling or juxtaposition of distinct competences, but rather as a complex or even mixed competence on which the user has access".<sup>134</sup>

Many professional soldiers, especially officers, may have in their careers a number of foreign language and intercultural contacts. As examples the following can be mentioned here:

- Language training activities in the form of courses and seminars, either by course completion or confirmation of attendance. In specialized courses or those at a higher level such courses can also be carried out with international participation and are mostly conducted in English;
- Participation in relevant professional training abroad (often in a foreign language);
- Visits of foreign delegations or company of delegations from abroad;

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<sup>132</sup> <http://elp.ecml.at> [27 06 2016].

<sup>133</sup> The European Language Portfolio consists of three parts: 1. The Language Passport, 2. The Language Biography and 3. The Dossier.

<sup>134</sup> In: Common European Framework for Languages, Chapter 8.1.

- Participation in multinational exercises at home and abroad, which are usually conducted in English;
- Giving briefings to foreign guests at home or giving lectures abroad in a foreign language
- Possibilities of interpreting or translation (usually at a higher level) by interpreting speeches of visitors or translating documents and records
- Journalistic contributions (comments, essays, articles etc.) in a foreign language, either in a domestic or foreign journal
- Regular communication; (in writing and speaking) due to the function, for example as a Defence attaché, Chief protocol, Researcher or Language teaching staff

The Military Language and Intercultural Portfolio (MILLIP) should

- stimulate both the intercultural learning and the learning of foreign languages
- encourage foreign assignments
- document linguistic and intercultural skills
- enhance the understanding of other cultures and languages
- promote independent learning
- enable self-assessment
- help to plan the own learning progress, to document it and to reflect on
- help to describe language and intercultural experiences
- inform other interested parties of their own experiences and skills
- provide a linguistic and intercultural proof when changing jobs



- offer superiors the opportunity to agree on learning objectives to meet individual needs, to assess differentiated services and offer a language or intercultural training, coordinate or carry it out
- allow organisations or institutions the possibility to use linguistic or intercultural resources better and to learn language and intercultural skills and to recognize when it's necessary to apply them (for example in job applications)

The MILLIP is not based on linguistic and communication services and skills only, but also on intercultural experiences. This portfolio thus represents a contribution to the promotion of tolerance, and respects other cultures. But it also offers the opportunity to reflect on experiences and lessons learned and to put them with other into relation and compare. The MILLIP is not only limited to the general working language English. On the contrary, it should also encourage learning additional languages. In this context, however, a rethinking is required: it will demand from the students a higher self-responsibility than before. There is more time to invest and they need to acquire methods to realize this. Learners also need to find out which types of learners they are and what learning techniques are the most appropriate to achieve the desired success.



Leaving family and country is for many soldiers a challenging situation.  
(Photo: Bundesheer)

The aim of MILLIP is to promote multilingualism at individual and organisational level. It must be ensured, for example, through accurate description and explanation, to grasp all of one's own experiences, knowledge, skills and competences in this portfolio and to make it comprehensible.

The MILLIP therefore has to comprise the following parts:

- Introduction
- Status quo
- Language certificates (as evidence of achieved performance levels)
- Certificates from the intercultural field (e.g. of a course or seminar)
- Language learning experiences (at home and abroad)
- Language learning goals
- Intercultural experiences

- Intercultural Learning Outcomes
- Comments and suggestions

A "bullet-list" should serve to document the progress of language and intercultural acquisition to reflect and evaluate, together with a coach. Primarily this assessment serves the learners themselves, and does not constitute an evaluation tool.

The descriptors, especially those of STANAG 6001, describe those language skills that have been either already achieved or to be achieved. Similarly, the intercultural objectives either determined by the learners themselves or have been agreed with the superior. The descriptors are designed to help learners to plan their further learning steps. In contrast to the European Language Portfolio, where it serves the self-assessment, in the military descriptors follow language exams where the results are documented in a certificate.

The MILLIP is therefore a personal proofed evidence of proficiency and experience of acquired knowledge, skills, abilities and competencies which are documented and reflected. In the best case, these skills and competences, when not provided with an official certificate, can be accepted and recognized.

### 7.3 Recommendation 2: Institutionalizing of linguistic support at the strategic, operational and tactical level

At the strategic level it should be noted that many international actors, states and organisations have decided to take action against global crime, terrorism etc. As "hot spots" the Middle East, the Balkans and the Caucasus region are still designated. But also in many Central African countries, there is terror and civil war. Despite the so-called "Arab Spring" in several Maghreb states there is still no peace in a single country of this region. In many cases, it has generated a vacuum of power where other

actors and grouping have suddenly seen a chance to come into power. Conflicts and crises are far away from being solved in these countries.

With the Military Strategic Concept (Militärstrategisches Konzept – MSK) the foundation stone for linguistic support was laid on the strategic level. This derives, according to the introduction<sup>135</sup>, in the context with Austria's Security Strategy (Österreichische Sicherheitsstrategie – ÖSS) 2013 and the detailed distinction in the Partial Strategy Defence Policy (Teilstrategie Verteidigungspolitik) of 2014.<sup>136</sup>

In the concept the attempt is made to bear the greatly reduced defence budgets into account and to meet both the new threats and challenges. Despite the political continuous reaffirmation that all tasks can be fulfilled, it is ultimately only an adaptation of the activities at the lower available budget. This adjustment is carried out – consciously or unconsciously – under acceptance of strong quality losses. But it is the positive part of the military strategic concept having at least recognized new trends, scenarios and challenges and having defined them. What is still lacking however, are the respective derivatives thereof, in the present case a specific military language doctrine. How and where this is to be settled, already generates a certain tension. In the Austrian Armed Forces are two institutions carrying out linguistic activities: The Language Institute and the Military Intelligence Agency. It is therefore necessary to clarify two issues already at the beginning:

1. Which international challenges have to be met and which linguistic resources (education, interpreting, translation, terminology management) are needed for these tasks?
2. How and by whom would the division of these specific tasks be carried out between the two institutions?

After answering these two questions another important issue has to be discussed: Can the tasks with the available resources (human, financial, infrastructural) be met and are changes in the organisation and the procedures needed? But that is precisely the criticism: The knowledge of

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<sup>135</sup> MSK, p. 7.

<sup>136</sup> Teilstrategie Verteidigungspolitik [Part Strategy Defence Policy] 2014, p. 14, 17 and 22.

the challenges is present, but a clear concept for the realization is missing. The situation has even become worse in terms of fulfilment, because the range of tasks may have become wider (where actually more resources would be required), the savings will be even more severe than according to the predictions as originally planned. One is almost inclined to recognize a certain amount of self-deception: More tasks should be carried out with more professionalism but with less resource. Moreover, the few remaining flexibility is further reduced, for example through the elimination of so-called "mixed jobs" (either occupied by professional or militia personnel) or by the planned conversion from military to civilian jobs. The attractiveness is minimized by the non-granting of specific performance stimulations for example, obtaining a higher value of the workplace by qualified training (doctorate or post-doctoral qualification).

On the strategic level, the deployment of Austrian soldiers in African countries has already been executed on several occasions due to the re-orientation of foreign policy. The current operations in Chad, Mali and the Central African Republic show very exactly this situation. However, this trend and these assignments could – due to the lack of certain specifications, tasks and regulations – is met only partly. Acting on its own resourceful initiative, the Language Institute was able to organize and carry out linguistic as well as country-related and culture-specific training. A language survival booklet of Bambara (the official language in Mali) and a so-called Communication Fibula 'Chad' for the Austrian contingent members were created. At the strategic level measures should be articulated and taken to ensure linguistic activities. These could be, inter alia:

- the (official) acceptance of non-members of the Ministry of Defence for temporary deployment abroad, either as an interpreter, translator or intercultural consultant
- a more concrete, more emphatic and more in advance given task for in-depth exchange of operational area languages (together with a cross-cultural training)
- a given task within the Armed Forces for the creation of language resources (experts) or at the Ministry of Defence, in those languages and regions that have been assessed by the top military leadership as likely future area of operations

On this level, it is recommended

1. to establish a pool of linguists of those major regional foreign languages, which are considered as possible future area of operations (according to the strategic analysis of the Austrian Government or the Ministry of Defence. Because the build-up of language resources usually takes a longer time, this initiative has to be taken immediately;
2. to establish a database for gathering foreign language skills of all recruits on accession to the military as well as a system for measuring the skills where an official (civilian) test such as TOEFL or according to CEFRL has not been done yet;
3. to identify linguists within the Armed Forces and to track them through their careers by expanding the current database of testees to suitable language management information system;
4. to investigate and quantify all other sources of linguists that may be available to the Austrian Armed Forces such as civilian contractors (providing already the AAF with linguists), foreign language students (through the existing cooperation with several university institutions), native speakers in other government departments, family members of military career personnel;
5. to assess the practicability of language skills as a selection criteria during recruitment of professional military staff in accordance with the needs of the forces;
6. to estimate the linguist requirements in line with the defence planning assumptions, assumed scenarios and their associated manning requirements.

On the operational level, a mechanism should be put into place for the current predictions of future operating language requirements – in accordance with the strategic trends – for global "hot spots" identified in the future. After determining the operational requirements, language

training should be started or at least people should be selected for this purpose.

On this level, it is recommended

1. to define current operationally required languages, respectively to continue training and maintaining of skilled linguists to meet these requirements;
2. to anticipate future operational requirements and, to carry out a cost-benefit analysis of junior and senior professional soldiers' training;
3. to track new technologies e.g. a phrase-book as an App, computer-based, mobile-based, online translation or interpretation services;
4. to learn lessons from previous operations and integrate into ongoing general or pre-deployment training;
5. to expand and extend a pool of capable experts, especially in regional and seldom taught languages.

The overarching goal on the operational level is a full spectrum approach to language training including the maintenance of military linguists, introduction training for company and battalion commanders for specific missions or operations. It should maintain the current linguist proficiency and the improvement of the effectiveness. On the operational level the activities should provide brigade commanders with personnel proficient in a target foreign language to contribute to the successful accomplishment of the operation.

On the tactical level, one should embark on the search for the best and already tested practices. With their implementation soldiers should then be empowered to fulfil their tasks in contact with the local population, local authorities and members of other organisations. The measures include appropriate language and cultural training, the support of local interpreters and technical support.

On this level, it is recommended

1. to implement and carry out colloquial level language courses to both the initial training as well as during the career;
2. to develop and establish a set of language maintenance instruments, e.g., distance learning tools;
3. to develop and establish "command language programmes" and to attract new students to operational/required languages;
4. to review the progression of budget and career move and in this context to define what (financial) measures can be taken to recruit, maintain and retain linguists and their skills in the military;
5. to produce in addition to the existing "survival language booklets" language learning support tools, such as language cards, task-based CDs, websites with military-related contents, pronunciation guides, glossaries and other materials, which can be produced on a short notice to be incorporated into pre-deployment training or distributing even in the operation area;
6. to include language training into the annual performance review and the resulting personal training plan as well as into the introduced Military Language (and Intercultural) Portfolio.

The ever shorter available time for foreign assignments addresses the improvement and longer pre-arranged training. An example is the operation in Chad: An Austrian participation in Africa never was drawn in any way into consideration so far, but came into effect within a few months. In September 2007, the UN Security Council passed a resolution (1778) on the establishment of MINURCAT mission to secure a large area in Chad (Darfur), which borders with Sudan and was constantly threatened by rebel groups. In November 2007, two months later, Austria's Council of Ministers decided to participate in this operation.

The European Union started to lead the operation "European Union Force Chad/Republique Centrafricaine" under the name EUFOR



Tchad/RCA. Due to the existing UN mandate, the consensus about Austria's neutrality was confirmed by the Austrian Government. Foreign missions in Africa (now Austrian soldiers also serve in Mali, Western Sahara, in the Central African Republic as well as in Congo) or in the Caucasus region (Georgia, Afghanistan) Languages and cultural skills are demanded now, which are little known in the European environment.

Language training at the tactical level gives platoon and squadron leaders as well as soldiers a 'working knowledge' of a language. Currently, soldiers receive a language survival guidebook and a short introduction to this booklet. This is far from being satisfactory. A cycle of language face-to-face training, mobile training devices, CDs and further materials of the target language is required as a minimum.

Language and culture can be described as symbiotic because they are interdependent. Without understanding of language and cultural issues an effective communication is actually not possible.

#### 7.4 Recommendation 3: Establishment of "Linguistic Reserves"

Armed Forces, participating in peace support operations, are often faced with the dilemma that they should be available on short notice on the one hand, but on the other hand (or because of it) there is hardly any time available, to develop linguistic capacities just as quickly as possible for the concerned region. Therefore, among the versatile contingent challenges, is the language barrier, that they are confronted with. Due to the lack of its own staff with sufficient language skills, the recruitment of local interpreters and translators is common practice. In some forces, it is also regular practice to use military personnel with native knowledge because of family ties (so-called heritage speakers). In the Austrian Armed Forces this procedure is not in effect (only partly) in order to ensure impartiality.

Even trained military linguists do not usually have the broad range of experiences in general or in specific areas that need to be covered linguistically. The United Nations contracts almost exclusively local

linguists, who are in many ways compared to the rest of the population privileged economically and culturally, although they are aware of the inequality compared to the troops with which they consciously work together. A sensitive area here represents the ethnic identities, with which they linguistically come in contact. Almost every force that carries out peace support operations is multilingual and their members use multiple language communication strategies. Larger problems usually occur in the formal command structure between units of different nations. NATO has taken over English as the lingua franca for military communication, although French and Russian are also sometimes in some countries (with Romance and Slavic languages) in use as common languages. The carrying out of English courses increases the effectiveness of military cooperation programmes, but however, the linguistic differences often hide the differences in the military culture among each other.

Native English speakers sometimes struggle with English as the language of general communication, particularly when strong local or regional dialects are spoken (Wales, Scotland, Ireland, Franco-Canadian, etc.). Another aspect should be considered important, especially if the languages of the conflict parties constitute an important identity marker, such as in former Yugoslavia. There, the languages Bosnian, Serbian and Croatian have "won" as a national identity criterion on pragmatism of mutual understanding. With the Montenegrin language, which was implemented as the official language of 19 October 2007 by the Constitution, a fourth language was added. The differences between Montenegrin and Serbian language are very little and speakers of Montenegrin, Serbian, Bosnian and Croatian language do not have serious problems of mutual communication at all. This number of languages in this region or the status of an "own" language is ultimately a political rather than a linguistic issue and the naming of the relevant language was perhaps the most important act of all. Each name reflects the understanding of the language, especially the personal positioning, for time and place. Linguistic labels and names are always a political signal that recognizes diversity and variety which reflect best of the complexity of this context.

An increased demand on language support is required predominantly when large personnel-intensive operations take place, which was the case with IFOR where approximately 80,000 troops were deployed. Especially,

when such extensive tasks as demining and reconstruction of infrastructure have to be carried out, an intensive cooperation with local military and civilian authorities is required. Of great advantage was the participation of armed forces, where members spoke at least a similar language as those of local people. Czech and Slovak soldiers in the Balkans, e.g., could communicate with Bosnians, Croats or Serbs (speakers of Southern Slavic languages) often usefully, even if their mother tongues belong to the Western Slavic languages. Equally important in this case are the cultural similarities, which represent an important help to communicate harmoniously and effectively.

If there is no communication between foreign military personnel and the local population possible, interpreters have to step in to support communication situations. If at every convoy, at every meeting and at every get-together, an interpreter has to be present – depending on the critical situation in a mission – it will be very difficult to be able to find the required number of qualified interpreters. With the change of the character, the mission or the range of responsibilities of a peace support operation, the linguistic requirements fundamentally can also change, both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Another problem in working with local interpreters is the reduced length of stay of contingent members in the area of operation. The duration of deployment is generally six months, but could also be only three months, sometimes also up to twelve months. Particularly, where local language support services are a national matter, almost every rotation implies a loss of information at the handover-takeover of this area of responsibility. Where a language "supervisor" for such language support doesn't exist, usually the S1 of contingent (Staff officer personnel) is responsible for this issue. Therefore, this "language area" is often of less priority and as a consequence, it is already inherently connected with the lack of continuity. Quite commonly, this 'supervisor' is not a linguist and not familiar with all the problems that tasks of linguists bring about it. In order to ensure a degree of continuity, a civil servant is sometimes entrusted with this service of a supervisor.

In some forces, such as those of the United States, there is a strict separation between local and international interpreters. Security reasons

and working with classified documents are the main reasons for this. Because most of the contingents are responsible for language support services by themselves, there are no common guidelines at higher level (NATO, UN, EU). Accordingly, there is no general system for quality assurance and quality improvement of offered language support services.

For many troop-contributing countries the flawless condition of equipment and technical devices has a high priority to generate an effective quality system. In contrast, the provision of language support is of significantly selective concerns. Quality assurance is considered a local matter and practice varies from place to place and from contingent to contingent.

One of the many quality features in translations is, e.g., proofreading. In most cases this is not possible due to the lack of qualified "superior" translators. Quality control therefore usually does not take place, and if it does, translators at a higher level are often not better qualified. In general, even the high workload of the translators does not allow this. Incorrect translations can just in operational situations and, moreover in culturally sensitive regions, lead to delays, errors, confusion or misunderstandings. An established structured quality assurance system, which also includes permanent supervision, might create a sustainable corrective.

An even bigger challenge is to achieve a quality control of interpreters. The implementation of a quality control is currently largely the demand of the user, who uses interpreters. Unless an officer or supervisor has communicative knowledge of the local language, he cannot assess linguists. Working together with an interpreter without any language skills, he is forced to ultimately unreservedly rely upon these skills. In general, users of interpreting service also do not know how quality assurance is carried out. If there is no possibility to check the work of linguists, quality should be ensured in their recruitment. It should also be made possible further improve the knowledge and skills.

Quality assurance highly depends on competent and qualified staff. In technical and administrative areas, this is not an issue in general. In language support the recruitment is usually still haphazard, arbitrary or left to chance. There are no universal standards available. This often precludes the urgent need for interpreters. Existing entrance tests from organisations

such as NATO or the United Nations – as far as they are used – substantially differ in scale and scope. Sometimes there are written tests, often there is only an interview. In both cases, these tests are limited to the verification of proficiency in English rather than their ability to translate or to interpret. Sometimes tests of civilian agencies such as, e.g., TOEFL (Testing of English as a Foreign Language) are used. Rarely is there a continuing education programme for local interpreters and translators. An improvement in their knowledge and skills is largely left to the linguists. This all would be more necessary, if more seriously a peacekeeping operation changes from its basic mission e.g., to a peacemaking or to a peacekeeping mission. With the transition from a more peaceful environment towards a more consensual environment the language requirements are also significantly changing: In a working programme increasingly subject-specific knowledge is in demand (demining, reconstruction, sewage, water purification, bridge and road construction, etc.). Linguistically not sufficiently qualified liaison officers, supervisors etc. are helpless in managing local overwhelmed linguists, especially when contributing to staff rotations meetings. If there is no continuity, coordination suffers extremely. If there is no centralized control and monitoring of the activities it all results not only in a quality problem, but language support is relocated in the discretion of local commanders.

The establishment of a (full-time) linguistic supervisor with clearly defined responsibilities would be highly necessary to ensure professional language support. The development of standardized admission tests for interpreters, ensuring the quality of their work, the introduction of a training offers for other crew members or the establishment of an evaluation system for interpreters, which can be performed by non-linguists, are just a few tasks to be supervised. Language support must in any case receive a higher priority. But the confidence of peace forces in linguistics and language mediation is only one dimension of the importance of trust in language support in peace operations. The language also has a direct impact on the quality of trust in the mission itself. This is because of the goal of peacekeeping operations: To finish to the violence, but also to change the behaviour, relationships and attitudes between the conflicting parties. To trust each other means confidence of cooperating within an agreed range of parameters. In a military context, this means that it can be expected from trusted linguists to interpret to the best of their knowledge

and beliefs, and to translate and maintain confidentiality. Paradigmatic language contacts in peace support operations such as talks during a meeting include multiple trusts: between the local and foreign interlocutors, between local people among themselves (who distrust each other) and, possibly among strangers themselves (superiors vs. subordinates, military vs. NGOs, political consultants vs. journalists), presumed that both locals and foreign soldiers communicate directly. The perception of the nationality and ethnicity of linguists also play an important role.

Heritage speakers are usually native speakers in the second or third generation due to the emigration of their ancestors. Although, they are working as soldiers in an operation abroad, they are not always equated with the other soldiers of the contingent. Not only citizenship, but also security clearance is a requirement for postings as linguists abroad, in order to eliminate any potential risk of split loyalty. Decisions, whether and to what extent a linguist will be trusted, are based on a mixture of approach, credentials and experience. Trust includes in practice far more than formal accreditation and certification, in particular by the repeated opportunity to observe the reliability and by a regular informal exchange of knowledge. Another reason why it would be necessary to have some soldiers with sufficient language skills on site is to monitor the performance of interpreters. Confidence in an interpreter is therefore a mix of several factors such as credibility, reliability and accuracy in translations, personal experience in working with interpreters and in the performance of his/her loyalty to the customer.

Because of not participating in purely UN peacekeeping missions only, Austrian troops will facing similar linguistic problems like other countries in area of operations, where they haven't been before yet such as in Afghanistan or in African countries, especially, when tasks have to be fulfilled in robust operations or in operations, where the gathering of intelligence information are requested. In such cases qualified interpreters are required. So far, there are any available. Qualified and loyal interpreters play a key role in the success of peace support operations. Interpreters will face problems, when challenged by their local clans or gangs, including death. This happened regularly in Iraq and Afghanistan.

We have to accept that even good knowledge of cultural specifics can never bridge certain gaps. There are barriers within allies and between them and staffs, barriers between the military and civilians, barriers between the host nation and hosts, the barriers built versus interpreters often seen as traitors by local population, there are barriers between the interpreters and the locals caused by the wrong people inquired or available for any questioning. There are language barriers and failures of correct translations on all sides and levels involved. Interpreting in foreign countries is a major problem for all institutions.

Language knowledge is often limited to the "standard" language-usage and phraseology, but already local dialects can become distinct barriers.

Professional interpreters obtain a short course of cultural issues, in military tactics and terms, techniques, and of proper interpretation, but have rarely much knowledge in a specific Military Occupational Skill, because usually none have ever served in the military.

Mutual trust would be a must, but can barely be expected, and in combat areas is rarely achievable – it needs a long line of contacts to build trust, but military rotations and the change of personnel always represent a lack of continuity.

To find willing and good interpreters is a long lasting process. Interpreters can be the key between failure and success. There are several examples of surprise-attacks, which were not foreseen or not predicted by J2, because there were either wrong questions asked, or wrong answers given. Nations e.g. in Iraq und Afghanistan learned to take care for their interpreters, because they had problems to find them over long(er) period of time. Interpreters had to be evacuated and to be protected; otherwise they would have been killed, what happened from time to time. MoD interpreters would usually work at higher a level (which still is not the case at the Austrian MoD or in the Austrian Armed Forces); their problem would most probably be a lack of English language. Such interpreters should be immigrated natives or military interpreters of command levels. Interpreters hired inside the countries are usually attached to battalions or companies, very rarely at platoon level. They also work at Tactical Operation Centers (TOC), with Special Forces, Military Police, at Command Operations Posts (COP), Ready Reaction Forces (RRF) or with

Liaison Teams (LT). English language can be very tricky, and can be a severe problem for non-native speaker, like to spell and pronounce words correctly, which can cause consternations and wrong translations, local VIPs can be felt offended. Standard Arabic and Arabic dialects are often quite different.

Interpreters with different religious backgrounds or interpreters questioning (through a military commander) a person from a different religious community (e.g. Shiite Muslim vs. Sunni Muslim) would usually not work, because usually they would have different loyalties. Sometimes it's a question of survival.

Some interpreters lacked proper education, some the needed culture and some were not interpreting but guessing. Working with troops at the front, some risk their live in assisting units, because they are usually unarmed. Sometimes it has been shown that local interpreters were considered as socially "underclass" members, despite some had a Master's degree and had attended universities. Military members often showed a lack of courtesy or disrespect to the interpreters. Many well prepared speeches of high ranking officers, addressing high ranking authorities or officials, were badly interpreted by native interpreters lacking proper vocabulary and the sensitivity to understand the political nuances.

A special attention should be paid when hired companies provide training courses. Often they do it not correctly, the tests were done rather in a simple way, and they ignore cultural aspects or severe language gaps.

#### 7.5 Recommendation 4: Establishment of regional intercultural and language training modules

Regional expertise of cross-cultural understanding is of fundamental importance and thus a prerequisite for a peaceful coexistence of people. Regional expertise includes geographically referenced and logically coherent physiographic and socio-economic information. The purpose of local knowledge is the identification, determination, description and connection



of spatial systems and their individual characteristics. These can be roughly divided into three categories:

1. Natural systems: These include minerals, landforms and their characteristics, climate, flora and fauna
2. Economic systems: These are agriculture and forestry, industry and manufacturing, banking, commerce, health care, tourism, information and communication technologies as well as transportation and traffic system
3. Social systems: These include cultural and ethnic diversity, religion, politics and political development

It is therefore quite difficult to develop an entire understanding of a region, if, e.g., general economic foundations and their regional disposition are not known or understood. Third World countries, e.g., still depend on and are heavily influenced by agriculture, among other things, where droughts or even small global price changes can cause major adverse effects. If underdevelopment, malnutrition or illness occurs, this in turn can have direct impacts on education and infrastructure. This often leads to political or military corruption and to general vulnerability to conflict and instability. A well-developed agriculture guarantees in such countries food supply and usually peace and stability in the region as well. The situation is similar to forestry: Timber trade has become of strategic importance, and in many countries the process of re-thinking has not yet begun when it comes to deforestation and the associated environmental protection.

One of the key components in the regional expertise represents the population, in particular its geographical distribution and its change over the years. One of the biggest concerns of the population development undoubtedly is the great disproportion between the population explosion in Africa and Latin America compared to the population decline in Europe. A massive wave of immigration from populous countries has currently just started and will not subside in the near future. This will change the ethnic and religious composition in some countries fundamentally and thus have deep impact on the economic life.

One of the most debated topics among scientific, political and economic experts is globalization. This plays a major role in the transformation of local cultures. Regional knowledge and the provision of information for all areas of knowledge-based systems causes a positive snowball effect. Thus, for example, brings about the improvement of bonding natural systems and their functions with the human range to a better understanding of cultures. An effective use of the resource – not in the sense of exploitation regardless of losses – leads to global prosperity and this in turn to global peace and security. Local expertise is precisely the key to a better understanding of diversity, impacts and influences.

With regard to the linguistic field, there is no current requirement that a part of such training modules be the acquisition of regional language skills up to the level at communication capabilities. Instead, a regional language (or maybe even several), which belongs to the most spoken or most widespread languages of the region, should be presented and compared with others. A general introduction for the understanding of this language should raise the motivation to continue learning this language. Basic structures, scripture and a basic vocabulary will also help to look for additional learning documents to be at least capable to identify contextually relevant texts.

In general, the language part should be designed to increase the operational efficiency. In terms of military terminology, this includes knowledge of tactical terms, abbreviations and phrases, observing the non-verbal communication, the ability of communicating via an interpreter and the knowledge of other intercultural communication concepts.

## 7.6 Recommendation 5: Creating level-based training structures of intercultural competence

A decisive aspect is the understanding of people in terms of customs and culture. Preparing soldiers to deal appropriately and effectively with people, who are from a different cultural environment, is a critical task. The challenge is to develop intercultural competence for soldiers who are

capable of winning hearts and minds of the target population in peace support operations.

To cope with the intercultural, threatening and often conflictual situations in the target country, intercultural training for preparation and follow-up processing are being used. Such training makes own cultural orientations and evaluation processes consciously and creates on the basis of this reflected self-understanding competencies for people from different cultures. This training should be oriented to personal characteristics, communicative, social and action-based skills and comprise the knowledge of regional and cultural skills. This should lead to the recognition and appreciation of cultural peculiarities and the understanding of foreign cultural partners.

First of all, we need to distinguish three types of intercultural training:

1. The cognitive training, where awareness-raising is meant. It is not pure knowledge, but the understanding of the influence of interactions between people of different cultural affairs prejudice and stereotypes
2. The affective training, by which the successful emotional trigger response is understood, that occurs due to different national cultures
3. The behavioural training, which serves the development of skills for successful dealing with people of different cultures

As part of a qualitative survey at the Helmut Schmidt University in Hamburg has shown that the project "Dimension Kulturen" (dimension cultures) is the most comprehensive examination of the basics of intercultural competence so far. This project examines all military areas where intercultural competence is of special relevance. According to this project "culture" is understood as a universal system of orientation. But intercultural learning was not thematically processed in any of those projects. There is no indication of how the learning process proceeds. So far, these projects are only slightly or not at all connected to each other or

carried out only for a limited period of time. Therefore, it cannot develop a continuous learning process. Additional to that, the three dimensions of intercultural competence are unbalanced addressed. There is on the one hand a central cognitive orientation of the subject matter, on the other hand the participant or user is overwhelmed emotionally with a multimedia fireworks. A balance between the cognitive, affective and behavioural dimension of intercultural competence in the learning projects should be the aim for the future. This is the same situation in the Austrian Armed Forces, where such intercultural training with qualified personnel is required at all levels.

As a necessity appears a continuous learning process. This should not only be demand-driven and operation-based, but also oriented to the needs and problems aligned to the daily-life of the forces. If general basics in culture are placed in advance, additional culture-specific and operation-related training can take place without any problems at any time. In addition to this, it should be attempt to connect already existing projects and to combine the existing theoretical basis with further practical interaction situations. Intercultural competence must be purchased from the soldiers themselves; a frontal teaching would miss the goal. Intercultural learning will not be launched by crash courses or lectures.

For this, an appropriate period of time must be created for both the troops' everyday life as well as for the pre-deployment training. Intercultural learning is stimulated at best in absolute beneficial intercultural situations. The misconception that only those who were in operations abroad, are interculturally competent, shows and requires a clear need of explanations. Intercultural competence should be at least thematically integrated, explained and discussed in all projects. This would also show that intercultural competence is absolutely necessary in a migration society like Austria's and thus also within the Armed Forces.<sup>137</sup>

By reacting and aligning the armed forces to the new threats and challenges, it is also necessary to reconsider the training purpose and thereafter align. There is no longer exclusive participation in peacekeeping

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<sup>137</sup> See also Mandy Franziska Thormann (2007): Interkulturelle Lernen in der Bundeswehr, In: <http://www.bmvg.de/portal/a/bmvg> [15 05 2015].

missions, but also peace support operations, which eventually may also be robust, and therefore would require a different approach to the previous ones. This training must be qualified, systematic and has to accompany an operation in three phases, in particular before, during and after an operation. To generate intercultural competence however, only the first two phases are of importance, because the third phase is an individual and not an intercultural one. The first phase (prior to operations) can be divided again into a neutral/general and a concrete/specific operational phase.

First, the necessary neutral/general cultural training should not take place immediately prior to an operation. It should already be an integrative part of all military career courses, both for non-commissioned officers as well as for officers. Regardless of a particular operation, it covers general cultural awareness, teaches to reflect on ones own cultural identity. The earliest possible start is important in order to establish, and be able to amplify. A peace support operation must also be understood from a cultural standpoint. Concerning the content the vertical interoperability should also be taught in advanced courses. Questions such as "Why do we have to do some things and what do we have to avoid?", "What is behind this culture-specific pattern of behaviour?" or "What is the impact of a culture-specific mistake?" call for answers. For such courses, in which, among other things, role plays have already been introduced, psychologists or anthropologists should be primarily employed as cultural experts. If possible, those who have already taken part in peace support operations can underline by real-life examples the teaching contents and thesis. This applies especially to the academies and less to the training centres of the different military services and branches in the Austrian Armed Forces.

The second concrete mission-specific part of the first phase can already refer to the respective country, operational area (Area of Operation – AOO) and the mission itself. In order to respond to the regional culture, an extensive regional and cultural study is required. "How and what caused the conflicts to develop?" are further important questions. Only with this knowledge we can jump to intercultural communication in dialogue and group form. Situational role games are also an effective instrument to communicate across cultures, at checkpoints, on patrols or in negotiations with representatives of the local authorities. In these situations, the use of

non-verbal communication should not be underestimated. This is an important factor, in order to minimize a possible conflict potential on the one hand and, to achieve a successful outcome of negotiations on the other hand. This is a very similar behaviour towards representatives of other armed forces or international organisations. In this context a great extent of flexibility is required.

The second phase ("during") is somewhat problematic and difficult. Problematic, because it must ensure that those contents, which are thought out during Phase 1 (before arrival to the mission area) are really relevant for the mission. Therefore, it is important to have trained and "mission-proven" personnel available prior to deployment. Difficult is this phase, because of ensuring a close culture-specific coaching. Even the time in Phase 1 (pre-deployment training) is already very limited, but being in the area of operation, time will be even scarcer or no time will be available at all. As an imperative, people at this stage have to organize themselves individually or within a team, which is usually newly established. The tasks in general, are not the same as at home, and many of the rules are new. Only in meetings with others intercultural contact situations arise.

This spectrum of contacts (civilian, local population, local authorities, NGOs, other military nationalities, international organisations etc.) requires reflection and coaching. For these purposes qualified personnel in the organisational structure of a contingent or a combat unit is necessary and therefore highly recommended. Experts in national or regional cultural matters and military psychologists may be appointed for these tasks. They also can be consulted on the respective hierarchy levels. They could also be appointed as contact persons for occurring intercultural or psychological problems.

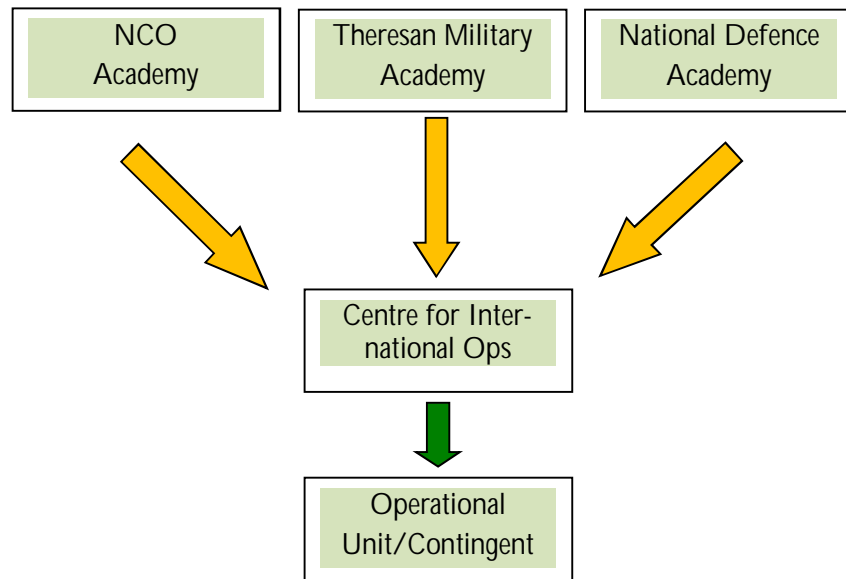


FIGURE 26: INTERCULTURAL TRAINING HAS TO TAKE PLACE DURING GENERAL TRAINING, PRE-DEPLOYMENT TRAINING AS WELL AS IN THE AREA OF OPERATION

## 7.7 Recommended Directions for Future Research

The following suggestions for future research are recommended:

- Due to the new policy Austria does not massively contribute any more to long-lasting missions like on Cyprus or on the Golan Heights. Austria participates now also in robust operations, and has recently already done. It would be interesting to investigate the linguistic and intercultural challenges for the soldiers in such new robust operations.
- An interesting research field would be the linguistic and intercultural examining of another group within the military acting in foreign countries and cultures: the military corps of defence

attachés. And then to put them in relation to – or to compare them with – another similar operating group: police or commercial attachés.

- After the recent decision by the Austrian government soldiers of the Austrian Armed Forces are conducting border police assistance. Therefore, a possible research field would be the linguistic and intercultural dealing with refugees or immigrants by soldiers (and/or maybe by policemen) at the border.
- Or in connection with the above mentioned issue, the integration of foreigners (immigrants) into the military serving as conscripts after the acquisition of the Austrian citizenship (due to the compulsory military or alternative civilian service in Austria). How takes place the interaction among soldiers with different cultural background?

## 7.8 Summary

Not only to be able to establish an intercultural contact correctly, but to be able to interact effectively in a multicultural team and at a multinational headquarters, a corresponding competence is required. Language skills are an important factor indeed, but also the composition of the team itself plays a major role for example, which nationalities are represented in what order or to what extent or, is it a closed or isolated group. Frequently, they are composed differently: In addition to the national or regional origin also age, rank, function, position or gender can play a major role. Important in this case is the mutual social perception.

There is sufficient evidence that the Austrian Armed Forces require solid and effective foreign language capabilities to meet their operational goals. These capabilities are conceptually complex and can only be fully achieved by adopting a range of approaches to this issue. A so-called requirement-based approach to meeting these needs will probably fill some of the capability gaps, particularly in meeting the standard operational requirements, but will certainly fail to provide new language capacities in



the time frame in which they are required during quickly occurring operations. The only possibility to relying on a requirement-based approach in the military situation is to establish a core of capabilities. This core of language experts will enable the Austrian Armed Forces to make the forces capable of engagement and communication with host nations or opposing forces in the future through the target-oriented use of foreign languages.

The need for new language skills is obvious: Due to the new Military Strategic Concept and the new Security and Defence Policy, the Austrian government has given way to Austrian military involvement in places such as Afghanistan, Lebanon, Chad, Mali or Central African Republic. In general, foreign language instruction in Austrian schools has a long tradition and still is very popular. But these taught languages are not those ones which are needed from the military point of view. One of the recommendations in this work seeks to create a larger pool of language-proficient Austrian soldiers by starting instruction at an earlier stage and with other languages than English or French. It has to be recognized that there are languages that are really needed if soldiers of the Austrian Armed Forces are going to be able to communicate and work with nationalities around the world.

An important criterion for soldiers is the understanding of people in terms of their habits and customs, in general of their culture. To train soldiers for enabling them to interact culturally correct and effectively with members of other cultural background, is certainly difficult, critical and takes usually long time. The right methods play a major role. A basic principle in this context is, the more competent a soldier in self and others understanding is, the better he is able to perform his duties as part of a peace support operation. Culturally interested soldiers can thus more likely to become so-called 'force multipliers' as those who may commit embarrassing mistakes.

Current activities for intercultural training are centrally organized at the three academies and in the Centre for International Operations. Any other cultural awareness is left to the soldiers themselves. It is also the responsibility of the superiors to contribute to this training. But it is necessary to train the superiors before. Suitable "lessons" at unit level would be a first step in the decentralized organisation. Currently, only those

soldiers will be given such a cross-cultural training, who volunteered for an assignment abroad. This training is not only extremely short, but quite stressful in the context of general and specific pre-deployment training. It is also assumed that not every participant deepens his knowledge by tailor-made language booklets, which are handed out to every soldier.

Apart from the implementation of teaching at the unit level, for which the development of relevant curricula is needed, it includes also specific materials, technology such as handhelds, apps etc. The reason of such early training is the new trend, in particular, not to deploy contingents for decades, but to participate in peace support operations only for a shorter term. To form culturally savvy soldiers can however be hardly achieved and the possibilities for this are very limited in the current situation. Cultural competence must not only remain a slogan but have to be institutionalized. Intercultural competent soldiers need to know and understand the internal primary culture as well as sub-cultural influences, to accept other cultures and be culturally adaptable. Cultural adaptability is defined as "the willingness and capability to identify, to understand and to work effectively across cultures".<sup>138</sup> All this have to be combined with respect and tolerance.

There are many variables which can be used as references to the differences and similarities between cultures. Researchers call them "dimensions of cultural variability".<sup>139</sup> Soldiers deployed abroad must be aware of at least the most important variables and how they can affect intercultural communication. The variable

1. *Individualism vs. Collectivism* focuses on the degree the society reinforces individual or collective achievement and interpersonal relationships;
2. *Long-term and short-term orientation* focuses on the degree the society embraces, or does not embraces, long-term devotion to traditional, forward thinking values;

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<sup>138</sup> Jennifer J. Deal, Don W. Prince(2003), *Developing Cultural Adaptability*, p. 7.

<sup>139</sup> Hofstede, Geert (2001) *Culture's Consequences – Comparing Values, Behaviours, Institutions and Organisations Across Nations*, 2. Ed., Thousand Oaks, London, New Delhi 2001, p. 351 f.

3. *Power Distance* focuses on the degree of equality, or inequality, between people in the country's society;
4. *Femininity vs. Masculinity* focuses on the degree the society reinforces, or does not reinforce, the traditional masculine work role model of male achievement, control, and power;
5. *Uncertainty avoidance* focuses on the level of tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity within the society, i. e. unstructured situations.<sup>140</sup>

Another important variable for soldiers is the understanding and the use of low- and high-grade contextual communication. While one in a low grade contextual communication communicates very directly and explicitly with others, he uses in a high-grade contextual communication situation gestures, facial expressions or unspoken hints. The point here is that soldiers recognize the cultural tolerance of uncertainty and can adapt to the behaviour of others.<sup>141</sup> Intercultural training is also an effective tool for soldiers to relieve anxiety and stress when they are being sent to an operation abroad or in case they are already there.

Intercultural training is not just a simple briefing, some culture-specific features or a presentation of a foreign country or a different culture. It cannot be reduced to a pure checklist which has to be processed point by point during training: Simple phrases or country-specific facts and data are insufficient. Intercultural training initially focuses more on their own self-consciousness and not so much on understanding the culture of others. Intercultural training should also include the overcome of a possible "culture shock", strategies for coping with stress and anxiety and understanding the process and the phases of a cross-cultural adaptation.

Capabilities referring to peace support operation include also civilian-military matters, negotiations with local authorities and creating a secure environment. Objective of developing intercultural competence is to improve communication and reduce misunderstandings in intercultural

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<sup>140</sup> See also Jones (2007): Hofstede – Culturally questionable?, p. 4.

<sup>141</sup> See also Anita Terauds et al., *Influence in Intercultural Interaction* (1966), Washington D. C.: The American University, p. 11.

interactions. However, it takes time to develop an appropriate level of proficiency. A useful approach would be the establishment of a system of fundamental principles that should help and to lead and guide intercultural meetings. Empathy and appreciation for a culture are the key words.

Another important criterion of (inter)cultural competency is "cultural adaptability". Living in a culturally diverse world is a fact. A culturally competent soldier has different meanings. First, soldiers have to understand internal primary culture and cultural influences, being accepted by other diverse cultures. If they don't understand their internalized culture influences they will not be able to understand basic values, customs, and beliefs that characterize particular groups. Knowing oneself fosters to understand the others. To be sensitive to cultural diversity supports to receive benefits. It helps to predict and anticipate the success of a task, a plan or a mission.

Most of the soldiers do not require scientific training in intercultural communication in order to participate in a peace support operation successfully. There is no need for all to have the same level of intercultural communication. Soldiers need much more an institutionalized 'Programme for generating Culture', which is essential for developing and maintaining intercultural communication, in order to support peace support operations.

Neither the current organisation, nor the education system encourages intercultural communication of soldiers in an appropriate manner. Although the existing military education system and the corresponding organisation for competence development would be very well suited, this has still a great potential of development. Intercultural training should be tailored to the different levels, starting with a general basic training, followed by NCOs and officers' training, where it should be a part of, as well as at the General Staff officers' course, at the Senior Staff officers' course 1 and 2. Likewise, it requires job-related skills in order to get a basis in all areas for foreign assignments. This should be in a way of bottom-up, i.e., to build on after the general basic training with a regional or country-specific cultural training.

Commanders should be able to assess cultural influences on missions at operational and strategic levels, particularly during the stabilization and support phase of a military operation. The development of intercultural competence is an obliged commitment, because it helps to improve soldier's understanding and to act confidently.

## Abbreviations

AAF LngInst	Austrian Armed Forces Language Institute
AFDRU	Austrian Forces Disaster Relief Unit
AHS	Allgemeinbildende Höhere Schule (General High School)
ALC	Austrian Language Committee
ALCC	Austrian Language Competence Centre
ALD	Association for Language Didactics
ALTHEA	European Union Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina
AOO	Area of Operation
ATHUM/ALBA	Austrian Humanitarian Contingent in Albania
AUCON	Austrian Contingent
AusbAbt	Ausbildungsabteilung (Training Department)
AusIE	Auslandseinsatz (Operation abroad)
AusIEBa	Auslandseinsatzbasis (Centre for International Operations)
AusIEG	Auslandseinsatzgesetz (Law for International Operations)
AUTCON/DEU ORFBn	Austrian Contingent/DEU Operational Reserve Force Battalion
AUTINT	Austrian Armed Forces International Centre or Austrian Armed Forces Centre for International Operations (obs.)

BGBI	Bundesgesetzblatt (Federal Legal Act)
BHS	Berufsbildende Höhere Schule (Vocational High School)
BILC	Bureau for International Language Co-ordination
BMLVS	Bundesministerium für Landesverteidigung und Sport (Federal Ministry of Defence and Sports)
B/K/S	Bosnisch, Kroatisch, Serbisch (Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian)
BRP	Berufsreifeprüfung (University Study Entrance Exam)
BMUKK	Bundesministerium für Unterricht, Kunst und Kultur (Federal Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture)
BMWF	Bundesministerium für Wissenschaft und Forschung (Federal Ministry of Sciences and Research)
BVG	Bundesverfassungsgesetz (Federal constitutional law)
CCC	Cross-cultural Competence
CEFL	Common European Framework for Languages
CICP	Center of Intercultural Competence
CIMIC (BC)	Civil-Military Co-operation (Basic Course)
CLPD	Centre for Languages, Plurilingualism and Didactics

CMIE	Centre for Multilingualism and Intercultural Education
CMMOD	Crisis Management and Multinational Operations Department
CSFP	Common Security and Foreign Policy
CSS	Cooperative Secondary School
CTC	Continuous Training Centre
CTHHB (BC)	Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (Basic Course)
DLI FLC	Defence Language Institute Foreign Language Center
DSL	Defense School of Languages
DCLC	Defence Centre of Languages and Culture
EAPC	Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council
EC	European Council
ECFL	European Centre for Foreign Languages
EDA	European Defence Agency
EFSZ	Europäisches Fremdsprachenzentrum (European Foreign Language Centre )
EHEA	European Higher Education Area
EK	Europäische Kommission (European Commission)
ELP	European Language Portfolio



EoMC LCC/PSO	Experts on Mission Course – Specialisation: Liaison, Cooperation and Coordination for Peace Support Operations
ESDP	European Security and Defence Policy
ESVP	Europäische Sicherheits- und Verteidigungspolitik (European Defence and Defence Policy)
EU	Europäische Union (European Union)
EUFOR Chad/CRA	European Force in Chad and Central African Republic
EUMM	European Union Monitoring Mission
EUOTRA	European Translation (Project)
EUSEC	European Union Sector Reform
EUTM (MLI)	European Union Training Mission (Mali)
FH-BaStg	Fachhochschule-Bachelorstudiengang (University for Applied Sciences – Bachelor programme)
FieldHumInt	Field Human Intelligence
FINCENT	Finnish Defence Forces International Centre
FLD	Foreign Language Departement
FIFlaTS	Flieger- und Fliegerabwehrtruppendschule (Air Force and Air Defence School)
GALG	Grundausbildungslehrgang (Basis Course for Academics)
GASP	Gemeinsame Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik (Common Foreign and Security Policy)

GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GERS	Gemeinsamen Europäischen Referenzrahmen für Sprachen (Common European Framework for Languages)
GLEhrg	Generalstabslehrgang (General Staff officers course)
GrpAusb	Training Division
HAK	Handelsakademie (Economic High School )
HLogS	Heereslogistikschule (Austrian Armed Forces Logistics School)
HPD	Heerespsychologischer Dienst (Military Psychological Service)
HS	Hauptschule (Primary School )
HTL	Höhere Technische Lehranstalt (Technical High School)
HTS	Heerestruppendeschule (Military School for Landforces)
HUAK	Heeresunteroffiziersakademie (Non-commissioned Officers Academy)
HV	Hörverstehen (Listening)
IATE	Inter-Active Terminology for Europe
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IFK	Institut für Friedensforschung und Konfliktmanagement (Institut for Peace Research and Conflict Management)
IFOR	Implementation Force

IHMF	Institut für Höhere Militärische Führung (Institute for Higher Military Command and Control)
IHSW	Institut für Sozial- und Humanwissenschaften (Institute for Human and Social Sciences)
IKK	Interkulturelle Kompetenz (Intercultural Competence)
IOW	Institut für Offiziersweiterbildung (Institute for Further Officers` Training)
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
IS	International Staff
ISS	Institut für Strategische Studien (Institute for Strategic Studies)
JSOC	Junior Staff Officers Course
JWP	Joint Warfare Publication
KAZCENT	Partnership for Peace-Training Centre of the Army Academy
Kdo	Kommando (Command)
KFOR	Kosovo Force
KIOP/KPE	Kräfte für Internationale Operationen/ Kaderpräsenzeinheiten (Troops for International Operations/Stand-by Units)
KMS	Kooperative Mittelschule (Cooperative Primary School)

KPE	Kaderpräsenzeinheiten (Stand-by Units)
KSE-BVG	Bundesverfassungsgesetz über Kooperation und Solidarität bei der Entsendung von Einheiten und Einzelpersonen in das Ausland (Federal Constitutional Law on Cooperation and Solidarity regarding the Deployment of Units and Individual Persons Abroad)
LEEP	Liberal Education and Effective Practice
LLL	Lebenslanges Lernen (Lifelong Learning)
LM	Liaison Monitoring
LNC PSO	Liaison and Negotiation Course for Peace Support Operations
LOT	Liaison Observation Team
LV	Leseverstehen (Reading)
LVAk	Landesverteidigungsakademie (National Defence Academy)
MFO	Multinational Force and Observers
MG	Mündlicher Gebrauch (Speaking)
MINURCAT	Mission des Nations Unies en République Centrafricaine et au Tchad (United Nations Mission in Central African Republic and in Chad)
MINURSO	Mision de las Naciones Unidas para el Referendum en el Sahara Occidental (United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara)
MINUSCA	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic

MINUSMA	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali
MLU	Multirole Logistic Unit
MO	Military Observer
MONUSCO	United Nations Organisation Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MS	Military Staff
MSC/MSK	Military Strategic Concept/Militärstrategisches Konzept
NAC	Northern Atlantic Council
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NMS	Neue Mittelschule (New Secondary School)
NSS	New Secondary School
NQF	National Qualification Framework
OA	Offiziersanwärter (Officer-cadet)
ÖBH	Österreichisches Bundesheer (Austrian Armed Forces)
ObstdhmfD	Oberst des höheren militärfachlichen Dienstes (Colonel of Higher Military Specialized Service)
Offz	Offizier (Officer)

ÖGSD	Österreichische Gesellschaft für Sprachdidaktik (Austrian Society for Language Didactics)
ONUC	Opération des Nations Unies au Congo (United Nations Operation in Congo)
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
ÖSKO	Österreichisches Sprachenkommittee (Austrian Language Committee)
OSZE	Organisation für Sicherheit und Zusammenarbeit in Europa (Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe)
PfP (TC)	Partnership for Peace (Training Centre)
PSO (TC)	Peace Support Operations (Training Centre)
PSYOPS	Psychological Operations
RACVIAC	RACVIAC, Regional Arms Control Verification and Implementation Assistance Centre
ROE	Rules of Engagement
RSM	Resolute Support Mission
SFOR	Stabilisation Force
SG	Schriftlicher Gebrauch (Writing)
SecEcoHumO	Sector Economic and Humanitarian Officer
SIB	Sprachinstitut des Bundesheeres (Austrian Armed Forces Language Institute)
SIIC	Summer Institute for Intercultural Communication

SKFü	Streitkräfteführung (Joint Forces Command)
SOFA	Status of Forces Agreement
SPSS	Statistic Package for the Social Sciences
STANAG	Standardisation Agreement
SWEDINT	Swedish Forces International Centre
SWISSINT	Swiss International (Competence Centre)
SYSTRAN	(Machine) Translation System
Ther MiIAk	Theresianische Militärakademie (Theresan Military Academy)
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language
TRADOC	Training and Doctrine (Command)
ÚJP AČR	Ústav jazykové přípravy Armády České republiky (Language Training Institute of Czech Armed Forces)
UN(O)	United Nations (Organisation)
UNAFHIR	United Nations Austrian Field Hospital in Iran
UNDOF	United Nations Disengagement Observer Force
UNEF	United Nations Emergency Force
UNFICYP	United Nations Forces in Cyprus
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees
UNIFIL	United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon
UNMIBH	United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina

UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia
UNMIN	United Nations Mission in Nepal
UNMISS	United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan
UNMO	United Nations Military Observer
UNMOGIP	United Nations Observer Group in India and Pakistan
UNODA	United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs
UNOGIL	United Nations Observer Group in Lebanon
UNOWA	United Nations Office in West Africa
UNTSO	United Nations Truce Supervision Organisation
UO	Unteroffizier (Non-Commissioned Officer)
VBBN	Values, Beliefs, Behaviours, and Norms
VÖP	Verein Österreichischer Peacekeeper (Association of Austrian Peacekeepers)
WAPA	Warschauer Pakt (Warsaw Pact)



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## Author

### Civil Education



1966-74 Artistic and pedagogical high school

1992-95 MA degree in Slavic languages and Educational Sciences at the University of Vienna

1993/94/95 Studies at the Charles University in Prague, Masaryk University and the Military Academy (now Defence University) in Brno

2000-2002 Doctoral programme in Slavic (Czech) Studies at the University of Vienna

2000-2003 Postgraduate studies (Master of Business Administration – MBA) "Education Management"

2009-2016 PhD programme in Military Sciences at the National University of Public Service in Budapest

### Military training and uses

1974-75 National military service

1975-78 Officers training at the Theresan Military Academy in Wiener Neustadt

1978-82 Various positions as platoon leader and company commander

1982-92 Staff officer at the Motor Transport School in Baden and, chairman of Automotive Examining Board

1992-2013 Head of Section and Department, as well as Deputy Head of the Austrian Armed Forces Language Institute at the National Defence Academy

2013-15 Acting Head of the Austrian Armed Forces Language Institute

## Publication and lecturing activities

- 1998 Czech-German Dictionary of military abbreviations, Vienna 1998
- 2002 Anthology of the Symposium "250 years foreign language teaching in the Austrian military on the example of Czech language". Report of the National Defence Academy 08/2003
- 2004 Anthology of the symposium "Terminology in the light of the EU enlargement – From the business, scientific and military perspective", Special edition of the National Defence Academy, Vienna of 2004
- 2006 Education Management in civil service institutions. – A challenge or a necessary evil? Special edition of the National Defence Academy 04/06, Wiener Neustadt of 2006
- 1995-dato Various specific articles in various magazines and journals in the field of military foreign language system in German, English and Czech language

## Foreign assignments:

Repeated and prolonged participations in missions abroad (from six months up to one year) with the United Nations in different positions such as Military observer, Humanitarian and Economic officer, Liaison Officer/Operations, member of a Board of Inquiry in the countries of Cyprus, Lebanon, Syria and Israel.

## Summary

The topic of the present thesis is concerned with multilingualism as part of intercultural competence in context with peace support operations.

During the Cold War and even many years afterwards, many people thought, that foreign language skills and knowledge of the region or the area of operation were only required by small parts of the (defence) force, primarily serving in specialized positions, mainly in intelligence agencies. Different operations, in which Austria participated, have shown the need for both cultural awareness and enhanced pre-deployment language training.

In the survey as part of the work the high-reconstructive study of the status quo was examined. Basic studies on the one hand and the field research through a questionnaire on the other hand have been shown the need for a comprehensive reform. The fact, that some progress in language education has been already achieved, could be confirmed. The lack of structures and the lack of stringency are still apparent. The necessary measures have been set out in several recommendations.

Because of the massive organisational (personnel), administrative and financial cuts as well as the planned merging of almost all military education and training institutions in the Austrian Armed Forces expresses the fear that the necessary measures are taken in the recommendations only partially or not at all. This would not only inhibit the development of professionalization, but also lead to an extraordinary loss of quality. Not to invest in education and training in time of crisis is a strong aberration and counterproductive, especially for a language institute.

The aim of the study was to investigate the current situation in the language area and the nature of interculturality in the Austrian Armed Forces, in particular in the context of Austria' participation in peace support operations. Recommendations in this thesis make an important contribution to the effective development of multilingualism and intercultural competence in the military.

There is no doubt that both foreign language skills and cultural expertise are critical capabilities, which are required by today's armed forces to meet the challenges of our present security environment. There has been no comprehensive, systematic approach to develop cultural expertise so far. The lack of language skills other than English and cultural expertise is a symptom of a massive problem that affects the nation as a whole. At the moment, our military training and educational system does not give a high priority or a widespread choice of languages it teaches. Language skills are essential capabilities in support operations, not just to allow communication between different actors in conflict solution, but also, alongside (inter)cultural skills, to enable the understanding among members of multinational units or headquarters. To understand somebody leads to a better understanding. The most serious challenge for the future will be the lessons learned from the past and to meet the most likely and demanding language needs. Although, English is for almost all officers and NCOs not a serious problem, the Austrian Armed Forces still lacks soldiers with "exotic" language skills, who would be highly appreciated contributors to multinational formations. Austria has given high priority to "Internationalization" for its armed forces not only in the governmental Security Strategy, but also in the Military Strategic Concept. Therefore, its personnel must be trained and ready for their international engagement with appreciation of diverse culture. The aim should be to indulge in direct communication with local population. This might reduce the risk to the indigenous, non-combatant population. Knowing the regional language with an appreciation of local culture is a powerful tool in influencing an operation's successful outcome. Several education and training institutions of the Austrian Armed Forces have taken different steps and initiatives, but several areas require further development.

The results of this thesis show a clear need for further amplifying and training in both areas.

## Annex (Questionnaire)

### Questionnaire for the research study (PhD thesis)

#### "MULTILINGUALISM AND INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE WITHIN PEACE KEEPING OPERATIONS"

Josef ERNST

#### Introduction

Austria has already been participating since 1960 in peacekeeping missions and has therefore, a huge treasure of experiences for which it is envied all over the world. Even in recent times, despite changed security policy Austria's participation in Peace Support Operations has high priority.

With results and analysis of this survey/study, I would like to contribute in the form of recommendations for improvements to the professionalism of the soldiers for future missions abroad in the fields of language and intercultural capabilities.

At this point, I may also introduce myself: I am COL Dr. Josef Ernst and deputy head of the Language Institute of the Armed Forces (SIB). After leaving the mechanized troops, I then have been transferred to the Austrian Armed Forces Motor Transport School, from where I joined the Language Institute in 2002/2003. At the Language institute I was, among other things, responsible for the linguistic and intercultural preparation of soldiers for deployment abroad. My respect for this area is the participation in four foreign missions in total, two in Cyprus in staff officers' positions and two in the Middle East as a UN Military observer and also as a Staff officer in the position as the Deputy Station officer.

## Implementation

Dear comrade,

I am fully aware of how time consuming this survey might be, but I would still like to ask you herewith for your assistance. Despite the large number of questions, very soon you will see that most of these multiple choice questions are easy and quick to answer. If you may have a problem answering one or more survey questions, due to the specific mission you were assigned to, we would kindly ask you to make an additional mark or comment. Questions should be answered by crossing the respective answer.

The information will only be used for this research study and will be dealt with an utmost anonymity.

Concerning the time I may ask you to send me back the completed form in the next 4 weeks (the sooner the better and the work can be proceeding more efficiently).

I thank you at this stage in advance for your willingness to participate in this extensive survey and after the completion of the study I will inform you about the results.

## QUESTIONNAIRE

### General

1. How old are you?

- up to 25 years       31 – 35 years       41 – 50 years  
 26 – 30 years       36 – 40 years       over 50 years

2. What job did you have abroad?

- Officer's job       Sergeant's or corporal's job  
 NCOs' job       other's (which?)

3. How often have you been on missions abroad?

- just once       three times  
 two times       more than three times

4. What was your intention/motivation for participation in PSOs?

- adventure  
 money



- to meet country and people
- opportunity to apply what you have been trained to do under operational conditions
- comradeship
- other reason (which?):

5. In what organisation(s) did you serve?  
(multiple indications are possible)

- UN
- EU
- NATO
- other (which?):
- OSCE

6. If you could choose, where would you like to work in a foreign assignment?

- in a pure Austrian unit
- in an internationally mixed unit
- predominantly in an international unit
- no opinion/all the same

7. In what unit/posting did you serve in PSOs?  
(more than one answer possible)

- headquarters (observer mission or brigade and above)
- battalions staff within the, in a station (of an observer mission)
- company or platoon
- military observer (i.e. UNMO)
- humanitarian mission (water preparation, field hospital etc)
- monitoring elections
- others (which?):

#### Language area

8. What language proficiency in English have you completed prior to your deployment?

- none
- SLP 1
- SLP 2
- SLP 3

9. What part of the language test has caused you the most difficulties?

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> reading proficiency   | <input type="checkbox"/> writing proficiency   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> listening proficiency | <input type="checkbox"/> none                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> oral proficiency      | <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know any more |

10. With what kind of contacts could you use your language skills?  
(more than one answer possible)

- in carrying out tasks via telephone
- in giving briefings
- in unprepared reacting to duty communication situations
- everyday communication situations in general
- official meetings with foreign fellow-officers
- informal meetings with foreign fellow-officers
- communication situations with the local population/authorities
- other (which?):

11. How do you estimate your English language skills in fulfilling your working tasks during your Tour of duty abroad?

	fluent	good	coherent	rather bad	bad
reading proficiency	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
listening proficiency	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
oral proficiency	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
writing proficiency	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

12. What kind of language skills other than English) you have yet?  
i.e., Spanish: level 1; French: skills from secondary school;  
Italian: 3 years high school)?

13. Did the so-called Language survival booklet help you during your Tour of duty abroad?

yes, very much

occasionally

no, not at all

we didn't receive such a booklet

there was not such a booklet when I was abroad

14. Could you use languages other than English in official or unofficial situations abroad?

yes, often and regularly

a little, not regularly:

no, not at all

15. What kind of linguistic field was of great importance for you during your Tour of duty abroad (1-5)

	1	2	3	4	5
general English	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
technical English	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
general military English	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
specific military terminology	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

16. Your language skills in your job have been

- excellent
- very good
- average
- weak/sufficient
- not sufficient

17. If you have marked the previous question with "weak/sufficient" or "not sufficient" what was the reason for this low performance?

- little motivation
- little time
- lack of diligence and will
- poor language training methods
- poor training material
- poor linguistic prerequisites
- poor possibilities for English communication
- other reasons (which)?

18. What language(s) other than English would you still like to learn or improve?

- French
- Arabic
- Spanish
- a Balkan language
- Italian
- other (which one)?

19. How did you reach the required language proficiency level?

- intensive course
- successively (by attending several language course throughout a longer period of time)
- stay in an English speaking country
- individual language training
- motivation and will
- because of good conditions for language training at my place of work

20. Have you been sent abroad without having reached the required proficiency level?

- yes
- no



21. What would you linguistically recommend for a professional and successful working performance on a mission abroad?

- passing the proficiency level 2 is enough
- passing the proficiency level 3
- anything else (what?)

22. If you had the choice, what kind of language training, if required, would you prefer?

- language course at the AAF Language institute
- decentralized language course at the unit
- civilian language school
- language school in a foreign country
- individual language training
- on-line language training (via Internet/Intranet)
- others (which?)

23. Language training with a teacher you consider as

- indispensable
- very important
- less important
- not important

24. Would you be interested in perfecting/deepening/completing your language skills supported by modern information and communication technologies?

- I am very interested in it
- I would appreciate this possibility
- I occasionally would take advantage of it
- I barely would take advantage of it
- I wouldn't take advantage of it

25. In case you could take advantage of using the modern information and communication technologies for language training, on what would you concentrate on? (multiple indications are possible)

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> listening proficiency | <input type="checkbox"/> writing proficiency |
| <input type="checkbox"/> reading proficiency   | <input type="checkbox"/> vocabulary          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> oral proficiency      | <input type="checkbox"/> grammar             |

26. How have you been trained to be prepared for the (military) mission and your job/duties?

	I totally agree	I rather agree	I rather don't agree	I don't agree
I received specific information from my superiors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I received information from comrades, who served already abroad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I received little information about the mission	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I was insufficiently prepared and I had to inform myself	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Interculturalism

27. Describe briefly, what you understand by "Interculturality"!

28. How have you been prepared for the Area of operation, in particular about country, population and political situation?

- comprehensively and sufficiently
- we received the basic facts and the most important "Dos and Don'ts"
- to a lesser extent
- insufficiently
- other opinion (which?):

29. Did you inform yourself about the country, population and tasks before you were sent abroad?

- intensively
- only slightly
- not really

30. Do you think that in the pre-deployment training should be more emphasis on cultural similarities and differences?

- definitely yes
- rather yes
- a little more would not be bad
- probably not, because it was already sufficient

31. What is important for you in intercultural training?  
(multiple indications are possible)

- Dos and Don'ts
- national and cultural studies in general
- handling of stereotypes/clichés/prejudices
- political background of the target country/area of operations

32. What is your opinion about cooperation/coexistence with soldiers from other nations in your position?

- I like it very much
- it is quite O.K.

- I don't care
- I rather dislike it
- I don't like it at all
- no opinion

33. How did you receive information about your daily work during your Tour of duty?

- through my Austrian superiors
- through the informal (i.e. the Austrian) way
- through my international superiors
- through the informal international (i.e. soldiers from other nations) way

34. How often did you have contact with soldiers from other nations at your workplace?

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> every day            | <input type="checkbox"/> less than once a week |
| <input type="checkbox"/> at least once a week | <input type="checkbox"/> barely or not at all  |

35. Have you made friendships with soldiers from other nations and do you still keep in touch with them?

- yes, regularly       yes, but rarely       not really

36. Have you had the feeling, in contact with members of foreign armed forces, that you are

- esteemed and acknowledged  
 equal and welcome  
 disregarded and not fully respected  
 I do not remember any more

37. Concerning local population and local authorities: Did you have the feeling, that you are

- esteemed and acknowledged  
 equal and welcomed  
 disregarded and not fully respected  
 rejected and suspicious  
 I do not remember any more

38. How important are/were the following factors for your daily work during your mission abroad? (multiple indications are possible)

	very important	less important	not very important	not important at all	no opinion
nationality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
rank	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
English skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
social contacts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

other factors:

39. Was there a post-deployment processing/de-briefing/care after the repatriation (except the handing back of equipment and dismissal formalities), where you was asked about your experiences and knowledge?

- yes, it was quite O.K.
- only trivially
- not really



I again thank you for your patience, cooperation, but especially for your sincere and honest answers.

COL Dr. Josef ERNST

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More than fifty years ago the first Austrian contingent was sent to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Many of the around 70,000 Austrian soldiers however, were repeatedly abroad.

The thesis will raise the problematic situation that there are not enough linguistic resources within the Austrian Armed Forces in order to carry out the ambitious goals, both in the bilateral and multilateral context. It should offer problem-solving and recommendations to enable military personnel to be able to interact linguistically and culturally successfully in different scenarios.

Along with the surveys and the statistical evaluation of the questions given by a questionnaire on language skills, language training and intercultural aspects, combined with the reflection of the own foreign assignment experience, should provide an empirical confirmation of the measures taken to the given statements and the theoretical relationship.

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