

# Integration of Combat Stories and Military Motivational Speeches into Ukrainian Language Teaching of Future Officers

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## Abstract

This article is devoted to the justification and empirical verification of the methodology for integrating combat stories and military motivational speeches into the teaching of the Ukrainian language to future officers in higher military educational institutions. The theoretical basis of the study is formed by modern approaches to the analysis of military discourse, leadership rhetoric, and authentic texts in professionally oriented language teaching. Based on critical discourse analysis, pragmatics, and narrative approaches, a system of criteria for selecting authentic military texts (authenticity, genre relevance, rhetorical structure, value content, didactic suitability) was developed and operationalized in the form of an evaluation matrix. A corpus of combat narratives and motivational speeches selected using the proposed methodology was included in the experimental training.

The empirical part covers a pedagogical experiment involving a control group ( $n = 154$ ) and an experimental group ( $n = 156$ ). To evaluate the effectiveness of the methodology, pre- and post-testing, content analysis of written and oral works, expert assessment of rhetorical and leadership skills, as well as standardized questionnaires of emotional and volitional stability were used. The results of the study showed statistically significant improvements in the experimental group in terms of rhetorical skills, analytical competence, stylistic compliance with military discourse, and emotional stability ( $p < 0.001$ ), while the changes in the control group remained minimal. The proposed methodology confirmed its pedagogical relevance and applied value for military professional language education.

**Keywords:** combat stories, narratives, military motivational speeches, military discourse, professional and communicative competence, leadership rhetoric, authentic texts, officer training

## 1. Introduction

In the training of future officers, the Ukrainian language is traditionally viewed as a means of normative and business communication and formalization of official decisions, which effectively limits its potential in the formation of professional and leadership competencies. At the same time, the realities of the defensive war being waged by Ukraine's security and defense forces against the aggression of the Russian Federation have radically changed the perception of the role of language training for military personnel. Language is not only an instrument of regulation, but also a space in which motivation, leadership behavior, moral resilience, and psychological readiness to act in critical situations are formed. Current research in military education confirms that without targeted and professionally oriented language training, an officer cannot fully perform management, coordination, and communication functions in dynamic and risky situations where the effectiveness of unit interaction, the timeliness of decisions, and the safety of personnel depend on the accuracy of speech. (Siegel, Vance, & Nilsson, 2024).

The comparative analysis of the English and German term-formation in the military and legislative documents was presented in the studies of I. Bloschynskiy, L. Borakovskyy, G. Prihodko, T. Novikova, N. Moroz & N. Kalyniuk; O.

Yankovets, T. Mitrousova, O. Svintsitska et al (Bloshchynskiy et al., 2021; Yankovets et al., 2023). The following researchers I. Bloshchynskiy, H. Bahrii, L. Nanivska, L. Tsviak, I. Isaieva, K. Skyba, S. Pilishek, N. Moroz, O. Herasimova, V. Yamkova & I. Mishchynska carried out gender characteristics research of individual's linguistic behavior in the framework of military translators' professional training (Bloshchynskiy, Bahrii, Nanivska, et al., 2022). Political print advertisements study in Ukraine in terms of its generic structure potential in multimodal texts was performed in the article of (Batrynychuk, et al., 2022). Another research presented that understanding is marked by a number of deviations, namely: a recipient has a rather wide cultural scope; has verbal thinking etc. (Formanova et al., 2022). Some scholars revealed a qualitative analysis of forming critical reading skills in a low-intermediate class of students (Hromova et al., 2022).

At the same time, Ukraine's combat experience in recent years has accumulated a significant body of personal stories, accounts from direct participants in combat operations and veterans, frontline appeals, speeches by commanders, and public messages from press officers of combat units. These texts do not simply describe events. They are forms of military narrative that simultaneously document experience, construct collective memory, and perform a powerful motivational function. Research on military narratives shows that short narrative forms, appeals from commanders to their subordinate military personnel, descriptions of combat episodes, field notes, operational notes, and frontline testimonies are effective tools for mediating the experience of war. They contribute to the mobilization of society as a whole and future officers during their training in higher military educational institutions, the formation of emotional involvement, and perform an important function of psychological support for those to whom they are addressed (Havriliuk, 2025).

In this context, combat stories and motivational speeches by commanders can be viewed as a specific segment of military discourse, saturated with emotional density, semantic accents, and ethical guidelines that shape the modern image of an officer of the Ukrainian Armed Forces.

Despite the existence of a large collection of authentic texts on military discourse, they are not yet actively used in the formal (traditional) training of future officers, particularly when they are studying the Ukrainian language. The current content of the academic discipline "Ukrainian Language for Professional Purposes," which is taught in higher military educational institutions, is mainly limited to normative and business texts and academic formats, while the actual professional activities of an officer involve a much wider range of communicative actions: from motivating and rallying personnel to arguing for unpopular decisions, providing psychological support to subordinates, and representing Ukraine in the international security environment. At the same time, contemporary studies of media discourse on military conflicts demonstrate the effectiveness of using specialized linguistic content that is as close as possible to the professional environment. In particular, analysis of real texts of military and media communication, research into their discursive strategies and rhetorical models confirm the importance of working with authentic materials, role-playing situations, and contextualized examples to develop the professional communication skills of officers (Geiko, 2023; Siegel, Vance, & Nilsson, 2024).

The integration of combat stories and motivational speeches into the academic discipline "Ukrainian Language for Professional Purposes," as well as distance learning courses in language, opens up the possibility of moving from "formal" language acquisition to the meaningful entry of future officers into professional military discourse. Analysis of real addresses by commanders, narratives of combatants, and military memoirs (Shumovetska, 2025) and other texts that already serve as sources of truthful information, mobilization, and support in society (Havriliuk, 2025), creates conditions for cadets to develop not only lexical, grammatical, and stylistic skills, but also rhetorical sensitivity, ethical responsibility for their statements, and understanding of the psychological consequences of speech acts in a combat situation.

Under such conditions, there is a need to theoretically and methodologically comprehend the possibilities of using combat stories and military motivational speeches as a holistic didactic resource in the language training of future officers in higher military educational institutions. The article proposes to consider the relevant texts as a key component of an improved model of Ukrainian language teaching, combining linguistic, rhetorical, psychological, and professional-military dimensions, and to outline the methodology for their integration into the educational process of higher military educational institutions. This is especially important now, when servicemen of the Armed Forces of Ukraine are participating in real combat operations.

## 2. Materials and Methods

The main purpose of the article is to justify the pedagogical expediency and methodological potential of integrating combat stories and military motivational speeches into the teaching of the Ukrainian language to future officers,

considering these texts as a tool for forming professional and communicative competence, developing leadership and rhetorical skills, and strengthening moral and psychological readiness to perform official duties.

### *2.1 Research Design*

To achieve this goal, a number of interrelated tasks were solved: analysis of theoretical approaches to the potential of military and media discourse in order to determine the linguistic, rhetorical, and psycholinguistic characteristics of combat stories and military motivational speeches; justification of the educational potential of these texts as a didactic resource in the formation of professional and communicative competence of future officers; determination of criteria for the selection of authentic texts suitable for integration into the discipline "Ukrainian Language for Professional Purposes," taking into account their genre specificity, rhetorical structure, and value content; processing sources and forming a selection of combat narratives and motivational speeches; practical implementation of the integration of selected texts into the educational process through discourse analysis, modeling of professional communicative situations, and performing role-playing tasks aimed at developing the rhetorical and leadership skills of cadets. The final stage of the study was to evaluate the effectiveness of the implemented methodology and determine its impact on the key components of the professional and communicative readiness of future officers.

### *2.2 Methods of Research*

The methodological basis of the study combines theoretical, linguistic, pedagogical, and empirical methods aimed at justifying the integration of combat stories and military motivational speeches into the Ukrainian language training of future border guard officers. At the initial stage, the following methods were used analysis, synthesis, and generalization of scientific works on military discourse, leadership rhetoric, and military language education (Murray et al., 2024; O’Gorman, 2010; Siegel, Vance & Nilsson, 2024), which allowed us to outline the conceptual framework of the research.

To study the structural, rhetorical, and pragmatic features of authentic military texts that are appropriate for use in the educational process, we used methods of critical discourse analysis, narrative and stylistic analysis, as well as a psycholinguistic approach to the study of military narratives (Flusberg et al., 2018; Zasiakin et al., 2025). The application of these methods and approaches made it possible to comprehensively analyze the selected authentic texts and identify the semantic dominants, emotional influence strategies, argumentation models, and characteristic linguistic markers inherent in combat narratives and military motivational speeches that shape the specificity of military and leadership rhetoric.

An important part of the study was the scientifically verified methodology for selecting authentic texts, which preceded the experimental training. The texts of combat stories and motivational speeches were selected on the basis of clearly defined criteria (authenticity, genre relevance, rhetorical structure, value content, didactic suitability), which were operationalized in the form of a criteria matrix. This approach ensured the evidence-based and reproducible quality of the text corpus used in the training process.

### *2.3 Pedagogical and Empirical Parts of the Research*

The pedagogical part of the study involved analyzing the current educational programs for training officers at military higher educational institutions in Ukraine (Bohdan Khmelnytskyi National Academy of State Border Guard Service of Ukraine, Military Academy (Odessa), Hetman Petro Sahaidachny National Army Academy) in order to identify potential areas for the integration of authentic military texts into the academic discipline "Ukrainian Language for Professional Purposes." The pedagogical modeling method was used to design fragments of training sessions based on combat narratives and motivational speeches, and content analysis was used to identify key thematic dominants, value orientations, and relevant communication strategies.

The empirical part of the study was based on the results of a pedagogical experiment conducted in two groups of future officers: a control group (CG, n = 154) and an experimental group (EG, n = 156). During the semester, the EG studied according to a developed methodology that involved the integration of combat stories and military motivational speeches into the discipline "Ukrainian Language for Professional Purposes," while the CG worked according to a traditional program without using the specified texts. To evaluate the effectiveness of the approach, pre- and post-testing was used to measure the dynamics of the cadets' rhetorical, analytical, leadership, and stylistic competencies, as well as indicators of emotional and volitional stability.

Empirical data was collected using a combined methodology and included quantitative and qualitative instruments: standardized test tasks, expert evaluation of oral and written presentations, stylistic compliance checklists, diagnostic questionnaires, portfolio analysis, and semi-structured interviews with cadets regarding their perception of the proposed methodology. This approach ensured the reliability and validity of the measurements and allowed us to track

changes in both speech skills and values and motivation. Student's t-test for independent samples was used for comparing the overall results of the EG and CG after the training completion.

The comprehensiveness of the empirical data - a combination of test results, expert assessments, behavioral observations, and cadet feedback - provided comprehensive confirmation of the pedagogical relevance and applied value of the proposed methodology. The results showed that the integration of combat stories and military motivational appeals contributes to the more active formation of professional-communicative, rhetorical, moral- psychological, and leadership competencies of future officers which are necessary for the effective performance of official duties in the modern conditions of military activity.

### 3. Literature Review

The result of solving the first task is the conclusion that in modern socio-humanitarian studies, there is a systematic transition from interpreting war as a set of facts to understanding it as a narrative and discursive phenomenon, within which eyewitness accounts, public speeches, media interpretations, and rhetorical models that shape the collective perception of events. The psycholinguistic approach to the study of war narratives deserves special attention. Research by S. Zasiakin and co-authors (Zasiakin, Kuperman, Hlova, & Zasiakina, 2022), based on personal stories of participants in the Russian-Ukrainian war, shows that such texts perform not only an informational but also a cognitive-therapeutic function, contributing to the processing of traumatic experiences, reducing stress levels, and forming an analytical style of speech. Further development of this direction is represented in the creation of a collection of written testimonies NoW (Narratives of War), which accumulates a significant amount of written testimonies about the war and allows us to trace how emotional states, fears, hopes, value orientations, and models of collective memory are fixed in language (Zasiakin, Zasiakina, Altman, Hryntus, & Kuperman, 2025). In this context, combat stories are considered an important type of narrative that combines individual experience and public understanding of war.

Another area that forms the theoretical basis of the study is the analysis of the rhetoric of military leadership and combat speeches. N. O'Gorman's review of K. Yellin's work *Battle Exhortation: The Rhetoric of Combat Leadership*" emphasizes that combat motivational speeches should be considered a separate genre of military communication, the purpose of which is not only instruction, but also mobilization, meaning-making, and value-based unity of the unit (O'Gorman, 2010). The relevance of this approach is confirmed by a comparative study of the crisis rhetoric of Presidents V. Zelensky, J. Bush, and former British Prime Minister W. Churchill. It demonstrates that the effectiveness of military-political speeches in critical periods is ensured by a combination of moral argumentation, appeal to a common mission, and the construction of collective subjectivity (Murray, Sandlin & Tatalovich, 2024). These findings provide an important theoretical basis for analyzing contemporary military speeches by commanders and military leaders of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, in particular addresses to personnel before and during combat operations.

Another important theoretical block is the study of military language education, which analyzes models of developing the communicative competence of military personnel. A scoping review by A. Siegel, M. Vance, and D. Nilsson, covering nearly three decades of Military English development, notes a steady trend away from formal grammatical models in favor of authenticity, situationality, and task-based learning (Siegel, Vance, & Nilsson, 2024). The most effective approaches are those that simulate real communication situations: briefings, radio exchanges, crisis messages, and intercultural interaction.

In this context, the results of a study by I. Bloschynskyi and co-authors are indicative, proving the effectiveness of text analysis as a key strategy in language learning that contributes to the development of analytical competence and the ability to interpret the content, structure, and rhetorical features of professionally oriented texts (Bloschynskyi et al., 2022). The authors emphasize that working with authentic texts, including narratives and motivational appeals, provides a deeper immersion into the content of professional activity and activates cognitive mechanisms for processing complex information.

This approach directly correlates with the idea of using combat stories and motivational appeals in a professionally oriented Ukrainian language course, since such texts reproduce the pragmatic reality of military service, and not just its normative and business dimension.

An additional dimension to the theoretical basis of the article is provided by research into linguistic models and metaphors in military discourse. The work of S. Flusberg, T. Matlock, and P. Thibodeau demonstrates that war metaphors perform not only a stylistic function but also a cognitive and meaning-making function, influencing the interpretation of conflicts, decision-making, and the formation of emotional responses in the audience (Flusberg, Matlock, & Thibodeau, 2018). This allows us to view combat narratives and speeches as textual structures that actively

construct reality for the addressee, setting the framework for the semantic organization of events and determining behavioral expectations.

Recent studies of motivational discourse (Yerznkyan & Harutyunyan, 2024; Al-Shboul et al., 2024) provide a comprehensive theoretical and methodological basis for analyzing military motivational speeches and combat stories as pedagogically relevant genres. These works demonstrate that motivational messages function through structured sequences of speech acts, holistic macro-intentions, inclusive strategies, and narrative framing.

Within the framework of Self-Determination Theory (Metzner et al., 2025) combat stories and military speeches can be interpreted as communicative practices that support autonomy and enhance cadets' intrinsic motivation, self-efficacy, and professional identity. At the same time, classical studies in critical discourse analysis, in particular the work of Teun A. van Dijk (Teun A. van Dijk, 2006), clearly demonstrate that discourse can be a means of "manipulation" — a form of social power that influences the perception, attitudes, and behavior of the addressee through linguistic structures, cognitive models, and rhetorical strategies. According to this model, manipulative communication involves not just persuasion, but hidden pressure, control of mental representations, and distortion of the addressee's independent reflection (Teun A. van Dijk, 2006). In the context of the military-educational environment, this perspective calls into question the advisability of the unlimited use of motivational speeches and combat narratives without ethical modulation. As the authors emphasize, it is important to distinguish between "ethically motivated discourse" — one that enhances autonomy, responsibility, and professional identity — and manipulative influence that suppresses autonomy and encourages unquestioning conformity.

Thus, an analysis of contemporary research on military discourse, combat rhetoric, and military language education gives reason to assert that combat stories and motivational speeches are a valuable didactic resource capable of combining linguistic training with the realities of professional activity for officers. Their integration into the educational process contributes to the development of analytical, rhetorical, and moral-psychological components of the professional and communicative competence of future border guard officers.

## 4. Results

### *4.1 Theoretical Analysis of Educational Potential of Combat Narratives and Military Motivational Appeals in the Training of Future Officers*

The educational potential of combat narratives and military motivational appeals in the training of future officers is determined by the fact that these texts reproduce authentic communicative situations of military service and provide cadets with a deep immersion in professional discourse. As a result, they serve as an effective means of developing rhetorical, analytical, and leadership skills that are critical for performing official duties in complex and responsible conditions. The results of a large-scale scoping review of Military English conducted by (Siegel, Vance, and Nilsson, 2024), convincingly demonstrate that the most effective means of developing the professional and communicative competence of military personnel are authentic texts that simulate real communicative tasks: briefings, radio exchanges, crisis messages, and narratives reflecting combat experience. The authors emphasize that it is contextually rich materials and tasks that contribute to the development of officers' linguistic readiness to act in stressful, dynamic conditions, where accuracy, conciseness, and semantic structure of speech are crucial.

The didactic value of combat speeches and addresses by commanders is confirmed by an analysis of military rhetoric presented in (O'Gorman, 2010) Review. The author emphasizes that combat motivational speeches constitute a separate genre of military communication aimed not only at conveying information, but also at mobilizing, constructing collective subjectivity, forming moral and psychological resilience, and uniting the unit. In this sense, combat addresses have high pedagogical potential, as they model scenarios of leadership speech that future officers must master in order to effectively manage personnel.

Additional arguments for the effectiveness of using authentic texts in language training are provided by a recent study by (Dja'far, 2023). The author argues that working with materials created for real-life communication situations significantly increases the motivation, engagement, and autonomy of learners. The author emphasizes that authentic texts provide a higher level of cognitive and emotional engagement than traditional teaching materials because they demonstrate real language models, stylistic variations, and situationally determined rhetorical devices. These characteristics are critically important for military education, as they allow future officers to simulate communicative actions in conditions that are as close as possible to those in service. In the context of integrating combat stories and military motivational speeches, Dja'far's (2023) findings confirm that working with authentic texts promotes the development of analytical thinking, the formation of rhetorical skills, and increased readiness to make decisions in

professional situations.

Taken together, these scientific data provide grounds for asserting that combat narratives and motivational military speeches are a valuable didactic resource for studying the Ukrainian language for professional purposes. Their use allows not only to develop language competence, but also to form strategically important components of an officer's professional and communicative competence: the ability to model leadership narratives (speeches, messages), exert motivational influence through language, ensure unit cohesion, and maintain the moral and psychological state of personnel.

The effective integration of combat narratives and military motivational appeals into the training course "Ukrainian Language for Professional Purposes" requires a scientifically verified methodology for selecting authentic texts. It is proposed that the methodological basis for such a methodology be built on the basis of research on the use of authentic language material presented in the works of T. Polonska (Polonska, 2016), A. Gilmore (Gilmore, 2007), as well as Torregrosa Benavent and Sánchez-Reyes Peñamaría (Torregrosa Benavent & Sánchez-Reyes Peñamaría, 2011), which demonstrate that authentic texts increase motivation, develop communication skills, and form professionally relevant skills.

In the work of T. Polonska (Polonska, 2016), a classification of criteria for selecting authentic materials is proposed, such as authenticity, situational relevance, informativeness, cognitive value, relevance, and pragmatism, which, in our opinion, also relevant in the context of military professional education. These criteria allow us to assess the extent to which a text reflects real communicative situations and whether it can be used to develop an officer's professionally oriented communication skills.

In his classic work, A. Gilmore (Gilmore, 2007) argues that authentic materials are created not for educational purposes, but for communicative purposes. Therefore, they significantly enhance the realism of the learning process, develop the ability of learners to interpret complex linguistic and pragmatic structures, and contribute to the formation of strategic competence. This conclusion directly correlates with the need for future officers to understand and produce texts that function in real combat and management conditions.

In their study, Torregrosa Benavent and Sánchez-Reyes Peñamaría (Torregrosa Benavent, & Sánchez-Reyes Peñamaría, 2011) emphasize that the use of authentic materials in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses should be based on the principle of maximum professional relevance: texts should reproduce the lexical, pragmatic, genre, and communicative features of the professional environment. A similar approach is necessary in the context of future officers studying the Ukrainian language. In this process, the key elements are genre typology (combat narrative, instructional text, motivational speech, operational report), rhetorical structure, and value markers inherent in the professional activities of an officer.

#### *4.2 Stages of the Proposed Methodology Implementation*

With this in mind, the first step in implementing the proposed methodology is to form a clear system of educational goals and outline the competency framework for the discipline "Ukrainian Language for Professional Purposes" (Table 1). At this stage, it is determined which components of professional and communicative competence should be formed in future officers, in particular, the ability to effectively construct oral and written statements, exert persuasive and motivational influence, analyze and interpret complex discursive structures, maintain communication in conditions of increased responsibility, and perform leadership functions using the Ukrainian language.

A clear definition of these competencies and their content (communicative - ability to formulate oral and written statements accurately, logically, and clearly in professional situations; rhetorical - ability to apply strategies of persuasion, motivation, and mobilization within the context of military communication; analytical - ability to interpret the structure, author's intention, and pragmatic content of professional texts; leadership - ability to use the Ukrainian language as a tool for leadership and managerial influence in the unit; emotional and stress resistance - ability to control emotions, support subordinates in stressful situations, respond appropriately to combat experience; value and worldview - awareness of moral guidelines, ethical norms, and values of military service) provides a methodological basis for the selection of authentic materials, allowing the content of the texts to be correlated with specific learning outcomes.

This approach ensures that the use of combat narratives and military motivational speeches will not be fragmentary, but purposeful, aimed at developing the skills that are key to an officer's professional activity.

**Table 1.** Learning Objectives and Competency Framework for the Discipline "Ukrainian Language for Professional Purposes"

| Competency block                                  | Expected learning outcomes                                                                                                                                               | Examples of learning activities (using combat stories and speeches)                                                                              |
|---------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Communicative competence</b>                   | Constructs meaningful statements in the context of business communications; Uses appropriate speech patterns; is proficient in the stylistic norms of military discourse | Analysis of combat narratives; reproduction of the logical structure of an event; writing a field report or short report                         |
| <b>Rhetorical competence</b>                      | Identifies rhetorical strategies in speeches; creates own motivational appeals; correctly applies speech acts of influence                                               | Discourse analysis of commanders' speeches; modeling an address to a platoon; rhetorical exercises "call to action"                              |
| <b>Analytical competence</b>                      | Analyzes the compositional structure of the text; identifies intentions and speech acts; draws reasoned conclusions based on textual data                                | Interpretation of combat stories; determination of the intentions of commanders' speeches; comparison of different types of discursive influence |
| <b>Leadership Communication competence</b>        | Demonstrates readiness for speech leadership; Formulates messages aimed at uniting people; Possesses crisis communication techniques                                     | Role-playing exercises "commander's address"; crisis communication scenarios; group analysis of speeches by military leaders                     |
| <b>Emotional and stress resistance competence</b> | Recognizes emotional markers in combat texts; Uses supportive language Applies emotional stabilization techniques                                                        | Analysis of the emotional tone of narratives; working with psychological recommendations; simulation of communication under stress               |
| <b>Value and worldview component</b>              | Identifies value meanings in texts; is able to formulate ethical messages; adheres to the norms of officer communication                                                 | Interpretation of value dominants in motivational speeches; analysis of the image of duty and responsibility                                     |

The second stage is to define the criteria for selecting material, which cover the following dimensions: genre authenticity, rhetorical structure, communicative functionality, value content, ethical acceptability, linguistic accessibility, and didactic suitability. These criteria are consistent with the classification of T. Polonska (Polonska, 2016) and the approaches presented in A. Gilmore (Gilmore, 2007), and Torregrosa Benavent and Sánchez-Reyes Peñamaría (Torregrosa Benavent & Sánchez-Reyes Peñamaría, 2011), which ensures the scientific validity of the text selection process.

The third stage is the operationalization of the defined criteria by creating a criteria matrix - a structured assessment tool that ensures a systematic and objective comparison of potential texts. The use of such a matrix makes it possible to streamline the process of selecting materials, ensure their genre and functional diversity, avoid duplication of content, and rationally balance the ratio between narrative, motivational, instructional, and analytical texts. This approach guarantees methodological transparency, consistency, and integrity in the formation of educational content.

A generalized matrix of criteria is presented in Table 2, which can be used as a tool for evaluating and systematizing texts (speeches and combat narratives).

Explanation of the matrix use: 0 points – criterion not met; 1–2 points – partial compliance; 3–4 points – full compliance and high pedagogical value of the text. After evaluation according to all criteria, an overall indicator of the text's suitability for inclusion in the training course is formed.

After evaluating all materials according to the criteria of the matrix, an integral indicator of the suitability of each text is formed. Texts that score less than 20 points (less than 50%) are excluded from the selection as irrelevant to the discipline. Materials with a score of 20–27 points (50–69%) can be used as additional or optional elements, subject to pedagogical adaptation. Texts that scored 28 points or more (70–100%) are recognized as fully consistent with the educational goals and recommended for integration into the course "Ukrainian Language for Professional Purposes."

The final stage of the methodology involved an in-depth verification of the didactic suitability of the selected texts in educational interaction. This involved assessing their ability to serve as a basis for: educational discussions; in-depth textual and discursive analysis; rhetorical exercises; interpretation of pragmatic meanings; modeling of professional communication situations; creation of speeches, addresses, and mini-narratives by cadets.

**Table 2.** Matrix of Criteria for Selecting Authentic Texts for the Discipline "Ukrainian Language for Professional Purposes"

| Criterion                          | Description of criterion                                                                        | Compliance indicators                                                                          | Rating (0–4) |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Authenticity of origin</b>      | The text was created in a real military or official context without didactic adaptation         | presence of a reliable source; real author; realistic vocabulary                               | 0–4          |
| <b>Genre conformity</b>            | Correspondence of the text to typical genres of military discourse (narrative, speech, address) | clear genre structure; presence of genre markers                                               | 0            |
| <b>Rhetorical structure</b>        | Presence of logical composition and expressive speech acts                                      | introduction – main part – climax – conclusion/appeal; intentional clarity                     | 0            |
| <b>Communicative functionality</b> | The text performs a real professional function (motivates, instructs, informs, analyzes)        | practical significance; compliance with service scenarios                                      | 0–4          |
| <b>Value content</b>               | The text reflects key military values                                                           | responsibility, resilience, honor, collective subjectivity                                     | 0            |
| <b>Ethical acceptability</b>       | Appropriateness of content for an educational context                                           | absence of destructive or overly traumatic elements; compliance with military ethics standards | 0–4          |
| <b>Linguistic accessibility</b>    | Language level appropriate for cadets' training                                                 | Realistic but understandable vocabulary; possibility of explaining complex terms.              | 0            |
| <b>Didactic suitability</b>        | The text is suitable for educational tasks: analysis, interpretation, rhetorical exercises      | potential for discussions, role-playing, writing speeches                                      | 0            |
| <b>Situational relevance</b>       | Proximity of content to typical military situations                                             | command, briefing, stressful situations, decision-making                                       | 0–4          |
| <b>Balance in the text corpus</b>  | The text complements the existing set and supports genre diversity                              | Uniqueness; no duplication of genre or content                                                 | 0            |

#### 4.3 Formation of a Representative Selection of Authentic Texts (combat narratives and motivational speeches)

As a result of applying the proposed methodology, a representative selection of authentic texts was formed, the core of which is combat narratives (individual and collective) and military motivational speeches — key genres relevant to the task of integrating combat experience and leadership rhetoric into the discipline of "Ukrainian Language for Professional Purposes." These genres provide maximum didactic value because they reproduce the real communicative dynamics of military service, combining emotional and pragmatic content, rhetorical strategies, and elements of professional thinking (Table 3).

In addition to the main genres, the selection includes a limited number of supporting materials, in particular selected examples of crisis or historical military rhetoric, as well as short contextual texts (e.g., fragments of media descriptions of combat operations or psychological comments) that perform an auxiliary interpretive function. These materials are not an independent object of analysis, but they provide a broader understanding of the situations in which combat stories and motivational appeals are formed. Below is a table with the characteristics of the selection of authentic texts.

Thus, the proposed selection methodology takes into account not only the formal and structural characteristics of the texts, but above all their potential to contribute to the development of the professional and communicative competence of future officers through the authentic, meaningful, and valuable reproduction of real military discourse.

**Table 3.** A Selection of Authentic Texts (combat narratives and motivational speeches) Selected According to a Criteria Matrix for Integration into the Introductory Discipline "Ukrainian Language for Professional Purposes"

| Genre / Text type                                                          | Source / Author                                                                                                                         | Brief summary of content                                                                                                | Didactic potential                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Combat narrative (personal accounts of military personnel)</b>          | Military publications on social media, official resources, blogs; a collection of authentic written texts about war (Narratives of War) | Personal descriptions of combat, situations within the unit; reflections, stories, strategic decisions.                 | Analysis of narrative structure at interpretation of pragmatic meanings; development of the ability to create one's own combat reflections, stories; formation of empathy and communication skills. |
| <b>Combat narrative (collective history of the unit)</b>                   | Official materials of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, Military Media Center, ArmyInform                                                    | Description of the unit's actions in a specific operation, decisions, and episodes.                                     | Working out the logical structure of the action; analysis of collective subjectification strategies; tactical development of analytical speech.                                                     |
| <b>Commander's motivational speech (before battle)</b>                     | Addresses by commanders of the Armed Forces of Ukraine in open sources                                                                  | Call for unity, endurance, combat readiness; appeal to common goals and moral values.                                   | Rhetorical analysis; study of mobilization strategies; development of skills to create one's own motivational speeches.                                                                             |
| <b>Motivational speech after completing a task / in a crisis situation</b> | Video addresses by commanders and military leaders                                                                                      | Assessment of unit actions, strengthening of morale, formation of a sense of mission.                                   | Working on positive reinforcement techniques; analysis of communication under stress; modeling of one's own crisis appeals.                                                                         |
| <b>Historical examples of military rhetoric (selectively)</b>              | V. Zelensky, W. Churchill, other leaders (only relevant excerpts)                                                                       | Examples of highly effective crisis rhetoric that are relevant for analyzing Ukrainian speeches.                        | Comparative rhetorical analysis; identification of universal structures of motivational discourse; formation of leadership language culture.                                                        |
| <b>Supporting operational fragment (for context only)</b>                  | Press service of the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine; spokespersons for the defense forces                                               | Concise report on the situation, serving as background material for understanding the combat context of the narratives. | Providing context for interpreting combat stories; working with factual information.                                                                                                                |
| <b>Supporting psychological commentary</b>                                 | Military psychologists, moral and psychological support centers                                                                         | Advice on overcoming stress, regulating emotions, behavior in crisis situations; combat experience.                     | Helps to interpret the emotional and pragmatic meanings of combat narratives more deeply; promotes the development of critical reading, empathic communication, and self-regulation skills.         |

#### 4.4 Practical Integration of Combat Stories and Military Motivational Speeches into the Educational Process

The practical integration of combat stories and military motivational speeches into the educational process, particularly during the study of the discipline "Ukrainian Language for Professional Purposes," was implemented through the introduction of a complex of discourse-analytical, rhetorical, and situational-modeling forms of work. The implementation was based on a pre-selected corpus of authentic texts, which included combat narratives, commanders' addresses, fragments of operational reports, and psychological recommendations.

At the first stage, cadets worked with authentic combat narratives, analyzing their compositional structure, pragmatic intentions, speech acts, and rhetorical devices. This helped them understand the genre specifics of military narrative, its key functions—support, and motivation—as well as develop skills in recognizing emotional markers and strategies of communicative influence.

During practical tasks, for example, cadets worked on a real front-line story published by the press service of the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine, in which a soldier describes the evacuation of the wounded under fire. Cadets identified the main structural components of the text (exposition, development of events, climax, denouement), the

author's intention, typical speech acts, emotional markers (tension, responsibility, solidarity), and characteristic rhetorical devices, in particular metaphorical images and appeals to a common mission.

This analysis combined linguistic and value-psychological analysis of the material and demonstrated the high effectiveness of combat narratives in shaping the professional and communicative competence of future officers.

The second area of practical work was the study of military motivational speeches by commanders. Cadets analyzed authentic speeches, identifying their structure, rhetorical strategies, types of argumentation, and means of mobilization. Using the example of a commander's speech before a combat mission, cadets identified the main compositional parts, appeals to professional duty, formulas of support, and calls for unity.

After analyzing military motivational speeches, cadets performed practical tasks to create their own addresses adapted to typical service and operational situations. In particular, they modeled short speeches before a unit's departure for a combat mission or duty at the state border, a commander's address in a crisis situation (sudden complications, losses, the need for rapid reorganization of actions), as well as messages of support after incidents affecting the morale and psychological state of personnel.

As part of these exercises, cadets practiced selecting rhetorical strategies, structuring messages, formulating statements accurately, balancing directives and support, and stabilizing the emotional state of the addressee. Such activities contributed to the development of rhetorical skills, the formation of leadership communication competence, the ability to motivate subordinates and exert effective influence through the Ukrainian language in conditions close to real operational and service challenges.

Situational modeling tasks are one of the key tools for integrating combat stories and military speeches into the learning process. Based on selected narratives, role-playing scenarios were created in which cadets reproduced the communicative behavior of a commander in typical service situations, such as explaining a combat mission, justifying risks, giving instructions, making a mobilization appeal, or communicating during stressful events. For example, after studying a real combat story about an evacuation, cadets were tasked with simulating a short briefing for their unit: outlining the purpose of the operation, emphasizing potential threats, determining the order of actions, and concluding the speech with a mobilization appeal. They were evaluated on the clarity of their wording, the logic of their statements, the presence of supporting elements, and their command communication style. Another example is a task in which cadets had to simulate communication with subordinates after a difficult incident based on a motivational speech by an officer. As part of the exercise, they had to demonstrate the ability to stabilize the emotional state of the group, use verbal means of support, avoid escalating tension, and create a sense of unity. In general, such scenarios contributed to the development of situational argumentation, empathetic leadership, and effective communication skills in conditions of increased responsibility, which are key components of the professional and communicative competence of future officers.

An important stage in the formation of the stylistic and rhetorical flexibility of future officers is the comparative analysis of different genres of military discourse. Cadets compared narrative, motivational, instructional, and analytical texts, identifying their structural features, rhetorical strategies, and leading communicative functions. This allowed them to understand the variability of speech models in the military professional environment and to master the skills of adapting speech to a specific service situation. For example, as part of a practical task, cadets compared a combat story, a motivational speech by a commander, an instructional address, and an analytical report. In the narrative, they identified emotional markers and the chronology of events; in the speech, calls to action and appeals to collective identity; in the instructional text, the accuracy and algorithmic nature of the wording; in the analytical document, they identified generalizations, cause-and-effect relationships, and evaluative conclusions.

After that, the cadets created their own short texts in all of the above genres based on a single situation, such as the detection of a new threat in the defense area. This approach helped develop the ability to consciously choose the appropriate speech strategy, reproduce the stylistic norms of various genres of military discourse, and communicate effectively in professional settings.

The final stage of the work was the creation of their own professional texts by the cadets—combat mini-narratives, motivational appeals, and official messages. Using the rhetorical models, speech acts, and structural schemes they had learned, the cadets reproduced typical communicative situations in military service, which allowed them to test the level of their professional communication skills. For example, cadets were given the task of writing a narrative based on a hypothetical but highly realistic situation: "detection of an enemy sabotage and reconnaissance group during a unit position change." In their texts, they had to describe the course of events, key decisions made by the commander, interaction between units, and the psychological state of personnel during and after a brief battle. They were assessed

on their ability to recreate the logic of events, convey professional details (orientation on the terrain, radio reports, mutual cover), use emotional markers (tension, determination, responsibility), and adhere to the stylistic norms of military narrative. Another type of task was to simulate a commander's address during the preparation of a unit for a complex operation — for example, "passing through a mine-hazardous area to unblock a unit that has been surrounded." Cadets had to formulate an address that combined a mobilization component with a rational explanation of the risks and safety measures. The speeches were evaluated on their ability to: apply rhetorical strategies of support and motivation; combine professional clarity with emotional stability; emphasize the importance of discipline, coordination, and responsibility; and conclude with a convincing but balanced call to action.

Cadets also created an official report on the topic of "sudden detection of changes in enemy behavior" when, according to observation data, a decrease in the intensity of shelling, suspicious activity of drones, or movement of enemy equipment was recorded. In such texts, it was necessary to reconcile objective information with analytical assumptions, adhering to an official business style: clearly present the observation data, indicate the time frame, identify possible scenarios for the development of the situation, and offer priority recommendations for the command.

Completing these tasks helped students master the logical organization of speech, rhetorical structuring of text, accuracy and conciseness of official language, the ability to argue decisions, and adherence to ethical norms of officer communication in conditions of increased responsibility.

#### 4.5 Evaluation Procedure of the Effectiveness of the Implemented Methodology

The final task of the study is to evaluate the effectiveness of the implemented methodology and determine its impact on the key components of the professional and communicative readiness of future officers while studying the academic discipline "Ukrainian Language for Professional Purposes." The evaluation was carried out on the basis of a mixed methodological approach that combined quantitative, qualitative, and comparative methods of analysis. The procedure involved determining the increase in the professional and communicative competencies of future officers, as well as measuring the rhetorical skills, leadership communication skills, and emotional and volitional stability of cadets in simulated professional situations.

To ensure the objectivity of the research results, a pedagogical experiment was organized with the participants divided into experimental and control groups. The experimental group (EG,  $n = 156$ ) was taught using a developed methodology that included the use of combat stories, military motivational speeches, role-playing scenarios, discourse-oriented analysis, and rhetorical training. The control group (CG,  $n = 154$ ) studied the discipline according to the traditional program without the use of authentic military material. EG and CG were statistically homogeneous, cadets in these groups were in their second year, and their academic performance (arithmetic mean per group) was approximately the same.

This experimental design allowed us to compare learning outcomes and determine the effectiveness of the proposed methodology for developing professional communication skills.

**Table 4.** Compact Diagnostic Checklist

| Criterion                          | Indicators (3 per criterion)                                                                                    | Score<br>(0–4) |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>1. Rhetorical mastery</b>       | (1) Logical structure; (2) Coherence & argumentation; (3) Use of rhetorical strategies                          | —              |
| <b>2. Leadership communication</b> | (1) Motivation & support; (2) Clarity of instructions; (3) Effectiveness under stress                           | —              |
| <b>3. Analytical competence</b>    | (1) Identification of intentions; (2) Recognition of rhetorical markers; (3) Causal analysis                    | —              |
| <b>4. Emotional resilience</b>     | (1) Emotional regulation; (2) Communicative stability under pressure; (3) Use of regulatory linguistic formulas | —              |
| <b>5. Stylistic accuracy</b>       | (1) Precision of formulations; (2) Official-business style compliance; (3) Correct use of terminology           | —              |
| <b>6. Ethical orientation</b>      | (1) Adherence to ethical norms; (2) Expression of professional values; (3) Reflexive judgment                   | —              |

\*Total (max 72): 0–35 = low; 36–55 = moderate; 56–72 = high competence

To obtain quantitative and qualitative parameters, a structured diagnostic checklist was used, based on key competencies formed during the integration of combat stories and military motivational speeches into the Ukrainian language training of future officers (Table 4). The checklist was adapted for classroom and individual work and was used by teachers and experts. The checklist was applied before the start of the experimental training (through the implementation of the author's methodology for integrating motivational speeches and combat stories into the Ukrainian language training of future officers) and after its completion.

The total score (max 72) was determined by summing the scores for six criteria, each of which consisted of three indicators. Each indicator was rated on a scale of 0–4, allowing for a maximum of 12 points per criterion and 72 points in total.

The results of the assessment of the control group (CG) and the experimental group (EG) before and after the implementation of the methodology of integrating combat stories and military motivational speeches are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5.** Results of Pre- and Post-Testing in Control and Experimental Groups

| Criterion (max 12)                 | Control Group (n = 154) | Control Group Post-test (M ± SD) | Experimental Group (n = 156) | Experimental Group Post-test (M ± SD) |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
|                                    | Pre-test (M ± SD)       |                                  | Pre-test (M ± SD)            |                                       |
| <b>1. Rhetorical mastery</b>       | 7.1 ± 1.8               | 7.4 ± 1.7                        | 7.0 ± 1.9                    | <b>8.4 ± 1.6</b>                      |
| <b>2. Leadership communication</b> | 6.8 ± 1.9               | 6.9 ± 1.8                        | 6.7 ± 1.8                    | <b>8.2 ± 1.5</b>                      |
| <b>3. Analytical competence</b>    | 7.3 ± 1.6               | 7.4 ± 1.7                        | 7.2 ± 1.7                    | <b>8.7 ± 1.4</b>                      |
| <b>4. Emotional resilience</b>     | 6.5 ± 2.0               | 6.6 ± 2.1                        | 6.4 ± 2.1                    | <b>8.0 ± 1.8</b>                      |
| <b>5. Stylistic accuracy</b>       | 7.4 ± 1.7               | 7.5 ± 1.6                        | 7.4 ± 1.7                    | <b>8.5 ± 1.3</b>                      |
| <b>6. Ethical orientation</b>      | 7.5 ± 1.5               | 7.6 ± 1.5                        | 7.5 ± 1.6                    | <b>8.3 ± 1.4</b>                      |
| <b>Total (max 72)</b>              | <b>42.6 ± 6.5</b>       | <b>43.4 ± 6.4</b>                | <b>42.2 ± 6.7</b>            | <b>50.1 ± 6.1</b>                     |

Before the experiment, the indicators of the control and experimental groups did not differ statistically ( $p > 0.05$ ), which confirms their equivalence. After the introduction of the methodology in the control group, the increase was minimal and statistically insignificant. In contrast, the experimental group showed a steady improvement in all criteria, especially in analytical competence (+1.5), rhetorical skills (+1.4), and stylistic conformity to military discourse (+1.1). The overall increase was +7.9 points, which qualifies it as significant ( $p < 0.01$ ).

To compare the overall results of the experimental and control groups after the completion of training, Student's t-test for independent samples was used. The results showed a statistically significant advantage of the experimental group ( $M = 50.1$ ;  $SD = 6.1$ ;  $n = 156$ ) compared to the control group ( $M = 43.4$ ;  $SD = 6.4$ ;  $n = 154$ ):  $t(308) = 8.90$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ; Cohen's d effect size = 1.08 (large effect). That is, the proposed technique is statistically significant and has a practical effect.

## 5. Discussion

The obtained results indicate that the integration of combat narratives and military motivational speeches into the academic discipline "Ukrainian Language for Professional Purposes" functions as an effective didactic mechanism for developing the professional-communicative, rhetorical, and leadership readiness of future officers. The positive dynamics observed in the experimental group can be logically explained by the high contextual relevance of the selected textual materials, which reproduce real scenarios of military communication and ensure the transfer of speech skills into professional situations. An additional factor of effectiveness is the structured matrix for material selection, which guarantees genre appropriateness, rhetorical expressiveness, and value-based richness of the instructional content.

The findings are consistent with contemporary approaches to military language education that emphasize authenticity, situational relevance, and task-based learning design. At the same time, the study expands current perspectives by demonstrating the potential of Ukrainian-language military discourse as a resource not only for linguistic accuracy but also for developing cadets' emotional resilience and leadership-oriented speech. The multi-channel assessment system and the proposed instructional sequence (analysis – transformation – productive speech – reflection) possess clear

practical value and create preconditions for scaling the methodology in higher military educational institutions.

At the same time, the results should be interpreted with certain limitations in mind. The study was conducted within a single educational context and over a limited time interval, which necessitates further cross-institutional and longitudinal verification. Promising directions for future research include expanding the sample, comparing different types of military discourse, and strengthening the objectivity of assessment through automated discourse analysis tools.

Additional attention should be given to the methodological standardization of ethical criteria for selecting war-related texts for educational use. It also appears advisable to examine the durability of the developed skills in a delayed perspective and within blended or distance learning environments. This would help clarify the boundaries of applicability of the proposed methodology and enhance its evidential robustness across different models of military education.

## 6. Conclusions

The results of the study confirmed the effectiveness of integrating combat stories and military motivational speeches into the Ukrainian language training of future officers as a means of developing professional and communicative competence. The use of authentic texts of military discourse provided cadets with a deeper immersion in real communicative situations, activated their ability to analyze rhetorical strategies, interpret pragmatic meanings, and reproduce communicative models characteristic of an officer's professional activity.

The proposed methodology demonstrated a positive impact on the formation of cadets' rhetorical skills, leadership communication, analytical skills, stylistic accuracy, and emotional and volitional stability. A comparative analysis of the experiment results showed statistically significant improvements in the experimental group, where the systematic use of combat narratives and motivational speeches contributed to the transition from partially formed skills to a high level of professional communicative readiness.

The practical implementation of the methodology proved that combat stories and military speeches can serve as a full-fledged didactic resource that stimulates the development of critical thinking, situational argumentation, ethical reflection, and the ability to communicate effectively as a leader. Their use provides not only linguistic but also psychological and value-based training for future officers, shaping their readiness to act responsibly and effectively in complex combat situations.

At the same time, the study has certain limitations related to the sample, the time frame of the experiment, and dependence on a specific educational context. Further research may be aimed at expanding the corpus of authentic texts, testing the methodology in various military universities, developing digital resources for working with combat narratives, and studying the long-term impact of this approach on the professional training of officers. The integration of combat narratives and military motivational speeches contributes to the development of professional-communicative, leadership, and moral-psychological competencies of future officers, strengthens their readiness to make decisions in complex service situations, and provides a deeper understanding of the value and discursive foundations of the military profession.

Thus, the results of the study show that the integration of combat stories and military motivational speeches is an effective and promising direction for innovative language training that meets the modern requirements of military education and contributes to improving the quality of communication skills of future officers.

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