

*Agnietė Žotkevičiūtė**

The General Jonas Žemaitis Military Academy of Lithuania

The Manifestation of Cultural Awareness of Military Personnel Participating in International Operations

The article provides a model of cultural awareness applied to the assessment of the manifestation of cultural awareness of military personnel participating in international operations and empirically assesses the manifestation of cultural awareness of the Lithuanian military personnel that have participated in international operations. In the first part of the article, competences constituting cultural awareness and methods of their acquisition are defined and, on the basis of the peculiarities of the cultural awareness of military personnel revealed in the article, a model of cultural awareness is formed. In the second part, the cultural awareness and methods of its acquisition of the Lithuanian military personnel that have participated in international operations is empirically assessed. Having assessed the cultural awareness of the Lithuanian military personnel that have participated in international operations, generalizations and recommendations concerning the cultural awareness of Lithuanian military personnel are provided.

Introduction

One of the essential reasons for the failure of the international operation “Iraqi Freedom” was the fact that, as soon as the early combat phase came to an end, the coalition forces realized that they had been operating in a completely foreign cultural environment¹. In the Iraqi culture, the organizational structure of insurgents is based on the joining of families and tribes while society characteristics create the medium for the employment of the asymmetric warfare strategy, i.e. the use of improvised explosive devices and suicide bombers-terrorists. Even in warfare, they followed neither the Geneva Convention nor informal commitments or rules².

* *Agnietė Žotkevičiūtė* is a Lecturer of the Department of Political Science of the Military Academy of Lithuania Address: Šilo 5a, 10332 Vilnius; tel. 8-5-2103569; e-mail: agniete.zotkeviciute@mil.lt

¹ Scales R., “Culture-Centric Warfare”, The Naval Institute: Proceedings, U.S. Army (Retired), October 2004. Internet access: http://www.military.com/NewContent/0,13190,NI_1004_Culture-P1,00.html, [referred to: 20-11-2012].

² McFate M., “Anthropology and Counterinsurgency: The Strange Story of their Curious Relationship”, *Military Review*, March-April, 2005, p. 24-38.

Operation “Iraqi Freedom” revealed that the settlement of a military conflict on the basis of the technological army superiority without paying attention to the cultural awareness of the military personnel is not effective³. The shortcomings of the excessive reliance on the technological superiority have been aptly defined by the observation of the Commander of the 3rd Infantry Division: “I had perfect situational awareness. What I lacked was cultural awareness. I knew where every enemy tank was dug in on the outskirts of Tallil. Only problem was, my soldiers had to fight fanatics charging on foot or in pickups and firing AK47s and RPGs. Great technical intelligence... Wrong enemy.”⁴

Armies of NATO countries more and more frequently participate in stabilization, peace enforcement, security or humanitarian operations the implementation of which requires the ability of military personnel to get involved in social interaction with other cultures,⁵ gain the support of the local population and reduce their support to the opposition⁶; thus, successful implementation of international operations becomes inseparable from cultural awareness of military personnel⁷. On the one hand, the application of cultural awareness during international operations helps to attract the support of the local population: understanding the culture of a foreign country – the values of the locals, the motives for the taken decisions and behavior – being aware of how the words, behavior and actions of military personnel are perceived, interpreted and assessed by the local population, may help earn their respect, trust and support⁸. Attracting the support of the local population enhances possibilities for the successful implementation of an international operation because locals can provide the necessary information to the military, assists in strengthening the cooperation between the local population and military personnel, encourages the support for the activity conducted by the military, helps in getting involved in local security initiatives and , finally, increases the support of the government of the country for the activity conducted by the military personnel⁹. Cultural awareness can also help military personnel

³ Scales R., “Army Transformation: Implications for the Future”, Statement of Major General Robert Scales, USA (ret.), Testifying before the House Armed Services Committee on July 15, 2004, 2.

⁴ Israel S., Scales R., “Iraq Proves It: Military Needs Better Intel”, New York Daily News, January 7, 2004.

⁵ Culhane E. et al., “Beyond Frontiers: The Critical Role of Cross-Cultural Competence in the Military”, *The Industrial-Organizational Psychologist*, Volume 50 Number 1, July 2012, p. 30-37, p. 31.

⁶ Freakley, B. C., “Cultural Awareness and Combat Power”, *Infantry*, Vol. 94, No. 2, March-April 2005, 2.

⁷ Culhane E., et al, (note 5), p. 30-37, p. 31-32.

⁸ Spencer E., “Brains and Brawn: Cultural Intelligence (CQ) as the ‘Tool of Choice’ in the Contemporary Operating Environment”, *Canadian Military Journal*, Vol. 11, No. 1, 2010, p.15-23, p. 19-20.

⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 20.

understand the enemy motivation, his decision-making processes and the system of values, perceive possible models of behavior, recognize informational operations and the propaganda under execution¹⁰.

Lithuania's participation in international operations is based on the signed collective defense and security agreements¹¹ following the implementation of which it has been planned to participate in three NATO-led operations by 31 December 2015. This translates into up to 200 military personnel and civilians to be deployed in Afghanistan, up to 5 military and civilian persons in Kosovo, up to 30 military personnel and civilians in the fighting against piracy operation "Ocean Shield", as well as 30 military personnel and civilians in the European Union-led fighting against piracy mission ATALANTA.¹² In implementing these international commitments, it is important to adjust to the changing nature of international operations, paying more attention to the research on the manifestation of cultural awareness of the Lithuanian military personnel participating in international operations and to the assessment of the cultural awareness potential. Therefore, the objective of this article is to determine how and on what basis it would be possible to assess cultural awareness of the military personnel participating in international operations as well as reveal the manifestation of cultural awareness of the Lithuanian military personnel participating in international operations.

1. Specifics of cultural awareness

1.1. Identification of cultural awareness competences

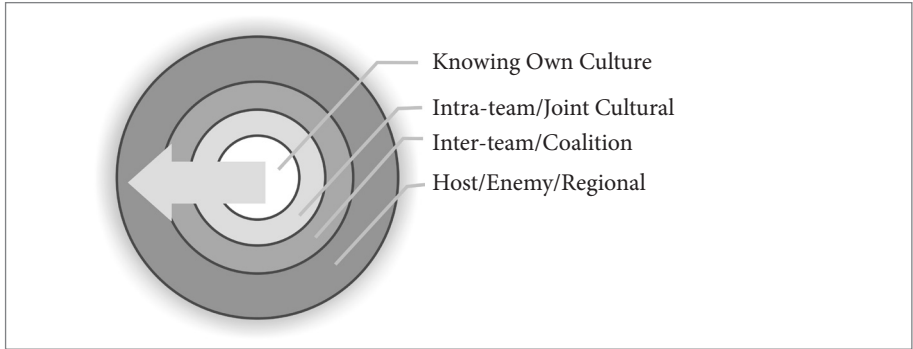
The need for cultural awareness depends on the nature and operational zone of the operations performed by the military. This need, though to the slightest extent, emerges when military personnel operate still in their own cultural environment and keeps increasing when they get involved in the activity carried out by coalition forces. The greatest need surfaces when military personnel conduct an international operation in another cultural

¹⁰ Ibidem, p. 21.

¹¹ Krašto apsaugos ministerija, „Tarptautinės operacijos“, [Ministry of National Defense, “International operations”], <http://kariuomene.kam.lt/lt/tarptautines_operacijos_786.html>, [referred to: 02-05-2013].

¹² Lietuvos Respublikos Seimas, „Dėl Lietuvos Respublikos karinių vienetų dalyvavimo tarptautinėse operacijose“, 2013 m. balandžio 23 d. Nr. XII-249, Valstybės žinios, 27-04-2013, Nr. 43-2101. [Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, “On the Participation of Military Units of the Republic of Lithuania in International Operations”, 23 April 2013, No XII-249, Valstybės žinios, 27-04-2013, No 43-2101]

environment. This change is reflected in the Michael J. McCloskey's "3C Bulls-Eye" model (see Figure 1)¹³.



The first internal sphere of the model illustrates that military personnel are first of all affected by their own culture, the understanding of which helps them acquire the potential to also understand another cultural environment¹⁵. The second internal sphere represents internal community/common culture, i.e. civilians and military personnel representing different societal groups though functioning in their own cultural environment. In this sphere demographic differences are encountered and the need for cross-cultural competences, which are important in order to understand human, organizational and cultural differences, emerges. The first two internal model spheres impart the idea that military personnel should know the values and tendencies of their own culture and, consequently, develop the ability to recognize the similarities and differences of the communication with representatives of other cultures¹⁶.

The second external model sphere comprises cultural and ganizational differences which military personnel encounter functioning in another ultural environment¹⁷. This sphere reflects the capability of the military to operate

¹³ McDonald Daniel P. et al., Developing and managing cross-cultural competence within the Department of Defense: Recommendations for learning and assessment, Paper submitted to the DLO, Revised October 27, 2008, p. 25-26.

¹⁴ Source: compiled according to McCloskey Michael J., Measuring Learning And Development In Army Cross-Cultural Competence, Draft Technical Report, Springfield, OH: 361 Interactive, LLC2008, cited from McDonald Daniel P. et al., Developing and Managing Cross-cultural Competence within the Department of Defense: Recommendations for Learning and Assessment, p. 25-26.

¹⁵ Reid Patrice A., Key Perspectives on the Interplay between Cross-Cultural Competence and Diversity Competence, Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute Directorate of Research, Technical Report Number 08-11, p. 10-11.

¹⁶ Ibidem.

¹⁷ Ibidem.

alongside their international partners, for example, with the armies of NATO countries, when different practices of behavior, tactics or even different objectives or different objective achievement methods of international operations are encountered¹⁸.

Finally, in the current global environment, armies get involved in reconstructive, humanitarian, security and other operations which are not directly related to military actions, while military personnel also function as diplomats in another cultural environment¹⁹. That is why the external model sphere reflects the attitude, stating that in order to effectively operate in another cultural environment and seeking to understand the values of the local population, enemy motives and behavior of the country where the international operation is conducted, military personnel have to develop diverse competences and skills²⁰ which may be identified as: 1) cross-cultural competences; 2) culture specific competences and 3) language competences (see Figure 2).

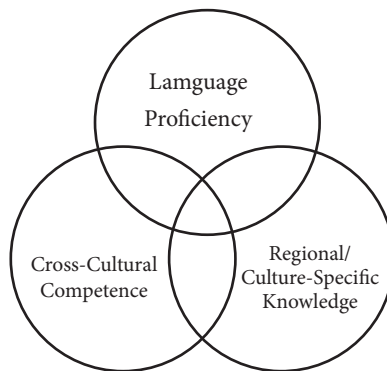


Figure 2. **Competences necessary for cultural awareness of the military participating in international operations²¹**

The interaction of these competences comprises all the competences necessary for a culturally aware military person, since they reflect the knowledge of military personnel of what to think and how to think and their ability to communicate with the locals of the country where the operation is conducted.

¹⁸ McDonald Daniel P., A brief note on the multi-layered nature of cross-cultural competence. DEOMI Technical Report No. 22-08, Patrick AFB, FL: DEOMI, 2008, p. 2.

¹⁹ Ibidem.

²⁰ Reid Patrice A., (note15), p. 11.

²¹ Source: compiled according to Abbe A., Building cultural capability for full-spectrum operations, ARI Study Report 2008-04, Arlington, VA: U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Science, 2008, p. 2.

Regional/culture-specific knowledge covers the knowledge of military personnel of *what to think*²² and is divided into: 1) knowledge about the concrete region or culture; 2) application of this knowledge during an international operation. Culture-specific competences comprise knowledge of the economic, religious and historical situation, social infrastructure, local population, politics, national and religious holidays, geographical, climatic and topographical state of the country where the operation is conducted.²³

Cross-cultural competence incorporates knowledge of *how to think* – how to communicate with representatives of another culture, how to interpret situations different from the cultural point of view, how to adjust one's behavior in seeking the desired results²⁴. These are the cognitive, behavioral and emotional skills and attributes of the military, as well as declarative, procedural and conceptual knowledge, skills of critical thinking and aspects of social involvement²⁵. Cross-cultural competences comprise:

- *Applying Cultural Knowledge* which covers the knowledge about other cultures: how in different cultures interpersonal relations and time are perceived, what is the need for personal space, style of thinking and the application of this information in assessing similarities and differences among cultures;
- *Applying Organizational Awareness* which reflects the ability to implement the mission and goals of the represented organization (institution), the aspiration to improve the policy, procedures, programs and

²² Ibidem, p. 2.

²³ Adapted according to "Language, Regional Expertise, and Culture (LREC) Capability Identification, Planning, and Sourcing, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction", CJCSI 3126.01A, 31 January 2013, p. G-1 also Yee K. et al., Cultural Intelligence: Its potential for military leadership development, Paper presented at the 47th International Military Testing Association in Singapore from 8 to 10 November 2005, p. 3, also Hardison Hardison Chaitra M. et al., Cross-cultural skills for deployed Air Force personnel: Defining cross-cultural performance, Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, 2009, p. 66, also Paris C., "Framework for Cross-Cultural Competence and Learning Recommendations", Book. Jerry C. Scarpate and Daniel P. McDonald (comps.), Celebrating the History & Future of Human Relations Research: DEOMI 8th Biennial Equal Opportunity, Diversity, and Culture Research Symposium, Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute (DEOMI) Press, Patrick AFB, FL, 2012, p. 135-154, p. 147 and 2012 m. spalio 31 d. Kariuomenės vado įsakymas Nr. V-1260 „Dėl karių rengimo tarptautinėms operacijoms (individualių įgūdžių atnaujinimo) kurso programos tvirtinimo“, p. 52-53. [The Chief of Defense's order No V-1260 on 31 October 2012 "On the Approval of the Course Program for Training Military Personnel for International Operations (renewal of individual skills)", p. 52-53].

²⁴ See Abbe A., Building Cultural Capability for Full-spectrum Operations, (note 21), also Abbe A., Halpin Stanley H., "The Cultural Imperative for Professional Military Education and Leader Development", Parameters, Winter 2010, 21-31, also Selmeski B., Military cross-cultural competence: Core concepts and individual development. Royal Military College of Canada Centre for Security, Armed Forces & Society Occasional Paper Series, Number 1, 2007.

²⁵ Culhane E. et al., (note 5) p. 33.

practice of the represented organization as well as the observation of the represented organization requirements when contradictory requirements are encountered within the organization and beyond it;

- *Cultural Perspective-Taking* which is the realization of the military personnel that the cultural attitudes and values they possess may be different from those of other cultures, the analysis of a different cultural context, the capability to assess how their actions and words may be interpreted in another cultural environment.
- *Communication* which comprises the knowledge about non-verbal communication signs when communicating with representatives of other cultures, the knowledge and observance of the acceptable norms and rules in communicating with representatives of other cultures as well as the ability to convey thoughts and ideas to the listener in an acceptable way;
- *Interpersonal Skills* incorporate the aspiration to get involved in another cultural environment – communicate and operate together with representatives of a different culture – and the formation of a positive image of a military person in another cultural environment;
- *Cultural Adaptability* is the ability to adjust one's behavior and clothing when showing respect to the values of another culture or observing customs call for it, also collection of the information about different culture people, environment, acceptable social rules and norms, thus improving the communication with others and one's own behavioral skills as well as the ability to adapt when encountering people professing different values, customs and cultures²⁶.
- *Language Proficiency* refers to the language knowledge of the country where an international operation is conducted and/or the language known to both the represented parties (to the military and the locals of the country where the international operation is conducted). Language skills not only facilitate the ability to understand and follow elements of a certain culture but also enable to get involved in social communication in another cultural environment thus crossing the boundaries of the observation of another culture and cultural differences²⁷.

During international operations, lack of language skills on the part of

²⁶ Adapted according to Renée Y., Foundation for Diversity Training: Competency Model and Learning Objectives, Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute, Directorate of Research, May 2011, p. 46-61, also Paris C., "Framework for Cross-Cultural Competence and Learning Recommendations", p. 135-154

²⁷ Watson Jeff R., The Role of Language Proficiency in Cross-cultural Competence (3C): A Fundamental Key to Intercultural Effectiveness in Military Personnel, United States Military Academy, West Point, New York, p. 3.

military personnel in communicating with the locals of the country where the international operation is conducted is quite often compensated for by using interpreters. In such a case, military personnel should be prepared to work through the interpreter – in using the services of the interpreter, the military should know what may be said and what is unacceptable to the local population; make sure that the interpreter conveys both the meaning of the words and the appropriate emotion; maintain the adequate non-verbal interaction and ascertain that the interpreter has adequate language proficiency corresponding to the requirements of the international operation²⁸.

1.2. Cultural awareness acquisition methods

Cultural awareness is acquired through diverse formal and informal activity – official courses and programs, learning in classrooms, organized before the military go on an international mission, work experience, individual studying as well as through the social interaction with the local population and other military personnel of the country where the international operation is conducted²⁹. The most frequently used methods for the development of cultural awareness are the following: 1) technology-based learning methods, 2) traditional face-to-face methods, 3) learning through social collaboration³⁰ and 4) self-education³¹.

- *Technology-based learning methods* comprise distance learning of military personnel, learning via the internet, simulated role games. Synthetic learning environments – simulated video games, virtual environment, etc. – are also attributed to this method³².
- *Traditional face-to-face methods* include training in classrooms, role games and various discussion platforms. During traditional training, the military get familiarized with the culture of the country where they are to conduct the international operation. Traditional training methods may also comprise simulated learning elements, for example, including into the learning process the local population of the country

²⁸ Wisecarver M. et al., (note 26) p. A-5.

²⁹ Ibidem.

³⁰ Caligiuri P. et al., Training, Developing, and Assessing Cross-Cultural Competence in Military Personnel. Technical Report 1284, United States Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences, April 2011, p. 19.

³¹ Driel M., Assessing Organizational Cross-Cultural Competence in the Military: Developing a Measure. Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute, U.S.: Patrick Air Force Base, 2010, p. 28; p. 30.

³² Caligiuri P. et al., (note 30), p. 22.

where the international operation is conducted or discussing during training practical cases based on cross-cultural incidents encountered during previous international operations. Both traditional and technology-based learning methods are attributed to the formal training which is provided to the military by the institution sending them on an international operation³³.

- *Learning through social collaboration* is attributed to the non-formal or individual learning method. It translates into the learning while communicating and observing the behavior of others: the more direct social contact the military personnel have with the local population of the country where the international operation is conducted the greater is the influence on their cultural awareness. Social communication of the military with other military personnel and civilians in both formal and informal environment while sharing the experience, acquired during international operations, is also important.
- *Self-education*, like social communication is an informal, individual method of acquiring competences. Self-education covers the interest of the military in the books about the country where the international operation is to be conducted, the analysis of the available Internet sources about the country where the international operation is planned to be conducted, etc.³⁴

Traditional, technology-based training methods and self-education help the military to develop competences to understand another cultural environment whereas social communication helps military personnel to learn from the events and situations which they themselves or their colleagues encounter during international operations³⁵.

1.3. The cultural awareness model of military personnel participating in international operations and its substantiation

Taking into consideration the competences necessary for military personnel participating in international operation, and the methods of their acquisition identified and presented in detail in sections 1.1 and 1.2, the model of the cultural awareness of military personnel participating in international

³³ Ibidem.

³⁴ Driel M., (note 31), p. 30.

³⁵ Ibidem, p. 23-25.

operations was created. The model is made up of two essential parts: 1) competences necessary for the cultural awareness of military personnel participating in international operations and 2) acquisition methods of competences necessary for the cultural awareness of military personnel participating in international operations (see Figure 3).

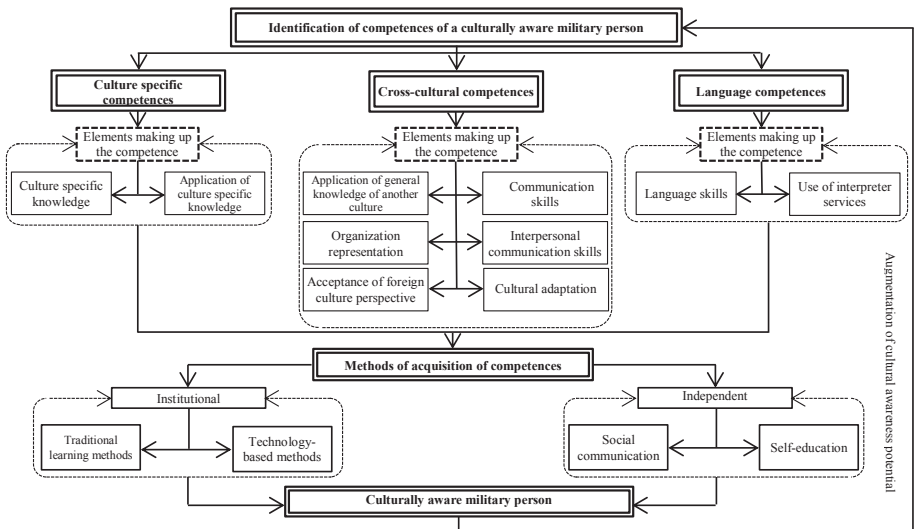


Figure 3. Cultural awareness model of military personnel participating in international operations

On the basis of this model, culturally aware military personnel are those who have: 1) cross-cultural, 2) culture specific and 3) language competences and have acquired them during: 1) the institutional training and/or 2) independent learning. One assumes that in case military personnel have no particular competences and/or do not use one or both of the above-mentioned acquisition methods, they have the potential to increase their cultural awareness.

2. Assessment of cultural awareness competences and methods of their acquisition of Lithuanian military personnel participating in international operations

2.1. Research methodology of cultural awareness competences and methods of their acquisition

This research aims at revealing the manifestation of cultural awareness of Lithuanian military personnel participating in international operations; to be more exact, what and how many identified in the model and making up cultural awareness competences as well as their acquisition methods get disclosed in the mentioned manifestation; therefore, empirically substantiating the model which would finally enable to state that the model is applicable to further research.

The nature of the research. For the collection of data, the author used a semi-structured interview method granting the opportunity to interpret the cultural awareness of military personnel on the basis of the attitudes to the research object and through the meanings attributed by them to the object of the related to the research object persons – the military personnel that have participated in international operations. This enables the execution of in-depth analysis of the phenomenon under research and to thoroughly explore the essential cultural awareness peculiarities of military personnel participating in international operations.

The process of the research. The research was conducted in February–March 2013.

The respondents and their characteristics. During the research, 12 servicemen from different Lithuanian military units that had participated in international operations in Iraq, Afghanistan, Kuwait, Croatia and Serbia, were interviewed. The respondents chosen for the research met the key criterion: the military personnel had participated in one or more international operations. The demographic characteristics of the respondents are provided in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of the respondents

Respondent	Military rank	Duration of service in the army (years)	Number of international operations (unit)	Countries where the service-man was deployed	Duration of the last deployment (months)	Total duration of deployments (months)
Respondent No 1	Colonel	21	2	Croatia and Afghanistan	24 months	36 months
Respondent No 2	Major	18	2 long-term and 3 short-term	Iraq, Afghanistan, Kuwait	6 months	14 months
Respondent No 3	Major	14	2	Afghanistan	7 months	14 months
Respondent No 4	Lieutenant Colonel	22	2	Afghanistan and Iraq	6 months	12 months
Respondent No 5	Captain	13	2	Afghanistan	6 months	12 months
Respondent No 6	Corporal	5	1	Afghanistan	7 months	7 months
Respondent No 7	Major	22	1	Croatia and Serbia	6 months	6 months
Respondent No 8	Major	22	1	Afghanistan	6 months	6 months
Respondent No 9	Captain	20	1	Iraq	6 months	6 months
Respondent No 10	Captain	17	1	Iraq	6 months	6 months
Respondent No 11	Major	16	1	Afghanistan	6 months	6 months
Respondent No 12	First Lieutenant	4	1	Afghanistan	6 months	6 months

2.2. Analysis of the assessment results of the manifestation of cultural awareness

2.2.1. Cross-cultural competences of the military personnel participating in international operations: application of general knowledge about another culture

In exploring the capability of the military to apply knowledge about another culture it has been noticed that, on the basis of their experience in international operations, military personnel point out: 1) similarities and 2) differences between the cultures which, in their turn, may be: a) causing discomfort or b) causing no discomfort. The research has also determined that the greatest influence on the interaction of the military with another culture is exercised by their motivation to adapt to another cultural environment and the avoidance of stereotypical attitudes about another culture (see Figure 4).

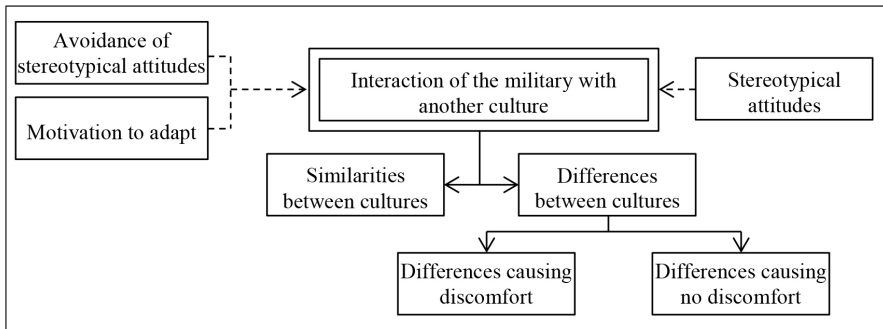


Figure 4. The aspects of applying general knowledge of another culture

Note: the unbroken arrow (\Rightarrow) indicates how military personnel analyze their interaction with another culture; the punctured arrow ($- \rightarrow$) indicates actions determining the ability of the military personnel to analyze the interaction with another culture.

On the one hand, military personnel having already formed stereotypical attitudes regarding another culture face a lack of knowledge of similarities and differences between cultures and show no initiative to analyze cultural differences:

Speaking seriously, it wasn't that I tried hard to look for these cultural differences. < ... > Read books about Indians and you'll understand what Afghans are like. They are simply behind us some five centuries. [Respondent No 5]

Besides, when military personnel have insufficient general knowledge of another culture, they start forming a distorted attitude towards another cultural environment:

To be a gay in their country (Afghanistan) isn't as bad as in ours. It's something like a standard there. [Respondent No 5]

On the other hand, those who have motivation to adapt in another culture (for, example, “< ... > *having found yourself in that (culturally different) environment < ... > you willy-nilly adapt to it. The environment will never adapt to you. It's only the question of time how soon. The more quickly you adapt to it the more comfortable you feel.*” [Respondent No 9])... and those who avoid thinking about another culture stereotypically (say, “< ... > *You must speak since only speaking eliminates stereotypes in people and it is only communication that can destroy or correct (stereotypes).*” [Respondent No 4]), show initiative to get to know and analyze cultural differences and apply the knowledge of another culture during an international operation.

While analyzing similarities between cultures, military personnel look for connections common to different cultures: they compare different cultures through the human historical past, stating that independently of cultural

background all people tend to identify themselves with their country's historic victories; distinguish similar human emotional expressions existing in different cultural environments; also note that different religions, for example, Christianity and Islam, are related by the common basis of religions – monotheism.

On the one hand, when analyzing differences between cultures, military personnel define a part of them in a neutral way, i.e. without pointing out the discomfort resulting from them, for example, saying that in Iraq or Afghanistan the authority or the roles of men and women are perceived differently. On the other hand, military personnel distinguish cultural differences that should not be tolerated and cause discomfort in communication with locals of the country where an international operation is conducted. Cultural differences of this nature include interpersonal relations, time perception, need for personal space, differences in thinking and perception of individualism/collectivism (see Table 2).

Table 2. Cultural differences causing discomfort as named by military personnel

Features	Illustrations
Interpersonal relations	<p><i>"It was very obvious, if while communicating, you come into contact, they accept you closer, and then this contact is very specific. In man and man relations, you are taken by your hand and led around < ...>. In this communication there is an expression of close bodily relation. It was a challenge to us, it was hard to break yourself inside."</i> [Respondent No 9]</p>
Time perception	<p><i>"< ...> It's hard to make appointments with them (in Iraq), say, if you agree for that time, it doesn't mean that they will arrive at that time, you have to wait an hour or two more until they arrive < ...>. They arrive, everything's OK, and you feel you have no right to reproach them."</i> [Respondent No 9]</p> <p><i>"It's a big problem (in Afghanistan) to coordinate any meeting for exact time, even a day in advance, they don't plan anything for more than a few days ahead, life is cyclic with them: to survive a cold winter, then to survive a hot summer, and so again and again."</i> [Respondent No 3]</p>
Need for personal space	<p><i>"< ...> but if communication is over 15 centimeters apart, it's really embarrassing, we want to keep half a meter apart, yet you understand that's it and that's all."</i> [Respondent No 4]</p> <p><i>"Higher collectiveness leads to a lower need for personal space. You especially feel it when there is a shorter distance while communicating."</i> [Respondent No 6]</p>
Differences in thinking	<p><i>"In thinking, there is a lack of planning ahead, most often they follow the saying Insha'Allah – as God wills."</i> [Respondent No 6]</p>
Perception of individualism/collectivism	<p><i>"If you compare their personalities with ours, we are individualists. I am responsible for my action, and Afghans – not. They understand themselves not as a personality but rather a family, tribe and sometimes this interferes with communication. With them, the first thing is the family, the tribe and only after that come you."</i> [Respondent No 5]</p>

The cultural differences causing discomfort comprise the aspects of social interaction between the military personnel and the locals of the country where the international operation is conducted. Since these differences are encountered with greater involvement of military personnel in another cultural environment, it should be concluded that the ability of military personnel to adapt to the cultural differences causing discomfort enhance the efficiency of social interaction between the military personnel and the locals, at the same time, improving the effectiveness of all activities performed by the military personnel.

Representation of the organization. In investigating how the military personnel represent the organization that has sent them on an international operation, it has been observed that the respondents only partly relate the implementation of the mission and goals of the organization they represent with the participation in the international operation. To be more exact, speaking about the motivation to participate in the international operation, they single out three motivating factors: 1) duty/work specifics; 2) financial reward and 3) wish to get familiar with another culture.

As a motivating factor, duty/work specifics may be related to the implementation of the mission and goals of the organization: the military personnel understand the mission and functions of their organization— in other words, the international commitment of the country which is reflected in the implementation of the functions of the organization.

Nevertheless, a part of the military participates in the international operation on the basis of exceptionally personal motives, such as a wish to become familiar with other cultures and/or financial reward. Those military personnel who have personal motives do not identify participation in an international operation with the implementation of the goals of the represented organization; therefore, one should assume that these military personnel lack consciousness that all their activities during the international operation rest on the implementation of the mission and goals of the represented organization. Preconditions for the motivation of the military personnel to participate in the international operation are illustrated by the ideas of the respondents presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Preconditions for the motivation of the military personnel to participate in an international operation

Features	Illustrations
Military personnel's motivation to participate in an international operation as a reflection of the organizational consciousness	<p><i>This is work. It's not a duty. I call it work, anyway, you're preparing, training for many years, understand what you'll do < ...>. It's hard for someone to realize, but it's work. < ...> You're learning, you get a chance < ...> to do that work in reality. [Respondent No 2]</i></p> <p><i>For me, in the first place is experience and responsible position, money is lower. [Respondent No 3]</i></p>
Military personnel's motivation to participate in the international operation as a reflection of personal incentives	<p><i>A wish to learn about nations of other cultures, searching and travelling, and not only geographically; striving self-realization. [Respondent No 1]</i></p> <p><i>A wish to gain new experience, to know culture. [Respondent No 12]</i></p> <p><i>Money. [Respondent No 5]</i></p>

Analysis of the research data shows the interaction between personal incentives motivating the military personnel and their ability to apply cultural knowledge, which implies that the military personnel who singled out the exceptionally motivating factor – financial reward – possess more stereotypical thinking regarding another culture.

Attention should be drawn to the fact that encountering the inflexibility of bureaucratic procedures of the organization and limited financial resources during the international operation, the military personnel take a passive position in regard to the improvement of the policy, procedures, programs and practice of the organization. The military personnel's position is illustrated in Table 4.

Table 4. Obstacles to improving the activity of the organization as named by military personnel

Features	Illustrations
Limited financial resources of the organization	<p><i>< ...> The worst thing was with the Lithuanian-made uniforms and boots—they are really of bad quality, that's why troopers often bought boots using their own money, but nobody made any fuss about it, because Lithuanians are patient, and then, it wouldn't change anything for there is a crisis. [Respondent No 5]</i></p> <p><i>So, you yourself know how many places we have in Lithuania that we can go to apply to. This equipment that you need, I know how much it costs < ...>. I perfectly understand how much it is and what my country's possibilities are. How we behaved? At night you do less, keep to safety precautions. Some time ago people fought with swords. Our equipment is of the 1960s level, roughly of the Vietnam War time, that's why you behave correspondingly, keep longer distance, leave more time, operate more cautiously. [Respondent No 2]</i></p>

Inflexibility of bureau-
cratic procedures of the
organization

< ...> *Very often it takes long to apply to some place and ask for something and if I require something fast, it means fast.* [Respondent No 4]
< ...> *Our (Lithuania's) bureaucratic apparatus works much too slowly.*
[Respondent No 11]

In addition, the military personnel do not comply with the requirements of the represented organization when they encounter contradictory requirements within the organization and beyond it. The failure to comply with the requirements of the organization is explained by the aspiration to increase the trust of the local population in them:

According to the requirements, when outside the camp, we must wear a bullet-proof vest, helmet and carry an automatic rifle. But, especially my unit, when going for tea to local leaders, we would take everything off and leave only a pistol, since when going fully equipped, we would show distrust in Afghans' hospitality. So, we would violate formal safety requirements but such is our job – to build up trust in the eyes of the locals. [Respondent No 3]

One may state that the motivation of the military personnel to participate in the international operation is a reflection of the ability of the military personnel to represent an organization which enables the motivation of the military personnel to be associated with certain manifestation of the military personnel's stereotypical attitudes. Other aspects of the military personnel representation of an organization include the aspiration of the military personnel to analyze how to improve the policy, procedures, programs and practice of the represented organization as well as the compliance with the requirements of the represented organization when contradictory requirements are encountered within the organization and beyond it – they are partly limited by the organization itself. The passiveness of the military personnel observed in improving the policy, procedures, programs and practice of the organization during the international operation should be related to limited financial resources of the organization and obstacles that are made to the effective activity of the military personnel during the international operation.

The failure to comply with the requirements of the represented organization during the international operation is, on the one hand, to be related to the need for more flexible requirements of the organization, taking into consideration the activity performed by the military personnel. On the other hand, not complying with the organization's requirements, the military personnel still seek to implement its goals involving the locals of the country where the international operation is conducted.

Acceptance of a different cultural perspective. During the study of the ability of the military personnel to accept a different cultural perspective, it was

noticed that military personnel, comparing their cultural attitudes and values with other cultures, are capable of seeing themselves from the perspective of another culture and assessing the danger of the formation of stereotypical attitudes:

Sure, we used the concept of time, to make agreements, it's pretty bad in operations when we plan a joint operation, when you agree during operations, and that person isn't present, then you think is it because he hasn't arrived or is it because he doesn't want to do that or he framed you and took off himself < ... > and your view is outright negative. < ... > Were you not mad? At the beginning I was, but then I understood: I would be really mad at a European, I would be seriously mad. It's quite a different thing when you are angry with a European, he gives that anger back to you, you get it back too, and they don't give it back, and here the thing is that here you are just the one who's angry. < ... > You form attitudes very quickly. You have to catch yourself on not to make these attitudes common. [Respondent No 2]

In analyzing how their actions and words may be perceived by representatives of other cultures, the military personnel assess the information acquired during institutional trainings and employ this information depending on another cultural environment:

"(During institutional trainings) we were told not to discuss religious topics. If I'm told not to discuss, (it means) don't communicate, but if I've read the Koran, < ... > and if I understand where (religions) come into one, is this a discussion? If you don't have enough knowledge – don't have a discussion; if you yourself are a believer and have knowledge of your faith, then you speak." [Respondent No 4]

Thus, it may be stated that with a higher level of the military personnel's cultural awareness, their willingness to analyze their already formed attitudes towards another culture is observed, as well as a wish not only to obtain information about another culture and use this information with regard to another cultural environment.

Communication skills. In the analysis of the ability of the military personnel to comply with the acceptable norms and rules in communicating with representatives of other cultures, the following should be distinguished: 1) norms and rules of another culture which must be followed and 2) norms and rules of another culture which may not be followed. The observance of norms and rules when communicating with representatives of other cultures is illustrated by respondents' ideas presented in Table 5.

Table 5. The observance of norms and rules when communicating with representatives of other cultures

Features	Illustrations
Norms and rules of another culture which may not be followed	<p><i>It (eating during Ramadan at daytime) wasn't that problem for us < ...>. They still understand that you are a foreigner, at least Iraq is a more modern country, especially in cities, and didn't apply their norms to us at all. [Respondent No 2]</i></p> <p><i>(During Ramadan, we tried to refrain from eating during the daytime) Although when out of sight. At least openly in their presence, but that wouldn't make a problem even if we ate. (Wouldn't because) that's their holiday, not ours. They understand that we don't fast, that we aren't Muslims and we sort of don't have to observe their customs < ...> [Respondent No 4]</i></p> <p><i>The locals stressed different cultural peculiarities, for example, to take off your boots before entering a house, showing a raised thumb, less that it had been done during trainings. [Respondent No 6]</i></p>
Norms and rules of another culture which must be followed	<p><i>Especially many misunderstandings would occur during Ramadan, you would demonstratively try not to eat and drink when being close to Muslims. [Respondent No 8]</i></p> <p><i>It was a taboo to interfere in their life, if you go to their home, you will interfere in their life. If there were operations, they (the locals) go first, you follow them. If, as a patrol, you are crossing their courtyard, they are looking at you angry-faced. [Respondent No 2]</i></p>

When assessing another culture's norms and rules and which must be observed and which may not be observed, the military personnel choose the attitude of the local population of the country where the international operation is conducted towards the behavior and actions of the military as an example to be followed. It has been observed that the military personnel attribute certain norms and rules, for example, consuming food during Ramadan, to the norms and rules that both must be observed and that may not be observed. Such a division of norms and rules of another culture is subjective; therefore, it is of the utmost importance to encourage the military personnel to get involved in social interaction with the local population of the country where the international operation is carried out since social interaction enables to assess possible reactions of the local population regarding the importance of the observance of certain norms and rules within a particular cultural environment.

Interpersonal communication skills. In analyzing the ability of the military personnel who have participated in international operations to communicate and operate together with representatives of another culture, it

has been noticed that the most frequent motives of the involvement of the military personnel in another cultural environment are: 1) involvement as a duty, and 2) involvement as the aspiration to adapt to another culture (see Table 6).

Table 6. The ability of the military personnel to communicate and operate together with representatives of another culture

Features	Illustrations
Involvement as a duty	<i>On both missions I was a member of the civilian-military cooperation group – my duty was to constantly communicate with the locals and carry out joint projects with them.</i> [Respondent No 3]
Involvement as adaptation in another culture	<i>I'm trying to respect and follow the customs, if I don't know, I ask how to behave.</i> [Respondent No 1] <i>If he (a local) finds it unacceptable what I do, then, I don't, these are their customs, if I start teaching a person to behave according to what seems right to me, what is necessary, I'm a guest, it's his rules that are here, not mine, if they celebrate something and at that time they need a family day, they get that family day all right.</i> [Respondent No 4]

The involvement as a duty should be related to the nature of the military personnel work – the military are aware of carrying out the mission and goals of the organization they represent; therefore, notwithstanding whether they have the aspiration to positively present themselves in another cultural environment, the military personnel are capable of adjusting while communicating and working together with the locals of the country where the international operation is conducted.

The involvement as adaptation reflects the aspiration of the military personnel to positively present themselves in another cultural environment and their ability to apply their ideas and behavior in seeking a compromise while communicating with the locals of the country where the international operation is conducted.

Unwillingness and/or inability to get involved should be related to the formed stereotypical attitudes of the military personnel:

Communication with such people can be only power-relations-based communication. They must feel you are above them. [Respondent No 8]

They are stupid; they are easy to be controlled if you earn their trust. [Respondent No 5]

Military personnel with stereotypical attitudes do not feel the need to get involved in the communication with representatives of another culture. This not only decreases the efficiency of the activity of the military personnel in another cultural environment, but is also an indication that military personnel

are unlikely to associate the activity they are performing with their duty to implement the mission and goals of the represented organization.

Cultural adaptation. The key aspects of the military personnel's cultural adaptation that have been revealed during the research are the following: 1) observation of the environment, 2) social communication, 3) understanding that a military person is a guest, 4) respect for the local population and their values. The aspects of adaptation mentioned by the military personnel are illustrated by the respondents' ideas presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Aspects comprising the cultural adaptation of the military personnel

Features	Illustrations
Observation of the environment	< ...> <i>They know the psychology of the negotiation process perfectly well, you had (to behave) very carefully because you felt you had to say the last word, that it's so, I promise. Since they communicate with you so nicely that you understand that you have come to the point when you have to promise, but you have to be very careful, because if you don't keep your promise – you'll harm the relations and you may lose your authority. Since authority is very important for them in communication. And winning authority, earning it is a certain process. They must trust you.</i> [Respondent No 9]
Social communication	< ...> <i>Did you try to taste their food out of politeness? There were times, but right after that was medicine and everything. We tried hard to avoid, but if you are going to negotiations or interrogations, you want to extract something, you have your stomach ready, but then – medicine < ...>.</i> [Respondent No 2]
Understanding that a military person is a guest	< ...> <i>I'm a guest; it's his rules that are here, not mine < ...>.</i> [Respondent No 4] <i>I was trying to adapt to them since communication with them was outside the base, on their territory. You can't make them feel nervous on their territory because you're in the zone of military action, you can't start behaving abnormally, can't start introducing your order, discipline. It's just natural: you are with them, conduct exercises, so you adjust to them.</i> [Respondent No 9]
Respect for local population and their values	< ...> <i>I'll never give him (a local) hell in the presence of his subordinates < ...>. Showing respect for him, I'll speak only about what work has been done and what hasn't, I'm aware of that, they have a clear understanding of honor: if you made a mistake, we know how to whip ourselves, < ...> (in Iraq) the feelings of shame and guilt are identical: you aren't to be blamed for not being caught, and if you were caught, then it's shame already. If you want to be friends, it's better to point to mistakes personally and save honor and dignity.</i> [Respondent No 4]

All of the above-mentioned aspects comprising cultural adaptation are important for the cultural awareness of the military personnel. The importance of observation of the environment and social communication manifested itself in analyzing the ability of the military personnel to understand a different

cultural environment, whereas the remaining three aspects—understanding that a military person is a guest, respect for local people and their values as well as the ability to find solutions in ambiguous situations—make it possible to expand the perception of military personnel’s cultural awareness as adaptation in another cultural environment. Therefore, this provides an opportunity for more comprehensive assessment of the potential of the military personnel’s cultural awareness in further research.

2.2.2. Knowledge about specific features of another culture of the military personnel participating in international operations. Military personnel’s knowledge about the specific features of another culture

Analysis of the data revealed negative attitudes of the military personnel in assessing the knowledge about the specific features of another culture acquired during institutional trainings (see Table 8).

Table 8. Attitudes of the military personnel in assessing culture-specific knowledge

Features	Illustrations
Culture-specific knowledge acquired during institutional trainings is not sufficient	<p><i>Technical knowledge of geography, it doesn't give anything, if I know that there is one or another holiday, so you must know why it started, why they value it, why the scale of their values is slightly different. [Respondent No 4]</i></p> <p><i>I, for one, know there is Ramadan, so leave them alone. But if you can speak about it – about that holiday, all essence – that's very important. < ...> And now, there's still complicated matter (trainings) with us, hardly understandable. Because, in fact, you go for half a year, there aren't many holidays, so they really could (during trainings) describe at least the specific holidays, because it's very important for them. [Respondent No 2]</i></p>
Culture-specific knowledge acquired during institutional trainings is subjective	<p><i>(I had knowledge) only basic, before going you are interested in history, geography < ...>. When you talk to the locals, they themselves assess (history) in different ways. We come, we understand one way, their people say something different. [Respondent No 2]</i></p>
Culture-specific knowledge acquired during institutional trainings do not correspond to the nature of military personnel’s work	<p><i>During the preparation I was in a joint group where the military personnel for Afghanistan and Iraq were trained. I was the only one to be trained for Iraq, so all presentation, all preparation was based on Afghanistan, I didn't get anything, any information about Iraq officially. [Respondent No 9]</i></p>

When analyzing the acquired knowledge, the military personnel emphasized those specific features characteristic of another culture which they

had not been familiarized with during the institutional trainings and, therefore, they lacked this knowledge when getting involved in social communication with the locals. For example, stating that they lacked knowledge of the history of the country where the international operation was conducted, the way history is perceived from the perspective of the local population, as well as more comprehensive knowledge of religious aspects of another culture.

It has also been observed that during the institutional trainings, the preparation of the military personnel for different international operations was not always differentiated – different cultures were put in parallel; for example, the same institutional trainings were organized for both the military personnel going to Afghanistan and the military personnel going to Iraq. This determined a decrease in the cultural awareness potential – the military personnel do not gain sufficient knowledge about specific features characteristic of another culture.

Application of the knowledge of military personnel about specific features of another culture during the international operation. The analysis of how military personnel apply knowledge of another culture while being in a different cultural environment made it clear that even those servicemen who claimed to have sufficient knowledge of another culture still found themselves in ambiguous situations due to a lack of this knowledge:

(I was in an ambiguous situation) when presenting a motor cycle to a local department and shaking the right hand, with only the left hand (which is considered to be dirty) left free to give the motor cycle keys, therefore at the time a picture was taken, the head of the department didn't take the keys and took them only after the picture was taken and I gave him the keys with the right hand. [Respondent No 6]

When visiting a school, I took photos of pupils and teachers and that is usual, but in one school some teachers were young and it seemed to them that I take their photos specially. I was asked not to do that < ...>. [Respondent No 3]

Knowledge about specific cultural features acquired by military personnel is not sufficient for the activity carried out by the servicemen during the international operation; therefore, during institutional trainings it is important to pay attention to the specific features of another culture, the application of which would enable the military personnel to avoid ambiguous situations in communicating and operating in a different cultural environment. The acquisition of this knowledge alongside the development of the abilities of the military personnel to analyze another cultural context and interpret the information gained in the course of training would allow them to better adapt to a different cultural environment.

2.2.3. Language competences of the military personnel participating in international operations. Language skills

The main aspects of language proficiency of the country where an international operation is conducted are: 1) a better relationship with the collocutor and 2) manifestation of politeness, respect for the local people (see Table 9).

Table 9. **The influence of a language on the activity of the military personnel in a different cultural environment**

Features	Illustrations
A better relationship with the collocutor	<p><i>I continue learning Dari (Persian), but still communicate with Afghans in English. If necessary, through an interpreter. Demonstrating that I know some Dari language, I establish a better relationship with the collocutor. [Respondent No 1]</i></p> <p><i>(Of Arabic I had) basic knowledge < ...>, we had an interpreter. I wanted to learn, to pick up a dozen phrases, words to warm up the atmosphere at the very beginning when communicating with them. For once you learn standard phrases: "how are you, how are you doing, what are the problems", they're happy like little kids, < ...> communication is much warmer. < ...> . [Respondent No 9]</i></p>
Manifestation of politeness, respect for the local people	<p><i>(I communicated with the locals of the country where the international operation was conducted) in Arabic, English, mixed (language). Most of them understand English, and some older people also know Russian. Arabic is out of politeness – saying hello, saying numbers. < ...> If asked about something, we tried to answer in Arabic < ...>. [Respondent No 2]</i></p> <p><i>(I communicated with the locals) in English. I knew only 20 or 30 words in Arabic. There are people who speak English fairly (well), you can talk to them directly, and those with whom you need an interpreter, they feel humiliated that an interpreter is necessary, then he (considers himself to be) ignorant, an intermediate link is needed. If the interpreter doesn't get the point of the question and tries to make it clear, he already unequally distributes attention, it is so that he is communicating with me more, so the interpreter is to be blamed that is speaking with to me too long, so I had to interrupt several times to avoid a conflict < ...>. [Respondent No 4]</i></p>

Knowing a language improves the manifestation of cross-cultural competences of the military personnel participating in international operations since it enables the personnel to expand the possibilities of social communication between the military personnel participating in the international operation and the locals of the country where the international operation is conducted.

According to the servicemen, communication through the interpreter makes their activity in a different environment to same extent more difficult due to: 1) communication differences between representatives of different cultures, 2) difficulty in conveying emotions, 3) lack of the interpreter competences, 4)

lack of willingness from the local population to get involved in communication (see Table 10).

Table 10. The influence of using the interpreter services regarding the activity of the military personnel in a different cultural environment

Features	Illustrations
Facing communication differences between representatives of different cultures	<p><i>The interpreter is using a multiple language, like he's telling fairy tales, there have been situations when a target is due to arrive, he says that a black and white Toyota is coming. So a person is sitting in the position, waiting for that car, and the Danish interpreter says: "no, he didn't say so, he said a black Toyota", so we say, "stop, stop" because a signal has been sent and if that person arrives, he'll be seized, he'll be destroyed and shot dead. And he says, that's a grey Toyota, more like blackish. This is cultural. With us, if it's evening, we say "meet you in the evening, at 9, and they would say, for example, especially at a wedding in a village "meet you before the moon touches the earth." [Respondent No 2]</i></p> <p>< ...> A good interpreter is the one who not only knows how to translate, but the one who can connect the two cultures into one. [Respondent No 10]</p>
Facing difficulty in conveying emotions	<p><i>Talking through an interpreter is some kind of technique and you don't know how he translates, because the interpreter is the same Iraqi. You don't know how he translates your words to them because all depends on the intonation, how the words are chosen. Sure, I was always watching their faces which helped to understand if the reaction was the one you were expecting after you said your words. If you see that there is no that reaction, you try to repeat, once again ask the interpreter to say in a different way. You see the ultimate correspondent, the one who gets that information, how he reacts to that information. [Respondent No 9]</i></p>
Facing a lack of interpreter competences	<p><i>No all interpreters translate competently, the translation process itself takes long, local people don't observe communication culture – interrupt, keep talking on the mobile during meetings, aren't polite. [Respondent No 3]</i></p>
Facing a lack of willingness from local population to get involved in communication	<p>< ...> <i>The collocutor often doesn't keep to the rules of communication through the interpreter – when speaking, is looking at the interpreter, speaks too long, directs some things to the interpreter. [Respondent No 6]</i></p>

The use of the interpreter services can be named as a factor aggravating the adaptation of the military personnel in another cultural environment, because the possibilities of the involvement in effective social communication get decreasing. Still, using the services of an interpreter may help compensate for the lack of language skills of the military personnel through their involvement in social communication. Therefore, the military personnel should become familiar with possible obstacles while communicating through the interpreter and should be taught how to reduce the presence of these obstacles through the involvement in social interaction.

Methods of acquiring competences of cultural awareness. In analyzing the methods of acquiring competences of cultural awareness, one may distinguish

between: 1) institutional and 2) independent acquisition of competences.

The institutional trainings organized by the National Defense System include both traditional learning methods (for example, “*There was a preparation cycle during which culture of that country was studied.*” [Respondent No 10]) and technology-based methods (for example, “*Before the mission, soldiers of my squad had to complete some distance learning courses on Afghanistan, history, culture, etc. Also, each of us had to finish at least one normal course in Lithuania or abroad related to the activity of our squad.*” [Respondent No 3]).

The military personnel assess the institutional trainings skeptically, emphasizing that they are only compulsory, formal trainings:

(Institutional trainings are) *50 per cent useful, and 50 per cent – to put a check, so that if somebody is killed, to answer the question “was it taught?” And 50 per cent, only from a very optimistic point of view (in assessing).* [Respondent No 2].

Experience in the country where the international operation is conducted was named by the military personnel as one of the most useful methods:

“It doesn’t matter how much you learn theoretically, let it be practically, too – but in another cultural environment, you’ll never know everything. What’s important is that our men should be told that the reality will be pretty different, there’ll be plenty of surprises < ...>. [Respondent No 1].

< ...> training can never be (sufficient) until you go and see the country. [Respondent No 4].

Nevertheless, having no sufficient cultural preparation, military personnel cannot operate efficiently in another cultural environment during the international operation since they are more orientated towards learning about another culture through the observation of the environment, but because of the lack of competences, without getting involved in social interaction with the locals:

The first mission is preparation for the second, so if I went for the third time, I’d prefer this country to be not only Islamic but also Arabic speaking place, for whatever I got during the first two tours would be of use in the third one. If I went to not an Islamic country, I’d had to start studying from scratch. < ...> The action during the second (international operation), was very much with the locals, an adviser’s job, and in the first mission I had combat tasks where no everyday communication with the locals was needed. Had it been the opposite, then I’d say I wouldn’t have been properly ready. [Respondent No 4].

In analyzing the possibility for enhancing the quality of the institutional training, the military personnel indicate the main aspects that should be improved: 1) to involve in the training instructors who have been to the

country where the international operation is conducted and/or instructors who come from the country where the international operation is conducted, 2) to study anthropology, 3) to apply trainings to the target audience and 4) to improve foreign language skills of the military personnel (see Table 11).

Table 11. Possibilities for improving institutional trainings while preparing military personnel for international operations

Features	Illustrations
To involve instructors who have been to the country where the international operation is conducted/instructors who come from the country where the international operation is conducted	<i>Teachers, instructors must be the best of the best, necessarily those who've been to operations. If the operation is new – those who have participated in similar operations.</i> [Respondent No 1] <i>To take to the training the instructors who come from the country where the international operation is conducted.</i> [Respondent No 6].
To study anthropology	<i>< ... > We don't know how to learn culture and understand it. From the very start of cadets training, this subject must be understandable for them < ... > because we've been in the international environment for many years already.</i> [Respondent No 2]
To apply trainings to the target audience	<i>"The main thing is < ... > applying the audience, by the target audience. No matter one or two (military men) are being prepared to work there, but the teaching process must be made for them according to the place they're going to. All the more so, the military men come back from that place who have been there and they can very well present info about that country and when you get there < ... > [Respondent No 9]</i> <i>To focus on separate training of functional specialists.</i> [Respondent No 12]
To improve foreign language skills of the military personnel	<i>It would be good to know more phrases of the local language because during the preparation there wasn't enough time to study the local language for a longer time.</i> [Respondent No 3]

On the one hand, being aware of the areas of the institutional trainings to be improved, the military personnel show no desire to contribute to the improvement of these trainings. On the other hand, the military personnel notably emphasize the importance of independent learning of another culture: they indicate the aspiration to pass the knowledge acquired in an international operation on to other military personnel going on international operations (for example, *"After this mission, I'll come back with still more knowledge that I'll try to hand down to others."* [Respondent No 3]), also, they appreciate the importance of the interaction with other *military men* (for example, *< ... > I was in touch with the person I'll have to substitute, he said what I had to bring, how to deal with money, what is necessary, what isn't necessary, what to have. And about the country – that's the internet. I got all information informally, not from the institution."* [Respondent No 9]). The communication between the military personnel while sharing experience may, to some extent, fill the gaps left after the institutional training and should be

encouraged as a part of the organizational consciousness of the military.

The acquisition of competences of cultural awareness by the military personnel when adapting in another cultural environment should be assessed skeptically because of the threat that the military personnel will only observe the environment without getting involved in social interaction with the local population. Taking the above-mentioned remarks into consideration, the acquisition of the required competences of cultural awareness necessary for the military personnel should be perceived as a long-lasting and continual process, i.e. the competences should be acquired before the military personnel embark on the international operation and they should be improved during the international operation.

Conclusions

Having empirically assessed the cultural awareness of the Lithuanian military personnel that have participated in international operations, it is possible to make generalizations and recommendations regarding the cultural awareness of the Lithuanian military personnel:

- 1) One of the key aspects of the cultural awareness of the military personnel is the motivation of the military personnel to adapt and operate in another cultural environment which is inseparable from their ability to avoid forming stereotypical attitudes with regard to another culture. Studying cultural awareness of the military personnel, the aforementioned aspects become evident when the servicemen analyze similarities and differences between the cultures. These aspects greatly influence the cultural awareness potential of the military personnel; therefore, when selecting the military personnel to participate in international operations, greater attention should be paid to the analysis of the motivation of the military personnel to participate in an international operation because:
 - a) the military personnel that are motivated to adapt to another cultural environment are capable of acquiring and adapting cultural knowledge and getting involved in social interaction with representatives of another culture. The military personnel having stereotypical attitudes form a distorted viewpoint on another cultural environment, therefore their social interaction with the representatives of another culture is negative or neutral;
 - b) the military personnel, being aware that they participate in the international operation carrying out the mission and goals of

their organization and, operating in another cultural environment represent their organization, are able to adapt to another cultural environment and get involved in social interaction with representatives of another culture irrespective of their motivation to adapt to another cultural environment.

- c) the institutional trainings provide insufficient knowledge and skills otherwise necessary for the adaptation and operation of the military personnel in a different cultural environment; therefore, military personnel should be motivated to independently improve competences necessary for their cultural awareness.
2. More attention should be paid to the development of the organizational consciousness of the military personnel, because:
- a) a part of the military personnel participates in the international operation driven by exceptionally personal motives and do not relate their participation in the international operation to the implementation of the mission and goals of the represented organization. The military personnel lack understanding that their activity, including social interaction with the locals of the country where the international operation is conducted, reflects the implementation of the mission and goals of the organization.
 - b) the military personnel violate the requirements of their organization trying to adapt to a different cultural environment. Not complying with the requirements of the organization, the military personnel still seek the implementation of the goals of the organization – the failure to comply with the requirements of the organization is related to the aspiration of the military personnel to build up trust of the locals of the country where an international operation is conducted. Therefore, attention should be drawn to the possibilities of improving formal requirements of the organization and/or to a more flexible application of these requirements with regard to the functions performed by the military personnel during the international operation.
3. The knowledge that is provided during institutional trainings is not sufficient for the adaptation and operation of the military personnel during the international operation; therefore, in order to increase the potential of the cultural awareness of the military personnel, the spectrum of cross-cultural, culture-specific and language skills should be expanded and more attention should be paid to the following:

- a) familiarization of the military personnel with cultural differences that might cause discomfort to them when operating in a different cultural environment;
- b) on the basis of the experience of the military personnel that have participated in international operations, the analysis of ambiguous situations that have been encountered during the interaction between the military personnel and the locals of the country where an international operation is conducted;
- c) the application of institutional trainings taking into consideration the character of the activity of the military personnel during the international operation as well as the analysis of the imparted knowledge through the perception of the mentality and behavior of the local population of the country where the international operation is conducted.
- d) the involvement of the instructors who have been to the country where the international operation is conducted and/or instructors who come from the country where the international operation is conducted in institutional trainings and/or the stimulation of social interaction of the military personnel with the military personnel who have returned from the country where an international operation is conducted.
- e) the improvement of language competences of military personnel, paying greater attention to both the military personnel's skills of the language used in the country where the international operation is conducted and familiarization with possible obstacles when working through an interpreter.