

TRANSFORMATION OF THE LITHUANIAN ARMED FORCES' EDUCATION SYSTEM

Nijolė Janulaitienė

Lithuanian Military Academy
Silo Str. 5 A, LT- 10322 Vilnius, Lithuania
e-mail: njanulaitiene@gmail.com

Abstract: As Atlantic Alliance aims to develop properly military capabilities, it has to pay special attention to military training, for only well-trained armed forces can take up the challenges and threats a state faces. The readiness level of the military is the major criterion for assessing the preparation of the armed forces to fulfill the objectives set for a state. Therefore, rational control and coordination of the servicemen's training process is a very important factor in preparing contemporary Lithuanian Armed Forces. *The Lithuanian Military Doctrine (2010)* defines training principles of the Lithuanian Armed Forces and is a key document for preparing the military training strategy.

Keywords: State Security, Armed Forces, Transformation of the Military, Military Training, Combat Training, Military Training Strategy.

Introduction

State and nation security depends highly on the efficient institutional security system. The place of the armed forces is significant in the military security system. However, only well-trained armed forces with well-developed military capabilities and giving military training its primary focus are professional and able to take on the challenges and threats a state faces.

The aim of the Lithuanian Armed Forces' transformation that has begun several years ago is to prepare "multifunctional, mobile, manoeuvrable, more easily deployable, controlled and maintained capabilities to be ready for present and future challenges and threats and be able to take up future missions" [6]. The *Transformation Guidelines for the Lithuanian Armed Forces* provides transformation in 8 fields of the military development.

The key field of the armed forces development is education and training system including all the fields of the transformation mentioned in the guidelines. Thus it is essential for the development of the professional armed forces. The National Defence System is comprised of the following military education institutions and centres: the General Jonas Žemaitis Military

Academy of Lithuania, Training and Doctrine Command with its subordinate units: Division General Stasys Raštikis Lithuanian Armed Forces School, General Adolfas Ramanauskas Warfare Training Centre, Lithuanian Great Hetman Jonušas Radvila Training Regiment. The Land Forces Juozas Lukša Training Centre trains military specialists who educate servicemen by organizing their combat training.

Research object: Changes in the education system of the Lithuanian Armed Forces.

Research method: Study and analysis of military scientific and teaching materials and government decisions.

Military Pedagogy in Lithuania

Military and combat training and spiritual nurture at the armed forces is the field of military pedagogy with specific features, however, belonging to education science.

Two periods of the Lithuanian military pedagogy may be distinguished as follows:

- *Period 1. Sources and Development of Military Pedagogy in the Period of Independent Lithuania in 1922-1940*

Lt. Col. V. Biržiška and Col. K. Žukas were the founding fathers of the Lithuanian military pedagogy during the Independence. They

defined military pedagogy as “the science that provides the fundamentals of physical, mental, technical and moral servicemen training” [11, 253]. Such concept was sufficient for the warfare specialists of those times. The ideas of the first military pedagogues were promoted by the following officers of the General Staff and Armed Forces: Col. V. Kiršinas, Lt. Col. J. Šepetys, Col. P. Tarasenko, Div. Gen. S. Raštikis, Maj. V. Bulvičius, Capt. V. Kuzmickis, Lt. B. Juškys, etc.

• *Period 2. Formation and Development of Postmodern Military Pedagogy in 1990-2011*

The period started in 1990 after the restoration of independence of Lithuania and the Armed Forces. During those years the world faced radical changes influencing strategic situation and previous international security conditions. International community started solving new objectives related to authorities' power and the use of armed forces in controlling international conflicts, strengthening global peace and security and defending democratic values. Such political situation and rapidly changing technologies required new thinking from the information society.

According to the experience of the military pedagogues in Switzerland (R. Steiger and U. Zwygart) [10], Germany (F. Poggeler), Austria (D. Portner and D. Kissel) and Lithuania, the educational institutions of military training in Lithuania started using the concept *military education* in the context of military science in the beginning of the 21st century [3, p. 21].

Discussions opened up for the concepts *military training* and *combat training*. Some military scientists and officers associated these concepts with each other, while others separated them. The discussions brought great confusion in the theory and practice of military pedagogy.

The discourse on the terminology of military pedagogy has been active to present years. Currently the topic on professionalization of the military and directions of its transformation dominates. Therefore, it is worth reviewing the process of military training in Lithuania in a systematic approach.

Key Features of the Lithuanian Military Training System

Military training is the basis for professional and efficient armed forces. Without thorough preparation to perform war and peacetime

missions, the military becomes a bureaucratic state authority that uses budget resources and does not perform its major function to ensure country's external security.

During the period of Lithuania's independence in 1990-2011, the military training system has been constantly changing as there was no single policy on military training. It depended on internal and external factors, such as the provisions of the Ministry of National Defence, international environment and the authorities' political decisions. A point should be made that the Lithuanian Armed Forces started its existence from scratch. Atlantic Alliance countries (Denmark, Great Britain, the US, etc) helped a lot in creating the military training infrastructure and training military personnel. They helped the Lithuanian Armed Forces to meet Alliance standards. Throughout its history, the Lithuanian military training system went through constant changes that were made according to the models of various foreign countries measuring the resources, authority policy, international cooperation policy, etc.

In 2003 the reform was introduced in defence and control of the military. Its primary aim was to professionalize the military [9, pp.14-18; 2, pp.19-22]. Help in adopting the reform was received from the expert groups (e.g. CUBIC Corporation) who gained experience in similar projects. The reform was followed by the transformation project of the military that was launched several years later. In 2007 the Minister of National Defence approved the *Transformation Guidelines for the Lithuanian Armed Forces* that included transformation in the field of military and combat training [6].

Military training is a complex phenomenon; therefore, it may be analyzed in pedagogical and systematic aspects. From the pedagogical aspect, the training process is defined as a long-term cognitive and practical interaction between the instructor and serviceman when the latter receives theoretical and practical experience and is prepared to act alone in particular battle conditions [4, p. 27]. Analyzing the training process in a systematic approach, the attention is paid to specific institutional environment for organizing the training process with its specific features.

Efficient training of the contemporary armed forces depends on the following factors:

- long-term strategy (conceptual framework) for the Armed Forces development and training

and consistent strategy-based implementation of the training policies (basis for training);

- institutional infrastructures (place of training);
- technical base (equipment) necessary for optimization of the training process (teaching aid to be used);
- application of innovative educational personnel training methods (who teaches and how).

Different understanding of the military training processes caused many discussions among the researches of the Lithuanian military pedagogy. Up to now general definitions of military training and combat training dominate dictionaries and military pedagogy publications. No clear line is drawn where military training ends and combat training starts or the training ways and methods used. Some authors (E. Kisinas et al.) chose a more simple way: they eliminated military training and the whole education called combat training [4]. It is easy; however, it is not the best solution as military training includes general military knowledge and skill development whereas professional training and qualification raise is a more concentrated and specialized training process to prepare a specialist of a particular military field to perform the tasks assigned.

Currently the Lithuanian Armed Forces training system is based on the US training model. It comprises individual training and education, operational assignments (tasks) and individual preparation. The training process of the US Armed Forces is organized considering the structure of the forces, resources, updated doctrines, technologies and training [1]. Two terms dominate: *education* and *training*. They are often used in general context and thus complicate conceptual understanding. The first term is abstract and means general military education and knowledge gained at the educational institutions whereas the other one is broader and oriented to perform concrete military tasks.

The latest US official academic publications (e.g. military strategic guidelines for the US Armed Forces training 2006) name the processes, skills and means necessary for reaching the aims of the military [7]. The document includes the following terms of general training: *institutional training* (performed at the educational institutions) and *operational training* (performed at the military units and combat training centers).

Earlier widely used term *military training* in the *Transformation Guidelines for the Lithuanian Armed Forces* is hidden behind the individual training and *combat training* is distinguished as a separate category in the context of collective training. With reference to the US experience, the essence and differences of *military training* and *combat training* will be defined.

Combat training is an individual professional continuous training process that is performed at the Lithuanian National Defence System and other Atlantic Alliance countries' military education institutions. Its aim is to provide servicemen with general and special knowledge on leadership and control to perform properly military duties. In other words, *military training* provides servicemen with military education of adequate level to perform service duties.

Individual military training dominates military training as well as leadership training that is long-term, consistent and progressive training process based on strengthening and developing servicemen' innate and acquired leadership features to become competent leaders and commanders. *Military training* includes:

- *Initial training (acclimatization)*

The initial and shortest stage or "gate" to the military. The young people wishing to serve in the armed forces are introduced to the structure, culture, internal order, rules of conduct of the military; they are provided with general knowledge on history, warfare, citizenship and law. The stage takes place at the Training Regiment and Military Academy of Lithuania.

- *Basic training*

The second stage of military training is applied for all the forces and is carried out after initial training is completed. Basic training includes basic individual tasks. They are performed in natural environment according to the teaching programmes drawn up in accordance with the lists of the basic individual tasks and standards of their fulfillment. Basic military training is performed at the Training Regiment and partly at the Military Academy of Lithuania.

- *Professional (specialist) training*

The third and the longest stage that lasts throughout servicemen' professional career. In this stage servicemen receive special military knowledge and perform individual tasks according to the training programmes drawn up in response to the list of individual tasks and standards of their performance. The stage is the basis for the military specialists' preparation. In

the US it is implemented in accordance with the military occupation specialty when basic training is completed in one of the military training institutions. In Lithuania it is performed at the Training Regiment, Military Academy of Lithuania, Lithuanian Armed Forces School and training centres of the forces.

Combat training, the other part of the training process, requires special attention. It is of equal importance to military training. The basis for combat training is the performance of tasks in combat-related conditions in accordance with the standards approved by the Chief of Defence. Servicemen' individual knowledge and skills gained during military training are formed and developed in the military units and specialized combat training centres. Combat training follows professional military training and is performed collectively at tactical and operational level. Combat training includes joint and international training for military unit and staff.

Lithuanian Armed Forces' servicemen are trained to perform tasks individually and collectively. During individual training, servicemen are trained to acquire necessary knowledge and skills to fulfill obligatory tasks individually.

Having completed individual training, servicemen undergo collective training where they are trained collectively to accomplish collective (military unit) tasks. This type of training is provided at the military institutions and permanent deployment locations of the military units. Here crews, military units or squads are trained. It is worth noting that the US Armed Forces additionally undergo army modernization training.

To finish the survey of the Lithuanian Armed Forces military education system, a conclusion may be drawn that the processes of military (individual) and combat (individual and collective) training described in the *Transformation Guidelines for the Lithuanian Armed Forces* differ only partly. As the focus is on individual professional (specialty) training, it may be called combat training.

Individual training is a crucial part of the training process; however, only in collective training it may be called combat training as it includes development of individual skills. The process of combat training starts when unit commander assigns collective tasks to the servicemen who already possess individual skills

(completed military training) developed during exercises (training) and international missions.

The *Lithuanian Military Doctrine* states: "Servicemen and military units are trained following systematic approach to military training. At first servicemen are trained basic skills individually, later they are trained to act as a squad, i.e. collective training is performed" [5]. While using any of the methods for servicemen training, the aim is to apply conditions closely related to the ones servicemen may experience in the battle field. The cooperation and confidence of the military units can be reached in joint training and participation in military actions.

While undergoing transformation in the Lithuanian Armed Forces, suggestions appear to change the subordination and coordination of the military and combat training institutions due to their different functions. The Military Academy of Lithuania, Lithuanian Armed Forces School, Training Regiment and other educational institutions provide the servicemen with training, yet they do not receive combat training here. The Training and Doctrine Command solves the problems of professional servicemen training while the issues of combat training are entrusted to the Joint Headquarters of the Lithuanian Armed Forces that coordinates operational units' preparation for the military missions.

The question arises who should be responsible for the whole process of military and combat training? Maybe it is worth concentrating it in one place as it is done by the US Armed Forces? Here the whole training process is successfully coordinated by the Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC).

The changes and transformation in the Lithuanian Armed Forces is an ongoing process; therefore, rational control and coordination of the training process is a significant factor in training contemporary Lithuanian Armed Forces that in association with Atlantic Alliance forces aim to respond adequately to the present and future challenges.

Conclusions

- Military training is the basis for professional and efficient activities of Atlantic Alliance forces as without thorough preparation for war and peacetime missions they cannot fulfill the essential function to ensure country's external security.

- During the period of Independence, Lithuanian military training system has been constantly changing due to international cooperation policy, decisions of Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania and provisions of Government of the Republic of Lithuania.
- Today the Lithuanian servicemen and military units are trained following systematic approach to military training. At first servicemen are trained basic skills individually, later collective training is performed.
- The *Lithuanian Military Doctrine (2010)* is a strategic document that establishes the principles of the Lithuanian Armed Forces activities and training. It is a solid basis for designing military training strategy to improve training of the Lithuanian Armed Forces.

References

1. AR 350-1. Army Training and Education. Headquarters Department of the Army.- Washington, April, 2003.
2. Bernotas, V. Krašto apsaugos sistemos valdymo modelis: kokių kelių einame // Kardas, 2008, Nr. 1 (430). - P. 19-22.
3. Janulaitienė, N. Karinės pedagogikos įvadas. - Vilnius: Gen. J. Žemaičio Lietuvos karo akademija, 2003. - 353 p.
4. Kisinas, E. Kario ugdymas. - Vilnius: Gen. J. Žemaičio Lietuvos karo akademija, 2000. – 385 p.
5. Lietuvos karinė doktrina. D-LK-001 / Patvirtinta Lietuvos kariuomenės vado 2010 kovo 10 d. įsakymu Nr. V-193.
6. Lietuvos kariuomenės transformacijos plano gairės / Patvirtintos LR krašto apsaugos ministro 2007 m. lapkričio 23d. įsakymu Nr. V-1171.
7. Military Training: Actions Needed to More Fully Develop the Army's Strategy for Training Modular Brigades and Address Impelentation Challenges, 2006.
8. Rakutis, V. LDK kariuomenės kadru problemos XVIII a. II pusėje // Kardas, 2007, Nr. 3 (426). - P.36-40.
9. Štrimas, G. Profesionalumo link // Kardas, 2008, Nr. 1 (430). - P. 14-18.
10. Steiger, R., Zwygart, U. Karinė pedagogika. - Vilnius: Gen. J. Žemaičio Lietuvos karo akademija, 1999. – 119 p.
11. Žukas, K. Kariškosios pedagogikos bruožai // Mūsų žinynas, Nr.29, 1926. - P. 252-282.