



THE MOTIVATIONAL-AFFECTIVE DIMENSION OF THE INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE OF THE ROMANIAN MILITARY PERSONNEL PARTICIPATING IN STABILITY AND SUPPORT OPERATIONS

Junior lecturer Polixenia OLAR, PhD*

Abstract: *The motivational dimension of the intercultural communication competence of the Romanian military personnel participating in stability and support operations outside the national territory denotes the ensemble of related motivations and affectivity which determines the military personnel, as individual, military structures as a human group, and the training institution to act in the sense and direction required by the obtaining of that respective competence.*

From another point of view, this dimension reflects the motives that drive the military personnel, either as individuals or as members of a group, to act purposefully, assiduously and responsibly in order to achieve their objectives. At the same time, this dimension harmoniously combines motivation with the affectivity that accompanies any human activity. Thus, the one way or another motivated human action is always accompanied by diverse affective experiences, different in intensity and meaning. In our opinion, affectivity gives colour specific to the motivation of human action. Thus, success in an activity motivated intrinsically or extrinsically is affectively experienced and is more often expressed through emotions and feelings. These in their turn are either positive or negative.

Keywords: *dimensions, variables, intercultural communication competence, stability and support operations*

The motivational-affective dimension defines the premises of the putting into practice of the intercultural communication competence by the Romanian military personnel. This dimension has two components, **motivation** and **affectivity**, which we will consider as playing the role of its essential variables.

Variables associated with the motivational-affective dimension

In our opinion, we can attribute two variables to the motivational-affective dimension of the intercultural communication competence: **motivation** and **affectivity**. We will encounter both of them at *individual, group or institutional* levels.

Motivation "conveys the fact that at the basis of human behaviour there is always an ensemble of motives - needs, tendencies, affects, interests, intentions, and ideals - which sustain the achievement of certain actions, deeds, attitudes"¹. Another

¹ B. A. Tucicov, (coordonator), *Dicționar de psihologie socială*, Bucharest, Științific and Enciclopedic Publishing House, 1981, pp. 148-150.

*"Carol I" National Defence University
lisiolar@yahoo.com

definition given to motivation refers to the "sum of internal motives of behaviour, be they inborn or acquired, of which the individual is aware or not, simple physiological needs or abstract ideals"².

Human actions usually are multimotivated. The motives of an action/relation make up a bundle of internal and external conditionings. The array of human motivations can be described by the series of notions: need, impulse or propensity, desire, intention, purpose, aspiration, ideal³.

Need designates certain internal states. It is the expression of a need of the human being. That is why we speak of physiological needs (for example, the need for food), but also of the need for security (man's need to live in circumstances in which either risks or threats do not exist or they are under control).

Impulse and **propensity** psychologically denote the experiencing of a state of activation, of tension, of preparation for action. Need and impulse can not be separated, as they form a unity, being sides of the same phenomenon.

² A. Rosca, *Motivele acțiunii umane*, Cluj, Institutul de psihologie al Universității, 1999, p. 217.

³ I. Radu, (coordonator), *Introducere în psihologia contemporană*, Bucharest, Sincron Publishing House, 1991, pp. 119-234.



Desire is a need that the individual is aware of, an emotional activation oriented toward its objective, an objective projected in an aware manner. It also extends to objects/situations proposed by the human group to which the individual belongs. While needs are rather limited, desires are more numerous, because a need can be satisfied by a larger array of objects and situations.

Intentions make the transition from motives to purposes or projects, indicating the crystallization of the directional aspect of the motive.

Purpose is the mental prefiguration of the result, the desired effect. If the purpose was not attained, the psychological tension is not extinguished, but it is maintained under the form of an impulse to ensure the continuation of the preoccupation with the problem.

Aspiration is the desire activated by images, models that are involved in culture. The spectrum of aspirations as modes to satisfy desires and aspirations are socially prefigured.

Ideal has its origin in the system of values of the person or group, prefiguring the final purpose of the action according to reality. The ideal usually requires a perspective value option, which acquires expression in the life programme of the individual.

Interest is the tendency to give attention to certain objects and to orient toward certain activities. This comprises needs, motives, tendencies, purposes in a relatively stable modality through which the individual actively relates to something according to a criterion of utilitarian nature.

Affectivity designates the affective processes that the individual goes through during the preparation of an action, during its execution and after finalizing it⁴. Practically, the affective processes represent an ensemble of complex psychological phenomena, with attributes related to physiological modifications which vary in intensity and which are characterized by behaviour marked by diverse emotional states (facial expressions, gestures, etc).

From the cognitive perspective, the affective processes include: *the emotional process (organic dispositions and affects); emotions; affective dispositions; feelings*.

In their turn, the *primary emotional processes*, meaning the organic dispositions and affects, form a relatively coherent couple. The organic *dispositions* accompany the state of anxiety, health, illness, fatigue. The *affects* envisage the sudden and short emotional outbursts, characterized by lively expressions and

gestures.

Emotions represent those emotional processes or experiences of a moderate level in which the manifestations of the conscience are not narrowed or stopped as in the case of affects. They are the effect of the confrontation between what the individual needs and what the environment offers as being real or imaginary. Unlike other affects, emotions have a transitory and multi-tonal character, a gradual and processual development and a higher level of interiorization and differentiation. Emotions make reference to a concrete, objectual situation: you are frightened by a certain situation, you are bothered by a certain happening. Consequently, emotions do not have a permanent character, but rather a situational one, depending on the emotional situation and being the result of the fulfilment or non-fulfilment of some biological tendencies. Emotion is experienced in a cognitive context, and definitely not in an isolated manner.

Emotions associate themselves in opposite pairs (like-dislike, admiration- contempt, joy-sadness, anger-relaxation), two types of emotions being distinguished: sthenic emotions (the activity, force and energy of the individual increase) and asthenic emotions (they diminish the energy and activeness of the individual).

At the same time however, emotions are inscribed in social patterns, they can be learned and socially shaped, while affects can not. So, the military personnel can learn to control their emotions in an intercultural situation.

The *affective dispositions* make up a sort of emotional fund that colours behaviour for a shorter or longer period of time.

Dispositions emerge in a double state: as premises for the emergence of new affective elements and as effect of some emotional manifestations, as a cumulative result of the psycho-social circumstances that the individual goes through, of certain constants of these circumstances.

Feelings represent a durable and complex formation of an affective character, of moderate length, which become true effective manifestations in relation with different events, objects, values, persons significant for an individual or human group. In other words, the feeling is characterized by stability, emotional condensation and habitual character. They are in a latent state and become manifest as required by the circumstances. Also, feelings have a social character in their expression. They practically play

⁴ I. Radu, (coordonator), *Op. cit.*, pp. 236-256.



the role of motivational factors of human behaviour.

Beside the organic and vegetative modifications, the emotional process also has behavioural manifestations (gestures, facial expressions, intended or uttered voice expressions) and an affective experience in relation with the world.

From the perspective of the intercultural communication competence, the external behavioural manifestations of the emotional process are important. The category of external behavioural manifestations includes: gesture, body movement or immobility, facial expression, vocal expression, muscular trembling etc.

Individual variables of the motivational-affective dimension. As **individual variables of motivation** we included: need, impulse, desire, intention, purpose, aspiration, ideal and interest.

According to the theory of A.H. Maslow⁵, man has the following needs: *physiological* (food, shelter, rest, sex); *security* (emotional balance in working and living activities); *social* (affiliation and belonging to various social groups); *psycho-social* (self-esteem, prestige, respect); *personal achievement* in creative activities; *cognitive, aesthetic*⁶.

As an individual variable, *need*, regardless of its object of reference, differs from one person to another. In the case of the building of the intercultural communication competence, we appreciate that the security, social, psycho-social, personal achievement and cognitive needs are the most important ones. The needs for security are necessary because by satisfying them the human individual feels safe in an environment that he can perceive as hostile to him (if we refer to the external theatre of operations. For this, the military personnel tends to completely and continuously satisfy their social needs, meaning the ones that refer to the affiliation and belonging to the military structure within which they are deployed in an external theatre of operations. In their turn, the psycho-social needs are especially important because, once they are satisfied, they give to the person self-esteem, the desired social prestige, respect. A significant role is played by the needs for personal achievement that

the military personnel satisfy through the structure to which they belong during their participation in stability and support operations outside the national territory. The cognitive needs reflect the need for knowledge of the military personnel. In our case, we refer to the need to create the intercultural communication competence which is felt by all the Romanian military personnel participating in foreign humanitarian assistance missions. These are formed through the assimilation, acquisition and interiorization of information which thus become knowledge necessary for the application of the intercultural communication competence.

To a certain extent, an important role in the acquisition of the intercultural communication competence is played by the so-called functional needs. We mean needs like the one for exploration, activity, alternation, on the basis of which numerous other secondary needs are formed. From one stage to another, the same needs are satisfied, thanks to learning, by more and more varied techniques and modalities, in tune with a greater life experience of each individual and depending on the socio-cultural circumstances in which he lives. The participation of Romanian military personnel in stability and support operations outside the national territory satisfies their needs to know other social, cultural and religious realities in special intercultural situations, their needs for professional achievement within and together with the group that they belong to.

Impulse or *propensity* appear and manifest themselves in all military personnel, under various forms and with various intensities, both during preparations for the participation in external stability and support operations, and also during the execution of these missions. This impulse, on the psychological level, appears under the form of a state of activation, of preparation of the action. Unlike need, impulse designates the processual aspect of satisfying this need. In fact, need and impulse form a unity, because they are sides of the same phenomenon.

Desire is defined as a need that the individual is aware of, an emotional activation toward its consciously envisaged or projected object. In the process of acquisition of the intercultural communication competence, the military personnel becomes aware of their desire to acquire the knowledge that will help them execute the missions assigned to them in an intercultural situation in the theatre of operations.

Intention marks the transition from motives

⁵ Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs motivational model, <http://www.businessballs.com/maslow.htm>, accessed on 24.11.2012.

⁶ P. Louart, *Maslow, Herzberg et les théories du contenu motivationnel*, http://www.e-rh.org/documents/wp_louart2.pdf, pp. 6-7, accessed on 24.11.2012.



to consciously formulated and pursued purposes. In the case of the building of their intercultural communication competence, the military personnel have clear intentions to master the necessary and sufficient knowledge in order to acquire this competence.

Purpose defines the aim pursued by every individual when they undertake an action. The attaining of a purpose means to extinguish the need that generated it. The process of building of the intercultural communication competence contains in itself the purpose envisaged by every military personnel participating in stability and support operations outside of the national territory.

Aspiration defines the level of attainment of a consciously formulated purpose. We appreciate that the development of a high intercultural communication competence constitutes the natural aspiration of the military personnel participating in stability and support operations in various areas of the world. Of course, aspiration towards competitiveness in the researched field differs from one individual to another according to numerous personnel and group factors.

Ideal is determined by the personnel and group system of values. In the case of the intercultural communication competence, the ideal is to develop the skill of fluent communication in any intercultural situation.

Interest is the ultimate component of individual motivation. It defines the ultimate purpose of the activity of a person. For the Romanian military personnel participating in stability and support operations outside the national territory the development of the intercultural communication competence represents the fundamental interest. Practically, interest means the capacity of every military to manage impeccably in any intercultural situation encountered in the theatre of operations where he finds himself.

At **individual level, the affectivity variables** are: *primary emotional processes* (organic dispositions and affects); *emotions*; *affective dispositions* and *feelings*.

Every *human individual* experiences *emotional processes*, meaning the organic dispositions and affects, during the preparation, execution and finalization of an activity. These processes differ from one person to another, due to individual psychological and biological characteristics. Thus, the state of health, fatigue, illness, anxiety is different

from one individual to another. Furthermore, they are affectively experienced differently by each person. *Affects* vary also from one person to another. Examples of affects: anger leading to self-abandonment, blind aggressiveness, despair, state of horror, uncontrolled bursts of laughter or crying. To a significant extent, affects indicate a loss, even temporary, of man's conscious control over his behaviour. For this reason, under the influence of affects man can engage in unreasoned acts, in contrast with his usual manner of being and acting. For this reason, knowing oneself is important, and the group knowing the manner in which the military personnel experience emotiveness, under the form of affects, is also important, especially when they are in a novel and unexpected intercultural situation.

Similar to the case of emotions, the manifestation of *affective dispositions* differs from one person to another. The affective dispositions present themselves both as premises for the development of new affective forms, and also as a cumulative expression of some emotional processes in certain psycho-social conditions.

Feelings are complex and durable affective formations. They manifest as affective attitudes toward persons, values, ideas, objects. Of course, different individuals may display similar or contradictory feelings toward the same person. Just like emotions, feelings manifest themselves in pairs: love-hate, pride-shame, gratefulness-ungratefulness. Feelings have social determination. In the case of the development of the intercultural communication competence we can speak of the feeling of doing one's duty, of the pride of contributing to the attainment of the purpose of the military group that one belongs to.

Group variables of the motivational-affective dimension. At **group level, motivation** takes the same forms of manifestation as at individual level. The differences appear when it comes to constituting the elements of motivation and their evaluation. Thus, the *need for security* is imposed by the group to all its members because only in this way it is possible to accomplish the assigned mission. At group level also, at the level of the military structure involved in stability and support operations respectively, we speak of a social, psycho-social and cognitive need. Thus, every military group feels the need to stand out, to impose itself through the deeds of its members with regard to the timely and complete execution of the assigned missions. Also, every military group,



through specific characteristics (size, cohesion, climate, effectiveness, consensus, conformity) proves its capacity to determine all its members to make all the necessary and sufficient physical and intellectual effort in order to acquire a high intercultural communication competence.

With regard to *propensity*, as element of motivation, it is also present at the level of the military group. This is because, *volens nolens*, between human groups, be they military, competition emerges with regard to the accomplishment of the assigned missions and tasks. Thus, an impulse toward action appears and manifests itself, toward assuming the role corresponding to the social status of the respective Romanian military structure.

Desire, as a need that the individual is aware of, at the level of the military group, appear, we appreciate, as a conscious and responsible urge toward the attainment of the established objectives. However, these latter ones can be accomplished if and only if all members of the military structure acquired a high level of intercultural communication competence.

Intention, at the level of the military group, is founded on the cohesion, consensus, conformity, traditions, psycho-social climate of the respective military structure. For this reason, when putting it into practice, all the members of the group have to participate.

Purpose, as element of group motivation, is clearly defined both officially, as well as informally. The military group is constituted in order to accomplish legal missions that define the role of its existence. Through the participation of a number of Romanian military structures to the accomplishment of various mission in various theatre of operations both within the North-Atlantic Alliance and within multinational military coalitions, the Romanian military personnel come in contact with various intercultural situations. Consequently, beside the official objective of the respective military structure, it also establishes its immediate purpose to be attained. Such a purpose is constituted by the development of the skill to communicate in an intercultural situation in all military personnel participating in stability and support operations.

Aspiration, at group level, expresses the yearning of the military structures toward purposes that go higher than the previous conditions. In this context, the aspiration of the military group is directed toward the development of the intercultural communication competence in all its members within the deadline

established through educational objectives set at the beginning of training. Usually, any group tends toward higher and higher aspirations in one field or another. In fact, we speak here of the level of the aspiration of the military group in the field of the intercultural communication competence. This level has the tendency to exceed the parameters set through educational objectives.

Ideal, in the case of the Romanian military structure participating in stability and support operations, is the acquisition of a high level of intercultural communication competence by all its members, so that this may help them achieve their formulated objectives. In the formation of this ideal the values and traditions specific to the military group are involved with regard to the accomplishment of the missions legally assigned to it.

Interests represent another element of group motivation. They define the final end toward which the military group tends in one field of activity or another. In the case of the development of the skill of intercultural communication, as an expression of the competence of the military personnel in this field, group interests converge with individual interests. Both the military group and its members wish to acquire a high level of intercultural communication competence, which is a factor of success in theatre of operations outside national borders.

In conclusion, we must emphasize that, in reality, the variables of individual motivation and affectivity manifest themselves simultaneously, not isolated, as previously analyzed. Practically, every variable of the individual motivation is accompanied by a distinct, more or less perceivable, affective experience.

We appreciate that at *group level*, *affectivity* manifests itself through emotions, affective dispositions and feelings. *Emotions* are affective experiences that the group, as a unity, manifests in one situation or another when confronted with novel and unusual situations. In this sense, the intercultural situation that the group knows by participating in stability and support operations outside the national territory can generate various emotions among the military personnel. They can be emotions of fear, anxiety or of courage, calm and self-control. The *affective dispositions*, at group level, manifest themselves through the contagion phenomena in the group (fear, horror, panic, hysteria) and in the psycho-social climate (trust-mistrust, optimism-pessimism, for example). In an intercultural situation the affective dispositions can influence that individual



and collective behaviour of the military personnel. *Feelings*, at group level, manifest themselves under the form of affective attitudes. They are thus defined by stability, emotional condensation and habitual character. Examples of feelings, at military group level, can be the pride of the military personnel to belong to a certain military, the feeling of the accomplished duty, the patriotic feeling.

Both the group motivation variables, as well as the affective processes that accompany them, manifest simultaneously. They are interdependent and inter-conditioned during their display in the individual and collective behaviour of the military personnel. The characteristics of the theatres of operations enhance the affirmation of certain motivations and emotional processes at military group level.

The institutional variables of the motivational-affective dimension

These include: social needs; desire; purpose; social ideal; aspiration and stable interests. In the case of the military institutions that becomes involved in the process of development of the intercultural communication competence as well, we speak of *social needs*, the *desire* to accomplish the set educational objectives, the *purpose* of the training process, the *aspiration* of the institution to attain high level of performance in its field of activity, of the *social ideal*, meaning to carry out tasks at the current level of exigency of the theatres of operations, of the *stable interests* of the military institution.

The **variables of affectivity at institutional level** are in our opinion: *affective dispositions and feelings*. We assert this because we consider the institution as a human organization destined to attain well socially defined purposes. We perceive *affective dispositions* as an emotional fund that marks the psycho-social climate of the institution which, in its turn, influences the behaviour of the personnel of the institution and of the military personnel that are part of the educational process.

Feelings are perceived here as affective attitudinal manifestations defined by stability, emotional condensation and durability. We speak of feelings of accomplished duty, pride to attain the educational objectives fixed through educational curricula, patriotism.

Indicators associated with the variables of the motivational-affective dimension of the intercultural communication competence of the Romanian military personnel

As The variables associated with the

motivational-affective dimension at all three levels differ only in number but not in quality, we will present the indicators only once, and we will use them distinctly when necessary.

Indicators for the variables of motivation

These are distributed as follows:

- we attribute for *need* the indicators: level where they manifest; type of need (physiological, social, security etc); place in Maslow's pyramid of needs; subjectivity, nature of need;
- for *impulse* or *propensity*: level where they manifest; level of exactness; the optimum/minimum of tension; level of the state of activation (very high, high, medium, small, very small);
- for *desire*: level where they manifest; level of emotional activation; desire manifested toward objects/situations proposed by the human group; number of individual, group or institutional desires;
- for *intention*: level of manifestation; direction of the motive;
- for *purpose*: level of manifestation; degree of mental prefiguration of the result; level of attainment of the purpose;
- for *aspiration*: level of manifestation; number of individual, group, institutional aspirations; level of individual, group, institutional aspiration; spectrum of aspirations;
- for *ideal*: personal, group, institutional system of values; final end of the action; level of manifestation;
- or *interests*: level of manifestation; type of interests; individual, group, institutional attitude toward object, person or idea; criteria of utility nature.

Indicators for the variables of emotional processes

They are distributed as follows:

- for *dispositions*: level of manifestation; domain of reference (health, fatigue, illness, sexual desire etc); mobility of disposition;
- for *affects*: forms of manifestation (anger, joy, aggressiveness, despair, state of horror); level where they manifest; type of affects (expectation, amazement, success); mobility of affects;
- for *emotions*: referential orientation; type of relation between the nature and object of the need; level of manifestation; contradictory couple of the emotion; type of emotion (sthenic



or asthenic); dynamic of emotion; polarity of emotion;

- for *affective dispositions*: premise for the development of new affective formations (which ones exactly); level of manifestation; expression of the emotional process; type of the group contagion phenomenon; dynamic of affective dispositions; mobility of affective dispositions;
- for *feelings*: degree of stability; level of generalization; duration; nature of the feeling (sense, direction of manifestation); character of feelings; dynamic of feelings; value of feelings (individual, group, social); motivational value of feelings); polarity of feelings.

In conclusion, we can state that the motivation-al-affective dimension creates the premises for the action of the military personnel with regard to the intercultural communication competence. The motivational side of the dimension can be analyzed on two levels: *intrinsic motivation* and *extrinsic motivation*.

The *intrinsic motivation* is the superior form of motivation. It does not know saturation because it does not depend on external motives, meaning rewards or punishments in case of execution / non-execution of a task. The reward comes from the satisfaction of carrying out the activity that the person undertook.

The *extrinsic motivation* is founded on motives outside the action. For example, the military learns a foreign language envisaging participation in missions outside the national territory which brings along professional, financial and social advantages.

In practice, we witness a combination of the two forms of motivation. In our opinion, the process of development of the intercultural communication competence of the military personnel participating in stability and support operations outside the national territory is based on both types of motivation.

With regard to *affectivity*, it is present during the training, execution and finalization of an activity. For this reason, motivation is tightly connected with the emotional processes, dispositions and feelings that the military personnel experience when they build and put to use their intercultural communication competence.

In conclusion, motivation and affectivity are permanently present in any moment of human activity. If their sense and direction of manifestation coincide, then success is guaranteed. On the contrary, if the sense and direction of motivation and affectivity are different, then we can witness difficulties in the accomplishment of the respective activity, be it from the point of view of motivation, be it from the point of view of affectivity.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Abraham Maslow's *Hierarchy of Needs – motivational model*, <http://www.businessballs.com/maslow.htm>.
2. Louart, P., *Maslow, Herzberg et les théories du contenu motivationnel*, http://www.e-rh.org/documents/wp_louart2.pdf.
3. Radu, I., (coordonator), *Introducere în psihologia contemporană*, Bucharest, Sincron Publishing House, 1991.
4. Tucicov, B. A., (coordonator), *Dicționar de psihologie socială*, Bucharest, Științific and Enciclopedic Publishing House, 1981.
5. Rosca, A., *Motivele acțiunii umane*, Cluj, Institutului de Psihologie al Universității, 1999, p. 217.
6. Thibault, J. W. & Kelly, H. H, *The Psychology of Groups*, John Willey and Sons, New York, 1959.