



Methodology for developing combat skills in military personnel during combat training

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◆ **Abstract.** The mismatch between available resources and tasks, limited training time, and the need for high-quality training make it critically important to optimise methods for developing combat skills, taking into account individual learning rates and safety restrictions. The aim of the article was to prove the need to improve combat training methods for personnel and to identify the best methods for their implementation. Based on a review of regulatory documents and military standards of the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine, the shortcomings of the current system of psychological training of military personnel were identified and the principles for its further improvement were formulated. Through the analysis of scientific and pedagogical sources, the basic laws of skill formation were identified. The differences between a skill and a habit as different levels of mastery of behavioural actions were studied, and the psychological factors that determine their formation were analysed, primarily the role of motivation and perseverance in achieving results. The stages, forms, methods and techniques of training aimed at improving the effectiveness of the acquisition of combat skills and abilities were summarised. The importance of a systematic approach to the organisation of the learning process was emphasised, and the stages, forms and methods of training aimed at improving the effectiveness of learning combat skills and abilities were summarised. The feasibility of combining a modular approach, targeted training scenarios and systematic control of results was justified. The potential of microlearning as a modern approach was described separately, noting its conciseness, practical orientation, adaptability to individual learning pace, use of digital learning tools, and regular feedback, which ensures high operational efficiency of training in conditions of limited time. The influence of personal experience and motivation on the stages and duration of skill formation has been identified. The results of the study can be integrated into the design and modification of training programmes, the development of methodological recommendations and training scenarios for combat training of units, which will contribute to improving the effectiveness of professional skills formation, rationalising training time and reducing operational risks associated with insufficient training of personnel

◆ **Keywords:** psychological training; learning activity; microlearning; motivation; habit

◆ Introduction

Any training, including combat (psychological) training, is an educational process of acquiring knowledge and skills, the effectiveness of which is determined by the conditions of the training, the teaching methods and the individual

psychological characteristics of the military personnel. According to the updated Basic General Military Training (BGMT) programme, 372 hours are allocated for the training of mobilised service personnel, which does not

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ensure a sufficient level of psychological resilience for effective actions in combat conditions (Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, 2025). The actual amount of time available for practical training is significantly lower than what is required for the reliable formation of service-combat abilities and skills. Standard approaches often fail to take into account individual learning rates and motivational factors, which reduces training effectiveness. As a result, the level of combat capability directly depends on the quality of training and the degree to which skills are formed. As emphasised by N.V. Moskalenko *et al.* (2022), the experience of armed conflicts, including the combat operations on the territory of Ukraine, demonstrates that the quality and speed of forming combat skills determine not only the successful completion of tasks, but also the preservation of the lives and health of personnel. Thus, the development of a comprehensive methodology aimed at accelerating and improving the formation of skills in service members is one of the priority tasks of modern military pedagogy and psychology. Modern combat conditions require military personnel to be highly mobile, quick to react and able to work with modern technologies. Given the rapid development of technology, training with the use of technical means such as drones, unmanned aerial vehicles and other innovative systems plays a significant role. As of 2025, the combat training programmes of the Armed Forces of Ukraine do not specify training methods, but rather the order in which classes are conducted, which are, of course, not identical concepts (Law of Ukraine No. 4538-IX, 2025). Combat training is the foundation of the armed forces' combat readiness and a key factor in achieving victory in modern armed conflict. The effectiveness of any unit's actions directly depends on the level of individual preparedness of each servicemember, their ability to perform their duties quickly, accurately and coherently under conditions of maximum physical and psychological stress.

D. Grossman & L. Christensen (2023) noted that due to the growth of technological complexity and information overload, modern combat operations require military personnel to have high digital and technical literacy, operational cognitive adaptability, and endurance under stress. In these conditions, simply acquiring theoretical knowledge is insufficient. The formation of stable, automatic practical skills is of decisive importance – from the use of personal weapons and the provision of first psychological aid and pre-medical care to complex tactical actions as part of a unit. According to the conclusions of I. Neminsky *et al.* (2023), it is these skills that allow military personnel to act reflexively and effectively under enemy fire, in conditions of stress, fatigue, and limited time for decision-making. A. Romanyshyn & A. Neurova (2025) emphasised that the main task is to develop not only the physical but also the mental qualities of military personnel, which are crucial for the successful completion of combat missions. Issues related to adaptation to service conditions, stressful situations, psychological stability, and making the right decisions in critical conditions are often the main topics in research. The

study by Z.A. Khan *et al.* (2023) focuses on the importance of using innovative teaching methods based on psychological and cognitive theories. One such approach is the use of cognitive learning principles, which involve the integration of new knowledge through understanding and reflection on experience. O.V. Sagan (2022) also noted achievements in the application of gamification in military training, where game elements are used to increase motivation and engage military personnel in the active acquisition of knowledge and skills. A review of the above studies revealed the need to improve approaches to the training of military personnel. The aim of the article was to substantiate the conceptual foundations for modernising personnel training methods and to develop recommendations for improving the effectiveness of combat skills and abilities training.

◆ Materials and Methods

To ensure comprehensiveness, objectivity and reliability of the results obtained, a set of complementary research methods was applied. The leading role was played by methods of analysis of scientific and pedagogical sources, which included comparison, generalisation, classification and systematisation of scientific approaches, concepts and practical solutions in the field of combat and psychological training of military personnel. They made it possible to determine the current state of the problem of professional skills development and to identify key pedagogical, psychological and military-applied approaches to adult education (in particular, in conditions of high stress and limited time). A comparative analysis of pedagogical systems revealed their functional advantages and structural limitations, which served as the basis for a critical assessment of existing approaches. The generalisation and systematisation of empirical and theoretical data ensured the formation of a conceptual framework for the study and a clear definition of its terminology. At the theoretical and methodological stage, methods of analysis of normative documents in combination with content analysis were used to study the official regulatory framework for combat training, which ensured the systematic reproduction of regulatory provisions and their methodological interpretation.

The regulatory and legal basis for this study was provided by documents and standards, including Military Publication 1-(18-21)160(13).01 (2021), Military Publication 1-00(160)03.01 (2021), Military standard STI 000G(V).58A (2019), Military standard STI 101A.26V (2019), a review of which made it possible to assess the compliance of existing practices with modern requirements of the defence sector, identify gaps and inconsistencies in the current regulatory and methodological framework that affect the level of training of military personnel. Based on official materials from the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine (2025), the features of conducting BGMT in higher education institutions were systematised. To define concepts such as “skill”, “habit”, “ability”, and “mastery”, data from the psychological dictionary by V.V. Syniavsky & O.P. Sergeenkova (2007) were used. A review of the latest teaching

practices, including gaming and microlearning, made it possible to develop a number of recommendations for improving the effectiveness of information assimilation by military personnel in military training. The recommendations of these manuals and collections of standards served as a source for determining the approaches and practices implemented in the training of the personnel of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

◆ Results and Discussion

The main indicator of a person's competence in any field is the number and quality of skills they possess. The result of BGMT should not be new theoretical knowledge, but rather developed skills that can be applied in real combat conditions. W. Pruchnicki *et al.* (2022) determined that a skill is formed as a result of special exercises – purposeful and systematic repetition of actions. A prerequisite for skill formation is a person's interest and motivation to learn. If, at the previous stage, a servicemember understands the purpose of a skill and the algorithm for its application, the pace of subsequent stages of training increases significantly. Thus, familiarisation with techniques and algorithms for performing actions plays an important role. For example, when mastering movements on the battlefield, the algorithms of movement are first demonstrated and learned through visual observation of the actions of experienced military personnel; then rehearsal (orientational) movements are performed, during which gross errors are possible, which are considered as a stage of the learning trajectory and are subject to systematic correction. The analytical stage provides that, based on the information received, the military personnel must master individual elements of the actions. For example, when teaching a child to read, letters are first demonstrated sequentially, then syllables, and later words; Similarly, when mastering a new action in combat training, it is necessary to consciously work through all the intermediate stages: the mechanism for performing actions must be understood, although in the initial stages their implementation may be characterised by inaccuracy and increased execution time. At the synthetic stage (the stage of conscious competence), individual actions are combined into a single whole, and the time required for execution is reduced. A combination of theoretical knowledge and practice is formed. The warrior forms a clear idea of the action and can consciously use it. Some steps begin to be performed automatically without conscious control. At the automatic stage (the stage of unconscious competence), the established skill does not require control and is performed completely unconsciously. The signal that the skill has been formed is considered to be the automatic performance of an action without prior analysis (Pruchnicki *et al.*, 2022). The signs of a formed skill are the combination of individual elementary movements into a coherent, coordinated action and the gradual elimination of unnecessary, irrational movements, which reduces overall tension. In the process of execution, attention shifts from controlling the technique of movement to achieving the final result.

Actions become rhythmic, which saves effort and reduces fatigue. In addition, the serviceman acquires the ability to arbitrarily regulate the pace of work – to slow down or speed up the execution depending on the situational conditions (Romanyshyn & Neurova, 2025).

The developed skill becomes part of a broader concept – competence, which implies the ability to perform an action with a certain level of quality in different, changing conditions. The development of competence requires a gradual increase in the complexity of tasks and variation in the conditions of activity, which ensures flexibility and consistency of action. The highest level of skill development is mastery, in which a servicemember is able to perform complex actions quickly, accurately, and effectively, even in stressful or non-standard situations (Syniavsky & Sergeenkova, 2007). An important aspect of organising personnel training is ensuring conditions under which theoretical material is presented in the most understandable form, and the training process provides for the possibility of prompt receipt and provision of feedback between the instructor and the serviceman. V.L. Zlyvkov & S.O. Lukomska (2019) identified the main recommendations for skill formation. First of all, skill formation has a stressful effect on the psyche of a military personnel. The more new skills are acquired at the same time, the higher the mental load on the military personnel, which reduces the effectiveness of the training process. Simultaneous mastery of several professional actions can lead to the formation of artificial associative links between them, even in the absence of a logical connection. As a result, such skills acquire a complex nature of manifestation and can be lost not selectively, but collectively. The widespread assertion about the superiority of lectures as the basis of training is erroneous, since the theoretical part plays a supporting role and corresponds only to the first stage of skill formation. It helps to set the direction of movement and avoid mistakes in the key part of training – practice. According to Y.L. Bryndikov (2018), the form of training plays an important role in the process of information transfer. The most effective form of training is individual training, when the instructor works directly with the serviceman and adapts the material to his level of preparedness. However, due to the significant resources required, this approach is rarely used, while group and distance formats are more common. To increase the effectiveness of such classes, it is advisable to use elements of microlearning, which contribute to better assimilation of the material and individualisation of the learning process (Pruchnicki *et al.*, 2022; Romanyshyn & Neurova, 2025). Microlearning is an approach to learning that involves acquiring knowledge in small doses, with constant repetition and complication. Its effectiveness lies in short and quick sessions, each of which has a specific goal and teaches a separate action. All these microelements form a complete picture of the topic being studied. For example, if a long video is divided into short videos, the course does not become microlearning. Micro-units must be purposeful; each stage of learning aims to teach a specific action. By combining

these sessions, a complete picture of the topic or skill being studied is formed (Romanyshyn & Neurova, 2025). This approach is important for all aspects of basic military training during mobilisation. Given the limited training time, the main goal of the training process is to prepare military

personnel to perform specific combat tasks typical of real frontline conditions, rather than to learn the basic principles of military activity designed for peacetime. Table 1 presents the key features and principles of microlearning that ensure effective learning in conditions of intensive combat training.

Table 1. Basic principles of microlearning

Name	Content
Purposefulness	Microlearning should focus on addressing one specific problem rather than a wide range of issues, ensuring its practical relevance
Conciseness	Explanations typically last 2-7 minutes. Preparing such a lesson involves removing non-functional information that distracts attention. Focusing on relevant content that has been proven in combat increases engagement and training effectiveness
Self-sufficiency and integrity	Each unit of training content should be self-sufficient, while also being integrated into the overall training system and aimed at achieving the planned results
Accessibility	The content of the lessons should be accessible, both in terms of understanding by the average person and in terms of the ability to obtain electronic and printed versions from any device
Practical applicability	Training content should be visually demonstrative and practically oriented to ensure the immediate applicability of the knowledge gained in combat conditions
Continuity	Training should be conducted in a comprehensive and phased manner
Multi-format	To maintain a person's attention, it is necessary to constantly change the form of teaching the training materials
Repetition	It is important to implement multiple interval repetitions of a new topic to reinforce it in the memory. The easiest way to do this is through comprehensive modelling of questions from different subjects
Skill acquisition	It is important to break down a skill into several simple actions and organise separate training for each one.
Speed of execution	At first, the serviceman performs the actions at a slow pace, focusing on individual elements to identify and eliminate mistakes. Prolonged work at a slow pace can hinder the integration of motor elements into a single system; thus, training should gradually transition to a normal pace, allowing for occasional mistakes as part of the automation process
Quality of execution	After identifying the key skills to be mastered, the next necessary step is to systematically monitor their performance. The effectiveness of skill formation is ensured by gradually increasing the complexity of tasks and consistently raising the requirements for the quality of performance
Use of simulators	A trainer is a simulator of certain actions and conditions. It is used to simulate situations and develop adequate responses to them
Corrective feedback	During training activities, it is necessary to provide timely and constructive feedback, which allows to identify mistakes, evaluate the correctness of the actions performed and the degree of achievement of the set goal. Untimely correction of actions can lead to the consolidation of bad habits, while awareness of one's own results and inaccuracies is a key condition for the effective formation of professional skills. The source of such feedback can be a teacher, instructor, colleagues, or the serviceman's self-control

Source: developed by the authors based on A. Romanyshyn & A. Neurova (2025)

Analysis of the table shows that microlearning in military training was based on the principles of purposefulness, practical orientation and continuity of the educational process. This system of training ensures the gradual, conscious and controlled development of skills, facilitates the rapid transfer of knowledge into practical activity and improves the quality of learning through individualisation and feedback. The study of theory can be supplemented by observing an experienced soldier performing an action in practice. As emphasised by K. Derera (n.d.), observation cannot replace training, but it will be more effective than simply reading or listening. Acquiring a skill is the result of long training, so it is important to break the skill down into several simple actions and organise separate training sessions for each one. The first training sessions should focus on quantity rather than quality. It is better to do 40 repetitions with mistakes in a day than 15 repetitions without mistakes. Gradually increase the interval between exercises. During breaks, the warrior analyses their actions. It is important that the breaks are not too long; it is important to maintain a balance. For example, in a week, a warrior without training will forget a new skill. Speed of execution is one of the key factors in skill formation. At the initial stage, it is advisable to practise actions slowly, focusing on

each element and identifying mistakes. At the same time, excessive prolongation of this stage can slow down the integration of individual actions into a coherent system, so the pace of execution should be gradually increased, allowing for controlled mistakes as part of the learning process. The quality of execution is also a determining criterion for the effectiveness of skill formation (Grossman, 2024). In the early stages of training, it is advisable to limit oneself to controlling the most essential parameters of the action, gradually complicating the tasks and increasing the requirements for accuracy and coordination of execution. The lack of purposeful control and the desire for improvement can lead to the consolidation of ineffective or erroneous methods of action, which reduces the overall level of preparedness. In cases where the amount of practical training is limited, particularly in BGMT conditions, it is advisable to provide for the possibility of independent training for military personnel. This approach helps to consolidate the knowledge gained and develop skills outside the formal training process, which increases the effectiveness of learning even when there is a lack of training hours.

In accordance with Military Standard STI 000G(V).58A (2019) and Military Standard STI 101A.26V (2019), the use of simulators provides the

opportunity to simulate real combat conditions and practise practical actions in a controlled environment. Simulators that reproduce typical situations and factors of combat conditions contribute to the formation of stable, automated reactions of military personnel. Effective forms of simulator training also include business games and specialised training courses, which allow theoretical knowledge to be combined with practical skills training (Military Publication 1-(18-21)160(13).01, 2021; Military Publication 1-00(160)03.01, 2021). When a servicemember performs a training activity, it is important to provide them with prompt, constructive feedback – to point out what mistakes they made, what actions were correct, and how well they achieved the set goal overall. It is important to correct the serviceman's actions in a timely manner, otherwise he may develop and reinforce incorrect habits. Understanding the results and mistakes in actions is one of the main conditions for successful skill formation. The soldier can obtain this information from a teacher, instructor, other servicemen, or through self-control. In the process of skill formation, special attention should be paid to the development of self-control, which consists in the ability of a serviceman to independently evaluate the results of his own activities, identify shortcomings, determine their causes and look for ways to eliminate them. This skill is not innate and is formed gradually under the influence of experience and systematic practice. Over time, as training tasks are completed, the ability to exercise self-control improves, which increases the effectiveness of skill acquisition and the quality of combat operations. According to a study by D. Grossman (2024), at the initial stage of developing a new skill, it is not advisable to involve military personnel in complex or responsible tasks. Despite outward confidence in mastering a new action, insufficient practical experience, psychological tension and stress caused by novelty can significantly reduce the effectiveness of skill acquisition. Thus, it is advisable to gradually introduce it into practical activities – from practising basic actions to performing complex tasks, with a gradual increase in complexity in line with the growth of professional experience and confidence of the serviceman. With limited training time, effective skill formation is ensured by a clear understanding of the algorithm of actions, intensive practice, and systematic feedback, which contributes to internal assimilation and consolidation of experience.

Based on the works of J.D. Fletcher & P.R. Chatelier (2000) and V.V. Syniavsky & O.P. Sergeenkova (2007), a training methodology model has been developed aimed at improving the effectiveness of skills formation in military personnel under limited conditions of combat readiness. The model was based on the formation of sequential tasks, the first of which requires removing all unnecessary elements and briefly conveying the algorithm for performing the action to the soldiers. The soldier must memorise the algorithm, understand it and clarify anything that is unclear. After the theoretical part with examples, an individual task can be given and feedback provided

(recommended time for completion is 10-12 minutes). The aim of the second task was to practise the algorithm and understand its capabilities. At this stage, the soldier must repeat the action as many times as possible and receive feedback. It is important to provide military personnel with hints that will help them complete the task correctly. For example, display the algorithm in the form of a short diagram or provide a checklist or flowchart that they can use to check their work. The goal of the soldier in the final task is to use the acquired skills and knowledge in conditions that are as close to real life as possible. To practise, it is advisable to simulate interaction in pairs or groups (recommended time for completion is 20 minutes in two approaches). The process of skill formation depends on several key factors: purposefulness, internal motivation and external instruction, which form the appropriate attitude; proper planning of exercises in accordance with the stages of training; the inclusion of skills in real and meaningful learning situations; providing feedback on performance results; and the servicemember's understanding of the general principle or pattern of action in the context of which the trained action is performed (Pruchnicki *et al.*, 2022). The formation of a skill is assessed by objective indicators: accuracy and quality of performance (absence of critical errors), speed of performing individual operations or their sequences, absence of the need for conscious control of performance and signs of tension, rapid fatigue or omission of intermediate elements of the action. In the context of mobilisation training, it is critically important to establish normative time intervals and threshold levels of competence for each key skill and compare them with the actual training time in order to reasonably determine whether the allotted period is sufficient for the reliable acquisition of basic combat skills (Melnychenko *et al.*, 2024). It is necessary to clearly distinguish between the concepts of "skill" and "habit", which are often mistakenly equated. A skill is formed consciously and purposefully in the process of learning, while a habit arises spontaneously and does not necessarily have a positive functional effect. According to V.V. Syniavsky & O.P. Sergeenkova (2007), a habit is a special form of human behaviour that manifests itself in a tendency to repeat the same type of actions in similar situations. Research by A. Romanyshyn & A. Neurova (2025) indicated that it takes an average of about 66 days to form a habit. However, this period can vary significantly – from 18 to 254 days – depending on the individual characteristics of the person, the complexity of the habit itself, the conditions of its formation, and other factors. Thus, a habit can be formed in 21 days, or in 18, 70, or even 200 days. The speed of this process is determined both by the nature of the habit and by external circumstances. The duration of skill formation varies significantly from person to person. Consequently, the time allocated for the BGMT for mobilised service members is insufficient for the proper formation of combat skills. This has a negative impact on the morale and psychological state of personnel and their resilience to the stress factors of a

combat environment. The situation is complicated by the lack of motivation of those responsible, limited material and technical resources, a shortage of qualified instructors, as well as the use of ineffective training methods and content that does not fully correspond to the real conditions of combat operations (Zlyvko & Lukomska, 2019). Based on the above, there is a need to amend the BGMT programme used to train mobilisation resources. While the 30-day duration of the course was previously justified by the complexity of the combat situation, given the recognition of the long-term nature of the war, it is reasonable to extend the BGMT period to at least 60 days. The proposed extension should be considered a priority compared to previous changes – to 49 days in November 2024 and to 51 days in July 2025 – in order to increase the readiness of mobilisation reserves and ensure an adequate level of their combat training (Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, 2025).

Motivation and perseverance are key determinants in the formation of professional skills. As emphasised by A.M. Vovna (2018), personal interest in acquiring a specific skill determines the frequency and quality of exercise performance, which affects the speed and stability of motor and cognitive component automation. One of the most important psychological prerequisites for the effectiveness of combat training is the formation, activation, and stable maintenance of a system of motives that regulate the training activities of military personnel. The assimilation of reality occurs in proportion to the degree of interest in the objects and tasks of this reality. Thus, the motivational component should be considered as a functional resource that determines the effectiveness of the training process. In M. Marushchak's (2023) study, the motives for learning activities are defined as internal driving forces that determine the direction and activity of a military personnel in the process of acquiring knowledge and skills, ensuring the setting and achievement of learning goals. The structure of the motivational system of military personnel's learning activities includes a number of interrelated components that reflect various aspects of the value-semantic orientation of the individual in the educational process. The assimilation of the content of educational activities occurs primarily through the use of traditional motivators provided for in the methodology of presenting educational material, in particular, emphasising its significance, relevance and practical importance. However, appealing to learning for the sake of learning itself is not effective enough in conditions of reduced positive motivational potential. Given the close relationship between the needs and goals of educational activities, it is advisable to consider the system of motivational factors comprehensively, covering both internal and external incentives for learning. General social motives include those based on an awareness of the social significance of the military profession, its prestige and role in ensuring national security. Such motives give military personnel a sense of involvement in important state affairs, which increases their level of responsibility and consistency in the learning process. Professional motives are directly

related to the desire to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary for the effective performance of official duties. Their role is to foster an understanding that mastering the relevant academic disciplines is a critical condition for professional development, survival and successful functioning in combat conditions. Cognitive motives reflect the serviceman's interest in the very process of cognition and acquisition of knowledge. The effectiveness of their formation largely depends on the pedagogical skills of the commander or teacher, who is able to present the training material in a logical, accessible and meaningful form, emphasising its practical significance for specific military service tasks. Social identification motives arise in the process of interpersonal interaction in the training group and determine the serviceman's desire to compare his own achievements with the results of other group members. Such motives contribute to an increase in the level of self-reflection, competitiveness and social activity, especially when individual goals can be achieved through group interaction. They become most effective when the training group acquires personal significance for the soldier – it becomes a source of support, recognition and authority. Pragmatic motives are determined by the practical usefulness of the knowledge gained for the serviceman. This refers to the awareness of the specific benefits that training provides, from increasing the effectiveness of combat missions to increasing the chances of professional advancement and success in future careers. A serviceman who clearly understands the practical value of the training material demonstrates greater engagement, discipline and responsibility in the training process (Marushchak, 2023). The holistic interaction of motives determines the effectiveness of the process of forming the knowledge, skills and abilities that form the basis of personnel combat readiness. In educational activities, there is no distinction between "good" and "bad" motivation – there are only factors that directly determine a soldier's activity in the learning process. The ideal situation is one in which all groups of motivational stimuli function simultaneously, but in practice this is not always the case. Thus, during each training session, the commander (teacher, instructor) should focus not on formal but on real motivation of military personnel, which ensures effective assimilation of training material (How to increase..., 2022). At the same time, it is necessary to take into account the dynamic nature of motives, which change under the influence of external conditions and factors such as length of service, material and living conditions, level of morale, and the specifics of the organisation and management of the training process. The main task of training centre officials is to constantly motivate military personnel to acquire knowledge. The main focus of the work was on the fact that the presence of knowledge and relevant skills will help to survive in battle.

A. Romanyshyn & A. Neurova (2025) formulated three basic principles for psychological training of armed forces personnel. The first principle is that soldiers should not be "killed" during training. The training leader (instructor or

teacher) should not declare military personnel “dead” during training. Simulated combat, which causes stress, presents the soldier with a psychological choice when “hit” by a weapon. If a participant stops after being “hit” during training (as if the scenario is complete), this instils an undesirable and potentially harmful behaviour pattern in their mind. Regardless of whether they have been “shot” or not, the training scenario should not end until the soldier is able to successfully continue the battle, take up an advantageous position, call for help and, while waiting for it to arrive, control the situation on the battlefield. Other outcomes do not provide a constructive survival experience in real-world conditions. According to the second principle, a lesson or training session should never end in failure for a soldier. First, the instructor guides the soldier through a scenario in which he suffers defeat in order to identify weaknesses in his training. Then, during training, the instructor helps him overcome these weaknesses and achieve success. Thus, upon completion of the training session, the soldier will be more prepared and confident. The third principle is that criticism should be confidential, and public comments are unacceptable. The basic rule for a military leader is to make comments privately and express praise openly. Corrective comments should be made individually, while positive results and achievements should be noted openly to create a positive motivational climate in the team. It should be borne in mind that the level of a serviceman’s actions in combat conditions corresponds to his level of preparedness, not his potential capabilities. The lack of basic knowledge and skills significantly complicates or makes it impossible to master more complex elements of training. An important factor in the effectiveness of the training process is the high-quality professional and psychological selection of personnel. The presence among the trainees of individuals who, due to their individual psychological characteristics, are unable to master the basic training course has a negative impact on group dynamics, worsens the moral and psychological climate in the team, and increases the risk of interpersonal conflicts. Understanding the structure of a skill, its components, and the possibilities for step-by-step mastery of each element significantly accelerates the process of developing professional competence (Buczko & Kowalczyk, 2025). At the same time, there is the problem of ensuring an adequate level of psychological and pedagogical training for the command, teaching, and instructional staff of training units. It should be emphasised that significant combat experience is not always a sufficient condition for effective performance of the functions of an instructor, since such activity requires special knowledge in the field of pedagogy, psychology and teaching methods. A. Romanyshyn & A. Neurova (2025) identified seven basic laws of skill formation that reflect the psychological and neurophysiological mechanisms of this process:

1. Uneven pace of skill development. The acquisition of any skill occurs at an uneven pace: at the initial stage, there is rapid growth, which gradually slows down during further training. On a graph, this process may take the

form of a curve with a sharp rise at the beginning and a gradual levelling off. The critical moment is the transition from rapid progress to slow consolidation, especially in cases of skill formation that involve potential risk to the life or safety of military personnel.

2. Temporary deterioration in results is a normal stage in skill development. After initial progress, there is a phase of “plateau” or even partial regression. This is due to the restructuring of cognitive structures and does not indicate a loss of learning effectiveness. Such fluctuations are natural and reflect the process of adaptation of the psyche to new forms of activity.

3. No limits to perfection. Skill development has no static limits; improvement is possible continuously through the further restructuring of cognitive and neural structures. Automation increases the effectiveness of activities. Effectiveness grows as a performer shifts from conscious control to automatised execution. Automation reduces cognitive load, enabling attention to be focused on more complex aspects of an activity. The greater the proportion of actions performed automatically, the more effective the activity as a whole.

4. Transfer and interconnection of similar skills. New actions are learned more quickly if they are structurally similar to existing skills. Previous experience in related activities helps to speed up the learning process. However, this principle does not apply to skills with different cognitive or motor structures, and changing previously established behaviour is often more difficult than forming new behaviour. The need for systematic training. Any skill gradually fades away if it is not used in practice. The speed of loss depends on the level of complexity of the action, but the restoration of previously formed skills occurs faster than initial learning.

5. Effectiveness as a key motivator. Effective skill formation requires visible results. Awareness of one’s own progress maintains motivation, provides positive reinforcement, and stimulates further development.

At the same time, it is important to note that when learning and consolidating skills at the level of muscle memory or automated actions (“autopilot”), it is necessary to limit the number of options for performing an exercise or task as much as possible. Research by S.-H. Woo & K.-M. Lee (2007) showed that increasing the number of possible response options from even one to two leads to a significant increase in reaction time. In other words, increasing the number of possible options for action in a situation causes a proportional increase in the time needed to make a decision, which in turn leads to a slower reaction. Systematic training, motivational support for the learning process, and maintenance of acquired skills are key conditions for effective combat operations.

◆ Conclusions

The study found that the process of skill formation and development in military personnel is subject to a number of psychological and pedagogical patterns. The main patterns and principles of skill formation were identified, as well

as the role of perseverance and motivation in this process. Effective learning is impossible without internal motivation, while its presence significantly increases effectiveness. Motivation can be formed by creating a situation of cognitive interest, when a military personnel realises the purpose of the task, understands the logic of actions and experiences the first successes in their implementation. This, in turn, contributes to an increase in the level of interest and involvement in the learning process. It has been found that the sustainable formation of skills is ensured only through systematic repetition, which contributes to the automation of actions. At the same time, even after reaching a high level of proficiency, there is still potential for further improvement. At the same time, a long break in the application of the acquired skills can lead to a partial loss of automated skills, which negatively affects the effectiveness of performing combat tasks. However, these skills can be restored through targeted retraining. In unfamiliar or extreme conditions, in the absence of the necessary level of training, a soldier is forced to exercise constant conscious control over his actions. This is accompanied by tension, negative emotional reactions and, as a result, a

decrease in the effectiveness of activities. Thus, systematic training, motivation to learn, and maintaining the acquired level of skills are critically important conditions for effective combat operations. A number of recommendations and prospects for effective psychological training of armed forces personnel have been formulated. Promising areas for further research include substantiating and verifying the effectiveness of new methods for developing professional skills in military personnel during combat training. In particular, it is advisable to study the impact of individual characteristics, modern training technologies, and motivational factors on the speed and quality of skill acquisition and reproduction.

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Методика формування у військовослужбовців навичок в ході занять з бойової підготовки

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♦ **Анотація.** Невідповідність між наявними ресурсами та завданнями, обмежений час підготовки та потреба в якісному відпрацюванні дій роблять критично важливою оптимізацію методик формування бойових навичок з урахуванням індивідуальних темпів засвоєння й безпекових обмежень. Мета статті полягала в доведенні необхідності вдосконалення методик бойової підготовки особового складу та визначенні найкращих методів її реалізації. На основі огляду нормативних документів і військових стандартів Міністерства оборони України виявлено недоліки чинної системи психологічної підготовки військовослужбовців та сформульовано засади її подальшого удосконалення. Шляхом аналізу науково-педагогічних джерел, було виокремлено основні закони формування навичок. Досліджено відмінності між навичкою та звичкою як різними рівнями опанування поведінкових дій, а також проаналізовано психологічні чинники, що визначають їх формування – насамперед роль мотивації та наполегливості у досягненні результату. Узагальнено етапи, форми, методи й прийоми навчання, спрямовані на підвищення ефективності засвоєння бойових умінь і навичок. Підкреслено важливість системного підходу до організації навчального процесу, узагальнено етапи, форми та методи навчання, спрямовані на підвищення ефективності засвоєння бойових умінь і навичок. Обґрунтовано доцільність поєднання модульного підходу, цілеспрямованих тренувальних сценаріїв і системного контролю результатів. Окремо охарактеризовано потенціал мікронавчання як сучасного підходу, що відзначається стислістю, практичною орієнтацією, адаптивністю до індивідуального темпу засвоєння, використанням цифрових засобів навчання та регулярним зворотним зв'язком, який забезпечує високу оперативну ефективність підготовки в умовах обмеженого часу. Виявлено вплив особистісного досвіду та мотивації на етапи та тривалість формування навичок. Результати дослідження можуть бути інтегровані в проєктування та модифікацію навчальних програм, розроблення методичних рекомендацій і тренінгових сценаріїв бойової підготовки підрозділів, що сприятиме підвищенню ефективності формування професійних навичок, раціоналізації навчального часу та зниженню оперативних ризиків, пов'язаних із недостатнім рівнем підготовки особового складу

♦ **Ключові слова:** психологічна підготовка; навчальна діяльність; мікронавчання; мотивація; звичка