

The Journal for the Study of Culture, Language and International Security

www.iscl.norwich.edu/journal

Volume 2, Issue 2, Special Edition



EARTH:
 MOSTLY HARMLESS



The Journal of Culture, Language and International Security

Published by the Institute for the Study of Culture and Language

A division of NUARI at Norwich University

Editor

Dr. Robert Greene Sands

Production Editor

Jessica DeVisser, Five7Alpha, Inc.

Journal Artwork

Brady Wyman

Journal Point of Contact

Robert Greene Sands: rsands@norwich.edu

About JCLIS

The Journal of Culture, Language and International Security is a publication of the Institute for the Study of Culture and Language (<http://iscl.norwich.edu>). Located at Norwich University, ISCL strives to promote the theory, doctrine, and practices foundational to mission success in the human domain through the application of culture and language. One of the Institute's goals is to build and share a comprehensive body of professional knowledge on research, the development of learning programs and application of culture and language considered critical to the future of US military strategy and missions. The ISCL's journal, entitled The Journal of Culture, Language and International Security (JCLIS), will contribute to the ongoing development of that body of knowledge. JCLIS offers an opportunity for a wide audience of interested military and non-military academics, military professionals and operators, students of security concerns and interested colleagues - in an unofficial and unfettered vehicle - to debate and advance the theory and practice of promoting success in a very dynamic and uncertain international environment. JCLIS will be available to ISCL supporters and the wider audience interested in promoting the advancement of culture and language in shaping the 21st century security mission.

Creative Commons License

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial NoDerivatives 4.0 International License

Journal Affiliation

The Journal of Culture, Language and International Security would like to acknowledge our partner association with Norwich University Applied Research Institutes (NUARI) (<http://nuari.org>) and Norwich University (<http://www.norwich.edu>). Expect Challenge. Achieve Distinction.

Environmental and Ethical Policies

The Journal of Culture, Language and International Security is committed to bringing quality research to a wide and diverse audience. JCLIS strives to protect the environment by remaining 100% electronic and encourages you do to the same. Instead of printing this document, where possible, spread its influence through electronic means.

Permissions

For information or to request permission to reproduce any part of this journal, please contact the editor, Dr. Robert R. Greene Sands: rsands@norwich.edu

Disclaimer

Statements of fact and opinion contained within the articles of The Journal of Culture, Language and International Security, made by the editor, the editorial board, the advisory panel or journal article authors are those of the respective authors and not of NUARI, Norwich University or the Institute for the Study of Culture and Language. NUARI, Norwich University or ISCL does not make any representation, express or implied, in respect of the accuracy of material in this journal and cannot accept any legal responsibility or liability for any errors or omissions that may be made. The reader should make his/her own evaluation as to the appropriateness or otherwise of any information presented within these pages.

Social Media Presence

The Journal of Culture, Language and International Security is pleased to enjoy a presence on Facebook, Twitter and Vimeo. JCLIS invites friendly and constructive feedback and discourse in these forums.

© Copyright 2015, Institute for the Study of Culture and Language. All rights reserved

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License

Editorial Board Members

Allison Abbe

Gail McGinn, ~ McGinn Consulting, LLC.

Darby Arakelian ~ Command Strategies, LLC

Thomas Haines ~ Defense Intelligence Agency

Jackie Eller ~ Middle Tennessee State University

Maj. Jonathan F. Brown ~ Marine Corps Security Cooperation Group

Pieter R. DeVisser ~ Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center, JBLM

Kerry Fosher ~ Center for Advanced Operational Culture Learning, Marine Corps University

Robert R. Greene Sands ~ Institute for the Study of Culture and Language/Norwich University

Catherine Ingold ~ National Foreign Language Center at the University of Maryland

Efrat Elron ~ Centre for Global Workforce Simon Fraser University

Scott McGinnis ~ Defense Language Institute, Washington Office

Lauren Mackenzie ~ Marine Corps University/Center for Advanced Operational Culture Learning

Allison Greene-Sands ~ Department of Defense

Jessica Gallus ~ Army Research Institute

Aimee Vieira ~ Norwich University

Marinus van Driel

Editor's Welcome

Welcome to a Special Topics Issue of the Journal for the Study of Culture and Language (JCLIS). Often, advances in culture and language research and learning, especially as both may apply to international security, occur between issues of JCLIS. The audience for JCLIS runs the gamut of academics, learning developers, instructors, program manager and those who deploy into culturally complex situations or interactions for any number of government and non-government organizations and we find it relevant and timely to produce special topics issues to meet the more immediate culture and language needs of this array of populations.

In this initial special topics issue, Robert Greene Sands and Pieter DeVisser suggest, in their detailed look at the DoD's language, regional expertise and culture (LREC) program, that there lacks any kind of sufficient assessment mechanism to provide organizations critical understanding of their LREC capability, while failing to also provide the individual learner with a measure of performance useful to professional career development. Sands and DeVisser provide a critique of current DoD LREC policy and strategy and the lack of necessary guidance on assessment beyond language programs. Drawing on their experience at Joint Base Lewis/McChord in developing an LREC course, they propose an assessment model based on learning performance that is a more accurate reflection of LREC capability.

I hope you find this initial special topics issue timely and informational. Our Winter 2016 issue will publish in February of 2016.

Robert R. Greene Sands, Editor

Disclaimer

The opinions expressed by the authors in this article are their own and do not necessarily reflect those of the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), Department of Defense (DoD), Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center (DLIFLC), or any other Government agency. References to specific DoD or Service programs, etc. are provided as examples only and are not intended to indicate U.S. Government policy or endorsement. This article is based on a plenary given by the authors; Ms. Yvonne Pawelek, Director of the Joint Base Lewis/McChord Language and Culture Center (JBLM LCC); and Dr. Allison Greene-Sands, Deputy Chief of Staff for the DoD's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SAPRO) and former Associate Director for Culture for the Defense Language and National Security Education Office (DLNSEO), at the May 2015 session of the Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) at the National Foreign Language Center (NFLC), University of Maryland. The authors would like to acknowledge Ms. Pawelek's and Dr. Greene-Sands' continuing efforts and support evident in this article; although the authors acknowledge any mistakes or misrepresentations are theirs alone.

On a separate note, 10 days after the ILR plenary, the authors, with the knowledge of the other co-presenters, agreed to formalize their presentation into this article. That was the 25th of May, which marked both Memorial Day, a day for Americans to honor our fallen Service Members, and Towel Day¹, an international day for honoring the genius of Douglas Adams.² We found it fitting, therefore, to add a few, admittedly obscure references to the comedy and embedded philosophies of the late science-fiction author to an article focused on refining the educational and operational philosophies of the Department of Defense (DoD)'s global mission. (Don't panic. Understanding the Adams' references is not necessary for understanding the article itself, though we highly recommend his Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy as bucket-list reading for all globally or intergalactically-minded people.) It is in this vein we present the following article. It is not purely academic, in the traditional sense, nor can it be classified as a purely editorial piece. It contains commentary and opinions, research and scholarly references, as well as the same sense of humor we attempted to insert into the ILR plenary.

1. You can learn more about Towel Day at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Towel_Day.

2. You can learn more about Douglas Adams at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Douglas_Adams

Narrowing the LREC Assessment Focus by Opening the Aperture:

A Critical Look at the Status of LREC Assessment Design & Development in
the Department of Defense

Dr. Robert Greene Sands and Mr. Pieter R. DeVisser

What's in a name?

Language, regional expertise and culture (LREC). L-R-E-C has been vernacularized as *él rék* or “el Wreck”, for anyone wanting to add a Spanish flare, perhaps with some applicability to the forthcoming saga of language and culture training/education in the DoD. This current formulation, nearly as all-encompassing as the title of the Douglas Adams novel *Life, the Universe, and Everything*, is the DoD's most recent conceptualization of the categories of knowledge and abilities considered crucial to its success – a conclusion drawn in the wake of over a decade of combat and counterinsurgency operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. “LREC”, as a term, is more than a mere abbreviation, however. The order of the letters, as well as what they represent, signify the mentality and intent of the policy-makers involved and an implied priority of each LREC component³, and the assumptions made about how each component is defined. At face value, “LREC” seems to represent two things: first, a significant and formal acknowledgement of additional skills required for mission success, vis-à-vis traditional strategic and tactical (battlefield) skills, and, second, the synergetic relationship of the individual LREC elements. “LREC” can also be seen

as an attempt to corral some related but also some very divergent anthropological/linguistic, pedagogical, and philosophical domains of multiple disciplines into a single training requirement/event. This combination suggests a much needed multidisciplinary approach in advancing each domain, as well as collectively addressing the domains together. However, the acronym may be interpreted as ostensibly reducing the complexity of its individual components – implying that the individual terms have a commonly understood or agreed-upon definition from which to begin a “simple” integration. When this last approach is considered, the individual LREC elements appear more like a single, combined consumable that can simply be “purchased off the shelf”⁴ – an appealing prospect to judiciously meet a training requirement but far from a reality. Depending on one's point of departure, LREC, as an acronym, simultaneously embodies potentially important and positive, as well as potentially dangerous and misleading, implications. As teachers and program managers in this field reading between the lines of the acronym, what it mostly seems to convey is twofold. First, when it comes to language and culture, there is great difficulty in adequately articulating the operational and the corresponding educational/training requirements, combined or individually. Second, there is formal acknowledgement that linguistic

3. The Department of the Army went so far as to rearrange the acronym from LREC to CREL (Culture, Regional Expertise, and Language), to signify its intent to place its training emphasis on culture and region.

4. Paraphrased from a meeting that included Pieter DeVisser, Yvonne Pawelek, and the current Senior Language Authority for the Army, who advocated “buying languages” – a reference to training via DLIFLC's Headstart2 and Rapport products.

and cultural competence,⁵ though unsatisfactorily defined to many in the language and culture community, are considered crucial components of DoD operations and must, therefore, occupy space (also undefined) on the training calendars of DoD organizations. While the first point may appear insurmountable, the second must be understood as the challenge to keep the call for linguistic and cultural competence from remaining mere lip service.

We⁶ contend that the path to refining the OSD's conceptualization of LREC is by way of developing assessment metrics and mechanisms, which will – through that development process – necessitate and drive the creation of a common, DoD-wide lexicon and understanding of LREC components and terms. To that end, there need to be: a level of collective understanding of what is to be assessed, a process through which to capture the LREC learning requirements of the beneficiary organizations, and, finally, a means to capture the LREC performance in a manner that can be understood in somewhat quantifiable and useable terms. Such an assessment-focused training/education program is not a revolutionary idea by any means. Many widely used instructional design models, such as the Dick & Carey model, for example, have assessment/evaluation at the heart of the development process. Developing, or at least envisioning, the assessment tool is actually begun at the outset of course design (after determining the problem statement and desired end-state, of course), followed by essentially reverse-engineering the goals and objectives associated with

the sub-tasks and knowledge needed by students in order to successfully complete the learning event, i.e. the assessment of task-based performance of the culminating event(s) (Dick, Carey & Carey, 2014). Such an assessment-based approach is particularly appropriate when the organization, for which the learning event is designed, tends to “run” on operational readiness metrics, as OSD does.

This article begins with a brief justification of the need for LREC assessment. We follow this with a detailed and critical chronology of LREC conceptualization, the goal of which is to identify problematic LREC definitions and concepts within OSD and within the Services. We employ here the old maxim, “You don't know where to go, if you don't know where you came from,” as our jumping-off point. This is followed by a brief critique of the assessment programs and approaches currently in place or in development within the DoD, in order to illustrate the corresponding difficulties inherent in creating LREC competence assessment tools without clearer guidance from OSD. Finally, this article will describe one program that promotes an initial development of coordinated LREC learning, as well as a built-in assessment model. We describe the current state of this assessment model, as well as the plan for its further development and its potential as a solution to fill the DoD's LREC assessment void. At the risk of further muddying the waters when it comes to the use of acronyms in this study, this article will not follow OSD's use of “LREC” but, will instead use “LRC” to describe the individual domains of language, region and culture. As will become obvious in this paper, “LRC” represents a more general categorization of knowledge, skills and attitudes (KSAs) than We intentionally write this article in the first-person and not the traditional, academic third-person. It is both impossible and unwanted to remove our personalities and our passion

5. This article treats cultural competence as an umbrella concept in which more narrowly focused competences such as cross-cultural competence, cross (or inter) cultural communication are subsumed.

6. We intentionally write this article in the first-person and not the traditional, academic third-person. It is both impossible and unwanted to remove our personalities and our passion from this article, just as it would have been impossible to do so from our plenary presentation. The intention behind *Journal of Culture, Language and International Security (JCLIS)* and the *Strategic Landpower White Paper*, referenced later on, is to acknowledge and incorporate the reality of the human aspects of actions and not to abstract that humanity from the equation.

from this article, just as it would have been impossible to do so from our plenary presentation. The intention behind Journal of Culture, Language and International Security (JCLIS) and the Strategic Landpower White Paper, referenced later on, is to acknowledge and incorporate the reality of the human aspects of actions and not to abstract that humanity from the equation. “LREC” and is much more useful in envisioning a truly integrated program. We will continue to use “LREC” only as it pertains to its specific use by OSD or the Services.

Don't panic. Grab a towel, and stick out a thumb.⁷

Why Assess LREC Competence?

Despite the pro-LREC commentary of the Government's top echelon (described below), neither OSD nor the subordinate Services, have ever fully or officially explored and correlated the utility of language and cultural competence with operational success and then transformed the correlation to establish and define a requirement to incorporate into specific policy or doctrine. Furthermore, neither the DoD nor the Services have distilled components of language and culture into relevant and applicable learning programs – and this is the important consideration – *that have clearly defined, achievable, and operationally relevant goals, the achievement of which is required and can be monitored and sustained through timely (i.e. at regular intervals) and theoretically sound learning events and properly designed and administered assessments.*

7. For anyone not familiar with Douglas Adams, read his *Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, the first novel of his trilogy.

Assessing LREC proficiency, even singular components of LREC, has always been considered a “step too far”, given existing research in the area and the seemingly unquantifiable nature of defining what constitutes good or bad, passing or failing, inter- and cross-cultural interaction – at least along traditional lines of scholastic assessment. Language proficiency assessment has existing measures, but they are neither applicable to the other LREC elements, nor were they developed with LREC in mind.⁸ Yet by facing this challenge head-on, developing the means for assessing LREC competence is perhaps the best way to fully understand the development and expression of that competence. Assessment will also provide a means to characterize a population with KSAs that comprise LREC competence in terms that potentially facilitate operational efficiencies and more successful and enduring mission completion. There are two key departure points for our conceptualization of a by-individual LREC assessment model. First, the ability to promote each LREC component simultaneously in integrated learning events will increase knowledge and proficiency in each area more quickly than if promoted separately, i.e. the relationship between the components is synergetic (Sands, 2013). Second, assessing LREC competence does not denote capturing it in one number or measure, but rather a series of measures can be employed, resulting in by-component scores that can more accurately indicate LREC capability and differentiate knowledge from skills – providing something leaders can use for more effective planning and operations.

The Haitian earthquake challenged the Department's ability to quickly identify Haitian French and Creole speakers for deployment and

8. This is not a criticism of current proficiency measures for language or those who developed them but a statement of fact regarding their applicability to LREC assessment.

introduced a broader discussion about operational requirements for Humanitarian Assistance/Disaster Relief (HADR) missions. Identifying language-capable personnel was critical, but querying the entire Force was perhaps unnecessary. While language capability was important, so were regional and culture knowledge and experience, not to mention branch of Service and occupational specialty training. It would have been more useful to have the ability to quickly match HADR-related LREC competence requirements of the mission with the personnel who met those requirements, in order to form the composite force that would actually be on the ground – comprised of medical, logistics, security, and other personnel. Canvassing organizations and commands for this information does not require a single, Force-wide tool, but rather for OSD to define operational parameters (including mission goals and required equipment, personnel, and the KSA required by that personnel). It is then for each subordinate organization to know the LREC capability within its own ranks (tailored to Service, assigned mission, and area of operations) and then be able to identify qualified and available personnel to build a response team or teams to meet OSD and the Services' requirements. LREC assessment is the key facilitator needed to make this selection and response process more efficient and effective and, ultimately, DoD missions more successful.

LREC à la Carte⁹: A Critical Overview

OSD leadership at the highest levels has been making a renewed case for the importance of LREC competence, in various forms, since at least 2008. At that time, for instance, the Air Force was already incorporating the sentiment at the Air Force Culture and Language

9. Each of the Services has approached LREC differently: sometimes tackling LREC learning events by individual component, sometimes combining one or two LREC components together, but typically à la carte and never as an integrated, component-interdependent and systematic affair.

Center by establishing positions for anthropology and other social and behavioral sciences professors, in addition to the language instructors it already had. In recent years, references to LREC have moved from being hinted at subtly to direct statements at the highest echelons of Government: "... in the 21st century, military strength will be measured not by the weapons our troops carry, but by the languages they speak and cultures they understand" (Obama, 2009). "'We need a building block capability to respond to a broad range of missions.' Another goal is to educate soldiers on region-specific culture and language, so they are better prepared for conflict in any part of the world. Army leaders concede that the forces that went into Iraq and Afghanistan suffered from a complete lack of knowledge of the local government, culture and language. 'We can't let that happen again... We have to be better'" (Erwin, 2012, quoting and paraphrasing former Army Chief of Staff, GEN Raymond Odierno). This idea has been further refined by the Army Chief of Staff, the Marine Corps Commandant, and the Special Operations Commander in their 2013 Strategic Landpower White Paper, *Winning the Clash of Wills: Strategic Landpower and the Inherently Human Nature of Conflict*. It has again been underscored in the Special Operations Forces (SOF) Concept of Operations, *Operating in the Human Domain* (Special Operations Command, 2015).

These and similar top-level quotes and documents are frequently referenced by language/culture program managers and others in the field to disseminate and then reinforce the pro-LREC sentiment throughout the Services, at both operational and decision-maker echelons. Though many redeploying commanders and troops have also expressed the importance of LREC knowledge and skills, implementing an effective LREC learning program has yet to be realized, since

effectiveness has yet to be defined and cannot, therefore, currently be measured. The intent behind those top-level sound-bites and documents becomes lost in translation somewhere in organizational mid-level management, where the desire for innovation meets the realities of an entrenched bureaucratic machine (of established mechanisms for funding, doctrine creation/modification, etc.), as well as a fair amount of anti-LREC pushback by those yet to embrace its utility. While top leadership has formally acknowledged the need for increased LREC competence, it has neither quantified nor specified in what form(s) that LREC competence directly translates into knowledge and skill expectations for Service Members, either military or civilian. Implying only a vague desired end-state leaves LREC program developers and managers without the specifics necessary to design learning events and develop curricula. This lack of clarity leaves individual programs to find their own ways and, for better or worse, the ability to branch off in myriad directions. The *clash of cultures* implicated in leadership discourse about LREC actually begins much closer to home than in the transnational security landscape. The clash exists within OSD and the Services, between those who see the utility and benefit of LREC, those who do not, and those tasked with resource prioritization and allocation.

In spite of this intra-organizational struggle and lack of more clearly defined requirements, the Army, Navy, and Marines have set in place LREC strategies, chiefly geared towards General Purpose Forces (GPF) – personnel not required by occupational specialty to have foreign language abilities – that minimize language capability and capacity. The small populations that need focused training for their occupational specialties (professional linguists, etc.) are supported by programs that focus almost exclusively on language and limited

culture-specific information, which may or may not be operationally relevant or current. Across the Service's, it appears LREC education/training is viewed as not required for professional linguists, not required in the same way, or considered to be something professional linguists are already provided. Regardless, LREC for professional linguists and LREC for GPF are typically considered separately, essentially creating two LREC programs (or an LREC and a language-only program) for units comprised of both professional linguists and GPF. This is indicative of further splintering of what could/should be a single, combined and coordinated LREC program. Each Service's LREC strategy for the GPF trainee audience features institutionalized learning programs in cross-cultural competence (3C) and culture/regional-general knowledge, though they vary significantly in their definitions of key terminology (culture, region, regional expertise; inter-cultural versus cross-cultural, etc.); course content; and input/vetting from academic professionals versus internally designated subject matter experts. In essence, the current LREC strategies reflect the notion that all military personnel must receive foundation-level 3C and culture-general education as part of initial entry training, followed by periodic refresher and enhancement education of the same throughout their careers. Region and culture-specific information will be provided in pre-deployment sessions. Language, when contemplated for the GPF, is designed for very low, "survival" level proficiency in speaking and listening (i.e. the use and understanding of memorized phrases only). Stand-alone, self-paced language resources, such as those produced by the DLIFLC (Headstart2, Rapport, etc.), are the proposed learning vehicles for this low-level language instruction (Ibrahimov, 2015).

Ordering “L” with a side of “C”

During the decade plus of involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan, the language skills of many professional linguists and Special Operations Command (SOCOM) personnel throughout the Services (with the possible exception of those trained in Arabic, Pashto, or other languages directly relevant to Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom) were allowed to atrophy in exchange for their other combat support skills (Malvesti, 2010 and Schoen, 2015). With the wind-down of those operations, organizations such as Army Special Operations Forces (ARSOF) are faced with addressing the degradation of language and culture skills that were the hallmark of the Green Berets during the latter years of the Viet Nam conflict (Ibid.). Similarly, the Army's Intelligence & Security Command (INSCOM) has been reestablishing its language program to support its professional linguists. These organizations have not merely been faced with recreating the language sustainment and/or cultural awareness programs they had in place prior to those operations; they have been faced with expanding their programs to encompass all LREC elements and/or higher proficiency goals.¹⁰ In addition, with the implementation of pre-deployment LREC requirements for (GPF)¹¹, many organizations not traditionally required to provide language/culture training have been faced with developing LREC programs with little internal expertise for doing so and few, if any, well-defined parameters, established by OSD, within which to work.

10. According to INSCOM Regulation 11-6, each of its subordinate language programs must incorporate enhancement support aimed at getting all its professional linguists to achieve ILR level 3 across modalities. SOCOM has indicated its new proficiency goal is ILR level 2 across modalities (McRaven, 2013).

11. The Army mandated GPF pre-deployment training in 2010, for example (Hernandez). Such requirements remain in place as enduring requirements for future deployments (US Army Forces Command, 2014)

Though expressed in different terms, the operational need for any form of LREC competence was once relegated to but a few populations across the Services – Special Operations Forces (SOF), Foreign Area Officers (FAO), and Defense Attachés – with any language component focused on relatively low levels of speaking. Higher-level language skills, on the other hand, were usually only the focus of programs supporting professional military linguists – dedicated primarily to listening and reading skills, with little or no emphasis on standardized instruction in region or culture. Operational realities, depicted in myriad policy and doctrinal documents, such as the 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review (Hagel, 2014), now necessitate a broader LREC focus. The formal acknowledgement that DoD personnel operate globally and will, by the very nature of those operations, be directly involved in affecting the lives and livelihoods of foreign nationals (be they partners, adversaries, or beneficiaries of DoD engagement) has brought with it the need for expanded LREC capacity and capability (Odierno, Amos, & McRaven, 2013). The Intelligence Community (IC) is slowly beginning to embrace the need to refocus its programs to include the communicative/productive modalities of language, as well as far more culture (both general and specific), to create professional linguists better able to analyze situations and texts within the culture-bound context they occur.¹² SOF has swelled to roughly 66,000 personnel (Feickert, 2015), and with that comes a dramatic increase in Security Force Assistance (SFA) and Foreign Internal Defense (FID) engagements. While such growth has been occurring over the last 15 years or so, significant funding has

12. From personal discussions in late 2011 between Pieter DeVisser and key personnel of the Associate Directorate of Education & Training (ADET) of the National Security Agency (NSA), as well as ADET language program managers before and since. Also indicated by Cheryl Houser's, the NSA's Senior Language Authority, involvement with the Regional Proficiency Assessment Tool (RPAT) (Houser and Rouse, 2015).

been directed at SOF and GPF programs designed to develop basic language proficiency and cultural awareness through episodic and nominal training, survival-language instruction, narrowly focused culture-specific products, and video and computer games and simulations (Sands, 2014). These were mostly knowledge-based learning events, with the skills-based learning too specific to be widely applicable or transferable. In the meantime, it seems many professional linguists received little to no language training and even less development of region and culture skills that would enhance their abilities to create more accurate Intelligence products, since they were otherwise occupied, being largely utilized outside of their occupational specialties (Malvesti, 2010 and Schoen, 2015)¹³. As far as LREC competence assessments were concerned, culture/region assessments were, and, for the most part, remain, limited to instructor-created

knowledge-checks and, for language, to the Defense Language Proficiency Test (DLPT)¹⁴ and/or Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI)¹⁵.

In addition to speculating about knowledge-check creation and validation, we feel use of the DLPT or OPI for SOF and GPF personnel, however, is like having them attempt to qualify at a rifle range with a pistol and then sending them into combat to man a howitzer. While there may be some broad similarities between the three weapon systems and an individual might be familiar enough with all three to get the job done, the scorecard from the rifle range simply conveys (if it conveys anything about the individual at all), overwhelmingly, if not completely, irrelevant information about whether or not the Command has a competent person to operate a howitzer. DLPT and/or OPI scores are nearly as irrelevant for SOF and GPF. The Lower Range DLPT was originally developed for the military's professional linguists, personnel required to maintain a minimum Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR)¹⁶ level 2 in listening and reading. SOF and GPF requirements tend to be much lower and include a speaking component. For example, one third of ARSOF personnel are expected to maintain ILR level 1 in listening, reading, and speaking (McRaven, 2013), and GPF training is aimed at learners' achievement of 0+ in listening and speaking (Hernandez, 2010). For many, DLPT results below level 2 were felt to lack the granularity to truly differentiate between the very low proficiency levels, particularly because no 0+ level questions are included, the need for which was established after the most current version of the DLPT, the DLPT5,

13. Also from Pieter DeVisser's experience as an INSCOM language program manager with access to INSCOM- and Army-wide proficiency statistics, 2009-2012, as well as numerous discussions since with linguists and language program managers throughout the DoD.

14. The Defense Language Proficiency Test (DLPT) is a 6-hour, multiple-choice (or constructed response, if the multiple-choice version is not available) test, broken into 3-hour segments for listening and reading, respectively. "The DLPT is designed to assess the target language proficiency of native speakers of English who have learned a foreign language as a second language and speakers of other languages with very strong English skills. The DLPT measures proficiency as defined by the Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) Skill Level Descriptions. The DLPT is designed to measure proficiency in the target language regardless of how it has been acquired; test content is not tied to any particular language-training program. The passages included in the test are sampled from authentic materials and real-life sources such as signs, newspapers, radio and television broadcasts, the Internet, etc. The passages cover a broad range of content areas, including social, cultural, political, economic, geographic, scientific, and military topics" (American Council on Education). See also DLIFLC's Defense Language Proficiency Test 5 System: Familiarization Guide for Multiple-Choice Format listed in References.

15. The Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) is a 20-30 minute "standardized procedure for the global assessment of functional speaking ability. A face-to-face or telephonic interview between certified testers and an examinee is conducted to determine how well an examinee speaks the target language through comparison of his or her performance on specific communication tasks to the Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) Skill Level Descriptions. The OPI takes the form of a carefully structured conversation between trained and certified interviewers and the person whose speaking proficiency is being assessed. The interview is interactive and continuously adapts to the speaking abilities of the individual being tested." The OPI is designed to measure how well the learner "is able to satisfy routine social demands and limited work requirements" (American Council on Education, emphasis added).

16. "The Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) is an unfunded Federal interagency organization established for the coordination and sharing of information about language-related activities at the Federal level. It serves as the premier way for departments and agencies of the Federal government to keep abreast of the progress and implementation of techniques and technology for language learning, language use, language testing and other language-related activities" (Interagency Language Roundtable).

was developed (Lorié, 2010)¹⁷. The DLIFLC did develop a handful of Very-Low Range (VLR)¹⁸ DLPTs to address this, especially for SOF, but they ultimately decided upon the OPI as the more relevant test (Bienkowski & Surface, 2013), even with its primary focus on global language (Lorié, 2010). The speaking component immediately rules out the DLPT as an appropriate testing mechanism for GPF, leaving the OPI as the only official alternative. In 2009 and 2010, however, as the DLIFLC was developing the GPF curricula to meet the Army's pre-deployment language and culture requirements for Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom (OEF/OIF), it recognized both tests were improperly aligned with the curricular and, by extension, assessment needs of the GPF demographic (Garzaniti, 2015 and Holman, 2015).¹⁹

Foreseeing the need for a more applicable assessment measure, the DLIFLC's Field Support Division developed the Tactical Operational Test (TOT) – similar to the OPI, in that it included a live interaction with 1-2 native speakers but focused strictly on the operationally-based vocabulary and scenarios around which it was developing the curricula (in Pashto, Dari, and, to a limited extent, Arabic). Although somewhat hurried by the pressing needs of OEF and OIF, both the GPF curricula and the TOT were significant steps in the direction of creating a more operationally focused and useful learning event with a

properly aligned assessment, designed with the intent of providing more accurate indicators about a Soldier's probable abilities downrange.²⁰ Unfortunately, in the Army Execution Order that created the GPF training requirement, Department of Army (DA) mandated the use of the officially recognized OPI and a course graduation requirement of ILR level 0+ in both listening and speaking (Hernandez, 2010). The TOT was, therefore, never truly seen as a course requirement for graduation, although it was administered as a culminating event for the course. For the instructors teaching the courses (largely contractors who likely perceived their future employment to rest on their students' achieving course graduation standards), as well as the Soldiers taking them, the emphasis became the global language required by the OPI, rather than the more operationally relevant language of the TOT. Not only did OPI scores limit the information commanders knew about individuals' capabilities for support of OEF or OIF, but, save some anecdotal evidence, too little data was collected from redeploying troops and commanders in terms of the (even subjectively perceived) effectiveness of the GPF training and the LREC capabilities they considered to be sufficient (or not) for operations.²¹

In brief, the short history of LREC has seen an uneven association of language with the other components of cultural competence. In addition, counterinsurgency missions in Iraq and Afghanistan demanded different language skills and assessment means to monitor capability than traditionally provided to military linguists. This imbalance continues to exist today.

17. Again, this is not a design flaw of the DLPT but rather a statement of the DLPT's intended demographic. The primary focus of the Lower Range DLPT is proficiency differentiation at ILR level 2 and higher (Lorié, 2010).

18. "The VLR DLPT is an extension of the DLPT5 testing system, designed as a measure of language proficiency in the reading and listening skills of foreign language learners, as set forth in the Inter-agency Language Roundtable (ILR) descriptors of language proficiency for levels 0+, 1, and 1+... In response to the current needs of government agencies that make use of language proficiency testing, the VLR DLPT is explicitly designed to make distinctions among personnel with language proficiency of 0+, 1, and 1+. Although the current DLPT5 tests do in fact make some distinctions below level 1, the VLR DLPT is explicitly designed to focus on distinctions below level 2" (Lorié, 2010).

19. Sam Garzaniti, of DLIFLC's Field Support Division, helped to implement the Campaign Continuity program, as well as in the development of the TOT, while Dr. Donald Holman, also of Field Support, spearheaded the project to refine it and implement its second version.

20. Ibid.

21. Ibid.

Adding Optional Condiments, “RE” and “RP”

“Regional Proficiency” was a 2007 construct developed just at the initial stages of OSD’s attempt to formally recognize the importance of variables such as language, international relations, and cultural awareness. Although the construct was knowledge-focused, *proficiency levels* (erroneously implying corresponding skills) were developed for this conceptualization of expertise. Each level was a mix of social, cultural, “regional”, and language variables that suggested some linkage in the development of those variables as proficiency increases. Regional Proficiency was originally correlated to a 0-5 scale, each level of which was comprised of a conglomeration of knowledge and skills (simultaneously too vague and overly specific) that resisted any kind of meaningful assessment. *Culture knowledge, clearly a necessary component, was hardly addressed, save vague mention of the need to develop cross-cultural competency, yet with no assessment metric envisioned.*

For example:

“Level 1 –

Has some level of proficiency related to a job that has relevance to a country, region, or issue, but has very limited knowledge about the country, region, or issue (e.g., an F-16 mechanic who goes to Norway to work with Norwegian F-16 mechanics but knows very little about Norway).

Level 4 –

Typically, 4 to 7 years in a specialized area, in addition to general experience in a broader subject area. Has a deeper knowledge and understanding of most of the components of a region or

country than many or even most natives of the country. Has experience working directly with senior U.S. military officers or directly with senior U.S. country or regional policy officers on programs that significantly affect U.S. policy in a country or region. Routinely writes and delivers substantive briefings on aspects of the region or country. Knowledge comes from a combination of advanced graduate education, seminars, research, teaching, publishing, area studies courses, in-country assignments, travel, mentoring, and specialized professional experience. Cultural knowledge and experience allows the individual to blend easily in the culture. Almost always has ILR level 3 or higher proficiency in at least one of the languages spoken in the country or region” (DoDI 5160.70; emphasis added).

Regional Proficiency was an attempt in the first two years after publication of the Defense Language Transformation Roadmap (DLTR) to address what was becoming clear in light of OEF and OIF: that understanding others and building relations and alliances with local communities and villages was just as important as building relationships with the Afghan and Iraqi centralized government and their militaries. Still tethered to language and the ILR skill levels, regional proficiency was married to the concept of language proficiency many were already comfortable with or had at least heard of – which is not to say, however, that familiarity was indicative of firm understanding of the ILR scale. One result of this pairing was the misperception by many that a language proficiency rating was simultaneously indicative of a regional proficiency rating at the same level. For this and other reasons, the 0-5 structure was later dropped in the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of

Staff Instruction (CJCSI) 3126.01A, in favor of a 1-3 level discrimination (Scaparrotti, 2013).

The concept of Regional Proficiency still exists today, but is now joined by “Regional Expertise.” Regional Expertise has a specific definition designed to suggest the means of obtaining the expertise, without actually defining what it is in quantifiable terms, and is solely based on knowledge gained from a graduate-level education or 40 semester hours of:

“... study focusing on but not limited to the political, cultural, sociological, economic, and geographic factors of a foreign country or specific global region through an accredited educational institution or equivalent regional expertise gained through documented previous experience as determined by the USD (P&R) or the Secretary of the Military Department concerned” (Scaparrotti, 2013).

For OSD policy-makers, the ambiguous notion of “academic” knowledge appears to have been the simplest thing to fall back on when describing regional proficiency/expertise. This indicates, perhaps, the assumption that acquired knowledge, combined with whatever mix of mission experience the individual already possessed or might acquire (in unknown and undefined quantity/quality), would miraculously equate to (or develop into) operationally relevant skills on its own. As a guideline for operational learning goals and objectives, the proficiency levels were simply insufficient. As for regional expertise, questions of course of study, what schools, what academic department, and other critical guidelines were not provided – all important for establishing the DoD’s intended definition of “expertise” and, by extension, how that expertise might be capitalized on in the

field. These two concepts still exist within LREC discourse today. Regional expertise is still an identifier of a competency/skill, and regional proficiency is still offered by organizations as a broad guideline for their own LREC programs.

These concepts are illustrative of a larger issue within the DoD LREC community. LREC has been devised as a collection of KSAs but without a sound academic footing, no stated theoretical basis upon which to build a program. As a community of practice, educators in the world of LREC, do we know what we are, or are supposed to be, trying to teach? Are we truly qualified to do so? Is it language, culture, region, communication, interpersonal skills, or some combination of some or all of these? Says Dr. Allison Greene-Sands, former Associate Director of Culture for the Defense Language and National Security Education Office (DLNSEO),

“The inability to come to consensus on LREC definitions and assessment essentially underscores why individual efforts for LREC, such as at the Services and JBLM, have had to emerge on their own. Unfortunately, the battle rhythm of policy updates does not always keep pace with the immediate operational needs in the field, nor does it allow for quick responses or adaptations to the latest research or innovations in the multidisciplinary approach to LREC, though the establishment of a common lexicon and operational requirements linked to LREC are critical for the readiness of the Force.” (Greene-Sands, 2015).

Garnishing with “C” (to taste)

Each of the Services has implemented or is implementing its LREC strategy differently, according to their different missions, organizational structures, and interpretations of LREC components and their

prioritization. The U.S. Air Force (USAF) manages to work 3C and region/culture into a mix of training and professional military education (PME) (USAF, 2009). This effort was catalyzed through making it part of Air University's 5-year Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) for accreditation. The QEP's five-year plan was completed in 2014, and 3C and culture are now, for the most part, institutionalized through insertions into the various PME stops along a professional career, for both enlisted and officers. The USAF language program, called the Language-enabled Airman Program (LEAP), consists of the identification of Airmen with language capabilities and the sustainment and/or enhancement of those capabilities over their careers. The Army's Culture, Regional Expertise, and Language (CREL) Strategy features a similar path, with 3C and culture being integrated into the professional schoolhouses for its officers and enlisted; the Training & Doctrine Command (TRADOC) Culture Center providing culture-specific training and products; and language training (for professional linguists) is given or sponsored by DLIFLC and approved vendors. DLIFLC also provides the pre-deployment products mentioned above and, until earlier this year, intensive, pre-deployment language courses for the Army's GPF. The U.S. Marine Corps (USMC) has developed a three year distance-learning program encompassing Region, Culture and Language Familiarization (RCLF), which focuses on a career-long learning pathway set in a regional area to "... ensure Marines are globally prepared and regionally focused in order to effectively navigate the culturally complex 21st Century operating environment. Each of the seventeen RCLF regions contains cultures linked by shared cultural traits and geographical proximity. RCLF uses regional examples to provide context for broader culture concepts" (USMC, 2015).

A Dessert of Mixed Nuts: LREC versus L/RE/C, LRE/C, L/REC, IreC, IREC, Lrec, LreC, etc., etc.

None of the Services have programmatically emphasized an interconnection between the different LREC components or the relationship between LREC competence and mission requirements in its training strategy. This oversight is contrary to the implication by top leadership that language, regional expertise, and culture belong together within one program and that the knowledge and skills developed in one area are complemented by and required for the development of the others. Instead, the Services have developed separate language, region, and/or culture programs, combining or emphasizing just one or two LREC components at a time. These are presented separately in both delivery (time, venue, etc.) and conceptualization (independently of one another). In some cases, a given LREC element is merely tacked onto an existing learning event, as opposed to truly being integrated either together with each other or into other relatable curricula. This makes for a disjointed and compartmentalized approach to LREC and results in inconsistent curricula and assessment across the DoD.

The Formal Approaches

Three approaches aimed at growing and/or assessing individual LREC competence are currently available or in development in the DoD, designed according to different LREC approaches: regional knowledge, regional proficiency, and cross-cultural competence (3C). They all are driven by different needs/missions but only capture part of what a holistic LREC assessment could/should be. From a test development perspective, these can be broadly categorized as education-based,

aptitude-based, and experience-based, respectively (though none fall completely and exclusively into any one of these categories).

The Education-based Approach—Navy Asia-Pacific (APAC) Hands Program

The Asia-Pacific (APAC) Hands Program is a Navy initiative to build officers with regional understanding and confidence to inform decision makers. There is a rigorous graduate-level certification program designed by Navy LREC and the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS). “Proficiency” levels are marked by incremental increases in graduate education and experience gained in assignments to select regionally focused billets/positions. The program is staffed with officers who will be acting as resources for Commanders on Asia Pacific matters of concern.

“All commands are highly encouraged to identify APAC Hand positions that may require or be enhanced by regional knowledge. Typically, these billets will be found on staffs at the operational or strategic level and will be related to the work required by the incumbent rather than based on a physical location. Coding billets will facilitate opportunities for education en route, which should reduce manning shortfalls and minimize the requirement for on the job training to learn regional dynamics” (States News Service, 2015).

The APAC, and similar programs, zero in on regional knowledge. As indicated above, this kind of approach fails to address the ability to apply the learned materials effectively and the related skills required for operational success. Knowing does not equate to doing, and nothing in such approaches is envisioned for bridging the gap between the two.²²

The Aptitude-based Approach – 3C Assessment Battery

Army Research Institute (ARI) initiated a six-year project to develop a 3C Assessment Battery to ultimately exist as a series of web-based tests. “The overarching objective of this project is the validation and delivery of a battery of cross-cultural competency assessments that could be used by the US Army for future selection and training in roles and assignments that have a cross cultural component” (Brenneman and Klafehn, 2015). As yet, there is no assessment mechanism to measure 3C in a Soldier, or any other Service personnel for that matter. There are intercultural assessments that have been developed by academia and private industry for non-DoD populations, but, as a few surveys of existing assessments indicate, most of the data is from self-reports and validity of the measures may not be accurate or valid (Van Driel and Gabrenya, 2014). The supposition here is that through two avenues, better training and/or selection methods, a Soldier with the requisite 3C will be chosen for a given assignment. Presumably, Soldiers identified with insufficient 3C would be selected for additional 3C training, whatever that might entail. “This project was started back in 2013 with the goal of addressing some of the major concerns the Army faces regarding the assessment of non-cognitive skills, in general, and culturally relevant skills” (Brenneman and Klafehn, 2015). The first two of four phases of the project concern cross-cultural performance indicators and requirements and a literature review of existing research and assessment. The third phase is the actual assessment development for the test battery, after research and using parts of existing assessments to develop new, DoD specific, ones. Completion of the first three

22. See Lee Johnson's article “Where are Today's Lawrences of Arabia” in the Summer 2015 edition of this Journal for more on APAC.

phases was scheduled for the end of September 2015 (Broad Agency Announcement W911NF-13-R-0001, 2013).

The current status of the project is the identification of 13 sociocultural performance indicators from Phase I, some of which may need some revision, as they were based heavily on operations in Iraq/Afghanistan and not representative of current and future missions. Researchers need to develop criterion measures for performance indicators - how well one variable or set of variables predicts an outcome based on information from other variables. In Phase III, sixteen constructs and approximately thirty assessments were identified or generated for use in the 3C Assessment System (3CAS). Phase IV will consist of the refinement and validation of the 3CAS battery "...for use as a selection and training tool by the US Army" (Ibid.). The ultimate goal is to develop a web-based tool/battery of tests that does not rely on self-reporting for use in training and/or selection. The fourth and final phase is due to be completed by 2018.

It remains to be seen whether or not ARI creates a functional 3C assessment, not to mention how the Army will implement it. Without providing clearly defined operational requirements for 3C, not to mention a theoretical basis for the conceptualization of 3C itself, has the Army really provided ARI with enough of a departure point for the creation of such an assessment, or has it left it to ARI to fill in those gaps? We categorize this approach as aptitude-based until the final product can be evaluated. Based on what we know about this assessment, it seems as though the intent is to use this similarly to the Defense Language Aptitude Battery (DLAB). The DLAB is used DoD-wide to determine a Service Member's aptitude for learning a foreign language at the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center

and is its de facto entrance exam, since a potential student's score must fall within the ranges specified for each Language Difficulty Category (LDC), into which DLIFLC-taught languages are separated. ARI's 3C assessment may be likewise utilized to predict which Soldiers are capable, or most capable, of 3C learning and proficiency (again, yet to be defined). 3CAS might also be employed to identify those Soldiers with the requisite 3C scores for selection/assignment to specific positions or operations. While this may seem a valid approach, the implementation of such aptitude tests is fraught with complications, typically unforeseen during test development and often the result of selecting an improperly aligned population against which to norm it.

For example, the DLAB and the four LDCs seem to have been based on American-born, English native-speakers, with no proficiency in other foreign languages. If so, this fails to adequately account for heritage or native speakers of other languages and a number of other individual differences directly reflected in both the current populations of our public schools and society at large, as well as the sociocultural demographics most likely to join the military. Not only is the LDC breakdown not applicable for, say, a native Korean speaker wanting to learn Chinese, but his/her DLAB score would be equally irrelevant – and would likely be relatively low, if his/her English proficiency was not high. As with any test, the DLAB cannot accurately account for any test-taker who does share the base characteristics of the population it was designed for.²³ That aside, a significant correlation has yet to be

23. See previous footnotes describing the DLPT and OPI, which state the tests are intended for English native-speakers, etc. While there is little openly available documentation about the creation of the DLAB or LDCs, it is likely they were created with this same demographic in mind. That said, the comments about the DLAB and LDCs are based solely on Pieter DeVisser's experience as a two-time DLAB examinee, as well as numerous conversations with heritage and native-speakers of other languages and his informal review of their DLAB scores.

identified between a student's DLAB score and his/her successful acquisition of a foreign language (Mirikitani, 2008). Recent research involving the Modern Language Aptitude Test (MLAT) (VanPatten and Smith, 2015), similar to the DLAB in many respects, also brings into question whether or not there is any correlation between assessment battery scores and foreign language acquisition, specifically where the productive modalities of language are concerned. We must wait and see if the ARI assessment sufficiently accounts for the myriad backgrounds of our Service Members in the norming process, as well as for research findings after its implementation, in order to validate its utility and accuracy. We are skeptical, however, that the creation of a one-size-fits-most battery is a worthwhile pursuit that will yield the results the Army truly needs.

The Experience-based Approach-Regional Proficiency Assessment Tool (RPAT)

The Regional Proficiency Assessment Tool (RPAT) represents an attempt at a holistic assessment of individual skills that, together, offer insight into how background, training, and experience predispose an individual to perform tasks in a region.

“The Regional Proficiency Assessment Tool (RPAT) when completed will supposedly enable the Department of Defense (DoD) to assess, track, and manage the regional proficiency of its military personnel. The RPAT provides a uniform method of gathering data and renders both an overall Regional Proficiency (RP) rating. DLNSEO has identified the possibility of utilizing the RPAT to also assess Civilian personnel as a future upgrade to the algorithm” (Houser and Rouse, 2015).

RPAT features as its assessment factors (and percentage of weight): regionally specific systematic knowledge (40%); regionally specific experiential knowledge (30%), utility of language skills (12%); analytic and critical thinking skills (10%); and nonspecific experiential knowledge (8%) (Ibid.). The biographical information critical to mining the individual's history and experience is drawn from an extensive introductory survey taken by the individual. Each survey is individually scored and a composite score generated, which is nested within 15 regions. There are degradation rates integrated into variables such as language and length of time since educational or experiential benchmarks. The regions are separated into: North America, Central Asia, West Africa, Central America, South Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, South America, Southeast Asia, Middle East North Africa, Western Europe, East Asia, Western Oceania, Eastern Europe, Caribbean, and Eastern Oceania. The RPAT is tied to providing proficiency levels, based on those identified by DoDI 5160.70, that “represent an individual's awareness and understanding of the historical, political, cultural (including linguistic and religious), sociological (including demographic), economic, and geographic factors of a foreign country or specific global region (Center for the Advanced Study of Language, 2015a).”

The RPAT has been in “production and testing” since 2011 indicating the difficulty in creating an assessment that captures LREC competence across the Total Force (to now include the civilian population). It is difficult to capture the depth and nuance of varied experience in biographical formulation derived from a survey. As often happens when testing products, not just the algorithm has been adjusted; the populations that have been enlisted to participate have changed. Consider the range of populations to be served by the RPAT, to include FAOs, SOF, and GPF. Listed below are just some of the

issues that have plagued and may still hamper successful implementation of the RPAT²⁴:

For instance, there has been difficulty in recruiting personnel from pilot groups, as well as identifying and recruiting from targeted groups, for validation. Many involved in initial testing provided less than favorable feedback on either experience or results. The initial face validation proved useful to a select population or two, such as FAOs, but expanding the RPAT to a broader range of populations has proven to be difficult. The Center for the Advanced Study of Language (CASL) and DLNSEO, the entities involved in commissioning and creating the RPAT, respectively, utilized a phased roll-out to assist with validation: starting with FAOs, then moving to SF and then the Intelligence Community (IC). The GPF, for which the RPAT was designed as a response to a task identified in the DLTR, is the next target audience. However, as with all cases in which the RPAT has been applied to different populations, the algorithm must be reconfigured to account for a much different audience in terms of the variables, such as education level and experience, as the norming demographic was initially FAOs. There were additional problems that surfaced during the validation process and the targeted roll-out: the completion of the initial survey was time-consuming; the initially generated RPAT score often times did not align with the perception of the individual and their knowledge, skills and experience; heritage knowledge of the region or language skills were not captured systematically in the algorithm; and, though education was a very critical component that innervated several of the variables, the tool

was not able to include incomplete degrees or certifications or training or education in civilian schools.

Another element of the RPAT was the intent for the tool to draw from existing “biographical” information housed on DoD personnel systems, “and provide a means to update information relevant to the RPAT. ... [The] finished product will draw from personnel records to provide ‘measure’” (Center for the Study of Language (CASL), 2015b). Currently, the Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC) is revising/ updating the questionnaire/algorithm to ensure consistency with the latest CASL version. However, much of the desired personnel data has not been consistently collected and tracked, making the data pool from which the RPAT is to draw insufficient to make the tool useful until the required data collection and entry takes place.

While this assessment shares some similarities with the ARI assessment described above, it is somewhat more focused on the individual’s experience than on aptitude, though there is the implication that the RPAT may be used as a means for identifying aptitude, in addition to identifying an individual’s current LREC competence. Though unstated in the RPAT’s development literature, perhaps the impetus on experience is an indication that the theoretical conceptualization of learning, upon which the RPAT is built, can be sought in Kolb’s Experiential Learning Cycle (Kolb, 1984). The concern with this kind of experience-based approach is that it presupposes two critical points: first, that academic, field, and life experience can be reduced to a mathematical formula that can accurately calculate how an individual will perform in real-life situations, and, second, that those real-life situations can be similarly quantified and then correlated with the individual’s possessed experience. While

24. This set of issues is taken from Robert R. Greene Sands’ knowledge of RPAT, including attending various presentations, informal discussions with many involved in the project or who have taken the

aware of the intense academic/scientific effort behind development of the algorithm, we question whether or not the human experience can be accurately distilled into figures this way. We are skeptical as to how an algorithm can accurately account for “experience” or differentiate between valuable experiences, from which the individual’s LREC competence actually or likely benefitted, and experiences from which the individual’s LREC competence did/would not.

Assessing the Assessments

It may be that spanning the Total Force for LREC proficiency is not in the best interest of the Department or the organization/Service/Command. Developing an assessment that immediately benefits a Commander by identifying LREC needs seems more necessary, and making it specific to mission, operations, and a specific Force, more advisable. The Navy’s APAC Hands Program does just that in a narrow focus, and that was the program’s intent – using the utility of gradually increasing levels of regional-specific knowledge measured by academic courses/credit to drive individual and program gain – though it falls short of specifying how the knowledge gained will translate into the operationally relevant skills. It does not attempt to reach beyond what the assessment (passing courses) can do. The ARI-sponsored 3C Battery, when completed, will give some understanding of the different competencies and provide feedback via a computer-generated exam or review. The actual measure, how the measure will be assigned, the fit to training/learning, the ability to identify remedial learning needed to address gaps in performance, utility of the measure/score to various organizations, and other questions remain open. We suggest staffing the project, especially this third and fourth stage, with a multidisciplinary team, comprised of subject matter experts in Cultural Anthropology, Second Language Acquisition, Psychology, and other

fields related to assessment and curriculum development within a military context.

Finally, the RPAT was developed with a learned and well-traveled/mission-experienced population in mind, such as FAOs. Education about regions/countries is seen as critical to the understanding of national governments and militaries. Language is considered, more or less, secondary. Variables that apply specifically to culture knowledge are far less important than degrees (regardless of field of study). The RPAT’s scale was modeled after the Regional Proficiency scale and, for the advanced scores, the education, degrees, and experience became the primary distinguishers of “expertise”. Just as with Regional Proficiency, the RPAT has been unable to deliver a finished tool that spans the Total Force – one of the initiatives of the DLTR. Not everyone needs a “PhD who can win a barfight” (Lujan, 2013).

Assessment in Learning Events

Any good assessment measure should correlate directly to the learning goals and objectives of the designed curriculum of a given learning event. We assert that this is the proper strategy to undertake when developing integrated LREC courses and that, by doing so, a properly aligned LREC assessment will present itself within the course design – thereby eliminating the need for a Force-wide tool that would be too far removed for the actual learning event to retain its accuracy or applicability. In addition to building an integrated LREC “friendly” curriculum, fielding capable instructors for each component and having supporting infrastructure (technology, administration, etc.) are also critical to the success/effectiveness of both course and assessment.

Assessment measures within a learning event are divided into two broad categories: direct and indirect. Direct measures concentrate on what students have learned or failed to learn – tied to discrete and expert-generated learning objectives. This information can highlight strengths. Through weaknesses, faculty can explore the causes over which they have control, and develop solutions based on “... tangible, visible, self-explanatory, and compelling evidence of exactly what students have and have not learned” (Suskie, 2009).

Indirect measures “reveal characteristics associated with learning, but imply that learning has occurred... and evidence consists of proxy signs that students are probably learning” (Ibid.). Examples of indirect measures include: mid-Semester course evaluations; evaluations of course assignments or units; course-level surveys; course evaluations that can be aggregated for the entire department/program; semester-end course evaluations; percent of class time spent in active learning; honors, awards, and scholarships earned by students and alumni; and number of student hours spent on homework. Add-on assessment measures can be supported by portfolios, surveys, focus groups, a published test, such as the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), aligned language tests, or pre- and post-program standardized tests (Ibid.).

Programs can implement course-embedded assessments, i.e. use coursework/assignments, which can be a more efficient use of time and minimize the feeling that assessment is an additional or separate task. The coursework must be relevant to the learning goals being assessed, and those goals must be easily recognizable as mission relevant; this increases the likelihood that learners will put forth their best effort, as long as they are vested in the mission. Subject matter

experts in their disciplines, who typically have a vested interest in maintaining the standards of their profession into the next generation, must create the course work. Learning objectives must be written to capture measurable responses (and, in our case, reflect operational needs). Classroom results would be relevant to faculty, who want to improve student learning (Ibid.). In essence, the learning event – through course designers, faculty, and LREC program managers - can provide the KSAs necessary for the mission and necessary to build relevant assessment measures, and the assessment measures should be able to provide general “performance” indicators, directly transferable to “scores” the leadership can utilize in its operational planning and execution.

Certainly germane to the military, and to the individual learner’s Supervisor/Commander’s benefit, is direct involvement with what KSAs are introduced and developed through the LREC learning event. LREC learning events themselves must also be assessed for validity of content and appropriateness of venue – something that can, to great extent, be inferred from the student assessments. Students must be exposed to, consider/reflect upon, and be assessed across a spectrum of instruments in language, region and culture. Every good lesson plan contains some form of evaluation. Each must be carefully designed and defined as either knowledge- or performance-based (the preference, of course, being performance-based assessments, but the realization that foundational knowledge is often a prerequisite). Careful attention must be paid to establishing objective and standardized grading rubrics to the greatest extent possible, while creating a host of malleable assessment questions and scenarios that reflect both the likely and the unpredictable nature of DoD engagements that cross cultural and linguistic boundaries. This approach combines classroom learning with

an operational rehearsal, combining the education of required knowledge with the training of required skills and the honing of required abilities. This describes the LREC instructional model that has been in development and piloting at the Joint Base Lewis-McChord Language & Culture Center since mid-2012 (outlined below).

An LREC Assessable Learning Program/Event – JBLM Language-Enabled Solider (LES) Course

Students: GPF

Duration - 10-week Plan of Instruction (POI); 6 hours/day facilitated, classroom instruction; 2 hours/day homework and/or self-study

LREC Components: Culture (general & specific knowledge), Cross-cultural competence (3C) and Cross-cultural Interaction and Communication (CCC), intensive language familiarization with ILR Speaking Level 0+ as the goal but designed with a heavy lean towards achieving ILR Speaking Level I.

Goal: Intensive target-language familiarization focused on vocabulary associated with rapport building, logistics, medical, and security aspects of a planned or contingency engagement (the emphasis of each category based on the requesting Commander's requirements) to achieve ILR Listening/Speaking Level 0+/0+ or better as measured by the OPI²⁵; culture-general/specific knowledge transfer; and increased cross-cultural competence and communications (compared with entry-level assessment scores).

Instructional Approach: Blended Learning with In-class instruction, as well as an online distance learning component via Learning Management System (LMS) for homework, tests, culture-general/3C self-paced learning modules, and administrative information (student data, attendance and progress tracking, grade-book, etc.); embedded direct and indirect assessment; all integrated into a realistic storyline that parallels the planned or contingency engagement as much as possible.

"LREC" distribution: Week 1-2: half-days of introduction to culture-general and 3C concepts by an anthropologist (a combination of self-paced learning modules via LMS and/or live lectures/discussions), followed by introduction to target-language (alphabet, days of the week, numbers, etc.); Weeks 3-9: target-language learning through Communicative and Task-based instruction; target-culture specific information incorporated into instruction; 3C, CCC, and culture-general topics revisited through homework, as well as weekly essay questions relating culture-general and 3C concepts to the culture-specific information covered to that point in the course; homework and weekly quizzes consist of questions/activities in

25. TOT-like assessments have yet to be developed for the primary languages being taught at JBLM. Also, during the planning phase of the LES program for 7th Infantry Division, the decision was made to follow the existing Campaign Continuity pre-deployment requirements (in terms of required number of trainees and course graduation criteria), as EXORD 191-10 and the related EXORDs that followed it were the only official Army references that provided any guidance for GPF LREC training.

listening, speaking, culture-general, culture-specific, and, to a very limited extent, reading. Week 10: review of course materials in preparation for final exam and OPI at end of week.

Assessment Approach

Language – daily assessment by language instructor (as well as some automated correction via LMS) of classroom interactions, activities, and homework assignments, all of which contain listening, speaking, and some reading; weekly scenario-based Language in Action (LIA) exercise; mid-term and final exam (both with LMS and LIA components); official OPI through installation Education Center.

~~Regional Expertise~~ Culture-specific²⁶ – Auto-graded homework questions throughout each week via LMS, assessment of pertinent LIA interactions by instructor and/or observers

~~Culture~~ Culture-General, 3C and Intercultural Interaction²⁷ – 3C, CCC, and culture-general topics revisited through homework and module Knowledge Checks, as well as weekly essay questions (auto-graded via LMS) related to the culture-specific information covered to that point in the course – essays are 2-part discourse between student and program Anthropologist, who designs questions to elicit responses that indicate 3C competence and provides assessments of each individual's 3C learning and ability to apply that learning; assessment by instructor and observers during LIAs.

Conceptual Underpinnings & Definitions

Cross-cultural Communication (CCC): the act of conveying and understanding meaning with people from two or more cultures different from one's own; also “the study of a particular idea or concept within many cultures...in order to compare one culture to another.... cross-cultural communication involves a comparison of interactions among people from the same culture to those from another culture.”

Most of us are competent in effectively communicating with some or most social groups in our society, though the success of that communication may vary widely. We consciously and unconsciously communicate through different channels with or independent

26.-like assessments have yet to be developed for the primary languages being taught at JBLM. Also, during the planning phase of the LES program for 7th Infantry Division, the decision was made to follow the existing Campaign Continuity pre-deployment requirements (in terms of required number of trainees and course graduation criteria), as EXORD 191-10 and the related EXORDs that followed it were the only official Army references that provided any guidance for GPF LREC training.

27.For similar reasons to the above footnote, the JBLM LCC, at least internally, uses this term to encompass 3C, CCC, and culture-general.

of the language. In social/communicative contexts, we are relatively fast learners – figuring out how to get one's point across or understand what's being heard as a matter of need tends to speed the process of, at least, learning what's required to get by. Getting additional instruction and training in CCC will capitalize on this somewhat intrinsic skill and develop it into an operational multiplier.

Cross-Cultural Communication Competence:²⁸ the ability to effectively grasp non-verbal and extra-linguistic means of communication and be able to compare and contrast across cultures. In a sense, the culture-general approach to application

Cross-cultural Competence (3C): the ability to navigate in complex interpersonal situations, express or interpret ideas/concepts across cultures, and make sense of foreign social and cultural behavior (Sands and Haines, 2013).

Culture: the shared patterns of behavior made meaningful by a group of people

This term is exceedingly difficult to define, as it embodies tremendous complexity. Alternatively, this term is very simple to define as it speaks to how all humans manage the sociability of the species. For our purposes, we choose to err on the side of simplicity and define culture so as to be pertinent for the DoD. This definition may seem to lack the power of utility as the focus of the DoD is typically on the observable (culture-specific). However, the reference to patterns and meaning speak to the more intrinsic nature of why the behavior exists and what it may represent. Behavior coalesces around activities or situations more or less universal (culture-general). Identifying patterns and meaning can facilitate understanding and interaction (inter- and cross-cultural communication and competence). The universal facets of culture are interrelated; the understanding of one can tell much about other facets (culture-learning). Group is not defined, because the DoD must be prepared to conduct operations with cultural groups of all shapes and sizes.

Cultural Self-awareness: the ability to recognize and mitigate one's own cultural biases; one of the four skill-based competencies that promote 3C; one of the four skill-based competencies that promote 3C

Culture-general: pertaining to the universal components of cultures, such as ideology, kinship, social networks, exchange, governance, etc.

Culture-general learning provides a framework of understanding one's own behavior, as well as that of others.

Culture-learning: the skill of learning about one or more cultures through observation, reflection, and research, to include the learning of culture-general concepts; one of the four skill-based competencies that promote 3C

Culture-specific: pertaining to the specific patterns of meaning-bearing behavior of a particular group of people

These are tidbits of knowledge, which are subject to vary widely in practice within any given cultural group. For example: Ask a group of Americans how they celebrate Christmas, and you will receive a plethora of answers, although they are all Americans. Providing a foreigner with information about even the “average” or “top five” forms of American Christmas celebration, will hardly prepare him/her to spend Christmas in a particular area or with a particular group, where any number of variations might be observed or expected. Imagine, instead, teaching underlying cultural differences in approaches (culture-general) to Ideology, Ritual, and Family/Kinship. Our intent is to provide both in a layered/contextualized approach (described below).

Inter-cultural Competence: the ability to effectively/successfully convey and understand meaning with people from a single culture different from one's own

Layered/contextualized Approach: We hypothesize that learners will increase their LREC competence more quickly, attain higher levels, and retain learned information and skills longer – across all LREC elements – if the course is designed to contextualize and make relevant each learning point. To that end, we believe exposure to culture-general and 3C/CCC concepts at the beginning of the course will provide the contextual pegboard, onto which the language- and culture-specific learning is then hung.

Perspective-taking: the ability to perceive events the way others do and understand how other people's cultural values and assumptions affect their behavior; paired with suspension of judgment, to withhold making personal or moral judgment until a sufficient amount of evidence and/or support becomes available; one of the four skill-based competencies that promote 3C

Sense-making: the ability to make sense of foreign cultural behavior in a variety of contexts; one of the four skill-based competencies that promote 3C

Situational Judgment Test (SJT): a type of psychological test which presents the test-taker with realistic, hypothetical scenarios and ask the individual to identify the most appropriate response or to rank the responses in the order they feel is most effective

Transferrable Skills: We hypothesize that the combination of culture-general, 3C, and CCC with intensive language familiarization within a mission context will result in skills that will be of significant operational use outside the target language and culture.

29. There is no shortage of official and “unofficial” statements about the future direction of the DoD (Hagel, 2014; McRaven, 2013; Odierno, 2012; and Robinson 2012).

Our Proposed Assessment Model

We are currently beginning the development of an assessment model that takes the general concepts in use at the JBLM LCC and create a formalized LREC assessment consisting of three separate measures for language, culture, and 3C (though these designations are likely to change to conform better to our above stated definitions). The measures will be represented along a 0-3 scale, in whole numbers, which are to be understood as low, moderate, and high. The low, moderate, and high ratings will be defined in both general, ILR-like terms, as well as tailored, operational can-do statements directly related to the goals set for the actual course of instruction. We are further developing existing rubrics and component/assignment weighting calculations, similar to, but far less complex, than the algorithm in use by the RPAT, to ensure consistency – though we acknowledge that a fair amount of subjectivity cannot be avoided when it comes to people assessing people. The three measures will be broken down as follows:

The Language assessment: will be based on TOT-like LIAs aligned to the specific linguistic components of the course and contextualized within an operational environment that contains both rehearsed and novel situations, which we will have to develop ourselves. [The OPI will continue to be utilized, with the current speaking and listening goals of ILR 0+/0+ or higher, until the TOT-like assessments can be developed and vetted.]

The Culture assessment: will be comprised of culture-general/specific/3C declarative and procedural knowledge acquisition as an expression of performance – based on an aggregation of scores throughout the course on knowledge checks and essays.

Inter-/Cross-cultural Interaction assessment: will be based on procedural knowledge and skill assessment consisting of knowledge check scores, SJTs, and LIA scores provided throughout the course.

Conclusion

Two years removed from the conclusion of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), and earlier Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) (euphemistically combined as Counterinsurgency or COIN), there are two more or less distinct DoD mission paths for future operations: kinetic/quick strike operations and increasingly non-kinetic operations, consisting of an array of mission types, from unconventional warfare (UW), special operations warfare, SFA, FID, and building partnerships (BP)²⁹. The kinetic path is contingency based and, therefore, overshadowed by the much more enduring approach of forming alliances with nations critical to our security interests in a region, as well as partnerships with nations and regions susceptible to failing economies, insurgencies, or even terrorism. SFA, FID, HADR, BP, Joint military exercises, and other critical missions continue to comprise much of what the DoD does internationally, but these have only recently been officially acknowledged as falling within the DoD's overarching responsibility of national security. OEF and OIF may have taken center stage since 9/11, but the fact of the matter is that non-combat operations have constituted the majority of the DoD's troop deployments for decades, and the focus of the DoD is now shifting back to what can arguably be called its primary mission: the reduction of the need for conventional combat through global partnerships and

31. Defined here loosely as the “formally accepted” or “standard” or “textbook” form of a given language, as opposed to technical or mission-specific language (defined below).

32. Defined as the language variation(s), vocabulary, idioms, etc. required for Service Members to perform the tasks assigned to them in the course of their military duties.

33. Again, this is not a criticism of the Defense Language Proficiency Testing System or those who developed it but a statement of fact regarding their applicability to LREC assessment.

the bolstering of those partners' security postures. This approach to protecting the nation requires plans and operations dedicated to addressing the instability and violence resulting from extremism in foreign nations, economies impacted by climate change, lack of infrastructure, drained natural resources, and the like. The DoD currently faces diversity both of mission type and those that are or will be involved. The military landscape will never again replicate the seemingly bipolar world of the 1950's and before, which offered at least the perceived comfort of easily differentiating friend from foe. It is critical that – in addition to spending government funds to develop improved combat equipment and increasing drone missions, etc. – we develop cultural thinkers and foreign language speakers to better support DoD engagements across the globe.

The DoD founders in its development of a critical and theoretically sound language and culture program for several reasons yet to be resolved fully a decade after the 2005 publication of the DLTR. Government Accountability Office (GAO) reports and House Armed Services Committee (HASC) recommendations and analyses by think tanks as late as 2010³⁰ criticized the DoD for lack of progress across many fronts: strategy, promoting LREC in learning, promoting effective capability based requirements analysis, standardizing terminology and assessment. While the DoD published a 2011 strategy and a 2014 implementation plan, the only two LREC-specific policy documents, neither of these is current. DoD Instruction (DoDI) 5160.70, published in 2007, defined concepts and terms related to regional proficiency and regional expertise but offered little in the way of clear and assessable concepts. Moreover, it has yet to be revised in the wake of GAO and HASC recommendations or changes in DoD operational focus. Although the Services have already produced strategies that

feature their own terminology and interpretations, defining Department-wide concepts and terms is still in the best interests of both the Services and DoD. A shared, standardized set of terms would help in building a common set of learning goals and objectives, promote a common lexicon to work from and promote inter-Service projects, potentially streamline funding for like programs, and lead to development of a useable LREC assessment model and associated metrics.

There has never been a formally developed assessment mechanism that could provide substance to the narrative that LREC matters in the field, nor has there been an assessment program developed to provide feedback to trainers, educators, or program managers on how well LREC programs are preparing troops to meet operational requirements and/or improve or facilitate mission success. In addition, no mechanism exists to provide some “measure” of an individual's LREC competence, which would provide meaningful information to his/her leadership about that individual's operational abilities and how that individual might best be utilized. What exists for language assessment was developed with global language skills³¹ in mind and not mission-specific language³² skills.³³ In addition, now more than ever, there appears to be an inconsistent application of resources, strategy, and development across the DoD for further expansion and sustainment of LREC programs. In large part, this is due to lack of standardizing guidance from DoD. Allowing the Services to decide for themselves what “LREC” means has resulted not so much in LREC programs but in myriad constellations of disparate, compartmentalized programs that emphasize the L, RE, or C (each defined inconsistently) to widely varying degrees. For instance, many Service Culture Centers, irrespective of validated requirements and vetted curricula, are still

operational, while most, if not all, GPF Language Training Detachments (LTDs), at least the Army's, have been closed – certainly bringing into question the level of dedication to designing and maintaining a coordinated and pedagogically-sound LREC program across all Services.

At this time, there is no existing LREC assessment that can be tailored to organization, or even mission. We assert that an assessment can be developed that offers a means to capture LREC capability taken from performance of an LREC learning event, such as Initial Acquisition Training (IAT) for language or later language sustainment events (Greene-Sands, 2015). In other words, we contend, the best means of assessing LREC is providing the curriculum, materials, and learning venue that establishes the interconnection between all LREC elements and to embed evaluations within the learning event, which can be controlled and monitored. We hypothesize that performance throughout such a learning event will yield a truer assessment of an individual's LREC competence. This model requires no reliance on biographical data, a personnel database – which may or may not be populated with current and relevant information, or a web-based tool to assist with competence-gap analysis.

The approach we advocate is focused on the creation of a more simplified LREC learning and assessment model. The research and development involved in creating a Force-wide model is overly complex and seemingly unending, not to mention costly. The DoD requires a solution now, not years from now. Now that the DoD has generally acknowledged the utility of LREC competence, it must create a common, operationally centered lexicon and standardizing

guidance that the Services can both understand and structure their LREC programs around. The individual Services can then develop LREC learning events tailored to their individual mission sets that already contain embedded and meaningful assessments. These will provide leaders with the current and applicable results they need for planning and execution of their missions, thereby eliminating the need for overly general assessments based on irrelevant and/or dated personnel data. For work in the Human Domain, instead of searching for a Force-wide LREC solution, the authors advise the DoD to embrace and advance a new operational mantra that embodies the need for LREC within its operational context:

Know yourself. Know your allies. Know your enemies. [In that order.]

The teachings of Sun Tsu, discovered in the text the Art of War, and its application to a Western approach to war provide a good starting point for our treatment of LREC, as well as for establishing the importance of LREC for the DoD. Now a staple reading for leadership and command learning, the Art of War has relevance for battle strategy and tactics, if the view taken is conscripted to just that focus. However, it also is a primer well beyond the words devoted to battle strategy, considering Asian – specifically Chinese philosophy – which is intertwined throughout the Art of War. If contemplated within its culture-bound context, the Art of War becomes more than a militaristic textbook; it becomes an opportunity to discover meaning of Chinese behaviors and worldviews.

Sun Tsu said:

“If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles. If you know yourself but not the enemy, for every victory gained you will also suffer a defeat. If you know neither the enemy nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle.”

That brief passage embodies the importance of LREC and holds the same relevance for today’s military personnel as for the military of ancient China over 2000 years ago.

Know Yourself – Know your field craft (tools, equipment, skills, etc.). Know your mission and the greater mission of your Service and the DoD. Know your own culture, beliefs and values. Understand “you” as an individual, a teammate, and Service Member. Recognize your sociocultural background, such as how you see family, law and order, gender and others, and the personal biases that come with it. Know how to monitor and mitigate those biases, to think differently, managing the unintended consequences of human cognition – bias – and its operation when considering those who are culturally different (Sands, 2013), in order to accomplish the mission. We tend to assume we know ourselves and fail to integrate self-reflection into our operational mindset, something that continues to hinder operational success in global operations.

Know Your Allies – Know the members of your team, be they fellow Service Members of the same or different Service, foreign nationals, foreign military personnel, etc. Learn to be able to see patterns of behavior in their actions and the meaning of that behavior to be able effectively communicate with them and overcome intra-, inter-, and

cross-cultural differences to more efficiently and effectively accomplish the mission. We often judge foreign/different behaviors through the lens of our own cultural context or, worse, dismiss the behaviors as irrelevant, because we do not “see” them and/or understand them. This hinders relations and communication with our allies, weakening the team and delaying (or worse) operational success.

Know Your Enemies – Learn about the people opposed to DoD engagements and our national security in general. Explore the possible reasons for their opposition. Understand how to analyze their behavior within the culture-bound context in which it exists, in order to anticipate and/or counteract behaviors disruptive to DoD missions or American safety and interests. We often misinterpret foreign/different behavior, because we do not explore the possible motivations behind it. This hampers creation of meaningful, accurate, and actionable Intelligence, not to mention creating strategies to counteract the behaviors contrary to American interests.

Know yourself. Know your allies. Know your enemies. [In that order.]

This motto implies a much deeper understanding of the people involved in the transnational environment of today’s military engagements and embraces the intent of the Strategic Landpower White Paper. Newly appointed Army Chief of Staff, General Milley, said at his acceptance, “War is an act of politics, where one side tries to impose its political will on the other... and politics is all about people. And people live on the ground. We may wish it were otherwise, but it is not. Wars are ultimately decided on the ground, where people live, and it is on the ground where the U.S. Army, the

U.S. Marine Corps and the U.S. Special Operations Forces must never, ever fail” (Lopez, 2015).

We’ve come a long way from the more simplistic “Know Your Enemy” slogan of yesteryear and acknowledge its shortcomings. It is time to think differently about the DoD’s role in the world: its missions, its operational environment, its personnel, and the people it affects. A primary consideration is the importance of a consolidated approach to LREC within that new thought process – an approach that focuses on the desired end-state in terms of capabilities, as well as an assessment mechanism that indicates whether that desired end-state has been achieved.

“Exactly!” said Deep Thought. “So once you do know what the question actually is, you’ll know what the answer means” (Adams, 1980).

References

- Adams, D. (1980). *The hitchhiker's guide to the galaxy*. New York: Harmony Books.
- American Council on Education. (n.d.). Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center: Courses/Exams. Retrieved from <http://www2.acenet.edu/credit/?fuseaction=browse.getOrganizationDetail&FICE=190163>.
- Bienkowski, S. C., & Surface, E. A. (2013, March 22). Special Operations Forces Mission-related Language Requirements: What skills should be tested? (Rep.). Retrieved July 17, 2015, from <http://www.govtil.org/TC/Presentations/March%202013%20Briefs/SOF%20Language%20Requirements%20and%20Testing%20Needs%20ILR%20Testing%20Committee%20March%202013%20Final.pdf>.
- Brenneman, M., & Klafehn, J. (2015, January 14). In Search of the Magic Bullet: Assessing Cross-Cultural Competence in the U.S. Army. Speech presented at George Mason University.
- Basic, Applied and Advanced Research (Broad Agency Announcement W911NF-13-R-0001). (2013-2018). Aberdeen Proving Ground Research Triangle Park Division, NC: U.S. Army Contracting Command.
- Center for the Advanced Study of Language (CASL). (2015a). Regional Proficiency Assessment Tool (RPAT). Retrieved July 17, 2015, from <http://www.casl.umb.edu/RPAT>.
- Center for the Advanced Study of Language (CASL). (2015b). Regional Proficiency Assessment Tool [Fact Sheet]. Center for the Study of Language. Retrieved July 17, 2015, from <http://www.casl.umb.edu/RPAT>.
- Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center. (n.d.). Defense Language Proficiency Test 5 System: Familiarization Guide for Multiple-Choice Format (Information Guide). Retrieved August 17, 2015, from http://www.ut.ngb.army.mil/clp/linguists/links/DLPT_5_Familiarization_Guide_for_Multiple_Choice_Format.pdf.
- Department of Defense. (2007). DoDI 5160.70 Management of DoD Language and Regional Proficiency Capabilities (Instruction).
- Erwin, S. I. (2012, November 1). Odierno: 'There's Angst in the Army'. *National Defense Magazine*. Retrieved July 11, 2015, from <http://www.nationaldefensemagazine.org/blog/lists/posts/post.aspx?ID=960>.
- Feickert, A. (2015). *U.S. Special Operations Forces (SOF): Background and Issues for Congress* (Rep. No. RS21048). Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service.
- Garzaniti, S. G. (2015, October 13). RE: Reference assistance [E-mail to the author].

- Greene-Sands, A. (2015, March 15). Assessing Language, Regional Expertise and Culture (LREC) Performance: Not like threading a camel through the eye of a needle. Speech presented at 2015 Plenary hosted by the Department of Defense, Interagency Language Roundtable at the National Foreign Language Center in MD, College Park.
- Hagel, C. (2014). The 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review. Washington, DC: Secretary of Defense.
- Hernandez, R. A. (n.d.). Execution Order (191-10) For AfPak General Purpose Force (GPF) Language Training Detachments (aka Campaign Continuity Language Training Detachments) (Rep. No. Execution Order (191-10)). Headquarters Department Of The Army (HQDA).
- Holman, D.W. (2015, October 13). RE: Reference assistance [E-mail to the author].
- Houser, S. and Rouse, B. (2015, July 9). Regional Proficiency Assessment Tool: Current Status and Future Goals. Power Point presentation given at Defense Language and National Security Education Office, Washington D.C.
- Ibrahimov, M. J. (2015, June 10). Army Culture & Foreign Language Program Brief (Issue brief). Retrieved August 15, 2015, from http://usacac.army.mil/sites/default/files/documents/cace/LREC/ALCC_10June15_CREL_Brief.pptx.
- INSCOM Regulation 11-6 (2011). Department of the Army, United States Army Intelligence and Security Command.
- Interagency Language Roundtable. (n.d.). About the Interagency Language Roundtable. Retrieved from <http://www.govtilr.org/IRL%20History.htm>.
- Kolb, D.A. (1984). Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Lopez, C.T. (2015, August 14). Ground Forces 'Must Never, Ever Fail,' New Army Chief Says. States News Service. Retrieved August 25, 2015, from http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1GI-425523958.html?refid=easy_hf.
- Lorié, W. (2010). (Draft) Framework for the Very Low Range Defense Language Proficiency Tests (VLR DLPT) (Version 5). Washington, D.C.: EduMetrica.
- Lujan, F. (2013, March 8). Wanted: Ph.D.s Who Can Win a Bar Fight. Retrieved from <http://foreignpolicy.com/2013/03/08/wanted-ph-d-s-who-can-win-a-bar-fight/>.
- Mackenzie, L. (2014). Strategic Enablers: How Intercultural Communication Skills Advance Micro-Level International Security. *The Journal of Culture, Language and International Security*, 1(1), 85-96.
- Malvesti, M. L. (2010). To serve the nation U.S. Special Operations Forces in an era of persistent conflict. Washington, D.C.: Center for a New American Security.

- Mirikitani, Ph.D., R. T. (2008). The Correlation and Relationship of DLAB Scores to Successful Language Studies at the DLIFLC: 2004 to 2006, 2007 to 2008 (Final Report). Monterey, CA: Defense Language Institute: Research and Analysis Division.
- McRaven, W. (2013) Posture Statement of Admiral William H. McRaven, USN Commander, United States Operations Command before the 113th Congress Senate Armed Services Committee Emerging Threats and Capabilities Subcommittee, <http://www.socom.mil/Documents/2014%20USSOCOM%20POSTURE%20STATEMENT.PD>.
- McRaven, W. (2013) U.S. Special Operations Command Commander's Education and Training Guidance, Fiscal Years 2014-17.
- Navy Creates Designation to Identify Officers with Pacific Region Expertise. (2015, February 5). States News Service. Retrieved July 26, 2015, from http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1G1-400443934.html?refid=easy_hf.
- Obama's Address to Veterans. (2009, August 17). Retrieved June 12, 2015, from <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/18/us/politics/18obama.text.html?pagewanted=all&r=0>.
- Odierno, R. (2012, March 22). Regionally Aligned Forces: A New Model for Building Partnerships. Retrieved June 12, 2015, from <http://armylive.dodlive.mil/index.php/2012/03/aligned-forces/>.
- Odierno, R. T., Amos, J. F., & McRaven, W. H. (2013). Strategic Landpower: Winning the Clash of Wills (White Paper). United States Army, United States Marine Corp, and the United States Special Operations Command. Retrieved June 12, 2015, from http://www.arcic.army.mil/app_Documents/Strategic-Landpower-White-Paper-28OCT2013.pdf.
- Robinson, L. (2012) The Future of Special Operations. Foreign Affairs (Nov/Dec) Retrieved August 10, 2015, from <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2012-11-01/future-special-operations>.
- Sands, R. Greene (2013). Language and Culture in the Department of Defense: Synergizing complimentary instruction and building LREC competency. Small Wars Journal, March(8).
- Sands, R. Greene. (2013) "Thinking Differently: Unlocking the Human Domain in Support of the 21st Century Intelligence Mission. Small Wars Journal August(20).
- Sands, R. G., & Haines, T. (2013). Promoting Cross-Cultural Competence in Intelligence Professionals: A new perspective on alternative analysis and the intelligence process. Small Wars Journal, April(25).
- Sands, R. Greene (2014). Finding a Common Thread: Implications for the Future of Culture and Language Programs in Support of International Security. The Journal of Culture, Language and International Security, 1(1), 3-21.

- Scaparrotti, C. (2013, January 31). CJCSI 3126.01A, Language, regional expertise and culture (LREC) Capability Identification, planning and sourcing (Instruction). Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.
- Schoen, F. (2015). Reorganization is Imperative to Fixing Special Forces' Bent Unconventional Culture. *Small Wars Journal*, 29(June).
- Special Operations Command. (2015). *Operating in the Human Domain (Concept of Operations)*.
- Subcommittee on Oversight & Investigations. (2010). *Building Language Skills and Cultural Competencies in the Military: Bridging the Gap*(Rep.).
- Suskie, L. A. (2009). *Assessing student learning: A common sense guide*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel & Readiness. (2007, June 12.) DoD Instruction 5160.70. Retrieved August 10, 2015, from <http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/516070p.pdf>.
- U.S. Air Force Culture, Region & Language Flight Plan. (2009). Retrieved June 12, 2015, from <http://culture.af.mil/nce/PDF/mission/ncemission08.pdf>.
- U.S. Army Forces Command. (2014, February 11). U.S. Army Forces Command Regionally Aligned Forces (RAF) Training Requirements [E-mail].
- U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO). (2009). 'Military Training: DOD Needs a Strategic Plan and Better Inventory and Requirements Data to Guide Development of Language Skills and Regional Proficiency (Rep. No. GAO-09-568). Retrieved <http://www.gao.gov/assets/300/291376.html>.
- U.S. Marine Corps' Center for Advanced Operational Culture Learning (CAOCL) Website. (2015). Retrieved July 22, 2015, from <http://www.mcu.usmc.mil/caocl/SitePages/index.aspx>.
- Van Driel, M. and Gabrenya, W. Instrumental Challenges in Developing Cross-cultural Competence Models, in R. Greene Sands and A. Greene-Sands (eds), *Cross-Cultural Competence for a 21st Century Military: Culture, the Flipside of the COIN*. Lexington Books (2014), <https://rowman.com/ISBN/9780739179598>.
- Vanpatten, B., & Smith, M. (2014). Aptitude As Grammatical Sensitivity And The Initial Stages Of Learning Japanese As A L2: Parametric Variation And Case Marking—Corrigendum. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition Stud Second Lang Acquis*, 37(01), 175-176. doi:10.1017/s0272263114000813.
- Walter, D., Carey, L., & Carey, J. O. (2014). *The Systematic Design of Instruction With Pearson Etext -- Access Card*. Pearson College Div.
- United States Government Accountability Office: GAO. Report to Congressional Committees. *Military Training: DOD Needs a Strategic Plan and Better Inventory and Requirements Data to Guide Development of Language Skills and Regional Proficiency*, 2009, <http://www.gao.gov/assets/300/291376.html>.