REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

1. Report Security Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

2. Security Classification Authority:

3. Declassification/Downgrading Schedule:

4. Distribution/Availability of Report: DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A: APPROVED FOR PUBLIC RELEASE; DISTRIBUTION IS UNLIMITED.

5. Name of Performing Organization: JOINT MILITARY OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT

6. Office Symbol: C

7. Address: NAVAL WAR COLLEGE
686 CUSHING ROAD
NEWPORT, RI 02841-1207

8. Title (Include Security Classification): The Language of Conflict: How a Combined/Joint Force Commander can overcome Military Linguist Shortages to Enhance Information Operations (UNCLASSIFIED)

9. Personal Authors: Major Michael D. Beeson, USAF

10.Type of Report: FINAL

11. Date of Report: 4 February 2002

12.Page Count: 26 **12A Paper Advisor (if any): Donald B. Fennessey, CAPT, USN**

13.Supplementary Notation: A paper submitted to the Faculty of the NWC in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the JMO Department. The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the NWC or the Department of the Navy.

14. Ten key words that relate to your paper: Information Operations, Linguists, Translation, Cultural Interpretation, Linguist Shortage, Kosovo, Combined/Joint Forces Commander, Machine Translation, Indigenous Speakers, Information Operations Cell

15.Abstract This paper examines how a combined or joint force commander can continue to shape Information Operations despite a shortage of military linguists. As advances in Information Operations grow throughout the world, so does the need for qualified and competent linguists. As we have seen in various military conflicts and operations throughout history, linguists have played a key role in keeping the operational commander apprised of enemy intentions, orders of battle and operations.

Without proper translation resources, the operational commander is placed in a position where he can be denied enemy information, thereby relinquishing the Information Operations advantage. By addressing translation requirements in the early operational planning stages, and employing a competent Information Operations Officer, who also has cultural and foreign area expertise, the operational commander can achieve an information advantage over his adversary. Tapping U.S. government linguists, civilian contract linguists, indigenous speakers, and machine translations also can aid the commander in filling any gaps in translation services and cultural awareness caused by the military linguist shortage.

16.Distribution / Availability of Abstract:	**Unclassified**	**Same As Rpt**	**DTIC Users**
	X		

17.Abstract Security Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

18.Name of Responsible Individual: CHAIRMAN, JOINT MILITARY OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT

19.Telephone: 841-6461

20.Office Symbol: C

Security Classification of This Page Unclassified

(Unclassified Paper)

NAVAL WAR COLLEGE
Newport, R.I.

The Language of Conflict: How a Combined/Joint Force Commander can overcome Military Linguist Shortages to Enhance Information Operations

By

Michael D. Beeson
Major, USAF

A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

Signature: _____

4 February 2002

_____
Faculty Advisor
DONALD B. FENNESSEY, CAPT, USN
Faculty, Strategy and Policy Department

ABSTRACT

The Language of Conflict: How a Combined/Joint Force Commander can overcome Military Linguist Shortages to Enhance Information Operations

This paper examines how a combined or joint force commander can continue to shape Information Operations despite a shortage of military linguists. As advances in Information Operations grow throughout the world, so does the need for qualified and competent linguists. As we have seen in various military conflicts and operations throughout history, linguists have played a key role in keeping the operational commander apprised of enemy intentions, orders of battle, and operations.

Without proper translation resources, the operational commander is placed in a position where he can be denied enemy information, thereby relinquishing the Information Operations advantage. By addressing translation requirements in the early operational planning stages, and employing a competent Information Operations Officer, who also has cultural and foreign area expertise, the operational commander can achieve an information advantage over his adversary. Tapping U.S. government linguists, civilian contract linguists, indigenous speakers, and machine translations also can aid the commander in filling any gaps in translation services and cultural awareness caused by the military linguist shortage.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Abstract	ii
Introduction	1
Language and Coalitions	2
U.S. Security Considerations	3
Background	4
Impact of the Military Linguist Shortage on IO	4
IO Cell Structure and the Linguist	6
Analysis	8
Part One: Enhanced Cultural Awareness for IOC Members	8
Part Two: Beyond Translation and Continued Training	10
Part Three: Tapping All The Resources	13
Conclusion	18
Bibliography	20
Appendix A	23
Figure A-1. Typical Joint IO Cell (JP 3-13)	23
Figure A-2. IO: Capabilities and Related Activities (JP 3-13)	24
Figure A-3. IO Officer Functions (JP 3-13)	25

Introduction

Perhaps one of the most successful, if not ingenious, elements of what we now label Information Operations (IO) occurred during World War II as a result of the simple, yet vital need to deny information to the enemy. Philip Johnston, the son of a Navajo missionary and one of the few non-Navajos who was fluent in their language, was also a WWI veteran who knew of the U.S. military's search for an undecipherable code. Johnston was aware that the Choctaw language was used in WWI to encode messages and immediately recognized its potential utility in WWII, which proved to be one of the greatest cryptologic success stories of the war.[1]

Although the information revolution continues to grow by orders of magnitude since Johnston first employed his Navajo code talkers, United States efforts to produce and train sufficient linguists have unfortunately failed to achieve parity with these advances. In light of recent world events and ongoing military operations, the necessity of information superiority, and particularly the role linguists and foreign area experts play in this environment, have become among the most useful tools in the Combined and Joint Force Commander's (C/JFC) IO kit.

While a review of our current U.S. military linguist inventory is a cause for concern, C/JFCs can mitigate the impact of this shortage to IO by using a three-part approach. First, IO Cell (IOC) members need to receive training to better understand the various ethnic and cultural issues comprising their commander's Area of Responsibility (AOR). Second, commanders and their IO staffs must understand that linguists and foreign area experts bring more than just expedient translations to the IO effort, and to be used effectively they require

constant training to maintain their proficiency.[2] Finally, commanders need to use all linguist and foreign area expert resources, including military, government and indigenous civilian personnel, in concert with a well-developed Theater Engagement Plan (TEP) and interagency cooperation strategy to meet their IO needs.

These solutions apply to combined and joint force commanders across the spectrum; linguists and area experts must be used in the most efficient manner regardless of theater if the intent is to most effectively prosecute a successful military operation. Adequate planning and full integration of all C/JFC's linguist capabilities and foreign area expertise will not only garner innumerable IO benefits, but will also aid with coalition coordination.

Language and Coalitions

Few would argue that the U.S. will fight future wars without the aid of an alliance or coalition. A quick review of contemporary conflicts ranging from the Gulf War to Afghanistan serves to confirm the likelihood of continued collaborative efforts between the U.S. and other allied nations. Joint doctrine draws on these and earlier conflicts to underscore our role in multinational operations, with emphasis on language implications:

> "…From the Revolutionary War to the present, U.S. armed forces have often fought to defend U.S. national interests as part of a larger multinational force. Each partner in multinational operations possesses a unique cultural identity—the result of language, values, religious systems, and economic and social outlooks. Among all the complex social, cultural and political issues facing a successful coalition, language differences often present the most immediate challenge. Specifying an official coalition language can be sensitive."[3]

It is imperative, therefore, that C/JFCs have resources to enable them to understand allied and enemy languages and cultures as part of their IO strategy as they look to neutralize future threats.

---

[1] Molnar, Alexander, Navajo Code Talkers: World War II Fact Sheet, prepared by the Navy and Marine Corps WWII Commemorative Committee, <http://www.history.navy.mil/faqs/faq61-2.htm> [14 December 2001]
[2] Gutierrez, Jose-Adan, "Language and Area Expertise in support of the Combined/Joint Commander." Unpublished Research Paper, U.S. Naval War College, Newport, RI: 1994

U.S. Security Considerations

We've unmistakably transitioned from a bipolar world to one that demands our constant attention to security matters from a multitude of directions. The U.S. was reasonably well equipped to undertake intelligence and IO activities in support of our nation's security during the Cold War, with the primary focus being on the Soviet Union and her satellites. With the fall of the U.S.S.R. and the emergence of numerous non-state threats, however, the heart of our security priorities changed dramatically, leading to a need for the U.S. to "retool" the existing security infrastructure to accommodate the changing threat. The new threats called for a shift in linguist and foreign area expert capabilities from the traditional Cold War languages of Russian, German, Korean and Mandarin Chinese to a host of languages and dialects virtually spanning the globe from the Middle East and Balkans to the Pacific Rim.

For example, the old monolithic Soviet Union has become a polyglot of fifteen republics, with hundreds of ethnic enclaves, each with its native language or dialect.[4] Moreover, as other regions continue to splinter along ethnic lines, as in the Balkans for example, different dialects become more pronounced, and thus there is a greater need for a diverse linguist/translator base to help commanders achieve information superiority across their AOR. Unfortunately, it took several attacks on our national interests and citizens throughout the 1990s to heighten the need for this retooling, and we remain in a catch-up mode to this day, despite urgent calls from operational commanders for improved intelligence capabilities.

---

[3] U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff. Doctrine for Joint Operations, Joint Pub 3-0, Washington, DC: 10 September 2001.VI-I to VI-5

Background

Impact of the Military Linguist Shortage on IO

In a March 1999 brochure on IO, then Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Henry H. Shelton noted "information operations and information superiority are at the core of military innovation and our vision for the future of joint warfare…. The capability to penetrate, manipulate and deny an adversary's battlespace awareness is of utmost importance."[5] As we saw, Philip Johnston used linguistics during WWII to master an important tenet of information superiority, which was then as it is today to "collect, process, and disseminate an uninterrupted flow of information while exploiting or denying an adversary's ability to do the same."[6]

What was true for Johnston some sixty years ago was still germane to IO during Kosovo operations in the 1990s, and will remain so for the foreseeable future; the need to gain information supremacy and deny adversaries information remains vital. The Kosovo action allowed NATO to use a full arsenal of IO weapons. From advanced aerial weapons to system intrusions—hacking—into the Yugoslavian air defense systems to degrade their response capabilities, the U.S. demonstrated a robust IO capability.[7] While the overall IO

---

[4] Fesperman, Dan and Gibson, Gail, Evidence is plentiful, but translators aren't; long before attacks, U.S. painfully aware of dearth of linguists; Terrorism Strikes America; The Nation, The Baltimore Sun, 20 September 2001

[5] Thomas, Timothy L., Kosovo and the Current Myth of Information Superiority, Parameters, US Army War College Quarterly-Spring 2000 <HTTP://Carlisle-www.army.mil/usawc/Parameters/00spring/Thomas.htm>

[6] JP 3-13 and Molnar. By using the unwritten Navajo language of extreme complexity, the U.S. was able to deny the Japanese vital information on tactics, troop movements, orders and other vital battlefield communications over telephones and radios. Molnar explains that when a Navajo code talker received a message, what he heard was a string of seemingly unrelated words. The code talker translated each Navajo word into its English equivalent. Then he used only the first letter of the English equivalent in spelling an English word. Thus, the Navajo words "wol-la-chee' (ant), or "tse-nill" (axe) both stood for the letter "a". By combining the first letter of various translated English words the code talkers could then process messages. One way to say the word "Navy" in Navajo code would then be "tsah (needle) wol-la-chee (ant) ah-keh-di-glini (victor) tsah-ah-dzoh (yucca)."

[7] Church, William, Kosovo and the Future of Information Operations, Centre for Infrastructural Warfare Studies. <http://www.infowar.com/info_ops/treatystudyio.shtml> [8 January 2002]

"report card" on Kosovo appears to be on the positive side, one common IO shortfall seems to run through the majority of accounts.

Peppered among military journals, newspaper articles, and congressional testimonies was the fact that a serious shortage of linguists hampered IO during the military operations in Kosovo. In a lessons-learned testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee on 14 October 1999, Secretary of Defense William Cohen and General Shelton noted, "the pool of personnel available to perform certain key functions, such as language translations…was limited".[8] The IO lessons learned in Kosovo, however, only scratch the surface of a much larger national problem.

The Joint Universal Lessons Learned System noted a shortage of Spanish linguists for Operation JUST CAUSE in Panama, a shortage of Arabic linguists in Operation DESERT STORM, and a shortage of Italian and Somali linguists during Operations PROVIDE RELIEF and RESTORE HOPE in Somalia.[9]

While terrorists were planning the bombing of the World Trade Center in 1993 in which six were killed and thousands injured, the U.S. was privy to taped phone conversations of Palestinian Ahmad Ajaj. Although he was talking about explosives, the translated tapes didn't come to light until his trial due to translation backlogs caused by a chronic shortage of linguists.[10]

More recently, the inability to translate evidence impeded the investigation of the American embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998. Moreover, the lack of translators also hampered the investigation of the October 1999 downing off Nantucket of EgyptAir Flight 990, and unconfirmed intelligence reports indicate that communications

[8] Thomas
[9] Gutierrez, p.17

intercepted prior to 11 September 2001 referred in Arabic to a "Christmas gift" for the United States. Curiously, the same idiomatic expression can mean "an unpleasant exploding surprise".[11]

Finally, the Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2002 Report found a great need throughout the intelligence community for increased expertise in a number of intelligence-related disciplines and specialties. In fact, the Committee believes the *most* pressing such need is for greater numbers of foreign language-capable intelligence personnel, with greater fluency in specific and multiple languages. The Committee has heard repeatedly from both military and civilian intelligence producers and consumers that this is the single greatest limitation in intelligence agency personnel expertise and that it is a deficiency throughout the intelligence community.[12] Fortunately, the C/JFC has a range of resources and options at his disposal to diminish the impact this lack of military linguists and foreign area experts has on IO—beginning with his IOC.

IO Cell Structure and the Linguist

The C/JFC's IOC is essential for coordinated and successful IO in that it develops and promulgates guidance and plans for IO that are passed to the components and supporting organizations and agencies for detailed mission planning and decentralized execution. The IOC integrates the broad range of potential IO actions and activities that contribute to the commander's desired end state in the AOR.[13]

---

[10] Fesperman and Gibson

[11] Berlinski, Claire, "English Only Spoken Here," Weekly Standard, December 3, 2001

[12] U.S. Congress, House. Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2002 Report. 107th Congress, 1st Session, House Report 107-219, 26 September 2001. <http://web.lexis.nexis.com/congcomp/document> [14 December 2001]

[13] U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff. Joint Doctrine for Information Operations, Joint Pub 3-13. Washington, DC: 9 October 1998.vii-viii. Reference Annex A, Figure A-1for an IO functional diagram.

Offensive IO involves the integrated use of assigned and supporting capabilities to affect adversary decision makers and achieve specific objectives. These activities include, but are not limited to: operations security (OPSEC), military deception, psychological operations (PSYOP), electronic warfare, physical attack/destruction, and special information operations.[14] Defensive IO elements are conducted through information assurance, OPSEC, physical security, counter deception, counter propaganda, counter-intelligence and electronic warfare. Defensive IO ensure timely, accurate, and relevant information access while denying adversaries the opportunity to exploit friendly information and information systems for their own purposes.[15]

Commanders must use linguists across the complete IO spectrum to realize the greatest benefit from this high-demand resource. Linguists' tasks within a combined or joint force will vary greatly from operation to operation depending on the cultures, languages, nations and theaters involved. For example, some linguists might be used for coordination with host nation public affairs personnel to ensure the commander's issues are being effectively broadcast to the indigenous population, while others might be used to translate intercepted enemy information regarding troop movements. Both serve the same purpose to enhance the commander's overall situational awareness which ultimately aids his decision making process. The C/JFC must rely on his IO "quarterback" to ensure the most efficient use of IO assets and capabilities, including the IOC members themselves.

The "quarterback" in this case is the IO Officer, who is responsible for coordinating the overall IO effort for the C/JFC and assists the J-3 in exercising joint IO responsibilities.[16] IO Officers are assigned from varying specialties and levels of experience. While U.S.

---

[14] JP 3-13, IV-1

[15] Reference Annex A, Figure A-2 for IO capabilities and related activities.

European Command (USEUCOM) and U.S. Pacific Command (USPACOM) have officers in the grade of O-6 as IO officers, U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) currently has an O-7 on loan from U.S. Space Command as its chief of IO.[17] This demonstrates the latitude a commander has when appointing an officer to this important position. Joint doctrine holds that the J-3 must ensure that only those officers with significant IO experience and expertise across a vast range of operations are assigned IO Officer duties, but is that enough?

Analysis

Part One: Enhanced Cultural Awareness for IOC Members

Lt. Col Russell Miller provides evidence that we would benefit greatly if IO Officers had a dedicated career field, specializing in all IO aspects. Miller concludes that the current joint IO doctrine doesn't work. Experiences during Operation ALLIED FORCE revealed significant doctrinal shortfalls. According to the lead "surrogate" IO planner on the JCS/J-39 staff, there were three difficulties that kept the JFC's staff from developing its own IO plan as mandated by JP 3-13.

First, the USEUCOM and JFC staffs were busy working time-sensitive deployment and operational issues—tasks that precluded their participation in a separate IO cell, which competed for many of the same people. Second, the resulting IO plan required coordination and approval well above USEUCOM staff, and as it turned out, outside of DoD. Third, and most insightful, operational planners didn't think an IOC (as conceived in JP 3-13) could develop an effective IO campaign given the lack of IO expertise on the USEUCOM and JFC's staffs. Their assessment was that it was too hard for a matrixed staff comprised of many "stove-piped" disciplines to put together an effective IO campaign—a plan with the

[16] Ibid, IV-4. Reference Annex A, Figure A-3 for a list of IO Officer functions

necessary degree of integration required to accomplish the JFC's strategic, operational, and tactical objectives. Miller contends what's needed is a cadre of "information warriors".[18]

While the "information warrior" career concept is not without merit, it is a long-term solution for the C/JFC. The IOC Officer, along with his cell members have a great impact on linguist operations within a joint or combined operation, and it is here the C/JFC can reap immediate benefits if the designated IOC Officer and cell members were to have a high level of foreign area expertise as they plan IO activities.

In Somalia, for instance, the U.S. wanted to clear the roads around Mogadishu of roadblocks in order to deliver much needed food. They attempted to get the message across by dropping leaflets to the populace. Due to a lack of cultural appreciation and a faulty translation, the dropped leaflets came across in a threatening tone, having an opposite affect on the population than was intended.[19]

Moreover, Andy Lease of the Joint IO Center points out that an IOC officer well-versed in the Muslim culture would be aware that dropping leaflets with the Koran printed on them, which in turn end up on the street and in the dirt, would have a negative affect on the desired audience as they see a symbol representing the cornerstone of their religion on the ground. With detailed cultural awareness training, an IOC member would be more effective to their operation as well as having to rely less on scarce linguists and foreign area experts.[20]

While it may not be possible in many instances to locate an IOC Officer or J-2 cell representative with a broad cultural knowledge of the given AOR, it would be relatively easy to provide these individuals, along with the IOC staff, with cultural training and other theater

---

[17] Lease, Andy, Technical Advisor at the Joint IO Center, San Antonio Texas. Via telecon
[18] Miller, Russell F., Developing and Retaining Information Warriors: An Imperative to Achieve Information Superiority, Unpublished Research Paper, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA. 2000
[19] According to Gen Anthony Zinni, in a video briefing to Naval War College students, January 2002.

information necessary for an operation. This training could be accomplished by existing Department of Defense or other U.S. Government agency programs.

Moreover, JP 3-13 supports this concept and underscores the fact that due to the wide-spread dependence on and capability of information technologies, the U.S. is more dependent on individual operators at all levels to collect, process, analyze, disseminate and act on information. "*Thus everyone, not just intelligence specialists, must be part of the threat assessment and response process*." [21] The commander must decide if the resulting benefits from additional training warrant the expense.

By gaining an enhanced understanding of a region's culture and better understanding what linguists and foreign area experts bring to the IO fight, an IOC officer and staff members should be in a better position to plan an effective IO strategy.

Part Two: Beyond Translation and Continued Training

Properly trained and qualified linguists provide much more than raw, expedient translations; they look beyond the dictionary and provide an insight into a foreign culture. Language capabilities allow a commander's staff to communicate more easily with his allied counterparts by using each other's language, and various levels of intelligence and other data can be passed and processed more rapidly, further enhancing efficiency. Language capabilities and foreign area expertise also aid in time-sensitive PSYOP leaflets, posters, newspapers, and radio and television broadcasting destined for the enemy or foreign audience.[22]

Almost everyone at one time or another has heard a humorous story where a slight misunderstanding of the nuances of a foreign language or culture led to a perhaps comical or

---

[20] Lease
[21] Ibid, I-18, italics added for emphasis

uncomfortable situation. An American commander provided one particularly poignant example during his tour in Germany.

Although not a linguist, he had taken it upon himself to learn a rudimentary level of vocabulary words, which he then pieced together to convey his thoughts to his host-nation friends. When warming up for a tennis match against a local player at a well-attended tennis tournament, our commander decided to show goodwill and speak in their tongue. After a brief warm-up period, our commander wanted to signal that he was sufficiently warmed up and ready to begin the match. At this point, he smiled and proudly exclaimed across the net to his opponent, "Ich bin warm!" which in slang translates to "I am a homosexual!"[23] His opponent and the crowd were at first confused, but then became amused when they realized his real intent.

Combined and joint commanders cannot afford such misunderstandings as they plan their IO. As Gutierrez notes, the key to successfully using linguists and area experts for the operational commander is the commander's understanding that they provide much more than translation services.[24] A fully trained linguist or area expert is able to convey the complete cultural dimension of a translation, whether the information is of enemy origin or intended for coalition or alliance partner consumption.

The U.S. armed forces might be wasting linguist talent and foreign area expertise due to underutilization. Far too many linguists are either not being utilized, or worse, they are leaving the service out of frustration. A mismatch between talent and task could result in a

---

[22] Ibid

[23] Although the literal translation of "Ich bin warm" is "I am warm", the translation is not the same when used in German. To further complicate the issue, the dative "Es ist mir warm", or "to me it is warm" is used when it is hot, as in the temperature. The commander would have been well advised to say, "Ich bin soweit" or "Ich bin bereit", or "I'm ready". This example is only used to illustrate the complexities when dealing with a foreign language.

[24] Gutierrez, p. 19

highly competent linguist or foreign area expert providing routine translations when their talents should have been more effectively used, or even worse, not used at all as we saw during the Gulf War where the Marine Amphibious Force had excellent linguist capabilities, but were never used by the CINC. [25]

There are approximately 16,500 authorized language-coded positions among the uniformed services and approximately 90% of all linguists receive their initial training at the Defense Language Institute, Foreign Language Center (DLIFLC). Nearly 4,500 service members graduate each year with varying degrees of proficiency in a range of languages, depending on national requirements. The operational commander must realize that graduates are not fluent, nor are they necessarily experts on any particular area of the world at this point. Once personnel have received this initial training, the commander's IO capability will be greatly improved by providing continued opportunities for his linguists to enhance their knowledge and practice their respective language and area expertise.[26] This can be done through language tapes and CDs, interactive training resources and translation competitions.

Another means for commanders to help their linguists maintain proficiency, as well as gain practical experience, is being demonstrated through operational exercises. Recently 88 linguists from DLIFLC left their classrooms to test their language skills in a joint language training exercise at the Military Operations on Urban Terrain training site at the former Fort Ord, California. SFC Tim Mason, chief military language instructor for the Middle East School at DLI, commented that the exercise situations came from people who had been in the field, and they hoped to expose students to at least a small portion of the problems faced by linguists in the field. Students faced mock hostile crowds, were required

[25] Gutierrez, p. 17
[26] Gutierrez, pp. 18-19

to hire a local truck driver to haul equipment, to speak with local police, and buy and barter for equipment.[27]

Similar exercises were conducted near Mubarak Military City, Egypt where Sgt William Sommer supervised twenty Arabic linguists who joined the 3rd Armored Cavalry's maneuvers in Egypt. Sommer realized the importance of his job as it applied to his commander's overall objectives, and noted for instance that his interpretation had to grasp key cultural and historical subtexts. Arab linguists should know, for instance, that the simple act of crossing one's legs while speaking to an Arab could be insulting if it exposes the sole of the shoe to his view. Aside from translating and performing intelligence duties, Sommer has twice been asked to help troops move frightened Bedouins who wandered into the war-game theater; clearly a potentially embarrassing, or worse, deadly situation for the commander.[28] In addition to heightened cultural awareness on his staff and proficiency training for linguists, commanders must be able to use all available linguists, regardless of whether they are military, contract or indigenous, if he can find them.

Part Three: Tapping All The Resources

To help locate individuals with a language background but who are not assigned to a language-coded position, C/JFC's IO Officers or J-1 representatives need to track language proficiency of members in their theater using each service's existing language database to help augment their currently assigned linguists. Many U.S. military personnel are competent, if not fluent in a second language, and could be used to supplement linguists and area experts if their talents were known.

---

[27] Frazier, Mitch, "Linguists on the Line". Soldiers Magazine. December 2001

[28] Franscell, Ron. "Soldiers speak their peace: Egypt exercises test military translators". The Denver Post. October 25, 2001

The problem with tracking members with knowledge of a foreign language but who are not assigned to a language billet is that not all members elect to take the Defense Language Proficiency Test to receive proficiency pay, and thus won't be in the services' databases. Once a member begins accepting foreign language proficiency pay, he or she is subject to local or deployed assignments, often to austere locations. Commanders should encourage personnel with language ability useful to the AOR to identify themselves prior to actual operations.

Another option is to rely on reserve linguists to fill gaps as necessary. The U.S. maintains a language and intelligence file for reservists, which includes personal and military characteristics as well as level of language proficiency.[29] IO Officers should work in advance with their associate J-1 and J-2 colleagues to identify any available assets to help round out the planning team. As with active duty members, reserve linguists should be incorporated into exercises and given opportunities to maintain proficiency through Internet courses, well-stocked libraries and any other means available.

Other important, and available resources to the C/JTF commander include his TEP and interagency cooperation. Resources from non-government organizations, U.S. Government entities and host nation personnel resident in a TEP enable combatant commanders and the National Command Authority to better understand the requirements imposed on the armed forces and associated agencies to shape the international security environment using IO. Examples of engagement activity categories include operational activities, combined exercises, and other foreign military interaction that includes combined

[29] Cavalluzzo, p.13

training and education, military contacts, security assistance, humanitarian assistance, and any other activity the commander designates.[30]

In addition, interagency cooperation helps commanders employ linguists and foreign area experts from other U.S. agencies. These agencies include, but are not limited to the CIA, DIA, NSA and FBI. This interagency coordination enables the commander to meet objectives without allocating additional military manpower or resources.

George Ishikata has highlighted two other translation and area expertise options for inclusion in an IO strategy; machine translators and contract linguists. Ishikata notes that machine translation (MT) is naturally dependable and has no biases regarding a conflict, its participants, or the material for translation. MT is, however, unable to adjust to contextual nuances that will cause the translations to perhaps be literal, while missing the essence of the information, as we saw with our "Christmas gift" example. Moreover, the cost of research and development can be prohibitive in the long term. Ishikata concludes that MT is currently incapable of replacing human linguists, but may have a larger role to play in the future depending on technical advances.[31]

Greg Caires, on the other hand, contends that MT does have an important role to play right now. He points out that the U.S. developed and deployed the Forward Area Language Converter (FALCON) to Bosnia to assist soldiers unfamiliar with the local language to rapidly scan documents and determine if they were of military value, which could have a tremendous impact on IO if documents or other information were found to contain information on enemy force structure, movements or intentions. The FALCON program

---

[30] Department of Defense DPMO Operations Directorate Fact Sheet, Theater Engagement Plan Review, <http://www.dtic.mil/dpmo/pr/factsheet26.htm> [25 January 2002]

[31] Ishikata, George K. "Pardon me, What did you say? A Look at how to Best Support the Army's Language Needs in future Operations. Unpublished Research Paper, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. 1998

began in December 1994, after the 82nd Airborne recognized the need for a field portable translator that could be operated by non-linguists, because in Haiti, for example, all the trained linguists were needed at higher headquarters and the tactical units were left to do without.

The FALCON software was able to provide soldiers in Bosnia with over 49,000 Serbo-Croatian words. Future development includes a capability for the machine to speak, which would be of great use in medical, mine clearing, and checkpoint applications. A soldier would either speak into the machine or choose a phrase from the English menu, which would then respond with a phrase in the foreign language, such as, "Are there mines around here?"[32] MT technical advances will continue along with debates regarding its overall utility.

Contract linguists have long been used to augment the active and reserve military linguist pool, and in some instances are the only "weapon of choice," such as during military operations other than war that require low-density target languages that military career linguists do not (and can not be expected to) speak. In the case of the Army in Haiti during Operation UPHOLD DEMOCRACY, the 16th Military Police Brigade stated that "contract linguists proved to be true combat multipliers throughout the operation." As a result, the Army currently plans to use up to 500 contract linguists, if necessary, as legal, medical, supply, liaison, and diplomatic translators and interpreters.[33]

There are very substantial risks involved with using contract or indigenous linguists that an operational commander must consider. The largest problem regarding contract linguists who are U.S. citizens centers on whether the user can trust the translation—the issue

[32] Caires, Greg. "Army to send electronic translator to Bosnia," Defense Daily, 1996
[33] Ishikata, p. 25

of dependability. These linguists may have received their language training in the U.S. without significant cultural exposure, leading to possible faulty translations.

The larger concern involves indigenous contract linguists who are not U.S. citizens. Kurt Muller describes this potential drawback while using indigenous linguists. He relates a 20 December 1952 Associate Press story that found Indonesian linguists interpreted everything as pro-American to please their employers, while a strong anti-American feeling actually swept the country. In the Korean War, U.S. personnel risked inaccuracy in propaganda efforts, and potential security violations or willful mistranslations by indigenous linguists.[34] Indigenous linguists should therefore be used for those tasks with a low security or operational risk factor, such as preparing memos and briefing slides, editing some publications, and drafting contracts and administrative letters to reduce the demands on military linguists. While the non-military linguist and area expert options for a C/JFC are many, each use must be weighed by the possible risk it presents.

One final near-term option for the commander is offered by Lease. The technology is in place right now to enable commanders to electronically confer with linguists around the world to help with translations and cultural interpretations. For example, a commander in a given AOR might not have a linguist on his staff with the particular language experience for a given document. In order to have the document translated in a timely manner, the commander's staff could locate the appropriate linguist via secure communication from a worldwide database of linguists, and then engage in a live video teleconference. With the completion of an electronic linguist "phone book", this tool proves promising.[35]

---

[34] Ibid, p. 34
[35] Lease

Conclusion

We are experiencing an information revolution that guarantees IO will continue to remain a key element to the C/JFC and his execution of operations in support of national objectives. To conduct effective IO, either offensive or defensive, commanders require competent linguists, foreign area experts, and translators to provide them with critical information. Duties range from the mundane typing of letters or translating briefings within a coalition or alliance, to critical operations either conducting PSYOP or translating time-sensitive messages regarding enemy intentions, force structure or operations.

The situation facing C/JFCs today as in the past is a chronic and critical shortage of qualified military linguists capable of meeting an ever-increasing IO requirement for translations and cultural interpretations. Linguist shortages not only caused IO gaps during operations in Kosovo, but they have also been attributed to shortfalls in our ability to prevent attacks against our citizens and nation, most notably on 11 September 2001. Our nation's lawmakers are aware of the problem and are addressing the future needs. But what can a commander do in the interim?

Fortunately, there are options for commanders to overcome the limitations of this overstretched resource to accomplish their objectives. Commanders can appoint IO Officers who have extensive foreign area training to help shape IO planning efforts. IO Officers can also proactively seek individuals who are not in a language-coded position but have language ability for the current theater of operations. Commanders also have a host of other resources from which they can draw once their pool of active duty military linguists has been exhausted. Other government linguists from the CIA or DIA can and are being used to help process information, as are indigenous contract linguists and military reservists. Machine

translations can help with rote tasks where linguistic nuances are not a factor, and other civilian contract linguists can be employed as well.

The key issue in using various linguist resources for the commander will always center on the costs and benefits of using each resource. When all translation resources have been consolidated and properly matched to requirements, hopefully the current military linguist shortage will be made transparent to the commander.

Bibliography

Ishikata, George K. “Pardon me, “What did you say? A Look at how to Best Support the Army’s Language Needs in future Operations.” Unpublished Research Paper, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. 1998

Barwinczak, Patricia M. Achieving Information Superiority. <http://www-cgsc.army.mil/milrev/English/Sepnov98/barwin.htm> [14 December 2001]

Berlinski, Claire, "English Only Spoken Here," Weekly Standard, 3 December 2001

Caires, Greg. "Army to send electronic translator to Bosnia," Defense Daily, 1996

Cavalluzzo, Linda C. and Suess, Jeremy N. Translator-Linguists: An Assessment of Requirements, Inventories, and Processes for Ensuring Personnel Readiness. Center for Naval Analyses, Alexandria, Virginia. December 1995

Chilton, Paul A., The Role of Language in Human Conflict: Prolegomena to the Investigation of Language as a Factor in Conflict Causation and Resolution, (School of Languages and European Studies, Aston University, Birmingham B4 7ET, UK), p. 2; Wright, Sue, Language and Conflict: A Neglected Relationship. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters LTD, 1998

Church, William, Kosovo and the Future of Information Operations, Centre for Infrastructural Warfare Studies. <http://www.infowar.com/info_ops/treatystudyio.shtml> [8 January 2002]

Devost, Matthew G, Houghton, Brian K. and Pollard, Neal A. “Organizing for Information Warfare: The Truth is Out There.” The Terrorism Research Center, 1997

Fesperman Dan and Gibson, Gail, "Evidence is Plentiful, but Translators aren't," The Baltimore Sun, 20 September 2001

Fishkoff, Sue, "Learning the Lingo." The Jerusalem Post, 15 September 1995

Foer, Franklin, "Sin of Commission; How an Anti-Terrorism Report Got Ignored," The New Republic, 8 October 2001

Franscell, Ron, "Soldiers Speak Their Peace", The Denver Post, 25 October 2001

Frazier, Mitch, “Linguists on the Line”. Soldiers Magazine. December 2001

Gutierrez, Jose-Adan, “Language and Area Expertise in support of the Combined/Joint Commander.” Unpublished Research Paper, U.S. Naval War College, Newport, RI: 1994

Hechinger, Fred, "About Education," The New York Times, 1 June 1982

Howe, Kevin, "Language would be U.S. Barrier; Afghan Population Speaks Several Different Tongues," Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, 7 October 2001

Janofsky, Michael, "A Nation Challenged: The Translators." The New York Times, October 4, October 2001

Jones, William, Language Training for the Officer Corps. U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 1960

Johnson, John, "AFTER THE ATTACK; Studying Languages of Enemies and Allies," Los Angeles Times, 25 September 2001

Lease, Andy, Technical Advisor at the Joint IO Center, San Antonio Texas per telecon

Loeb, Vernon, "Test of Strength," The Washington Post, 29 July 2001

Miller, Russell F., Developing and Retaining Information Warriors: An Imperative to Achieve Information Superiority, Unpublished Research Paper, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA. 2000

Molnar, Alexander, Navajo Code Talkers: World War II Fact Sheet, prepared by the Navy and Marine Corps WWII Commemorative Committee, <http://www.history.navy.mil/faqs/faq61-2.htm> [14 December 2001]

Nolte, Carl, "Wanted: Speakers of Arabic, Farsi," The San Francisco Chronicle, 19 September 2001

Parker, William, The National Interest and Foreign Languages. The U.S. National Commission for UNESCO, Department of State, Third Edition, 1961

Roberts, Andrew, "Bring Back 007," The Spectator, 6 October 2001

Schmitt, Eric, "Military Language School Adjusts for a World Without a Cold War," The New York Times, 19 April 1992

Seaman, Mark, "Fighting in a world of shadow," The Times (London), Part 4, 7 September 1989

Thomas, Timothy L., Kosovo and the Current Myth of Information Superiority, Parameters, US Army War College Quarterly-Spring 2000 <HTTP://Carlisle-www.army.mil/usawc/Parameters/00spring/Thomas.htm>

Worth, Robert, "A NATION CHALLENGED: INTELLIGENCE; Agents Wanted. Should Speak Pashto," The New York Times, 1 Oct 2001

Wright, Sue, Language and Conflict: A Neglected Relationship. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters LTD, 1998

U.S. Congress, House. Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2002 Report. 107th Congress, 1st Session, House Report 107-219, 26 September 2001. <http://web.lexis.nexis.com/congcomp/document> [14 December 2001]

U.S. Department of Defense. Joint Statement on the Kosovo After Action Review. Hearings before the Senate Armed Services Committee, <http://www.defenselink.mil/cgi-bin/dlprint.cgi> [14 December 2001]

_____ DPMO Operations Directorate Fact Sheet, Theater Engagement Plan Review, <http://www.dtic.mil/dpmo/pr/factsheet26.htm> [25 January 2002]

U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff. Joint Intelligence Support to Military Operations, Joint Pub 2-01 Operations. Washington, DC: November 1996

_____ Doctrine for Joint Operations, Joint Pub 3-0. Washington, DC: 10 September 2001.

_____ Joint Doctrine for Information Operations, Joint Pub 3-13. Washington, DC: 9 October 1998.vii-viii

_____ Joint Task Force Planning Guide and Procedures. Joint Publication 5-00.2. Washington, DC: January 1999

Appendix A

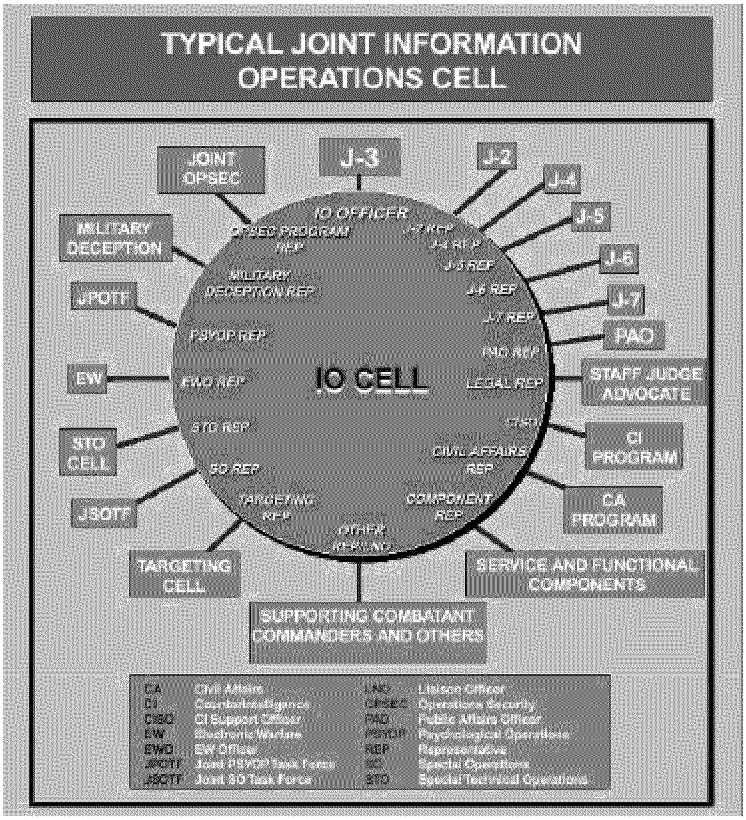

Figure A-1. Typical Joint Information Operations Cell (JP 3-13)

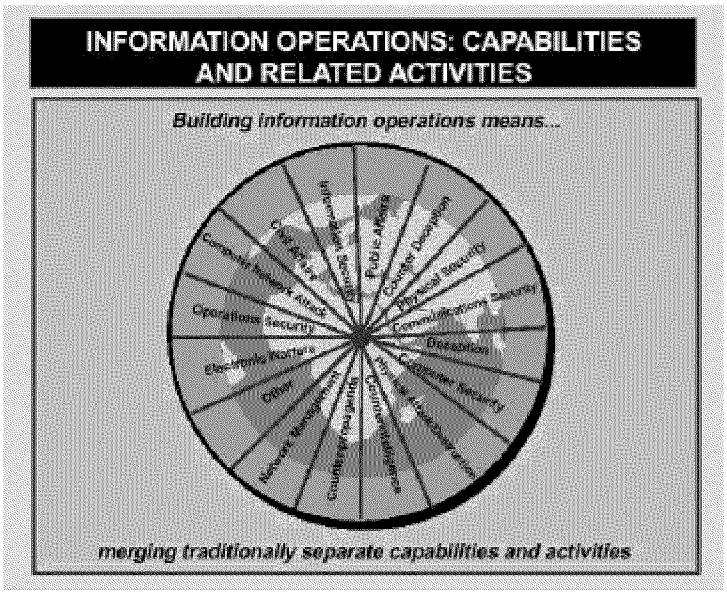

Figure A-2. Information Operations: Capabilities and Related Activities (JP 3-13)

INFORMATION OPERATIONS OFFICER FUNCTIONS

- Coordinating the overall IO effort for the JFC.
- Coordinating IO issues within the joint staff and counterpart IO planners on the component staffs.
- Coordinating IO defensive and offensive concepts to support the JFC concept of operations.
- Establishing IO priorities to accomplish planned objectives.
- Determining the availability of IO resources to carry out IO plans.
- Recommending tasking to the J-3 for joint organizations, staff, and elements (e.g., electronic warfare planners, military deception planners, etc.) that plan and supervise the various capabilities and related activities to be utilized. Consolidated J-3 tasking ensures efficiency of effort in planning and executing integrated IO.
- Serving as the primary "advocate" for IO targets nominated for attack throughout the target nomination and review process established by the JFC.
- Coordinating the planning and execution of IO between the joint organizations (including components) responsible for each element of IO.
- Coordinating intelligence and assessment support to IO.
- Coordinating IO inputs from joint centers and agencies.
- Coordinating liaison with the Joint Command and Control Warfare Center, Joint Warfare Analysis Center, and other joint centers.

Figure A-3. Information Operations Officer Functions (JP 3-13)