CITIZEN LANGUAGE, REGIONAL EXPERTISE, AND CULTURE (LREC) VOLUNTEERS AS AN ELEMENT OF NATIONAL POWER

ANALYSIS OF NATIONAL LANGUAGE SERVICE CORPS MEMBERS

MARCH 2021
AGENDA

• Main Points

• Introducing the Case Study

• Overview of Data Set

• Findings from Data

• Recommendations for Future
MAIN ARGUMENTS

• Civilians with language skills gained outside the USG domain are critical to national power
  - Dramatically extending US capabilities: both WRT reach and richness

• Civilians regularly volunteer time to perform language service

• **Civilian language, regional expertise, and culture (LREC) volunteers (CLVs)** = a demographic divergent from the customary DoD/USG populations

• CLVs are overwhelmingly **immigrant** and **heritage** speakers of foreign languages
  - Demonstrating irreplaceably high levels of language skills across language employment modalities

• Key Success Factors
  - Calibrate mission context and profile with background and experiences of CLVs
  - Observe best LREC skill employment practices / tactics/techniques/procedures
  - Ensure excess capacity
  - Provide ample sustainment, enhancement, habituation opportunities = incentives to volunteer
THE CASE STUDY SUBJECT: THE NATIONAL LANGUAGE SERVICE CORPS (NLSC)

What is NLSC

• Administered by DLNSEO on behalf of OUSD P&R
• Authorized by FY 13 NDAA; Title 50 USC Ch 37; 32 CFR 251; DoDI1110.02

Who Comprises NLSC

• All-volunteer group of US citizen language professionals (ILR 3 ↑)
• 11,000+ globally-distributed members; 1,263 are federalized; 551 languages
• Can serve all Federal agencies, CONUS/OCONUS
TWO-COMPONENT CASE STUDY DATA SET
AGGREGATE-QUANTITATIVE & SMALL SET QUALITATIVE

• Aggregate Quantitative
  - Multi-Year
    o Recruitment Trends
    o Mission Load
    o Activation Metrics
  - FY19 to FY21
    o Mission Profiles
    o USG Partners

Small Set Qualitative
• 100 FY19/20/21 Mission Participants

• Telework / CONUS / OCONUS
• EUCOM / PACOM / AFRICOM / CENTCOM / SOUTHCOM
  • Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, Croatian
  • Dari, French, German, Hindi, Indonesian
  • Italian, Japanese, Kazakh, Khmer, Korean
  • Luganda, Norwegian, Persian, Portuguese, Punjabi
  • Romanian, Russian, Spanish, Swahili, Tagalog, Vietnamese

• Multiple Modalities
  • Interpretation (Simultaneous, consecutive)
  • Translation
  • Instruction
  • Test Development
  • Cultural Support
AGGREGATE FINDINGS (I)
CADRE GROWTH & MISSION SUPPORT MEASURES

Cumulative Membership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Activations</th>
<th>Missions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 2020 – March 2021</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>192</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 2019 – March 2020</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2018 – March 2019</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2017 – March 2018</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>2007 – 2017</td>
<td>819</td>
<td>189</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partner Engagement</th>
<th># Partners Supported</th>
<th># Partner Agreements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 2020 – Present</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2019 – March 2020</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2018 – March 2019</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>2007 - 2018</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
AGGREGATE FINDINGS (II)
MISSION DATA PER FISCAL YEAR

# of Missions By Language (March 2018 - Present)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Missions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>31</td>
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<tr>
<td>Standard Arabic</td>
<td>24</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mandarin Chinese</td>
<td>24</td>
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<tr>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mesopotamian Arabic</td>
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<td>Indonesian</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>North Levantine Arabic</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portuguese</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tagalog</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thai</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croatian</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dari</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egyptian Arabic</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swahili</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algerian Arabic</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bengali</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hindi</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lao</td>
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<td>Norwegian</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Romanian</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yoruba</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Single Mission Languages:

- Armenian
- Bulgarian
- Central Kurdish
- Central Pashto
- Czech
- Ganda
- Kazakh
- Khmer
- Malay
- Modern Greek
- Nepali
- Panjabi
- Hebrew
- Portuguese
- Ukrainian
- Urdu
- Wolof
- Georgian
- Hadrami Arabic
- Hausa
### AGGREGATE FINDINGS (III)

**MISSION DATA PER FISCAL YEAR**

![Bar chart showing Partners Supported (March 2018 - Present)]

**Single Mission Supported:**

- 4th SFAB
- 500 MI BDE
- ATA
- DLA
- DLNSEO
- FBI
- MCoE
- NAVEU-NAVAF
- NSEB
- SPMAGTF
- USARPAC
- USAWC
- USAWC SSI
- USCG
SMALL SET QUALITATIVE FINDINGS (I): CLV DEMOGRAPHY

160+ Missions / 30+ Partners supported from sample
- Total 260 mission in time period
- Total 40 partners in time period

- High Percentage of Immigrants (Over 80%)
  - 41 Unique native countries
  - Half are polyglots

- Mid 30s and Over
  - 30s: 9%
  - 40s: 35%
  - 50s: 33%
  - 60s: 18%

- Majority with Graduate Degree
  - 60% educated in target language country
    o 44% with Master’s (14 International)
    o 13% with Ph.D. (5 International)

- Overwhelmingly perform LREC work outside of NLSC
  - Translators, Interpreters, Teachers, Entrepreneurs

What’s Missing:
- Military veterans or former USG (only 5%)
- Recipients of DoD/DOE LREC fellowships (Boren, FLAS, etc.)

Largest Group: 40’s with MA/MS, Working in LREC outside of NLSC
Second Largest: 50’s with BA/BS, Working in LREC outside of NLSC
SMALL SET QUALITATIVE FINDINGS (II):
LREC AND OPERATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

CLVs work in highly diverse mission parameters

• NLSC missions ranged from 21 –192 days; most were 32 days
• Nearly 50% have completed multiple missions
  • Some member’s supporting 10+
• Most frequent support was language instruction
  • 83 Language Instruction
  • 37 Interpretation
  • 27 Translation
• NLSC mission tasking frequently evolves into multi-modality
• Majority of work performed telework
• 90+ Missions Covid-related (of 161)
• Majority of work uncleared

CLV work is a meaningful endeavor parallel to paid LREC activities

• Over 80% perform LREC work outside of NLSC
• Significant interpretation/translation experience prior to NLSC work
Suboptimal mission results are not due to poor or overstated LREC skills.

- Non-Use of established best practices in leveraging LREC personnel
- Gaps in member’s technical skills in digital domain
- Lack of member familiarity / patience with government activation / deployment mechanisms
- Unclearly articulated language mission requirements
- Mismatch between mission profile experiences / language and the current mission parameters
**RECOMMENDATIONS (I): POLICY & OPERATIONAL**

- **Simplify process to “hire” and deploy CLVs**
  - Reduce the “hard factor” and opacity
  - Address ambiguities and risks as applied to CLVs

- **Better match personnel to mission profiles**
  - Language mission managers (LMM) require many more touch points
  - More time is needed to understand CLVs on a human level
  - More time to understand LREC competency level

- **Educate users about best practices for leveraging LREC professionals**
  - LMMs and CLV program leaders / managers require LREC as well as 3C experience
  - Identify the requirements and selection criteria, and provide development opportunities

- **Provide and incentivize repetitive routine training opportunities**
  - Greater – and easier access – to opportunities for language testing in various modalities
  - Pre-mission exposure to USG / DoD, but do not overstate the requirement

- **Diversify the cadre and strengthen investment in demographic core**
  - Look to data gathered to dictate future recruitment techniques and goals

- **Ensure psycho-emotional reward for service**
  - Emphasize volunteerism and pride for supporting NLSC based missions
RECOMMENDATIONS (II): RESEARCH & ANALYTICAL

Examine drivers of volunteerism, disaggregated across LREC subcultures

- Immigrant
- Heritage
- School – Taught
- Youth

Identify predominant and niche LREC user modalities

- Most vs. least LREC skills needed?
- What does USG want most frequently?
- What LREC skills does USG need most precision in?

Identify and assess mission skills, focused on language sustainment

- Enhancement aids
- Easily accessible self-assessment
- In-person examination
- Remote evaluation instruments

Reassess positioning of CLV initiatives in the USG space

Integrate the proven CLV Varsity into research and analysis
WHO IS THAT VARSITY?

Lao Linguist Philip Manithep supported the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) in 2018. His task was to interpret between DPAA and Laotians to search for the remains of a three-person crew of a downed A-26A aircraft from June 28, 1966.

“Mr. Manithep’s actions provided great diplomatic support; he acted [how] a true ambassador of the U.S. should act: with professionalism, knowledge, demeanor, kindness, and charisma.”
—Team Lead, Expeditionary Support DPAA

Vietnamese Linguist Jimmy Thai supported the U.S. Coast Guard. He interpreted for workshops aboard the USCG Cutter Morgenthau as the decommissioned vessel was transferred to the Vietnamese in Honolulu, HI.

Mr. Thai’s knowledge of operational terminology proved so extensive that he continued with the ship to VungTau, Vietnam, as a bridge between Vietnamese and USCG personnel.

Japanese Linguist Sherry Brooks interpreted for a 3D Marine Expeditionary Brigade (3D MEB) exercise to plan and execute a computer-simulated territorial-defense scenario, ultimately enhancing the alliance and interoperability between U.S. and Japanese forces.

“[Sherry’s] understanding of the Japanese language and culture allowed training opportunities and education to occur that might not have existed if Sherry was not there... I cannot say enough about her flexibility and understanding of unique inter-military situations and how she navigated the nuances with experience and professionalism.” —Exercise Lead, 3D MEB