Defence Research and Development Canada | Recherche et développement pour la défense Canada

DEFENCE R&D DÉFENSE

Conference Report:

Cultural and Linguistic Advancement for Mission Success: Enhancing Language, Regional and Cultural Capabilities Across Whole of Government for an Effective COIN Strategy, February 22-24, 2012. The Westin Tysons Corner, Falls Church, VA.

Tara L. Holton

This Technical Note is an informal publication of Defence R&D Canada – Toronto.

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DRDC Toronto TN 2012-055
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Original signed by Tara L. Holton

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Abstract

The purpose of this technical note is to report for interested parties at DRDC - Toronto on the Conference for Cultural and Linguistic Advancement for Mission Success: Enhancing Language, Regional and Cultural Capabilities Across Whole of Government for an Effective COIN Strategy. This conference was held February 22-24, 2012 at the Westin Tysons Corner, Falls Church Virginia, and included presentations by experts on the topic of linguistic, regional and cultural (LRC) knowledge, skills and training for the military community. Included in this report are short summaries of each of the conference presentations, as well as links to the presentations themselves, hosted on the conference organizer's (marcus evans') website.

Résumé

L'objectif de cette note technique est de rendre compte aux parties intéressées de RDDC Toronto de la conférence sur l'avancement culturel et linguistique visant le succès des missions : amélioration des capacités culturelles, régionales et linguistiques à la grandeur du gouvernement en vue d'obtenir une stratégie anti-insurrectionnelle (COIN) efficace. Cette conférence s'est déroulée du 22 au 24 février 2012, au Westin Tysons Corner de Falls Church (Virginie). Les participants ont pu assister à des exposés donnés par des experts sur la formation, les compétences et les connaissances culturelles, régionales et linguistiques pour la collectivité militaire. Le rapport présente un sommaire pour chacune des présentations de la conférence, ainsi que des liens vers les présentations en entier sur le site Web de l'organisateur de la conférence (marcus evans).

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Executive summary

Conference Report:

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Tara L. Holton; DRDC Toronto TN 2012-055; Defence R&D Canada – Toronto; May 2012.

Introduction or background: This is a report on the conference for Cultural and Linguistic Advancement for Mission Success: Enhancing Language, Regional and Cultural Capabilities Across Whole of Government for an Effective COIN Strategy, held February 22-24, 2012 at the Westin Tysons Corner, Falls Church Virginia. The conference was intended as an opportunity to learn about linguistic, regional and cultural (LRC) knowledge, skills and training for the military, about the United States of America (USA) Department of Defence (DoD) strategies to create a unified LRC strategy and to discuss the use of these skills to overcome insurgency.

Significance: In order to ensure that information from this conference is disseminated to others at DRDC – Toronto, the author has prepared this technical note, which consists of brief summaries of each presentation, in order of appearance. Please note that summaries directly quote both the speaker and the powerpoint (ppt) presentations provided. Should the summary be of interest to the reader, the full slide deck of the presentation is available at the marcus evans website. Access codes for the website can be found within the introduction to this technical note. Contact information for several of the presenters is available through the author of this technical note to anyone who would like to speak directly to the presenters.

Sommaire

Conference Report:

Cultural and Linguistic Advancement for Mission Success: Enhancing Language, Regional and Cultural Capabilities Across Whole of Government for an Effective COIN Strategy, February 22-24, 2012. The Westin Tysons Corner, Falls Church, VA.

Tara L. Holton ; DRDC Toronto TN 2012-055 ; R & D pour la défense Canada – Toronto; mai 2012.

Introduction ou contexte : Il s'agit du rapport de la conférence sur l'avancement culturel et linguistique visant le succès des missions : amélioration des capacités culturelles, régionales et linguistiques à la grandeur du gouvernement en vue d'obtenir une stratégie anti-insurrectionnelle (COIN) efficace. La conférence a eu lieu du 22 au 24 février 2012, au Westin Tysons Corner à Falls Church (Virginie). Elle a permis aux participants d'assister à des exposés sur la formation, les compétences et les connaissances culturelles, régionales et linguistiques pour la collectivité militaire, d'apprendre davantage sur les stratégies du département de la Défense des États-Unis visant à créer une directive unifiée sur les éléments culturels, régionaux et linguistiques et de discuter de l'utilisation de ces compétences pour mettre fin à l'insurrection.

Importance : Afin de s'assurer que l'information tirée de la conférence est diffusée à l'ensemble du personnel de RDDC Toronto, l'auteur a préparé la note technique, qui comprend un sommaire pour chacune des présentations de la conférence dans l'ordre chronologique. Il faut prendre note que les sommaires citent directement les conférenciers et les documents PowerPoint fournis. Pour les lecteurs intéressés, les présentations en entier se trouvent sur le site Web de Marcus Evans. Vous trouverez les codes d'accès pour le site Web dans l'introduction de la note technique. Aussi, pour ceux qui souhaitent communiquer directement avec les présentateurs, l'auteur de la note technique a les coordonnées de certains d'entre eux.

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Acknowledgements

My thanks to Dr. Angela Febbraro for her comments on earlier drafts of this technical note.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Over the last 10 years, the United States of America (USA) Department of Defense (DoD) has developed a number of programs addressing the need to train deploying members in linguistic, regional and cultural (LRC) capabilities of the country to which they are deploying. The 2012 conference on Cultural and Linguistic Advancement for Mission Success, the first of what is expected to be an annual event, was intended as a venue where attendees could learn about current efforts to "increase the prominence of these critical skills in military training programs, create a unified LRC strategy across the DoD, develop a strategy for utilizing cultural and linguistic expertise to overcome insurgency and obtain the resources necessary to solidify this expertise in a long term governmental knowledge bank" (Conference Proceedings, p. 2). The purpose of this technical note is to report for interested parties at DRDC - Toronto on the conference.

In the following section are brief summaries of each presentation, in order of appearance. Please note that summaries directly quote both the speaker and the powerpoint (ppt) presentations provided. Should the summary be of interest to the reader, the full slide deck of the presentation is available at the marcus evans website (please see below). Contact information for several of the presenters is available through the author of this technical note to anyone who would like to speak directly to the presenters.

1.2 Conference Documentation

Conference documentation including presenter bios and ppt presentations are available at the marcus evans website:

www.marcusevansdocs.com
User ID: CHC337
Password: CLAMS

2 Presentation Summaries

2.1 Day One

Lee Johnson,
Director,
US Navy Foreign Language Office

Defining Language Requirements Across Military Branches

This presentation addressed the need to consider language requirements of all Services as they relate to the new National DoD Strategy, keeping in mind that each Service has its own mission and therefore different requirements. The speaker saw LRC as both a capability and a requirement, where requirements are needs generated to support a mission or scenario, while a capability is a resourced capacity to meet that requirement. The challenge addressed by the speaker is to connect the capability with the individual in need of training, balancing cost, time investment and return on investment. The speaker emphasized the difference between an interpreter, a cryptologist, an interrogator and a conversationalist, and suggested that operators need to understand the differences among these, and hence the true requirement. It was suggested that while the Navy emphasizes the importance of LRC training, this does not garner attention until it is required, and he suggests that there is a need to reach out to units and personnel deploying overseas.

Karl Prinslow,
Director, Cultural Knowledge Consortium (CKC) Project
Department of Defense

Cultural Knowledge Consortium: The Status of International Collaboration for Socio-Cultural Analysis

This presentation focused on the Cultural Knowledge Consortium (CKC), which is a forum that seeks to connect and support the socio-cultural knowledge community in order to provide access to expertise and knowledge through a single point of data access. This consortium is a Department of Naval Intelligence (DNI) directed task to develop and facilitate access, storage, analysis and collaboration while supporting DoD and Combat Command (COCOM) requirements. The main efforts of the recently stood up CKC are data brokering and community building across communities including libraries, academics, military, NGOs (non-government organizations), private organizations and government/DoD socio-cultural analysis activities. Information on the CKC can be obtained from Mr. Karl Prinslow: karl.prinslow@us.army.mil

Paul Morro
Deputy Director TORCH Programs
AECOM

Mike Simone,
Vice President for Strategic Programs
AECOM

Highlighting the Contributions of Open Source and Atmospherics Programs for LRC Capabilities

This presentation spoke to the growing importance of open source information for both analysts and decision makers. This material has a lot to offer in a counterinsurgency (COIN) environment in terms of understanding the perceptions, attitudes and beliefs of the local population. However, in a related vein, finding a culturally astute linguist/analyst is a challenge. The presenters addressed the importance of selecting and training 1) native speaking linguists/analysts who were born and raised in the target language, region and culture, and 2) linguists and analysts who were born and raised in the United States (both English speakers and heritage speakers). Individuals from these two categories could then be used as a multicultural linguist/analyst team who would function more effectively together than either would individually.

Dr. Mahir J. Ibrahimov,
Senior Culture and Foreign Language Advisor
US Army Training Doctrine and Command (TRADOC)

Expanding Army Culture and Foreign Language Program

This presentation focused on a description and the expansion of the Army Culture and Foreign Language Program (CFLP). Speaking generally, the purpose of this program is to address gaps in the Army's capability to influence and conduct full spectrum operations with other cultures over an extended period of time. The presenter outlined the program's timeline from approval in 2009 to the generation of core lesson plans in the present FY, and into the future when Headquarters Department of the Army (HQDA) will assign a focus country and core language to each soldier. Also discussed were measures used to determine program success, including measures of effectiveness and measures of performance (see slides for more details). The desired end state of the program will be to build and sustain an Army with the right combination of culture and foreign language capabilities to facilitate full spectrum operations.

Dr. Kathleen Evans-Romaine,
Director
Critical Languages Institute

Dr. Christopher Brown,
Associate Director, Language Acquisition Resource Center
San Diego State University

Developing LRC Skills Within the Feeder Education Systems

This presentation addressed a partnership between the federal government and the education community with the goal of facilitation and of advanced language education programs that produce professionally proficient language speakers. This presentation also discussed project GO (Global Officer) which helps Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) cadets and midshipmen learn target languages abroad. Also discussed was the difference between a language generalist

who has had exposure to the language resulting in a novice or intermediate level of proficiency, and a language specialist, who has an advanced or superior level of proficiency with the target language. The speaker provided information about the level of proficiency that these programs can provide, and the number of years it would take to generate language generalists and language specialists. Pilot language training centers are identified in the ppt presentation slides available at the marcus evans website.

Captain Brad Treadway,
Commander, Naval Special Warfare Group TEN
United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM)

Naval Special Warfare Language, Regional Expertise, and Cultural Awareness Initiatives

This presentation spoke to the Naval Special Warfare (NSW) Language, Regional Expertise and Cultural Awareness (LREC) initiatives taking place. Currently the Naval Special Warfare Cultural Engagement Unit has two means of engaging the population: Culture (through language and regional experts) and Gender (through culture support teams). This presentation focused on the Language and Regional Experts (LRE) who include primarily Native-born and 1st generation Navy sailors and who are trained as micro-regional experts capable of integrating into Sea, Air, Land (SEAL) operational elements (tactical and operational). The LRE training consists of a 6-month process designed to train the regional expert on the SEALs, the SEAL mission and their role within the NSW. Training comprises of an academic component, an assessment component and a soldiering skills component. Effective integration and risk management of the LRE was also discussed. Once integrated into the SEAL organization the LRE may function as combat support technicians, combat area advisors and cultural communicators.

2.2 Day Two

Dr. Emily Spencer,
Director Research and Education
CANSOFCOM Professional Development Center

Solving the People Puzzle: The Importance of Cultural Intelligence to Success in the Contemporary Operating Environment

This presentation focused on Dr. Spencer's work on Cultural Intelligence (CQ) as it relates to the contemporary operating environment. The presentation provided definitions of culture and CQ, described the difference between Cultural Awareness and CQ and emphasized the importance of CQ to mission success. Dr. Spencer noted several instances in which CQ in the host nation environment can be of help. Some examples of this include: providing information on local/regional atmospherics with regard to culture, economics, demographics and social issues; generating support and participation for local security initiatives; and enhancing cooperation and participation in development, governance and reconstruction initiatives (see slides for full list and descriptions). Dr. Spencer also discussed how she integrates her research into training and education, encouraging her students to think critically by viewing problems through a cultural

lens. She emphasized the importance of integrating CQ into training and education.

Dr. Amy Zalman,
New Markets Strategy, Cultural and Language Analysis Division
SAIC

Dr. Craig Hayden,
Assistant Professor, International Communication Program
American University's School of International Service

Kevin King,
Global Practice Chair
Edelman Digital

Analytic Efficiencies: Methods for Maximizing Cultural-Linguistic Insight in Austere Times

This presentation began by addressing the changes between the 20 th and 21st century in violent conflict and the nature of engagement as well as parallel changes in how the concept of culture is understood. The implications of moving from a static to a non-static view of culture were discussed, including the move from a 20th century view of culture as stable and autonomous to the currently accepted view of culture as a dynamic and fluid concept. The panel discussed 'real-time' awareness of cultural practice as well as analysis of meaning-making as a necessary component in understanding cultural data and as a complement to quantitative data. Narrative, Relational, Rhetorical and Discursive analyses were mentioned as related means of understanding meaning-making. This presentation continued by discussing the use of technology as a means of obtaining cultural-linguistic insight. It was noted however that manual review of data is still essential given that automated sentiment analysis is not capable of identifying sarcasm or slang. The speakers also noted blind spots in reporting such as mobile (cell phone/smart phone) and Facebook.

Amy Weinberg,
Deputy Executive Director, Director of Research
University of Maryland Center for Advanced Study of Language

Setting a Consistent Standard for Language and Cultural Proficiency

This presentation discussed the need for a consistent standard for language and cultural proficiency given the DoD's focus on the importance of metrics as a means of determining suitability for a particular job, readiness for a given mission and requirements needed to guide training and resource decisions. The underlying components of knowledge, skills and abilities and individual characteristics as a means of measuring language proficiency were discussed, as was the DoD's definition of language proficiency, and reading proficiency scales. The presentation also focused on the development of an accepted set of benchmarks for determining regional proficiency or cultural competence as a means of determining readiness to perform a mission. This regional proficiency assessment tool will have an initial force-wide calibration available in 2012 and the validation study will be completed after 2013.

Lieutenant Colonel D. Scott Mann,
VSO Coordinator
United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM)

Weighing the Impact of Language, Region and Culture on COIN

This presentation focused on the importance of LRC on COIN operations, with emphasis on living and working among the population. It was emphasized that doing so allows the US military to help Afghans defend themselves day and night and to reasonably oversee the protection of civilians 24 hours a day. This has resulted in the community seeing them as welcome guests, which LCol Mann stated was a big change from the community reception in the past. A relationship based in trust and derived from persistent engagement on a linguistic and cultural level was indicated as key to mission success. The differences between Village Stability Operations (VSO) and the Afghan Local Police and the relationship between VSOs and the military relationship with the Afghan Local Police were discussed. LCol Mann also outlined the stages and details of the ideal Village Stability Operation framework, including Shape, Hold, Build and Transition (see slides for more information).

Lieutenant Colonel David "Wally" Walton
Department Chair. Directorate of Regional Studies and Education
U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School

Key Considerations for a Meaningful Cultural Training Program

This presentation addressed a methodology (and it was stressed that this is a methodology and not a panacea) for teaching culture to military members. LCol Walton discussed the Army Special Operations attributes necessary for inclusion in Army Special Operations and the importance of training for the known and educating for the unknown. This presentation explained how knowledge increases as an individual moves from Self Awareness, to Situational Awareness (where cultural competency takes place) through to Situational Adaptability (where cultural synthesis takes place). This presentation emphasized the importance of looking at the Army Special Operations Soldier holistically, in which culture is seen as a part of lifelong learning. This is achieved through a blend of training, experience and education as a means of producing special operators who are highly trained in warrior skills and broadly educated in leadership qualities based upon humility, critical thinking, comfort and ambiguity, acceptance of prudent but calculated risks and the ability to make rapid adjustments based upon a continuous assessment of the situation (see slides for more detail). According to the speaker, they must assume the role of economists, political scientists and anthropologists.

2.3 Day Three

Marilyn Willis-Grider, Ed.D.,
Deputy Director
TRADOC Culture Center

Building a Foundation of Tools to Promote a Holistic Cultural Education

This presentation addressed the need for a holistic cultural education for the general force. Competencies for the 21st C Soldier were outlined, including Character and accountability, Comprehensive fitness, Adaptability and initiative, Lifelong learning, Teamwork and collaboration, Communication and engagement, Critical thinking and problem solving, Cultural and Joint, Interagency and Multinational (JIM) competence and tactical and technical competence. The TRADOC Culture Center emphasizes the need for leveraging lifelong learning to reinforce cultural abilities, and the presentation addressed the possibility of leveraging real, virtual and augmented realities as a means of achieving lifelong learning.

Dr. Jessica Gallus,
Senior Research Psychologist
Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences (ARI)

Doug Jordan,
Chief, Cultural Programs
Joint Special Operations University

Cross-Cultural Competence (3C) Research Today

This presentation began with a description of ARI's vision, which is to create and provide innovative behavioural and social science solutions that enable the Army to provide ready forces and force capabilities in an era of persistent conflict. Their research results inform policy and programs of interest to HQDA, TRADOC and United States Army Forces Command (FORSCOM). The speakers focused on ARI's Culture Research program which aims to develop training and measurement methods, assessment tools and exercises to build cross-cultural competence across the cognitive, behavioural and attitudinal domains. Previous research at ARI focused on defining cross-cultural capability, whereas current research focuses on identifying required capabilities, developing a taxonomy of missions and contextual variables that shape the demand for soldier socio-cultural capabilities, and examination of the role of negative experiences on soldiers' cross-cultural development and capability. Future research will focus on metrics and cross-cultural training and development. The presentation continued with a discussion of cross-cultural competence education/training tailored for SOF. Course content, development, pilot course and curriculum review were addressed. The slides for this presentation were very detailed; please refer to them for additional information.

Dr. Alenka Brown
Senior Research Fellow at the Institute for National Strategic Studies
National Defense University

Respecting the Diverse Global Cultures of War

This presentation focused on how to overcome insurgency and acknowledge diversity through appreciation of cultural differences. The presenter explained how this can be accomplished

through mapping the neuro-psychometrics that form an individual's behavioural patterns. Dr. Brown explained that through map meta-programs of socio-cultural differences it is possible to socially engineer end states of influence and help to define cultural behavioural shifts. She provided the example of a behaviour-cognitive pattern through which individuals process information. It was explained that speaking generally, individuals from Afghanistan for example, process, access or collect information around them from an "emotional-tonal" orientation, while DoD as an organization and American culture tend to do so from a "tactical-visual" perspective. According to Dr. Brown, from the behaviour-cognitive pattern, capability strategies (not conscious) are formed and through these we all make culturally specific decisions. Dr. Brown provided an example of how to determine an individual's cognitive-behavioural pattern using visual cues and how to draw inferences about the individual and their culture based on this pattern. This research has not been available to the public until recently and publications are forthcoming.

Jolynn Shoemaker,
Executive Director, Women in International Security
Center for Strategic and International Studies

Sahana Dharmapuri,
Fellow, Carr Center for Human Rights Policy
Harvard University

Exploring the Growing Cultural Role of Gender Across the Ranks

This presentation asked the question "what is the link between gender and security?" The presenters noted that despite the importance of women's inclusion in defence and security, they are under-represented in peace processes and within security policymaking institutions. The presentation outlined how mission success depends upon many aspects in which gender mainstreaming (a strategy for making women's and men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the policies and programs in all political, economic and societal spheres) is critical. Gender mainstreaming was described as important to the development of trust and support among the local population, to collecting a more nuanced intelligence picture, to enhancing force protection and security, to supporting women's participation and status in long term security, and to building a foundation for representative governance and security structures. The presenters further discussed the role of gender in enhancing operational effectiveness and in situational awareness before turning the floor over to the audience in order to discuss their experiences regarding the relationship between gender and mission effectiveness.

3 Concluding Remarks

This 3-day conference provided valuable insight into the linguistic, regional and cultural capabilities (LRC) currently in use within the DoD context. Addressed at this conference were existing and developing efforts to impart LRC knowledge and skills across WOG for a more effective COIN strategy. From theoretical underpinnings to cultural and linguistic training programs, to new developments in the field, this conference focused on the importance of current LRC research and applied efforts to mission success and the need to increase the presence of LRC education in training programs for the military.

Of particular interest were efforts currently underway to consolidate and unify information and LRC strategy across the DoD, something the Canadian Forces (CF) with its current 'ad hoc' approach to implementing culture and language skills and training may wish to monitor. Also of note was the emphasis placed upon the importance (yet challenging nature) of measuring cross-cultural competence (3C), an effort that, like our American counterparts, Canada is currently exploring. Indeed, like our American counterparts, consolidating, standardizing and measuring LRC research and training efforts is an effort increasingly recognized as significant to mission success in the new complex environments faced by the CF.

It is hoped that this technical note will allow for awareness of efforts and resources underway in the DoD, provide connections for those with similar areas of research, and underscore the relevance of LRC research currently being conducted with and for the CF.

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List of symbols/abbreviations/acronyms/initialisms

3C	Cross-Cultural Competence
ARI	Army Research Institute
CANSOFCOM	Canadian Special Operations Forces Command
CF	Canadian Forces
CFLP	(Army) Culture and Foreign Language Program
CKC	Cultural Knowledge Consortium
COCOM	Combat Command
COIN	Counterinsurgency
CQ	Cultural Intelligence
DoD	Department of Defence
DND	Department of National Defence
DNI	Department of Naval Intelligence
DRDC	Defence Research & Development Canada
DRDKIM	Director Research and Development Knowledge and Information Management
FORSCOM	United States Army Forces Command
GO	Global Officer
HQDA	Headquarters Department of the Army
JIM	Joint, Interagency, Multinational
LRC	Linguistic, Regional and Cultural
LRE	Language and Regional Expert

LREC	Language, Regional Expertise and Cultural Awareness
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NSW	Naval Special Warfare
ppt	Powerpoint
R&D	Research & Development
ROTC	Reserve Officer Training Corps
SEAL	Sea, Air, Land (in reference to a member of a US Navy Special Warfare unit)
SOF	Special Operations Forces
TRADOC	United States Army Training Doctrine and Command
USSOCOM	United States Special Operations Command
VSO	Village Stability Operations

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The purpose of this technical note is to report for interested parties at DRDC - Toronto on the Conference for Cultural and Linguistic Advancement for Mission Success: Enhancing Language, Regional and Cultural Capabilities Across Whole of Government for an Effective COIN Strategy. This conference was held February 22-24, 2012 at the Westin Tysons Corner, Falls Church Virginia, and included presentations by experts on the topic of linguistic, regional and cultural (LRC) knowledge, skills and training for the military community. Included in this report are short summaries of each of the conference presentations, as well as links to the presentations themselves, hosted on the conference organizer's (marcus evans') website.

L'objectif de cette note technique est de rendre compte aux parties intéressées de RDDC Toronto de la conférence sur l'avancement culturel et linguistique visant le succès des missions : amélioration des capacités culturelles, régionales et linguistiques à la grandeur du gouvernement en vue d'obtenir une stratégie anti-insurrectionnelle (COIN) efficace. Cette conférence s'est déroulée du 22 au 24 février 2012, au Westin Tysons Corner de Falls Church (Virginie). Les participants ont pu assister à des exposés donnés par des experts sur la formation, les compétences et les connaissances culturelles, régionales et linguistiques pour la collectivité militaire. Le rapport présente un sommaire pour chacune des présentations de la conférence, ainsi que des liens vers les présentations en entier sur le site Web de l'organisateur de la conférence (marcus evans).

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Conference Report; Culture; Language; WOG; COIN

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