

UTAH ARMY NATIONAL GUARD
Headquarters, 300th Military Intelligence Brigade (Linguist)
P.O. Box 1776
Draper, UT 84020-1776

UT-300TH

18 August 2001

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Brigade Command Language Program Council Minutes, August 2001

1. The Brigade Command Language Council met at 1800 hours on 16 August 2001 Draper, Utah. Attendees included MAJ Steve Stevens (300th), SFC Todd Glover (300th), MAJ Derek Tolman (142nd), and CW2 Kristine Bean (142nd).

2. Topics discussed from the agenda included:

a. Hot or Suspense Items.

(1) Newsletter/Honor Roll. SFC Glover will reminded the council the next issue of the brigade's linguist newsletter and 3/3 DLPT Honor Roll will be published at the October USR. The deadline for submissions is 1 October. We expect to see at least one article per battalion, to include the non-Utah units.

(2) Mobile Training Teams. SFC Glover reviewed the MTTs from DLI.

(a) CLPM Course. SFC Glover noted that the CLPM Course held at Draper from 6 to 10 August was very successful. DLI sent an MTT composed of Dr. Aziz Abassi and MSgt Adel Nough to teach the course. Attendees included CW2 Jeff Hanson (A, 141), 2LT Kevan Larsen (B, 141), CPT Paul Rice (HHC, 142), CW2 Andres Hernandez (B, 142), CW2 Neil Buckley (D, 142), SFC Dean Sessions (D, 142), and CPT Shahram Takmili (741st MI BN). The feedback from the attendees was positive, and units who had soldiers attend should put that enthusiasm and new knowledge to work.

(b) Instructor Certification Course (ICC). Additionally, SFC Glover provided an update on ICC that is currently being taught. Six language instructors showed up to take the course. They are very excited about what they are learning and expect that it will vastly improve the training the provide to our soldiers. A more detailed report on the ICC will follow at the next meeting when it is completed. MAJ Stevens noted that all contract language instructors working with our soldiers need to take this course. We do need to schedule it again for next year.

(3) FY02 MTT Forecast. CW2 Bean requested that in FY02 the brigade sponsor MTTs from DLI to teach the same languages as last year (Russian, Korean, Japanese, Spanish, Chinese-

UT-300TH

18 August 2001

SUBJECT: Brigade Command Language Program Council Minutes, August 2001

Mandarin) plus Arabic and German. The 141st did not provide input, nor did the non-Utah battalions.

(4) CLP of the Year. MAJ Stevens announced that the suspense for annual CLP of the Year competition for the 141st and 142nd to brigade is 20 September. This will allow him to review the submissions before the final suspense to HQDA. Out-of-state battalions may submit directly to HQDA no later than 30 September.

b. Regular Review Items.

(1) TALP. Brigade is executing all remaining TALP funds next week. Battalions should begin preparing their end-of-year TALP expenditure reports per regulation and ensure that they have hand receipts for all items over \$100.

(2) Technology. MAJ Stevens gave updates on the CLP site, the language server, and linguist database. The CLP site grows almost weekly; however, we are still looking for more input from soldiers on good Web and local resources. All of the Rosetta Stone software has been loaded onto the brigade's language server. In terms of the database, MAJ Tolman is currently assisting in the design of the reports we want it to produce. We hope to do beta testing before the end of the FY.

(3) Inventories. We are still looking for the battalions to provide inventories of their language materials in an electronic format so they can be added to the CLP Web site as brigade has done with the Language Resource Center inventory.

c. Other Review Items from Past Meetings. MAJ Stevens provided an updated list of all CLPM-related suspense dates for the FY02. One item that needs additional input before the final version can be published next month is the dates for the battalion language council meetings. Battalions should provide these dates to MAJ Stevens ASAP, but NLT 20 September. We discussed moving the brigade language council meetings to the first Wednesday of the month. Utah battalions should provide feedback to MAJ Stevens and SFC Glover about this immediately. The two exceptions will be March and May. In these months the meetings will coincide with the Brigade Language Conference and CLPM Seminar, respectively.

d. New Items.

(1) Contract Language Program Overhaul. Council members agreed that there is a great need to improve the way the contract language program is run in the Utah battalions. We discussed six major issues:

(a) Attendance.

UT-300TH

18 August 2001

SUBJECT: Brigade Command Language Program Council Minutes, August 2001

Discussion. At present we are not keeping adequate accountability of our soldiers' attendance for contract language instruction. A headcount is made, but there is no accountability for whether soldiers counted as present are staying in class or called out for unit business or for some other reason not really getting the language instruction. We are paying good money for these classes and language training time is very limited, so we need be maximizing attendance. Moreover, we are not documenting this training appropriately on the Individual Linguist Record (ILR).

Recommendation. We need to develop and use a class attendance roster on which we record the number of hours of class each individual attends language class. At the end of the contract, the company CLPMs should total the hours for each soldier and enter this total into the person's ILR and the brigade database (for example, Todd Glover – 50 hours @ Korean Refresher, FY01 300th MI Language Contract). This will benefit both the soldier and unit. Soldiers will get credit for the training they attend. The units will have a record of the training, or at least the training opportunities, they provided individual soldiers.

(b) Instructor Evaluation.

Discussion. Our instructors are currently not being evaluated effectively, if at all, whether in terms contract compliance, teaching proficiency, or effectiveness. In the past some surveys have been used with the students to determine their general feelings about the contract instruction, but these surveys have not been detailed or specific. Likewise, although command and language management personnel have visited classroom instruction before, there has been no systematic visitation and evaluation of the teachers. Therefore, we don't really know if our instructors are proficient and effective, other than in vague terms from the soldier that a particular teacher is "good" etc. Moreover, we are not able to provide our instructors with any concrete feedback on what they are doing well or what is working for our soldiers and what may be improved.

Recommendation. One of the following individuals should observe and evaluate each instructor at least one time per contract: Brigade CLPM, Brigade Language Officer, Battalion Language Officer, or trained Company CLPM—someone who has had the CLPM course and eventually the ICC course. The evaluator should provide a copy of the evaluation form to the teacher. Additionally, someone who knows the language taught by the instructor should evaluate the him/her. Ideally, each of the students taught by the instructor that FY should participate in this evaluation. This feedback should also be given to the teacher. Individual units should maintain files on their instructors and should enter information into the brigade database.

(c) Student Evaluation.

Discussion. At present we have no mechanism for measuring the effectiveness of our contract language instruction. The only metric we look at is the DLPT, but this is an inadequate tool for measuring potential gains from a relatively small number of hours in the classroom. We have no way of knowing how a student is doing in class and if he/she is really benefiting from the class. We

have no way of figuring a return on our investment. Another facet of this problem is that teachers don't have adequate authority to maintain discipline in classes. Some teachers have complained that soldiers sleep or otherwise don't participate. Since the teacher's don't provide a grade or other feedback to units, there is no incentive for some students to strive to learn in class.

Recommendation. Develop a grading system for teachers to use with students. Again, this should benefit both students and teachers. For students it should be an added incentive for attending, participating in, and learning from class. For teachers it might give them some needed leverage in maintaining student interest and discipline in the classroom and in getting students to complete homework assignments. MAJ Stevens would also like to pursue the possibility of getting college credit for our language instruction, if possible.

(d) Class Leaders.

Discussion. Most, if not all, class leaders have traditionally not known their role in the classroom. The most common result of this is that there is no class leader. This is a big disservice to the teacher, depriving him/her of potential help with admin documentation important feedback on teacher effectiveness, a channel to communicate student needs, and assistance with class discipline. If the class leader is also the most proficient linguist, he/she may also act as a de facto military language instructor (MLI).

Recommendation. We need to train our class leaders prior to the beginning of the contract language instruction. They need to know their role, be given the tools to perform the job, and understand how to evaluate instructor performance.

(e) Instructor Training.

In the past we have just taken our instructors as we got them. Some of them have had no experience teaching the language. They are just native speakers of the target language. However, merely being bi-lingual or speaking a foreign language does not mean one can teach the language effectively. Some of them have been very qualified, experienced foreign language educators. But even professional language teachers and professors may not know the true needs of our soldiers. It is noteworthy that DLI requires all instructors to take the ICC before they teach at DLI.

Recommendation. At a minimum we need to conduct pre-service training for our instructors. MAJ Stevens proposes that we run a 4-hour orientation for instructors in early December, with him, SFC Glover, CPT Paul Rice, and CPT Mark Hult each conducting an hour long session. This might include introduction to the Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) rating scale, introduction to the DLPT, introduction to our MOSs (possibly even providing them copies of pertinent MOSQ books), introduction into our CTT (possibly even providing copies of our CTT books), introduction into the evaluation tools we will use for them, explanation of their role vice the class leader, and a review or highlight of noteworthy points in the work description and/or contract. This training session would

SUBJECT: Brigade Command Language Program Council Minutes, August 2001

be a good opportunity for them to network, share best practices, and build a support group. During this training they should also be expected to provide their syllabuses/curriculum for the FY. In addition to the pre-service training which should be conducted at the beginning of each contract year, SFC Glover will explore the possibility of instructors getting LINGNET accounts to be able to tap into resources available from DLI for teachers. If that is not possible, MAJ Stevens will add a place on the brigade's CLP Web site for teacher development and collect resources for them. Ideally, all instructors should take DLI's ICC. We need to pursue funding this course for the next 2 years to ensure that we can get our instructors through it.

(f) Format.

Discussion. The amount of time devoted to contract language instruction has decreased in recent years. We may question whether the number of hours we currently contract is effective—both in terms of results and cost. In addition to questioning the number of hours we contract, perhaps we need to look at the format of the contracts, i.e. just teaching 1 day a month. Although this has been visited before, we always need to look at whether there might be a better way of doing things. Some have also begun to wonder if we might employ the instructors in a different way.

Recommendation. Try to increase the amount of time teachers get to spend with students. If training schedules are getting to the point of being too full for contract language instruction per se, we should explore other formats for employing the instructors. This might mean instead of just teaching classes, we look at them being mentors/coaches to help soldiers through non-classified work or to facilitate CTT and MOS training in language. We need to remember Dr. Ray Clifford's often repeated saying about "time on task" is one of the most important things to remember about language learning and maintenance.

(2) Linguist Ribbon. Several months ago the council discussed previous attempts at gaining approval for a linguist badge, tab, or ribbon. According to AR 600-8-22, a special skills badge is actually the most appropriate form of recognition for linguists. Such a badge would allow us to easily display the graded current proficiency of our linguists—linguist (2/2), senior linguist (2+/2+) and master linguist (3/3). Unfortunately, such efforts have not been successful in the past. MAJ Stevens led a discussion on reviving and modifying for resubmission a proposal to establish a National Guard Linguist Ribbon. The discussion centered around three main decisions:

(a) Ribbon. The big decision for the ribbon proposal is on what criteria to issue the award. Should it be awarded for just achieving the Army standard of 2/2 on the DLPT, for a higher standard of 3/3, or a graduated standard based on Language Difficulty Category (LDC), i.e., 2/2 for CAT IV, 2+/2+ for CAT III, and 3/3 for CAT I/II? The other big question is whether it should be awarded for hitting whatever mark is determined once or for maintaining a certain number of years.

(b) Devices. The major concern with devices is whether to use devices to recognize longevity or proficiency. Recognizing longevity might take the form of awarding a "one-up"

UT-300TH

18 August 2001

SUBJECT: Brigade Command Language Program Council Minutes, August 2001

number for each year the standard for which the awarded ribbon is maintained, similar to the Overseas Service Ribbon (i.e., if we chose 3/3 as the standard and award the ribbon when someone gets a 3/3, the next time that person gets a 3/3, he/she would get a "1" to affix on the ribbon). Alternatively, in Utah we could use the beehive device to recognize longevity, as we do with the National Guard Service Ribbon, awarding it at 3 years, 5 years, 10 years, etc. Using a beehive instead of a number would make it easy to allow recognition of a second language. The other main option is to use devices to recognize language proficiency rather than maintenance. For example, the three hourglass devices (bronze, silver, and gold) may be awarded to signify 2/2, 2+/2+, and 3/3 on the DLPT, respectively. Under this scenario, linguists could even be recognized for qualifying in up to three or four languages.

(c) Design. MAJ Stevens presented some recommendations for the potential design to be used for this ribbon, should it be approved. Rather than come up with some new ribbon design, we looked at existing ribbons provided by Graco Industries, the number one provider of state ribbons. The options we looked at can be found at <http://www.deepwell.com/~menelder/us/graco11a.gif>, <http://www.deepwell.com/~menelder/us/graco12a.gif>. Some additional ribbons are located at <http://www.deepwell.com/~menelder/us/gracong1.gif>. Although each state's award program is independent, MAJ Stevens will encourage the CLPMs in all seven states which have units affiliated with the 300th MI Brigade to pursue the same ribbon criteria and design, when we make a final determination.

3. Next Meeting. The next Brigade Command Language Council meeting is scheduled for Thursday, 20 September at 1800 hours in Draper.

4. Any questions may be directed to the Brigade Language Support Officer at (801) 620-1907 (DSN 766-3907) or Brigade Command Language Program Manager at (801) 523-4258.

STEVE G STEVENS
MAJ, MI, UTARNG
Language Support Officer

DISTRIBUTION

Commander, 300th MI Bde
Commander, 141st MI Bn
Commander, 142nd MI Bn
Commander, 223rd MI Bn
Commander, 260th MI Bn
Commander, 341st MI Bn
Commander, 415th MI Bn