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Lessons learned from Iraq and Afghanistan has demonstrated to the Department of Defense the importance of foreign language proficiency and cultural understanding. Across the services these competencies are now reflected in the curriculums of their training and educational institutions for officers, noncommissioned officers, and enlisted personnel. Prior to this there were few military occupations where language proficiency and cultural understanding were requirements. Only one of those few, Special Forces, has since their inception been developed, organized, and trained to operate in remote areas working with indigenous populations-speaking the language and understanding the culture. When Special Forces competencies are measured against statements made by the Special Operations Commander there is a wide divergence in current capability versus stated objectives. The reason for this is not complicated. There is insufficient time to develop these competencies within the current personnel management system.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Title: Retooling Special Forces Officers for the 21st Century

Author: Major J. Jason Floyd, United States Army

Thesis: Special Forces must address the training methodology and personnel policies to maximize time, within the existing personnel management system, to address the systemic problem of their officers' language proficiency and regional expertise.

Discussion: Lessons learned from Iraq and Afghanistan has demonstrated to the Department of Defense the importance of foreign language proficiency and cultural understanding. Across the services these competencies are now reflected in the curriculums of their training and educational institutions for officers, noncommissioned officers, and enlisted personnel. Prior to this there were few military occupations where language proficiency and cultural understanding were requirements. Only one of those few, Special Forces, has since their inception been developed, organized, and trained to operate in remote areas working with indigenous populations-speaking the language and understanding the culture. Special Operations Command, like the Department of Defense, has also recognized the importance of language proficiency and regional expertise. When Special Forces competencies are measured against statements made by the Special Operations Commander there is a wide divergence in current capability versus stated objectives. The reason for this is not complicated. There is insufficient time to develop these competencies within the current personnel management system.

Conclusion: An analysis of Special Forces officers identifies current foreign language proficiency and regional expertise and the underlying reasons for their deficiency. A solution to this problem is complicated as its source is Congressional legislation enacted in the 1980s. A viable solution, not dependent on Congressional involvement, is to restructure Army policies, Professional Military Education, and Human Resources Command.

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To my wife, I am lucky and appreciate her efforts as she tirelessly read my drafts and provided me the needed support that allowed me to write this. She did this while pregnant with our first child and brought into the world a [redacted].

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I. INTRODUCTION

During testimony before the U.S Senate Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities, as part of a review of the Defense Authorization Request for the 2010 Fiscal Year, Senator Jack Reed inquired about language capabilities within Special Operations Forces (SOF). Admiral Eric Olson, Commander, U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) replied, "We do have a number of initiatives—I euphemistically call it Project Lawrence, inspired by Lawrence of Arabia, but certainly not limited to Arabia—Lawrence of Pakistan, Lawrence of Afghanistan, Lawrence of Columbia, Lawrence of wherever it is—that we are operating around the world, or assisting, or working with our partners."[1] When asked to expound, Admiral Olson stated that the euphemism represented, "a loose group of initiatives meant to develop and recognize language and regional expertise, who are war fighters; it can become the corps of a career."[2]

SOCOM's Project Lawrence reflects current operational requirements combined with a change in the strategic environment. This appreciation of the environment has also led the Department of Defense (DOD) to emphasize foreign language skills and regional expertise for officers, noncommissioned officers, and enlisted personnel. In fact variations of language proficiency and cultural skills were used 39 times in the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR). This paper analyzes arguably DOD's archetype for language proficiency and regional expertise which is Special Forces; specifically, the officers whose competency indicate the challenges ahead. To understand the problem this paper will examine the 58-year history of Special Forces from its origins to the present day. This establishes that foreign language proficiency and regional expertise are the cornerstones of Special Forces and how these competencies are interrelated with the impetus of this analysis, Project Lawrence.

SOCOM, like the 2010 QDR, emphasized increasing language and regional expertise as a goal but Admiral Olson used a historical figure to perhaps emulate. To further develop the problem the euphemistic T.E. Lawrence will be examined and compared to that of Special Forces officers to identify the differences and analyze Special Forces officers' level of language proficiency and regional expertise. This analysis will determine that Special Forces officers are deficient in these competencies and consider the underlying reasons.

The Army personnel system is examined in order to understand its beginning, organization, implementation, and effect on Special Forces officers' language proficiency and regional expertise. This, being the last part of the analysis, identifies the current time based personnel management system is an impediment to competency. This will be further developed in describing the dilemma for Special Forces officers who pursue foreign language and regional expertise opportunities.

This analysis purposely delves into the history of Special Forces language proficiency, regional expertise, and the Army personnel management to identify that the Special Forces officers' foreign language proficiency and regional expertise is deficient and the reasons why. Three recommendations are provided to maximize time, within the existing personnel management system, to address the systemic problem of Special Forces language proficiency and regional expertise.

II. SPECIAL FORCES, THE HISTORY OF LANGUAGE AND REGIONAL EXPERTISE

Throughout the 58-year history of Special Forces, the one overarching mission has been unconventional warfare (UW). This mission and lineage of Special Forces can be traced to a few select units during World War II. These units were the United States Canadian First Special Service Force, 5307th Composite Unit (Provisional) or "Merrill's Marauders" and the Office of Strategic Services (OSS). Special Forces were developed during the Korean War based on the acknowledgement that many of the UW lessons learned during World War II were applicable if not critical to U.S. national security objectives at the dawn of the Cold War. Though adversaries have changed throughout the history of Special Forces, the UW mission has remained unchanged. Currently joint doctrine defines UW as:[3]

> Unconventional Warfare consists of activities conducted to enable a resistance movement or insurgency to coerce, disrupt or overthrow an occupying power or government by operating through or with an underground, auxiliary and guerrilla force in a denied area.[4]

In order to put the foundation and subsequent history in perspective, Special Forces were not fostered by the Army. The Special Forces lineage was not solely Army units as in the case of the OSS. The development of Special Forces was a result of the Office of the Chief of Psychological Warfare's (OCPW) staff section; a group of Army officers including members of the OSS and 5307th. This group of officers foresaw in Special Forces an equal component to the elements of U.S. combat power. Special Forces enabled indigenous forces to conduct guerilla warfare in support of U.S. strategic objectives. By organizing Special Forces inside the Army

there existed the capacity to sufficiently coordinate and resource from within the military. The OCPW's concept was largely based on the OSS in both organization and mission and for that reason it can be argued that the Army adopted Special Forces and with it the mission of UW.[5]

The OCPW's strongest UW proponent was Colonel Aaron Bank. Colonel Bank, an OSS veteran, had extensive operational experience. As a "Jedburgh" he had conducted guerrilla warfare against the Germans in occupied France and then in the aftermath of World War II, assisted in managing the post-war differences between the French, Japanese, and Viet Minh forces in Indochina. Colonel Bank's UW experiences were enabled by his competency of the French and German languages, taught to him by his mother and grandfather. Aaron Bank's education was further developed while living in France as a boy. There he had the opportunity to immerse himself in his second and third languages increasing his level of language proficiency. His competency of languages was pivotal in his career and instrumental in the development of Special Forces.[6]

The implementation of a UW capability following World War II can be viewed as simply good staff work on the part of OCPW. While there was an understood need to have the capacity to conduct UW on the part of policy makers, the responsibility of that capability was contested. The concept of a peacetime UW force was initially deferred by the Army to the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and military planners more closely aligned a wartime UW mission with "Ranger like" units. Even officers within the OCPW were not in agreement on what constituted UW and terms like Ranger, Special Forces, and Special Operations were interchangeable and ill-defined. With time, analysis, and refinement a UW concept-Special Forces, closely resembling the OSS model put forth by Colonel Bank was agreed upon by the OCPW and eventually the DOD. This was done in large part because of the realization that

Ranger units were limited in their effect; Ranger units were focused on the tactical and operational levels of war. DOD required a strategic capability to organize indigenous forces in Eastern Europe to conduct guerilla warfare against the Soviet Union.[7]

A critical and lasting competency indentified during the development of Special Forces was the requisite need of language and regional expertise required to conduct a successful UW campaign. The OCPW's concept of Special Forces reflected this via the Lodge Act (Public Law 597). A total of 1,300 foreign nationals from Europe were to serve in Special Forces and in accordance with the legislation received U.S. citizenship upon completion of their service obligation.[8]

The OCPW's ability to successfully develop and articulate the organization, competencies, capabilities, and mission of Special Forces was foreboding in that several Ranger units were deactivated providing Special Forces the billet spaces needed for approval. Subsequently, Army Special Forces were born on June 19, 1952 with the activation of 10th Special Forces Group (SFG) commanded by Colonel Aaron Bank. Special Forces and the UW mission belonged to the Army. It took decades for this relationship to mature and only be formalized with Congressional legislation.[9]

Congressional involvement did not occur until the mid 1980s. In the interim, Special Forces were further refined and organized through the 1950s, but were significantly reduced by the end of the decade. The 1960s were significant in that Special Forces saw extensive growth, development and utilization for counterinsurgency (COIN) prior to and during the Vietnam War. Special Forces were well suited for COIN as UW's intrinsic characteristics are the same as an insurgency. But instead of orchestrating an insurgency, Special Forces were to counter one.

Special Forces had a patron in President John F. Kennedy and his visit to Ft. Bragg, North Carolina in 1961 is remembered for his sanctioning of the Green Beret. More importantly he received a demonstration of Special Forces competencies and capabilities that still resonates today; language and regional expertise, civic action programs to gain the support of the populace, and training indigenous forces to find and destroy the guerillas.[10]

The 1970s were marked with the drawdown of Special Forces following the Vietnam War and a shift in U.S. defense strategy. But attention was refocused on Special Forces as part of Special Operations following Operation Eagle Claw in 1980. The unsuccessful attempt to free the Iranian hostages caused an extensive review and Congressional oversight which revitalized the relevancy of Special Forces role in UW.[11]

On November 14, 1986, the Nunn-Cohen amendment (Public Law 99-661) was passed. The amendment grew out of the legislative process to reform the services in the 1980s and associated gaps in special operations made apparent by Operation Eagle Claw and again during Operation Urgent Fury. The Nunn-Cohen amendment established USSOCOM, defined special operations including unconventional warfare, and created funding that gave the command autonomy from the other services. As a result of the legislation USSOCOM was activated on April 16, 1987. Special Forces were recognized as an Army branch for the first time a week prior on April 9, 1987. Two years later the Army's 1st SOCOM was renamed U.S. Army Special Operations Command (USASOC).[12]

After the activation of USSOCOM, Special Forces under USASOC were used to support conventional forces. Special Forces played a key role in Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm; however, the mission changed significantly from UW and COIN. The requisite

need for U.S advisors during coalition warfare coalition, a diverse mix of languages and cultures, was appropriate for Special Forces and provided U.S. commanders the capability to advise, assist, and train coalition partners. These capabilities were an extension of Special Forces role in Foreign Internal Defense (FID) which remained the operational focus for the remainder of decade.[13]

Special Forces ascended to the forefront of U.S. defense strategy following the attacks by al-Qaeda on September 11, 2001. Elements of 5th SFG and CIA, supported by U.S. air power, assisted the Northern Alliance in the defeat of the Taliban. While not UW, this conventional war by unconventional means proved the utility of Special Forces. SOF's relevance continued to grow with successes in Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF). These successes attributed to the 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review mandate to grow SOF by 15 percent which included an additional five Special Forces battalions.[14]

SOF's increased role and operational requirements are reflected in SOCOM's Strategy for 2010 which recognizes the changing environment and delineates SOF's responsibility in executing U.S. national security objectives. This is demonstrated by SOCOM's concept of the 3-D Warrior. The 3-D construct has modified the traditional concept of national power; diplomatic, information, military, and economic (DIME) to a whole of government approach through defense, diplomacy, and development (3-D). This change in orchestrating national power into national security has therefore led USSOCOM to define the 3-D Warrior as, "that special operator who is regionally grounded, diplomatically astute, and expert in the core activities whose actions produce tactical through strategic effect within a coordinated whole-of-government approach".[15] If "regionally grounded" implies a level of language proficiency and

regional expertise it might be viewed that the 3-D Warrior and Project Lawrence are intrinsically linked.[16]

What can be determined, after examining the Special Forces history, is that the missions of UW, COIN, and FID are dependent on language proficiency and regional expertise. As are the contemporary capabilities envisioned in Project Lawrence and the 3-D Warrior, which emphasize these same competencies. When executing operations across a 3-D environment; foreign language proficiency and regional expertise are perhaps the most significant competencies for a Special Forces officer in a "coordinated-whole-of-government approach." These competencies were just as relevant 60 years ago in the development of Special Forces and activation of 10th SFG.

III. T.E. LAWRENCE AND COMPETENCY

In choosing T.E. Lawrence as a euphemism Admiral Olson drew attention to a shortfall within Special Operations Command (SOCOM); the lack of war fighters who are skilled linguists with regional expertise. This chapter will examine what it means to have language proficiency and how it relates to regional expertise and then analyze Special Forces officers' competency in these areas.

First, to put this chapter in context, what enabled T.E. Lawrence to play a pivotal role in the Arab Revolt during World War I? He was British born during the late Victorian Period and possessed an avid interest in the Medieval Period that led him to Oxford and then three years at Carchemish. Lawrence schooled as an archeologist and employed in that profession; immersed himself in the language and culture of the Arabs and moved beyond his own cultural paradigm. John E. Mack's 1977 biography of Lawrence stated:

> He became thoroughly conversant with the intricacies of the tribal and family jealousies, rivalries and taboos, their loves and hates, and their strengths and weaknesses. It was this carefully gathered knowledge, together with his remarkable ability to identify with the feeling and personal priorities of individual Arabs, to know the emotions and concerns upon which their self-esteem, security, power and prestige were based, that enabled Lawrence to win the confidence and acceptance of the Arab peoples.[17]

The quotation highlights Lawrence's empathy with the Arab people which will be referred to as "cultural acuity." This served him well as a British officer at the tactical and

operational levels of war during the Arab Revolt. Lawrence achieved strategic effects largely based on his understanding of the Arabs developed in his formative years in Carchemish. It is naive to think that Lawrence achieved such renowned success because cultural acuity alone. He was a complex man whose personality and will played equally in his achievements but his lasting impact on history was tied to his competency of Arabic and grasp of the Arab culture.[18]

For T.E. Lawrence, as well as Special Forces officers, language proficiency and regional expertise can be viewed as overlapping but are not the same. One could be fluent in a language and still not have a grasp of the history and culture of a people; likewise, someone could have a good understanding of a region and people with a limited grasp of the language. As demonstrated by Lawrence, when these two are coupled and one possesses the ability to listen, understand, speak, and convey within a cultural framework these competencies can be exponential in their effect. In order to gain language proficiency and regional expertise there are four common elements between T.E. Lawrence and the Special Forces officer:

- An individual with the aspiration and aptitude to learn a language
- A means by which to learn a language whether through immersion in a foreign culture, personal instruction in a classroom or home environment, or technology via computer software
- Cultural understanding and placement within a culture
- Time, a factor that applies a multipliable effect across language proficiency and regional expertise

These elements highlight that gaining language proficiency and regional expertise is multifaceted and subject to variations in individual aptitude, language, culture understanding,

and amount of time. T.E. Lawrence's intellect, interest, and academic pursuits provided him the opportunity to reach a level beyond regional expertise. He was culturally acute, attributed in large measure by the amount of time spent in Arabia. Special Forces ability to gain language proficiency and regional expertise differs considerably from that of T.E. Lawrence as will be examined by the means that they are trained and tested, placement within a culture, and time provided to learn a langue and gain regional expertise.

Foreign Language

Language is a skill and is testable, thus is quantifiable. The Army Language Program is the means by which the Army trains and tests foreign languages. It is defined as "the Army's mechanism to provide Commanders and linguists with sufficient resources to sustain and enhance foreign language skills required to perform mission essential tasks critical to the success of Army missions."[19] Special Forces is one of four branches, and two functional areas within the Army where officers are coded with language proficiency. The other branches and functional areas are Psychological Operations, Civil Affairs, Military Intelligence—Human Intelligence (HUMINT), Academy Professor of Foreign Languages, and Foreign Area Officers. The Army Language Program establishes the level of proficiency for the aforementioned branches and functional areas with the exceptions being Special Forces, Civil Affairs, and Psychological Operations which are determined by USASOC.[20]

The Army, as do the other services, use the Defense Language Proficiency Test (DLPT) as the primary means to rate language proficiency. Tables 3-1, 3-2, and 3-3 provide the corresponding narrative associated with a DLPT score. Scores range from 0 which equates to "No Proficiency" to 5 or "Functionally Native Proficiency". For the purpose of this analysis the

quantitative scores of 0+ through 3+ are defined to illustrate their interrelationship in language proficiency. They are also the comparative measurements for the Army and Special Forces language proficiency. An alternate means of evaluating language proficiency is the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) which differs from the DLPT in that it requires spoken interaction between the testers and the tested, and does not examine reading proficiency.

Table 3-1
Reading Skill Level Proficiency

Rating	Reading	Requirement
0+	(Memorized Proficiency) Can recognize all the letters in the printed version of an alphabetic system and high-frequency elements of a syllabary or a character system.	
1	(Elementary Proficiency) Sufficient comprehension to read very simple connected written material in a form equivalent to usual printing or typescript.	Previous USASOC SF Qualification (DLPT)
1+	(Elementary Proficiency, Plus) Sufficient comprehension to understand simple discourse in printed form for informative social purposes.	
2	(Limited Working Proficiency) Sufficient comprehension to read simple, authentic written material in a form equivalent to usual printing or typescript on subjects within a familiar context.	FLPB minimum
2+	(Limited Working Proficiency, Plus) Sufficient comprehension to understand most factual material in non-technical prose as well as some discussions on concrete topics related to special professional interests.	
3	(General Professional Proficiency) Able to read within a normal range of speed and with almost complete comprehension a variety of authentic prose material on unfamiliar subjects.	
3+	(General Professional Proficiency, Plus) Can comprehend a variety of styles and forms pertinent to professional needs. Rarely misinterprets such texts or rarely experiences difficulty relating ideas or making inferences.	

Source: Interagency Language Roundtable[21]

Officers in language coded branches or functional areas are entitled to the Foreign Language Proficiency Bonus (FLPB) if they meet the minimum score in listening and reading. Although speaking proficiency can be tested by the DLPT it is not necessary to score for FLPB. The monthly entitlement for qualifying in a language coded position ranges from $200 per month for a 2 in reading and 2 in listening (2/0/2) or "Limited Working Proficiency" and $400 per

month for a 3 in reading and 3 in listening (3/0/3) or "General Professional Proficiency" and no more than $1,000 per month for multiple languages. Officers must take the DLPT and maintain proficiency every twelve months in order to retain FLPB.[22]

Table 3-2
Listening Skill Level Proficiency

Rating	Listening	Requirement
0+	(Memorized Proficiency) Sufficient comprehension to understand a number of memorized utterances in areas of immediate needs.	
1	(Elementary Proficiency) Sufficient comprehension to understand utterances about basic survival needs and minimum courtesy and travel requirements in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics, can understand simple questions and answers, simple statements and very simple face-to-face conversations in a standard dialect.	Current USASOC SF Qualification (OPI)
1+	(Elementary Proficiency, Plus) Sufficient comprehension to understand short conversations about all survival needs and limited social demands.	
2	(Limited Working Proficiency) Sufficient comprehension to understand conversations on routine social demands and limited job requirements.	FLPB minimum
2+	(Limited Working Proficiency, Plus) Sufficient comprehension to understand most routine social demands and most conversations on work requirements as well as some discussions on concrete topics related to particular interests and special fields of competence.	
3	(General Professional Proficiency) Able to understand the essentials of all speech in a standard dialect including technical discussions within a special field.	
3+	(General Professional Proficiency, Plus) Comprehends most of the content and intent of a variety of forms and styles of speech pertinent to professional needs, as well as general topics and social conversation.	

Source: Interagency Language Roundtable[23]

USASOC has recently changed the language qualification of the Special Forces Detachment Officer Qualification Course (SFDOQC) from the DLPT to the OPI (See Table 3-2, 3-3). This change recognizes the ability to speak a foreign language as a paramount skill for Special Forces officers and enlisted personnel. Previously, in order to qualify in a language, Special Forces officers and enlisted soldiers were required to take the DLPT and score a minimum of 1 in reading and 1 in listening (1/0/1) or "Elementary Proficiency". The new standard for Special Forces language training will be a 1 in speaking and 1 in listening (0/1/1). A

consequence of this change is that Special Forces officers and enlisted personnel will no longer receive the training in reading which is suited for the DLPT and qualifying for the FLPB. This may seem unsound for Special Forces since there is no monetary incentive for language proficiency. But this can be explained in that the Army Language Program covers a wide range of military specialties including cryptologic linguist whose vocation requires the ability to listen, read, and decipher. Thus, the FLPB does not require speaking whereas Special Forces operational requirements emphasize personal interaction with indigenous populations.[24]

Table 3-3
Speaking Skill Level Proficiency

Rating	Speaking	Requirement
0+	(Memorized Proficiency) Able to satisfy immediate needs using rehearsed utterances.	
1	(Elementary Proficiency) Able to satisfy minimum courtesy requirements and maintain very simple face-to-face conversations on familiar topics.	Current USASOC SF Qualification (OPI)
1+	(Elementary Proficiency, Plus) Can initiate and maintain predictable face-to-face conversations and satisfy limited social demands.	
2	(Limited Working Proficiency) Able to satisfy routine social demands and limited work requirements. Can handle routine work-related interactions that are limited in scope.	
2+	(Limited Working Proficiency, Plus) Able to satisfy most work requirements with language usage that is often, but not always, acceptable and effective.	
3	(General Professional Proficiency) Able to speak the language with sufficient structural accuracy and vocabulary to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations in practical, social and professional topics.	
3+	(General Professional Proficiency, Plus) Is often able to use the language to satisfy professional needs in a wide range of sophisticated and demanding tasks.	

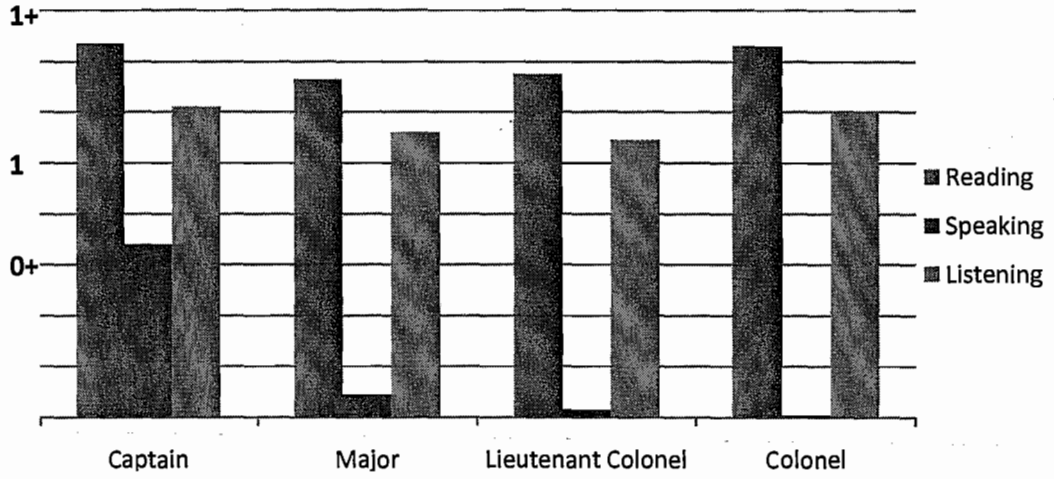
Source: Interagency Language Roundtable[25]

This discrepancy is indicative of the issue with training Special Forces in a foreign language. The Army doctrine, testing, and incentives are generalized and not specific for the unique missions of the language coded branches. This is in contrast to the training methodologies of the Army and USASOC. Whereas the Army's language training is tailored by the Defense Language Institute (DLI); USASOC's language program is conducted at the United States Army

John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School (USJFKSWCS or SWCS). The principal differences between the two are location, time, and training objectives. DLI students are trained either at Monterey, California or Washington, D.C. for up to a year, dependent on language. DLI language training under the Army Language Program produces linguists qualified in reading and listening (2/0/2) which entitles them to FLPB, thus providing an incentive to sustain their competency. SWCS students' language training occurs at Ft. Bragg, North Carolina in approximately half the length of time with the objective of qualifying in speaking and listening (0/1/1) and in accordance with regulations not entitled to FLPB or the incentive to sustain their competency. The simple solution, which is being pursued by SWCS, is to amend Army and DOD policies to incentivize the OPI to encompass the new training objectives. This measure, if implemented, will address the issue of the monetary incentives but it will not lengthen SWCS's language training program to address the issue of Special Forces language proficiency.

As stated, language is testable and thus quantifiable. To determine the current language proficiency of Special Forces officers a consolidated tally was conducted based on language ratings enclosed within their Officer Record Briefs (ORB). Special Forces officers' language proficiency, reading and listening, scores are above a 1/0/1 aggregate (See Table 3-4). Only the rank of Captain has speaking proficiency at 0+ (1/0+/1) or "Memorized Proficiency". The speaking disparity for field grade officers is attributed to the previous training emphasis being on reading and listening. The aggregate does not account for officers being current, taking the DLPT within the last year, as required by regulation.

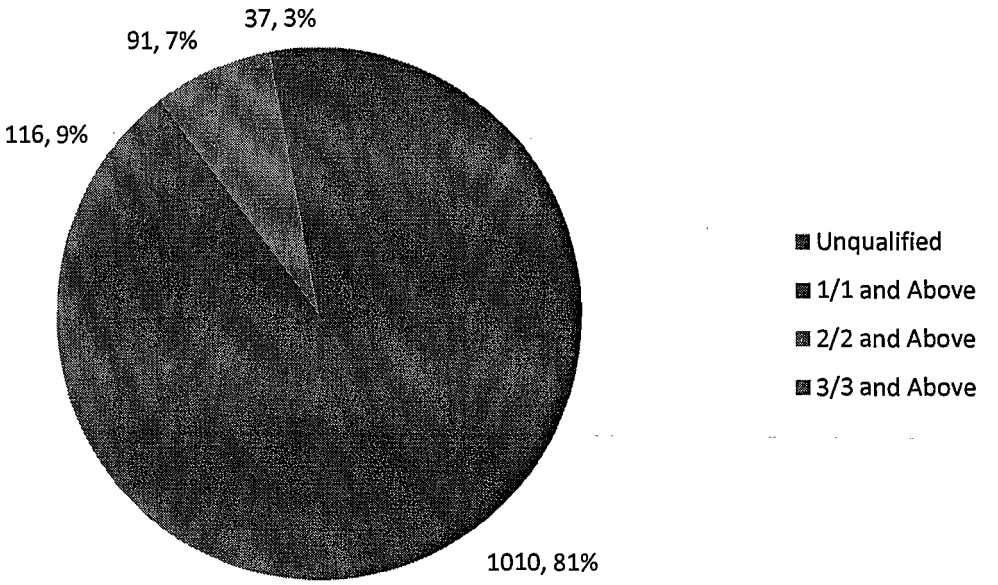
Table 3-4
Special Forces Branch Language Proficiency



Source: Total Officer Personnel Management Information System (TOPMIS) query[26]

When DLPT currency is factored in the analysis there is a significant decline in language proficiency (See Table 3-5). Of the 1254 Special Forces officers' language ratings; 244 (19%) are qualified in a language. Of those 244 Special Forces officers, 128 (10%) officers are at or above a 2/0/2 and qualified to receive FLPB. Those at or above a 3/0/3 are represented by 37 (3%) officers. The high percentage of officers unqualified in language is a persistent trend with rates being as low as 10 percent for all Special Forces, both officers and enlisted, in 2003. This trend can partially be explained by the high demand of operational requirements which detract from language sustainment programs. Additionally, a significant cause may be the aforementioned difference between DLI and SWCS training objectives, time, and lack of incentives.[27]

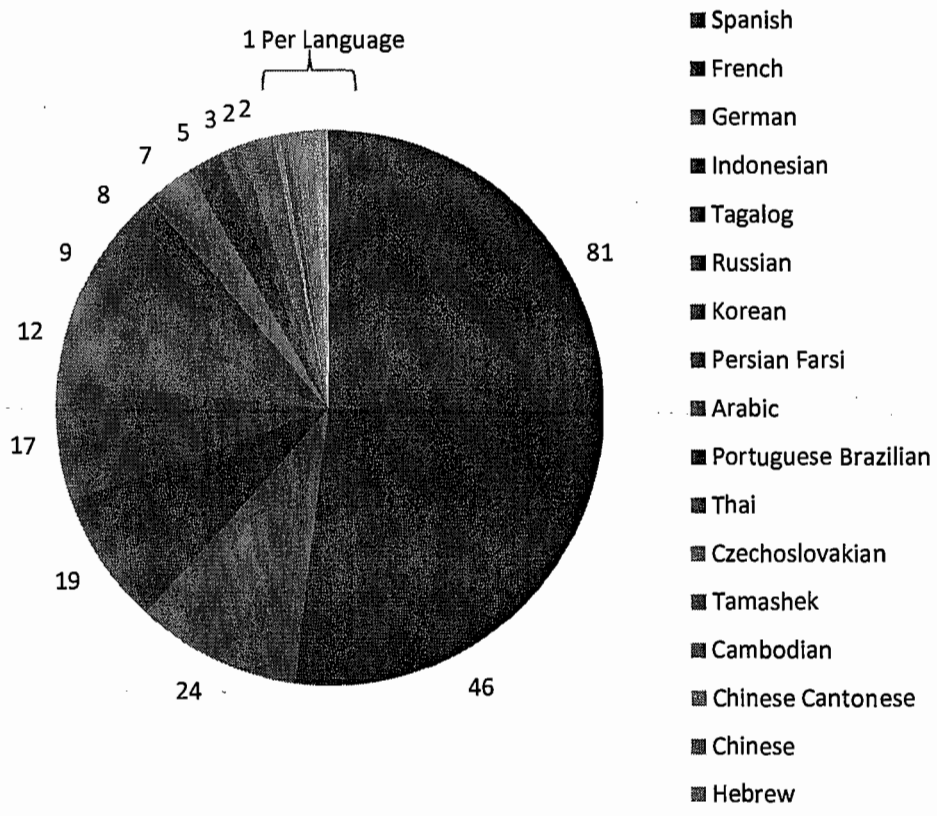
Table 3-5
Special Forces Language DLPT Qualifications



Source: Total Officer Personnel Management Information System (TOPMIS) query[28]

Based on the analysis of Table 3-5, Special Forces officers have insufficient time and incentive to improve their language proficiency. After SFDOQC, there is no formalized language training beyond the unit level sustainment training; so officers' language proficiency is deferred to the "self development" domain of Army professional development. The implication being that it is the responsibility of Special Forces officers to maintain their language qualification. The only incentive to improve, other than "self development", is the FLPB. This monetary incentive, which equates to $2,400 a year for a 2/0/2, has not been effective in improving language proficiency. The analysis of Special Forces qualified languages underscores this point.

Table 3-6
Special Forces Qualified Language Diversity



Source: Total Officer Personnel Management Information System (TOPMIS) query[29]

Of the 244 officers who currently have a language rating above a 1/0/1; 62 percent have qualified in Spanish, French, and German (See Table 3-6). Further analysis shows that languages in demand, reflecting current OEF and OIF requirements, are spoken by 32 (2%) officers. These languages are 17 Tagalog speakers, 8 Persian Farsi speakers, and 7 Arabic speakers. There are no officers qualified in Pashtu, Dari, and Urdu which are more regionally and ethnically specific but increasingly in demand as exhibited by the Afghanistan Pakistan Hands (AFPAK Hands or APH) program.

The APH program is a Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff directive, which has identified the requirement to select and develop a cadre of officers and enlisted personnel from across the services with proficiency in COIN doctrine, culture, and language proficiency in Pashtu, Dari, and Urdu. The APH training pipeline is a 16 week course which incorporates language training with cultural and regional orientation, where upon completing the training selected individuals will be proficient at 0/0+/0+ using the OPI. APH officers and enlisted personnel will be matched with counterparts that rotate deployments in either Afghanistan or Pakistan. The purpose of the training and deployment methodology is to develop a cadre whose language proficiency and regional expertise increases over the course of deployments and throughout their career. If using the Lawrence model, it might be argued that this cadre represents an attempt by DOD to gain a level of cultural acuity, placement and time being the two key contributing elements.[30]

The APH program is similar to the Special Forces training and deployment methodology in regards to the development of language and regional expertise. Both have a formalized training pipelines that develops a level of language proficiency and cultural orientation. Subsequently, reoccurring deployments develop regional expertise if not cultural acuity. Whereas APH has a narrow focus; albeit in a strategically key region, Special Forces support five Geographic Combatant Commands. In order to accomplish this, SWCS trains students in 17 languages in conjunction with small unit tactics, 5 Special Forces military occupation specialties (MOS), UW, and Survival, Evasion, Survival, and Escape (SERE) as part Special Forces Qualification Course (SFQC). Clearly the APH directive is a reactionary response to shortfalls in specific language proficiency and regional expertise. It, like Project Lawrence, may also call into question not only the capability of Special Forces but implicitly USASOC, Army, and the DOD.

This observation, based on the requirement for regionally specific expertise after eight years of counterinsurgency, reinforces the requisite need to have sufficient time to develop language proficiency and regional expertise.

Regional Expertise

Regional expertise is less easy to define. There is no quantitative way to analyze Special Forces and determine a percentage of qualification as in a language. What can be done is to examine Special Forces training, geographical orientation, operational deployments, educational opportunities, and what will be referred to as "enhancing assignments." This analysis will compare current Special Forces regional expertise and that of T.E. Lawrence; specifically, his three years in Carchemish, which as previously stated led to his cultural acuity.

Special Forces officers receive language training during SFDOQC. Additionally, they are trained in aspects of the culture and customs associated with that specific language. This training occurs throughout the qualification course and culminates in Robin Sage, a UW exercise. Through this training methodology Special Forces officers are qualified in their language 0/1/1 (OPI), used the language in a training environment, and gained a level of cultural understanding. Essentially they develop a foundation in a language and knowledge of a culture in which to build upon.

Following completion of SFDOQC, a Special Forces officer will be assigned to one of the five SFGs aligned with a GCC. Once arriving to a SFG, Special Forces officers' deployments are largely dictated by operational requirements, which may or may not coincide with their language. Highlighting this point is that in 2008, 80 percent of SOF were deployed to U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM). The 2006 QDR mandated growth of Special Forces should

rectify part of this problem and enable officers to gain regional expertise; however, there are second order effects of growth that impact Special Forces officer professional timelines.

Table 3-7
Foreign School and Enhancing Assignments

Culture Opportunity	Countries	Length	Applications/Scholars	Remarks
Foreign ILE	Canada France Germany Ireland Italy Japan Kuwait Spain Switzerland	1 year	1 per country, exception 2 per Australia	-Prerequisite language qualification -ILE credit
Olmsted Scholarship	Argentina Austria Azerbaijan Belgium Bosnia and Herzegovina Brazil Bulgaria Chile China Costa Rica Croatia Czech Republic Denmark Ecuador Egypt Estonia Finland France Germany Greece Hungary India Israel Italy Japan Jordan Latvia Lithuania Malaysia Mexico Morocco Norway Peru Poland Portugal Romania Russia Senegal Serbia Singapore Slovakia Slovenia South Korea Spain Sweden Switzerland Taiwan Thailand The Netherlands Tunisia Turkey Ukraine Uruguay Venezuela Vietnam	2 years	3 x Army FY09	-Consolidated list of past countries where scholars attended school -Officer must still attend ILE -Language training
General Wayne A. Downing Scholarship	Determined through selected university and focus of study	2 years	2 x Army FY09	-Offered since FY09 -Officer must still attend ILE -Language Training
Interagency Fellowship	Can deploy OCONUS while assigned to State Department USAID DIA and DNI	1 year	Approximately 15 per year	- ILE credit
Military Attaché	Dependent on Embassy vacancies	2-3 years	Dependent on assignment availability	-Officer must still attend ILE -Language training

Source: Army Human Resource Command[31]

Upon completion of a Special Forces officers' initial assignment at a SFG, there are opportunities to immerse in a foreign culture. Table 3-7 is a consolidated list of all current Army

fellowships, scholarships, foreign ILE, and enhancing assignments that range from a few months to up to three years in a foreign country. When analyzing these opportunities; scholarships like Olmsted and General Wayne A. Downing adequately provide officers the time to rise from a level of regional expertise, gained though SFG assignments, to a level of cultural acuity. T.E. Lawrence's three years in Carchemish as the comparative ideal. This assumes that the officer's language matched their educational objectives and opportunities. Additionally, the military attaché program is another suitable opportunity which can provide three years in a foreign country. These opportunities are not all equal. The Foreign ILE and Interagency Fellowships are limited in either country of education or time of utilization. Every opportunity is limited in number of applications or assignments as in the Olmsted and Wayne A. Downing Scholarships which combined accounted for five Army officers for Fiscal Year 2009. Another factor which affects these opportunities is that officers must still attend ILE which can add up to another year before the officer can return to an operational assignment. The implications of these opportunities on officers' careers will be discussed later in this analysis, but cultural acuity proves to be at the expense of operational and career progression.

After analyzing Special Forces officers' competency, language proficiency is deficient in level (only 19% are current) and prioritization of qualified languages. In examining regional expertise, the growth of Special Forces will lessen the commitment of Special Forces to CENTCOM allowing SFGs to focus on their geographical areas. In turn Special Forces officers will gain the level of regional expertise associated with that prior to OEF and OIF; however, there is insufficient opportunities and time to develop officers who are culturally acute. The examination of regional expertise was purposefully focused on midcareer officers, those who

have yet to attend ILE. More senior officers, those who attend ILE, have limited time to gain the language and cultural acuity level that can best be referred to as competency.

IV. THE ARMY PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The history of Special Forces is marked with a high degree of volatility with respect to its significance and necessity but SOF's position in 2010 has attained a level unparalleled in U.S. defense strategy. The increase in relevance has been accompanied with a higher demand for SOF capability. Yet, there remains a gap which can be traced from the origins of Special Forces through the legislation in the 1980s. The Nunn-Cohen amendment recognized SOF under a unified command with the component commands from the services. However, USASOC, Navy Special Warfare Command, Air Force Special Operations Command, and Marine Special Operations Command, are still held to the personnel policies of their respective service, which is codified in Title 10 of U.S. Code. SOCOM attempted to rectify this in 2009, as directed by the 2009 National Defense Authorization Act, by recommending 11 initiatives which required amending Title 10 to allow SOCOM to have input across the services in the management of SOF personnel policies. The recommendations were opposed by all four service chiefs and the initiatives were not implemented.[32]

Law and Time

To understand the significance of personnel policies, the system by which Special Forces are managed, assigned, and promoted within U.S. Army Human Resources Command (USAHRC or AHRC) will be examined. The reason for this is simple: Special Forces are trained, including language and cultural training, within this system. The Army personnel system does not specifically differentiate officers from any of the various branches and functional areas, of which there are 34. Instead the Army consolidates officers into three functional categories and corresponding functional groups. Timelines for promotion and command are the same within

these functional groups, as the system is time based. Officers are managed within this time based system by cohort year groups (YG), which are determined by the officer's date of rank (DOR). The time based system begins when an officer is commissioned and accessed into the Army, determining their YG, with predetermined boards for promotion and command. The analogy of the U.S. primary and secondary education model is adequate to explain the basic similarity. Think of the Army personnel system using the U.S. education model; the first day of school begins when an officer is commissioned determining his YG. From that moment an officer could map out when they will be promoted, and dependent on their individual goals, their career could be planned out in much the same way a student could view his education, from start to graduation. This analogy is a simplification, but highlights the point that both systems use a model predicated on a standardized timeline.[33]

The Army personnel system is guided by federal law, policies, and regulations. Combined, these form what is commonly referred to as the Officer Professional Management System (OPMS) which has existed since 1972. OPMS has gone through numerous revisions, but the current paradigm which affects Army offices can be traced to the passage of the Defense officer Personnel Management Act (DOPMA) in 1980 and codified by Title 10 and 36 of the U.S. Code. DOPMA was enacted to rectify the challenges of numerous personnel policies across the services from the end of World War II till the then present day dilemma of maintaining a large peacetime Army during the Cold War. DOPMA unified personnel policies into law and established the conditions by which the services managed their officer corps. DOPMA in effect constructed a framework for the services to manage their officers and recommended, which was then established as policy by the DOD, a length of time in grade for each rank. The law and

policies resulted in a framework built on time with careers ranging between 20 to 30 years dependent on rank.[34]

The System and Regulations

The regulation by which the Army outlines career paths within this framework is the Department of the Army Pamphlet 600-3, Commissioned Officer Professional Development and Career Management. This pamphlet establishes the professional milestones an officer will accrue over a period of 20 to 30 years; from his commissioning through promotion to general officer. Army officers' careers are categorized in three "domains"; institutional training, operational assignments, and self-development with the comprehensive goal of developing leaders. The institutional training and operational assignments are objective and evaluated by the respective Army Evaluation System or the Officer Evaluation System. The self-development "domain" is a catchall for what officers do outside institutional training and operational assignments to professionally develop themselves. The self-development component has no quantitative system to evaluate an officers' competency but the pamphlet states, "Self-development is the key aspect of an individual officer qualification that solidifies the Army leader development process."[35]

Institutional learning, interspersed throughout a career, occurs in four phases. An Army officer will attend entry level training at the Basic Officer Leaders Course (BOLC), advanced training at the Captains Career Course (CCC), and mid-career training at Intermediate Level Education (ILE). All three combined equate to approximately two years of schooling by the mid career mark, which in turn represents nine to twelve years of commissioned service. Selected officers, by a Department of Army selection board, will attend Senior Service College (SSC) at

the sixteen to twenty-three year mark after demonstrated leadership at the rank of lieutenant colonel.[36]

Operational assignments are the most significant in leader development. Selection for promotion and command are heavily determined by the Officer Evaluation System and the corresponding Officer Evaluation Report (OER). The OER is used by supervisors to quantify an officer's performance and potential for increased levels of responsibility. It also provides officers feedback on their performance through formalized counseling. During an officer's promotion and command boards the OER is unique in that it is the only document where an officer is rated against his peers while executing an operational assignment.[37]

OPMS is executed by the ARHC's Officer Personnel Management Division (OPMD). OPMD is responsible for meeting the Army's current and future personnel requirements; effectively, it places personnel on assignments. It achieves this by working in coordination with each of the Army's 34 branches and functional area proponents. The proponents are responsible establishing training requirements and leader development. To use the education analogy once more, the proponents are responsible for identifying the key assignments an officer must accrue before they can be promoted in much the same way a school district determines a curriculum a student must successfully complete in order to proceed to the next grade.[38]

Directorate of Special Operations Proponency (DSOP) under the Commandant, USAJFKSWCS is responsible for charting Special Forces officers' careers while adhering to the aforementioned law, regulations, and policies. Further, SWCS is solely responsible for training Special Forces candidates after successful selection at Special Forces Assessment and Selection (SFAS). The training, SFDOQC, takes approximately one year following the officer completing

the CCC as part of the institutional learning domain. As previously discussed, throughout SFDOQC an officer receives language and cultural training.[39]

The Army's personnel management is predicated on predictable timing of promotion. Special Forces, as with all branches and functional areas, have career timelines and promotions that are associated with a functional group. Special Forces officers are managed within the Maneuver Fires and Effects (MFE) division at HRC and their professional timelines are the same as the other MFE branches (Armor, Infantry, Aviation, Field Artillery, Air Defense Artillery, Engineer, Chemical, Military Police, Psychological Operations, Civil Affairs, Public Affairs, and Information Operations).[40]

The Army uses a board process to select officers from MFE for promotion and command. The boards are conducted by 18 to 21senior officers from respective branches within MFE. The information that the board uses to promote and select officers is the performance portion of the officer military professional file (AERs, OERs, awards, and any derogatory information), photo, ORB (a one page snapshot of a career), and notifications of voluntary/involuntary statements of retirement and selection. This board is formalized by a Memorandum of Instruction (MOI) which provides the board administrative guidance. Officers' files are reviewed and then scored which establishes an order of merit list (OML) and then selected dependent on the either the quota for promotion or the number of commands. This process omits SOCOM's role in selecting Special Forces officers for command and promotion.[41]

For a Special Forces officer, as with all Army officers, time is the factor by which careers are managed as outlined in this chapter. The ability to learn a language and gain regional expertise also takes time; however, Special Forces officers' competency of foreign languages

and regional expertise is not currently part of professional development process. The 11 initiatives proposed by SOCOM might have rectified this but the disapproval by the service chiefs underscores the sensitivity to SOCOM's ability to influence personnel management. The current system can be characterized by career milestones, operational assignments, and those who are rated highest are given greater opportunities for promotion and command. This system works and produces leaders to command battalions and brigades but it does little to incentivize language proficiency and regional expertise.

V. DILEMMA

The purpose of examining Special Forces language proficiency, regional expertise, and personnel management was to develop an understanding of the problem. Admiral Olson confirmed that USSOCOM does not have an adequate level of war fighters with language proficiency and regional expertise. By reviewing the Special Forces history, it is evident that they are war fighters whose lineage is closely linked to these competencies. Special Forces competencies, capabilities, and missions are unique within the DOD; however, their officers' careers are managed based on time versus competency. Exacerbating this problem is that promotions to Captain and Major have been accelerated by the Army because of personnel shortfalls at the field grade level. This is coupled with the 2006 QDR mandated growth of SOF and Special Forces. The accelerated promotion timeline and growth of Special Forces has resulted in even less time to develop competency in language and regional expertise. The dilemma is that Special Forces officers do not have the necessary professional time to become competent in a language or gain regional expertise to the extent that they are culturally acute.[42]

The Management of Special Forces Officers

An outline (See Table 5-1) of Special Forces officers' careers illustrates the promotion timeline with associated professional military education, key and developmental (KD) and preferred developmental assignments. This table represents three non-doctrinal Special Forces careers; Command Track, Non-Command Track, and Language and Regional Expertise Track which are all shaped by factors discussed earlier. Special Forces officers have approximately 15 years of utilization, dependent on retirement at 20 years, in accordance with the requirement to fulfill their basic branch utilization, and the approximate two years needed to complete CCC and

SFDOQC. Additionally, select Special Forces officers may need additional military schooling for infiltration techniques and specialized skills which may require up to an additional three months of training. Once officers complete their qualification training they are assigned to a SFG for their first four years where they will fulfill their key and developmental requirement as a Captain. Traditionally, Special Forces Captains completed 36 months at an SFG prior to moving to a preferred developmental assignment. However, the growth of Special Forces and the recent accelerated promotions has caused a shortfall of Special Forces Captains, (323/554) or 58 percent strength, resulting in the preponderance to be reassigned to ILE after they have been promoted to Major.[43]

Table 5-1
Special Forces Career Tracks

Command Career Track

Rank	LT			CPT						MAJ						LTC					COL				
Years	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Command	Basic Branch																								

Non-Command Career Track

Rank	LT			CPT						MAJ						LTC					COL				
Years	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Non Command	Basic Branch																				Retirement?				

Language and Regional Expertise Track

Rank	LT			CPT						MAJ						LTC					COL				
Years	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
L/R Experience	Basic Branch																				Retirement?				

Utilization

Professional Military Educations	Key Developmental
Preferred Developmental	Language and Regional Expertise

Source: DA Pam 600-3[44]

A few select officers will be assigned to preferred developmental assignment following the initial assignment at SFG. For these officers, their assignment will typically span a two year period prior to attending ILE. The remaining officers will remain at a SFG followed by ILE either for 10 months at one of the services' Command and Staff Colleges or for 18 months at Naval Post Graduate School. Therefore the timing or "cycle" of when an officer will be assigned to a SFG or Theater Special Operations Command (TSOC) is dependent on when Special Forces officers attend ILE, and what ILE they attend. Special Forces Majors are required to complete a two year KD assignment at either a SFG or TSOC with selected offices extended for a third year typically as a Group Operations Officers.

Several factors effect officers' career progression after completing their KD assignment as a Major: first, is whether the officer is competitive for below the zone (BZ) promotion; second, is the officer competitive for battalion command; and third, what is the officer's preference. It may be counterintuitive but an officer who is less competitive for BZ selection and battalion command may actually have more opportunities. The reason for this is that an officer who is competitive for BZ selection will also be highly competitive for battalion command, and if selected their only option outside of command is to defer which limits his opportunities for promotion beyond lieutenant colonel. The result is that there is only one career track for Special Forces officers, a career track of command. Anything outside of a command track results in less opportunity for promotion beyond lieutenant colonel and no opportunity for command. There is no incentive for officers to continue service past 20 years other than their personal preference.

You Have to Choose

The lack of incentives outside of a command career track affects the ability to develop language and regional expertise by means of scholarships or enhancing assignments. The reason for this is that in doing so an officer will sacrifice operational experience. A comparison using a theoretical officer, referred to Captain X, will demonstrate the consequences of pursuing Command Track and Language and Regional Expertise Track illustrated in Table 5-1.

Two assumptions must be made about Captain X. The first is that Captain X has performed above his peers and his supervisors have rated him accordingly. He has high potential for increased responsibility and there is strong probability that he will be competitive for BZ promotion and potentially battalion command. The second assumption is that Captain X has a maintained his language proficiency and has the desire to further develop it and pursue an assignment that enhances his competency through the military attaché program.

Captain X will be counseled by his supervisors and assignment officer that pursuing the enhancing assignment will result in him losing at least one year of operational experience and result in him spending four years outside of the Command Track. This is in comparison to his peers who will have an extra year of operational experience and potentially spend only two to three years outside a SFG. In this scenario Captain X decides to stay within the Command Track and does not pursue the enhancing assignment. Captain X will be competitive for BZ promotion and battalion command as long as he continues to excel above his peers, but as a result will not have had the three years to increase his language proficiency and regional expertise.

If Captain X is counseled and decides to pursue an enhancing assignment he will do so knowing that he sacrifices operational time at a SFG. During the enhancing assignment he will

receive language training, gain in language proficiency, and spend two to three years immersed in the culture, gaining a level of cultural acuity beyond the level of regional expertise associated with an SFG assignment. He will excel well beyond the competencies of his peers, but they will be more competitive for promotion and command.

The reason for the difference is time. In order to be competitive for promotion and command an officer can ill afford to lag behind their peers in operational experience which is quantified by OERs. Simply put, officers with more operational experience have more OERS and those who excel above their peers will rate higher, be promoted earlier, and command battalions—they have incentive to pursue the Command Track. An officer who chooses to pursue scholarships and enhancing assignments gain in critical competencies but they have less operational time and therefore, are less competitive.

This dilemma only accounts for a small percentage of Special Forces officers. As previously discussed there are few opportunities to gain the type of experiences which actually develop language proficiency and cultural acuity. The Captain X comparison may be irrelevant if Special Forces language proficiency was adequate with the assumptions that the growth of Special Forces will adequately address regional expertise to a degree where officers become culturally acute. Yet this is not the case. Special Forces officers' systemic problem is the inadequacy of language proficiency coupled with the inability to develop regional skills. Again time is the prohibitive element. Referring to Table 5-1 once more the Command Track is the default paradigm for career management and the sole vehicle for promotion. The following chapter will propose possible solutions to develop language proficiency and regional expertise.

VI. POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS AND CONCLUSION

Special Forces are different; they have unique missions that require a blend of competencies that take time to master. Unfortunately the Army personnel system was not developed with Special Forces in mind, and the inevitable outcome has been the arbitrary management of Special Forces officers. The history of Special Forces and Army personnel management underscore this point as personnel policies were written into law six years prior to Nunn-Cohen amendment established SOCOM.

This analysis does not intend to develop a solution to officer management outside existing law. The analysis of personnel policies framed the challenges of attaining competency under the current construct. There has been a considerable amount of literature focused on changing law to reflect a competency model. The 2006 RAND study, "Challenging Time in DOPMA, Flexible and Contemporary Officer Management" provided a detailed analysis and the potential outcomes of amending law and service policies to reflect a competency management system. The Army has conducted its own analysis, and the OPMS Task Force has recommended a "college" like system where officers have several years to meet promotion requirements. This system allows officers to pursue "electives" in much the same way college students can pursue a curriculum not restricted by time. Each of these takes a holistic approach to the problem whereas this analysis has a much narrower focus on Special Forces.[45]

The objective of this analysis is to propose near term fixes that can be executed without amending law. This paper proposes three recommendations to adequately deal with solving the deficiency of Special Forces language proficiency and regional expertise. These recommendations require further examination because they will necessitate changing current

Army policies and regulations. Additionally, these recommendations will encapsulate Special Forces, Psychological Operations, and Civil Affairs as SOF. This accounts for the recommendations being carried out by USASOC, whose three aforementioned branches all have language proficiency and regional expertise requirements.

The first recommendation is to align Professional Military Education to focus more time and training on language for SOF officers. Special Forces officers currently must attend the Maneuver CCC (MCCC) at Ft. Benning, Georgia or Ft. Knox, Kentucky prior to beginning SFDOQC at Ft. Bragg, North Carolina. Unless already stationed at Ft. Benning or Ft. Knox, an officer will have to move twice. This takes approximately six to eight months to complete including the training at the MCCC. The MCCC curriculum is approved by the United States Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) and prepares officers to command Infantry or Armor companies and staff positions at the battalion or brigade level. An alternative to the current training methodology is to incorporate MCCC into SFDOQC. Part of the approximate seven months saved, with a direct move to Ft. Bragg, necessitates amending the phases of SFDOQC to include TRADOC training requirements. But much of the curriculum is redundant; specifically, the Military Decision Making Process (MDMP). The time that is left can be utilized for language and cultural training at Ft. Bragg. This recommendation, of the three, warrants the most time and planning because of the organizational and monetary requirements needed to facilitate. The change is also the most debatable; because of the assumption that non-combat arms Special Forces volunteers need the MCCC as a preparatory course prior to attending SFDOQC. A factor for a decision is the low percentage of non-combat arms Special Forces officers currently accessed, thus the redundancy in curriculum for the majority of Special Forces volunteers.

The second recommendation is to restructure the OPMD from three functional groups into four with an Army Special Operations Forces Group (ARSOF Group). The ARSOF Group can be organized under a Colonel comprised of Special Forces, Civil Affairs, and Psychological Operations branches. ARSOF Group is better positioned within AHRC to ensure that the personnel policies of SOF are in align with those of USASOC and SOCOM to include language proficiency and regional expertise. There has been a historical trend for SOF officers to be assigned in non-SOF billets because of Army requirements. Part of this recommendation is an expansion of ARSOF Group responsibility, in conjunction with DSOP, to ensure that officers meet established language requirements prior to being reassigned. To accomplish this change, policies and regulations will need to be amended to account for the unique skill set of Special Forces officers and the imperative need to develop core competencies.

The third recommendation is to establish a SOF Interagency Fellowship program much like the current one offered by the OPMS Task Force; albeit, with some modification. A potential framework to advance is creating habitual relationships within the United States government (USG). Perhaps a likely agency to pursue for language proficiency and regional expertise is United Stated Agency for International Development (USAID). The current Interagency Fellowship includes a condensed ILE followed by approximately nine months working within the USG. A better course of action to increase SOF language proficiency and regional expertise is to extend the assignment to two years with the assumption that SOF officers deploy to a country or region where their language can be utilized. The potential reward for an agency like USAID is that they would receive a SOF perspective on development, which synchs with the SOCOM 3-D Warrior construct. Of the three recommendations this requires minimal coordination to implement.

This analysis and recommendations were intentionally focused on junior to mid-career Special Forces officers. The reason for this is that development of language proficiency and regional expertise requires years, not weeks or months, to master. It also does little good to commit resources toward language education after Special Forces officers who have completed their KD assignment as a Major. They will have on average four to six years of service remaining prior to retirement eligibility and lack little incentive to continue service. As can be extrapolated from this analysis it may take up to four years to produce an individual as steeped in the language and culture as the euphemistic T.E. Lawrence.

Based on this analysis, in order to establish a sustainable level of language proficiency, Special Forces officers need at least one year of language training which parallels the Army Language Program. That does not mean that Special Forces should adopt DLI's training objectives nor attend DLI versus SWCS. Simply, Special Forces officers need more organized training focused on developing language skills. The three recommendations included in this chapter adequately address increasing time from what is currently afforded to Special Forces officers.

Insufficient regional expertise is the harder of the two competencies to remedy. Other than operational deployments and those listed in this analysis there is no process to immerse Special Forces officers in culturally developing opportunities. Using the existing Army Interagency Fellowship and coordinating with USAID provides a near term solution. While the fellowship addresses only a small percentage of officers it is accessible and those selected attain a level of cultural acuity. Meanwhile establishing the ARSOF Group provides an effective mechanism to not only manage SOF officers but ensure language proficiency and regional expertise are incorporated in the assignment process.

The inadequacy of Special Forces officers' language proficiency and regional expertise is an indicator of the challenges with these competencies. They take time to develop. T.E. Lawrence was not constrained by a professional management system. He pursued his personal interest which benefited not only himself but that of his country. Special Forces officers have an obligation to their profession and country to be language proficient and regional experts. The recommendations provided are viable solutions that do not require amending law or the concerted efforts of the DOD as they also take time.

NOTES

[1] U.S. Senate Subcommittee On Emerging Threats And Capabilities, Committee On Armed Services, *Defense Authorization Request for Fiscal Year 2010.* 111th Cong., 1st sess., 18 June 2009, Committee Transcript, 6, http://armed-services.senate.gov/testimony.cfm?wit_id=8082&id=3887/ (accessed on January 15, 2010). U.S. Department of Defense, *2010 Quadrennial Defense Review*. Arlington, VA, 2010.

[2] Admiral Eric Olson, interview by author, MacDill Air Force Base, FL, 2 November 2009

[3] Jimmy Dean, "Overview of Events and Personalities, *The Early Years 1952-1960". Special Forces the First Fifty Years, Golden Jubilee, The United States Army Special Forces, 1952-2002*, ed. Charles Oldham, 69-75 (Tampa, FL: Fairmount LLC, 2002) 69-71.

[4] Mark Grdovic, "Developing a Common Understanding of Unconventional Warfare," *Joint Force Quarterly* 57, 2nd Quarter 2010: 136-138.

[5] Aaron Bank, *From OSS to Green Berets, The Birth of Special Forces* (Novato, CA: Presidio Press. 1986), 130, 131. Alfred H. Paddock, Jr., *U.S. Army Special Warfare, Its Origins* (University of Kansas Press, 2002), 45, 152.

[6] Bank, 34-62, 100-104, 105-129.

[7] Bank, 152-154.

[8] *Ibid*

[9] Bank, 124, 148-154, 155-160.

[10] William P. Yarborough, " Yarborough Reflects", *Special Forces the First Fifty Years, Golden Jubilee, The United States Army Special Forces, 1952-2002*, ed. Charles Oldham, 139-145, 344 (Tampa, FL: Fairmount LLC, 2002) 139-143.

[11] Jimmy Dean, "Overview of Events and Personalities, Special Forces Comes of Age 1961-*1972". Special Forces the First Fifty Years, Golden Jubilee, The United States Army Special Forces, 1952-2002*, ed. Charles Oldham (Tampa, FL: Fairmount LLC, 2002), 116-133; Jimmy Dean, "Overview of Events and Personalities, *Downsizing and Revitallzation 1973-1989". Special Forces the First Fifty Years, Golden Jubilee, The United States Army Special Forces, 1952-2002*, ed. Charles Oldham (Tampa, FL: Fairmount LLC, 2002), 198, 199.

[12] The designation of Special Forces Branch is significant as officers had been previously managed by their basic branch and did not have a career solely in Special Forces. Officers were slated for Special Forces positions after qualification but leave and return to their basic branch upon completion of the assignment. Susan L. Marquis, *Unconventional Warfare, Rebuilding Special Operations Forces* (Brookings Institute Press, 1997), 135, 145-147, 154-159.

[13] FID is defined by *Joint Publication 3-07.1, Joint Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Foreign Internal Defense (FID)*, "as the participation by civilian and military agencies of a government in any of the action programs taken by another government or other designated organization to free and protect its society from subversion, lawlessness, and insurgency". Susan L. Marquis, *Unconventional Warfare, Rebuilding Special Operations Forces* (Brookings Institute Press, 1997), 230-233.

[14] Jimmy Dean, "Overview of Events and Personalities, The Modern Era 1990-2002". *Special Forces the First Fifty Years, Golden Jubilee, The United States Army Special Forces, 1952-2002*, ed. Charles Oldham (Tampa, FL: Fairmount LLC, 2002), 228-237; U.S. Department of Defense. *2006 Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, Arlington, VA 2006, 5. Steven. P. Basilici and Jeremy Simmons, "Transformation: A Bold Case for Unconventional Warfare," (Master's thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2004), 47.

[15] U.S. Special Operations Command. *Strategy 2010*, November 1, 2009 , A-1.

[16] *ibid*

[17] John E. Mack, A *Prince of our Disorder, The Life of T.E. Lawrence*, (Harvard University Press, 1976), 88.

[18] John E. Mack, A *Prince of our Disorder, The Life of T.E. Lawrence*, (Harvard University Press, 1976), 23, 37-40, 92, 111.

[19] U.S. Department of Army, Army Regulation 11-6, *The Army Foreign Language Program,* (Washington DC: U.S. Department of the Army, 31 August 2009), 32.

[20] *The Army Foreign Language Program,* 28.

[21] There are four omissions to the language skill level proficiency, 0 "No Proficiency", 4 "Advanced Professional Proficiency", 4+ "Advanced Professional Proficiency, Plus", and 5 "Functionally Native Proficiency". These

omissions were disregarded due to relevance in the chapter. Interagency Language Roundtable, Interagency Language Roundtable Language Skill Level Descriptions, http://www.govtilr.org/Skills/ILRscale2.htm, (accessed on January 15, 2010)

[22] *The Army Foreign Language Program,* 18.

[23] ibid

[24] LTC James Nance, interview by author, Fort Bragg, NC, January 7, 2009.

[25] Interagency Language Roundtable, http://www.govtilr.org/Skills/ILRscale2.htm.

[26] TOPMIS query, data used for table was extrapolated on January 11, 2009 with the assistance of Major Christian Sessoms, Special Forces Captains Assignment Officer. The table is based on 1254 Special Forces officers on active duty, 1778 foreign languages spoken (361 officers speak more than one language), and 418 officers who have taken the DLPT from December 2008 to January 2010.

[27] U.S. General Accounting Office. *Military Training, Strategic Planning and Distributive Learning Could Benefit the Special Operations Forces Language Program*. Washington, DC: Government Accountability Office, September 2003, 20.

[28] *ibid*

[29] TOPMIS query, January 11, 2010

[30]MARADMIN 0599/09, Afghanistan Pakistan Hands Program (APH), http://www.marines.mil/news/messages/Pages/MARADMIN0599-09.aspx, (accessed on January 15, 2010). U.S. Special Operations Command, AFPAK Hands Update, December 7, 2009.

[31]The Olmsted Foundation, http://www.olmstedfoundation.org/olmsted/web/index.cfm, (accessed on January 15, 2009). Military Personnel (MILPER) message 09-133, 13 Academic Year 2010-2011 Intermediate Level Education (ILE) Opportunities And Procedures For Applying To Foreign, Sister Service School And Interagency Fellowship Attendance, June 13, 2009.

[32] Sean D. Naylor, "Spec Ops Standoff." *Army Times*, August 31, 2009, http://infoweb.newsbank.com.

[33] DA PAM 600-3, 10-21; Peter Schirmer, National Defense Research Institute. *Challenging Time in DOPMA, Flexible and Contemporary Military Officer Management* (Rand Corporation), 9-15, http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/2006/RAND_MG451.pdf (accessed on December 23, 2009).

[34] *ibid*

[35] DA PAM 600-3, 1-18.

[36] *ibid*

[37] *ibid*

[38] *ibid*

[39] DA PAM 600-3, 5. U.S. Department of the Army, Army Regulation 5-22, *The Army Force Modernization Proponent System,* (Washington DC: U.S. Department of the Army, February 6, 2009), 14.

[40] DA PAM 600-3, 13

[41] U.S. Department of Defense, *Commissioned Officer Promotion Program Procedures Directive*, September 24, 1996, 1-13; Department of the Army, *Personnel—General, Policies and Procedures for Active-Duty List Officer Selection Boards.* Department of Army Memo 600-2, September 25, 2006, 2-9, http://www.army.mil/usapa/epubs/pdf/m600_2.pdf (accessed January 15, 2009).

[42] Charles A. Henning, *Army Officer Shortages: Background and Issues for Congress,* CRS Report for Congress RL33518 (Washington DC: Congressional Research Service, July 5, 2006) CRS-1; Andrew Feikert, *U.S. Special Operations Forces (SOF):Background and Issues for Congress*, CRS Report for Congress RS21048 (Washington DC: Congressional Research Service, July 29, 2008), CRS-4.

[43] U.S. Army Special Forces Branch, *Special Forces Branch Brief*, October 21, 2009.

[44] DA-PAM 600-3, 174

[45] Schirmer, 9-15. Jim Tice, "Officers' Career Path Due to be Overhauled." *Army Times,* February 1, 2010, 27.

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