INTRODUCTION

Frank L. Borchardt

A great deal of government activity has taken place, very recently, in the last year or a half or so, in the area of language learning. It seemed to CALICO that it would be worthwhile to get the membership informed from the original sources of just what some of those initiatives are. The relation of CALICO and government is old and intimate. As a matter of fact CALICO was founded in a collaboration between university, private and public sectors. From the very outset these are the roots of the association. The association would in fact not exist if it were not a meeting point for those rather significant sectors of American life. We are, therefore, very pleased that we were able to bring together several of the chief players in the newest initiatives to inform us of what is happening. The first of these will be the relatively new Center for the Advancement of Language Learning; the second will be the new Critical Language Institute at Florida A & M. Let me introduce the people from CALL (The Center for the Advancement of Language Learning) -- Dr. Earl M. (Rick) Rickerson, and Betty A. Kilgore. Betty Kilgore will be doing the presentation:
The Center for the Advancement of Language Learning was conceived by a number of representatives from 4 major government language schools as a way of fostering more cooperation and coordination in language efforts. (This is not to imply that the four government language schools were not cooperating with each other before, but the cooperation has not been systematic.) So a plan was proposed to the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence for funding that would facilitate coordination and cooperation and eliminate some of the duplication of resources that had been going on. Congress funded the Center as part of the Foreign Language Initiative in September. Therefore, we are very new. And the Center itself is only part of a larger package, the part of which I will explain to you.

CALL’s objectives deal with four areas. The first objective is really the coordination and cooperation, and the sharing of resources between government agencies, which will provide a way to make communication between the schools more systematic. The second is to ensure that the work that is done for and by the government language schools is of the right quality and that it is the right thing to do. CALL can facilitate this.

The third objective of CALL is to provide a focal point for the academic world and its associations with the government language schools (and again, this is not to say that there isn’t association at all, because there are many deep ties). CALL can make this more systematic.

The fourth objective of CALL is to create a language proficiency testing board which will do much of the testing for government language students, as well as teaching workshops on how the government tests.

The government agencies that were a part of the Foreign Language Initiative of which three are intelligence agencies. These agencies are all represented in a group called the Foreign Language Committee, which meets about six times a year to discuss language issues of common concern to the government language schools and the Community.

This represents a breakdown of how CALL was originally organized. Although this has changed drastically since our inception, seeing it can give a dear idea of the scope of our plans. I am the director, and Candice Hunt, who will join us soon from FSI, is the deputy director.
We have been funded to do two kinds of projects. The projects involving interagency focus for the Community are actually being done by CALL staff at CALL. The other projects are being done in the individual agencies or by interagency staff at CALL. The two projects that are being done by CALL staff are the Testing Board and the Academic Affairs program.

Testing is a very sensitive issue, so we have to go very gently. The idea is to have a common application of agreed-upon standards for all agencies. Our goal is to achieve a situation in which someone who is rated with a score of 2 in speaking proficiency in a given language in a given agency will be able to perform to the same standards as someone else with the same rating who was trained and tested by another agency, right now this does not always occur.

The other goal, that of having testing done at CALL, is to eliminate the problem of people testing their own students. This currently goes on at all of the language schools, and no one thinks of it as an ideal situation. One of the first activities we dedicated funding to was the testing board. Because of the contentious nature of its function, we are moving slowly and carefully on working with the whole issue. In September, we
Objectives of CALL

- Coordinate activities of the US Government language training community.
- Provide leadership to ensure sharing of information and resources across agencies in the community.
- Ensure the quality and relevance of language activities throughout the community.
- Be a focal point and resource for academia on federal language teaching and testing practices.
- Create and oversee a uniform system for testing the language skills of US Government employees.

Agencies Participating in CALL

- National Security Agency (National Cryptologic School)
- Department of State (Foreign Service Institute)
- Department of Defense (Defense Language Institute)
- Defense Intelligence Agency (Defense Intelligence College)
- Central intelligence Agency (Language Training Division)
- Federal Bureau of Investigation (Language Services Unit)

National Foreign Language Testing Board

- Testing facility for participating US Government agencies
- Common application of common standards
- Oral proficiency
- Reading tests
convened a group of about 7 testers who were not testing managers but very good testers, from the different government language schools. They met at CALL for about 5 - 6 weeks, and in that time they were able to develop a plan that they thought would be a way to proceed with the organization of the testing board. The testing managers, as well as their managers, were briefed on the plan, at which time a number of issues emerged that had to be taken into consideration. But the basic plan remained intact. We followed that phase with a testing advisory panel, which has had three meetings to date. The membership of this panel includes the testing managers and some ex-officio representatives. The plan, therefore, is proceeding. We hope to be able to start testing at CALL at the end of the summer, probably doing some joint testing to start with, because there is a lot of concern about handling this matter, we feel that this is the best way to proceed. We have hired Eduardo Cascallar, who comes to us on leave from ETS, to be the testing board coordinator, so it will be his task to get this activity moving. Eduardo probably has the most challenging of all the jobs at CALL.

The other big project that CALL is doing is an academic affairs program. We want to do a number of things to help the academic community in the following ways: by providing workshops on how we teach for functional proficiency at the government schools; by making ourselves available to advise colleges and universities on setting up immersions; and by collaborating on the development of materials. CALL is going to be a focal point where schools can get some kind of assistance from government. To this extent, we have funded Florida A & M's Critical Languages Institute project through this initiative for materials development, Dr. Norman will tell you more about that.

Briefly, here are some of the projects that are being done by other agencies who received funding through the initiative. The Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) received money to put up a resource center at CALL, this will be a repository of all kinds of information pertaining to language: language programs, locations of course materials, hard-copy and on-line databases on a variety of subjects such as locations of experts in various languages, CALL's emphasis is on the less commonly taught languages, so the Resource Center will reflect that. The Resource Center is equipped with interactive video and audio workstations as well as informational resources. It will be an open facility where one can either come in or dial in, and we hope that it will see a lot of use.
**Academic Programs**

- Provide information to academia on US Government language training and testing activities.
- Conduct workshops for university instructors on proficiency-based language teaching and testing.
- Work through Florida A&M's Critical Languages Institute to let contracts for materials in high-priority languages.

**CALL-Supported Projects**

**DIA's Language and Area Resource Center** *(A focal point and clearinghouse for materials on foreign languages and area skill acquisition and maintenance.)*

- Collects and catalogs training materials — to include computer-based and audiovisual materials — for foreign language teaming and maintenance.
- Collects and catalogs materials for area and cultural studies.
- Provides remote access to language and area materials database via electronic communications media.
- Provides a laboratory for actual use of collected materials for language learning and skill maintenance.

**CIA's Federal Language Training Laboratory**

- Develops interactive multimedia language courses and computer-based testing systems.
- Serves as a focal point for academia on interactive multimedia and computer adaptive testing.
- Uses technology transfer legislation to facilitate the marketing of FLTL-developed courses to the general public.

**DLI's Video Teletraining Facility**

- Two sites for long-distance language instruction
At this point, we are just beginning on the database development. We have a lot of hardware but are still light on finding uses for it. The Resource Center will house the interactive video programs being developed by the Federal Language Training Laboratory, as well as their computer adaptive reading tests. Finally, the Defense Language Institute is putting up a video teletraining site at CALL where people can come in and maintain their language skills. We will work with DLI on scheduling, and we will publicize that information for people interested in pursuing that resource.

We have just completed our 5-year strategic plan. We plan to focus on some curriculum materials, and we want to continue our relationship with the academic community. There may be other consortia we will want to develop. We are going ahead with the testing board. We find that we change course a lot because we are so new. We have a group of people who are very enthusiastic and are going to take this enterprise work. We have also received very good support. You will find, I think, that we will be a very good resource, not only for the government, but for the academic community as well.

**QUESTIONS & ANSWERS**

Q: How are you handling the problem of copyright in your resource center?

A: In the initial phases, the materials will be government-made courseware, which are all public domain. But we know that we all have to address the copyright issue.

Q: Do you have a relationship with the Center for Applied Linguistics?

A: We have an excellent relationship with them; we are back and forth with them all the time. And actually, they are working on one of the projects being done for the resource center through the Defense Intelligence Agency.

Q: Do you plan to have a way of disseminating information in the form of a newsletter?

A: Yes, we do. Our first goal is to finish our brochure, and our newsletters will start coming out shortly thereafter. Once the newsletter has started, we plan to mail them out quarterly.

Q: What does the government use to test for proficiency in those languages that do not currently have proficiency guidelines?
A: We will work on defining proficiency in certain major languages first, then others will follow. In the meantime, there are generic descriptive proficiency guidelines that are not language-specific, and which can be used for any language.

Q: Regarding funding: do you currently have the money to do the things you have described?

A: We have money for ’92 and for ’93. Of course the federal budget is in the process for ’94 right now. I am optimistic for our future funding, though, because anything now in government, as you probably realize, that is a coordinating element to stamp out duplication of effort and sharing resources, which is what we are all about, is looked upon favorably.

THE CRITICAL LANGUAGE INSTITUTE OF FLORIDA A & M UNIVERSITY

James Earl Norman

The Florida A & M University project in translation and interpretation began four years ago. As you well know, three to four years ago, there was such a paucity of state funds that the Florida legislature would not appropriate money for new programs in foreign languages, let alone translation and interpretation. However, it was essential for university students to be graduated with subsidiary skills in these areas. Also, I thought it was important to have an officially accredited institution within a university system of higher education offer translation and interpretation services to government agencies and the business world. Therefore, I decided to submit a two-pronged proposal: one, the academic to address the needs of the students, and the second prong focusing on translation services to the community, state and Federal Government agencies. I was very fortunate to have the Department of Defense fund this exciting project.

Building on the success of the Translation Center, The Department of Defense decided to fund the creation of the Critical Languages Institute (CLIF) in September, 1992. CLIF is committed to bolstering Government language teaching capability in the less-commonly-taught languages-language vital to the nation other than Spanish, French, German, and the like. CLIF’s mission reflects a national awareness of the impact these
languages have on our country’s diplomatic initiatives in newly emerging states, military preparedness, and security interest ranging from economic competitiveness to counter-terrorism.

Moreover, CLIF provides a unique bridge between Government and academia in the crafting of foreign language teaching materials that win benefit both communities. This year the Institute — in collaboration with the Government’s Center for the Advancement of Language Learning (CALL) and several major universities — is developing six courses: Arabic (Levantine and Gulf dialects), Basic Persian, Intermediate Persian, Cantonese, Turkmen, and Eastern Armenian. These courses, designed for use in Government and academia, are based on use-oriented, proficiency-based methodologies rather than traditional approaches.

Through the Institute, Florida A & M University will also serve as headquarters for a national Consortium of expert scholars in less-commonly-taught languages. The Consortium will consist of foreign language colleagues like many of you, who have distinguished yourselves by work done in this area. An initial Consortium conference was held at the end of January in Orlando, Florida. Conference participants came to Orlando to devise, network, and discuss what Florida A & M University was proposing to achieve in these languages. Since this is an area that has been traditionally neglected, CLFF wanted to bring a cadre of experts together to establish an official Consortium and develop the courses mentioned above.

The Consortium is open to new members, new ideas and elicits your support as these critical language issues are discussed. The Consortium has been chartered and a Memorandum of Understanding drafted. Florida A & M University has solicited proposals, in the name of CLIF, to develop training materials selected for the first year. The RFPs were sent out on February 26, 1993, inviting the community to participate in this national effort. As this work progresses, the Institute will keep you abreast of its activities. May I assure you that, as Director of the Institute and a foreign language teacher myself, I will endeavor to represent you effectively and professionally.
PANELISTS’ BIODATA

Betty A. Kilgore, has been with the Central Intelligence Agency since 1956 and has served in numerous assignments, primarily with the Agency’s Office of Training and Education. Her previous assignments include four years as Deputy Chief of the CIA's Language School. Currently, she is on a rotational assignment to CALL from the Central Intelligence Agency.

James Earl Norman, is Director of the Critical Languages institute of Florida A & M University, Tallahassee, Florida. He has been involved in foreign language education for the past 20 years and has worked on several federal grants relating to translation and interpretation. He is interested in fomenting cross-cultural understanding and preparing students to meet the linguistic challenges of the current global economic marketplace. Even though his doctoral degree is in Spanish, his interest extends to all languages of the world.

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