

The Director of Central Intelligence

Washington, D.C. 20505

Foreign Language Committee  
Research and Technology Subcommittee

26 April 1989

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chairman, Foreign Language Committee

SUBJECT: Research and Technology Subcommittee; Second Meeting Report

1. The second quarterly meeting of the RTS was held on 20 April 89 at the NSA Conference Center. The following organizations were represented:



NSG (Brockhouse)  
USAF (Vick)  
NIC (Uyehara, Maloney)  
DLI (Talmy)


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Of the organizations which were represented at the first meeting in January, the FBI, State Department, FSI, and the Army, were not represented at this meeting.

All attendees at the meeting held at least Secret clearances which were all forwarded to the Agency to allow for discussion up to the National Secret level.

2. NSA, CIA, NIC and DLI responded to the actions which came out of the first meeting: a survey of Language Technology initiatives, and a brief of language functions at each organization.

NSA presented a database of 40 technological initiatives in support of working linguists. The database was carefully sanitized by the Agency's Information Security Policy branch lowering its original classification to CONFIDENTIAL. The utility of the sanitized version is severely limited.

CIA representative  contributed a description of projects including machine processing of foreign language text prior to human scanning, word-for-word machine gisting, off-the-shelf Machine Assisted Translation, development of a Japanese Optical Character Reader, generic morphological analysis by machine, and research into Natural Language Understanding algorithms.

NIC members  described cooperation with the Air Force's FTD to use SYSTRAN software running on a PS/2 to translate Russian, French, and German.

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DLI delegate Vladimir Talmy brought a "Talking Paper" on educational technology which described various initiatives in Monterey including the German VELVET interactive video program, Interim EIDS and EIDS, and a resident satellite dish system for local collection of international language broadcasts augmented by a SCOLA link for languages not covered by the local antennas.

Although the reports were not in the database format requested at the first meeting, their contents will be entered into a table for quick reference.

3. **OBSERVATIONS:** This meeting was very instructional on critical issues which probably reflect the intelligence community at large. The issues are at the heart of why there is an Intelligence Community Staff with all of its attendant committees and subcommittees. We ran up against some of the thorny problems of trying to network, and cooperate in our community. In brief:

- **Clearance of committee members** - We must all have TS/SI clearances to allow for discussions of the real issues and details of language technology. If there is no Need-To-Know for a particular member or organization, there is probably no need to attend. It appeared, from the meeting, that the more a representative knew about the complex language problems and solutions in the community, the higher the clearance and vice-versa. This is logical and obvious. There is a direct correlation between clearance, involvement with intelligence community problems, and knowledge useful to the committee.

[NOTE: this observation contradicts my original presumption that any institution involved with language would have similar needs and equivalent potential for contribution - in fact some members seem to have little in common.]

- **Classification of shared data** - A related problem is the pooling of classified data. We will be looking into the problems of distributing our database to all appropriately cleared members. There is reluctance to share all technical data even with TS/SI cleared members because of gray areas in the procedures for interagency exchanges.
- **Membership and institutional involvement** - It was clear from this meeting that attendance and representation are idiosyncratic; tied to the individual, not the institution. A person's schedule decides whether an institution is represented, not the institution itself. This reflects the lack of coordination with the senior management of the institutions, or perhaps reflects management intentions. We should really determine which organizations want to play in this arena, and have them support their player. Otherwise there is no incentive for an individual to be involved. If interagency cooperation is not a priority for member institutions, perhaps the need for such committees should be reassessed.

4. PLANS: The issues above will be resolved and I am optimistic about pressing on. We will determine how best to share information among the different institutions and will build a database reflecting the technological "State of the Community". I anticipate that members will want to see systems at other institutions and I foresee demonstrations of projects where the interest is high and the sponsors are willing.

The ultimate goals of the group, which should be reiterated from time to time, are working to determine technical solutions, trading resources and information, reducing duplication, and maximizing the use of what's available. We will "endeavor to persevere".

Our next meeting will again be at NSA, on 20 July.



Chairman

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