

May 9th, 2:50 PM - 3:50 PM

## Developing Cross-Cultural Communicative Competence

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# Cross-cultural communicative competence

*Can these skills be developed through training?*

**Michael Kay**

**ICAEA President**

**INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ENGLISH ASSOCIATION**

*supporting the use of English for aviation safety*

[www.icaea.aero](http://www.icaea.aero)

# Background

- Aviation English training/testing since 1996
- MA in Applied Linguistics: language testing (ICAO LPRs)
- Designed and implemented RELTA, Australia (2003-2010)
- Trainer and curriculum developer: AEROTHAI (2011-)



# Overview

## **Typical AEROTHAI ATCO profile**

- Negative towards local licensing test
- Proud and confident but reserved
- Staff shortage
- Minimum time available for language training
- View language training as 'test preparation'
- Low on motivation
- Value memorisation of and language (grammar and vocabulary) over creative spontaneous communication
- Passive language learners

## **Culture (work and national)**

- Collectivist
- Value saving face
- Respect elders and rank (hierarchy in authority important)
- Avoid conflict
- Focus on immediate situation
- May offer minimum content in communication

## Training programme objectives

- Develop/maintain language proficiency (for on-the-job radio communication)
- Raise awareness of cross-cultural communication issues (exposure)
- Raise awareness of need for communication strategies (exposure)
- Provide opportunities to integrate development of language skills with development of communication strategies:
- Practise using communication strategies to incorporate into work practices (ATC-pilot comms)

# Workshop

## **Explore:**

- The notion of developing cross-cultural communicative competence of operational personnel using English as a second language
- Consider what elements of CCCC could be developed through training
- Ideas for how these could be developed
- Share some examples

- **Information engagement skills**

- Share relevant information and enquire

- **Accommodation skills**

- Modify communication for weaker speakers

- **Strategic and interactional competence**

- Recognise and repair communication breakdowns, share relevant information

- **Pragmatic competence**

- Interpret intended meaning based on context

- **Socio-linguistic competence**

- Use language appropriate for the situation

- **Efficiency skills**

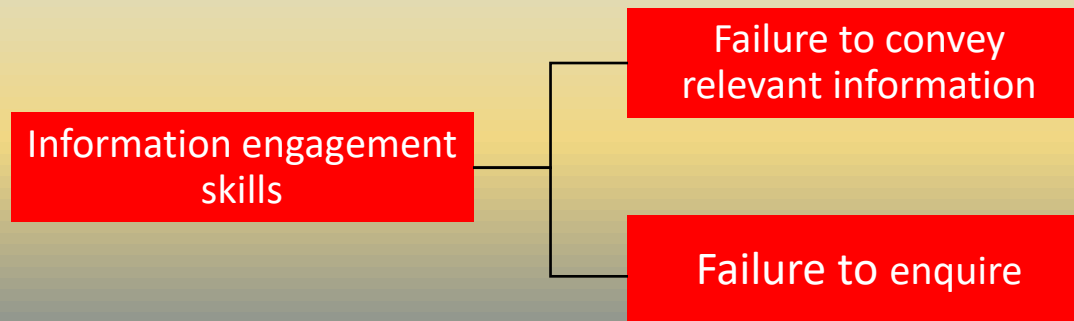
- Be succinct and immediate

ATC: Air Spring 8972, reduce your speed to Mach .73 to arrange your flight to arrive after time 00. Expect hold.

PILOT: Ahh, unable, we have minimum fuel, Air Spring 8972.

ATC: Air Spring 8972, roger. ... ah... **Phuket is not available.**

PILOT: **Ah, ... ah, we have minimum fuel.**



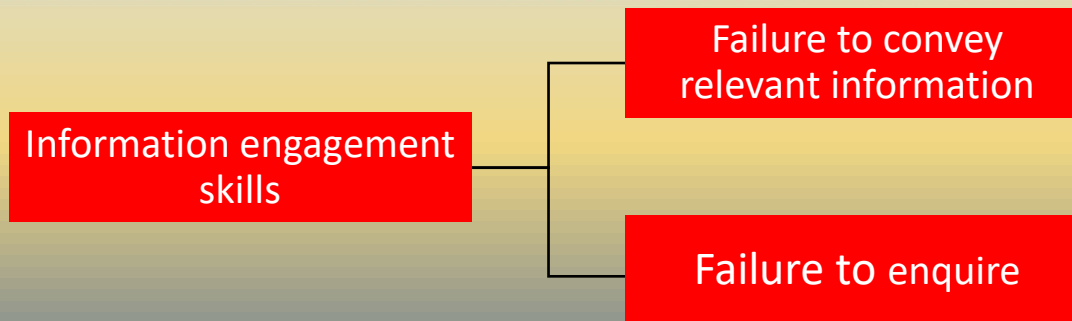


ATC: Air Spring 8972, reduce your speed to Mach .73 to arrange your flight to arrive after time 00. Expect hold. **Phuket is not yet available due airport closure.**

PILOT: Ahh, unable, we have minimum fuel, Air Spring 8972.

ATC: Air Spring 8972, roger.... ah... **advise intentions.**

PILOT: **Bangkok Control, ... ah ok, due minimum. We will need to divert to Surat.**



# Who needs to develop which CCC skills?



NES

(AAL pilot)



NNES

(Thai ATCO)

## **Information engagement skills**

Share relevant information and enquire

## **Accommodation skills**

Modify communication and language for weaker participants

## **Strategic competence**

Recognise and repair communication breakdowns

## **Pragmatic competence**

Interpret intended meaning based on context

## **Socio-linguistic competence**

Use language appropriate for the situation

## **Efficiency skills**

Be succinct and immediate

# Which skills could we develop through training?



**NNES**

**Incorporate in language training:  
Develop as communication skills?**

**Incorporate in language training:  
Raise awareness?**

**Information engagement skills**

Share relevant information and enquire

**Accommodation skills**

Modify communication and language for weaker participants

**Strategic competence**

Recognise and repair communication breakdowns

**Pragmatic competence**

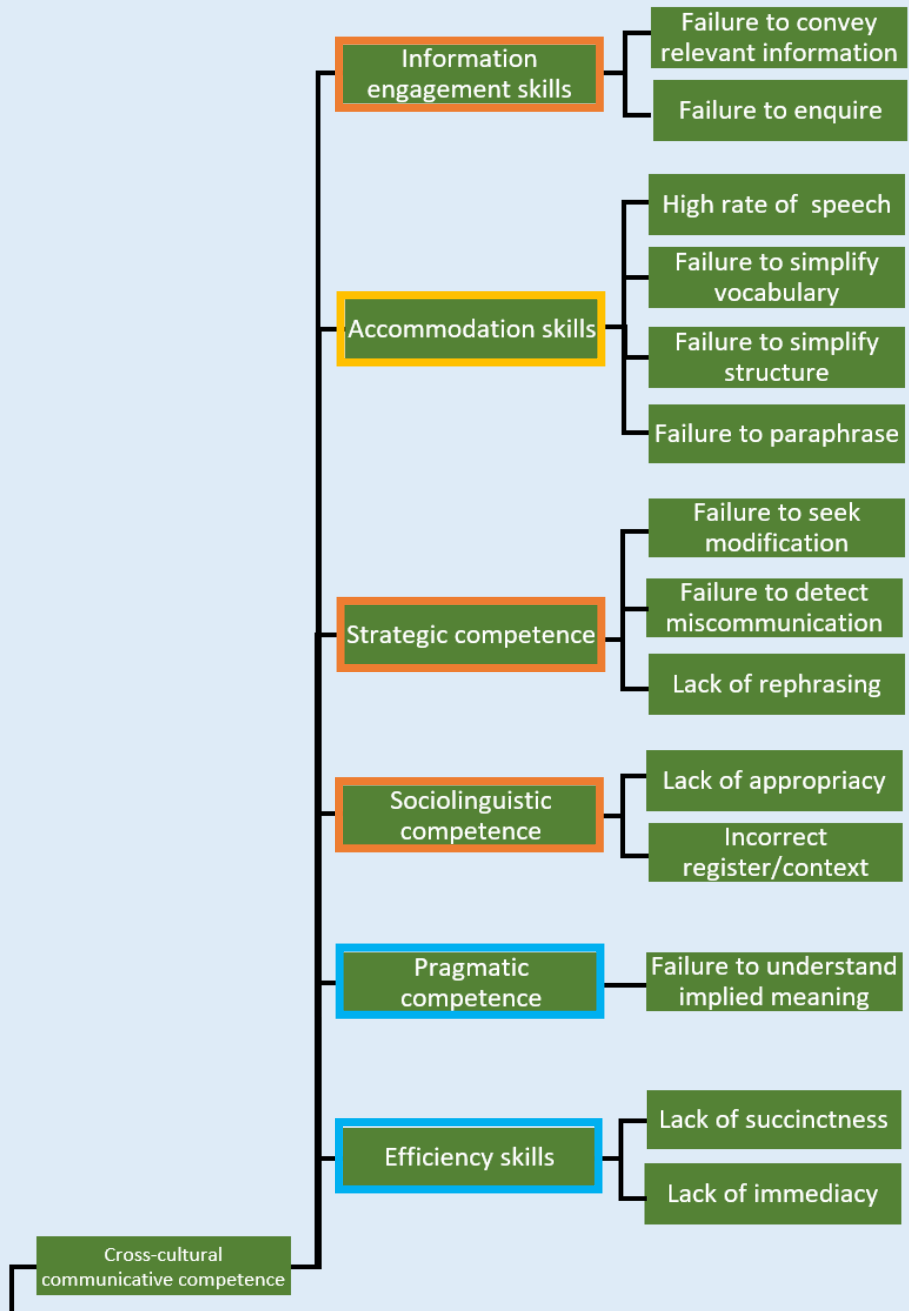
Interpret intended meaning based on context

**Socio-linguistic competence**

Use language appropriate for the situation

**Efficiency skills**

Be succinct and immediate



# Raise awareness of issues in cross-cultural communication

- **Pragmatic competence**
  - > Recognise implied meaning
- **Efficiency skills**
  - > Respond/initiate with immediacy (and accuracy)
  - > Communicate succinctly
- **Accommodation skills**
  - > Recognise when ↑ELP pilots are adjusting communication
  - > Adjust communication to aid understanding of ↓ELP pilots

# Developing CCC skills through training

- **Information engagement skills**

Share relevant information and enquire

- > Offering (*Would you like? Do you need? I can offer you... or ...*)
- > Explaining, giving reasons (*...because, ...so..*)
- > Enquiring (*Are you able to?*)

- **Strategic competence**

Repair communication breakdowns

- > Avoiding creating impression of understanding (e.g. *saying roger, silence*)
- > Clarifying (*Do you mean...? Confirm you ...*)
  - *Synonyms with vocabulary ranges (difficult to easy)*
  - *Paraphrasing skills (complex to simple sentence structures)*
- > Requesting rephrasing (*I don't understand, Request you rephrase*)

- **Socio-linguistic competence**

Use language appropriate for the situation

- >
- >

# Activity

## Discussion topics

1. What are the communication breakdowns in each scenario?
2. Can you identify causes of the breakdowns, based on the Communication as a Human Factor Taxonomy?
3. How could each stimulus be used for training purposes? (What communicative strategies could be developed and how?)



1. TGW2368 – SIN APP



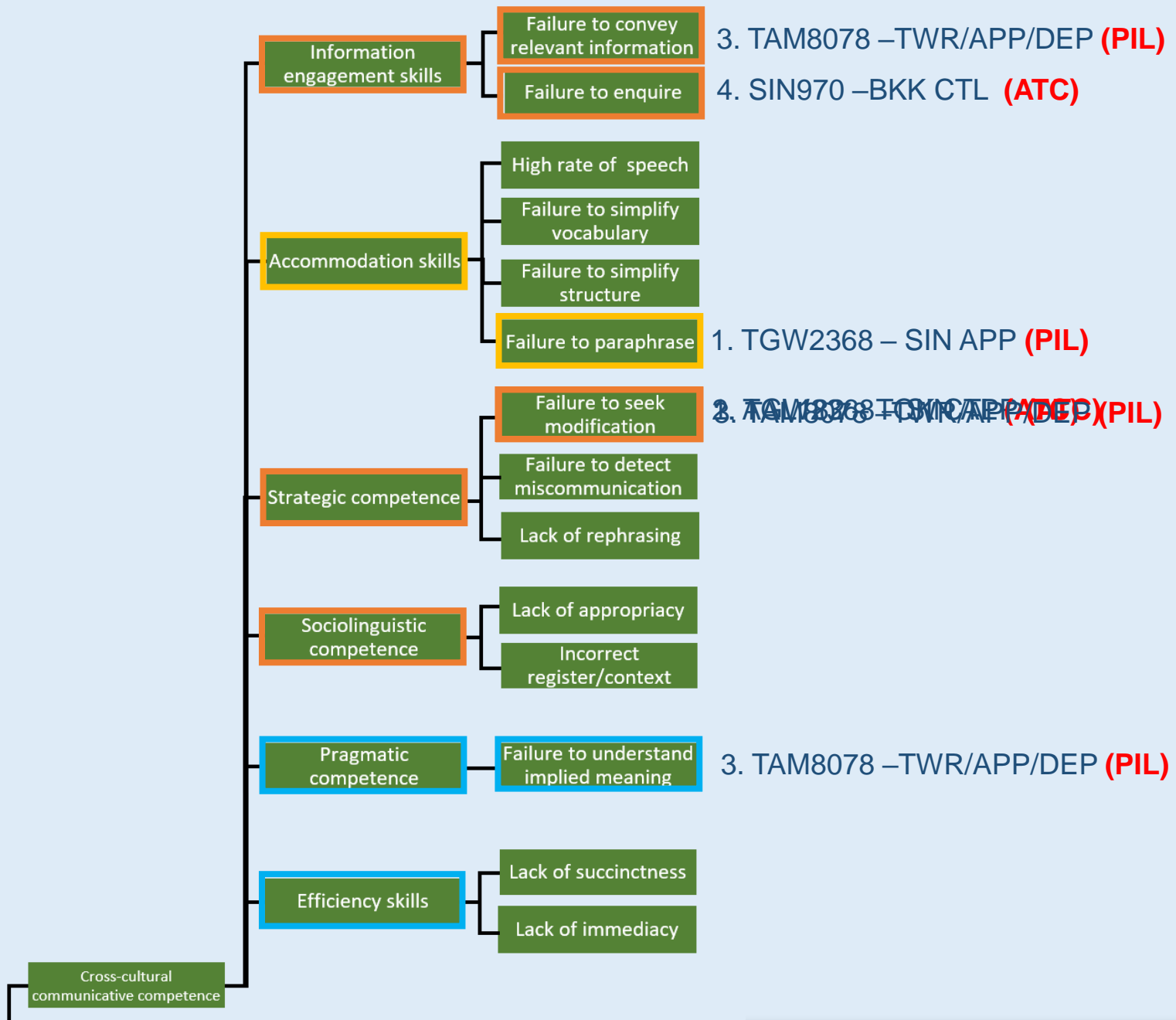
2. AAL182 – TOK CTL



3. TAM8078 – JFK TWR/APP/DEP



4. SIN970 – BKK CTL





# Examples of 'our' training ideas

1. TGW2368 – SIN APP

2. AAL182 – TOK APP

3. TAM8078 – JFK TWR/APP/DEP

4. SIN970 – BKK CTL



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