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Developing Cross-Cultural Communicative Competence

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Cross-cultural communicative competence

Can these skills be developed through training?

Michael Kay

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INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ENGLISH ASSOCIATION

supporting the use of English for aviation safety

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**

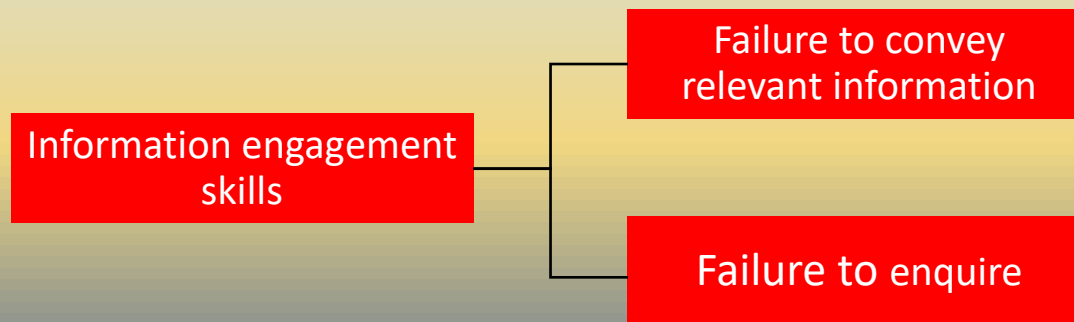
- Be succinct and immediate

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.**

Information engagement
skills

Failure to convey
relevant information

Failure to enquire

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

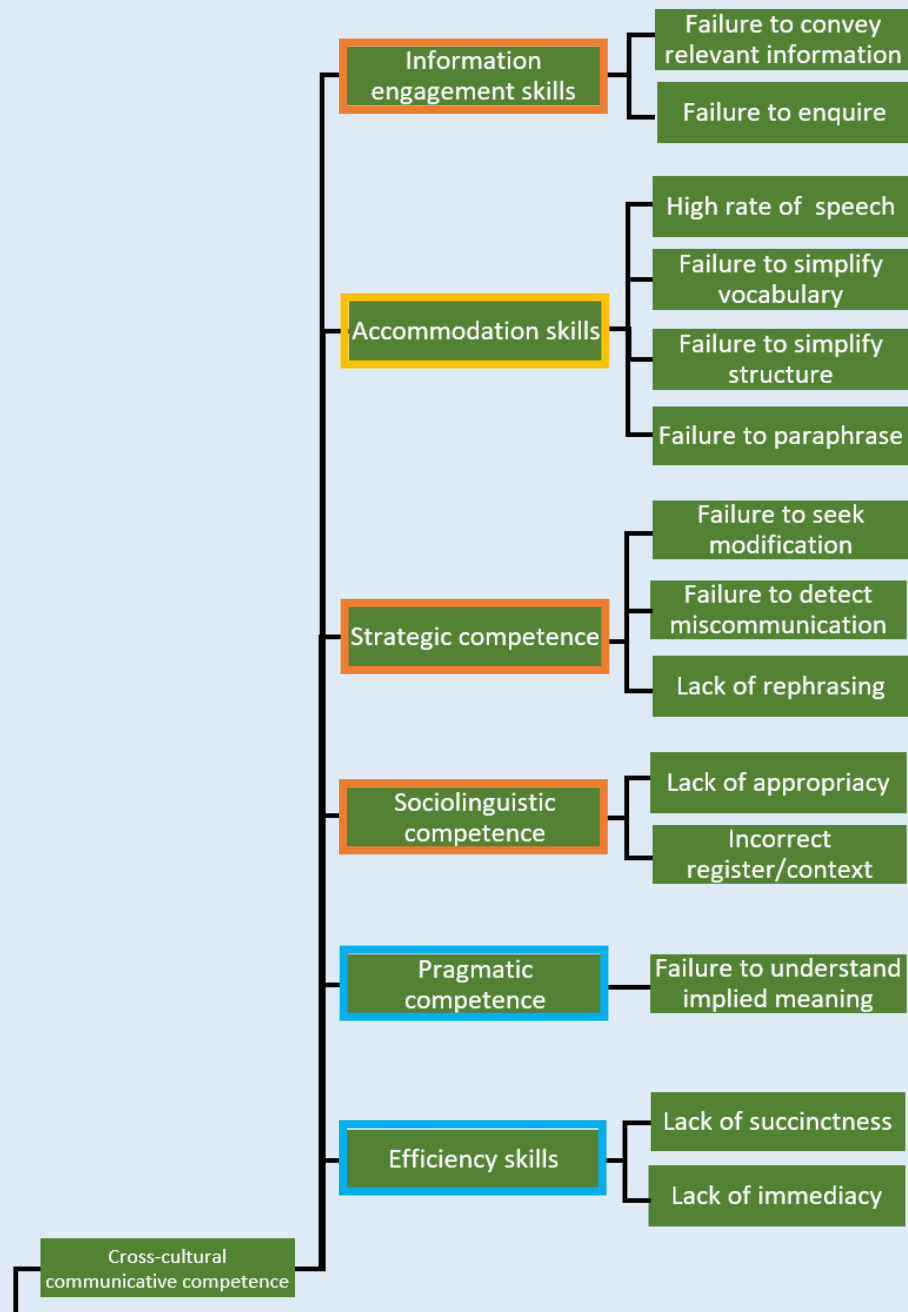
Interpret intended meaning based
on context

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



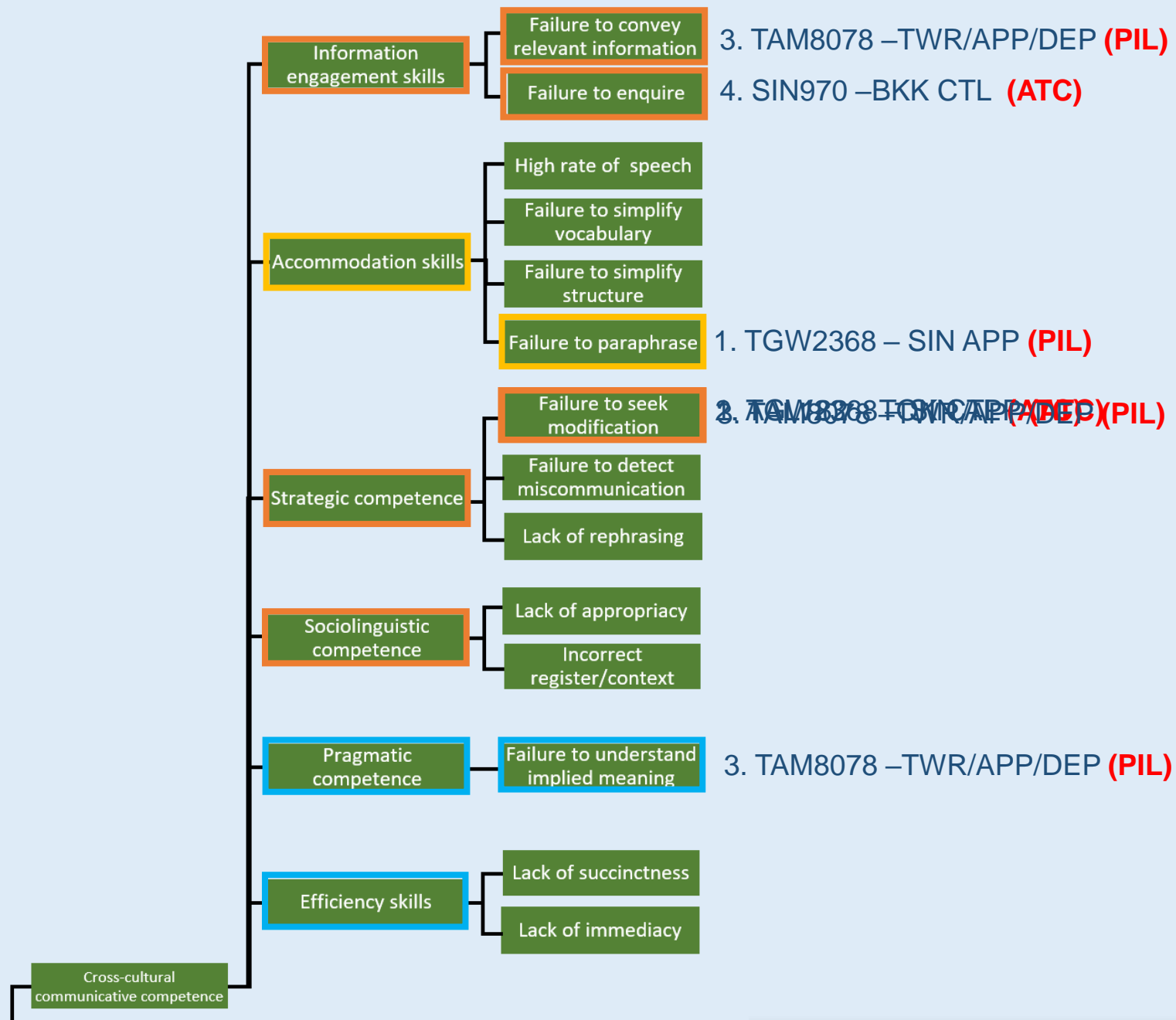
2. AAL182 – TOK CTL



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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