

використання усіх перекладацьких технік, що є необхідними під час його роботи. Саме професійні якості перекладача та його вміння знаходити «золоту середину» у використанні існуючих технік вважаються показником для створення вдалого перекладу. Коли йдеться про креативність, то окрім вищезазначених причин і випадків використання перекладацьких технік, існує велика кількість факторів, які напряму залежать від автора перекладу, його світосприйняття, логічності висловлювання думки, та навіть естетичного смаку.

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## IS THERE ANY DOMINANT CULTURE IN GLOBAL AERONAUTICAL SETTINGS?

***Abstract.** This article investigates the existence of dominant culture in global aeronautical settings. The author presents the nature of aeronautical communication and classifies its users into two main groups: native and non-native speakers of English. Traditionally, presented high-risk aviation environment is devoid of any cultural models to follow. However, the author demonstrates how a human factor may modify prescribed rules and points to the real-life examples of dominant culture observed in aeronautical communication. The article hopes to contribute to intercultural aeronautical communication as well as multiculturalism.*

***Key words:** dominant culture, aeronautical communication, Aeronautical English, multicultural communication.*

### 1. Introduction

Without proper communication, air travel would constitute one of the most high-

risk environments today. International aeronautical communication takes place between pilots and air traffic controllers, but also between pilots of different aircraft or pilots and ground services, and makes aircraft reach its destination smoothly. Otherwise, it would not be possible to instruct, advise or support a pilot. Moreover, it works both ways as pilots can also inform controllers about various non-standard occurrences or even point to potential problems. The rules of such communication are standardised around the world so as to enable all aviation professionals to follow the regulations and consequently avoid miscomprehension. Firstly, there are general aeronautical rules [1], such as air traffic rules [1], aerodrome operations, personnel licensing. Secondly, there are those that refer to language, such as using Aeronautical English (traditionally also called Aviation English) which has been the official language for aviation since 1951 (introduced by the International Civil Aviation Organization — ICAO).

According to the ICAO *Standards and Recommended Practices* (SARPs), each ICAO state is required to establish a safety program to achieve an acceptable level of safety in aviation operations because only common safety rules constitute the backbone of the aviation safety system:

They provide for a uniform level of requirements for operators, manufacturers and aviation personnel, thus facilitating the flow of products, persons and services in the internal market, and allowing for mutual recognition of safety certificates, reducing the administrative burden and workload for the national authorities and the industry [2].

Although ICAO regulatory documents indicate English as the language of global aviation, they do not indicate any particular model which aeronautical communication participants may follow. All the operational personnel is supposed to be familiar with first of all, standard phraseology [3] — a strictly prescribed code for routine situations, based on English, for all stages of flight, and ‘plain English’ for non-routine occurrences. The only overall recommendation that the ICAO provides for pilots and controllers is to be straightforward and construct clear utterances so as to be easily understood:

*Plain language in aeronautical radiotelephony communications means the spontaneous, creative and non-coded use of a given natural language, although constrained by the functions and topics (aviation and non-aviation) that are required by aeronautical radiotelephony communications, as well as by specific safety-critical requirements for intelligibility, directness, appropriacy, non-ambiguity and concision.*

(ICAO Doc. 9835 2010: 3.3.14)

Thus, pilots and air traffic controllers are required to be able to communicate proficiently using both ICAO standard phraseology and ‘plain English’ (ICAO 2010) that is also called in literature Plain Aviation English (Bieswanger 2016) and Plain Aeronautical English (Borowska 2017). This fact constitutes an important factor for multicultural aeronautical communication.

## **2. Aeronautical English context**

Generally speaking, Aeronautical English users may be divided into two groups:

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1 Annex 2 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation: *Rules of the Air* (ICAO 2005).

2 [https://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/air/safety/safety-rules\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/air/safety/safety-rules_en)

3 For linguistic description of standard phraseology, see Borowska (2017).

non-native speakers of English who constitute a great majority of users in aeronautical settings, and native speakers of English. Contrary to general assumptions (e.g. native speakers of English do not have to learn any rules of standard phraseology or plain English), both groups have to study coded phraseology as well as be able to express themselves in Plain Aeronautical English. This fact has been also noted by Estival (2016: 51):

*It is a specific code with conventions outside of 'natural' English, which needs to be learned on its own terms. ... there are two types of evidence to support this observation. First, NESs<sup>4</sup> do not understand AE<sup>5</sup> when they are exposed to it without training. Everyone hearing radiotelephony (R/T) communications for the first time, even when being told what is happening, will comment that they cannot understand most of what is being said and it does takes a certain amount of time for student pilots to get used to it.*

(Estival 2016: 51)

Moreover, the ICAO requirements emphasise that «The burden of improving radiotelephony communications should be shared by native and non-native speakers» (ICAO 2010 Doc. 9835). Therefore, the fact that the Aeronautical English is based on natural English does not mean that native speakers of English are released from 'learning' it.

Globalisation gave rise to multicultural aviation context, in which different nationalities and cultures come into contact. As suggested above, the norms of aeronautical interaction are considerably different from those of everyday conversations as they are highly regulated, with precise rules about who can speak, and what they can say, and how they can say it (cf. Conley and O'Barr 1990). In civil aviation today, cross-cultural contact is the norm rather than the exception. In such a global context, cultural interfaces are a daily reality (Merritt and Maurino 2004):

*The safety case surrounding cultural interfaces in aviation seeks to broaden the horizon even further, showing how members of one culture can incur confusion, misunderstanding, and misapplication when encountering members or artifacts of another culture.*

(Merritt and Maurino 2004: 149)

According to Merritt and Maurino (2004), as soon as we encounter members or artifacts from another culture, these cultural efficiencies are challenged and the opposite occurs. The world becomes less predictable, more uncertain, and requires more mental effort.

Consequently, such multicultural environment has also led to communication difficulties which should be solved on a regular basis by aeronautical communication participants. On the one hand, global aeronautical communication does not follow any cultural model, but only its prescribed technical rules, so aeronautical settings by definition are not dominated by any culture. On the other hand, there is also a human factor involved in the aeronautical communication process. The fact that it is the

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4 Native English Speakers.

5 AE refers here to Aeronautical English.

English language spoken in the airspace seems to cause hierarchical relations at times. Thus, in order to examine the way in which such culturally and linguistically diverse participants interact with one another and what sort of barriers to effective communication the participants face when performing their professional tasks, we should investigate if there are any examples of dominant culture in international aeronautical settings.

### **3. A dominant culture**

According to *A Dictionary of Sociology* (1998), a *dominant culture* is one that is able, through economic or political power, to impose its values, language, and ways of behaving on a subordinate culture or cultures. This may be achieved through legal or political suppression of other sets of values and patterns of behaviour, or by monopolising the media of communication. Furthermore, a dominant culture is also perceived as the prominent cultural group in an area that is not influenced by other cultures that may come to the country or region. In the United States, for example, cultures that immigrate to the country pick up the dominant American culture (Sorrells 2013). A similar phenomenon may be observed during aeronautical communication.

As it is still the type of English used, a number of native speakers may think minority groups that follow their own culturally expected norms of interaction behave inappropriately. For example, a conversational silence is valued differently by different cultural groups. Another example (see below) shows that when a native English controller is pushing a non-native English pilot to answer his question, the pilot may be reluctant to say anything as he/she regards the controller as being rude. The American controller, on the other hand, expects the pilot to provide answers without any hesitation (cf. Eades 2007). Multicultural communication is especially challenging when members of minority groups are not familiar with the discourse practices of the dominant culture as well as have limited proficiency in the majority language (cf. Hafner 2012: 527). As a matter of fact, when non-native speakers of English communicate with one another, they do not need the assistance of a native speaker. Now these are native speakers who should understand the fact that they use a global language, not their mother tongue (i.e. natural English), and they should also adapt to a new situation because they are no longer on top with their accents and communication techniques (Borowska 2016).

Aside from linguistic matters, communication with limited proficiency individuals can be complicated because they adhere to different underlying cultural values (Hafner 2012: 528). According to Hall's concept (1959, 1966, 1976, 1983) of high-context and low-context cultures, the cultures are based on different assumptions. Therefore, when practitioners of those two different systems come into contact, some challenges may arise (cf. Hafner 2012: 530) as communication style refers to ways of expressing oneself. In a high context culture, people tend to speak one after another in a linear way, so the speaker is seldom interrupted. Moreover, communication involves more of the information in the physical context or internalised in the person; greater confidence is placed in the nonverbal aspects of communication than the verbal aspects (Hall 1976). In a low context culture, meanings are explicitly stated through language. People communicating usually expect explanations when something remains unclear. As Hall (1976) explains, most information is expected to be in the transmitted message in order

to make up for what is missing in the context. Furthermore, those who talk a lot, especially in their own language and in their own environment, have the best conditions to have power, so they may easily become the representatives of dominant culture, as in the following example:

Exchange (1)

**Controller (native speaker of English):** ETD503, where you park?

**Pilot:** Bravo 23, sir.

**Controller:** Not taxiway, the letter! [shouting]

**Pilot:** Oh, negative sir, we are on 22R holding short of Foxtrot.

**Controller:** What taxiway do you enter the ramp?! [shouting]

**Pilot:** OK, so we just exit the runway and we're holding short of Foxtrot on 22R.

**Controller:** You are not listening to what I'm asking you. What taxiway do you enter the ramp?

**Pilot:** I'm not on the ramp yet, sir.

**Controller ATCO:** What taxiway do you enter the ramp? Tell me. What letter? [commanding manner]

**Pilot:** OK, we can enter at Kilo for Etihad 503.

**Controller ATCO:** That's what I need get out of you, we talked 6 times. Straight ahead and hold short of Hotel, sir.

*Further instructions follow*

**Pilot:** Next time I would like you to be polite with me. Thank you.

(www.liveatc.net: JFK, 2014)

In the example above, an American controller is a representative of a low-context culture, whilst a pilot is a representative of a high-context culture. The American controller uses informal language and manifests he has power by shouting at the pilot, whilst a pilot performs his duties according to his perception of interpersonal professional communication, although he is irritated by the controller's attitude. Moreover, a unique dialect (here strong American accent) is hardly ever understood by non-native speakers, especially those of an operational level (ICAO level 4) in communication (Borowska 2016). Finally, the pilot gives his opinion about controller's behaviour in a very polite manner.

People in the dominant group [culture], due to nationality, do not need to understand the viewpoint of subordinated groups and often have a vested interest in not understanding the positions of subordinated others in order to maintain their own dominance (Sorrells 2013). Therefore, in aeronautical settings, Americans are often blamed of ethnocentrism, i.e. their way of thinking and acting in the given context is superior to others. There are communication patterns that are understood to be 'typical' of American controllers, e.g. the use of slang, chatty style, informal expressions and ironic comments. The dominant culture of a society also establishes its mainstream social customs. The following exchanges (2) and (3) are examples of pilot's assimilation to a dominant culture:

Exchange (2)

**Pilot:** Can you find somebody to park us here?

**Controller (native speaker of English):** No, I can't, 'cause I'm the ground

controller sir. I can barely get you to the ramp.

**Pilot:** Haha Sorry! Wrong frequency!

(www.liveatc.net: JFK)

The pilot does not consider controller's behaviour as improper. Moreover, he is also sorry for his mistake. Assimilation is hardly ever possible among temporary visitors engaged in relatively short-term cross-cultural adaptation experiences. One needs to know how a given cultural aspect functions in order to assimilate more easily.

Exchange (3)

**Pilot:** Ground, hello, Turkish2!

**Controller (native speaker of English):** Turkish2, are you ready for taxi, or just saying 'hi'?

**Pilot:** Yes, we're ready for taxi, Turkish2.

(www.liveatc.net: JFK)

The pilot follows American controller's (a representative of dominant culture here) attitude and also deviates from standard phraseology. Such behaviour is caused by the cultural patterns of the dominant group which become the norm in the given context. Therefore, we can say that culture influences how we use the language.

The globalised context of aviation makes ethnocentric approach extremely problematic. The assumption that one's own group is superior to others, one's language better, can result in conflict and discrimination (Sorrells 2013), as in exchange (1) and exchange (4):

Exchange (4)

**Controller (native speaker of English):** Why do you have to push on to Alpha, with all that room in the alleyway?

**Pilot:** [silence]

**Controller:** I don't know. Forget it, just push back on Alpha, I know it's a tough question.

(www.liveatc.net: JFK)

In exchange (4), the controller seems not to be interested in the pilot's answer as he does not wait for such answer.

The role of Aeronautical English communication is, *inter alia*, to remove potential language and cultural barriers and place a non-native speaker of English in a position as similar as possible to that of a native speaker of English. This analysis shows that such aim is not always achieved. Although people would not be deprived of culture, they may be equipped with a cross-cultural awareness. All the participants of aeronautical communication should be aware of the possible problems their linguistic behaviour may raise during interaction with interlocutors of different culture. Non-native speakers of English' target language may be highly influenced by the syntax, semantics and pronunciation of their own mother tongue. Therefore, there may exist a discrepancy between a performance of those engaged in a conversation and what a native speaker expects a conversation to sound like. Such awareness can often reinforce communication, reduce coordination time between a pilot and controller and help to solve operational problems (Borowska 2016). Both sides should be trained how to resolve challenges of intercultural communication because an effective communication

strategy begins with the understanding that the sender and the receiver of the message are from different cultures and backgrounds. Moreover, the aim of such training should be ‘an intercultural speaker’ of aeronautical communication.

Therefore, aeronautical communication calls for intercultural speakers who are characterised by «sensitivity towards other people and cultures coupled with self-reflexivity» (Wilkinson 2012). Moreover, this type of speaker is not bound to specific cultures or languages, but is competent in mediating across borders (ibid: 296). More investigations of intercultural discourse could help to better understand the types of interactions, interlocutors’ speech act behaviour in these situations, the nature of intercultural misunderstandings and negotiation strategies, if any, employed by discourse participants in order to repair and build relationships (Jackson 2012: 460).

#### **4. Conclusion**

Traditionally, there is no prescribed dominant culture in aeronautical settings. However, real-life examples show the opposite. In some circles, the fact that English has been chosen as a language for aviation presupposes the interpretation that native speakers of English, though in great minority in aeronautical settings, are an example of dominant culture. To this end, they impose on their non-native interlocutors the way they use their language as well as the cultural context.

Hopefully, aeronautical settings are full of intercultural speakers who not only ‘communicate’, but also ‘mediate’ across linguistic and cultural boundaries. In other words, intercultural speakers possess linguistic and cultural knowledge and awareness and also interpreting and negotiating skills. Therefore, they not only act on behalf of themselves and their interlocutor(s), but also on behalf of the larger sociocultural groupings to which they belong (Wilkinson 2012: 297).

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## **СПЕЦИФІКА УСНОЇ ДІЛОВОЇ ПРЕЗЕНТАЦІЇ НА УРОКАХ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВИ ЯК ІНСТРУМЕНТУ ЗАКРІПЛЕННЯ ЗНАНЬ У СТУДЕНТІВ ВНЗ УКРАЇНИ**

***Анотація.** У даній статті розглядається усна ділова презентація під час уроків англійської мови як важливий елемент впливу на закріплення знань студентами та формування їх власного стилю мовлення в іноземній мові. Визначаються критерії, яких має дотримуватися студент під час презентації, а також надаються рекомендації щодо вибору її тематики.*

***Ключові слова:** ділова презентація, вивчення англійської мови, іноземне ділове мовлення, ділова англійська.*