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ENGLISH LANGUAGE FOR COMMUNICATION BETWEEN PILOT AND AIR TRAFIC CONTROLLER

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Introductions To provide safe air passenger transportation a huge number of aviation personnel is involved. International transportation is organized due to International Civil Organization (ICAO) requirements as this process has to be unique and standard to all participants.

Material and methods

This research was being held at the National Aviation University in Ukraine. The aim of our study is to facilitate the importance of Aviation English for aviation personnel.

Results

The experience of air transport management depicts that all aviation personnel need to interact with each other. To establish this interaction successfully the knowledge of international language becomes necessary. Thus, Aviation English is here in need. Another fact which demonstrates that safety of flights depends on the language proficiency was the number of fatal accidents which happened in aviation history because of misunderstanding between speakers. To avoid further incidents and accidents in air transportation ICAO made standard and recommendation practices to Aviation English.

Since that time Aviation English becomes a universal language for aviation. Because only due to language proficiency and standard vocabulary the pilot and the air traffic controller could exchange all the necessary information about the flight accurately: flight number, crew members, passengers, other external factors, situational moments, to ensure efficient operation and complete safety.

The first aviation experts recognized this fact many years ago, so in 1951 the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) declared English the only language that pilots and air traffic controllers should use in direct communication. The reason why English was chosen was because at that time English-speaking countries dominated the skies [1].

Aviation English is a specific language known worldwide for its phonetic alphabet, technical terminology (for routine and non-routine situations) and phraseology.

To ensure that pilots and air traffic controllers are able to use the English language at the level necessary for clear communication, they have to be tested. ICAO has developed a language proficiency scale from 1 to 6 which is used for aviation personnel estimation. The ranking is based on criteria including vocabulary, fluency, pronunciation, comprehension, interaction and structure.

Although the ICAO language rating scale ranges from 1 to 6, Level 4 is the minimum level required for operations. The aim of the ICAO Language Proficiency Test is to verify the applicant's language skills in the following areas: general and aviation vocabulary; use of standard phraseology; understanding aviation recoding and ability to retell in a few words; ability to communicate correctly in an ATC'S pilot's dialogue; explain the reasons, consequences and pilot's or ATC's action in any emergency situation [4].

The reliability of the test depends on the level of language proficiency obtained. Native English speakers and those who are proficient in the language (level 6) do not need to be reassessed.

Those at level 4 are required to be tested every three years and those at level 5 are required to be tested every five years [3].

Conclusions

Safety is the priority in aviation and good communication between pilots and air traffic controllers is an important factor. Minor language misunderstandings can affect the meaning of the message and become a barrier that can lead to serious consequences. Pilots and air traffic controllers require intensive training and a number of requirements before, during and throughout their careers, and demonstrating language proficiency is one of them.

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