



# Do expert speakers need to practice a language?

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## Background

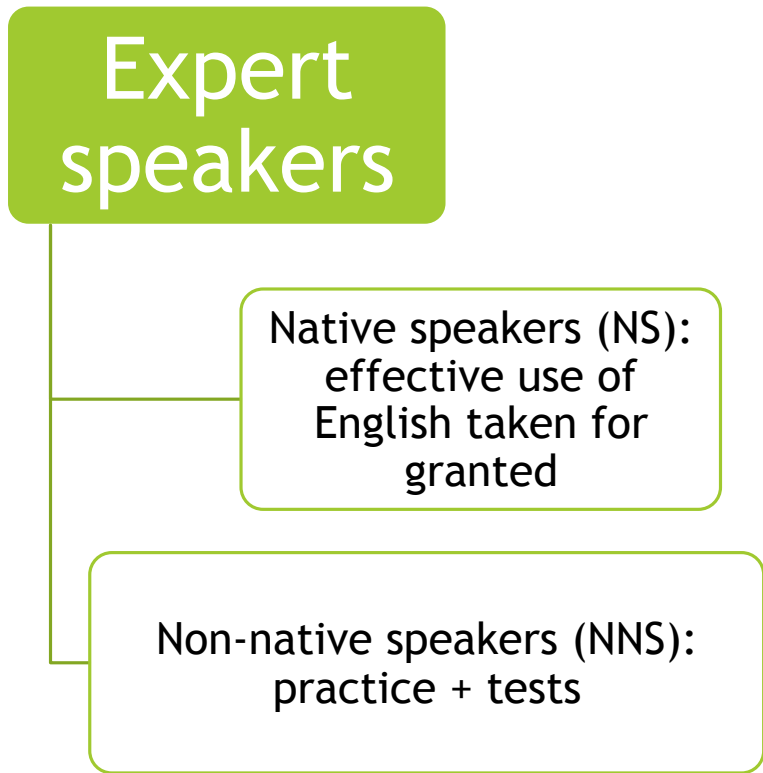
- ▶ Aviation English as a global language?

It enables routine communications among professionals who speak different native languages.

- ▶ *Aviation communication linguistic behaviour*



# Expert speakers of Aviation English



## NS - NNS interaction

NS often do not conform to to the standards of aviation communication, namely they:

- ▶ are too demanding towards NNS
- ▶ are not clear
- ▶ make communication errors
- ▶ use phraseology inappropriately
- ▶ do not use phraseology at all





- ▶ **RISK:** safety-related aviation incidents

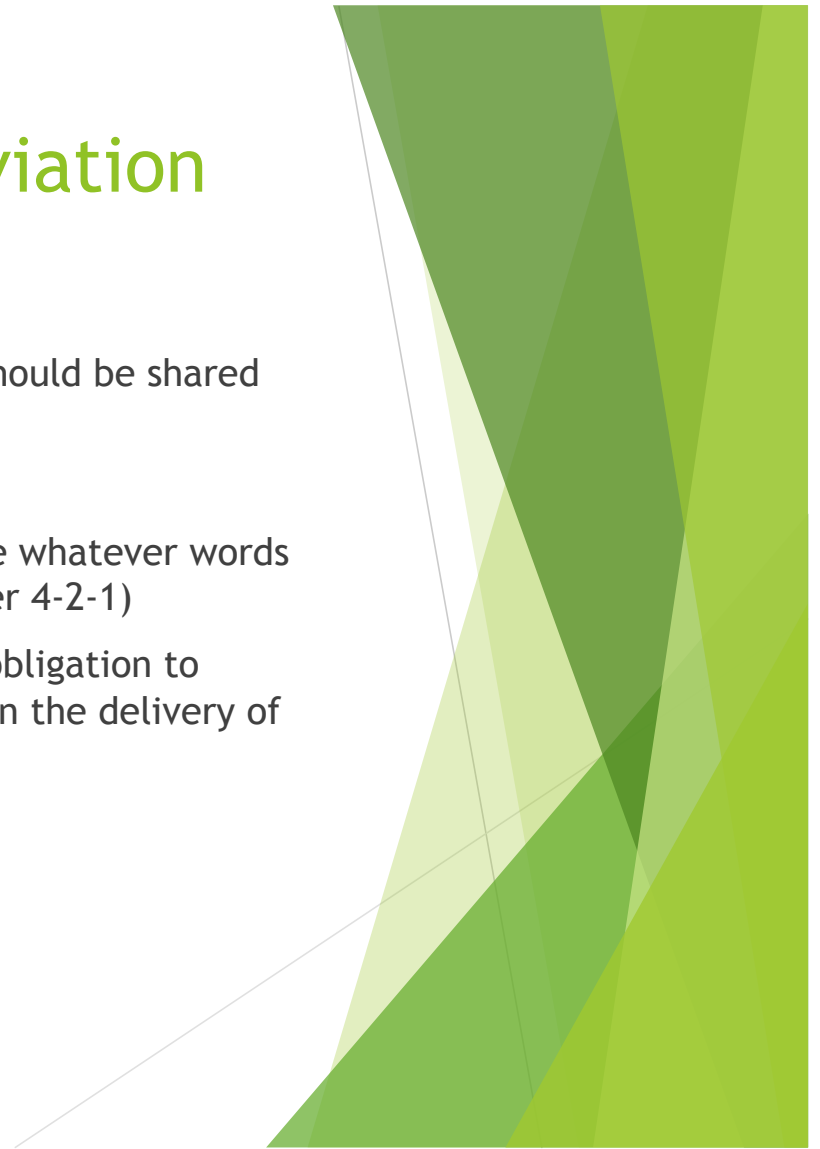
- ▶ **OBJECTIVE:** to improve NS linguistic behaviour  
strong need to simplify the communication for operational speakers and at the same time make NS understand the message provided by NNS

- ▶ **METHOD:** NS language training



# Expert Speaker knowledge on Aviation English usage

- ▶ “The burden of improving radiotelephony communications should be shared by native and non-native speakers” (Doc. 9835)
- ▶ HOW?
- ▶ “Since concise phraseology may not always be adequate, use whatever words are necessary to get your message across” (FAA 2010, chapter 4-2-1)
- ▶ “...native speakers of English, in particular, have an ethical obligation to increase their linguistic awareness and to take special care in the delivery of messages” (ICAO 2010: section 5.3.1.3)
- ▶ HOW?

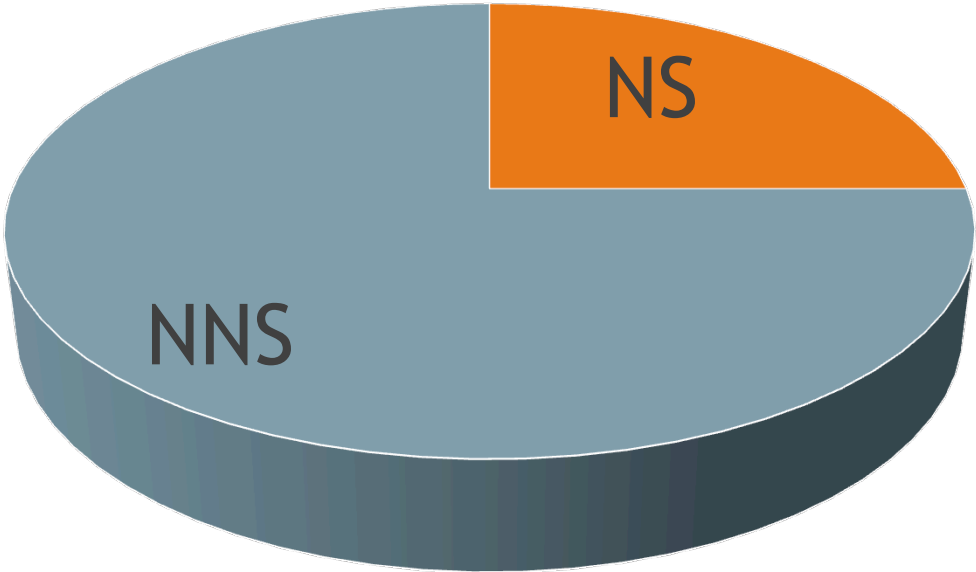


## ICAO descriptors

- ▶ communicate on common, concrete and work-related topics with accuracy and **clarity**
- ▶ use **appropriate communicative strategies** to exchange messages and to recognize and resolve misunderstandings (e.g. to check, confirm, or clarify information) in a general or work-related context
- ▶ **handle** successfully and **with relative ease** the linguistic challenges presented by a complication or unexpected turn of events that occurs within the context of a routine work situation or communicative task with which they are otherwise familiar
- ▶ use a dialect or accent which is **intelligible** to the aeronautical community that almost never interferes with ease of understanding

# Ownership of Aviation English

AE users

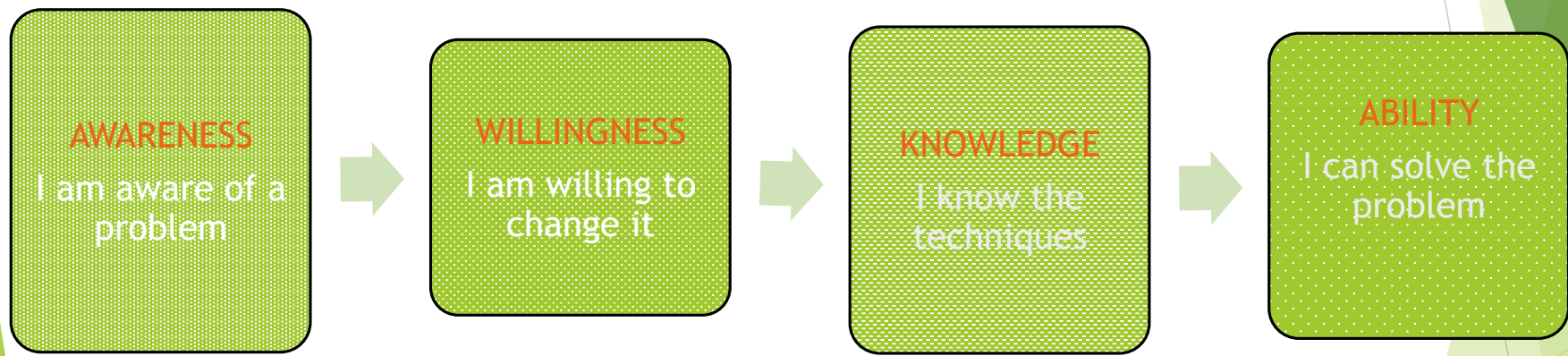




## Expert speakers' common errors

- ▶ not using proper phraseology
- ▶ being too fast (up to 260 words per minute)
- ▶ using pronunciation that is not clear and/or of local variety
- ▶ using complex phrases and syntax, idioms or phrasal verbs
- ▶ not acting appropriately in case of misunderstanding
- ▶ being hostile

# Key conditions to improve NS performance



## Native speakers' communicative strategies

COMMUNICATIVE STRATEGY	ACTION
Active listening	To check important words and phrases
Attuning	To pay attention to speed, complexity of sentence structure and vocabulary (no idioms, colloquialisms), not to use local accents and dialects
Language adjustment	To adapt use of language to the proficiency level of the recipients
Interpersonal attentiveness	To pay attention to interlocutor's sensitive areas of language use and avoid making them 'lose face' as well as encourage them and 'give them face'

## NS need to practice the following:

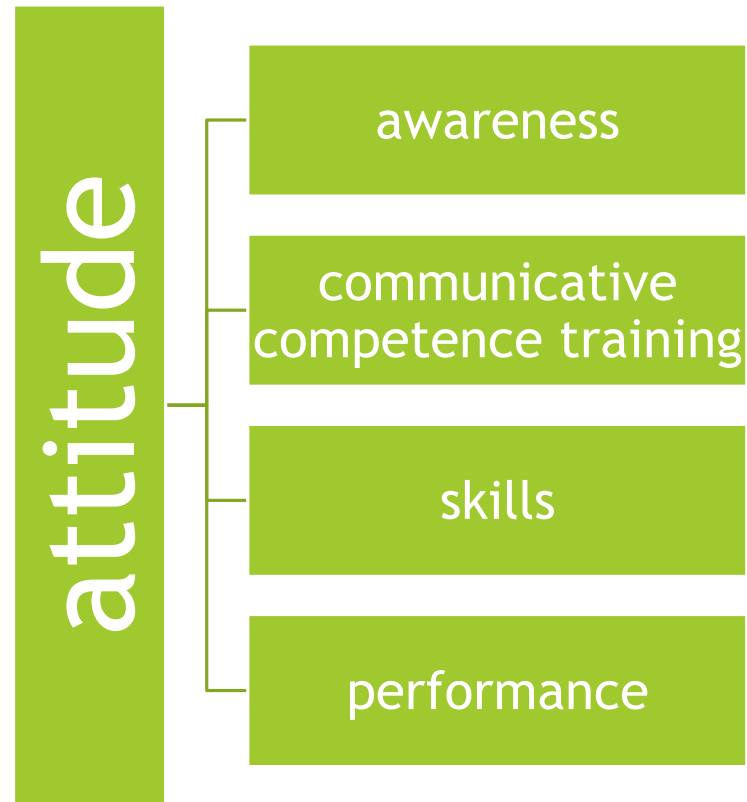
- ▶ making sure there is not too much information in a single transmission
- ▶ reformulating the utterance
- ▶ using repetitions
- ▶ making their speech unambiguous, e.g. no use of homonyms
- ▶ adjusting their pronunciation to common accents, e.g. Received Pronunciation, General American
- ▶ using simplified grammar structures, e.g. no auxiliaries, simple tenses
- ▶ using self-initiated repair
- ▶ developing meaningful negotiation strategies

# Linguistic behaviour in aviation communication

NNS	NS
grammatical and lexical awareness	Meta-linguistic awareness
focus on rules	focus on strategies
correctness	meaning negotiation

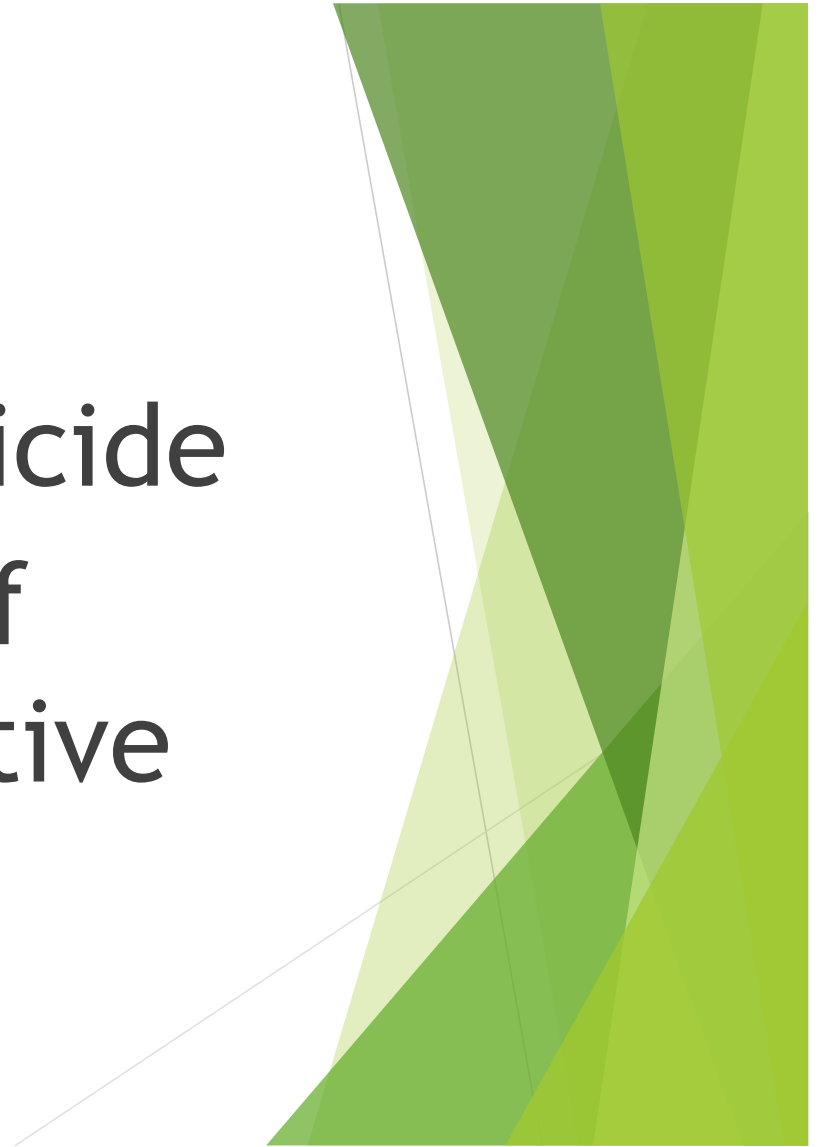


# Expert speakers' training stages



## Conclusions

- ▶ NO: NS linguistic suicide
- ▶ YES: modification of existing communicative conventions



## WHAT THE CONTROLLER SAYS:

FLIBBER 213, RADAR CONTACT,  
FIVE NORTH OF THE POWER PLANT.  
FLY HEADING 220, RADAR  
VECTORS LEFT DOWNWIND  
RUNWAY 31. DESCEND AND  
MAINTAIN 2000. TRAFFIC  
1 O'CLOCK, 3 MILES, EAST-  
BOUND, INDICATING 2500.



## WHAT THE PILOT HEARS:

FLIBBER 213. BLAH BLAH BLAH  
BLA BLAH BLAH BLAH BLAMMER BLAH.  
EAY BLAH BLAH TWO TWO BLAH. BLAH  
BLUBBERS BLEFT BLAH BLAH BLAH  
BLAHWAY THREE NONE. BLAH BLAH  
AND BLAH BLAH TWO THOUSBLAH.  
BLAH BLAH ELEVEN O'BLAH, THREE  
BLAH, EASTBLAH, INTERBLABBING 2500.

