Developing curriculum materials using authentic stimuli

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This workshop provides an insight into how we develop training materials based on authentic air-ground recordings for in-house training of Thai ATCOs at Aeronautical Radio of Thailand (the Thai ANSP).

Materials based on authentic recordings provide for more effective curriculum because they are real-world, linked to job needs, accepted by learners as meaningful, contain useful target language, are engaging for learners and often contain communication issues which can be exploited to develop ATC communication strategies.

The workshop provides an overview of the stages involved in developing curriculum materials focusing on both language skills and communication strategies. These stages include: sourcing suitable stimulus; identifying content, themes and language embedded in the stimulus worth exploring via the curriculum; mapping out learning objectives; planning a sequence of tasks which could form the basis of a self-contained and cohesive lesson; writing the curriculum tasks; and reviewing and trialling materials.

During the workshop participants explore how an example of an authentic recording could be used to develop a curriculum unit/lesson by going through each of these stages and mapping out some possible task types against agreed learning objectives.

The workshop concludes by providing an example template of a lesson and accompanying tasks-types based on authentic air-ground recordings. The template proposes the following: 1. Context setting tasks (to engage learners' prior knowledge to introduce theme/topics); 2. Pre-listening tasks (to pre-teach/raise awareness of vocabulary/language points); 3. Listening comprehension tasks (focusing on global meaning followed by listening for specific information); 4. Language/communication analysis tasks (drawing attention to language/communication issues embedded in the stimulus and encouraging learners to recognise gaps in their knowledge and discover language patterns); 5. Consolidation tasks (to provide learners with opportunities to experiment and apply rules/patterns and strategies in guided communication); and 6. Personalisation/creative tasks (allowing learners to use language in ways that are personalised and related to their own work situations/needs in less controlled contexts).