

Editors' Preface

This special edition of the *Applied Linguistics Papers* brings together 12 papers collected thematically in two volumes written by Aviation English researchers and practitioners settled in nine different countries – Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Japan, Poland, Turkey, Ukraine and the USA – therefore representing institutions and universities from around the world. The first volume is devoted to the language assessment of operational personnel and the other one to the latest research issues in the context of aeronautical communications. The idea of having this publication was conceived during the 9th GEIA Seminar, an event held in the hybrid format, with online presentations and in-person workshops, from October 17 to 21, 2022 in Brazil and hosted by the Airspace Control Institute (ICEA). Aviation Communication Research Centre of the University of Warsaw suggested to present the exchanged research results in order to offer other researchers a means of support in their study of Aviation English worldwide. In this way, the Volume introduces readers to current concepts and methodologies in the field. Thanks to the expertise of the authors, we are able to follow not only theoretical assumptions in context, but primarily the analysis of real-life aeronautical communication.

GEIA¹ stands for *Grupo de Estudos em Inglês Aeronáutico* (in Portuguese) and is the Aeronautical English Research Group, accredited by Brazil's National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq²) and maintained by ICEA³, the Airspace Control Institute, the military organization of the Brazilian Air Force. It gathers together researchers from different aviation authorities in Brazil, such as the Department of Airspace Control (DECEA)⁴, ICEA and the National Civil Aviation Agency (ANAC⁵), as well as from prestigious universities spread in different countries. The research studies investigate various aspects of Aeronautical English, in three lines of research – aviation language description and analysis; aeronautical English teaching and learning; aeronautical English testing and assessment – and aims at studying topics such as:

- the description of the language used in pilot-controller radiotelephony communications that go beyond standard phraseology in non-routine and emergency situations, as well as the analysis of the impacts of this communication as a safety component in accidents and incidents, concerning human factors;
- the analysis of the content, syllabus, instructional material, and other elements of English courses and trainings offered to pilots and air

¹ GEIA: [ICEA - Subdiretoria de Ensino - GEIA - Grupo de Estudos em Inglês Aeronáutico \(decea.mil.br\)](http://decea.mil.br)

² CNPq: Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico (in Portuguese)

³ ICEA: Instituto de Controle do Espaço Aéreo (in Portuguese)

⁴ DECEA: Departamento de Controle do Espaço Aéreo (in Portuguese)

⁵ ANAC: Agência Nacional de Aviação Civil (in Portuguese)

traffic controllers, as well as of aviation English teacher training courses and teachers' development;

- the description and analysis of assessment tools used to evaluate pilots' and air traffic controllers' language proficiency for their professional purposes, test development and delivery, washback effect and rater's training;
- other related topics in the interface of Aviation English, such as teaching for other aviation professionals, compilation of glossaries and terminology tools, translation, contrastive analysis with other languages, etc.

The results from those studies aim at the development and improvement of English language teaching, learning, and assessment resources targeted at Brazilian air traffic control professionals, in order to ensure they are able to use English as a tool for safety in operations.

It is also important to emphasize that we consider *Aviation English* as an umbrella term that refers to the use of the English language by any aviation-related professionals, including not only pilots and controllers, but also mechanics, meteorologists, flight attendants, and others. *Aeronautical English*, by its turn, is the type of language used solely by air traffic controllers and pilots while controlling international traffic, and the object of the language proficiency requirements addressed by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) on Doc 9835⁶ (2010). Other researchers from the international community have adopted this distinction in order to avoid misunderstandings⁷. This is why, the term *Aeronautical English* is used in order to emphasize the reference to pilot-ATC communication.

The main objectives of Aviation Communication Research Centre match the GEIA profile. Thus, it fulfills its mission successfully by exchanging research and scientific experience, promoting dialogue between researchers, aviation staff and language trainers. Consequently, the theory and practice are linked in order to serve aviation safety.

- **The 9th GEIA Seminar**

Since its inception in 2013, every year GEIA promotes seminars in which group members and invited researchers present their findings to pilots, air traffic controllers, teachers, examiners, and all the community interested in teaching, learning and assessing Aviation and Aeronautical English. In 2022, building on the success of the previous GEIA Seminars, the 9th GEIA Seminar⁸ was held in a hybrid mode, with online presentations and in person workshops. The online part of the event offered 20 videos of lectures and presentations

⁶ International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO 2010), Doc. 9835 AN/453: *Manual on the implementation of ICAO language proficiency requirements*. 2. ed. Montreal.

⁷ see P. Tosqui-Lucks / A. L. B. de C. Silva (2020). "Aeronautical English: Investigating the nature of this specific language in search of new heights". *The ESPecialist*, 41(3). <https://doi.org/10.23925/2318-7115.2020v41i3a2> and A.P. Borowska (2017) *Avialinguistics. The Study of Language for Aviation Purposes*.

⁸ <https://geia.icea.decea.mil.br/geia/9thseminariogeia/en-us>

delivered by 22 speakers from ten different countries, and brought together 380 attendees from 43 different countries. The in-person part of the event offered four workshops conducted by six Brazilian professionals, including language experts and subject matter experts, to an audience of 50 attendees.

This publication of the *Applied Linguistics Papers*, entitled *Aviation English Special Volume 1 and Volume 2: Enhancing Efficiency in Aeronautical Communications*, is an offshoot of the collaboration of GEIA based in the Airspace Control Institute, in Brazil, and Aviation Communication Research Centre, based in the University of Warsaw in Poland. It brings together twelve papers, focused on aviation language description, teaching, and assessment. All the papers of the Volumes were presented at the 9th GEIA Seminar and the research results were addressed at the panel discussions. Moreover, all the presented articles have been blind reviewed.

The contents particularly address Aeronautical English assessment practices, language analysis, as well as Aeronautical English teaching process in both military and civilian contexts. Thus, enhancing efficiency in aeronautical communication can be realized firstly, through better testing practices, including test development; secondly, through a language description and analysis, especially paying attention to human factors and terminology in use; thirdly, through a proper training practices such as collaboration with subject matter experts and also the use of games in the teaching process.

We believe all the papers collected in this special edition offer enriching discussions that support and promote ways to enhance efficiency in Aviation English communication. Besides collecting the findings in the field of Aeronautical English, this international publication has also contributed to strengthen the partnership between GEIA members and researchers from different parts of the world.

We would like to thank our guest of honor and a keynote speaker of Iowa State University Emeritus Professor Dan Douglas for opening the Volume with his article. Thanks are also due to all the blind reviewers for dedicating their time to carefully analyze the papers. The final versions of texts would not exist without our context-oriented proofreaders: Neil Bullock, John Can, James Anthony Casburn, Jana Fox, Elizabeth Mathews, Alan Orr, Alastair Pennycook, Jennifer Roberts, Tom Simon, and Erin Todler. Our gratitude goes to the *Applied Linguistics Papers* Editor in Chief – prof. Sambor Grucza for giving us this invaluable opportunity to spread the results of our research and to contribute to enhancing efficiency in aeronautical communications.

Together, we are making the skies safer!

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