

Developing Online Tests for Special Language Needs

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Abstract:

Based on a new test for Aviation English this presentation will exemplify the development of an online test for ESP and the criteria that have to be fulfilled in order to establish as high a level of quality as possible. The background to the test is the internationally agreed requirement that as from 2011 all pilots flying across national borders have to demonstrate a minimum level of language proficiency in English. To this end the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) has produced a curriculum and scales to define the required minimum level (ICAO Level 4). These have been used to develop a diagnostic test to enable pilots to ascertain their strengths and weaknesses where they stand in relation to this level. On this basis language teachers can provide a tailor-made course to bring the pilot's proficiency up to the required standard. Following on from this presentation there will be plenty of scope to discuss to what extent this approach is transferable to other special language needs.