



IN ENGLISH, PLEASE



by **Dominique Defossez**,
author of *L'anglais pour voler*
www.anglais-pour-voler.com

Fluent radio communications abroad **5 steps to success**

KEEPING IN MIND THAT MASTERING RADIO COMMUNICATIONS IN ENGLISH STARTS WITH A MINIMUM KNOWLEDGE OF THE LANGUAGE ITSELF, ON WHICH YOU APPLY A VARNISH OF AVIATION ENGLISH, EACH OF THE PARAGRAPHS 1 TO 4 BELOW WILL FIRST GIVE TIPS ON HOW TO IMPROVE BASIC LANGUAGE SKILLS BEFORE MOVING TO THE SPECIALIZED PART.

Step 1 - Build up your vocabulary

It is one of the main pillars of a language (another one being grammar), and there are numerous ways to work on it. www.englishclub.com offers various vocabulary lists. Learning from them can be tedious but also efficient. Scroll down the "Vocab" page to read the post giving "7 tips for learning English vocabulary". Why not try tip n°4? It could help other people around you improve their vocabulary at the same time. Another site to bookmark is www.dictionary.com: sign up for their word-of-the-day email to "get a vocabulary boost in your inbox" and check their numerous word games. For example, in the "games" then "quizzes" category, find out your level by working your way up from 2nd-3rd Grade (7-8 years old!) Vocabulary quizzes. On the aeronautical English front a solid vocabulary base can make the difference in non-standard situations. Start by studying the standard phraseology: Not only will you learn the proper way to express yourself in a concise manner on the radio, but you will also come across the aeronautical vocabulary needed for day-to-day operations. The UK's CAA CAP 413 - The Radiotelephony Manual - can be accessed via the "Publications" button at www.caa.co.uk. Just type CAP 413 in the search box. If you are looking for a reference book more centered on general aviation, download the "EGAST radiotelephony guide for VFR pilots" from the EASA site at www.easa.europa.eu. Again, type the title in the search box to get access to an interactive PDF document offering, among other things, audio recordings of pilot/controller messages.

Step 2 - Read

Reading comes first in the list of 7 tips mentioned above. Follow their advice. Read anything that you can lay your eyes upon, on paper or online. On the paper side, you can subscribe to a monthly publication such as The Connexion, an easy-to-read newspaper published for English-speaking expats living

in France. Check their editorial line at www.connexionfrance.com. On the internet, sites such as www.edition.cnn.com, www.bbc.com/news, www.france24.com/en/, propose posts on international news but also address topics such as travel, culture, health, and entertainment. Halfway between conventional books and online publications, e-readers give access to the electronic version of all sorts of books.

Reading material on aviation-related subjects is also readily available. Sign up for newsletters from specialized magazines like Flyer at www.flyer.co.uk or Flying at www.flying-mag.com, and read articles on sites such as www.skybrary.aero or <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portal:Aviation>, with the extra advantage of Wikipedia having the translation only a click away. Other sites such as www.boldmethod.com and www.pilotworkshop.com are also worth mentioning.

Step 3 - Listen

There are countless ways to listen to English in everyday life: movies and series on TV, news on international news channels, YouTube videos on the internet, to name only the most obvious. For a more academic approach <https://www.esl-lab.com/> offers free access to lessons to "boost your English listening skills", with exercises graded by level.

To train your ear to radio communications in English, there is always www.liveatc.net. Choose the airport according to the time you log in to listen to maximum traffic, or look into their "interesting recordings" files. You can also practice listening and noting down ATIS information: ATIS phone numbers are easy to find in AIPs, or, in the case of UK ATIS phone numbers, on page 32 of the Met Office's "Get-Met" booklet available at: www.metoffice.gov.uk/services/transport/aviation/regulated.

Step 4 - Speak

Start improving your speaking skills by making sure your pronunciation is correct. On-

L'anglais pour voler
available on



Available on the Appstore, the collection of «In English, please» articles with the audio recordings when available. The application has recently been updated with the articles up to May 2019, offering more than 140 pages of aviation-related English practice right at your fingertips.



line dictionaries, such as www.dictionary.com or www.wordreference.com, provide the pronunciation of most words in their extensive databases. Otherwise, there is no better way to gain better fluency in oral production than to participate in conversation classes, either during face-to-face meetings, or phone sessions. Aeronautical English classes can be organized at your local aeroclub or accessed on the internet via specialized sites. Once the basics are secured, there is nothing like the real stuff: take advantage of a quiet time at your local airport to communicate in English with ATC. You can always revert to French if needed.

Step 5 - Practice for the FCL.055 exam

Eventually, all this hard work leads to the FCL.055 exam. If passed, a language proficiency endorsement, equivalent to a permit to fly abroad, will be added onto your license. The FCL.055 exam, as organized by the DGAC, is a very specific exam that has to be prepared ... specifically. A lot has been done in previous "In English, please" articles and in several of Eliot's Practice Papers to help you in that respect. Below is a quick recap of what can be found at www.anglais-pour-voler.com:

- To familiarize yourself with the exam's format, read a former "In English, please" article entitled "The FCL.055 - a user's guide" in the 5th exercise of the Shelter-In-Place Special Edition n°1.
- From September 2020 to June 2021, the "In English, please" articles proposed a phased thematic training - "Back to Basics" and "Practice for the FCL.055 exam" - culminating in May and June with two full FCL.055 exams. These articles were matched in the website "Practice" section with more exercises mirroring each month's subject, including another full exam.
- During the first confinement in the spring of 2020, 7 Shelter-In-Place Special Editions were posted in the "Practice" section, each offering 7 exercises.