

INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ENGLISH CONFERENCE  
7 – 10 July 2014



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**IMEC 26**



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## **The SeaTALK Project Survey of Maritime English - current practices and challenges for the future**

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### **Abstract**

The paper presents a summary of the results of the SeaTALK Project survey. This survey was designed to collect information concerning current practices in Maritime English and the data collected reveals the specifics of the Maritime English language training courses across Europe, including teaching programmes, content, workloads, credit allocation and assessment procedures. The primary objective of the survey is to confirm the validity of the SeaTALK Project but it is felt that the results of the survey will also prove to be of particular interest to IMLA-IMEC and maritime communities in general.

A number of key points and observations have emerged in the process of the data analysis revealing great diversity within MET in terms of types of institutions. Despite this diversity the findings suggest that there is a common content framework which could be used to consolidate practices within the maritime learning community. Today, there are, however, no common standards for Maritime English instruction and the inquiry into the concept of *learning outcomes* reveals a lack of common understanding of the term. Furthermore, credit systems appear to be rigid and no standard method of defining the number of credits is recognizable.

The EU-funded SeaTALK Project aims to develop Maritime English Training modules to be incorporated into an innovative ECVET-based model. The objective is to use

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the model to facilitate the mutual recognition and transparency of learning outcomes and competencies in Maritime English throughout Europe.

**keywords:** *Maritime English, SeaTALK survey, credit system, learning outcomes, training modules, SeaTALK project.*

## **Introduction**

Various aspects of the reform in Maritime Education and Training (MET) institutions and in teaching Maritime English under the requirements of the Bologna Process have been brought to the attention of the IMLA-IMEC audience in the recent years. Research work in MET studies suggests that numerous attempts and efforts to address the complexity of the process and explore the application of its requirements in the maritime educational context have been made throughout the years. Authors have previously identified key problems and expressed deep concern about improving the quality of MET in aspects and elements, such as: the need to “*harmonise the learning outcomes of Maritime English courses along with the results of tests and other forms of assessment*” [1] (Cole & Trenkner 2008); the lack of a common approach to describing workloads within the ECTS credits for Maritime English (Pritchard & Tominac 2009); the existing barriers to mobility of students and teachers across countries and MET institutions in Europe (Pritchard 2013), etc. These are just a few examples of issues that have not only become well-known and widely discussed in the Maritime English teaching community but also have slowed down the implementation of the Bologna Process in a number of European maritime educational settings.

The purpose of this paper is not to go deeper into the problems and the reasons behind them but to present the results of a survey from the perspective of how these results and the implications based on them could be used to achieve the main objectives of the EU-funded SeaTALK Project (<http://www.seatalk.pro>), an EU Lifelong Learning pro-

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gramme, thus speeding up the compliance of Maritime English teaching with the goals of the Bologna Process at MET institutions in Europe.

The paper first gives an overview of what the project aims to achieve and what the survey results will be used for. Then the most important data is presented and discussed in the light of a major challenge facing MET institutions – to strengthen the link between educational and work requirements in order to meet the expectations of the current labour market. This is associated with the concept of learning outcomes and their impact on the main aspects of education ranging from curriculum development and assessment to credit transfer systems.

### **Purpose of the SeaTALK Project survey**

The survey is designed to collect information concerning the current Maritime English language training courses offered at Maritime Universities/Institutions/Training centres across Europe with a view to producing acceptable common learning outcomes. Since the learning outcomes and the number of credits assigned to Maritime English across Europe differ from country to country, and even among the MET institutions of the same country, the information gathered from the survey responses gives insight into some basic common ingredients in the Maritime English learning outcomes that play a significant role in assigning credits to the course.

The project aims to develop Maritime English training modules to be incorporated into an innovative ECVET-based model that could be used to facilitate the mutual recognition and transparency of learning outcomes and competences in Maritime English throughout Europe. Thus, the project will assist National Authorities to recognize and assess, in a standardized manner, levels and qualifications in Maritime English. Furthermore, it will facilitate mobility for current and future seafarers by allowing them to undergo commonly-recognised Maritime English training. This in turn will bring about an adequate response to the expectations of a new generation of learners.

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The results obtained will be considered as a reference point for the creation of a harmonised comprehensive framework of Maritime English Training and Education. Furthermore, the survey results will prove significant for the development of a Maritime English Competence Grid for each seafaring rank and position. This Grid will be linked to the Common European Framework of Reference for languages (CEFR), the latter being regarded as a guideline recommended by the European Council to describe the achievements of foreign language learners across Europe. It will also be used to set up systems of validation for language competencies.

### **Survey design, participants and data collection**

The SeaTALK Project survey<sup>1</sup> is a collaborative effort involving partners from nine countries who have undertaken to investigate the specifics of Maritime English language training courses including teaching programmes, content, learning outcomes, workloads, credit allocation and assessment procedures.

The methodology of the survey design relies on some basic considerations such as: structure, types and sequence of questions, face and content validity, timing the length of the survey responses required, creating an online version, etc. It was important to pilot the questionnaire in order to identify potential problems and *‘to get a better understanding of the frame of reference relevant to the questionnaire and question wording’* [2] (Balnaves&Captui, 2001:87). A suggestion by Foddy (1993:186) to check what the questions would mean to respondents was implemented by asking colleagues to paraphrase the questions using their own words.

The survey consists of twenty-two questions and was carried out between March 2013 and June 2013. Twenty-four teachers/respondents employed in Maritime institutions (21 of which in higher education institutions) in 17 countries across Europe, including the partners in the project, participated in the survey. Therefore, the teacher sample is representative of the target institutions. The method of sampling is not based on any scien-

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tific criteria of representativeness, rather on the willingness to participate and the time available to complete the survey. All project partner members submitted lists of names of professional contacts who were invited to take part in the survey by email.

The countries represented are: Belgium, Bulgaria, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Latvia, Netherlands, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom, Ukraine and Russia. Although the Russian Maritime University (in Vladivostok) is not geographically in Europe it does fall under the Bologna Process/Agreement.

The nature of the survey and the instrument used for data collection required quantitative and qualitative analysis to be carried out. There were practical reasons for doing the analysis by hand due to the relatively small number of respondents to the survey questionnaires.

## **Main findings and implications**

The results of the survey interpret the current situation concerning teaching Maritime English across Europe. Some respondents provided very detailed answers whereas others were less informative. Where answers required further clarification the respondents were contacted by email to provide the relevant data. The results, comprising the answers to the survey questions, have been summarized in 5 tables which can be found in Appendix 2 of the SeaTALK Survey final report at [www.seatalk.pro](http://www.seatalk.pro).

## **Types of MET institutions and level of education**

It was important to explore first the profile of maritime institutions as this is directly linked to the type of Maritime English courses offered within their MET programmes. The data reveals that maritime institutions across Europe differ in several aspects. They are not always independent (maritime) universities but comprise different types of institutions. Perhaps it would be logical to assume that some smaller countries combine naval with merchant marine education and training as a result of the economic advantages.

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Larger countries with stronger economies tend to offer these separately which may be due to the existence of an extensive private sector at the national level that influences the scope of Maritime education and Maritime English, respectively. Findings suggest that frequently the curricula of a particular institution are often predetermined by the institution's "history" and internal capacity rather than recognition of the needs and demands of the international shipping industry. Private institutions are still fewer in number but increasing significantly. One institution claims dependency on private companies reflected in the frequency with which the content of the training modules is changed to suit the requirements of the corresponding private company.

Most respondents report that their university offers a Bachelor of Science (BSc) of 4 years (8 terms) with follow-on courses in the Master's programme (2-4 terms). A lower level of maritime education is provided at the secondary vocational level. The majority of institutions indicate that additional vocational training courses, for example ECDIS, MRM and tanker familiarization, are included in the degree programmes. With the exception of the most common additional courses, the type of vocational training provided is often influenced by the needs and wishes of the students in question. The survey results indicate that in general, curricula are updated on a regular basis ranging from 6 months to 6 years, often to comply with official regulations such as the STCW 2010 Manila Amendments. Education is typically both classroom-based and extramural, complemented in some cases by distance learning. On board training has been reported as playing a major role in maritime education. Institutions offering only 6 terms for the Bachelor level tend to be those that do not offer sea training as separate semesters within the curriculum. Self-study is also cited by most respondents as being an integral and essential part of maritime education. However, it remains unclear how this time can be measured.

Data from the survey establishes, with a reasonable margin, that the typical age of those commencing maritime studies is between 18 and 25, i.e. these are usually school-

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leavers who hope to get a secure and well-paid job. It was important to find out whether a specific level of General English is required at entry level. Results show that in general, (62.5%) maritime institutions are not in a position to demand such a level as a prerequisite for seafarer training. Findings suggest that most institutions would appear to rely on the English language requirements of the secondary education system at the national level to provide a basis for General English competence; however, four institutions indicate that a B1 level (CEFR) is required. Further, countries situated in Eastern Europe appear to rely on their own 'in-house' language courses and include many hours of General English in their curriculum. One respondent indicated a requirement that all prospective candidates to university level maritime education follow a year's preparatory course in English. This situation is unique amongst the respondents, but could have to do with the trend at European universities to use English as the language of instruction, which is currently the case at this university. It is clear that European maritime institutions begin their maritime education at different levels of General English.

### **Number of classes and content of Maritime English courses**

The survey results show that the number of class hours allotted to General English versus Maritime English varies considerably. Over half of the respondents report that their institutions run classes in General English, the number of hours on offer ranging between 20 and 402 mainly in the first or second year of training. For Maritime English, nearly all respondents give specific figures relating to the number of hours dedicated to this subject. These figures range from 15 to 712 hours, with some informants distinguishing between deck and engine (e.g. deck 290 / engine 170). Although half of the respondents reply that the study of Maritime English is an uninterrupted process, in other words that students study the subject every semester, it proves difficult to draw overall conclusions on this point. Yet, as generally there is no English language entry level requirement, the ratio between Maritime English and General English classes per

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semester/academic year will vary depending on the extent to which English is spoken/taught in the respective students' countries.

When focusing on Maritime English, the results reveal that the content of the Maritime English modules in both the Deck and Engineering sections is universally set within an authentic maritime context as far as is possible and is commonly in keeping with the guidelines offered in IMO Model Course 3.17. In addition, respondents also tend to agree that syllabuses, whilst largely relying on the lecturers' own experiences, meet with the national requirements. The actual lists of topics contained in the modules across the 24 institutions are comparable and invariably include selected subjects from the IMO Model Course.

The content of Maritime English courses is supported by a wide range of materials. Most of the respondents reply that they develop their own courses with accompanying textbooks and other resource materials for (exclusive) use in their own institutions. In addition, they indicate a number of well-known publications and materials that appear to be widely used by the survey's participants. These include IMO Model Course 3.17, Marlins "English for Seafarers", the MarEng web-based learning tool for Maritime English and the SMCP. Supplementary material is taken from nautical publications such as Sailing Directions, Bridge Procedures Guide, Guide to Port Entry, COLREGS, SOLAS, MARPOL, etc.

### **Learning outcomes**

One of the key questions in the survey concerns Maritime English competences and learning outcomes (LOs). The question is intended to provide insight into the main objective of the SeaTALK project, namely to define a set of learning outcomes for maritime institutions in Europe. Currently, there exists an evolution in European education with a focus on learning outcomes<sup>2</sup> and their impact on how learning is assessed. Fur-

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/publications/12952.aspx>

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thermore, the concept of LOs has become central to the European credit system for vocational education and training (ECVET) which is one of many European initiatives that encourage learner mobility within the European Union. It focuses on transnational mobility for the purpose of acquiring new knowledge, skills and competences.

Therefore, the concept of LOs has been widely discussed recently in various educational contexts along with types of learning, as it has influenced to a large extent VET curricula development in educational institutions. (Learning Outcomes Approaches in VET Curricula, Cedefop, 2010) These discussions, however, have given rise to a number of interpretations and definitions. This implies a lack of common understanding of what learning outcomes are and the examples provided by the respondents to the survey question confirm that the diversity of interpretations still exists.

Some respondents to the SeaTALK survey questions mention the potential overlap between learning outcomes, learning objectives and competences, which gives rise to confusion. The fact that this confusion still exists among maritime teachers was confirmed by the results from the IMEC 25 workshop on validating learning outcomes.

Based on the interpretation of the European Qualification Framework (EQF), researchers have attempted to identify the key aspects of these concepts. The definitions suggested below help to clarify what they have in common and how they can be contextualised. For the purposes of the SeaTALK survey analysis and this report the following definitions have been used:

### **Learning outcomes**

The EQF defines learning outcomes as “statements of what a learner knows, understands and is able to do on completion of a learning process, which are defined as knowledge, skills and competencies” [3]. (European Parliament and Council of EU, 2008, Annex I) This definition has been accepted and used in EU policy documents.

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## **Competence**

“*Competence can be defined as ‘contextualised learning outcomes’*” (Cedefop, 2009e, p.6), i.e. performance in a given situation which researchers measure against the ability to use certain knowledge and skills adequately.

The main distinction between learning outcomes and learning objectives stems from the relationship between the process of teaching and learning. Learning objectives describe the intentions of the teacher whereas learning outcomes describe the achievements of the learner.

The data collected in this area leads us to suggest that distinguishing between the two terms ‘competence’ and ‘learning outcome’ is, at best, challenging and, in some cases not undertaken at all. One respondent, for example, reflects that “*we currently use competence and learning outcome synonymously*”. Only six respondents give detailed information about their LOs and their answers tend to be general, for example describing the LO as the ability “*to perform professional responsibilities in compliance with STCW’10 operational level requirements*”. In describing LOs one respondent refers to the four language skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening). A second makes a distinction between ‘*knowledge*’ and ‘*skills*’ pointing out that ‘*competences*’ are defined by the phrase ‘*to be able to*’. A third makes no distinction between ‘*knowledge*’ and ‘*skills*’ but also uses the phrase ‘*will be able to*’ when referring to a ‘*competence*’. The fourth distinguishes between ‘*general/specific job-related competences*’ and the concepts of ‘*knowledge*’ and ‘*skills*’ supported by the phrase ‘*to be able to*’. Two informants give “evidence” of LOs by referring to the tests their students should be able to pass successfully, namely CES (Seagull), Marlins, MARENG, and other specialised tests. Two of the informants who give negative answers provide additional information. One of them comments that “*this may alter*”; the other one adds that it is the teacher who develops a list of LOs for each course. Reported information suggests that teachers interpret the concept of LOs in their own way.

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Clearly it is often the language used that determines the expression of certain ideas and assumptions. Just over half of the answers lead to the conclusion that learning objectives and/or outcomes are linked to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) although how the link is made remains unclear. The language level depends on the institution in question but ranges from CEFR B1 to C1.

The survey results clearly show that currently there still exists lack of common understanding of the concept of LOs within MET institutions in Europe which is reflected in the diversity of interpretations. This, in turn, makes it difficult to compare the programmes of study. It implies that not much progress has been made in developing and implementing common descriptors of workload within the ECTS credits allocated to Maritime English courses. Another conclusion is that it is not clear how the LOs provided as examples are linked to the assessment of student performance.

### **Assessment**

Another area of interest to the SeaTALK survey is the type and frequency of assessment of students' performance in achieving the existing Maritime English learning outcomes. Data reveals a wide variety of testing practices and types of tests currently used in MET institutions. This makes it very difficult and almost impossible to compare the approaches to how Maritime English communicative competence is measured. Assessment mostly takes place in the classroom and includes written and oral assignments of many different varieties. Both formative and summative assessment is noted, with frequency ranging from every lesson to once a module or semester. Continuous assessment is also listed. The majority of respondents state that tests are usually teacher-developed and are thus exclusive to the institution in question. Only two respondents refer to commercial tests being used, namely Headway and TOEIC.

According to the results, four institutions have final exams. This demonstrates the equal status of English to other specialized subjects in these institutions.

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The question about assessment is limited in scope and does not request any additional information on the kinds of tests, their validity and reliability and whether they measure knowledge or skills and competences or are designed as integrated. Nevertheless, the results suggest that each institution uses its own resources, experience and understanding of how and when Maritime English competence should be measured and how results should be interpreted. This, in turn, shows that despite the major breakthrough of the Maritime English Competence Yardstick as a standard it hasn't been applied properly and consistently yet. It may have been too early to expect changes in teachers' perceptions and attitudes to testing practices to occur automatically.

### **European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) Credits**

The existing diversity of learning outcomes makes it difficult to compare not only how their achievement by students is assessed in the MET institutions participating in the survey but also how European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) credits are allocated to courses of Maritime English.

Data reveals that typically the number of credits for Maritime English ranges from 5 to 8. In some cases much higher figures were given (e.g. 60 or 270) but these answers were most likely referring to a total number of credits, covering all subjects.

Where a distinction between Deck and Engineering is made the number of credits ranges from 4 to 32 for deck and 27.5 for engineering. Such a distinction is worth making, as it may show whether the general principle of having more classes with deck students than with engineering students is still practiced, taking into consideration some major changes that have been brought about by engine automation on board ships. The results, in general, seem to reflect an established credit scheme, i.e. 1 credit per 13 class-based hours and 14 self-study hours. Answers like "1 credit per 15 hours" in any discipline show that the status of the English language equals that of the other key subjects.

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Six institutions have not defined their credits yet which seems to suggest that these institutions are still in the preparation stage of meeting the Bologna requirements in this area.

It can be concluded that the number, level and credit value of the units are defined at the national level by the respective institutions and that the aim of the SeaTALK Project thus is to find the relationship between Units, LOs and qualification.

## **Conclusions**

The purpose of this paper is to present the results of the SeaTALK project survey concerning the current state of Maritime English language training courses at Maritime institutions across Europe. In the light of the Bologna Process requirements regarding higher education systems the data collected reveals great diversity within MET in terms of types of institutions. This influences some other parameters such as the age of the student, the duration of studies, the number of hours, etc. Despite this diversity there is a common content framework, not least for Maritime English, which encompasses important issues. This undoubtedly helps to consolidate practices within the maritime learning community. All MET institutions have a common core of maritime topics, experienced teaching staff and updated curricular and teaching materials. In addition, most organise follow-on Master's courses or additional vocational courses. Assessment procedures are well-established in the form of different methods and test types. It is fair to say that national parameters have a strong influence on maritime education and assessment. This may, for some countries, be the result of financial factors.

There are, however, no common standards for Maritime English Instruction and the inquiry into the concept of *learning outcomes* reveals a lack of mutual understanding of the term. Although lists of learning outcomes do exist, these are not necessarily transparent and user-friendly. Furthermore, credit systems appear to be rigid and no standard method of defining the number of credits is recognisable. Thus, this survey confirms the

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validity of the SeaTALK project to interpret the current situation and provide a solution that facilitates the mutual recognition and transparency of learning outcomes and competences in Maritime English throughout Europe.

### **Challenges for the future**

The concept of LOs is not fully comprehended and implemented by all MET institutions or not properly included in the curricular. Therefore, the LOs approach in the vocational education and training (VET) curricula of Maritime English needs further analysis and improvement.

ECVET should be part of the policy of the respective MET institution or even of the respective Maritime Administration, not of the language departments in particular.

In many cases Maritime English is not assigned equal status with other key subjects and perhaps this should be changed.

The main implication for assessment is that it should be focused on judging whether the learner is communicatively competent in a work situation. This judgement should be based on valid and reliable tests which, in turn calls for the on-going development of appropriate standardised assessment tools for Maritime English that should verify whether the student has achieved the established learning outcomes.

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## **Which teaching materials? Mapping linguistic competences, learning outcomes and professional standards to build an integral Maritime English syllabus**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The workshop focuses on a core aspect of the SeaTALK project: training modules to support competence-based teaching and learning within the Maritime English curriculum. Current trends in tertiary education, at academic, professional and vocational levels, encourage, even demand, strict correlation of performance criteria with professional competences or standards. Consequently, in MET institutions, it is becoming common practice that competences and learning outcomes within Maritime English programmes should present a clear link to the STCW<sup>①</sup>. With a view to amassing a database of teaching and learning materials specific to Maritime English, the workshop is designed to allow participants to share and gather perceptions as to how existing materials could be interrelated with the learning outcomes derived from STCW. The consequent exchange of ideas should provide a rich basis of Maritime English material which may, eventually, be included in SeaTALK training modules and lay the keystones for guidelines, or even standards, in the future.

**keywords:** *training modules, SeaTALK, competences, learning outcomes, STCW, Maritime English teaching materials, standards*

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<sup>①</sup> International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping, 1978, as amended

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## **Workshop Rationale and Outline**

Maritime English has come to be recognised as the established *lingua franca* for use during professional activities on board and is the recommended or, in certain circumstances, mandatory means of communication to ensure safe navigation. Despite this, there have been few attempts to establish universal standards in Maritime English, leaving the setting of such standards to national maritime authorities, MET institutions and individual Maritime English instructors. The lack of established standards constitutes an apparent failure to meet expectations and requirements within the industry. With the exception of the IMO Model Course 3.17, a significant hindrance to meeting these requirements has been the non-existence of a standard Maritime English syllabus<sup>①</sup> [1].

Current revision of the Model Course 3.17 for Maritime English will produce an updated syllabus and provide a revised database of resources, including a variety of online resources to illustrate the curriculum. The SeaTALK project<sup>②</sup> contains elements which will run parallel to the revised IMO Model Course 3.17. The project undertakes to develop Maritime English training modules to be incorporated into an innovative ECVET<sup>③</sup>-based model. The objective is to use the model to facilitate the mutual recognition and transparency of learning outcomes and competences in Maritime English throughout Europe. Thus, the project will assist National Authorities to recognise and assess, in a standardised manner, levels and qualifications in Maritime English. In addition, it will facilitate mobility for current and future seafarers by allowing them to undergo commonly-recognised Maritime English training.

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<sup>①</sup> IMO Model Course 3.17 is a notable exception. However, although the so-called “Model Course” may be considered a syllabus it does not provide guidance or reference to teaching materials and thus, it may be argued, does not constitute a course.

<sup>②</sup> [www.seatalk.pro](http://www.seatalk.pro)

<sup>③</sup> European Credit transfer system for Vocational Education and Training

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The workshop focuses on a core aspect of the project; training modules to support competence-based learning within the Maritime English curriculum. Current trends in tertiary education, at academic, professional and vocational levels, encourage, even demand, strict correlation of performance criteria with professional competences or standards. Consequently, in MET institutions, it is becoming common practice that competences and learning outcomes within Maritime English programmes should present a clear link to the STCW<sup>①</sup>. The SeaTALK projects provides a series of competence grids, one for each level and rank of seafarer, wherein linguistic criteria and learning outcomes as well as the professional (STCW) standard are shown. The grids, which aim to be reader-friendly, permit the user, at a glance, to map the occupational on board standard to the linguistic competence. A sample copy of the Maritime English Competence Grid for Deck Officers Operational Level, showing learning outcome 3.A, is provided as an appendix to this paper<sup>②</sup>.

To accompany the competence grids, the SeaTALK consortium aims to create a database of teaching and learning materials specific to Maritime English for inclusion in the training modules. The final deliverable will provide the maritime community with a comprehensive database of training material tailored to each rank and level of seafarer.

This is not the first time that there has been an attempt to collect and collate learning materials for Maritime English. Pritchard's "*A Survey of Maritime English Materials – State of the Art in Maritime English*" [2] provided, at the time, a comprehensive overview of materials used in Maritime English teaching and learning. As Pritchard pointed out "no single material (textbook or other) has imposed itself yet as the material with worldwide use or the one setting standards to other Maritime English materials, though one or two have found a wider, international use (e.g. T.N. Blakey 1987 or SEASPEAK

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<sup>①</sup> International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping, 1978, as amended

<sup>②</sup> See Appendix 1, Maritime English Competence Grid for Deck Officers Operational Level, Learning outcome 3.A

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1988 and, most recently, P. van Kluijven 2003<sup>①</sup>”. Since then MarEng, an online tool for learning Maritime English, may, arguably, also be considered to have moved into the ranks of internationally used material. Following Pritchard’s extensive survey, a web-based database of Maritime English resources was made available.<sup>②</sup>

To some extent the SeaTALK database will mirror both the collection provided by Pritchard and the database offered in the Model Course 3.17. Provision of a syllabus and accompanying database of Maritime English materials will be presented without recourse to pedagogical dogma. Thus the consortium aims to supply a comprehensive and, more significantly, accessible database, containing materials that may be readily obtained. The user will be able to select items from a variety of material in order to achieve the desired linguistic competence and standard, according to the rank and level of seafarer in question.

During the workshop participants will discuss how specific professional competences in the STCW may be construed in a Maritime English context. Correlation between language criteria, learning outcomes and professional competences will be examined and participants will be asked to consider which types of teaching/learning material may be considered useful to achieve a particular Maritime English standard as set out in the training modules within the SeaTALK Project. The authors will provide groups of participants with a handout<sup>③</sup> in the form of a table which will both stimulate discussion and provide space for annotation about specific teaching / learning materials. In a similar appeal to that made by Pritchard in 2004, the consortium hopes to gain support from

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<sup>①</sup> As quoted in Pritchard: Blakey, T.N. (1987). *English for Maritime Studies*. Prentice Hall International (UK) Ltd, Hemel Hempstead, U.K.

Weeks, F. et al. (1988). *SEASPEAK*. Oxford: Pergamon Press

van Kluijven, P.C., (2003) *International Maritime Language Programme*. 6th edition. Alk & Heijnen Publishers, Alkmaar, The Netherlands

<sup>②</sup> Maritime English resources databank at <http://www.pfri.uniri.hr/~bopri/mareng/login.php>

<sup>③</sup> See Appendix 2, handouts used in the workshop

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IMEC participants in the form of concrete examples of material used in MET institutions, thus bolstering the existent collection of resources.

## **References**

- [1] Cole, C., Pritchard B. & Trenkner P. (2005). The professional profile of a Maritime English instructor (PROFS): An interim report. (D. Nielsen, Ed.). Maritime Security and MET, Proceedings of the International Association of Maritime Universities (IAMU) 6th Annual General Assembly and Conference. 65-71, Southampton: WIT-Press
- [2] Pritchard, B. (2004) A Survey of Maritime English Materials – State of the Art in Maritime English, IAMU, Tokyo

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Appendix 1:  
 Extract from Maritime English Competence Grid within the SeaTALK project  
 (www.seatalk.pro)

Maritime English for Deck Officers - Operational Level  
 derived from STCW 78, as amended and IMO Model Course 3.17

Maritime English Competence Grid

The Competence Description Grid is part of the SeaTALK Project which aims to create a harmonized comprehensive framework for a common Maritime English education and training for seafarers, including a ME ECVET system. SeaTALK aims to establish a common qualifications recognition system in EU based on IMO requirements for each rank of seafarers (STCW 78 as amended). The Grid is linked to CEFR and incorporates the findings of the IMO Model Course 3.17, the ECVET system, the highly successful MarTEL Phase tests and a survey of Maritime English Modules offered in MET institutions.

**English language competence requirements at intermediate level (MarTEL B2) – language skills and communicative functions**

**The learner should demonstrate confident use of all four language skills with a particular focus on the following communicative functions:**

- Listening skills** – understanding: the content of routine and emergency messages despite interference from pronunciation and accent; explicitly and implicitly stated information; main idea and supporting details; relatively large information loads;
- Speaking skills** – communicating clearly without causing misunderstanding; using the appropriate SMCP phrase in various situations; taking part in meaningful interactions - adopting a level of formality where appropriate; entering and maintaining a conversation; describing procedures, presenting ideas, comments and supporting points of view; explaining stages in a process; asking for relevant information;
- Reading skills** – understanding, interpreting, analysing and evaluating maritime specific information; understanding main points and details; recognising symbolic writing and abbreviated forms; recognizing different types of authentic text and register; deducing information from documents and complex authentic texts

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<p>3. Carry out successfully watch-keeping duties and routine procedures on board and in port as required by STCW 78 as amended</p>	<p><b>The learner should be able to:</b></p> <p>3.A Demonstrate the knowledge to communicate successfully during OOW duties and those related to navigation in all weather conditions</p>	<p>3.A.1 Interpret correctly and explain symbolic data (e.g. nautical charts, satellite charts, weather maps)</p> <p>3.A.2 Demonstrate knowledge of the content, application and purpose of STCW procedures</p> <p>3.A.3 Comment on COLREGs; explain and support reasons for actions taken; produce an oral/written report on incidents at sea</p> <p>3.A.4 Orally describe types/parts of vessel, places on board and purpose of equipment (e.g. anchoring equipment, mooring winches, etc.)</p> <p>3.A.5 Orally summarise events of a watch after reading log book entries and orally report information from check lists/trouble-shooting charts</p> <p>3.A.6 Give a presentation on COLREGs and interpret accurately the rules of the road; explain the meaning and use of various lights, buoys, shapes and fog signals</p> <p>3.A.7 Confidently use the SMCP to communicate with VTS and warn other ships about dangers, weather conditions, obstructions and incidents at sea</p> <p>3.A.8 Demonstrate the ability to read, listen and understand weather forecasts and other messages (e.g. Navtex, e-mails, radio communications)</p> <p>3.A.9 Orally describe stages in preparing for sea and arrival in port; give correct helm orders and relevant numerical information (e.g. compass points, bearings, distances)</p>	
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Appendix 2

Handouts used in the workshop

Teaching/Learning Material Definition with respect to STCW Based Language Learning Outcomes (Sample OS.1-LLO.1A)

Occupational Standard*	Language Learning Outcomes**	Language Performance Criteria***	Please list the teaching /learning materials you (your institution) use to achieve the language performance criteria listed ( or Please make suggestions)
<p>1. Use effectively all relevant documents related to work and international requirements (SOLAS, MARPOL, STCW as amended, ILO conventions; ISM, ISPS codes).*</p>	<p><b>The learner should be able to:</b></p> <p>1.A Demonstrate knowledge of the content, application and purpose of nautical publications and extract relevant information</p>	<p>1.1.A.1 Can read, understand and work with conventional written documentation found on board .</p> <p>1.1.A.2 Comprehend and use information from Sailing Directions, G to port entry, COLREGs, List of lights and List of radio signals, NAV information, Notices to Mariners, shipping correspondence</p> <p>1.1.A.3 Comprehend and use adequately technical manuals, drawing charts and tables (e.g. Lists of lights and Fog signals, Tide tables) and infer meaning from graphical, symbolic and numerical information herein included</p>	<p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p> <p>5.</p> <p>6.</p> <p>7.</p> <p>8.</p> <p>9.</p> <p>10.</p>

Would you be willing to see your materials listed in the SeaTALK Maritime English training modules? Yes / No .....

If you have answered 'yes, would you kindly provide your name and email address?

Name: ....

Email: ....

\* Reference for Occupational Standard: STCW Table A-II/1

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**Teaching/Learning Material Definition with respect to STCW Based Language Learning Outcomes (Sample OS.2-LLO.2A)**

Occupational Standard*	Language Learning Outcomes**	Language Performance Criteria***	Please list the teaching /learning materials you (your institution) use to achieve the language performance criteria listed ( or Please make suggestions)
<p><b>2.</b> Apply communicative strategies successfully in day-to-day functional situations at sea*</p>	<p><b>The learner should be able to:</b></p> <p><b>2. A</b> Demonstrate the ability to listen and communicate internally (within the ship) in routine, face-to-face situations especially with multi-lingual, multi-ethnic crews</p>	<p><b>2.A.1</b> Orally narrate, describe and compare events, places, processes (e.g. ports, voyages, weather conditions) and communicate about events in the future)</p> <p><b>2.A.2</b> Demonstrate the ability to exchange information orally, give opinions and support points of view (e.g. vessels, ship positions, course of action, current and routine situations)</p> <p><b>2.A.3</b> Understand and carry out orders, ask for and give relevant information (e.g. directions, procedures)</p> <p><b>2.A.4</b> Discuss and analyse onboard incidents, maintenance, general repairs and breakdowns, reasons for and consequences of miscommunication on board (e.g. MARS reports)</p>	<p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p> <p>5.</p> <p>6.</p> <p>7.</p> <p>8.</p> <p>9.</p> <p>10.</p> <p>11.</p> <p>12.</p>

Would you be willing to see your materials listed in the SeaTALK Maritime English training modules? Yes / No .....  
 If you have answered 'yes, would you kindly provide your name and email address?

Name: ....

Email: ....

\* Reference for Occupational Standard: STCW Table A-II/1

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**Teaching/Learning Material Definition with respect to STCW Based Language Learning Outcomes (Sample OS.3-LLO.3A)**

Occupational Standard*	Language Learning Outcomes**	Language Performance Criteria***	Please list the teaching /learning materials you (your institution) use to achieve the language performance criteria listed ( or Please make suggestions)
<p><b>3.</b> Carry out successfully watch-keeping duties and routine procedures on board and in port as required by STCW 78 as amended.*</p>	<p><b>The learner should be able to:</b>  <b>3.A</b> Demonstrate the knowledge to communicate successfully during OOW duties and those related to navigation in all weather conditions</p>	<p>3.A.1 Interpret correctly and explain symbolic data (e.g. nautical charts, satellite charts, weather maps)                      3.A.2 Demonstrate knowledge of the content, application and purpose of STCW procedures.                      3.A.3 Comment on COLREGs; explain and support reasons for actions taken; produce an oral/written report on incidents at sea.                      3.A.4 Orally describe types/parts of vessel, places on board and purpose of equipment (e.g. anchoring equipment, mooring winches, etc.)                      3.A.5 Orally summarise events of a watch after reading log book entries and orally report information from check lists/trouble-shooting charts.                      3.A.6 Give a presentation on COLREGs and interpret accurately the rules of the road; explain the meaning and use of various lights, buoys, shapes and fog signals.                      3.A.7 Confidently use the SMCP to communicate with VTS and warn other ships about dangers, weather conditions, obstructions and incidents at sea.                      3.A.8 Demonstrate the ability to read, listen and understand weather forecasts and other messages (e.g. Navtex, e-mails, radio communications)</p>	<p>1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13.</p>

Would you be willing to see your materials listed in the SeaTALK Maritime English training modules? Yes / No .....  
 If you have answered 'yes, would you kindly provide your name and email address?

Name: ....

Email: ....

\* Reference for Occupational Standard: STCW Table A-1/1 \*\* Produced within the SeaTALK Project

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**Teaching/Learning Material Definition with respect to STCW Based Language Learning Outcomes (Sample OS.4-LLO.4A)**

<b>Occupational Standard*</b>	<b>Language Learning Outcomes*</b>	<b>Language Performance Criteria**</b>	<b>Please list the teaching /learning materials you (your institution) use to achieve the language performance criteria listed ( or Please make suggestions)</b>
<p><b>4.</b> Carry out successfully cargo operations*</p>	<p><b>The learner should be able to:</b>  <b>4.A</b> Demonstrate the knowledge and ability to communicate efficiently during cargo operations.</p>	<p><b>4.A.1</b> Describe port/ship cargo handling facilities and equipment; outline the general stages in cargo handling and give clear instructions  <b>4.A.2</b> State clearly and accurately requirements, request corrective actions and give arguments (e.g. cargo handling, stowage, securing, trim, stability)  <b>4.A.3</b> Identify and name types of packaging, receptacles and marking; give arguments about improper packaging, handling techniques, dunnage, securing  <b>4.A.4</b> Use the SMCP for cargo handling procedures and reporting incidents related to cargo damage; write a damage report  <b>4.A.5</b> Discuss and report information related to the stowage plan and cargo documents; identify and insert appropriate remarks in cargo documents  <b>4.A.6</b> Demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively with shore labour/agent/chief officer  <b>4.A.7</b> Give and write down numerical information correctly during loading, discharging and supply operations  <b>4.A.8</b> Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of written requirements and manuals for carriage of cargo everyday communications</p>	<p>1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13.</p>

Would you be willing to see your materials listed in the SeaTALK Maritime English training modules? Yes / No .....

If you have answered 'yes, would you kindly provide your name and email address?

Name: ....

Email: ....

\* Reference for Occupational Standard: STCW Table A-1/1      \*\* Produced within the SeaTALK Project

## Using Authentic Maritime Materials to Improve English Language Skills

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### Joint Workshop Activity Abstract

It is acknowledged by all concerned that effective knowledge of English at sea and in ports is a must for all seafarers responsible for safety and security of the ship, her crew and her passengers.

A recent survey carried out by the SeaTALK project shows that MET institutions try to prepare their students to use English effectively at sea in many and varied ways; sometimes even by changing the language of instruction to English or offering students an English preparatory year before the main courses start. All these efforts naturally improve the English language proficiency of the students but there remains the ‘lingua franca’ barrier, with its complex lexicon, grammar and structure not to mention alien maritime context.

This workshop focuses on overcoming this ‘barrier’, through the use of authentic maritime materials to improve the English language skills of the students. It aims to establish a joint study and practice of converting everyday on board materials like COLREGs, NAVTEX messages, maintenance manuals, operating instructions, emergency procedures etc. into *language skill exercises* so that seafarers of the future can be better prepared for the effective use of English at sea.

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This workshop will also contribute to the current EU funded LdV project SeaTALK which aims to develop standard ME training modules for mutual recognition and transparency of learning outcomes in ME through the consolidation of existing teaching/learning materials.

**keywords:** *Maritime English, language skills, teaching/learning materials, training modules, SeaTALK project*

**Workshop Activity Program:** (*Running Time: 1 hour*)

00:00 – 00:10 minutes:

**Introduction**

The authors will briefly discuss the pros and cons of using authentic materials in the classrooms when teaching Maritime English and explain their role in consolidation of the learning materials for the SeaTALK project.

00:10 – 00:30 minutes:

**Group Study**

The audience will be divided into 4-6 groups and will be handed out certain authentic materials which are gathered from the routines or emergencies on board.

They will be asked to utilize/transform these materials into teaching or learning materials in terms of approach, method and assessment for the improvement of a language skill.

00:30 – 00:55 minutes:

**Evaluation of the study and discussion**

The group representatives will be invited to present the results of their group study to the participants and explain their expected learning outcome by using such material. They will also be welcomed to express their views on the

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use of authentic materials in teaching/learning Maritime English.

00:55 – 00:60 minutes:

**Conclusions and end statement**

Authors' closing statement briefly summarises the workshop conclusions and thanks the participants for their involvement.

**Requested Equipment:**

1. One computer connected to a projector.
2. Sufficient amount of blank sheets and writing utensils for use by participants.
3. A wireless microphone for the participants to voice their comments and views.