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## **ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES: THE COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH**

Today, millions of people want to improve their English or ensure that their students are fluent in English. Students set goals to be able to master English with a high level of accuracy and fluency. Therefore, employers also insist that their employees have a good command of English, and fluency in English is a prerequisite for success and progress in many fields of employment. Constantly growing need for good English communication skills has created a huge demand for teaching English and for quality language, teaching materials and appropriate teaching methodology.

Maritime English has been widely used, given the challenges of modern world trade. Sailors use English as their working language, for communication not only for personal purposes but also for professional ones, so maritime English lies in the realm of English in the workplace.

In fact, Maritime English evolved from General English, and therefore communication in English can be for both maritime and general purposes. To develop a standard program for students, it is necessary to study the processes of learning and teaching both General English and Maritime English [3]. The relationship between GME and SME is one of gradation and preparation, with GME leading into SME; the former being the preparation for the latter [2, s. 11]. English for Specific Purposes (ESP) has become a fruitful field over the last three decades. As a learner-centered approach, its main purpose has been that of fulfilling the specific needs of target learners to satisfy either their professional or vocational demands [1, s. 380].

The main purpose of the article is to characterize the features of applying a communicative approach to teaching specialized marine English.

Under the STCW Convention, all officers in charge of a watch must have a good command of spoken and written English. Senior officers with functions at a managerial level must also speak and write English, since this is a requirement at the previous level of responsibility. Ratings forming part of a navigational watch are required to be able to comply with helm orders issued in English. Crew members assisting passengers during emergency situations should be able to communicate safety-related issues in English or in the language spoken by the passengers and other personnel on board. In these days of multi-national and multilingual crews, the importance of

sharing a common language cannot be underestimated [5, s. 49]. The concept underlying the specific requirements of the STCW Code is that seafarers should be able to use English for professional purposes.

In order for students to achieve the required level of competence, an English teacher responsible for teaching Specialized Maritime English must implement an effective approach. To help instructors achieve this aim, the Communicative Approach should be selected as the principal means of instruction and student learning in combination at times with other approaches such as Content Based Instruction, Task Based Learning and Lexical Approach [2]. For effective teaching and learning of a language, teachers need to understand the methodology of the communicative approach in order to be able to create tasks appropriate to their students' learning needs, develop communicative competence of students and implement a curriculum.

The underlying practice of the Communicative Approach is based on:

- language as a practical tool of communication
- student-centred teaching
- English taught through English
- students learning by active involvement
- learning tasks reflecting real life communication [2, s. 210].

The need to make communication the primary focus of teaching materials and classroom activities has long been a core assumption of communicative methodology [4, s. 93]. The English teacher should consider the professional needs of students who are proficient in the functional language skills required in the labor market. Therefore, materials should be oriented towards a specialized professional context. This principle should be adhered to with students starting from the first year, who need to be ready to undergo maritime practice in the second year, and, accordingly, to undergo a preliminary interview with companies.

Reflecting the part that communication skills are important criteria for crew companies' selection of cadets, the English teacher should introduce topics related to them and do not require too specialized terminology. Here are some examples of topics that can be presented for the first course in the course of studying Marine English at the beginning of the first semester. (Module: Maritime education. (Topic: Personal data (the first meet a person, my family, my native city); Topic: Working time and leisure (daily routine, my favourite subject, in my free time, extracurricular activities).

The communicative approach involves the use of tasks that require students to use English to achieve a result. For example, Module: Bulk cargo carriers. Students must surf for information about a bulker on site and complete column A (A: your ship) in the table about the ship than ask and answer questions to complete the second column of table (B: your group

mate's ship). Finally, students compare the bulkers according to their name, basic dimensions, cargo, onboard loading equipment if any, number of holds, hatch cover type. The following example is for the same module: a) write down the questions to interview group mates about tankers design, their cargo and cargo handling equipment; b) ask your group mates to complete the table; c) describe a tanker in terms of her design, cargo and cargo handling equipment. It appears that students may be asked to complete a table after receiving information from their group mate, or they may be asked to find a solution to a problem together in groups.

The key feature of this type of learning is that students need to use language for realistic functions: asking (ask and answer questions on properties of the cargo); discussing (decipher the abbreviations and discuss the purposes of tankers) and for realistic purposes (e.g. finding out information: write down the questions to interview group mates about tankers design, their cargo and cargo handling equipment; exchanging opinions: conduct a group survey «What cargo would you prefer to work with – break bulk/neobulk/ containerized?» The activity is conducted in small groups). It has to be considered that by actively using English to complete tasks, students can learn a language from each other as well as practice communicating in a social context.

The results of the study suggest that the key to successfully implementing Maritime English is an understanding of the goals and principles of communicative learning and learning processes, combined with careful preparation. Thus, it is important for an English teacher to know the specifics of communicative training and take into account all aspects related to its use.

### References:

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