

Research on Teaching and Reform of Maritime English Listening and Conversation Course Based on IMO Maritime English Demonstration Course

Wang Die, Zhou You

Hubei Communications Technical College, Wuhan, Hubei, China

Abstract: IMO's Model Courses in maritime English play a vital role in maritime education and training, which can ensure the quality of seafarers' training, optimize the standards and specifications of existing training courses, and enhance the implementation level of the standards stipulated in the International Maritime Organization STCW Convention. Based on the teaching practice of maritime English listening and conversation in maritime colleges and universities, this paper puts forward a series of curriculum reform measures based on IMO Model Courses structure model. By optimizing the curriculum, we aim to achieve an organic connection between basic English and professional English; Clarify course standards to ensure seamless integration between course content and practical work; Innovate teaching modes to cultivate students' effective use of maritime English and interpersonal communication ability. At the same time, we will strengthen the construction of the teaching staff and improve teachers' professional English teaching level and practical abilities. Teaching reform of maritime English listening and conversation course can break the shackles of traditional teaching mode, stimulate students' interest in learning, push maritime English education in China to a new level, cultivate more maritime talents with international competitiveness, and contribute to the vigorous development of China's shipping industry.

Keywords: IMO Model Course; Maritime English; Maritime English Listening and Conversation; Reform in Education

1. Introduction

In the context of global economic integration,

the shipping industry, as an important pillar of international trade, is closely related to the professional competence and international communication ability of crew members. With the continuous improvement of the International Maritime Organization's (IMO) requirements for seafarers' English communication skills, the teaching and reform of maritime English listening and conversation courses have become particularly important. The series IMO of demonstration courses developed by provide member countries with standardized training models and methods for seafarers, including the Maritime English Demonstration Course, aimed at improving the effective communication skills of seafarers from non-native English speaking countries, ensuring the safety of maritime operations and environmental protection^[1].

While facing new opportunities in the international seafarer market, China's maritime education also faces many challenges. Currently, the output of Chinese seafarers in the international shipping market is still limited by their comprehensive English proficiency, especially their listening and speaking abilities. This not only affects the international competitiveness of Chinese seafarers, but also restricts the development of China's shipping industry. The "Development Plan for Chinese Seafarers (2016-2020)" also emphasizes the promotion of the application of IMO demonstration courses in the education and training of Chinese seafarers, and further improves the quality of education and training for Chinese seafarers. Therefore, based on the IMO maritime English demonstration courses, conducting in-depth research on the teaching and reform of maritime English listening and conversation courses has important practical significance and strategic value.

2. Application Analysis of IMO Maritime

English Demonstration Course

2.1 Course Introduction

The IMO Demonstration Course^[2] is a standardized teaching template established by the International Maritime Organization to enhance the quality of global seafarer training. These courses cover STCW (Standards of Training, Certification, Watchkeeping for Seafarers)^[3]. All the requirements of the convention aim to assist contracting parties, especially developing countries, in accurately understanding and implementing the content of the convention. These courses are not officially explained, but due to their

comprehensive teaching content and structured design, they have become important references and templates for international maritime education. The IMO demonstration course adopts a unified structural pattern, as shown in Table 1. From this, it can be seen that The IMO demonstration course is a technical content and training guide based on the STCW Convention, combined with job analysis and course development ideas. This enables students from different countries and knowledge backgrounds to become qualified sailors who meet international standards through systematic learning and training.

Table 1. IMO Demonstration Course Structure Model

Model course structure	content	Specific explanation
Course Introduction	Course Introduction	Basic description of exemplary courses, including usage instructions
Part A	Course Structure	Course nature, course objectives, admission criteria, certificate specifications, training scale, instructor requirements, training facilities and equipment, use of simulators, reference materials, etc
Part B	Course Overview	Suggestions on teaching content, teaching hours, and simulation demonstrations
Part C	teaching program	Write according to teaching objectives, clarify the level of knowledge, understanding, and skill mastery
Part D	Faculty Handbook	Important reference materials and basis for training and teaching
Part E	Teaching evaluation	Provide effective evaluation information for teaching objectives, including evaluation purposes, forms, methods, etc
Course Guide	Implement course guidance	Provide guidance on the preparation, teaching techniques, and course development for the effective implementation of demonstration courses, applicable to all demonstration courses

IMO Maritime English Demonstration Course^[4-5], course number ModelCourse3.17, is divided into two core parts: General Maritime English (GME) and Professional Maritime English (SME), aimed at enhancing the English communication skills of non-native English speaking seafarers and meeting the English requirements of the international shipping industry. GM Part E starts with language foundation, integrates maritime topics, cultivates students' comprehensive English application ability, and accumulates professional vocabulary, laying a solid foundation for subsequent SME learning. SM E further delves into the application of professional English in the field of navigation, ensuring that students can communicate freely in complex maritime environments.

The IMO maritime English demonstration course was jointly revised and officially

published by the International Federation of Maritime Teachers and Shanghai Maritime University in 2015. The revision of the course closely follows the dynamics of international maritime regulations, especially after the Manila Amendment to the STCW Convention. Shanghai Maritime University has taken active actions, conducted multiple investigations, preparations, and proposals, and ultimately led to a comprehensive update of the course content to ensure it is in line with the latest needs of the shipping industry. The successful revision and publication of the IMmaritime English demonstration course not only reflects China's influence in the field of international maritime education, but also provides high-quality English learning resources for non-native English speaking seafarers worldwide, promoting the standardization and internationalization of global maritime

education.

2.2 Analysis of the Localization Application of Courses in China

Under the promotion of the national maritime department, China launched research on the localization of IMO demonstration courses in 2011, and has been striving to promote and apply them domestically. So far, domestic maritime colleges and maritime institutions have participated in the development, and more than 40 courses have been translated and published by Dalian Maritime University Press. At the same time, based on the reference to the content of the demonstration courses and the requirements of the STCW Convention, the National Maritime Administration has formulated a version of the "People's Republic of China Seafarer Training Outline" every 5 years, with the latest version being the "People's Republic of China Seafarer Training Outline (2021 Edition)". The training outline emphasizes the "job competency" orientation and integrates the basic components of IMO demonstration courses, such as training content, training objectives, teaching hours, facilities and equipment, instructors, etc., providing standards for maritime management agencies to certify the courses of their training institutions and colleges; The Maritime Safety Administration has also organized the preparation of the "Seafarer Examination Outline (2022 Edition)" in accordance with the "People's Republic of China Seafarer Competency Examination and Certification Rules" and the "Seafarer Training Outline (2021 Edition)", aiming to further enhance the competency of seafarers.

In the current maritime education system in China, the core of crew training still focuses on academic education. This traditional model not only promotes the construction of knowledge system, but also invisibly sets obstacles for the widespread implementation and application of IMO demonstration courses. The IMO main reason for the slow progress of promoting demonstration courses in China is that^[6]: (1) the course development only meets the minimum requirements of the STCW Convention, and the quality of students in Chinese academic education is higher than the standard, so teaching needs to be adjusted and difficult to replicate; (2) The curriculum system differs greatly from the training system

in China, and only provides a reference summary, which cannot be directly used as a textbook; (3) The demonstration course has a long duration and needs to be divided into multiple courses or chapters for teaching, making the teaching arrangement difficult.

At present, the teaching and training of maritime English in China's maritime education mainly refer to the evaluation and examination projects of the National Maritime Administration, with a focus on exam oriented education. The setting of maritime English courses often fails to closely meet the actual needs of the maritime industry, and the course content presents fragmented characteristics. There is a lack of necessary connection and integration between various knowledge points, which restricts the effective improvement of students' comprehensive language ability in practical work scenarios. In contrast, The IMO maritime English demonstration course is more practical and operationally oriented, making it easier for students to absorb and master. In view of this, in the process of promoting the localization of IMO maritime English demonstration courses, it is necessary to avoid mechanically copying and blindly following the trend, but to deeply understand the uniqueness of Chinese maritime crew training and the current situation of maritime English teaching in maritime vocational colleges.

2.3 Comparative Analysis: Requirements for Maritime English Listening and Speaking Skills in IMO Demonstration Courses, As Well As in the Training and Examination Outlines for Chinese Maritime Crew

By comparing Table 2, it is not difficult to find that the training and examination outlines for Chinese maritime crew basically cover all the training objectives of the IMO Maritime English Demonstration Course. The IMO maritime English demonstration course focuses on cultivating the listening and speaking abilities of seafarers, and emphasizes their effective communication skills^[7]. For the teaching of maritime English listening and conversation courses, a fundamental change in teaching philosophy is urgently needed. The core of the reform should focus on building a teaching system guided by the core of "competency" ability, aiming to guide teaching

to shift from the traditional "exam oriented" mode to a more emphasis on "application", improve the comprehensive English literacy of

crew members, strengthen practical operation skills, and not just meet the exam requirements in the exam process.

Table 2. Requirements for Maritime English Listening and Speaking Skills in IMO Demonstration Courses, As Well As Training and Examination Outlines for Chinese Maritime Crew

IMO Maritime English Demonstration Course	Chinese Ship Crew Training Outline (2021 Edition)	Chinese Seafarer Examination Outline (2022 Edition)
1. accident at sea; Operate helicopters using standard maritime communication terms 2. Accident prevention; Can carry out the following activities on board Mechanical equipment maintenance; Emergency medical situation handling 3. Ship operation; Sailing in adverse weather conditions; Use standard maritime communication language for severe weather warnings; Use standard maritime communication language for navigation warnings 4. Briefly introduce navigational aids and equipment using standard maritime communication terminology; Navigation system 5. Mechanical/device malfunction; Briefly introduce specific mechanical faults and repairs using standard maritime communication terminology 6. Use standard maritime communication language and message mode for external very high frequency communication; 7. Use standard maritime communication language for duty handover; Effective communication and collaboration within the driver's cabin team; International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea; Specific duty procedures	1. Proper use of SMCP for English communication with relevant personnel 2. PSC inspection and communication based on firefighting, life-saving and other equipment 3. Communication based on navigation duty and distress communication	1. basic English 1.1 Daily greetings among sailors 1.2 Common phrases used in ship life 1.3 Basic Maritime Vocabulary 2. Proper use of SMCP for English communication with relevant personnel 2.1 Standard cars and steering commands 2.2 Emergency and secure communication 2.3 Pilot communication 2.4 Special assignments 2.5 Standard Terminology for Ship Traffic Services (VTS) 2.6 On board Safety 2.7 Goods and Cargo Operations 3. PSC inspection based on fire and rescue equipment, listening and speaking communication 3.1 Inspection of life-saving equipment 3.2 Fire equipment inspection 3.3 Inspection of Aircraft Equipment 3.4 Other PSC inspections 4. Listening and speaking communication based on navigation duty and distress communication 4.1 Navigation Duty 4.2 Communication in distress 5. read 5.1 Ability to read and understand various English navigation publications and English nautical charts 5.2 Ability to read and understand international conventions and legal documents related to daily maritime affairs 5.3 Able to correctly read and understand navigation warnings, weather forecasts, faxes, telegrams, and other materials received on board the ship 6. other 6.1 Customs and Immigration Services 6.2 Ship Security

3. Analysis of the Current Situation of Teaching Maritime English Listening and Conversation Courses

Maritime English Listening and Conversation is a vocational skill practical course for maritime technology majors in maritime colleges, and it is also one of the subjects for the practical evaluation of the Chinese Maritime Ship Crew Competency Certificate. It aims to train students' English listening and speaking abilities in ship duty work, lay a good language foundation for business communication on board, and meet the requirements of the STCW Convention and the ship operation level pilot competency

standards stipulated by the Maritime Safety Administration of the People's Republic of China.

3.1 Analysis of Learning Situation

Students majoring in maritime technology have a weak foundation in English. This phenomenon is particularly evident in some student groups, who mostly come from rural areas with relatively scarce educational resources. In the high school education stage, these students focus more on training exam taking skills and overlook the essential value of English as a communication tool, which leads to limited development of their actual communication abilities. In addition, the

significant differences in English foundation among students further exacerbate the differentiation of learning outcomes and weaken the overall vitality of classroom interaction. Although higher education institutions offer basic English courses aimed at laying a solid foundation for students' English learning, the actual results vary greatly. On the one hand, the speed of improvement in students' English proficiency is not consistent, with some students making significant progress while others make slow progress; On the other hand, even with some improvement, it is often difficult to achieve the desired level. Even more tricky is the issue of the connection between basic English and professional English. In the training system and competency examination for Chinese maritime crew, the differentiated needs between undergraduate and vocational education have not been fully considered. Therefore, most vocational colleges have chosen to follow the pace of undergraduate colleges and adopt a teaching model of "public first, professional later". In this mode, basic English courses often use general English textbooks, which are broad in content but not in-depth, and there is a significant gap between them and the highly specialized maritime English courses that follow. Maritime English, with its strong professionalism and high difficulty, requires students to quickly transition to learning professional terminology and specific contexts while mastering a certain foundation. However, due to the lack of effective transitional training, students often find it difficult to effectively transfer the learning outcomes of basic English to the field of maritime English, which seriously restricts the improvement of the quality of professional English teaching. Exploring more scientific and reasonable teaching models, strengthening the effective connection between basic English and professional English, has become an urgent task to enhance the English proficiency of students majoring in maritime technology.

3.2 Analysis of Teaching Content

The disconnect between teaching content and actual needs. Although the current textbooks have improved in terms of uniformity, there are shortcomings in the richness of auxiliary materials, the timeliness of content, and the closeness to shipping practice. The update of

textbook content failed to reflect the latest developments in the shipping industry in a timely manner, lacked coverage of international conventions and rules, and lacked simulation of English usage scenarios that crew members may encounter in their actual work. These issues limit the cultivation of students' maritime English listening and speaking abilities, and affect their ability to adapt to the international crew market. Therefore, in order to improve the practicality and pertinence of teaching content, it is necessary to update and enrich existing textbooks, introduce more teaching resources and practice materials closely related to shipping practice, promote the comprehensive development of students' listening and speaking abilities, and meet the requirements of the STCW Convention for the training of listening and speaking skills for maritime students.

3.3 Analysis of Teaching Mode

The traditional teaching philosophy and teaching mode can no longer meet the requirements of cultivating high-quality maritime talents. In the field of teaching maritime English listening and conversation, traditional models such as oral translation and direct teaching overly focus on grammar, vocabulary, and translation accuracy, while neglecting the practicality and foreign affairs characteristics of maritime English, resulting in students having difficulty flexibly applying what they have learned in practical work. The assessment oriented teaching model exacerbates this problem, as students rely on rote memorization to prepare for exams without truly improving their listening and speaking abilities. In order to overcome this dilemma, it is necessary to transform teaching concepts and innovate teaching models. Teachers should transform from knowledge transmitters to guides, focus on classroom interactivity, encourage students to actively participate, and make learning an active exploration rather than passive acceptance, shifting from a "teacher centered" approach to a "student-centered" approach. More importantly, the teaching process should be closely integrated with practical work situations, adopting a training model that combines engineering and learning. By simulating or implementing real work

environments, students can personally experience, learn, and apply knowledge while playing different roles. This situational teaching method not only stimulates students' interest in learning and enthusiasm for participation, but also cultivates their teamwork spirit and ability to solve practical problems.

4. Teaching Reform Measures for Maritime English Listening and Conversation Course Based on IMO Maritime English Demonstration Course

4.1 Optimize Course Offerings to Achieve an Organic Connection between Basic English and Professional English

In response to the uneven English foundation among students majoring in navigation, the curriculum should be optimized to achieve an organic connection between basic English and professional English^[8]. On the one hand, for students with weak English foundations, basic English tutoring courses should be offered to enhance their English proficiency through methods such as natural phonics and specialized training in high-frequency vocabulary. On the other hand, in the process of teaching basic English, relevant content related to navigation should be gradually introduced to help students understand the terminology and expressions of navigation, laying a foundation for subsequent professional English learning. In addition, English textbooks that are suitable for the characteristics of the maritime profession should be compiled, emphasizing the practicality and pertinence of the content to ensure that students can apply what they have learned.

4.2 Clarify Course Standards and Achieve Seamless Integration Between Course Content and Practical Work

Establishing the curriculum standards for maritime English listening and conversation is the primary step in teaching reform. The course design should comprehensively consider the requirements of the STCW Convention, the characteristics of the IMO Maritime English Demonstration Course, and the training and examination outlines for crew members, fully reflecting the characteristics of industry education integration, ensuring that

the course content fully covers key elements such as course nature, objectives, teaching methods, and class hour allocation. It should closely integrate the characteristics of vocational college students with the actual needs of maritime work positions, achieve seamless integration between course content and practical work, and enhance the practicality and pertinence of the course. Through systematic course design, clear learning paths can be provided for students, while clear teaching guidance can be provided for teachers.

4.3 Innovative Teaching Mode to Enhance Students' Effective Communication Skills in the Field of Navigation

Innovate teaching models and methods, focus on establishing and improving evaluation and feedback mechanisms, and implement a student-centered teaching philosophy to effectively enhance students' English communication skills^[9]. The teaching philosophy centered on "student learning" proposed in the IMO Maritime English Demonstration Course is integrated throughout the entire teaching process. Teachers are responsible for "threading the needle" and teaching students to "integrate and connect", focusing on cultivating students' practical application and innovation abilities; Introducing situational teaching method and communicative teaching method, simulating real maritime scenes, allowing students to learn and master English in practice, effectively improving their communication skills, enhancing the fun of learning, and enabling students to experience the practical application of maritime English in person; Based on the workplace context, project-based teaching is carried out, and sub projects and specific work tasks are further refined^[10]. Online teaching platforms and multimedia resources are fully utilized to carry out blended online and offline teaching, providing students with richer and more diverse learning channels and resources, broadening their learning horizons, and improving their ability to learn independently and collaboratively; Emphasize the establishment and improvement of evaluation and feedback mechanisms. By timely understanding students' learning situation and problems, targeted guidance and assistance can be provided to further improve

teaching effectiveness.

4.4 Strengthen the Construction of the Teaching Staff, Enhance the English Proficiency and Practical Ability of Teachers

Building a professional and practical teaching staff is a fundamental guarantee for improving the quality of maritime English teaching. Through internal training and external introduction, we aim to achieve a "dual training" of teachers, which includes enhancing the maritime professional knowledge of full-time English teachers and improving the educational and teaching abilities of part-time teachers. On the one hand, through mutual recruitment between schools and enterprises, external recruitment and internal training, English teachers with rich practical experience in navigation are introduced, and at the same time, the maritime professional knowledge and skills of English teachers on campus are cultivated, forming a teacher pool that combines full-time and part-time teaching. On the other hand, teachers are encouraged to participate in various training and academic exchange activities to continuously improve their professional competence and teaching ability. In addition, effective incentive mechanisms and evaluation systems should be established to stimulate teachers' teaching enthusiasm and creativity. During the teaching process, full-time English teachers and part-time teachers in enterprises should learn and communicate with each other to achieve complementary advantages.

5. Epilogue

The IMO demonstration course has pointed out the direction for maritime education and training, and its standards not only lead the reform of maritime education and training, but also lay a solid foundation for the improvement of the quality of Chinese crew training. The teaching and reform of maritime English listening and conversation courses discussed in this article is based on deep thinking and active practice from this international perspective. By optimizing the curriculum, we strive to achieve a deep integration of basic English and professional English, laying a solid bridge for students from theory to practice. Clarifying curriculum standards and ensuring seamless integration

between course content and job functions is a crucial step in enhancing the practicality of teaching. Innovating teaching models and strengthening the construction of teaching staff are powerful guarantees for improving teaching effectiveness. Looking ahead to the future, the reform of maritime English listening and conversation courses is of great significance in meeting industry demands, enhancing professional competence, responding to vocational qualification exams, and building a lifelong learning system.

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