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KEY ELEMENTS IN ASSESSING MARITIME ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

КЛЮЧОВІ ЕЛЕМЕНТИ ОЦІНКИ РІВНЯ ВОЛОДІННЯ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЮ МОВОЮ ДЛЯ МОРЯКІВ

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The shipping industry operates under strict regulations outlined in various documents issued by the International Maritime Organization, encompassing conventions, codes, and model courses that provide fundamental guidelines to which maritime educational institutions must adhere. Those well-defined guidelines require a cohesive educational structure, which integrates its components like the curriculum content, instructional methods, targeted competencies, and assessment of the knowledge and skills to be acquired by students.

The Maritime English course pursues cultivating communication competence, facilitating future seafarers' interactions in multiple professional scenarios ranging from onboard communication to interaction between vessels and shore-based stations [2]. An appropriately organized

assessment system boosts learners' awareness about their capabilities to carry out tasks in multinational crews [4; 11].

As a fundamental learning component, assessment acts as a tool that motivates students and provides instructors with analytical insights [5; 6; 10]. Motivational tools include intrinsic and extrinsic elements contributing to students' satisfaction with their academic accomplishments [7]. In contrast, analytical tools assist students in synthesizing learning outcomes and enhancing their meaningful personal contributions to future success [9].

The assessment system presented in this paper provides learners with numerous chances to reflect on their academic achievements, both in a formal setting and in a more casual environment. Peer evaluation serves as a crucial component of the learning experience, ensuring that assessment standards remain consistent and support students in attaining higher levels of academic performance [8]. As a pedagogical tool, it manifests delivery of feedback, inquiry, comments, and advice provided this aspect of learning is properly arranged.

This study is aimed at providing in-depth description of key elements in assessing Maritime English proficiency.

Research results. The first element focuses on students individually undertaking the tasks assigned for a specific lesson, which may be completed before or after a synchronous session with the entire group of students. At this stage, students can get one point, although it does not influence formal grading. It serves to help them acknowledge their successes and failures. At the beginning of each module, special attention is given to controlled and semi-controlled exercises to provide sufficient practice of vocabulary and grammar.

Due to the second element, which is self-study, learners are encouraged to immerse themselves in three distinct categories of activities. These activities are primarily focused on enriching vocabulary, refining grammar skills, and checking reading comprehension. This assessment element is viewed as informal, embracing a more casual and less structured approach usually found in formal assessment.

With the third element, the initial formal assessment involves a module test that students can access online on a specified day. The test includes thirty tasks, successful completion of which demonstrates students' command of vocabulary, grammar, reading comprehension, and professional competence. Those tasks are assessed based on the selection of the most appropriate responses to situational questions.

After the module test, students proceed to the next element of formal assessment, which is to demonstrate their oral communication skills based on the content outlined in the module. To ensure students are aware of the

subject matter, they are provided with a list of questions designed on Bloom's taxonomy cognitive domain and challenge varied thinking skills [1].

Several key criteria are applied to evaluate students' communication skills, such as accuracy and fluency of speech and relevance of the information they present.

Higher-order thinking skills, such as analysis, evaluation, and creation, are essential when students consider case studies to be the final element of formal assessment. They analyze the chain of actions performed by the crew, evaluate and identify misdoings, and create a plan of alternative measures to avoid such accidents. Thoroughly conducted case analysis allows students to embrace their experience with the knowledge obtained and demonstrate their communicative skills while interacting in pairs or small groups and disputing with their group mates. Students are actively engaged in self-reflecting, giving feedback on their involvement, and identifying ways for improvement in order to take responsibility for their learning progress [3, p. 233].

Conclusion. Disregarding key elements in assessing students' Maritime English proficiency may lock in any initiative to further develop their skills and provoke dissatisfaction with the overall learning experience.

Language mastering is an ongoing process, so assessment begins anew with each module. Such an approach provides students with a clear awareness of assessment criteria, a comprehensive way to evaluate their learning progress, draw up future steps for achieving learning outcomes, and support their learning efforts by providing constructive feedback that finally contributes to improving their communicative skills.

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