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DEVELOPMENT OF LEADERSHIP SKILLS VIA MEDIATION AT MARITIME ENGLISH CLASSES

The article effectively highlights the need for leadership skills in the maritime industry, focusing on multicultural teamwork and high-stress scenarios. It links these skills directly to the requirements of Maritime English education and IMO Model Course 3.17 in particular. Mediation practices, such as active listening, empathy, problem-solving, and decision-making, are proposed to enhance leadership capabilities while addressing conflict resolution in real-world maritime contexts.

Detailed descriptions of sample activities, such as debates, teamwork exercises, and case studies, provide actionable strategies for teachers. They prepare students for real-world maritime challenges, making it highly relevant to their future careers. The research also suggests rubrics to assess leadership and mediation skills which is highly practical. These rubrics ensure structured feedback and allow students to reflect on their performance. Analysing the differences between experienced and inexperienced students highlights the importance of preparatory activities. While experienced students reported improved confidence and engagement, inexperienced students required additional groundwork in maritime vocabulary and protocols. The findings suggest that specifically designed support and preparatory activities are crucial for students with limited maritime exposure.

Incorporating mediation techniques into Maritime English classes not only enhances students' language proficiency but also equips them with essential leadership skills, preparing them to manage multicultural crews and respond effectively to emergencies. This approach fosters emotional intelligence, adaptability, and cultural sensitivity, ensuring students are well-prepared for leadership roles in the maritime industry.

Keywords: leadership skills, mediation, Maritime English, conflict resolution, multicultural communication.

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РОЗВИТОК ЛІДЕРСЬКИХ НАВИЧОК ЗАСОБАМИ МЕДІАЦІЇ НА ЗАНЯТТЯХ З МОРСЬКОЇ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВИ

У статті ефективно висвітлено потребу у лідерських навичках у морській галузі з акцентом на міжкультурну командну роботу та діяльність у стресових ситуаціях. Ці навички безпосередньо пов'язуються з вимогами навчання морської англійської мови, зокрема Модельного курсу ІМО 3.17. Практики медіації, такі як активне слухання, емпатія, розв'язання проблем і прийняття рішень, пропонуються як засіб підвищення лідерських здібностей та ефективного вирішення конфліктів у реальних морських контекстах.

Детальний опис прикладів завдань, таких як дебати, командні вправи та кейс-стаді, пропонує викладачам практичні стратегії. Вони готують студентів до реальних викликів у морській сфері, що робить підхід особливо актуальним для їхньої майбутньої професії. У дослідженні також пропонуються рубрики для оцінювання лідерських та медіаційних навичок, що має високу практичну цінність. Такі рубрики забезпечують структурований зворотний зв'язок і дають змогу студентам рефлексувати над власними досягненнями. Аналіз відмінностей між досвідченими та недосвідченими студентами підкреслює важливість підготовки вправ: досвідчені студенти відзначили зростання впевненості та залученості, тоді як недосвідченим студентам знадобилася додаткова робота з морською термінологією та протоколами. Отримані результати свідчать, що спеціально розроблена підтримка та підготовчі завдання є критично важливими для студентів з обмеженим морським досвідом.

Інтеграція технік медіації на заняттях з морської англійської мови не лише підвищує мовну компетентність студентів, а й формує в них необхідні лідерські навички, готуючи до управління багатонаціональними екіпажами та ефективного реагування на надзвичайні ситуації. Такий підхід розвиває емоційний інтелект, адаптивність і культурну чутливість, забезпечуючи всебічну підготовку студентів до лідерських ролей у морській галузі.

Ключові слова: лідерські навички, медіація, морська англійська мова, розв'язання конфліктів, міжкультурна комунікація.

Navigators are usually required to work in multicultural and high-stress environments where leadership and effective communication are essential. Successful leadership ensures safety, operational efficiency, and crew ethics. Maritime industry involves teamwork, resolving conflicts, fast and efficient decision-making, proficient bridge resource management.

The paper aims to analyse the importance of development of leadership skills at Maritime English classes through the lens of mediation and suggests some practical activities to reach the goal.

Maritime English is the lingua franca of seafarers, ensuring clear communication among multinational crews. Proficiency in Maritime English aids in giving and receiving clear instructions, resolving misunderstandings and fostering collaboration among diverse teams.

Two years ago management of State University of Infrastructure and Technologies (now National Transport University) first provided the course “Leadership and Bridge Resource Management” (language of instruction – English), the classes are conducted as workshops. And we had an opportunity to integrate activities for developing leadership skills into both curriculums English for Specific Purposes and Leadership.

Using mediation techniques enhances leadership skills such as active listening, empathy, problem-solving, decision-making, diplomacy and persuasion. Teaching mediation at Maritime English classes equips students with real-world conflict resolution techniques, which are crucial for leadership roles.

To develop leadership skills via mediation at Maritime English classes, it is essential to create a curriculum that integrates practical and realistic mediation tasks. These tasks should reflect actual maritime contexts. For example, students can practice summarizing detailed maritime regulations (such as MARPOL annexes or SOLAS chapters), interpreting technical documents (e.g., turning checklists into precautionary measures), or rephrasing safety manuals to make them understandable for crew members with varying English proficiency levels. Such activities help students develop the ability to ensure clear and accurate communication onboard.

Providing students with authentic mediation experiences requires the use of real-life materials like ship logs, safety guidelines, and communication records. We also use videos, audio recordings, and examples of shipboard communication that involve mediation, collected with the help of our students during their shipboard training.

Understanding leadership theories provides a solid foundation for understanding the skills needed in maritime contexts. **Servant Leadership Theory** (Greenleaf, 1977), for example, emphasizes the leader's role as a servant to their team, focusing on empathy, listening, and the empowerment of others. This aligns closely with mediation practices that prioritize active listening, rapport, and collaboration in resolving conflicts. Activities like teamwork exercises or debates, where students practice “serving” their crew by resolving disputes or mediating misunderstandings, will do the trick. Encouraging debates helps students articulate their opinions and practice leadership by mediating group discussions.

Sample activity.

Debate on Leadership Styles

Suggest a topic for discussion “Is an autocratic or servant leadership style more effective onboard ships?” Students debate in small groups, with one student mediating to ensure a fair and respectful discussion. Practice leading discussions, resolving disagreements, and using persuasive language in English.

Teamwork exercises foster collaboration and leadership while using Maritime English for communication.

Sample activity.

The class is divided into groups simulating different crew roles (e.g., captain, engineer, deck officer). The task is to create and execute a safety drill plan for a fire onboard. One student acts as the team leader and mediator to coordinate efforts and resolve disagreements. The teacher will evaluate the leader's ability to delegate, mediate disputes, and clearly communicate in English.

Transformational Leadership Theory (Bass, 1985) highlights the importance of inspiring and motivating team members to achieve a shared vision. Transformational leaders exhibit qualities such as emotional intelligence, adaptability, and strong communication skills. Role-playing and simulation exercises are highly effective tools for developing leadership skills with the help of mediation. Simulating real-life maritime situations allows students to practice resolving communication challenges among individuals with different language abilities. For instance, a role-play could involve assisting a non-native English-speaking crew member in understanding a safety procedure. The mediator, played by the student, would need to clearly explain the procedure and ensure comprehension. These activities not only enhance students' mediation and leadership skills but also prepare them for real-world situations in their maritime careers.

Sample activity.

A multinational crew misunderstands an emergency order due to language and cultural barriers. One student assumes the role of a mediator (e.g., the captain or chief officer) to clarify the situation and resolve the conflict. The goal of an activity is to encourage students to practice active listening, clear communication, and culturally sensitive mediation techniques. After performing the task it is useful to discuss what worked well and what could be improved in terms of language use and leadership.

Analysing real or hypothetical maritime incidents enhances problem-solving and critical thinking.

Sample activity

Case Study

A ship's grounding occurred due to miscommunication between the bridge team and the engine room department. Students analyse the communication breakdown and present how mediation could have prevented the incident. It's crucial to highlight the importance of leadership and clear communication in distress situations. Having discussed the initial scenario, students may act out an improved communication scenario based on their analysis.

Applying mediation strategies to develop leadership skills at Maritime English classes will provide teachers with certain benefits. Students become confident in using Maritime English for resolving conflicts and giving instructions. They develop core leadership skills, such as emotional intelligence, flexibility, adaptability, etc. Mediation practices teach students to respect diverse perspectives, which is crucial for multicultural crews. Students are better equipped to lead effectively in high-stress maritime environments.

To emphasise benefits of applying these strategies there is one of the activities which is described in detail. The objectives of activity are to develop leadership skills such as active listening, decision-making, and adaptability, strengthen mediation abilities like resolving conflicts and facilitating collaboration, and enhance Maritime English proficiency in real-world contexts.

A fire breaks out onboard, and the team must coordinate a safety drill. Captain, Chief Engineer, Deck Officer, Safety Officer, Crew Members take part in the activity. The Captain (leader) delegates tasks, gives orders, and mediates disputes. Other crew members report problems and collaborate on executing the safety plan. The leader must adapt communication to crew members with varying English skills.

Learning Outcomes are as follows:

Develop skills of delegation, clear communication, and conflict resolution (from the point of view of leadership)

Develop abilities to clarify instructions, address misunderstandings, and foster team cohesion (from the point of view of mediation).

Materials to use: ship diagram (to identify affected areas), safety drill checklist, handouts for students, example fire report, audio recording of an alarm (used as a trigger for the scenario).

Provide students with necessary handouts.

Captain	<p>Responsibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Oversee the safety drill. ▪ Delegate tasks to the crew based on their expertise and current location. ▪ Resolve disputes or misunderstandings between crew members. ▪ Ensure all actions comply with safety procedures and timelines. <p>Use clear and concise English when giving instructions. Ask questions to confirm understanding, especially for non-native speakers. Focus on teamwork and keeping the crew calm under pressure.</p>
Chief Engineer	<p>Responsibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide technical information about the engine room and safety equipment. ▪ Assess the damage caused by the fire and suggest containment measures. ▪ Communicate any technical limitations to the Captain and crew. <p>Be specific about what can and cannot be done in the engine room. Use simple, clear language to explain technical terms if needed.</p>
Deck Officer	<p>Responsibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assist in coordinating the crew's fire-fighting and evacuation efforts. ▪ Monitor the status of fire-fighting equipment and report any issues. ▪ Communicate updates about deck safety to the Captain. <p>Pay attention to instructions from the Captain and clarify if needed. Encourage cooperation among crew members.</p>
Crew Members	<p>Responsibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Follow the Captain's instructions during the drill. ▪ Report any challenges (e.g., equipment problems, lack of clarity). ▪ Act out communication barriers (language or cultural misunderstandings) to add realism to the activity. <p>Focus on completing tasks while raising any concerns clearly. Provide constructive feedback during the debriefing.</p>

This checklist will guide the Captain during the simulation and ensure all steps of the safety drill are followed.

Assess the situation and location of the fire.	
Sound the fire alarm and inform the crew of the emergency.	
Assign crew members to:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Contain the fire using extinguishers or fire hoses. ▪ Evacuate personnel from the affected area. ▪ Report injuries or missing crew members. 	
Confirm all crew members understand their tasks.	
Address any language or communication issues.	
Consult the Chief Engineer for technical input.	
Monitor updates from all crew members.	
Evaluate the drill's success and note areas for improvement.	
Provide feedback to the crew.	

Steps for teachers to follow:

1. Brief students on the scenario and distribute role descriptions.
2. Provide the Captain with the safety drill checklist and fire report.
3. Assign a "language barrier" to one or two crew members to simulate communication challenges. (A crew member struggles to understand the term "fire extinguisher" and needs clarification. Another one misunderstands evacuation instructions, heading to the wrong location).
4. Play the emergency audio recording (sound of general alarm – 7 short and 1 prolonged blast and fire alarm – continuous sound not less than 10 seconds) to simulate the start of the incident.
5. The Captain assigns tasks (e.g., fire containment, evacuation, and reporting).
6. Crew members perform their roles, introducing communication challenges where appropriate.
7. The Captain mediates disputes or misunderstandings and adjusts the plan as needed.
8. After the performance discuss what worked well and what could be improved.
9. Students provide feedback on the Captain's leadership and mediation performance.
10. The teacher highlights examples of effective leadership and mediation and areas for growth.
11. Use the detailed rubric to score each student's performance.

There are two rubrics to assess both leadership and mediation skills.

Rubric to assess leadership skills.

Category	Excellent (5)	Good (4)	Average (3)	Needs Improvement (2)	Poor (1)
Communication	Communicates clearly, uses precise Maritime English, and engages effectively with all team members.	Mostly clear communication; occasional minor errors in English use.	Communicates adequately; some misunderstandings or unclear instructions.	Struggles to convey messages clearly; frequent language errors.	Fails to communicate effectively; instructions are confusing or absent.
Decision-Making	Quickly evaluates situations and makes confident, well-reasoned decisions.	Makes reasonable decisions with minor delays or uncertainties.	Decisions are delayed or lack clarity but are generally acceptable.	Hesitates or makes poorly reasoned decisions.	Unable to make effective decisions under pressure.
Delegation	Distributes tasks efficiently, considering team strengths and limitations.	Delegates tasks fairly but with minor inefficiencies.	Delegation is uneven or not well planned.	Delegation is unclear or lacks focus.	Fails to delegate or creates confusion.
Adaptability	Adapts to unexpected situations and adjusts leadership style accordingly.	Adapts well but with some hesitation or challenges.	Shows limited adaptability; struggles with unexpected changes.	Has difficulty adapting; creates unnecessary delays or conflicts.	Fails to adapt; hinders the team's performance.

Rubric to assess mediation.

Category	Excellent (5)	Good (4)	Average (3)	Needs Improvement (2)	Poor (1)
Active Listening	Demonstrates full engagement; accurately summarizes and reflects on others' input.	Listens actively but misses minor details.	Listens adequately; occasionally misunderstands or overlooks input.	Inconsistent listening; misses key points.	Fails to listen actively or acknowledge others' input.
Conflict Resolution	Resolves conflicts effectively, balancing fairness and diplomacy.	Resolves conflicts adequately but with minor issues.	Struggles to resolve conflicts or delays resolution.	Conflict resolution is ineffective or one-sided.	Fails to address or escalates conflicts.
Clarity of Mediation	Communicates clearly and ensures all parties understand the outcome.	Communicates effectively with minor clarification needed.	Communication is somewhat clear but causes confusion.	Frequently unclear, requiring repeated explanations.	Communication is unclear or leads to further misunderstanding.

The activity was suggested to two groups of students: the first-year students of short-term study who have already had experience at sea (group 1) and the first-year students after school with no experience (group 2).

Students of group 1 found the activity immersive, especially with the audio recording and realistic role-playing elements. The simulated language barriers make them realize the importance of clarity and patience. Students reported improved confidence in using Maritime English under pressure. They recognized the need for clear communication and quick decision-making in emergencies. One of the students suggested adding a time constraint to increase the challenge. Others requested additional scenarios, like man-overboard drills or medical emergencies, to practice varied leadership and mediation skills.

Group 2 reported some difficulties. They struggled to make quick, decisive actions due to a lack of familiarity with emergency protocols. They were also lack of specific firefighting vocabulary such as “fire extinguisher”, “fire hose”, “containment measures”. They failed to simulate realistic actions because they didn’t fully understand what would happen in a real emergency. It’s important to emphasize that mistakes are a natural part of learning and encourage supportive and constructive peer feedback. Proper preparation should have been provided in advance for the students with no experience. Teaching basic Maritime English terms and safety procedures and conducting mini-activities to build leadership and mediation skills (e.g., team games or simple role-playing exercises) would be useful.

To sum up, integrating mediation practices into Maritime English classes is a strategic way to foster leadership skills. Through role-playing, case studies, and teamwork, students not only enhance their language abilities but also develop essential traits for leading in the maritime industry.

Application of leadership and mediation-focused tasks into Maritime English curricula equips students with the confidence and skills needed to navigate the complex interpersonal and operational challenges of the maritime industry. This approach fosters not only effective communication but also the emotional intelligence and cultural awareness necessary for successful leadership in global, multicultural settings.

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