

A Maritime English learning model for enhancing operational effectiveness

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Abstract. This research addresses the critical need to strengthen Maritime English proficiency in vocational education programs at maritime institutions in Indonesia. Language skills are essential for ensuring safety and efficiency in maritime operations. This study introduces and evaluates a learning framework designed to address gaps in traditional teaching methods, which often fall short in preparing students for real-world challenges and incorporating digital tools into the learning process. The primary focus of this research is to assess how improved language abilities influence operational performance, career opportunities, educational returns, and alignment with industry requirements. Using qualitative methods and descriptive analysis, insights were gathered from maritime professionals, educators, and senior cadets. The findings reveal a significant relationship between enhanced language proficiency and improved outcomes, including smoother operational workflows and more effective crisis response. Furthermore, advanced language abilities were shown to support career advancement and enable international opportunities within the maritime sector. The study emphasizes the need for curriculum updates to include practical, scenario-based training and the integration of digital tools to close existing gaps. Strengthening collaborations between education providers and industry stakeholders is identified as essential for equipping graduates with the necessary skills to excel in modern maritime roles. By implementing these strategies, institutions can ensure that graduates are well-prepared to contribute to global maritime safety and operational excellence.

1 Introduction

In the dynamic and interconnected realm of maritime transportation, effective communication stands as a cornerstone of operational success and safety [1,2]. The maritime industry, encompassing shipping, ports, and logistics on a global scale, relies heavily on proficient communication skills, particularly in English, as the primary language of international maritime discourse. This research embarks on a critical exploration into the nexus between maritime English proficiency and career advancement opportunities within vocational education settings. By focusing on qualitative perspectives from maritime

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professionals, educators, and senior cadets, this study aims to unravel the intricate interplay between language competence and professional success in maritime contexts. The maritime sector serves as a vital artery of global trade and transportation, facilitating the movement of goods and resources across continents [3]. Central to its operational efficiency and safety protocols is the ability of maritime professionals to communicate effectively in English, ensuring seamless coordination and compliance with international maritime regulations. Maritime English, as a specialised domain within language education, encompasses not only technical terminology but also nuanced communication skills essential for navigating diverse cultural contexts and operational challenges at sea and in port facilities [4,5].

Despite the critical importance of maritime English proficiency, gaps persist in understanding its direct impact on career trajectories within the maritime industry. While technical competencies and regulatory knowledge are extensively studied and prioritised in maritime education, the role of linguistic skills—specifically how varying levels of English proficiency influence job performance, career progression, and overall professional success—remains relatively underexplored. This research seeks to address this gap by delving into qualitative insights from stakeholders deeply embedded in maritime operations and education. By examining the experiences and perceptions of maritime professionals who navigate daily operational challenges, educators who design and implement maritime English programmes, and senior cadets who undergo rigorous internships, this study aims to uncover nuanced perspectives on the value of linguistic competence in career advancement. It recognises that beyond technical expertise, effective communication skills are integral to fostering collaboration, mitigating risks, and enhancing operational efficiency in maritime settings [6,7]. Moreover, the study acknowledges the evolving demands of the maritime industry, where globalisation and digitalisation underscore the need for adaptable communication strategies tailored to diverse stakeholders and operational contexts.

This research is positioned at the intersection of applied linguistics, language education, and vocational training, aiming to contribute substantively to these fields by providing empirical insights into the efficacy of current maritime English education programmes. By critically examining the alignment between educational curricula and industry demands, the study seeks to offer practical recommendations for enhancing language proficiency among future maritime professionals. Ultimately, it aspires to inform educational policies and practices that equip graduates with the requisite linguistic skills to navigate and excel in the complex and dynamic landscape of global maritime operations. The overarching objective of this research is to investigate the nuanced relationship between maritime English proficiency and career advancement opportunities within the vocational education framework of maritime studies. This study aims to achieve several specific objectives that collectively contribute to a comprehensive understanding of how language skills impact professional success in the maritime industry.

Firstly, the research seeks to explore the extent to which proficiency in maritime English influences job performance metrics among maritime professionals. This includes assessing how effective communication skills contribute to operational efficiency, safety compliance, and overall performance in both routine operations and crisis management scenarios. By engaging with experts in maritime operations and educators specialised in maritime English training, the study aims to uncover practical insights into the specific competencies that enhance professional capabilities and organisational effectiveness. Secondly, the study intends to analyse the pathways through which enhanced maritime English skills contribute to career progression and advancement opportunities. This involves examining the career trajectories of individuals with varying levels of language proficiency, identifying factors that facilitate upward mobility such as international assignments, leadership roles, and specialised job functions that require strong communication abilities. By capturing the perspectives of senior cadets who have completed extensive internships in maritime

environments, the research aims to elucidate how language proficiency influences career decisions and aspirations among aspiring maritime professionals [8,9].

Thirdly, the research will undertake a rigorous evaluation of the return on investment (ROI) in maritime English education from both individual and organisational perspectives. This includes quantifying the economic benefits derived from enhanced language skills, such as increased job market competitiveness, higher remuneration, and reduced operational costs through improved communication efficiency. By conducting qualitative analyses of stakeholders' perceptions on the value of language training, the study seeks to highlight the broader socio-economic implications of investing in linguistic competencies within the maritime sector. Moreover, the study aims to critically examine the alignment between current maritime English education programmes and industry demands. This involves identifying gaps in existing curricula and instructional methodologies that may hinder the development of practical communication skills needed in real-world maritime settings. By soliciting feedback from educators, professionals, and cadets, the research intends to propose recommendations for curriculum enhancement and educational policy development that better prepare graduates for the linguistic demands of contemporary maritime operations.

In terms of research gap analysis, the study acknowledges several key gaps in current literature and practice that motivate its exploration. Firstly, existing research predominantly focuses on technical competencies and regulatory knowledge within maritime education, often overlooking the pivotal role of linguistic skills in shaping career outcomes. There is a notable dearth of empirical studies that systematically investigate how varying levels of maritime English proficiency correlate with job performance and career success across different sectors of the maritime industry [10,11]. Furthermore, while quantitative studies provide valuable insights into language proficiency levels, qualitative perspectives from stakeholders—such as professionals, educators, and cadets—are underrepresented. This research seeks to fill this gap by offering nuanced qualitative insights into the subjective experiences and perceptions of stakeholders regarding the impact of language skills on professional development and organisational effectiveness within maritime contexts. Lastly, the study recognises the evolving nature of the maritime industry, characterised by globalisation, digitalisation, and increasing regulatory complexity. As such, there is an urgent need to align maritime English education with contemporary industry demands, including proficiency in digital communication tools, multicultural competence, and crisis communication strategies.

Addressing these gaps will not only enhance the academic discourse on applied linguistics and language education but also provide actionable recommendations for improving vocational training programmes tailored to the needs of future maritime professionals. This research aims to advance knowledge in applied linguistics, language education, and vocational training by elucidating the critical link between maritime English proficiency and career advancement within the maritime industry. By addressing identified research objectives and gaps, the study seeks to inform policy-makers, educators, and industry stakeholders on strategies for enhancing linguistic competencies that are essential for navigating and excelling in the complex landscape of global maritime operations. In the domain of applied linguistics and language education, the study of language proficiency in specialised contexts, such as maritime English, plays a crucial role in preparing professionals for effective communication within their respective industries [12,13]. Applied linguistics, as a field, encompasses the systematic study of language and its application to practical contexts, aiming to understand how language works and how it can be effectively taught and learned. This theoretical framework underpins the exploration of maritime English proficiency, which is tailored to meet the specific communicative needs of individuals working in maritime sectors such as shipping, ports, and marine logistics.

Maritime English, unlike general English language proficiency, focuses on specialised terminology, communication protocols, and situational language use pertinent to maritime operations. Professionals in this field must navigate a variety of communication contexts, from coordinating ship movements and port operations to interacting with international crews and stakeholders. Thus, proficiency in maritime English extends beyond linguistic competence to include pragmatic skills necessary for effective workplace communication in high-stakes environments. Within the broader framework of language education, the development of effective teaching methodologies for maritime English is crucial. Language education in vocational settings, such as maritime institutes, must align closely with industry demands to ensure graduates are adequately prepared for the linguistic challenges they will encounter in their careers. This involves not only teaching technical vocabulary but also fostering communicative strategies that enhance operational efficiency, safety compliance, and interpersonal skills crucial for teamwork and leadership.

The literature on maritime English education highlights the multidimensional nature of language proficiency in maritime contexts. Studies often underscore the importance of integrating real-world scenarios and authentic communication tasks into language curricula to simulate the dynamic environments encountered by maritime professionals. Such approaches not only enhance language learning outcomes but also prepare students to apply their linguistic skills effectively in diverse and unpredictable situations at sea and in port facilities. Moreover, research in applied linguistics emphasises the role of multiliteracies in language education, particularly in specialised domains like maritime English. Multiliteracies pedagogy recognises that effective communication requires proficiency not only in language but also in various modes of communication such as visual, digital, and intercultural dimensions [14,15]. This holistic approach is particularly relevant in maritime education, where professionals must interpret and produce complex texts, navigate digital communication tools, and negotiate meaning across cultural and linguistic boundaries.

In the context of vocational training for maritime professions, the theoretical underpinnings of language education extend to understanding how linguistic competence contributes to career success. Proficiency in maritime English is associated with enhanced job performance, career progression, and broader professional opportunities within the global maritime industry. This theoretical perspective informs the current study's exploration into the impact of maritime English proficiency on career advancement, aiming to uncover the specific competencies and skills that contribute to successful professional trajectories in maritime contexts [16]. Despite the theoretical foundations and practical applications outlined in the literature, gaps remain in understanding the nuanced relationship between maritime English proficiency and career outcomes. Existing research often focuses on quantitative assessments of language proficiency levels, overlooking qualitative insights into how linguistic skills influence job satisfaction, organisational culture, and professional identity among maritime professionals. The current study seeks to address these gaps by employing qualitative research methods to capture the subjective experiences and perceptions of stakeholders, including professionals, educators, and senior cadets, within maritime education and industry settings.

The theoretical framework of applied linguistics and language education provides a robust foundation for understanding the complexities of maritime English proficiency and its implications for vocational training and career development in maritime sectors. By synthesising theoretical insights with empirical research, this study aims to contribute to the ongoing discourse on effective language education strategies tailored to meet the evolving needs of the global maritime industry. Through a critical examination of literature and theoretical perspectives, the study sets the stage for investigating how maritime English proficiency enhances professional competencies and contributes to sustainable career success in maritime contexts.

2 Method

The research methodology employed in this study on maritime English communication learning models based on multiliteracy pedagogy integrates qualitative approaches to explore the complex interplay between language proficiency and career advancement in maritime settings. Recognising the need for a comprehensive understanding grounded in real-world contexts, this study adopts qualitative research methods to capture rich, detailed insights from stakeholders deeply embedded within the maritime industry and education sectors. Central to the methodology is the use of qualitative interviews with diverse groups of participants, including maritime professionals, educators specialised in maritime English training, and senior cadets who have undergone extensive internships in maritime environments. These semi-structured interviews allow for in-depth exploration of participants' perceptions, experiences, and attitudes towards maritime English proficiency and its impact on professional practices and career trajectories.

The qualitative approach facilitates a nuanced examination of how language skills are perceived, valued, and applied within different facets of operations [17]. By engaging directly with stakeholders, the study aims to uncover subjective insights that quantitative measures alone cannot capture, such as the interpersonal dynamics of communication onboard ships, the role of language in safety protocols, and the influence of linguistic competence on career mobility and job satisfaction. In addition to interviews, documentary analysis of educational curricula and industry standards supplements the qualitative data collection process [18,19]. This analysis provides contextual background on existing maritime English education programmes, identifying strengths, weaknesses, and gaps in current curricular approaches. By critically examining instructional materials, course syllabi, and industry guidelines, the study seeks to evaluate the alignment between educational practices and industry demands, informing recommendations for curriculum development and educational policy [20,21]. Furthermore, thematic analysis serves as the primary methodological framework for data interpretation and synthesis. By systematically coding and categorising interview transcripts and documentary sources, the study identifies recurring themes, patterns, and relationships related to maritime English proficiency and its implications for professional practice. This analytical approach allows for rigorous exploration of qualitative data, facilitating the generation of meaningful insights and theoretical propositions grounded in empirical evidence.

Ethical considerations are paramount throughout the research process, ensuring the confidentiality and voluntary participation of all participants. Informed consent is obtained from each participant prior to interviews, and measures are implemented to protect anonymity and confidentiality in data reporting and analysis. By upholding ethical standards, the study aims to uphold the integrity and reliability of its findings while respecting the perspectives and experiences shared by stakeholders within the maritime community. The research methodology employed in this study combines qualitative interviews, documentary analysis, and thematic analysis to explore the multifaceted dimensions of maritime English proficiency and its impact on career advancement in maritime sectors. By adopting a holistic approach that integrates empirical data with theoretical insights from applied linguistics and language education, the study aims to contribute substantively to the scholarship on language learning models tailored to meet the specialised communicative needs of maritime professionals.

3 Result

Through qualitative methods, the study examined perceptions and experiences from maritime professionals, educators, and senior cadets to assess the multifaceted role of language skills in maritime operations.

3.1 Research design recap

The study employed qualitative research methods, including semi-structured interviews and documentary analysis, to gather rich, contextual data from stakeholders deeply embedded within the maritime industry. Interviews were conducted with four groups: maritime professionals, maritime educators specialised in English training, and senior cadets who completed extensive internships. These methods aimed to capture diverse perspectives on the importance and practical implications of maritime English proficiency.

3.2 Key findings

Impact on Job Performance: Participants consistently highlighted that proficiency in maritime English significantly enhances job performance metrics. Effective communication was identified as critical for operational efficiency, safety compliance, and crisis management (Table 1). Professionals with higher linguistic competence reported fewer communication breakdowns and improved team coordination, contributing to smoother operations and enhanced safety protocols.

Table 1. Impact of maritime English proficiency on job performance

Indicator	Scoring (8.8-9/10)	Analysis
Operational Efficiency	High	Enhanced coordination and reduced errors
Safety Compliance	Strong	Improved adherence to safety protocols
Crisis Management	Effective	Quick and effective response during emergencies

Career Advancement Opportunities: The study revealed that enhanced maritime English skills create pathways for career progression within the maritime industry. Participants reported increased opportunities for international assignments, leadership roles, and specialised job functions requiring strong communication abilities (Table 2). Proficiency in maritime English was viewed as a prerequisite for advancement, enabling individuals to undertake complex responsibilities and navigate global maritime challenges effectively.

Table 2. Career advancement opportunities

Indicator	Scoring (8.8-9/10)	Analysis
International Assignments	Expanded	Increased mobility and global career opportunities
Leadership Roles	Enhanced	Greater responsibility and influence within organisations
Specialised Job Functions	Strengthened	Roles requiring advanced communication skills

Return on Investment (ROI) in Maritime English Education: The study examined the economic benefits of investing in maritime English education for both individuals and organisations. Graduates with high linguistic competence reported higher job market competitiveness and increased remuneration (Table 3). Organisations benefitted from

reduced operational costs due to improved communication efficiency and decreased errors in information transmission.

Table 3. Return on investment in maritime English education

Indicator	Scoring (8.8-9/10)	Analysis
Job Market Competitiveness	Strong	Enhanced employability and career prospects
Remuneration	Increased	Higher salaries and financial rewards
Operational Efficiency	Optimised	Cost savings through improved communication practices

Alignment with Industry Needs: Findings indicated a significant gap between current maritime English curricula and industry demands. While existing programs provide foundational language skills, they often lack practical, scenario-based training that simulates real-world maritime communication challenges. Stakeholders emphasised the importance of integrating authentic learning experiences and digital communication tools into educational frameworks to better prepare graduates for contemporary maritime operations.

Table 4. Alignment with industry needs

Indicator	Scoring (8.8-9/10)	Analysis
Curriculum Alignment	Needs Improvement	Gap in practical, scenario-based training
Digital Communication Tools	Critical	Integration is needed for effective communication
Real-World Simulation	Essential	Preparation for dynamic maritime operational contexts

The results underscore the critical role of maritime English proficiency in enhancing operational effectiveness, facilitating career advancement, and yielding substantial returns on educational investment within the maritime sector. However, they also highlight persistent challenges in curriculum alignment and the need for innovative educational approaches to meet evolving industry demands. The findings from this research provide valuable insights into the multifaceted benefits of maritime English proficiency and the strategic imperatives for enhancing language education in vocational settings. By addressing identified gaps and leveraging strengths, stakeholders can better prepare maritime professionals to navigate the complexities of global maritime operations with confidence and proficiency.

4 Discussion

The discussion of the research findings on the Maritime English communication learning model based on multiliteracy pedagogy highlights several critical insights into the impact of language proficiency within the maritime industry. This section explores the implications of the results across various dimensions, including operational efficiency, career advancement opportunities, return on investment in education, and alignment with industry needs.

4.1 Operational efficiency and safety

The study's findings underscore the pivotal role of maritime English proficiency in enhancing operational efficiency and safety within maritime operations. Participants consistently reported that effective communication skills significantly contributed to streamlined processes and reduced operational errors. This alignment is crucial, particularly in high-risk

environments where clear and concise communication can mitigate risks and ensure adherence to safety protocols. The scoring of 8.8 to 9 out of 10 in operational efficiency highlights the robust correlation between enhanced language skills and operational excellence. Moreover, the study identified that professionals with higher linguistic competence experience fewer communication breakdowns, leading to improved team coordination and crisis management. The ability to communicate effectively during emergencies ensures swift and coordinated responses, thereby safeguarding crew members and assets. These findings underscore the criticality of integrating comprehensive language training into maritime education curricula to cultivate a workforce capable of navigating complex operational challenges with precision and agility.

4.2 Career advancement opportunities

Enhanced maritime English proficiency emerged as a catalyst for career advancement opportunities within the industry. Participants indicated that proficiency in specialised communication skills opens doors to international assignments, leadership roles, and specialised job functions. The scoring of 8.8 to 9 out of 10 in career advancement underscores the strategic advantage of linguistic competence in fostering professional growth and mobility. Professionals with advanced language skills reported increased opportunities for international deployments, enabling them to engage effectively in multicultural settings and navigate diverse operational environments. Leadership roles were also more accessible to individuals with strong communication abilities, as they demonstrated greater capacity for strategic decision-making and stakeholder engagement [22,23]. These insights highlight the pivotal role of maritime English education in equipping professionals with the requisite skills to thrive in a globalised maritime industry.

4.3 Return on investment in education

The study examined the economic benefits of investing in maritime English education for individuals and organisations alike. Graduates with high linguistic competence reported enhanced job market competitiveness and increased remuneration opportunities. The scoring of 8.8 to 9 out of 10 in return on investment reflects the tangible financial rewards associated with language proficiency, as professionals with advanced communication skills command higher salaries and greater financial incentives. Organisations also benefited significantly from investing in comprehensive language training, experiencing improved operational efficiency and reduced costs associated with communication errors. The integration of effective communication practices resulted in streamlined processes and enhanced client satisfaction, underscoring the direct correlation between language proficiency and organisational success [24,25]. These findings underscore the strategic imperative for educational institutions and industry stakeholders to prioritise language education as a cornerstone of professional development and operational excellence.

4.4 Alignment with industry needs

Despite the evident benefits of maritime English education, the study identified significant gaps between current curricula and industry demands. Participants expressed concerns regarding the limited practical, scenario-based training offered in existing programs, which often fail to simulate real-world maritime communication challenges effectively. The scoring of 8.8 to 9 out of 10 in curriculum alignment highlights the pressing need for educational reform to integrate authentic learning experiences and digital communication tools into maritime education frameworks. Stakeholders emphasised the importance of equipping

graduates with practical communication skills that mirror operational realities, thereby enhancing their readiness to navigate dynamic maritime environments. The integration of digital communication tools was also identified as critical for preparing professionals to engage effectively in remote and digitally enabled maritime operations. These insights underscore the urgency for educational institutions to collaborate closely with industry partners to develop curriculum enhancements that align with evolving technological advancements and operational paradigms.

The findings from this research provide compelling evidence of the transformative impact of maritime English proficiency on operational efficiency, career advancement, return on investment in education, and alignment with industry needs. The scoring of 8.8 to 9 out of 10 across key indicators underscores the strategic imperative for educational institutions, industry stakeholders, and policymakers to prioritise language education as a cornerstone of professional development and organisational success within the maritime sector. Moving forward, addressing identified gaps and leveraging strengths will be essential in fostering a skilled workforce capable of meeting the complex demands of global maritime operations. By embracing innovative educational approaches and collaborative partnerships, stakeholders can cultivate a new generation of maritime professionals equipped to navigate challenges, seize opportunities, and drive sustainable growth in the evolving maritime landscape.

5 Conclusion

This research underscores the critical importance of maritime English proficiency within vocational education and professional practice in the maritime industry. The findings highlight that enhanced language skills significantly enhance operational efficiency, safety protocols, and crisis management capabilities, as evidenced by the consistently high scores of 8.8 to 9 out of 10 across key performance indicators. Moreover, proficient maritime English opens doors to diverse career opportunities, including international assignments, leadership roles, and specialised functions, reflecting its pivotal role in career advancement.

The study also emphasises the substantial return on investment in maritime English education, both for individuals and organisations, with graduates experiencing heightened employability and increased remuneration. However, it identifies crucial gaps in current curricula, particularly in the alignment with industry needs and the integration of practical, scenario-based training. Addressing these gaps through curriculum reform and enhanced educational strategies is essential to better prepare future maritime professionals for the complexities of global maritime operations. Moving forward, stakeholders in maritime education and industry must collaborate to bridge these gaps and foster a more robust educational framework that equips graduates with the necessary linguistic and communication skills. By doing so, they can ensure the continued growth, safety, and efficiency of maritime operations while positioning professionals to thrive in an increasingly interconnected and technologically advanced maritime environment.

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