

Disclosing the Challenges Faced by the Deck Cadets During Onboard Training in Oral Communication Through a Qualitative Survey

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ABSTRACT

Miscommunication became one of the main obstacles in the maritime industry, which uses English as its lingua Franca among multinational work environment. This research aims to disclose the challenges the deck cadets faced in oral communication during onboard training. In more detail, this article also revealed the factors that influenced the cadets' oral communication issues, situational challenges that occurred, strategies that are used by the cadets to overcome the challenges, and the learning results they achieved. This study used a qualitative approach, with thematic analysis and coding to analyze the data. The data were gathered from 25 deck cadets from the Marine Higher Education Institute with various global and national companies as their internship place through a qualitative survey. A questionnaire with open- and closed-ended questions was distributed using Google Form to get qualitative data related to the deck cadets' difficulties in oral communication during onboard training. The findings showed that the challenges faced by the deck cadets in oral communication are divided into three dimensions: linguistic issues, psychological factors, and interlocutor English competence. Moreover, the cadets testified

that their oral communication issues were influenced by linguistic factors, phonological competence, maritime English competence, psychological factors, and exposure. These challenges mainly occurred in high-pressure situations, which require fast and accurate communication. To overcome this, the cadets applied active practice, continuous learning, and encouragement for self-confidence, which contributed to the development of the cadets' speaking skills gradually.

Keywords: Deck Cadets, Onboard Training, Qualitative Survey, Oral Communication, Challenges

INTRODUCTION

Miscommunication is one of the crucial matters in the maritime sector. It is considered the major cause of sea accidents. In the maritime sector, communication holds a strong role, specifically for the safety of vessel operation. Rozar et al. (2025) stated that miscommunication is one of the real threats to maritime safety, which is caused by human errors. Communication failures are often overlooked by maritime stakeholders. One of the biggest examples of a sea accident that happened because of miscommunication is the Titanic accident. Titanic is a famous and iconic play by

Leonardo de Caprio, which tries to unveil the accident from the passenger perspective and is romanticized by most people. From the surface, we can assume that the Titanic is only a mere physical collision of the vessel and the iceberg. However, through the British Wreck Commissioner's Inquiry Report (1912), it was proven that the accident happened because of various human and communication failures, such as in delivering messages, the use of standardized phrases, and coordination among the crew and passengers, and a lack of communication and emergency drills, which hindered the evacuation process. Gabedava and Hu (2025) stated that miscommunication is still the main risk in the maritime sector. It indicates that the attention of stakeholders towards these issues still needs to be improved. Hence, from this history, we can see that a standardized language is really important in ensuring the safe operation of a vessel.

In the formal classroom, English has been taught by various programs in accordance with the Maritime English Curriculum. Some studies (Andiansyah et al., 2025; Dewi et al., 2025) also examine strategies that are effective for enhancing cadets' speaking ability. Amundsen and Noble (2025) also conducted research on the use of Language in its authentic situation, highlighting the importance of communication in operational situations. Besides learning, Khoiruman and Putrayasa (2025) emphasized the crucial role of the learning sources for the cadets' language development, including speaking. The finding of Gardner (2026) also indicates that speaking is not only about "being able to speak" but is also affected by various linguistic factors. Moreover, the cadets are given a chance to learn in an authentic situation by the onboard training program, or in general, we call it an internship. During their onboard training, the cadets will realize that speaking is the most crucial skill that is needed. IMO (2001) requires clear, immediate, and unambiguous communication. A multinational vessel also

requires a dynamic environment and high risk. Gabedava and Hu (2025) stated that fast and accurate communication is needed for operations and emergencies on board. With this fast cycle, it is important for the cadets to master English, especially speaking skills, to support safe maritime operations and enhance their professionalism as future seafarers.

According to the initial survey conducted by the researcher, it was found that the cadets faced various problems in their oral communication during onboard training. The preliminary survey was conducted by an online text-based interview with semi-guided questions. The cadets testified that they felt nervous, scared, and unsure when they needed to speak English at the beginning of their internship program. They added that it was because of the unfamiliar situation, lack of exposure, and the pressure they felt for the first time experiencing the real professional work environment. Moreover, the cadets also stated that the other crew's accent also influenced their oral communication process. They testified that in a certain situation, the Philippine, Chinese, Korean, and Japanese crew who have an "un-native" accent also try to mix their first language with English, which adds more confusion for them. Lastly, the cadets stated that they try to fix these issues by repetitive and continuous practice. They try over and over and try to involve body language in the process to decrease the risk of miscommunication and misunderstanding. However, if these issues occur continuously, without any improvement in the cadets' skills, effective communication will never be achieved. Instead, it will cause a significant problem for sea safety.

Various previous studies mainly focused on the maritime English lesson in the academic context, formal class simulation, and curriculum development. Furthermore, the studies mainly explored strategies to enhance the communication skills of the cadet through a quasi-experimental approach or a qualitative approach with a

large number of participants, resulting in generalized results. On the other hand, this study specifically explored the authentic experience of the deck cadet during onboard training through a qualitative survey with a small number of participants, which is still limited. Yet, this approach enables a deeper understanding of the oral communication barrier experience by deck cadets within an authentic work environment. Therefore, this study aims to (1) identify the oral communication challenges faced by deck cadets during onboard training; (2) explore the factors influencing their oral communication issues; (3) describe the situational challenges arising in onboard training; (4) identify the strategies the deck cadets use to overcome the challenges; and (5) analyze the learning outcomes achieved during their onboard training. The findings are expected to provide a more comprehensive understanding of cadets' oral communication experiences in the maritime environment, offer insights for the development of maritime education and training programs, and enrich the literature on oral communication in Maritime English.

LITERATURE REVIEW

To decrease the risk of communication failures for sea safety, the International Maritime Organization (2001) established Standard Marine Communication Phrases (SMCP), which is supported by the Safety of Life at Sea Convention (SOLAS), to ensure effective communication onboard and the safe operation of the vessel in bridge communication and emergency situations. Guo et al. (2026) stated that Maritime English is essential for the safety of vessel operation, especially in multinational vessels. By using standardized English, they have a common language to ensure that communication runs in accordance with less miscommunication and misunderstanding. Under these conditions, it is important for cadets to have English proficiency. According to the Standards of Training, Certification, and Watchkeeping (STCW) Code, Table A-II/1 (2010), sailors need to

master English in oral and written form to the required English competence that has been determined by the regulations.

However, in real practice, the cadets often find obstacles in communicating in English. Some studies explored the various challenges in maritime communication (Aeni et al., 2017; Dewi et al., 2021; Riyanto et al., 2023; Abimanto & Mahendro, 2025; Masalaci, 2025; Kartal et al., 2026). These studies argued that the cadets' communication skills are affected by internal and external problems. The studies proved that internal or psychological problems played a big part in the speaking mastery of the cadets. The cadets' anxiety is one of the main obstacles that hinder them in speaking and participating in the authentic context. It affects their communication fluency, self-confidence, and the effectiveness of their interaction in the real work maritime environment. Horwitz et al. (1986) emphasized that foreign language anxiety is a specific anxiety which appear if the individual needs to use a foreign language in a communication situation. During onboard training, the willingness to communicate level also affects how far the cadet initiate to communicate by using English in doing their task or interacting with the other crew casually. Willingness to communicate is the individual readiness in using a second language if they find a chance to communicate (MacIntyre, 2007). This willingness is also affected by various factors such as self-confidence, competence perspective, motivation, and communication situation. Moreover, low communication competence becomes one of the causes of their struggle, too. Various studies also indicated the misalignment between the formal Maritime English Education and the real communication demands that the cadets need on board (Dirgeyasa, 2018; Ismail et al., 2020; De Castro, 2021; Jeon et al., 2022; Hilal, 2022; Hafita et al., 2024; Simanjutak et al., 2024; Amundsen, 2025; Guo et al., 2026).

Through onboard training, the cadets are able to observe what their real task is in the professional field and how to truly handle it. It is a chance for them to correlate their initial theoretical foundation with the real practice on board. The cadets' real experience helps them to shape their professional competence (Simanjutak et al., 2024). They can learn through concrete experience, which aligns with Kolb and Kolb's (2017) experiential theory. The cadets will learn through Kolb's cycle, which consists of four stages to create meaningful learning through individual experiences. Concrete experience helps the cadets to directly experience a certain event or activity. We can correlate this with the cadets who use English in a real professional environment, such as communicating with the crew, listening and responding to instructions, and doing a simple report. Second, reflective observation happens when the cadets evaluate their communication performance by looking back at their mistakes or some part that triggers miscommunication with the crew. Third, abstract conceptualization happens after the cadets reflect on their mistakes. They begin to understand effective communication on board. Last, active experimentation happens when the cadets try to fix their communication mistakes by repetitive practice in its real context. By applying this cycle, the cadets will be able to improve their communication pace, fluency, self-confidence, listening comprehension, the use of standardized and effective language, communication strategy, self-directed learning habits, and work performance.

During their sea practice, the cadets gain communication competence through their direct involvement in professional interaction with officers and crew which more experience in their field. Situated learning theory by Lave and Wenger (1991) also explained that the learning process can run effectively if the individual actively participates in the authentic setting as part of a community of practice. Hence,

communication skills are not only formed through formal lessons but also from active participation through real work practice.

Moreover, during onboard training, the cadets receive guidance, correction, and feedback from crew or officers to help the cadets improve their oral communication gradually. Sociocultural theory by Vygotsky (1978) also explained that the development of individual learning skills is affected by social interaction and support from others who have higher competence through the scaffolding process. This theory emphasized that language competence can develop through social collaboration in the authentic work context.

MATERIALS & METHODS

This research used a qualitative approach through a qualitative survey to explore the deck cadet challenges in oral communication during onboard training. Creswell (2014) stated that the qualitative approach is an approach to understand and explore the meaning that is given by an individual or group toward certain social or human issues. This approach is chosen because of its ability to dig up descriptive data and give a deep perspective through the respondent's experiences. This research did not include variable manipulation, but observed and interpreted the phenomenon naturally in its authentic context. Jansen (2010) described a qualitative survey as a survey that aims to explore and describe the participants' diverse experiences and perspectives in a certain population. So, the researcher utilized a qualitative survey to explore various experiences, especially the deck cadets' challenges in oral communication during onboard training.

The participants were selected using purposive sampling to ensure they had relevant experience with the research focus. The participants were contacted first through WhatsApp by the researcher to ask for their consent to be part of the research. Creswell (2014) stated that the central phenomenon can be learned and understood through a purposive selection of the

individual and location. The participants of this research were the deck cadets who originally majored in the nautical department and were still doing on-board training. The participants were in their fifth and sixth semesters at the Marine Higher Education Institute. This research involved various cadets in reputable global and national companies who are in the international line or international navigational route with diverse types of ships to ensure a wide spectrum of participants. All of the participants participated voluntarily and had already given an explanation related to the purpose of the research.

Nautical cadets were chosen because this research focuses on oral communication challenges during onboard training. According to the STCW Code Table A-11/1, deck officer candidates are required to use English to communicate orally with other vessels, Vessel Traffic Service (VTS), coast stations, and multinational crews, including the use of SMCP. This competence shows that oral communication is the main task of nautical cadets. Meanwhile, the engine cadets also use English but mainly in the engine department environment. Hence, nautical cadets were chosen because their oral communication experience is more varied and relevant to the researcher's objectives.

The sample size in this research consists of 25 deck cadets who majored in the nautical department in their fifth and sixth semesters and are still doing their onboard training internship. They are considered capable of this qualitative research because of their aligned experiences with the topic of this research. In this qualitative research, the main focus is not on the number of the sample, but on the depth of the information given by the participants. Creswell (2014) argued that the purpose of qualitative research is not the generalization of the results but to develop a deep understanding of the major phenomenon. The sample is chosen to represent the deck cadet experience in contextual English

communication through oral communication during onboard training. There were several indicators which the researcher used in choosing the cadets such as: (1) is a deck cadets who is still doing onboard training; (2) has experience in using English for oral communication during onboard training; (3) can provide a comprehend information related to her/his oral communication experience in depth; and (4) voluntarily agreed to participate in the study.

The data were collected through a qualitative survey by the use of open-ended and closed-ended questionnaires in a Google Form that was distributed online via WhatsApp to the participants. The questionnaire was designed to dig into the challenges that they face in speaking English during onboard training. The data collection process was done over a certain period to ensure the number of participants was adequate. The participants were given freedom to answer the questions honestly based on their true experience while doing onboard training. The use of open-ended questions is to ensure that the participant can freely explore their answer. Creswell (2014) stated that the use of open-ended questions enables the participants to truly deliver their experience without any limitation from any researcher's perspective.

There were several steps that the researchers took in order to collect the data. First, the researcher contacted the cadets through WhatsApp to ask for their permission to be participants in this research. Then, the researcher sent them a consent form so the cadets could openly state their participation status and understand the purpose of the research and the instruments. After signing the consent form, the cadets were directed to fill out the Google Form for the instruments. Last, the researcher appreciated the participation of the cadets and informed them that the researcher would try to contact them again for further clarification whenever needed.

The instruments were constructed grounded in Kolb and Kolb (2017) experiential

learning theory, which consists of four steps. In the concrete experience stage, the researcher represented it by asking the cadets about their direct experience in speaking English for communication during onboard training, which reflected on the first part of the questionnaire. Next, the reflective observation stage was done by asking and directing the cadets to reflect on their speaking experiences, specifically on their challenges. Furthermore, through the instrument, the researcher directed the cadets to make meaning of their struggles. Lastly, the cadets were asked for their strategies and actions to overcome those challenges.

The analysis process was done through coding and thematic analysis. Saldana (2016) argued that coding is a method that enables the researcher to adjust and group the code, which is similar to categorization. Thematic analysis was used to identify patterns and theme which appeared in the respondents' answers. This analysis was done through several stages, such as reading the entire data, doing the initial coding, grouping the code into categories, and identifying the entire theme. This process enables the researcher to understand the meaning behind the data systematically and in depth. Thematic analysis is chosen because of its flexibility, and it is also in accordance with the qualitative data in narrative form. It is aligned with Braun and Clarke (2006), who stated that identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns happen in the thematic analysis method.

In this research, after conducting an online survey through Google Form via WhatsApp with the participants, the researcher read the participants' answers to get familiar with them. Then the researcher identified each cadet's response into codes. Then, the researcher grouped the code into categories. From the categories, the researcher analyzed the entire theme and interpreted it into narratives to make a whole meaning from the cadets' personal experience.

RESULT

Speaking Challenges

Through the data analysis, there were several findings that guided us to the cadets' difficulties in oral communication during onboard training. First, the researcher found that several cadets' general difficulties in speaking English are expressed through various codes, such as difficulties in vocabulary, language structure, pronunciation, spontaneous speaking production, comprehension issues, psychological factors, technical terminology issues, and interaction factors. Through axial coding, these codes are grouped into several categories, such as linguistic barriers, speaking production barriers, listening comprehension barriers, psychological barriers, maritime communication competence barriers, and interaction-related barriers. Hence, the selective coding shows that various communication challenges in maritime English are caused by limited linguistic competence, psychological factors, and lack of familiarity with standardized maritime communication.

Second, the cadets testified that the other crew members had several difficulties in understanding their speech, which is expressed through the codes, such as grammar issues, vocabulary limitations, speaking fluency, pronunciation issues, psychological factors, and maritime communication competence. These codes are grouped into several categories, such as linguistic barriers, speaking production fluency barriers, pronunciation barriers, and psychological barriers. Hence, the selective coding shows that the cadets' speaking challenges are mainly affected by insufficient linguistic competence, low fluency, psychological barriers, and lack of mastery in standardized maritime technical terminologies.

Furthermore, the cadets explained in more detail the reason why the other crew might find it hard to understand them, which is coded into several keywords by the researcher, such as grammar and language

structure issues, vocabulary limitation, pronunciation & clarity, accent & language variation, fluency, psychological barriers, comprehension issues, experience factors, and interaction factors. These codes are grouped into several categories, which show the cadets' difficulties in the bigger picture, such as linguistic competence barrier, pronunciation & clarity barrier, fluency barrier, accent barrier, psychological barrier, comprehension barrier, exposure barrier, and terminology mismatch. Hence, the selective coding shows that communication during onboard training has a lot of communication breakdowns because of the limited linguistic competence, low speaking fluency, pronunciation & accent variation, and psychological barriers in the real work environment onboard.

Therefore, through those three questions referring to the cadets' speaking difficulties, which have been analyzed through the open, axial, and selective coding, it was shown that the cadets' challenges during the onboard training in speaking English for communication are divided into three dimensions: linguistic challenges (grammar, comprehension, and speaking proficiency), psychological challenges (lack of confidence and fear of making mistakes), and contextual challenges arising from the international maritime environment (variations in accuracy, speaking pace, and diverse terminologies). This third dimension illustrates the complexity of oral communication faced by cadets within the professional maritime context.

Factors Influencing Speaking

Through the data analysis gathered from three questions, several factors influencing the cadets' speaking abilities are found. From the first question, the cadets testified that their speaking difficulties are caused by language skill issues, communication experience issues, accent issues, comprehension issues, psychological issues, maritime communication competence issues, and adaptation awareness. Through these codes, the researcher grouped them

into several categories, such as linguistic factors, exposure factors, accent factors, psychological factors, maritime communication competence factors, and the adaptation process. Hence, the cadets believe that limited exposure, accent diversity, and linguistic competence are three major factors that mostly influence their speaking ability.

Moreover, through the second question, the cadets expressed their thoughts or reasons why they have a hard time understanding the other crew's speech during the speaking process. The cadets testified that accent & speech variation, speech delivery issues, maritime communication terminology issues, and environment are several factors that affect their difficulties in understanding and comprehending the interlocutor's speech in the speaking process. These codes are grouped into several categories, such as accent & pronunciation barrier, speaking pace, clarity barriers, maritime communication competence barrier, environmental barrier, and linguistic barriers. Hence, through selective coding, it was found that the cadets' comprehension difficulties occur from accent variation, speech delivery, and limited familiarity with the standardized maritime communication during onboard training.

In addition, the third question tried to reveal the reason why it is hard to understand the other crews speaking in more detail. The cadets testified that there were several issues related to the other cadets' speaking issues, such as accent issues, pronunciation issues, speaking pace issues, mixed language issues, adaptation issues, word choice issues, and environmental issues. These codes were grouped into several categories, such as accent & pronunciation issues, speaking pace issues, multilingual complexity issues, communication adaptation issues, environmental issues, and individual difference issues. Hence, through selective coding, it can be found that communication failures in the speaking process with the other multilingual crew

occurred because of accent diversity and communication variation.

From the findings above, which were analyzed through open, axial, and selective coding, several challenges were found that influence the cadets' speaking skills. The challenges that occurred in the speaking process during onboard training are linguistic factors, phonological competence, maritime English competence, psychological factors, and exposure factors. Moreover, these challenges are correlated with each other, which influence the cadets' speaking skills and appear as an obstacle to their overall communication process.

Situational Speaking Challenges

Through the open-ended question, the cadets expressed their greatest difficulties in speaking during certain activities. The cadets find it hard to speak in English when they face certain situations, such as operational work situations, linguistic breakdown, communication context issues, psychological factors, time pressure situations, comprehension issues, and adaptation factors. In the bigger picture, axial coding shows that vessel operation situations, linguistic competence barriers, high-pressure situations, psychological issues, comprehension issues, environment issues, and adaptation issues are the major factors that are mostly hard for them in using English. Hence, their difficulties in speaking English during onboard training on situational activities occurred in the interaction of limited linguistic competence, high-pressure situations, psychological stress, and a multicultural environment.

Strategies for Overcoming Speaking Difficulties

Through the data found, there were several strategies that were used by the cadets to overcome their difficulties in speaking English during onboard training. The cadets used active communication strategies, learning & practice strategies, psychological strategies, communication repair strategies, the use of supporting media, interaction-

based strategies, and cognitive strategies. These codes were grouped into several categories, such as learning by doing, continuous learning, psychological control, communication repair strategies, support tools, and real interaction learning. Hence, it is found that the cadets integrated active practice, continuous learning, and psychological adaptation as their strategies in overcoming their speaking difficulties.

Moreover, the cadets testified in more detail about the strategies that help them in overcoming the difficulties, such as habit formation & familiarity, confidence & psychological improvement, communication effectiveness, error correction and feedback, language simplification strategy, social & interaction learning, cognitive & mindset shift, emotional support, and individual acknowledgement. Through axial coding, several categories were found, such as habit formation, exposure development, psychological empowerment, communication effectiveness improvement, feedback & error correction method, language simplification strategy, social interaction learning, cognitive reframing, emotional and spiritual support, and communication diversity awareness. Hence, the cadets testified that exposure, confidence, simplification, and feedback are strategies that help them in improving their speaking skills during onboard training.

Speaking Outcomes

Through the data and data analysis, it was found that language knowledge improvement, accent awareness, listening awareness, confidence and psychological growth, communication awareness, learning strategies & behavior change, personal development and reflection, problem solving and adaptation, and limited preparation awareness are various factors that the cadets believe contribute to their speaking output. Through axial coding, it was found that linguistic development, accent adaptation, comprehension adaptation, psychological empowerment, communication awareness development,

learning behavior change, personal growth, reflection, adaptation, problem solving, and skill awareness are categories of their speaking outcomes. Hence, the cadets testified that maritime English outcomes were shaped through experiential learning, adaptation, and psychological-linguistic improvement.

DISCUSSION

Speaking Challenges

The findings showed the cadets' three main challenges in oral communication during onboard training, namely, linguistic challenges, psychological challenges, and environmental challenges. Linguistic challenges related to the deck cadets' lack of vocabulary, grammar, and the ability to deliver messages spontaneously, quickly, and clearly. These challenges showed that oral communication in the maritime environment not only demands mastery of English but also the ability to use the language effectively in the real work environment. The findings are aligned with communicative competence theory from Canale and Swain (1980), who emphasized the importance of grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competence as a communication foundation. Moreover, Brown (2001) also stated that the ability to produce language fluently and quickly has become the main key to oral communication. From the experiential learning theory perspective, this experience is important for their communication competence development, which gradually transforms through direct experience, reflection, and repetitive practice in the authentic work environment (Kolb & Kolb, 2017). Hence, the communication experience during onboard training becomes a crucial facilitator for the deck cadets to transform their experience into professional communication competence.

Furthermore, psychological factors also played an important part in affecting the speaking ability of the cadets. The cadets often feel low confidence, are afraid to make mistakes, and hesitation becomes the

main obstacle in their speaking process. This situation makes the cadets tend to hesitate in delivering their ideas, even to avoid communication. It is aligned with foreign language anxiety theory found by Horwitz et al. (1986), which explained that anxiety in using a foreign language can hinder their oral communication performance through fear of speaking and anxiety towards negative judgment. On the other hand, MacIntyre (2007) stated that the individual's low level of confidence and perspective of competence tend to affect their willingness to communicate. By this, the deck cadet's communication skills are not only affected by linguistic competence but also by their psychological readiness in using English in a professional situation.

Moreover, the complexity of the maritime work environment also strengthens the challenges that the cadets face during onboard training in the speaking process. The multinational work environment causes accent, culture, and habit differences in the process of oral communication, which increase the potential of miscommunication. This case is correlated with the situated learning theory by Lave and Wenger (1991), which suggests that the learning process happens through active participation in the community of practice where competence increases through direct involvement in the authentic work environment. Sociocultural theory by Vygotsky (1978) also emphasizes that the interaction between the officers and crew that is more experienced in the field is part of the scaffolding that helps the cadets to develop their oral communication skills. In the maritime context, the use of SMCP aims to minimize miscommunication for sea safety and effective communication (IMO, 2001). However, the findings show that the use of SMCP is not optimal and consistent, which affects the complexity of communication onboard, worsening it.

Factors Influencing Speaking

The results show that the speaking skill of cadets during onboard training is affected by several factors, that is, linguistic factors,

accent factors, maritime communication competence, psychological factors, and exposure factors. Different from the previous findings, which emphasize the form of difficulties, this subsection tried to reveal that those difficulties occurred because of the lack of English competence. The limited vocabulary, grammar, and experience in using English cause the cadets to not only struggle in speaking English but also find it difficult to comprehend the other parties' messages. Canale and Swain (1980) stated that communication competence depends on the mastery of several integrated linguistic competencies. Kolb and Kolb's (2017) theory also helps the researcher to explain the findings that is the communication competence can not develop instantaneously but rather through the accumulation of experience, reflection, and repeated practice in authentic situations. In other words, the more limited the cadets' opportunities in speaking English in a professional context, the slower the development of their communication skills. Moreover, accent factors and communication variation in a multinational workplace environment are also the main causes of the challenges in speaking. The different accents and pace of speaking make the cadets find it difficult to understand the information that they get, which directly impacts the response that they give. Hence, the limitation in comprehension affects the quality of speaking that is produced by the cadets. This phenomenon is also explained by the concept of English as a lingua franca, when variation in pronunciation and language mastery is common in international communication. On the other hand, the lack of mastery in SMCP is also affecting the gap between understanding and language production in the communication process on board. This situation illustrates the learning process described by situated learning theory (Lave & Wenger, 1991), where skills develop through direct involvement in a community of practice. During this process of adaptation, interaction with the crew

becomes an integral part of the learning experience itself. Consequently, communication challenges are an inseparable aspect of becoming a member of a professional community.

Furthermore, psychological problems and exposure become important cause which affect the cadets' speaking ability. Lack of confidence, fear of making mistakes, and lack of experience in interacting using English tend to make the cadets hesitate in speaking. This condition not only hinders language production but also affects their skill in processing and understanding information quickly. The fear of making mistakes and low self-confidence decrease their willingness to initiate or hold a conversation in English, a phenomenon consistent with the concept of foreign language anxiety (Horwitz et al., 1986). This state then results in a low willingness to communicate (MacIntyre, 2007), thus limiting opportunities for meaningful communicative experiences. Moreover, Vygotsky (1978) emphasizes that the intensity of interaction with more experienced officers and crew serves as crucial scaffolding, helping the cadets to overcome these barriers and gradually build communicative competence within the maritime work environment. Hence, it can be concluded that factors affecting speaking skills do not only come from the language competence itself but also occur from how the cadets understand, respond, and adapt in the complex maritime workplace environment.

Situational Speaking Challenges

The findings showed that the speaking challenges experienced by the cadets cannot only be seen as individual, limited linguistic competence, but also a phenomenon that is contextual and situational. In various activities onboard, such as vessel operation, communication in emergencies, and cross-cultural interaction, the cadets faced the demand to convey messages quickly, accurately, and be understood by interlocutors from diverse backgrounds.

Canale and Swain (1980) argued that communicative competence is not always enough to explain the complexity of the maritime workplace environment. Aligning with situated learning, Lave and Wenger (1991) stated that speaking skills are a social practice that is formed from involvement with the real context. It means that communication failures are not only a reflection of individual weakness, but also the limitation in the process of adaptation to the communication context, which is specific and dynamic. These situations illustrate the characteristics of an authentic learning environment as described by Lave and Wenger (1991), where learning and competence development occur through direct participation in professional practice. Consequently, communication challenges cannot be separated from the operational context in which cadets learn and work. These situational challenges not only reflect the individual challenges, but also reflect the transition process from the formal classroom learner to a practitioner in the maritime work environment.

The characteristics of each communication situation also determine the level of complexity of the challenges cadets face. Communication during routine operations allows for the clarification or repetition of information, whereas communication in high-risk situations such as emergencies or operations requires coordination and demands simultaneous understanding and response. Under certain conditions, time pressure limits the opportunity for the cadets to plan their speech, making prior experience the primary basis for determining the appropriate response. It aligns with Kolb & Kolb (2017) theory, which states that authentic experience serves as the foundation for developing knowledge and professional competence through reflection and subsequent application in future situations. Hence, every communication situation encountered during training serves not only as a challenge but also as a learning opportunity that strengthens the cadets' communication

readiness for increasingly complex professional contexts.

Moreover, high-pressure situations become a characteristic of the maritime workplace environment, which shows how psychological factors interact directly with linguistic performance. In a condition which demand a quick response, such as operational communication or an emergency situation, the cadets not only face a linguistic limitation but also significant cognitive and emotional pressure. It strengthens the concept of foreign language anxiety by Horwitz et al. (1986). This situation indicates that situational challenges are influenced not only by task characteristics but also by an individual's psychological response to communication demands. Language anxiety tends to rise when learners face high-stakes communication situations. At the same time, such pressure can diminish the willingness to communicate (MacIntyre, 2007), causing cadets to become more cautious or hesitant, or even to delay communication, despite the need for immediate information delivery. However, in this context, anxiety does not stand alone but interacts with the cognitive demand in the speech production process (Levitt, 1989). Therefore, the speaking challenges in a certain situation are not only caused by the limited mastery of English but also by the development of processing demands that need to be done simultaneously in an ideal condition. These findings indicated that the speaking ability in a maritime context needs to be seen as a result of interaction between linguistic competence, cognitive capacity, and situational pressure.

On the other hand, the complexity of the maritime workplace environment, which is multicultural, showed that communication is not only affected by individual and situational factors but also by the dynamic interaction among speakers. Accent variation, speaking pace, and practical use of English are not always met with the standardized SMCP, which creates variation in the communication system. Jenkins

(2000) explained that accent variation is a phenomenon that can not be avoided in international communication. This situation requires the cadets to continuously adapt the way they understand and convey information during interaction. From the sociocultural theory perspective (Vygotsky, 1978), this adaptation process unfolds through social interaction with more experienced individuals who gradually provide scaffolding for the development of the cadets' communication competence. However, in the maritime context, this variation directly impacts sea safety. Moreover, inconsistency in the use of SMCP showed the gap between the formal regulation and communication practice on board. Hence, these findings showed that the understanding that speaking challenges in certain situations during onboard training is the result of a complex interaction between individual limitations, situational pressure, and inconsistency of communication in a multicultural environment onboard.

Strategies for Overcoming Speaking Challenges

The findings showed that the cadets do not act passively in facing the speaking challenges. They actively develop their speaking strategy, which is based on direct practice in daily interaction. The continuous exposure to speaking English in the workplace environment pushes the cadets to build communication habits naturally. In this case, speaking practice has become the main tool to enhance their fluency and confidence. It is aligned with the perspective that speaking skills can develop through real social context, not only from formal learning (Bygate, 2001). Hence, exposure not only functioned as a practice but also as an adaptation mechanism toward the communication demands onboard. It also aligns with experiential learning theory by Kolb and Kolb (2017), who emphasize that authentic experience is the foundation for developing professional competence. Each interaction onboard serves as an

opportunity for cadets to test communication strategies, reflect on successes and errors, and repetitively apply these insights in future situations.

Moreover, the simplification strategy becomes the approach that is used by the cadets to keep the sustainability of communication, although with linguistic limitations. They tend to use basic vocabulary, simple sentence structure, and combine verbal and nonverbal language to ensure the message is conveyed. This strategy showed that the success of communication does not depend only on the complexity of sentences but also on the effectiveness in delivering meaning. It is aligned with strategic competence theory, Canale (1983), which explained that the ability of a speaker in handling language limitations through a certain communication strategy also affects the communication process. This process also resonates with Lave and Wenger's (1991) theory when the cadets were able to adjust their language to be part of the community of practice. The cadets gradually adopt the pattern of communication that the professional community uses. This process not only creates oral communication skills development, but also shapes communication judgement that decides the communication strategies that are most suitable for the situation characteristic that they face. Hence, communication strategies are not only understood as a mere way to overcome limited language but also as an indicator of professional competence development.

On the other hand, the psychological aspect also plays an important role as a strategy that is applied by the cadets. Efforts to build confidence, decrease their fear of making mistakes, and manage their mental pressure in communication become the internal adaptation process. This strategy showed that the improvement of speaking skills does not depend only on the linguistic aspect but also on the individual mental readiness in using the language. MacIntyre (2007) emphasize that the success of

communication is affected by the individual readiness to use a second language when the opportunity to communicate appears. At the same time, those efforts help to decrease the impact of foreign language anxiety (Horwitz et al., 1986). By this, the cadets were able to hold on to their communication participation although they faced linguistic limitations. Psychological strategies not only function to increase self-confidence but also strengthen the courage to keep communicating in the demanding work situation. Hence, psychological aspect management becomes an important requirement in enhancing the cadets' speaking performance during onboard training.

Moreover, the use of feedback in communication interactions becomes another strategy which help the cadets to improve their speaking skills. Feedback is gained through the process of clarification, repetition, and response from the other participant, which enables the cadets to evaluate and adjust their use of English. This process reflects that there is a learning process that happens and is reflected in the real communication context. This process reflects the scaffolding mechanism within sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978) where competence develops through collaboration with more experienced members of the community. These strategies not only serve as practical solutions to speaking barriers but also represent a process of professional socialization that shapes the cadets' communicative identities as future officers. Hence, feedback is not only a function of correction, but also a learning tools which quicken their speaking skill enhancement in the maritime real workplace environment.

Speaking Outcomes

The findings showed that the outcomes of their speaking and learning in the context of maritime English during onboard training are not achieved instantly. It happened through the learning process, which is based on the real experience during onboard

training. The direct interaction between the multinational crew, involvement in real work communication, and exposure to real situations become the main source in the development of the cadets' speaking skills competence. In this context, learning is not limited only to the formal classroom setting, but also a contextual learning form of social practice in the maritime workplace environment. It is aligned with experiential learning from Kolb and Kolb (2017), which emphasized that knowledge and skill develop through direct experience, a process become a new understanding. Hence, the speaking skills that the cadets have gained are the result of a dynamic and contextual learning process. These learning outcomes also show that communication competence develops through active participation in the community of practice, as explained in the situated learning theory (Lave and Wenger, 1991). The cadets internalized the professional communication practice through direct involvement and work activities. The interaction and guidance from the officers and crew who are more experienced is one of the scaffolding strategies in Vygotsky's (1978) theory. Hence, the learning outcomes achieved by the cadets are reflected not only in improved oral communication skills but also in the development of professional communication competencies that enable them to participate more effectively in the maritime work environment.

Moreover, the adaptation process becomes a crucial result which appear from the communication experience. The cadets are not only learning to use English but also adapting to various accents, communication styles, and practical use of English in a multicultural workplace environment. This adaptation showed that communicative skill development is more flexible and contextual, and is not only gained from formal classroom learning. Canale (1983) stated that communicative competence reflects the improvement that is not only caused by linguistic aspects but also sociolinguistic and strategy in using

effective language. Lave and Wenger (1991) also explain that such competence develops by gradual involvement within a community of practice. By this, the process of adaptation becomes an indicator for the cadets, who begin to internalize the communication norms and practices in the maritime work environment. This learning outcome is reflected not only in improved language proficiency but also in the development of contextual and professional communication competence. Hence, the speaking learning results encompass the ability to navigate the communication complexity in real situations onboard.

On the other hand, the improvement of psychological and linguistic aspects becomes an integral part of the success that is gained. The cadets showed development in self-confidence, fear of speaking, and the ability to manage anxiety in speaking. This change happened in alignment with the improvement of vocabulary mastery, fluency, and the ability to arrange a clearer message. This finding also indicates that the speaking learning results are not only technical, but also transformational, because of their involvement with the change in the individual's perception and use of English. Vygotsky (1978) also states that an individual's development is not only influenced by experiences but also the ongoing interaction with a more experienced individual through the scaffolding process. By this, the learning outcomes demonstrate a transformation of incompetence encompassing linguistic, psychological, and professional development. It equips cadets to communicate effectively within the maritime work environment.

CONCLUSION

From the findings and discussion, it can be concluded that the speaking skill of the deck cadet during onboard training is multidimensional. The challenges that are experienced are not only linguistic limitations, such as vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation, but are also

psychological factors such as lack of confidence and fear of making mistakes. Moreover, a workplace environment that consists of a multicultural crew involving various accents, speaking pace, and the use of diverse maritime terminologies also becomes a major obstacle to communication. It shows that oral communication can not be separated from the ability to comprehend the interlocutor's speech, so that speaking and comprehension are correlated in the communication process.

Moreover, speaking challenges are also affected by the communication situation faced by the deck cadets during onboard training. In certain conditions, such as vessel operation, emergency situations, and cross-cultural interaction, demand that the cadets communicate quickly and accurately, which increases the pressure that is felt by the cadets. Hence, the speaking skill is not only decided by the individual's competence but also by a dynamic situational and contextual speaking situation. These findings emphasize that the speaking challenges are the result of the interaction of linguistic limitations, psychological factors, and the complexity of the workplace environment.

To overcome these challenges, the cadets develop various strategies such as enhancing exposure through direct communication practice, simplifying the use of English, building self-confidence, and utilizing feedback through interaction. From those strategies, the cadets are not only able to maintain communication, but also experience gradual development in speaking skills. Hence, the learning outcomes show that the speaking skills of deck cadets in maritime English is shaped through the process, which is experience-based, adapting to the communication environment, and the development of psychological and linguistic factors sustainably.

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