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Exploring the effectiveness of online learning; the Moodle platform and its benefits in learning Maritime English

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Abstract. Future maritime professionals must be proficient in maritime English in order to operate, communicate, and maintain safety in the globalised marine industry. The main focus is on examining how linguistic and technical abilities are integrated, emphasising how they work hand in hand in the classroom. This paper looks at how the Moodle platform works to improve English for Specific Purposes (ESP) instruction in the maritime industry. What is Moodle? Moodle is a flexible open-source learning management system that caters to the particular communication requirements of marine workers who need to be proficient in industry-specific jargon and norms. Effective ESP learning requires active user participation, which Moodle promotes through the use of interactive exercises, collaborative projects, and realistic resources. The importance of cross-cultural communication training is discussed, emphasising its role in preparing future ship professionals for an international working environment on a ship. Furthermore, the balance between fostering student autonomy and providing structured support is essential to maintain engagement. Despite these challenges, Moodle's capability to track student progress and adapt content delivery based on empirical data supports continuous improvement in language acquisition. The paper concludes that by effectively leveraging Moodle's features, maritime educators can enhance the learning experience, improve communication skills, and ultimately contribute to operational efficiency in the maritime sector. This research underscores the importance of addressing potential barriers to participation to maximize the platform's benefits, thereby ensuring that it meets the specific language learning needs of maritime professionals. All things considered, using online learning resources and tools (like Moodle LMS) offers a viable way to improve maritime English instruction and get aspiring maritime professionals ready for the demands of the modern marine sector.

Keywords: Moodle platform, online resources, maritime English, ESP learning

1. Introduction

The worldwide shipping sector requires excellent communication in English as a common language. Online learning resources help students improve their language skills and practice communicating in a real-world context. Virtual classrooms and video conferencing allow students to simulate real-world circumstances in dialogues, presentations, and group activities relevant to their future employment. Online learning removes geographical barriers, increasing access to high-quality maritime English instruction. This is especially useful for folks living in remote places or unable to attend regular in-person classes. Online platforms enable all students to learn important language skills for professional progress, regardless of location or time constraints.

Proficiency in Maritime English is crucial for future ship engineers to effectively communicate, operate, and assure ship safety in the globalized maritime industry.

Seafarers must know how to use nautical vocabulary, such as ship components and engine room. Topics covered include safety-related words, marine communication procedures, and technical English for ship systems and machinery; safety protocols, legal terms (SOLAS, STCW, LSA Code), documentation (logbooks, cargo manifests, and reporting forms), cross cultural communication, emergency procedures, and environmental awareness.

Good Maritime English skills minimize the risk of misunderstandings, promote teamwork and coordination, and enable effective problem solutions. As a result, marine engineers must constantly develop their language abilities in order to assure the safety, efficiency, and success of their operations in today's globalized maritime business. Maritime professionals work in a dynamic and complex environment that requires technical vocabulary, communication skills, and understanding of industry-specific standards. Dudley-Evans and São João (1998) discovered that ESP incorporates language and communication strategies customized to different contexts. This requires marine staff to be familiar with nautical language, safety regulations, and effective intercultural communication. The ability to communicate effectively and accurately among crew members, navigators, and port personnel is crucial not just for operational efficiency, but also for ensuring safety and compliance with international rules. is recommended to adjust body of the paper to the common organization structure of scientific papers – IMRaD (Introduction, Methods, Results and Discussion).

2. The Moodle platform

The Moodle platform, a popular open-source learning management system (LMS), has grown in popularity in educational settings due to its flexibility and wide range of functions that cater to a number of learning scenarios. Moodle is especially useful in the context of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), a method that emphasizes tailoring language instruction to fit the communicative demands of students in various professional domains. The ESP understands that professionals, such as those in the marine industry, have specific language requirements that are not typically addressed by mainstream English language courses. Teaching Maritime English is closely related to Moodle and other modes of teaching language due to the specialized nature of the language and the need for practical, accessible, and interactive educational platforms. Future marine engineers must possess sufficient English language competence to solve professional and personal issues while performing their official duties. Teaching Maritime English using Moodle and other modes of language instruction enhances accessibility, interactivity, flexibility, and customization, thereby optimizing the learning experience for future ship engineers and promoting proficiency in the specialized language skills required for success in their future work. Maritime English education faces several contemporary challenges that necessitate innovative approaches and solutions. Thus, the research problem encompasses integrating technology, including online learning tools and multimedia resources, into Maritime English education.

Considering the specialized nature of the language and the requirement for practical, accessible, and interactive educational platforms, teaching Maritime English is intrinsically linked to Moodle and other language teaching methods. Future marine engineers must have appropriate English language skills to solve professional and personal problems while executing official obligations. Teaching Maritime English through Moodle and other modes of language instruction improves accessibility, interactivity, flexibility, and customization, thereby optimizing the learning experience for future ship engineers and promoting proficiency in the specialized language skills required for success in their future careers. Maritime English teaching faces a number of modern difficulties that require innovative methods and solutions.

In this respect, the Moodle platform delivers a large choice of materials that may effectively satisfy these special language and communicative requirements. According to Yurzhenko (2019), an e-course produced on the Moodle platform can help educate Maritime English for professional reasons by exploiting their customizable choices for content dissemination and participation. The platform supports the usage of authentic information such as marine magazines, instructional films, and interactive

exercises that are relevant to the real-world issues faced by maritime professionals. Furthermore, Moodle's flexible course structures enable educators/trainers to construct learning paths that mimic the specialized skills necessary in the marine profession, enabling a tailored approach to language acquisition.

According to Diahyleva et al. (2024), the use of online learning tools increases student engagement, particularly among prospective ship engineers taking marine English courses. The discussion forums' real-time capabilities enable students to engage in debate on important maritime topics, exchange ideas, and clarify uncertainties while improving their professional language skills. This interactive aspect not only encourages peer-to-peer learning, but it also fosters a sense of belonging, which is critical for pushing students to actively participate in specialized vocabulary and communicative needs across several situations.

Collaborative projects within Moodle further increase user participation and often require students to work together in virtual teams, simulating real-world maritime environments where effective communication is essential. By participating in such collaborative efforts, students not only improve their language skills but also develop critical soft skills, including negotiation and problem-solving, which are vital in their future careers. Lisinchuk (2019) analyzes the principles of communicative education executed through Moodle, which emphasizes interaction as a fundamental component for effective language learning. These principles emphasize the importance of placing learning activities in authentic contexts that reflect the maritime industry, making the content more relevant and engaging.

Despite these promising solutions, difficulties with user participation exist on the Moodle platform. A significant issue is students' diverse levels of computer literacy, which may hinder active involvement in discussions and collaborative work. Students who have less expertise utilizing online platforms may struggle to navigate Moodle successfully, limiting their ability to fully participate with their content and peers. Furthermore, the asynchronous nature of many online learning components can cause communication delays and a loss of camaraderie among study groups, reducing the engaging experience that is essential for language development.

The delivery of specialized content through the Moodle platform is essential for the improvement of the English for Specific Purposes (ESP) language in the maritime domain. Moodle offers various methods of content delivery that meet the differentiated requirements of maritime professionals, promoting an engaging and effective learning environment. One approach involves the use of interactive modules that facilitate the understanding of complex maritime terminology and concepts. These modules typically have multimedia elements, including videos, simulations, and animations that contextualize the use of language in realistic maritime scenarios. Such immersive experiences allow students to apply their knowledge in a practical way, promoting a deeper understanding and training/fixation of language skills relevant to the maritime domain.

Furthermore, examinations tailored to marine environments enable a focused assessment of language competencies. Moodle's features include many methods of assessment, such as peer testing, debates, and reviews, which can be tailored to meet the specific needs of the marine industry. These exams not only assess language competency, but also promote critical thinking and problem-solving abilities, both of which are vital in maritime operations. According to Yurzhenko et al. (2023), incorporating interactive evaluations into Moodle boosts student involvement, which is crucial in the ESP learning process. Aligning assessment assignments with genuine marine circumstances allows students to better connect their language abilities to real-world applications, boosting the relevance and efficacy of their study.

The effectiveness of Moodle further supports the delivery of ESP content; the Afanasievskaya and Used study (2019) highlights the platform's ability to facilitate collaborative learning among maritime personnel. The inclusion of discussion forums and group projects allows students to exchange ideas and practices, fostering a vital community of practice in the maritime sector. This collaborative aspect not only enriches the learning experience, but also reflects the teamwork typically required in offshore operations, thus preparing students for the real-life challenges they may face in their professional environments. Moodle's ability to provide timely feedback is another prominent feature that significantly

improves content delivery in ESP learning. Instructors can easily track student progress and provide immediate feedback on assignments and assessments, a feature highlighted by Yurzhenko et al. (2023). This immediate feedback allows learners to identify areas for improvement and adjustment of learning strategies, thereby improving learning outcomes. The iterative learning process facilitated by rapid feedback loops is crucial, especially in the maritime domain, where accuracy and clarity of language are fundamental.

The varied methods of distributing Moodle platform material, such as interactive modules, specialized exams, and collaborative tools, support their usefulness in improving ESP learning in the maritime field. Moodle not only assists the maintenance of language skills by combining creative instructional methods with technology aspects, but it also fosters the application of knowledge in relevant nautical scenarios. Moodle's rich educational experience delivers a holistic learning environment that adequately prepares students for the linguistic issues they will face during their maritime careers. Examining learning outcomes is critical for determining Moodle's success in teaching ESP, especially in the marine area.

Additionally, Moodle's inherent collaboration features, such as peer feedback and collaborative projects, showed a sense of community among students. According to research by Malberg et al. (2023), this collaboration leads to a deeper understanding of maritime English as students collectively navigate complex communication tasks. This social constructivist approach cultivates an environment in which students can practice and hone their communication skills in a minimally threatening scenario, reinforcing their confidence in using English in professional contexts. Before the pandemic, maritime education relied heavily on direct education and experiential learning, where students were actively involved in onboard simulations and real-world application scenarios. The sudden shift to an online mode required a reassessment of educational strategies, methods of student engagement and assessment procedures. Moodle's versatile features, including forums, quizzes, and multimedia resources, made it easy to deliver materials and supplement with courses that reflected the objectives of the curriculum.

In terms of learning outcomes, the assessment methodologies offered by Moodle, such as instructional assessments and feedback mechanisms, have shown their effectiveness in measuring student progress and specialist language acquisition. Participants reported significant improvements in both written and oral communication skills, which are fundamental to successfully navigating maritime environments. The tests suggest that the platform's features, designed to provide immediate feedback and encourage iterative learning, promote a deeper understanding of specialized language and its application in real-world scenarios.

3. Conclusion

To summarise, while the current study confirms the effectiveness of the Moodle platform in boosting ESP learning outcomes for maritime professionals, it is obvious that there are numerous areas for further research. Evolving e-learning environments that adapt to the changing needs of maritime professionals will be critical in ensuring that educational practices remain up-to-date high-impact, and in compliance with industry standards. As the marine sector has grown globally, so has the demand for proficient English communication, emphasising the importance of long-term research efforts to improve e-learning approaches in this specialised field.

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