

## The Motivations Behind Studying Maritime English

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**Abstract.** How motivated are seafarer trainees/cadets to learn Maritime English as a Foreign Language (MEFL)? This paper/presentation has two main goals: to do a comparative analysis of effective education of Vietnamese, Filipino, and Japanese maritime students, and to develop ways to implement better language-learning practice in Japan, where motivation to learn MEFL can be low. Through this research, the author would like to change Japanese maritime students' consciousness of studying English because it is necessary for maritime students to speak English fluently in the maritime industry for their future. Through a comparative analysis, the differences among these countries will become apparent, and successful strategies for learning Maritime English and increasing motivation may appear.

**Key words:** Maritime English; Learning English;

### 1. Introduction

The vessels of Japanese companies are using English as the main language of communication because of an increasing number of foreign crew (Nagao, 1978). Japanese seafarers need to use English for their jobs to communicate with other people. Despite

this, many Japanese students have lower motivation to study English in their university life than in their high school life because Japanese university students have no high-risk examinations of English in spite of having an opportunities to use English in course work (Rooks, 2012). They have no recent purpose to study English. This presentation will compare the Maritime English education system among Japan, Vietnam and Philippine to conclude what is the effective education of Maritime English. The methodology of this study operates under the hypothesis that the more effective education students receive, the higher their motivation is. This study also hopes to investigate what types of education are the most effective to raise the motivation of Maritime students studying English. The first part of this paper will give background information about various English education systems. The second part of the study will focus on analysis of interviews with Maritime institutions in Vietnam and the Philippines in order to identify successful aspect of Maritime English education that may be integrated in Japan.

### **1. Primary and Secondary English Education**

Before I start to compare the maritime English education system, it is important to research and compare the Primary and Second education systems because the students have studied English since they start to go to Primary school. At first, I compare the difference of Primary and Secondary education system in English class by using four factors, which is the start year of learning English, the time of class in a week (each grade), the language used in class, and the examination system for university.

Table 1 General comparison of English Education among three countries in this study

	Start learning English	Education system (P-M-H)	Primary and Secondary English Class Hours	Teaching English through English	The university Entrance Examination
Japan	5 <sup>th</sup> grade*	6-3-3	P 0-0-0-0-2-2 M 3-3-3 H 6-5-5	From university (particularly)	Nation-wide exams (L .R.G.V)
Philippine	1 <sup>st</sup> grade	6-4-2 Or 7-4-2	P7.5-7.5-7.5-5-5 M 5-5-5-5 H(No data)	From primary English	No nation-wide exams (R.W.G.V)
Vietnam	6 <sup>th</sup> grade	5-4-3	P0-0-0-0-0 M 3-3-3-3 H 3-3-3	Not taught by English in any school levels	Nation-wide exams (R.W)

Source: Current trends and Issues in English language Education in Asia, 2008

Note: \* Japanese government is going to start compulsory English class from 5<sup>th</sup> grade from 2020

P=Primary; M=Middle School; H=High School;

L=Listening; R=Reading; G=Grammar; V=Vocabulary; W=Writing

Table2 English test's score of all people who had TOEIC test

	TOEIC Score
Japan	516
Philippine	709
Vietnam	507

Source: report on test takers worldwide 2016

Table 1 shows the difference of education systems among three countries. Filipinos are the earliest to start learning English and they dedicate much time to the study

of English. When they enter an elementary school at 6 years old, they start to use English. On the contrary, Japanese and Vietnamese don't learn until entering junior secondary (Yeon Hee Choi, Hyo Woong Lee, 2008), (Japan is going to start studying English from 5<sup>th</sup> grade in 2020)<sup>4</sup> Table2 show the TOEIC average score of people who have a test in 2016 (Not only Maritime workers and students). The Philippines is the highest of the three countries, so the amount of Time and time to start studying English are important factors of different English skills. And also English class in the Philippines is taught in the target language (English) differing from Japan and Vietnam.

The nationwide exam is standardized, while individual schools make original tests suited for target students levels. When Filipino students would like to enter the university, they need various skills of English: Reading, Writing, Grammar, and Vocabulary. It is clear that Filipinos have a lot of opportunities to use and learn English and they synthesize skills through Primary and secondary school. Filipino students cannot avoid studying English because students have to get predefined English scores when they want to enter and graduate the university, or start to work at a good company.<sup>5</sup>

## **2. Maritime English Education system**

I research about Maritime English education by interview for Vietnam Maritime University (VMU), Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific, Philippines. I listed the factors of effective education, which are Frequency, Methodology, Materials, and Educational objectives. I asked 14 questions to research about Maritime English Education in South-East Asia. Data is still being collected from the Philippines, so this paper will focus on the Japanese education system and Vietnam Maritime University.

### **A. Vietnam Maritime University**

Vietnam Maritime University (VMU) is the education organization

where students who want to be seafarers go and study in Vietnam. VMU has a course of navigation and marine Engineering. VMU offers 2 undergraduate English programs, which are English language and Business English. VMU also offers many short classes for Maritime English whose term is about 3-5 months. These classes are mandatory for all Navigation and maritime Engineering students. In VMU, E-lecturing and Maritime English books are also used as materials in Maritime English classes. In classes teachers focus on 4 skills, which are listening, speaking, reading, and writing, and students are evaluated by tests and group presentations. There is an exchange program and foreign students visiting VMU. Vietnamese students take time to do homework about 3-5hours every week. TOEIC is used the data to asses student proficiency and the score is 450. And the average score of Navigation and Engineering student is 500-600, and the advanced classes is IELTS6.0-7.5.

#### B. Kobe university

Kobe University is located in Kobe city, Hyogo prefecture, Japan. There are two courses to be seafarers. One is the Navigation course, the other is Engineering course. Kobe university offer 7 classes to be seafarers Writing1, Writing2, Comunication1, Comunication2, Maritime English1, Maritime English2, Maritime practical English. These are the mandatory class for navigation and Engineering students. In Kobe University, English-central and Maritime English textbook are used as materials. Through these classes, teachers make a point of speaking, writing, reading, and presentation skills, and students are evaluated by tests and presentation at the end of semester. There is an exchange program, the students visiting sister school in a few weeks and foreign students visiting Kobe university.

### **3. Conclusion**

I compared the Primary, Secondary, and Maritime University education system among three countries. (Maritime University is just only two countries between Vietnam and Japan.) By comparing two countries in this paper, Japanese education system is similar with Vietnamese one in aspects of the start learning, the custom without using English in their life and the activities in Maritime classes. It seems that the Japanese and Vietnamese Maritime education is effective for improving English from the viewpoint of many resources taken in Maritime English classes, and students have a lot of chance to improve their English by taking special programs or advanced classes. But they can not improve their English unless they learn much positively because there is only 1 or 2 mandatory classes in a week and almost resources are optional. According to Philippine's primary and secondary school education, it takes much more time to touch with English to acquire the English skills. Philippine English starts from 1<sup>st</sup> grade and English is taught through English. It seems that English is used as a part of their life or education in Philippine and these system makes the whole level of English go up from the result of Table2. I have a suggestion that Japanese maritime English Education should offer the opportunity to use English not only classes, for example on board training, research activity, and in Non- English classes. If Japanese Maritime English education have much more opportunities to practice English by using in existence resources and program, education of Japanese has much more effective than ever before and connect to the motivational of students studying English.

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