



**IAMU 2023 Research Project**  
**(No. YAS202301)**

**Educating Global Maritime Professional:  
An Action Research to implement courses  
regarding Effective communication**

By

University of Transport Ho Chi Minh City

**August 2024**

**IAMU**  
**International Association of Maritime Universities**

*International Association of Maritime Universities*

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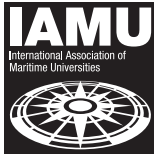
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# Executive Summary

The research project, "Educating Global Maritime Professionals: An Action Research to Implement Courses on Effective Communication," led by Research Coordinator Hoang Nguyen Vuong from University of Transport Ho Chi Minh City, aims to enhance the interpersonal communication skills of future maritime professionals through a collaborative e-learning course. *This initiative explored the focused area of "interpersonal communication" in the Body of Knowledge (BoK) of the Global Maritime Professional (GMP) Initiative set forth by the International Association of Maritime Universities (IAMU) in 2019.*

## Objectives

*To achieve this goal, the project established several objectives.*

1. Understand the needs of maritime academic institutions regarding effective interpersonal communication,
2. Develop e-learning course that can complement the institutions' curriculum regarding communication skills,
3. Deliver and evaluate the outcomes of the course in collaboration with partnered institutions,
4. Suggest the way forward for the course to be maintained as a periodic learning activity for MET institutions.

## Methodology

Action research was employed as the primary methodology in this study. The project involved instructors, curriculum developers, and students from three IAMU member universities: University of Transport Ho Chi Minh City (UTH), Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific (MAAP), and Batumi Navigation Teaching University (BNTU). This research was conducted following a three-phase action research cycle:

Phase 1: Understanding the status quo and the needs

Phase 2: Deliberating and implementing the intervention

Phase 3: Evaluation and Feedback

## Key Findings

The findings of the project follow the structure of an action research cycle:

Phase 1:

The findings reflect the current state of and need for communication training in participating institutions, including several main themes:

- Appreciation of communication skills
- Different approach to communication training
- E-learning prospects for communication training
- Effect of the lower-level education
- Insufficient curriculum coverage
- Lack of confidence among students
- Interest in international communication courses

Phase 2:

The researcher developed a collaborative e-learning course based on the findings of Phase 1, suggestions and feedback from participants, and literature review. The course has three intended learning outcomes and various learning activities, including reading materials, writing emails, video critiques, and debates.

Phase 3:

The implications of the course are demonstrated in the following themes:

- Enhancing life-long learning skills
- Valuable multinational learning environment
- Lack of communication activities in universities' curriculum

- Importance of practicing communication
- Flexibility of asynchronous learning
- Variety of learning content increases attention span

# **Educating Global Maritime Professional: An Action Research to implement courses regarding Effective communication**

**Theme: Maritime Education and Training in the era of global change**

University of Transport Ho Chi Minh City

And

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**Abstract** This study aims to strengthen the interpersonal skills of future global maritime professionals through a collaborative e-learning initiative focused on Effective Communication, which is related to one of the focus areas of the Body of Knowledge (BoK) of the Global Maritime Professional (GMP) Initiative (IAMU, 2019). Specifically, this research explores the potential of collaboration among IAMU member universities in delivering the learning outcomes stated in the BoK, as a teaching and learning strategy. Employing an action research methodology, instructors and students from different Maritime Education and Training (MET) member universities participated in determining the content and educational approaches needed to improve students' interpersonal communication skills. Subsequently, a collaborative e-learning course incorporating the content and various Teaching and Learning Activities (TLA) emerged and underwent testing and evaluation with students representing three different MET institutions. The findings underscore pressing educational needs within MET, particularly in verbal and written communication skills. The study highlights the value of implementing communication courses with students from different nationalities, revealing that despite time zone disparities, culture and language barriers, students not only enhance their communication skills but also cultivate essential social skills crucial for a Global Maritime Professional. IAMU member universities have faced numerous challenges in implementing the GMP and BoK. This study proposes alternative ways for GMP implementation, emphasizing the potential of member universities coming together to deliver BoK's focus areas and their learning outcomes effectively.

**Keyword:** *Global Maritime Professional; Body of Knowledge; Interpersonal Communication, Action research, E-learning*





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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background

Maritime industry is one of the most vital industries, encompassing numerous activities regarding the transportation of goods, people and services through the seaway. The global trade is significantly dependent on the operations of the shipping industry, where vessels carry more than 80% of goods volume internationally [1]. In this picture, seafarers play an important role in maintaining the safety and efficiency of these operations. Therefore, the education and training of seafarers are among the main focus of the industry.

The competence of seafarers is governed by the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification, and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW), which establishes minimal standards for the workforce to carry out their duties on board safely. However, the contemporary era is characterized by unprecedented disruptions such as technology advancement, political unrest, and climate change, challenging the current paradigm of maritime education and training [2], [3]. The requirements for seafarers are increasing. Thus, the way of training them is unlikely to be identical.

Maritime education nowadays not only focuses on the technical knowledge and skills required for seafarers to operate tasks onboard, but also on soft skills and lifelong learning skills (i.e., critical and analytical thinking) to cope with increasingly complex problems raised by the mentioned disruptions and facilitate their success after the sea life if they decide to set up a land-based career [4], [5], [6]. One of those skills that enables seafarers to conduct duties onboard effectively, and also impact their seafaring careers as a whole is interpersonal communication.

Communication skills involve two interconnected components: receiving and responding. Receiving includes listening, and observing to understand. Responding consists of discussing, and conveying thoughts and ideas through speaking or writing. The skills enhance the collaboration among people, facilitating a smooth and seamless exchange of information [7].

In the maritime context, communication appears in almost all operations onboard, either within the ship, ship to ship, or ship to shore (e.g., watch keeping, cargo handling, docking and undocking). Thus, clear and effective communication is essential for ensuring the safe operation of the ship. Further, it is among the crucial soft skills that affect the employability of maritime professionals [8].

From a legal standpoint, educational criteria for maritime communication have been set out by STCW in Table A-II/1 and Table A-II/2. However, they are considered a part of technical competences, not as the soft skills or life-long skills that seafarers can master to deal with highly complex problems confronting the shipping industry these days. To complement this, the International Association of Maritime Universities (IAMU) established the Body of Knowledge (BoK), putting forward detailed learning outcomes that are deemed needed for a future maritime professional, including interpersonal communication as one of the most vital soft skills.

## 1.2 Rationale for the project

Member universities of IAMU are encouraged to examine learning outcomes in BoK and design the curriculum that fits their context and achieves these outcomes. However, few studies have shed light on how these institutions adapt their learning objectives into their curricula. Furthermore, most maritime universities tend to work in isolation [9], hindering the potential to collaborate and exchange good practices regarding curriculum design.

As mentioned, communication is an essential skill for future seafarers and was recognized in the BoK. The project seeks to investigate the current status of communication training in various maritime university members in IAMU, exploring opportunities to bring relevant stakeholders (i.e., lecturers, students, and curriculum developers) together to design collaborative educational solutions to improve interpersonal communication in line with the learning outcomes in BoK.

### ***1.3 Aims and objectives of the project***

The overall aim of the project is to enhance interpersonal communication skills for future global maritime professionals through collaboration between MET institutions. To reach the aim, relevant objectives were established, as follows:

- Understand the needs of maritime academic institutions regarding effective interpersonal communication
- Develop an e-learning course that can complement the institutions' curriculum regarding communication skills
- Deliver and evaluate the outcomes of the course in collaboration with partnered institutions
- Suggest the way forward for the course to maintain it as a periodic learning activity for MET institutions

In line with the objectives, research questions were raised to guide the research activities of the project:

- What is the current status of communication training in MET institutions?
- What are the needs of training on communication skills from the perspective of stakeholders (e.g., students, lecturers, curriculum developers)?
- What are the learning outcomes and learning activities of the communication e-learning course?
- What are the implications of the e-learning course?
- What are the recommendations to develop the collaborative communication course?

### ***1.4 Overview of the project***

The project employs action research as the primary methodology. The research activities took place at three universities: University of Transport Ho Chi Minh City (UTH), Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific (MAAP), and Batumi Navigation Teaching University (BNTU). Researchers examined the present situation of learning and teaching activities regarding communication through the lens of stakeholders who directly engaged in those activities such as students/cadets, lecturers, and curriculum developers. After that, the researchers collaborated with them to devise a joint e-learning course, implement, and evaluate it. Details of the methodology can be found in section IV of this report.

## **2. Literature Review**

In this section, researchers look critically at the relevant literature concerning legal framework, conceptions, and relevant training on communication skills in the maritime industry to gain a deeper understanding of industry perception of communication skills and to form a theoretical foundation for the educational solutions that were employed in the project.

## ***2.1 Regulatory framework regarding communication skills***

While training requirements for communication skills are evident in many maritime regulatory frameworks, they are attached to achieve specific technical tasks and not considered as an independent competency. For instance, according to the STCW code, navigational officers of ships above 500GT should communicate effectively as a part of managing bridge resources and maintaining a safe watch [10, p. 102]. Another example in the code is that effective communication is a requirement for deck officers in the cargo handling process (International Maritime Organization, 2017, p.110). Further, the International Safety Management Code (ISM) stipulates that ships' personnel should possess good communication skills to implement their safety management system.

The BoK is a complementary instrument, which categorizes interpersonal communication as one of the most essential soft skills for the maritime profession. Moreover, it specifies different levels of achievement in both cognitive and affective domains [11, p. 31 & 42]. For the former one, the achievement level ranges from remembering to creating. For the latter one, it is from receiving to internalizing the value system. The instrument details specific learning outcomes for communication skills, which are lacking in the current maritime regulatory framework.

## ***2.2 Maritime communication, English skills and communication skills***

Regarding communication at sea, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) has established a specialized communication component called Standard Marine Communication Phrases (SMCP). These phrases are simplified to a minimum to facilitate interpretation, mitigating the risk of miscommunication in the safety situation and fitting in various rough communication situations at sea [12]. According to STCW, officers at the operational level should have knowledge and proficiency in using SMCP to conduct duties onboard such as understanding the ship's safety information, communicating with other ships, coastal stations and VTS centers.

The IMO also recognizes the necessity of improving overall English language skills for seafarers. SMCP only situates as a part of a broader set of language skills that encompass vocabulary, grammar, and discourse abilities. Further, STCW mandates that navigational officers should communicate in English both orally and in writing [10], [12]. Historically, English has been a common language onboard ships since the sixteenth century when England gradually rose as a maritime power [13].

On the one hand, English proficiency, particularly maritime English, is a crucial part, contributing to effective communication onboard. On the other hand, knowledge of communication in terms of skills, principles and barriers is also critical. Maritime stakeholders seem to overlook the latter competence. STCW requires seafarers to understand and communicate clearly in English [10, p. 108]. Mere proficiency in English is insufficient for them to accomplish it. Therefore, specific training on communication skills and principles is deemed necessary. IAMU volunteered to put forward specific outcomes for this type of training with the BoK. This project investigated the practicality of such training by employing a pilot course, incorporating BoK's learning outcomes for interpersonal communication.

## ***2.3 Communication training and Collaborative e-learning***

Maritime stakeholders have focused on specialized English communication training, putting forward guidelines and recommendations on designing relevant courses, and curricula. During the early 2000s, a company called Marlins introduced the first model course for maritime English. Later, the IMO

issued Maritime English Model Course 3.17, which combined the former English curriculum for seafarers [14].

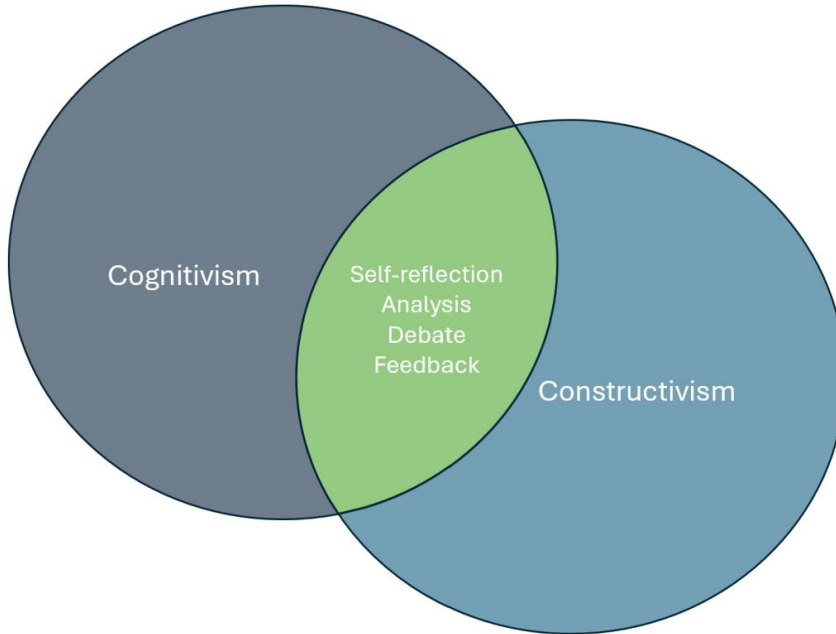
The newest version of IMO Model Course 3.17 (2015) incorporates general English and specialized Maritime English into one course. It suggests course frameworks, outlines, and syllabi at two proficiency levels: novice and intermediate. Each level delineates different requirements for knowledge, understanding, and proficiency. The Model course begins with fundamental English knowledge in grammar, vocabulary, phonology and communication skills (Reading, Listening, Writing) and then applies the use of it to common situations onboard ships.

On the contrary, James and his colleagues proposed a reversal in the approach to maritime English, adapting from a medical English perspective. Instead of teaching general English at the beginning and later embedding maritime components, the researchers think instructors should prioritize teaching specific maritime situations and helping students acquainted with the terminologies, syntax, and intonation used in those scenarios [15].

When it comes to maritime communication training, the industry primarily emphasizes language education, particularly English – the predominant language used onboard [13] – but disregards the training on communication as a skill. As mentioned, language competence is a vital part of effective communication, but it is not sufficient on its own. Communication skills encompass a wide range of abilities in conveying and receiving information between speakers and listeners [16]. Apart from language proficiency, it is crucial to grasp communication principles, impediments, active listening skills, the knowledge of cultural and contextual elements when communicating [17].

Regarding the pedagogic approaches to communication training, scholars have discussed the application of numerous prominent learning theories including behaviorism [18], cognitivism [19], and constructivism [17]. Firstly, the behaviorist approach emphasizes learning through the surrounding environment with incentives and punishments as signals for behavior development. The application of this school of thought to communication education has been decreasing, limiting to the context of the mentally disabled [18]. Unlike behaviorism, the cognitivist approach focuses on the process of thinking, happening within people's mind when they learn [19]. Finally, the constructivist approach lets the learners actively find and form their knowledge and competence with the facilitation of the lecturers.

In line with the scholars' discussion, Ammentorp, Chiswell & Martin [20] proposed effective, evidence-based communication training methods in the medical domain such as role-play, self-reflection, observation, analysis and feedback, which have traits of cognitivism and constructivism. Although the paper is in a healthcare context, the adaptation to the maritime domain can be beneficial. This practice is similar to James et al [15] work, where he and his colleagues learned communication learning approach of the health industry and made recommendations for the maritime field. This project adapted the effective communication training methods in health care, under the basis of constructivist and cognitivist approaches, to form learning activities that can be used in the maritime context (See Figure 1).



**Figure 1. Educational Intervention Framework**

The educational intervention in the project materialized as a collaborative e-learning course. This form of training was developed and employed by Bolmsten et al [9] to educate global maritime professionals in different MET institutions. On that foundation, this study continued to use the same approach to further explore a specific competence of the global maritime professionals, namely interpersonal communication.

### **3. Methodology**

#### ***3.1 Action research and its cycle***

The project deployed action research as the main methodology. Action research has grown its popularity as a research methodology in various areas, including education, information technology, business and management, and sustainable development, amongst others. However, in the maritime field, action research remains a novel approach.

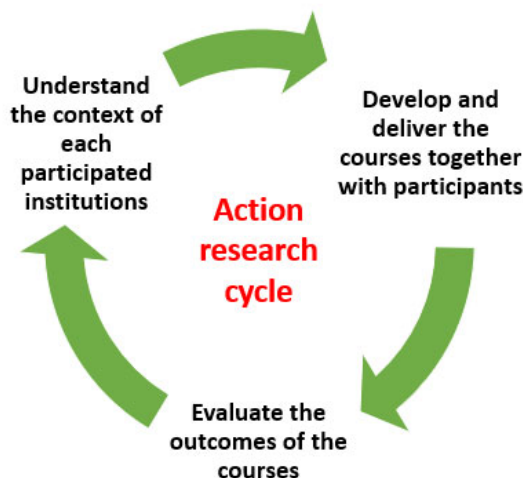
Action research, as its name suggests, is the research methodology that applies theories into practice, generating actionable knowledge or solutions to tackle pressing problems within social entities or communities. The approach's emphasis is on the collaboration between researchers and practitioners who are directly involved and affected in the situation that the action research aims to improve [21]. This is alien to the positivist view of research, which posits the researchers as observers and emphasizes the objectivity of the findings [22], [23]. While both views have their own implications, action research might have a distinct advantage in generating feasible solutions or proper actionable knowledge to improve the practice in a timely manner, which is deemed necessary in the era characterized by the rapid development of technologies.

The maritime educational aspect is a conspicuous topic of action research in the maritime sector. Educators have been using the approach to investigate innovative educational interventions in maritime contexts such as collaborative learning [9], experiential learning [24], scaffolding-based approach [25], and constructivist approach [26].

The overall aim and objectives of the project lean towards designing educational solutions to strengthen communication skills for future seafarers. Considering the characteristics and applicability of action research in MET, the researchers believe that this approach is a proper methodology to achieve the purpose of the project, generating actionable knowledge that can be useful for the implementation of GMP.

Action research often takes form as cyclical or spiral process [21], aiming at incremental improvement in each implementation of a cycle. The project adapted the action research cycle guided by the Cooperative Method Development (CMD). The CMD was developed by Dittrich et al [27], establishing three-phase action research: 1. Understanding, 2. Deliberating change, 3. Implementation and evaluation. Although the researchers used CMD in the information technology context, they highlighted the probability of adapting the framework in other domains [27].

Therefore, the action research cycle deployed in the project includes three phases: Phase 1 – Understand the context and needs of METs regarding communication skills training, Phase 2 – Develop and Implement the collaborative e-learning course, Phase 3 – Evaluate the outcomes of the course. The cycle is depicted as follows:



**Figure 2. Action research cycle**

In phase 1, the researchers conducted semi-structured interviews with stakeholders such as lecturers, students, curriculum developers and assessors to solicit qualitative data regarding their perceptions of communication skills training and the existing communication curricula. Besides, the researchers also asked for relevant curriculum documents to gather further information on communication training elements. These practices helped researchers gain a deeper understanding of how each participating METI is training communication skills from the perspective of people who are directly involved in this training.



In phase 2, the researchers designed a course outline with learning outcomes and corresponding learning activities based on the input from phase 1 and the literature review. The outline was sent to participants in phase 1 for comments and feedback. The researchers incorporated the opinions of stakeholders to improve the course outline. A learning management system was established, functioning as a platform to build the course materials upon. The course included both synchronous and asynchronous activities with different learning outcomes and assessments. The academics then implemented the course with students from participating institutions.

Phase 3 occurred right after phase 2: the researchers carried out semi-structured interviews with course participants to evaluate the outcomes of the course. In this way, the academics could capture their thoughts and opinions promptly, avoiding any risk of blurring the experience. Furthermore, it is also more convenient for participants in terms of scheduling. Subsequently, a feedback form was also sent to students to express their opinions and perspectives. The form provides an additional means to analyze and juxtapose with qualitative interview data.

### ***3.2 Participants' recruitment and their roles***

In phase 1, the researchers recruited interviewees using a convenience sampling strategy. It is a technique where subjects are selected because of their convenient accessibility and proximity to the researchers. This approach was employed by various researchers when they conducted action research [28], [29].

The interviewees were selected from three MET institutions in Vietnam, Georgia, and the Philippines. The researchers sent emails including an introduction of the research project, an offer to participate in the project, and a consent form to relevant stakeholders such as lecturers, maritime students (deck and engineering department), curriculum developers and assessors. The ones who agreed to join the project as interviewees would be arranged for online interviews through Zoom. The researchers chose this modality because it allows researchers to record the interviews conveniently without background noise. However, some interviews in the Philippines and Georgia were conducted face-to-face because the accessibility to interviewees was only available for in-person meetings. The researchers adjust interview questions according to the positions of the interviewees in their institutions (i.e., students, university's staff).

Before the interviews, the researchers organized a familiarization session to introduce the project and get to know interviewees, reducing the potential hesitation and shyness during interviews. 9 students and 4 lecturers were recruited in Vietnam; 9 students and 3 lecturers participated in the interviews in Georgia; and 10 students and 1 curriculum developer were selected in the Philippines. In total, 28 students, and 8 universities' staff were chosen for phase 1.

In phase 2, the researchers developed an initial outline for the communication course based on the input of phase 1 and sent them through emails to universities' staff for their feedback. The comments and feedback were collected and incorporated to finalize the final outline of the course. In phase 3, 4 students from each university were selected to participate in the course. They would give their perspectives to evaluate the program afterward.

### ***3.3 Data analysis***

The recordings of the interview were transcribed using Otter.ai – an artificial intelligence tool that converts spoken data into written text. The support of the tool enables researchers to save time and concentrate on analyzing the data. However, the transcription's accuracy is compromised by the

various English accents of the interviewees. The researchers re-listened to all the interviews and corrected the inaccuracies.

The Nvivo software was used to store and analyze the interview data. First, the researchers made the written text compatible with the Nvivo and then imported the data to the software. Second, the approach called thematic analysis was employed to analyze the qualitative data. Thematic analysis was widely used in qualitative research to identify, analyze, and report patterns or themes within data. Braun & Clarke [30] suggested step-by-step guidance to carry out the thematic analysis rigorously, including six phases: 1. familiarize researchers with data, 2. generate initial codes, 3. search for themes, 4. review themes, 5. define and name themes, 6. produce the report. The researchers adapted this guidance to handle the qualitative data in the project. Since the phase 2,3,4, and 5 revolve around identifying common patterns, resulting in themes and these phases are reiterative processes, the researchers integrate four phases into one: code and identify themes. Therefore, the thematic analysis employed includes three stages.

#### *Stage 1. Familiarize researchers with data*

In this phase, the researchers triangulated different data types: interview data, document data, and field notes. By doing so, the academic gained a more thorough understanding of the data. For example, when the lecturers described and gave their perceptions on the curriculum regarding communication skills, the researchers can reflect their opinions on the curriculum documents. Besides, the field notes also captured the implications of the body language and intonation of the interviewees in addition to the spoken data. Braun & Clarke [30] appreciated the triangulation of numerous data sets to improve the knowledge of researchers on the data.

Furthermore, the researchers re-listened to the spoken data to fix possible inaccuracies in the corresponding written text. This reiteration is a good way to familiarize the academic with data and generate initial ideas of the potential patterns [31], [32].

#### *Stage 2. Code and identify themes*

Following the familiarization phase, the researchers delved into the data to uncover common patterns across responses from participants of different maritime institutions. Then the identified patterns were grouped to form basic themes. Finally, the basic themes were integrated to generate overarching themes that addressed the research questions. However, the process of coding and finding themes was not linear and hierarchical, going from common phrases to overarching themes. It was rather an iterative process where researchers go back and forth between the themes.

#### *Stage 3. Produce the report*

Finally, the researchers wrote up the report by elaborating on the well-developed themes from phase 2, highlighting succinct, cohesive, and logical stories of the data. The write-up presented prevalent themes supported by evidence within the data. Furthermore, the report described the data and provided relevant arguments, thoughts, and implications that reveal answers to research questions.

## **4. Results and Findings**

In this section, the researchers will present the data analysis results in form of well-refined themes to uncover the research questions. The themes will be reported in phase 1 and phase 3 of the cycle. Phase 2 is a narrative of the process by which the researchers develop an e-learning course in collaboration with participants, considering the input from phase 1.

#### **4.1 Phase 1: Understanding the status quo and the needs**

The themes in this phase reflect the status and the needs of communication training in different MET institutions from the perspective of the universities' staff and students. The researchers will use the position of the participants in the data extracts instead of real names to protect their privacy and ensure confidentiality.

The overarching themes include the **status quo** and **needs**. **Status quo** includes basic themes revealing the current status of communication training.

##### **4.1.1 Appreciation of communication skills**

Despite the varying contexts, both students and lecturers recognize the significance of communication, particularly in maritime settings. Several instructors emphasized that effective communication is crucial for carrying out responsibilities at sea and for fostering relationships among sailors, thereby decreasing feelings of isolation and job-related pressure. The following quotes demonstrate this point:

Filipino curriculum developer: I think the importance of effective communication in the in seafaring is on top of on top of the line, because in seafaring, we know that they see a job that is being done in a group setting. Therefore, communication between the members of the group is very vital for the success and the safety of the operation.

Vietnamese lecturer: ... if the communication is effective, everyone understands each other. At sea, when seafarers have 24 hours being with each other, they can exchange not only the technical work but also personal information. Effective communication leads to completing the job better, understand each other more. Seafarers are happier and the life at sea is less stressful.

Georgian student: as we know, on board there are multinational crew. first of all, they have to establish communication and other things are important like the safe operation of the vessel and to make to be sure make correct answer and reply for any related jobs and any emergency situations and it's mostly connected with all of the kinds of things on board, seafarers to each others. That's most important to be make a good relation and do good job.

The instructors indicated that effective communication on board is not about linguistic perfection but about being assertive and open to discussing and sharing ideas. Some students believe that having flawless English-speaking skills is not always crucial for effective communication. It is more necessary to focus on adapting your speaking style to ensure mutual understanding between speakers and listeners. The following quotes capture these opinions:

Georgian lecturer: I think that fluency of communication is very important. Because the person always has some complexities to communicate with other people who think that not to make any mistake or say something that didn't the correct way. I always say that just speak, it doesn't matter. And it helps them helps them to communicate.

Filipino student: ... good communication skills also depend on you knowing who you're talking to. And for them to fully understand. Because maybe it's not about how good you give it, but more on the understanding. That's my perspective.

The cultural factor is associated with the appreciation of communication skills. According to the participants, greetings and communication are essential in Asian culture. Particularly, subordinates are

expected to have appropriate etiquette when they communicate with superiors onboard. Failure to attend to this problem can result in negative consequences.

Vietnamese lecturer: ... In Vietnamese culture, communication is highly valued. From my managerial experience, if a seafarer is silent, do not greet when meeting captains or navigational officers, it makes them annoyed according to Asian culture. And it can lead to worse consequence. For example, I manage a ship where some seafarers do not do proper greeting, and this matter was pointed out in a meeting, criticizing the seafarers for not being polite.

#### 4.1.2 Different approach to communication training

While communication skills are treated as separate courses in the Philippines, other institutions in Georgia and Vietnam incorporated or embedded communication in other subjects. In the Philippine institution, there are four courses addressing communication issues. Meanwhile, these skills are embedded in learning activities such as group work, presentation in Vietnam. For Georgian institution, maritime correspondence is the subject that incorporates communication, particularly letter-writing skills.

Filipino curriculum developer: So currently... I think there are about more than four courses for communication. So you have their purposive communication, and you have I am not familiar with the other three, but there are four currently here with regards to the communication courses.

Vietnamese lecturer: It is embedded in many subjects... we have the group working exercises for students. And those exercises help students practice communication skills. There's no subject solely for the communication but rather embedded in some elements in university's subjects.

Vietnamese lecturer: ... lecturers can integrate the soft skill in their lessons in lectures. For example, when I give students later, I try to teach them how to make a presentation, how to work in a group, how to, how to be commander in in their groups, and they change the role.

Georgian lecturer: now we have communication but not separate subject but we have correspondence or maritime correspondence, we teach them how to write letters... how to start letter how to finish letter how to order for example, the sailor wants to sign off or like due to family problems or due to health problem and how he has to write it to take out more to the company

One teaching approach shared by the institutions is simulating or engaging in real-life situations in which students can play roles and practice communication. This practice gives students hands-on experience, putting their knowledge into action and preparing them for potential situations that they might face in their future careers. For example, Vietnamese and Georgian educators conducted mock company interviews or maritime watches to enable students to hone their communication abilities. Similarly, the Filipino institution provided students with extracurricular opportunities, such as public speaking and debate in clubs or organizations, to enhance their communication skills. These supplementary educational activities can significantly enrich the formal curriculum offered by academic institutions.

Georgian lecturer: Student collaboration is very important... We do this real life. Real life situations. For example, one student is representative of some company and some students are representatives or some but they are employees as employees, and they have some interview,

how to interview what kind of questions should they ask for and be prepared to answer. We do that.

Vietnamese lecturer: I have a lecture in simulation bridge. In in the bridge simulation room, we have many facilities and many scenario for students to train their English for example, rich resource management using equipment and the steering orders steering practicing a scenario and for navigation students, they almost can train and can enhance every knowledge of navigation on rich in terms of English speaking, listening and vocabulary. The best way is the practice in collaboration and in simulation room.

Filipino student: ... there are some organizations or clubs or organizations within MAAP that helps you to better develop your communication skills, really speakers board, debate society, in writing, such as kumbaya point, and there's a lot of organizations that could help you better develop your skills are in communication.

#### 4.1.3 E-learning prospects for communication training

In the context of online learning, participants acknowledged the advantages of this method in enhancing communication skills training, although some noted drawbacks of the online environment. For instance, Georgian lecturers recognized the convenience of e-learning, where students can learn at their own pace and schedule. However, they believed that personal interactions are essential in communication training, which cannot be provided through online learning. Similarly, a Filipino educator emphasized the importance of physical delivery in speaking training; however, he believed that e-learning is adequate for effective training in reading, writing, and oral communication.

Georgian lecturer: It's very convenient. It's convenient, you can join this group or any seminar anytime. It does that better. Is it evening or early in the morning? But there's just one disadvantage is lack of communication face to face

Filipino curriculum developer: So the first few stages, the reading and the writing, you can implement those through an online course. But the speaking is a very different kind of ballgame. So you need to have a face to face or a physical delivery method when it comes to speaking. But if you just want to train the students in order to effectively communicate orally that I think that would already suffice in an online environment.

Besides, they also proposed ways to maximize the benefits of online training. A Vietnamese lecturer suggested that instructors should design slides and scenarios carefully to achieve effective online sessions. In line with his opinion, Georgian educators used role-play and teamwork activities to enhance the e-learning experience. Meanwhile, the Filipino one opined that setting appropriate learning outcomes for online activities is essential to delivering online courses.

Vietnamese lecturer: I think Online is also good methods for giving lecture and practicing speaking, listening. And to do it, effectively, it depends on lectures, and their preparation for the slides, or for scenario they gave to students when doing like like this. So well prepared lectures will give better results.

Georgian lecturer: I used for example, role plays weekly and team work

Filipino curriculum developer: ... I think you should just set your expectations on what you expect your students to be at this level when it comes to communication skills.

According to student viewpoints, they have recognized several advantages associated with e-learning. One Filipino student opined that online learning could serve as a useful supplement to traditional face-to-face learning, as it allows him to quickly review and refresh his knowledge. In addition, a Georgian student believed that the effectiveness of learning depends on the learner, rather than the specific method or mode of instruction. Therefore, both classroom-based and online learning approaches can be equally effective.

Filipino student: ... it's really the accessibility that gives us the advantage of using it. And of course, you can use it anywhere if you have the iPad and I guess the best example would be in MAAP that we have computer-based training, which is the Seagull. We use it for different hundreds of topics that we take up from time to time for a semester. ... you get to have some refreshing you get to refresh your memories on about certain topics... people cannot deny the fact that having online learning can be a good supplement, when it comes to face to face learning. So it cannot be the main modality that we have. It can just be a supporting and supplementing program that we can use.

Georgian student: So I think in online also we can learn better. And in class also. I think it's not different.

#### 4.1.4 Effect of the lower-level education

Education at the lower levels refers to early childhood, primary, secondary, and high school education. Several participants expressed the opinion that this formative education has a considerable influence on the communication skills of students, shaping habits that persist even as they progress to tertiary education. For instance, a Vietnamese lecturer opined that it is crucial to incorporate soft skills training, such as communication, into the secondary or high school curriculum. Similarly, a Filipino educator posited that the impact of early education on students is substantial, such that the curriculum in higher education institutions may struggle to alter their established communication habits.

Vietnamese lecturer: I think the soft skill have the communication with the person and other person, crew and other crew... I think these courses are needed in high school or secondary education level

Filipino curriculum developer: Since the inculcation of the communication skills is very vital in the formative stages. So that should be about five years old to 12 years old. So now that they are in their adult stage, the adult stage to the communication skills, teaching them those communication skills is now very, I can say very ineffective, because they have already formed the habits, they already have the vocabulary, and chasing that vocabulary gap is very difficult because establishing a good vocabulary and speaking skills relies on how much the student read how much the student write, how much the student speak. So in a span of, let's say, 16 years in secondary education, if that skills was not developed properly, then can you imagine how can we supplement that gap in the four years that we have in the tertiary education?

Many students reported that they have not participated in any communication courses or activities, which may inhibit the development of their communication skills.

**Needs** include the basic themes showing the needs of participants regarding communication training.

#### 4.1.5 Insufficient curriculum coverage

While the participating institutions approach communication training differently, many participants believed that the current curriculum requires supplement or reinforcement. Some lecturers hesitated about including additional courses in the curriculum due to its already packed schedule. However, offering these courses as electives or incorporating extra-curricular activities, such as workshops, could provide beneficial supplements to the curriculum. Likewise, numerous students opined that the current curriculum in their institutions is not enough, lacking opportunities for them to apply knowledge and practice communication.

Filipino curriculum developer: So if you can squeeze in additional courses, that is good, you can introduce that one as an elective course, if there is a remaining part because that's another concern where the Philippines setting because currently, every year, you have already an average of 30 to 34 hours out of the 40 hours, right. So you only have a limited amount of time to squeeze in that elective course. So one alternative is you can do a series of workshops throughout the four years or three years

Vietnamese lecturer: There are a lot of things needed to be trained. Seafarers need many skills, even the office skills for paperwork, report, especially chief officers who are in charge of paper work. Taking the watch for 8 hours and then spend time doing the paperwork ... There will be definitely a need, but to what extent to separate communication into a course. In my opinion, it can be some elements in a subject, but a whole course for that is not necessary.

Georgian lecturer: there are training courses in one semester, which is not enough to raise their level. And they need more practice and more semester in order to rise their level.... they need more practice and more lectures in order to also raise their level and their education in communication.

Filipino student: I think what the curriculum lacks is the application ... I think cadets should have a more in-depth applications of interviews like that, because onward Sir, we are experiencing dealing with different nationalities. So it is it is much better to think harder, that's to bond with our nationalities, something like that, so that they will be ready for what they're experiencing.

Vietnamese student: I don't think it's enough. Curriculum in university transport of Ho Chi Minh city is not enough for students for students to learn about communication skill and soft skill and the courses in this university is not good quality too.

#### 4.1.6 Lack of confidence among students

When asked to rate their communication skills on a scale of one to ten, the majority of students gave themselves a score between five and seven. No one assessed their skills at nine or ten. They highlighted some challenges, such as being afraid to make mistakes, having trouble finding the right words to express their thoughts or feelings, and not having enough opportunities to practice on a regular basis.

Vietnamese student: I rate my communication skills at seven because sometimes I'm not feel very confident when talking to somebody and sometimes I cannot find any words to like express what I mean... I haven't had any course like communication course.

Vietnamese student: I think I have been trained for speaking English because in high school teacher always have in my in my opinion, to me something that linking to present the conversation. So I think that's a one kind of training. And after that, I don't think we learn any more training in English.

Georgia student: I can rate my English about five. Because I have complexes. I am afraid to have mistake. When I speak, and I don't know how to do (to solve) this problem.

Further, a Filipino student reported that the social status of the listeners also influences his communication skills. This challenge might link to cultural factors in Asian countries as mentioned in the theme "Appreciation of communication". Another student pointed out that his writing is better than his speaking. Thus, communication skills are also affected by one's personality and preferences.

Filipino student: I think I'm a five... the number one problem I had before is that I get intimidated when I talk to someone who's a bit, of course, superior or someone a high profile. So I encountered that problem.

Filipino student: So I rated myself five, because they've been piling up, so it gets really complex. But regardless, as a journalist, I should be good at communication. But that's a different story. Because it's just, it's easier to write than speak for me, as you can see there I'm writing constantly, is just so that they can formulate my ideas better, because it's hard for me to formulate my ideas and put them into words on the spot. So that's why it's easier for me to write because when you're writing, you can just edit it out. There's no pressure

Besides, a few students were confident in their speaking skills. However, they struggled with managing their stress and paying attention to their audience. This proves that communication is not only focusing on delivering messages but also being in the shoes of the listeners, ensuring mutual understanding between listeners and speakers.

Filipino student: in terms of communication, I would say that I'm good at it. In terms of understanding how to really, or how to convey my feelings, or how to convey my instructions properly. However, I think I lack in terms of like, stabilizing myself in terms of stress, in terms of, when I am doing a lot of things, I tend to speak too fast. And then I tend to neglect if someone understands what I'm trying to say

#### 4.1.7 Interest in international communication courses

One of the objectives of the study is to create a collaborative learning experience for participants. Many participants supported this idea. A Vietnamese lecturer valued this opportunity, giving students a chance to exchange knowledge and learn perspectives from different cultures and nationalities. Another believed that such chance would push students out of their comfort zone, stimulating them to practice speaking and expressing their ideas. A Georgian lecturer opined that the effectiveness of the course depends on the students' awareness. If they acknowledge the importance of communication, they will actively seek knowledge and profit from the experience.

Vietnamese lecturer: I think that if we can organize such course, it is really good. For university education level, it is encouraged to exchange knowledge, culture to have more perspectives. Secondly, the future working environment is multinational so, the course involving different nationalities with the help of e-learning, is feasible. And just do it! I think you could propose a course like that. I think it's feasible and effective.



Vietnamese lecturer: I think, yeah, it's very good if we can put students from many countries to the class online, like this, because it will make everyone to speak. And they try to understand each other who come from many countries and it stimulates them to express their idea. They have to use English is very good. It's very good and interesting, is very good idea. I appreciate that.

Georgian lecturer: I think that it would be okay... I think that when a person is interested, they are already grownups. ... they know that's very important for them, they know if they do that they do that for themselves. It's good for them, benefit for them

Likewise, a Filipino student appreciated the chance to discuss issues with others from different countries, exploring various angles of the problems. Another would like to explore the differences in culture by communication. Furthermore, a Vietnamese student highlighted the importance of environmental factors in training communication and such international courses provide a multinational experience similar to their future working environment. Moreover, a Georgian student would embrace the chance to practice communication.

Filipino student: I think learning from their own perspective as well, like hearing out their own sides of the, of the problem. I think for me, like having to experience the course with other nationalities could help me because I think it could help me because it's not just based on my own understanding, I think it could help I could also understand their point of view

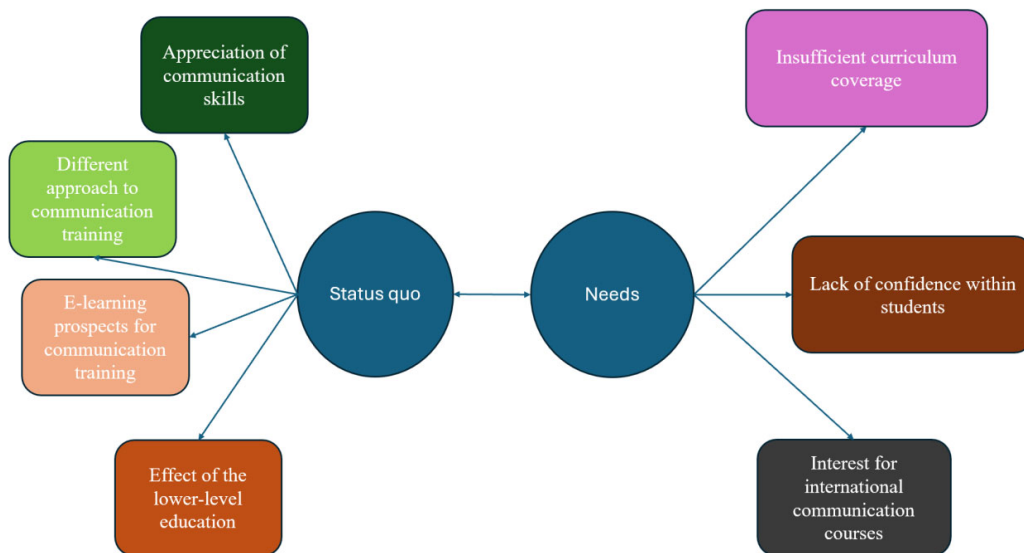
Filipino student: it could be a good opportunity for the participants to address cultural barriers. So it's pretty activities. I think activities like this. I think that's a good activity for facilitating a ritual. We're gonna be different nationalities, different nationalities, because simply communicating with them. Let us learn more about them. But how they think about what motivates them, what, what inspires them, what incentivizes them,

Vietnamese student: Regarding communication and understanding training, it needs the environment. Imagining the classmates are like ship's crew, so we can practice in advance ... we can not only enhance communication, but also we receive more knowledge, exchange knowledge. So that we cooperation (cooperate) to develop.

Georgian student: Good idea, I think... I think so. will be more communication more practical and will be easy to learn.

### *Summary of phase 1*

Figure 3 portrays the findings of Phase 1, highlighting overarching themes and the connection between them.



**Figure 3. Findings of phase 1**

Table 1 provides a short description of each theme and the corresponding exemplary extracts from the data.

**Table 1. Summary of phase 1's themes**

Overarching themes	Basic themes	Short description	Exemplary extract
Status quo	Appreciation of communication skills	Participants recognized the importance of communication for seafarers in conducting duties and fostering relationships onboard.	If the communication is effective, everyone understands each other. At sea, when seafarers have 24 hours being with each other, they can exchange not only the technical work but also personal information. Effective communication leads to completing the job better, understand each other more. Seafarers are happier and the life at sea is less stressful.
	Different approach to communication training	Each participating institution employs a different approach to communication training, including having a separate course or embedded communication skills in other subjects	Now we have communication but not separate subject but we have correspondence or maritime correspondence,

	E-learning prospects for communication training	The participants perceived the advantages and disadvantages of e-learning in training communication skills	It's very convenient. It's convenient, you can join this group or any seminar anytime. It does that better. Is it evening or early in the morning? But there's just one disadvantage is lack of communication face to face
	Effect of the lower-level education	The previous education of students affects the communication training at the tertiary education level	Since the inculcation of the communication skills is very vital in the formative stages. So that should be about five years old to 12 years old. So now that they are in their adult stage, the adult stage to the communication skills, teaching them those communication skills is now very, I can say very ineffective, because they have already formed the habits
Needs	Insufficient curriculum coverage	The participants indicated the need to complement the curriculum with elective courses or extra-curriculum activities	There are training courses in one semester, which is not enough to raise their level. And they need more practice and more semester in order to rise their level.... they need more practice and more lectures in order to also raise their level and their education in communication.
	Lack of confidence among students	Students lacked confidence when evaluating their communication skills	I can rate my English about five. Because I have complexes. I am afraid to have mistake. When I speak, and I don't know how to do (to solve) this problem.
	Interest in	Participants are interested in the	I think that if we can

international communication courses	idea of creating a multinational learning environment	organize such course, it is really good. For university education level, it is encouraged to exchange knowledge, culture to have more perspectives. Secondly, the future working environment is multinational so, the course involving different nationalities with the help of e-learning, is feasible. And just do it! I think you could propose a course like that. I think it's feasible and effective.
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#### ***4.2 Phase 2: Deliberating and implementing the intervention***

Phase 2 focused on designing and implementing the collaborative course as an intervention. This section would first elaborate on the different sources, including inputs from phase 1, literature review, and participants' opinions, which informed the course development. Then, the development and implementation of the course will also be described.

##### **4.2.1 The sources for course development**

Firstly, the findings of phase 1 informed the researchers about the status and the needs of communication training in various institutions, establishing a good foundation and rationale to design a course that suits the situation. Through phase 1, the researchers gain a deeper understanding of how participating institutions are training communication skills and the perception of these skills from the students and universities' staff. Through the lens of the participants, the academics believed that communication is one of the most important life-long learning skills, triggering the need to continuously nurture and master the safety operation of ships and relationship development onboard and on land.

The researchers acknowledged the different approaches in teaching communication between participating institutions. This might be associated with the unique contextual elements, varied cultures, and academic freedom in each country. Thus, the academic posited the intervention course as an extracurricular activity to complement or reinforce the curriculum regarding communication training in each university.

The understanding of the advantages and limitations of e-learning, highlighted by participants helped the researchers to leverage the benefits of the online course, designing it in a way that students can access anytime and learn at their own pace. Furthermore, the academic used the online platform to bring students from different nationalities together, forming an international experience. Besides, the

drawbacks of online modalities were carefully considered to identify suitable communication aspects to be trained and establish proper learning outcomes.

The academics were also aware of various students' backgrounds regarding communication. It might be affected by their previous education. Thus, the course would give students more chances to exchange knowledge and practice, enhancing the learning from each other. Besides, the researchers designed assessment activities in the form of open discussion and debriefing, not having rigid and stringent answers. In this way, each student could draw different lessons and knowledge based on their background knowledge and competence in communication.

The needs from participants generated ideas for researchers to develop course materials and activities. The course would provide students with many opportunities to practice their communication skills, applying their knowledge of communication principles. These activities complement the lack of practical application in the curriculum, which was emphasized by students during phase 1's interview. The researchers also considered organizing familiarization activities at the beginning for students to get to know each other, boosting their confidence. Further, the course would allot time for students to make friends and create common group chats. In this way, students could maximize the advantage of a multinational course, which the educators and students highly valued in phase 1.

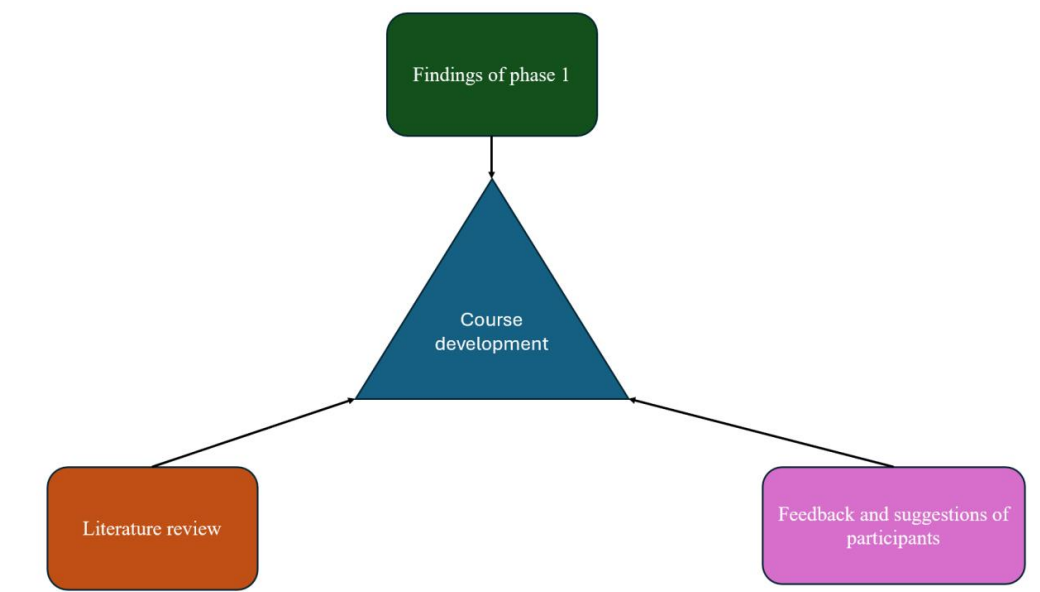
Secondly, the researchers collaborated with the universities' educators to establish course outlines and learning outcomes. For the time convenience reasons, the academics consulted lecturers and instructors regarding the potential learning outcomes during phase 1's interviews. A Filipino curriculum developer proposed that the two most important learning outcomes of the course: 1. The learners should be able to deliver their thoughts in a logical and concise manner, and 2. The learners should be able to listen actively and reflect their understanding according to what they hear. In addition, a Vietnamese lecturer complemented that the learners should understand the issues individually and talk about the issue in the first place before delivering their thoughts to others clearly and concisely. From Georgian perspective, the lecturers did not mention any specific learning outcomes but highlighted them in the curriculum documents, which the researchers could not access. The following is the input from Filipino and Vietnamese educators:

Filipino curriculum developer: so, the learning outcomes when it comes to orally effectively communicate is that one student should be able to synthesize the thoughts orally in a clear, concise manner. The second one is the students should be able to transfer to the listener the thoughts or whatever is key, he or she is communicating and that the listener should be able to relay what this what the speaker has already said.

Vietnamese lecturer: Okay, in my opinion, the learning outcome should be divided into some levels. I think. First, all students come from many countries can understand and can talk about the topics that lecturer gave them roughly. And second, students can make presentation and they try to make other classmates understand the topics and understand what they want to express. And I just have two level like this. If I, I built a lesson to give students I will try to do like this. We can divide it into some level of understanding and try to make the outcomes clear.

Finally, the researchers considered the input from a literature review. The BoK is the main foundation that inspired and rationalized the project. Thus, the researchers consulted intended learning outcomes or level of achievements regarding the focus area: interpersonal communication. Further, the academics integrated methods and strategies that are proven to be most effective in training communication to form learning and teaching activities (see Fig 1). In summary, the formation of the

course was informed by the findings of phase 1, the suggestions of lecturers and educators, the input of literature review. These sources are depicted in Fig 4.



**Figure 4. Sources for course development**

#### 4.2.2 Designing the course and implementing the course

The researchers collaborated with World Maritime University to use their platform to develop a learning management system (LMS). This LMS will be used to facilitate the course: storing the course materials, structuring the course, tracking the participation of the students, and giving instructions for students in each learning activity. Besides, a common Facebook group chat was created to initiate the communication between the researchers – acting as lecturers in the courses – and the students, ensuring a seamless understanding of the conduct of the course.

#### Maritime Interpersonal Communication Course - IAMU Project



**Figure 5. A glance at the course LMS**

Based on the different sources (see Fig 3), the researchers determined three intended learning outcomes (ILOs): 1. Identify the components of a successful interpersonal communication cycle with particular reference to maritime operations, 2. Explain the principles and factors that influence optimum interpersonal communication in a maritime professional career, 3. Demonstrate the use of good interpersonal communications for productive maritime operational outcomes.

Then, the topics as well as teaching and learning activities (TLAs) were designed, aligning with the ILOs. The topics are Email etiquette, the Importance of effective communication on board, Components of a successful interpersonal communication cycle, Interpersonal communication principles, Barriers to effective communication, Techniques to develop effective communication skills, Closed loop communications, Concept of challenge and response, Concept and visualization of challenge and response, closed-loop communications, Barriers to effective communication. The teaching and learning activities include Ice-breaking activities, Practice sending emails, Reading materials and discussing through LMS, Lecture and discussion, and Debate on a communication issue in a maritime context. Finally, the corresponding assessment tasks were created, encompassing question and answer (Q&A), discussion, debriefing, and feedback. Table 1 describes the alignment between ILOs, topics, TLAs, and Assessment tasks.

**Table 2 Course Outline**

<b>Course title: Maritime Interpersonal Communication</b>						
<b>Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs):</b>						
ILO1. Identify the components of a successful interpersonal communication cycle with particular reference to maritime operations						
ILO2. Explain the principles and factors that influence optimum interpersonal communication in a maritime professional career						
ILO3. Demonstrate the use of good interpersonal communications for productive maritime operational outcomes						
Day	ILO	Topics	TLAs	Learning Modality	Assessment Tasks	Resources and Equipment
1			Briefing and Orientation - Ice-breaking activities - Briefly introduce the course topic and content - Divide participants (students) into 4 groups	Synchronous (60 mins)		Zoom
2	ILO1, ILO2, ILO3	- Email Etiquette - Importance of	<b>Individual tasks</b> - Practice sending emails	Asynchronous	- Questions and Exercises	LMS

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>effective communication on board - Components of a successful interpersonal communication cycle</li> <li>- Interpersonal communication principles</li> <li>- Barriers to effective communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reading materials and discussing through a Learning Management System (LMS)</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>on LMS</li> <li>- Sending emails following a situation</li> </ul>	
3	BREAK					
4	ILO2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Technique to develop effective communication skills</li> <li>- Closed-loop communications</li> <li>- Concept of challenge and response</li> </ul>	<p><b>Group task</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Critique videos and send the critique through LMS</li> </ul>	Asynchronous (managed through group chat and LMS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Critique two videos</li> </ul>	LMS
5	ILO3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Concept and visualization of challenge and response, closed-loop communications</li> <li>- Barriers to effective communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lecture and Debriefing</li> <li>- Debate on a communication issue in a maritime context</li> </ul>	Synchronous (60 mins)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Discussion and debriefing on previous TLAs and debate</li> </ul>	Zoom

The alignment between ILOs, topics, TLAs, and assessments ensures the coherence and logic of the course outline. This practice is called constructive alignment, which is beneficial for students to acknowledge what they are going to learn, how they can do it, and to what standard they can achieve after the course [33]. The course outline was communicated to students before the commence of the program.

Twelve students from three participating universities were recruited for the course. The students were selected based on their availability, and English proficiency. The researchers included language competence to minimize the challenge of language barriers. After arranging with each institution and



students, the academics proposed a 5-day course, starting from January 09, 2024 to January 15, 2024. The researchers – played the role as course lecturers - and students familiarized themselves with each other through the Facebook group chat before starting the course.

The researchers arranged the teaching and learning activities as well as the assessment tasks in five days and uploaded the relevant materials to the LMS. On day 1, the academics organized a synchronous session to break the ice between participants and introduce the course overview (See Fig 5). In this session, participants were divided into 4 groups, and they set up their group communication channel to enhance familiarization between group members and prepare for the group activities later in the course. The group members were randomly assigned; however, each group must have three students from three different countries.

**Figure 6. Day 1 of the course on the LMS**

On day 2, students worked individually to complete two activities. The first activity requires them to send an email to recruitment officers to apply for a job (See Fig 6). This activity imitates the situation where graduate students apply for a seafaring job onboard. Next, the participants were given reading material in the second activity to read and then complete the relevant exercises (See Fig 7 and Fig 8). Although the two activities are for individuals, the researchers appreciated the benefit of knowledge exchange between students. Thus, a forum for discussion was created for students to opine their understanding of the reading material. The participants could also do this through their group chats established on day 1.

**Figure 7. Practice sending emails**

### **Activity 2: Reading materials and discuss through Learning Management System (LMS)**

- Importance of effective communication on board - Name the components of a successful interpersonal communication cycle with particular
- Identify various interpersonal communication principles
- Barriers to effective communication



Reading Material (Please click on this title to open the document)

✓ Done

In this document, you will find the content about:

- COMMUNICATION SKILLS
- KEY ASPECTS OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION
- IMPORTANCE OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION ON BOARD
- BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION
- TECHNIQUES FOR DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Please scan and read the material individually and discuss the questions/tasks with other students.

**Figure 8. Material reading activity**



Forum for discussion (Please enter the chat to post your answer/chat with other students)



Please enter this forum to discuss and answer questions regarding the reading materials

Ex 1.

Identify the qualities of a Good Listener and a Bad Listener. Write GL for good listener, BL for bad listener.

Interrupt	Change the Subject	Yes, but in style	Are patient
Gives cues and Prompts	Asks open questions	Take over the conversation	Ask few questions

Ex 2.

What are the techniques for effective communication?

- (b) What is the difference between active listening and assertive behaviour?
- (c) What is the purpose of feedback? What should one do to become active listener?
- (d) Recognizing barriers to effective communication is a first step in improving communication style. Do you recognize these barriers from your own personal and professional experience?

Ex 3.

- (a) What are the key aspects of communication?
- (b) Effective Communication is crucial for marine industry. Justify the statement.
- (c) What should you keep in mind to ensure effective communication?
- (d) Describe important functions of communication in marine industry

**Figure 9. Reflection of the reading material**

On the third day, the researchers deliberately provided a break for students to strengthen their relationships with their group members in preparation for the group activity on the fourth day. In addition, this break also provided students with additional opportunities to analyze and reflect upon the reading materials.

On day 4, four groups of students are given two videos regarding communication problems on the LMS and are required to critique these videos. The critiques were submitted as group work in written form to the LMS portal (See Fig 9). The assessment of this work will be discussed on the last day of the course.

▼ Day 4 - Tasks/Topics 2 (Asynchronous – by group) ✎

On this day, you will work as group. Please see the videos below:

The group tasks include:

***Critique provided videos and send the critique through LMS***

**Video 1:**



**Video 2:**



Discuss the communication problems in the videos. If you were them, how would you do to avoid such issues?

Please compose a word file to express your perspectives (word limit: 500 words) and submit to the portal "Critique Submission"!



Critique submission ✎

✓ Done



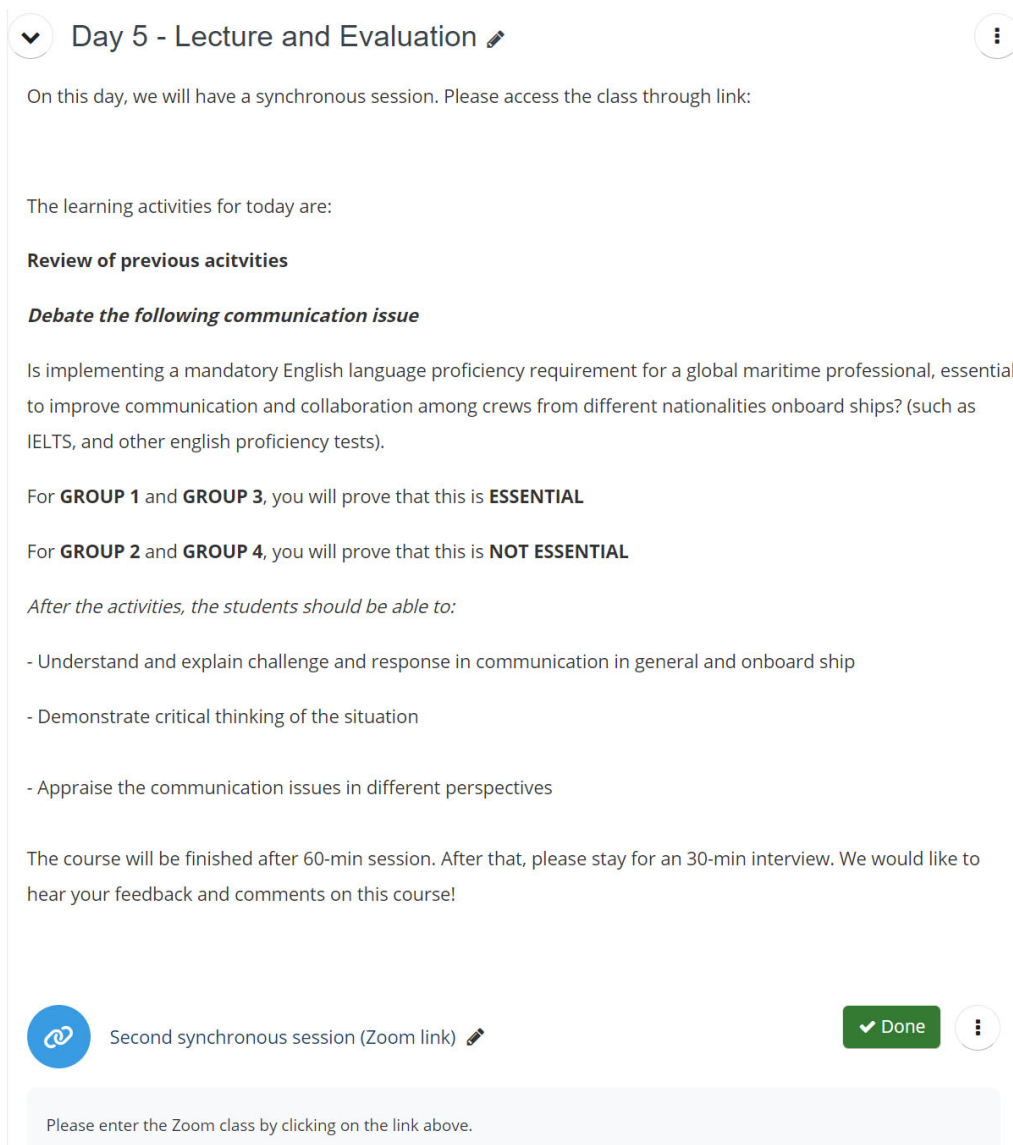
**Opened:** Saturday, 13 January 2024, 12:00 AM

**Due:** Sunday, 14 January 2024, 12:00 AM

You can submit your group work through this portal

**Figure 10. Critique activity**

The researchers hold a 60-minute - synchronous session through Zoom on the fifth day. In this session, the researchers as lecturers discussed and debriefed on the previous activities, drawing key lessons based on the work of students and the perceptions of the lecturers. Then, two breakout rooms were created to accommodate two groups each to conduct the debate. Each group was assigned a fixed perspective when debating. They had to find arguments and reasons to prove their points. Afterward, they were asked to raise their true perspective regarding the debate problems. Finally, the lecturers wrapped up the activity with a discussion.



Day 5 - Lecture and Evaluation

On this day, we will have a synchronous session. Please access the class through link:

The learning activities for today are:

**Review of previous activities**

***Debate the following communication issue***

Is implementing a mandatory English language proficiency requirement for a global maritime professional, essential to improve communication and collaboration among crews from different nationalities onboard ships? (such as IELTS, and other english proficiency tests).

For **GROUP 1** and **GROUP 3**, you will prove that this is **ESSENTIAL**

For **GROUP 2** and **GROUP 4**, you will prove that this is **NOT ESSENTIAL**

*After the activities, the students should be able to:*

- Understand and explain challenge and response in communication in general and onboard ship
- Demonstrate critical thinking of the situation
- Appraise the communication issues in different perspectives

The course will be finished after 60-min session. After that, please stay for an 30-min interview. We would like to hear your feedback and comments on this course!

Second synchronous session (Zoom link)

Please enter the Zoom class by clicking on the link above.

**Figure 11. Debating activity**

Internet connection was one of the challenges faced throughout the course delivery. In addition, there were issues related to the time difference. Specifically, during the synchronous delivery, it was morning in Batumi, Georgia, and afternoon in Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam and Mariveles, Bataan, Philippines. Furthermore, some students faced schedule constraints due to their preparation for the

final examination. As a result, Georgian students were unable to complete the course. They only joined the synchronous session on day 1. Nevertheless, the rest of the students continued with the course and completed it by day 5.

### **4.3 Phase 3: Evaluation and Feedback**

During this phase, researchers evaluate the course's outcomes by examining the perspective of participating students. They expressed their viewpoints on the course in a semi-structured interview and provided feedback using the form that was given after the last synchronous session. Further, the feedback form reinforced students' perspectives about the course, giving more evidence to construct the themes.

#### **4.3.1 Enhancing life-long learning skills**

In addition to achieving intended learning outcomes, numerous students emphasized that they have developed life-long learning skills such as critical thinking, adaptability, social skills, and problem-solving skills. A student reported that engaging in debating activities enabled him to develop the ability to analyze problems from multiple perspectives and critically evaluate the ideas of others. Another valued the chance to tackle group working problems and improvise to achieve the objectives of the group activities.

Filipino Student: the advantage of our debating skills is that we are going we are practicing our critical thinking skills, which is we are having are taking receiving the idea of the first speaker so that we can answer what are the negatives that he has? He or she has said so that we can correct it ...And we can say what we strongly believe because in ships, we can say that we can interfere teach another person if you think it is really unsafe

Filipino Student: So, at first I was expecting that we will be working with the group designated to us, however, we are ending up to work with only two because in our group we are in we are three members. So that is the proximate disadvantage ...There are things that happens like that, that one person is resigning, or one person wants to go home because of family problems or issues with his or her own country. And this one is an advantage for me because it gives you flexible flexibility, or courage to do some tasks, which I was not supposed to be doing

Besides, some students also indicated that they have improved their social skills, making new friends from different nationalities. Throughout their collaboration, they recognized differences in culture, accent, and time and managed to overcome obstacles to communicate with each other to complete both individual and group exercises. Several students reported that they enhanced their confidence in communication, specifically while interacting with foreign classmates and they have learned to be more assertive.

Vietnamese student: I can make a relationship with foreign friends from around the world I have learned so many things from this course, had a chance to make new friends

Filipino student: ...With this, my not only my, what developed to me, is not only my communication skills, but also my social skills as I was able to befriend other country, I was able to introduce my culture, I was able to understand the culture aspect... we can understand how are different peoples communicating to each other or how one person is getting to one to another person, just by simply communicating so by that we have the advantage to determine how to communicate with each other

### 4.3.2 Valuable multinational learning environment

Numerous students highly valued the opportunity to collaborate with classmates from different countries. This training allows individuals to practice interacting with people from diverse cultural backgrounds, preparing them for their future international working environment onboard ships. Some students indicated that this is the difference between the course and the curriculum at their institutions. Furthermore, they indicated that the learning activities helped them to step outside of their comfort zone and communicate effectively with individuals from various cultures and accents.

The appreciation of the international learning environment is also evidenced in the feedback form. All students who filled in this form, enjoyed learning and working together with other students from different countries. They thought putting students of different nationalities together was a brilliant idea.

Vietnamese student: So I think that it's really good if we can include some Georgians and some other people from all over the world to discourse, because when we working on the ships, is it's not only about English, but about all the skills and the accent of the language also

Filipino student: it's really different. talking and having these kinds of concepts with different nationalities. Rather than talking with whole Filipino, both of you already know, we're already talking to each other. You're going to speak with each other in your mother tongue, which is basically Filipino, but in this type of course, I'm going to speak out myself with especially to "Vietnamese student" English to English, which is a different environment

Vietnamese student: ... the most special part of this training, for me is the chance to, to be to communicate with students from other countries

### 4.3.3 Lack of communication activities in universities' curriculum

In the process of the course, several students came to understand that they lacked communication training at their universities. One such student remarked that he had never learned such skills at his institution. Another indicated that the course activities differed from the English subjects that were part of his university's curriculum. The course provided an opportunity to practice, unlike English subjects at the university, where they were only required to memorize information. Additionally, a group of students expressed their appreciation for the email etiquette activities, as they did not receive practical training in these skills at their institutions.

Vietnamese student: So I think that with this course, I think the very interesting topic is sending email, because it University we are not get used to sending emails to the company. And we don't know how we don't know how to use how to write anything. And for for me, I have to go all the way to the internet and find solutions. So it's, it's really important for us to learn how to use how to send emails properly.

Vietnamese student: When I learning this course, I think this course is very different from my university, my English subjects in my use of university ... one more thing when I learned English in my university, I just, like learned by heart, but I don't, I don't have a chance to practice

Filipino student: what struck me most was the detailed discussion of the of email etiquette, even though we were told the basic email etiquette however, what, what was being discussed a while ago, it was more detailed, and I believe that it should be more, it should be expanded, and it should be gone into detail. In order for, since it's a skill, and not usually taught at school. However, when it comes to, when it comes to the real world, or when you're applying for a job,

it's actually beneficial. And it's, it's a, it's a very big advantage for for you, especially, especially if you're fresh graduate or applying for a certain position in a company.

Filipino student: The email that is an advantage for me or for us, since email will be done even though we are still cadets, we will be emailing our shipping company or our agency or different formal organizations that we will be email, we will be sending an email so it's really an advantage for us for having an entire idea on how to write or how to be know to have, how to write an email

#### 4.3.4 Importance of practicing communication

Students recognized the challenges and barriers of communication when they had the chance to practice with individuals from diverse cultural and personal backgrounds. This realization motivated them to seek solutions to communication issues, and they gained increased confidence in their communication skills as they acknowledged their areas of improvement.

Vietnamese student: I realized that my barriers in communication like when I speak, when I'm speaking English, I usually miss a pronounce a word, like, which can lead to misunderstanding and misinterpretation to the receiver.

Filipino student: the second asynchronous activity which is done by group its advantages is that we can understand or we can determine or distinguish what are the communication barriers or what are the things that hinders communication between two people. if we were able to understand how they cannot communicate on ship or in daily lives, we can understand how are different peoples communicating to each other or how one person is getting to one to another person, just by simply communicating so by that we have the advantage to determine how to communicate with each other

#### 4.3.5 Flexibility of asynchronous learning

Students found the asynchronous learning model to be beneficial, as it allowed them to work effectively with their group members despite the challenges posed by time differences. For example, one student believed that the asynchronous activities helped him complete tasks with his teammates when they were available, while another preferred the offline activities as they allowed him to provide his opinions at one time and have his teammates join the discussion at another time.

Filipino student: having the synchronous activities huge advantage, because it is flexible, anytime I can answer and by having asynchronous activity, I can perform these activities with my teammates with my group mates, we were communicating while on our availability when we can when we are both available to

Vietnamese student: So for myself, I prefer to offline activities, because I can easily share my opinion and easily discuss activities with my friends

#### 4.3.6 Variety of learning content increases attention span

According to the students, one beneficial outcome that emerged from the course was the effect of incorporating a variety of learning activities. Throughout the course, students were mandated to perform various tasks separately or collaboratively, such as reading comprehension, email practice, video critique, and debates. The students reported that they actively participated in these activities, and the diversity of tasks kept them concentrated and attentive.



Filipino student: personally I didn't experience any drawback from the activities, the variety of activities is very useful in order for us to retain our attention, does not get bored by having only one activity. By having different activities, we are not getting bored in taking on this

In summary, the collaborative e-learning course demonstrated several key benefits. Firstly, it created a multinational learning environment, allowing students from different cultural backgrounds to work together and learn from each other. This aspect is particularly valuable for preparing future maritime professionals for the future international working environment. Secondly, the course's structure, which included a variety of synchronous and asynchronous activities, helped maintain student engagement and provided multiple avenues for practicing communication skills. By practicing, students realized barriers and challenges as well as their deficiencies in communication, thereby, enhancing and perfecting their skills. Finally, the feedback from students highlighted the development of lifelong learning skills such as critical thinking, adaptability, and social skills, which are essential for their professional growth. The outcomes of phase 3 are depicted in Fig. 12

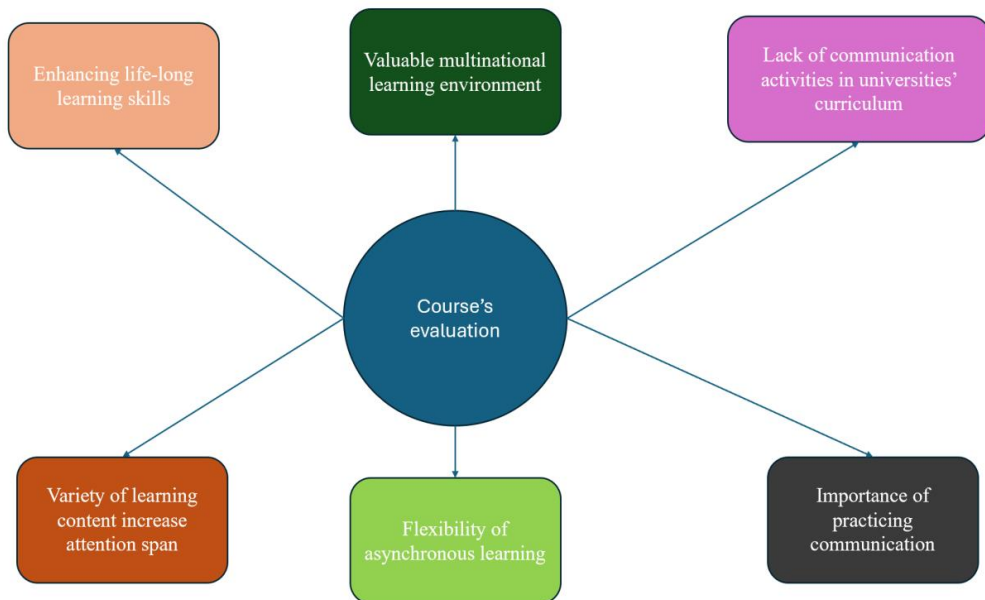


Figure 12. Outcomes of phase 3

## 5. Discussion

This section discusses insights in the findings of the three phases to answer the research questions established at the beginning. Further, the discussion elaborated on how the findings complement or reinforce the existing literature.

- What is the current status of communication training in MET institutions?

The project explored this question through the perspectives of lecturers, curriculum developers, and students. This approach is considered bottom-up, which can provide a contextually relevant understanding of how the communication training is evident in the MET institutions' curriculum and how it is delivered to students. By incorporating the participants' perspectives, the researchers could

identify specific intended learning outcomes for the later course that are directly applicable to the participants [34], [35].

The participants emphasized the importance of communication skills, not only for the safe and efficient operation of vessels but also for fostering positive relationships among seafarers, reducing isolation and job-related stress. These findings align with Ahmmed (2018), who posited that good communication skills affect both professional and personal lives. This appreciation necessitates a continuous focus on communication training to enhance the skills of future seafarers as effective communication skills cannot be acquired in a short period, but rather are shaped over time through habit formation. This perspective was highlighted when the participants discussed the impact of early education.

Each participating institution takes a different approach to communication training. While MAAP offers four courses directly on communication, BNTU and UTH integrate communication training components in other subjects such as maritime correspondence, and soft skills. Although all participants recognized the significance of communication skills, there are diverse directions aimed at enhancing communication skills, reflecting academic freedom in the MET institutions.

E-learning is a viable option for training communication skills. According to participants, the flexibility of online learning is a significant advantage, as it enables learners to access knowledge and study at their own pace. However, some participants noted drawbacks of e-learning, especially the absence of direct interaction between lecturers and learners, which can compromise the quality of communication training. Therefore, e-learning could be employed to achieve certain learning outcomes to ensure the effectiveness of the course.

- What are the needs of training on communication skills from the perspective of stakeholders (i.e., students, lecturers, curriculum developers)?

The participants indicated some pressing needs regarding communication skills. First, some believed that the current curriculum of their institutions is insufficient regarding communication training. Particularly it lacks practical application or opportunities for students to practice communication. Therefore, some supplements are needed to reinforce the curriculum. Considering the busy schedule of the existing curriculum, supplements can take the form of elective courses or extra-curricular activities. The education needs for communication in the maritime domain are also evident in the work of Bolmsten et al. [9]

Further, students have expressed a lack of confidence when they do the self-evaluation of their communication skills. This deficiency might be due to the lack of opportunities to practice in the current curriculum or the enduring influence of early education, which fosters unfavorable habits for effective communication. Besides, cultural factors and individual personality traits could play a role in the communication habits of students.

Maritime students will work in the international environment onboard ships. Therefore, all participants acknowledged the value of a collaborative course where students from diverse nationalities can interact and engage with one another. Such a course would simulate their future working environment and have potential benefits for improving their communication skills.

- What are the learning outcomes and learning activities of the communication e-learning course?

The e-learning course designed in this study aimed to address identified needs, considering the current state of communication training in three MET institutions. It incorporates a variety of learning activities that promote active engagement and high-order thinking, following the principles of cognitivism and constructivism [17], [19]. The learning outcomes were designed to enhance both the theoretical understanding and practical application of communication skills, taking into account the findings of phase 1, the level of achievements in BoK related to interpersonal communication, and the literature review.

The established intended learning outcomes are:

- ILO1. Identify the components of a successful interpersonal communication cycle with particular reference to maritime operations,
- ILO2. Explain the principles and factors that influence optimum interpersonal communication in a maritime professional career, and
- ILO3. Demonstrate the use of good interpersonal communications for productive maritime operational outcomes.

Learning activities, which are aligned to the ILOs, comprised of reading comprehension, email practice, video critiques, and debates. These activities were highly appreciated by students, helping them maintain their attention and providing opportunities for skill development. This approach not only complemented existing communication subjects but also underscored the importance of communication as a lifelong skill essential for career success in maritime professions

- What are the implications of the e-learning course?

The collaborative e-learning course in the study is an interesting intervention, bringing students/cadets from different institutions together to create a multinational learning environment. The course has several implications that are highlighted by the students who participated in the course.

Firstly, while the course aims at enhancing communication skills, the students reported that they also practice other lifelong learning skills such as critical thinking, adaptability, social skills, and problem-solving skills. In the contemporary era characterized by rapid changes and disruptions, these skills are crucial for the success of any seafarers, who will deal with increasingly complex problems in the maritime domain. Similarly, the importance of these skills, in addition to technical competencies, was emphasized by many scholars [4], [6].

Secondly, students treasured the multinational learning environment of the course. As expected in phase 1 where students expressed interest in interacting with different students from other countries, they discovered numerous advantages with this environment, including enhancing confidence when talking with foreigners, establishing new relationships, and broadening their understanding of cultural and perspective differences. This type of course is particularly beneficial when teaching subjects such as cultural awareness or communication, as it enables students to be exposed to diverse cultural differences and various viewpoints on the problem. However, the collaboration between different institutions for a course will take considerable time and travel costs. By implementing in an online environment, this course addressed this critical challenge, saving resources and paving the way for more collaborative initiatives in the future.

Thirdly, the course demonstrated the importance of practicing communication. By giving opportunities to engage in different communication activities such as email writing, debate, and group critique, students reinforced their knowledge, boosted confidence, and realized avenues for improving

communication skills. These activities are a crucial complement to the formal curriculum of maritime universities, providing students with more chances to cultivate their skills. Besides, the flexibility and the diverse activities of the course help the students to manage their schedule and maintain their concentration to achieve the course's learning outcomes.

## **6. Recommendations**

This section addresses the final research question: What are the recommendations to develop the collaborative communication course?

There are several recommendations based on the outcome of the project, including:

### *Integrate practical communication activities into existing curricula*

Practical exercises should be integrated into existing curricula, focusing on hands-on communication. Activities such as critique or debate can enrich the learning experience. These practical exercises allow students to apply theoretical knowledge to reality, which eventually improves their communication competence. For instance, critique can help students practice critical thinking and deliver their arguments clearly and persuasively, while debate encourages understanding from various perspectives and respecting these differences. By adding these practical learning opportunities to the curriculum, students can develop skills applicable to their future professional and personal lives.

### *Potential for Online Multinational Communication Courses:*

Further opportunities can be provided for the development of e-learning courses, where students from different countries and institutions could work with students from others. This type of international collaboration builds up a partnership between institutions globally in MET, through which students are exposed to each other's perspectives and can enlighten more about the differences in culture and accent. These types of projects extend educational opportunities and networking possibilities for future maritime professionals.

It is crucial to diversify the learning activities in online collaborative courses. Both synchronous and asynchronous teaching and learning activities should be used to enhance students' learning experience. Synchronous sessions will provide students with opportunities to interact with lecturers and other students in real-time and receive immediate feedback. Asynchronous activities include material reading, and discussion forums, enabling students to learn at their own pace and can revisit the materials when needed. Further, various learning activities such as critique, presentation, and reading comprehension should be applied, to maintain students' attention to the courses.

### *Way forward to maintain the course as a periodic extracurricular activity:*

The researchers believed that education, particularly communication training is a process. Effective communication habits and skills could not be formed over one course. Therefore, the academics suggest a way to maintain this pilot course as a periodic extracurricular activity. First, one MET institution can be the host for the LMS, maintaining and developing the LMS for the collaborative course. Being a host for this course is beneficial for the university's students, giving them a chance to practice with international students. Every year, the host institution can send invitations to other MET universities. Different lecturers from participating universities can take turns to run the course based on prior negotiation.

## **7. Ethical consideration and Limitation**

### ***7.1 Ethical consideration***

Since the project involved people, the researchers prioritized the confidentiality of participants. Real names were replaced with positions in all data extracts to protect participants' identities and privacy. Participants were fully informed about the nature and purpose of the study before consenting to participate in any research activities including interviews, and the course. They were aware of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences. All data collected during the project were stored securely and only accessible to the research team. Any published results will be anonymized to ensure that no individual can be identified.

### ***7.2 Limitation***

One limitation of the project is the generalizability. The project conducted research activities and implemented the course with three MET institutions. The results of the study do not reflect the state of communication training of MET institutions in general. The course implemented in the project might not be applicable or need modifications when conducting in different contexts.

The results were gleaned from the perspective of lecturers, curriculum developers, and students who are directly involved in learning and teaching activities. Since the outcomes are perspective-based, they can be subjective, and applicable only to participants. Further, the project did not consider the perception of the managerial level of the institutions, thus, the findings might not be comprehensive.

One of the biggest challenges in the project is the language barrier. Although the researchers tried to seek assistance regarding this matter by asking for the university's staff support, the translated data might not reflect fully the opinions of the participants. Another challenge is the time difference. While the academics managed to arrange the time that all students can participate in synchronous activities, the asynchronous ones such as group discussion might be compromised by the time difference. Furthermore, Georgian students could not participate in the course thoroughly due to their exams and family concerns. Therefore, the evaluation lacks the perspective of Georgian participants. Through this experience, the researchers believed that the success of collaborative courses also depends on the commitment of all participants.

## **8. Conclusion**

The study successfully developed and implemented a collaborative e-learning course aimed at enhancing communication skills for maritime students. The findings underscore the importance of communication training in MET institutions and highlight the benefits of a multinational learning environment. By following the action research cycle, the researchers gained valuable insights of the current status and needs of communication training, thereby, informing the development of a course that is both relevant and effective.

The researchers posit the joint e-learning course as an innovative educational intervention, aiming to enhance the collaboration between maritime universities to improve communication skills for students. This prototype should be a first step, paving the way for maritime educational institutions to maintain such collaborative courses as one approach to complement necessary skills that will help future seafarers become global maritime professionals.

Moving forward, it is recommended that MET institutions continue to prioritize communication training, leveraging online platforms to facilitate international collaboration. By collaborating, MET institutions can provide students with unique multinational learning experiences, equipping them with the necessary skills to deal with increasingly complex problems in the maritime industry.

## 9. Project deliverables

According to the project contract terms and application form, the authors committed to achieving several deliverables. This section indicates the status of completion of those deliverables (See Table 3)

Table 3. Details of deliverables

No	Deliverables	Status of completion	Remarks
1	Make a presentation of an interim report for the research project at AGA23 in Helsinki, Finland	Done	
2	Submit the progress report to the Secretariat by the end of March 2024	Done	
3	Submit the final research report to the Secretariat	Done	<p>The final report includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reports that indicate the needs and current status of learning and teaching activities for the GMP focus areas in general and the topic of maritime interpersonal communication in particular (phase 1 findings)</li> <li>• Course syllabus that includes the learning outcomes, topics, learning activities and assessment which the member universities can use (Phase 2 outcomes)</li> <li>• Feedback on the entire course design and delivery (Phase 3 findings)</li> </ul>
4	Publication in the IAMU Conference Proceedings	Done	<p>A project paper entitled: “Educating Global Maritime Professional: An Action Research to implement courses regarding Effective communication” has been submitted to the AGA24 and will be presented at the conference and</p>

			included in the IAMU Conference Proceeding
5	Publication in the IAMU Section of WMU JoMA journal	Work in the progress	The authors intend to further develop the paper submitted to AGA24 and make a submission to the WMU JoMA journal in the IAMU section

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# Attachment



## Attachments/Appendices

The email was sent to recruit interviewees for phase 1 of the project. The email was translated to Vietnamese to avoid language barriers.

### English

Dear students,

First of all, thank you for your interest in the research project entitled “Educating Global Maritime Professional: An Action Research to implement courses regarding Effective communication topic”.

This project aims to design and implement an online course focusing on effective communication at sea for future seafarers.

In a first step, we would like to cordially invite maritime students to an online interview to understand your prior knowledge and opinions regarding the “effective communication” topic.

The interview data will be used solely for research purposes. Personal data such as names, images, voices will be hidden for privacy. All the data of the project will be deleted after completion. You will have the right to withdraw the information you provided at any time during the project and for any reason.

If you agree to join the interview, please fill in some basic information below. The schedule of the interview will be informed to you by email.

Your participation is highly appreciated!

Best regards,

Research team

### Vietnamese

Các bạn sinh viên thân mến,

Trước tiên, xin cảm ơn các bạn đã quan tâm đến dự án nghiên cứu mang tên “Đào tạo thuyền viên Hàng hải Toàn cầu: Nghiên cứu Hành động để triển khai các khóa học về chủ đề Giao tiếp hiệu quả”.

Dự án này nhằm thiết kế và giảng dạy một khóa học trực tuyến tập trung vào giao tiếp hiệu quả trên biển cho những người đi biển trong tương lai.

Bước đầu tiên, chúng tôi trân trọng mời các bạn sinh viên ngành hàng hải tham gia một cuộc phỏng vấn trực tuyến để tìm hiểu kiến thức và quan điểm trước đây của các bạn về chủ đề “giao tiếp hiệu quả”.

Dữ liệu phỏng vấn sẽ chỉ được sử dụng cho mục đích nghiên cứu. Dữ liệu cá nhân như tên, hình ảnh, giọng nói sẽ được ẩn để bảo mật. Tất cả dữ liệu của dự án sẽ bị xóa sau khi hoàn thành. Các bạn sẽ có quyền rút lại thông tin bạn đã cung cấp bất cứ lúc nào trong dự án và vì bất kỳ lý do gì.

Nếu đồng ý tham gia phỏng vấn, vui lòng điền một số thông tin cơ bản dưới đây. Lịch phỏng vấn sẽ được thông báo qua email.

Chân thành cảm ơn sự tham gia của các bạn!

Trân trọng,

Nhóm nghiên cứu

The interview questions for phase 1:

Phase	Participants	Intended interview's questions
<p>Phase 1: Focus group interview with students and lecturers to understand the current communication courses/lessons in the curriculums</p>	<p>Lecturers</p>	<p>1. What do you think about the importance of effective communication for seafarers?</p> <p><i>Potential follow-up questions:</i>            1.1 Have you tried to incorporate any communication training in your lessons?            1.2 What is your perception about hidden outcomes of the lessons when students can absorb communication skills through imitating the manner of lecturers, for example?</p> <p>2. Even it is not explicitly mentioned in STCW, do you think that there is a need for communication as well as other interpersonal skills courses/ lessons? Why/why not</p> <p>3.1 Does your institution have plans to integrate soft skills and communication training into the curriculum in the near future?            3.2 What are the challenges of the integration?</p> <p>4. What are the suitable modalities and approaches to deliver communication courses for seafarers?            Small groups → specific tasks, eliminate the shyness, force to communication to finish the task  <i>Potential follow-up questions:</i>            4.1 What are the advantages and disadvantages of delivering communication skills online?            4.2. How can we leverage the benefits of e-learning in these courses?</p> <p>5. What are the suitable learning outcomes for these courses?</p>
	<p>Students</p>	<p>1. Do you think that you have good communication skills? Why?</p> <p>2. How important are communication skills for seafarers?</p> <p>3. Have you been trained communication skills before? Could you describe your experience?</p> <p>4. Do you think that the current curriculum lack the communication and other soft skills training classes?</p> <p>4.1 Do you need such training classes?            4.2 What activities do you expect from these training classes</p> <p>5. In your perspective, how can students improve the interpersonal communication skills?</p>

Phase	Participants	Intended interview's questions
<p>Phase 1: Focus group interview with students and lecturers to understand the current communication courses/lessons in the curriculums</p>	<p>Lecturers</p>	<p>1. What do you think about the importance of effective communication for seafarers?</p> <p><i>Potential follow-up questions:</i></p> <p>1.1 <i>Have you tried to incorporate any communication training in your lessons?</i></p> <p>1.2 <i>What is your perception about hidden outcomes of the lessons when students can absorb communication skills through imitating the manner of lecturers, for example?</i></p> <p>2. Even it is not explicitly mentioned in STCW, do you think that there is a need for communication as well as other interpersonal skills courses/ lessons?</p> <p>3. How does your institution train these soft skills, especially communication for maritime students?</p> <p>3.1 <i>Does your institution have plans to integrate soft skills and communication training into the curriculum in the near future?</i></p> <p>3.2 <i>What are the challenges of the integration?</i></p> <p>4. If there is the need, what are the suitable modalities and approaches to deliver communication courses for seafarers?</p> <p><i>Potential follow-up questions:</i></p> <p>4.1 <i>What are the advantages and disadvantages of delivering communication skills online?</i></p> <p>4.2 <i>How can we leverage the benefits of e-learning in these courses?</i></p>

The interview questions for phase 3:

<p>Phase 3: Focus group interview with students to evaluate results</p>	<p>Lecturers</p> <p>1. What are the benefits of this online course to students' communication skills from your perspective?/</p> <p><i>Potential follow-up questions:</i>            2.1 How can such online courses can complement current curriculum of your university regarding communication skills of maritime students?            2.2 Which cognitive level in Bloom taxonomy that students could achieve by using these learning activities?            2.3 What form of assessment is suitable for these online learning activities?</p> <p>2. What are the drawbacks of this online course that might negatively impact students?</p> <p><i>Potential follow-up questions:</i>            2.1 Could the learning outcomes be achieved using these learning activities? Why/Why not?</p> <p>3. Do you have any recommendations to improve the course?</p> <p><i>Potential follow-up questions:</i>            3.1 What is potential resistance when implementing these learning activities? (from university, lecturers, and students' point of view)            3.2 What are the roles of stakeholders (lecturers, students, university managers/leaders) to effectively implement online courses?            3.3 Do you think that this online learning in general and this online teaching approach, in particular, could have potential application in the future? Why/Why not?</p>
	<p>Students</p> <p>1. In your opinion, what are the differences between these learning activities and your current learning activities in the communication courses at your university?</p> <p>2. What are the benefits of these learning activities from your perspective?</p> <p><i>Potential follow-up questions:</i>            2.1 Do you think that you understand the concepts/ knowledge of the subject better (more in-depth)?            2.2 What additional skills that you could improve through these learning activities?            2.3 Do you think these skills are important for your study? Why/Why not?</p> <p>3. What are the drawbacks of these learning activities to your study?</p> <p><i>Potential follow-up questions:</i>            3.1 Why do you consider them as drawbacks            3.2 What are the potential solutions for these challenges?</p> <p>4. Do you have any recommendations to improve the online course?</p> <p><i>Potential follow-up questions:</i>            4.1 What could you do to enhance your engagement in these learning activities?            4.2 What could lecturers/ facilitators do to improve these learning activities?</p>



The accounts to test the LMS of the course:

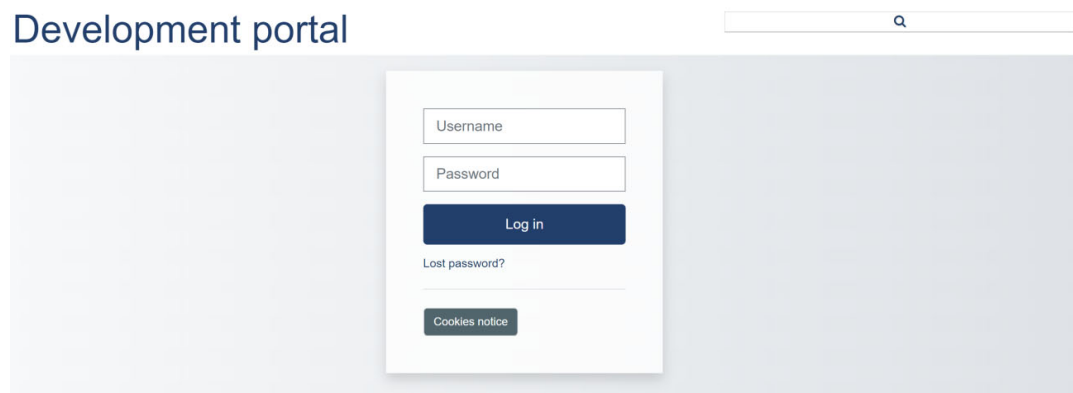
### LIST OF ACCOUNTS (GUESTS)

Full name	Username	Password
guest 01	guest01	Welcome@01
guest 02	guest02	Welcome@02
guest 03	guest03	Welcome@03
guest 04	guest04	Welcome@04

**Please kindly follow the instructions below to complete your account set up.**

#### Step 1: Access the Learning Management System (LMS)

Please click on the link: <http://dev.wmu.se/login/index.php> . You should see the interface below



#### Step 2: Access the course

After logging in, find the course “Maritime Communication Course - IAMU Project” – or click on the link <http://dev.wmu.se/course/view.php?id=138>

**After these steps, you are ready for the course!**

**If there are any problems, kindly email to [hoang.vuong@ut.edu.vn](mailto:hoang.vuong@ut.edu.vn)**







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