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MARITIME ENGLISH LANGUAGE NEEDS AND PRACTICES IN THE PORT OF BEJAIA: AN ETHNOGRAPHIC CASE STUDY

Abstract

Algeria joined the International Maritime Organisation in 1963 and has ratified all the international maritime conventions. It has also taken official measures in relation to the use of English for maritime communication by Algerian ship crews and port personnel. However, little is known about language practices in general and English language use and needs in particular of the Algerian port regulation staff (port officers, safety officers, radio officers, pilots). The aim of the present paper is to explore language practices and needs of the port regulation staff in the Port of Bejaia. The investigation adopted a case study methodology with non-participant observations and ethnographic interviews as the main instruments for collecting data. Three port officers, two pilots and two radio officers accepted to be interviewed. The findings of the research revealed the co-existence of five languages in the port of Bejaia, each being used for a different purpose and with a different category of interlocutors. English is used in seven main communicative events, in which Algerian maritime officers and pilots interact with foreign seafarers of diverse nationalities and for a variety of topics and purposes. The findings of this research can be used to design an ESP course for Bejaia's port regulation personnel.

*Keywords***:** Communicative Events, communicative situations, foreign ship crews, language needs, language practices, port regulation staff.

1. Introduction

It is nowadays accepted among marine professionals and academicians that English has become the lingua Franca of maritime communication. It has, actually, been adopted by the International Maritime Organization (IMO, henceforth) as the international language of maritime communication, in 1995, as an attempt to reduce the marine accidents caused by the lack of understanding among seafarers from different language backgrounds. This special and generalized use of the English language, called *Maritime English* (ME, henceforth)or *English for Maritime Purposes* (EMP, henceforth) enables maritime crews from different national, linguistic and cultural backgrounds to insure efficient and safe communication on-board ships, among ships at sea, and between ships and different shore services.

In fact, English started to be used officially as the language of navigation after the IMO Convention on the Standards of Training Certification and Watch keeping (STCW, henceforth) in 1978. At that time, Maritime English was just a limited jargon made of a set of specialized terms and idioms: Standard Marine Navigational vocabulary (SMNV, henceforth). However, the IMO's STCW conventions of 1995 and 2012 have considerably reinforced and improved the standards of maritime education and training in general and Maritime English use in particular (see IMO, 2012). Thus, instead of former knowledge-based teaching approaches, the IMO recommended maritime educational institutions to adapt competency-based principles. As regards language use, it recommended that English be used as the unique language of international maritime communication, and that this language be required for the training and certification of mariners in all the IMO member countries. Consequently, SMNV has been

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replaced by the SMCP (i.e. Standard Marine Communication Phrases), and a twofold perspective approach to Maritime English language teaching has been employed ever since: 1) a wide-angle perspective in which all the language skills and other specific maritime communication skills are investigated and integrated into language teaching practices; 2) a narrow-angle perspective in which the men of the see are trained to use the SMCP for specific safety and navigational matters (IMO, 2012).

These developments have generated an attractive, expanding and promising field of inquiry in linguistics and language teaching as part of English for Specific Purposes (see Culic-viskota & Kalebota, 2013). Accordingly, ME lecturers and researchers can now direct their efforts to the improvement and development of courses, curricula, syllabi and lessons; conception and proposition of innovative and effective teaching methods; new techniques, strategies and criteria of assessment and/or evaluation; description and improvement of the current situations; design and use of appropriate materials and equipment, etc.(Culic-viskota & Kalebota, 2013). In addition, after the long domination of narrow-angled sentence level research, linguistic analysis of ME has now adopted a wider perspective by integrating text, discourse/ rhetoric, genre and corpus approaches.

Algeria joined the IMO in 1963, i.e. just after it got independent, and ratified all the international maritime conventions, among which 1978's STCW convention and the 2006's maritime labour convention (see JORA N°5, 2016). The ratification of these conventions implies the adoption, by the Algerian government, of English as the main language of international maritime communication. However, Algeria's complex sociolinguistic situation and its geographical proximity with non-English European and North-African countries, presupposes the existence of other competitive languages among the men of the aboard ships and within Algerian ports. Subsequently, an exploratory study needs to be conducted in order to determine the language practices of the Algerian Port personnel and the communicative situations and events in which English is used.

2. Problem and Purpose

In spite of the adoption, by the Algerian government, of official measures in relation to the use of English for maritime communication by Algerian ship crews and port personnel, little is known as scientific researchers about language practices in general and English language use and needs in particular of the Algerian port regulation staff (port officers, safety officers, radio officers, pilots), nor do we have any precise evaluation of the efficiency of the English-based maritime communication in general and of shore-to-ship communication in particular. Accordingly, the main aim of the present study is to describe the language practices and needs of the regulation personnel in the Port of Bejaia. This includes the description of language practices, English-based communicative situations and events, and the communicative components of these situations and events.

2.1. What is Maritime English?

English for maritime purposes (EMP), or Maritime English (ME), is viewed and defined differently by the maritime stakeholders. For multinational ship crews and EFL harbour personnel having continuous contacts with foreign ship crews, Maritime English is an operational language, i.e. a restricted language, used to assure effective and comprehensible communication between ships and between ships and shore (Ziarati, 2008). The raison d'être of this variety of English is to grant the safety of ship crews, the vessels, harbour installations and harbour personnel. However, many other experts reject this definition and view maritime English as an elaborate and complex multidisciplinary discourse (Demydenko, 2012). Nevertheless, a third group of linguists and ELT researchers consider these two types of ME as two forms of the same entity (Covacevic 2014; Kalebota 2013).

In fact, according to Sanela Covacevic (2014), there are two main forms of Maritime English (ME): ME as restricted code and ME as an elaborate code. Firstly, ME as a restricted code is based on the use of SMCP (former SMNV), which is a specific register employed by the men of the sea and characterised by the use of specialised terminology, phraseology and a limited number of grammatical structures (Sanela Covacevic, 2014). Language use, in this situation, is mechanical and non-creative in that the interlocutors memorise expressions and structures and use them mechanically to cope with everyday professional issues. Secondly, ME is believed to have developed into a more elaborate discourse through the long years of using English as the Lingua Franca of academic maritime communication. According to them, Bachelor students in maritime schools need both professional and vocational English, which are considered as a necessary tool for successful careers in the maritime occupational contexts. In parallel, intense academic activity is observed in maritime high schools, with Master students particularly, in science and technological subjects and business and law subjects, which makes the need for English for Academic Purposes a prerequisite (Čulić-Viskota & Kalebota, 2013).

Similarly, Kourieos (2015, p. 2) noticed that, very often, ME education and research have been limited to vocational English courses which *"aim at the acquisition of standard competence in the use of English onboard, so they mainly concern seafarers and are informed by the need for a common language, essential for avoiding accidents at sea"*. She affirmed that, in fact, the students of maritime schools have also to study academic maritime English which they need to successfully deal with their academic studies. Accordingly, maritime English can be said to have widened in perspective to cope with both academic and professional expectations, in addition to the students' levels of study.

Demydenko (2011) views maritime English from a wider and more complex perspective. To start with, she views Maritime English as a lingua Franca of maritime communication and a global language used at sea, *"a product of life on the ocean itself, used for clear communication between ship and shore, between crew members, between crew and passengers, where the cost of communication breakdown can be damage to property, to the environment or loss of life (p. 250)"*. In addition, she considers ME as an operational language developed on the basis of communicative practices among the men of the sea and which result in a number of strict and clear communicative conventions likely to reduce communicative misunderstanding and confusion. Last but not least, the author describes ME as a multiplicity of language subsystems. For her, maritime English involves a complex system of specialised sublanguages related to maritime industry, the most prominent of which are: *(1) general English, (2) general ME, (3) ME for navigation, (4) ME for marine engineering, (5) ME for ship's documentation and correspondence, (6) ME for radio communication, (7) SMCP, (8) ME for IMO conventions, regulations, manuals, etc., (9) ME for semiotic systems, (10) ME for visual aids and others.*

2.2. IMO recommendations on maritime English

English has been adopted by the IMO as the main language of the sea since 1973's IMO's maritime safety committee meeting and 1978's STCW convention and has permanently gained in importance ever since (STCW, 1995; IMO, 2001). Recognition of the English language hegemony over the international maritime communication and the need for efficient English language training for the mariners were reinforced during 1995's STCW and the different amendments of the SOLAS convention (STCW 1995; STCW 1996; IMO, 2001). In fact, the decision made by the IMO's maritime safety committee, during the 1973's meeting, to use English as the common language of communication at sea communication led to the design in 1977 and adoption during 1978's STCW convention of the Standard Marine Navigational Vocabulary (IMO, 2001). Later in 1997, the SMNV was modified and developed into the more elaborate SMCP by the IMO safety and navigational subcommittee and adopted by the IMO convention in 2001 (IMO, 2001).

Similarly IMO's SOLAS conventions, which have concerned themselves with the safety of life at sea, expressed, for the first time, the need for a common language of the sea during 1974's SOLAS convention (IMO/ SOLAS, 1974). Later SOLAS conventions have explicitly insisted on the necessity of adopting English in general and the SMCP in particular as a common communicative tool among multilinguistic ship crews, among ships at sea and between ships and harbour services. The use of English and SMCP were believed to increase the safety rate of vessels, cargos and crews (IMO, 2001).

Additionally, 1978's international STCW convention, as amended in 1995, recommended the integration of the ability to use the SMCP in the certification requirements of the seafarers, and elaborated a list of minimum standards of the English competence according to the different categories and ranks of seafarers. As shown in the table 1 below, the would-be navigational and engineering officers, navigational watch seafarers and radio operators need to learn SMCP and to develop some mastery of oral and written English. Besides, careful observation of the competence evaluation criteria (see table 1), reveals that English-based communication needs to be clear, concise and precise both in oral and written forms.

Table 01:

Minimum standards of competence in English for seafarers (STCW code 1995, p. 34-98)

Category	English/ communication Competence	Criteria for evaluating the competence
Officers in charge of navigational watch	Use the SMNV, as replaced by SMCP, and use English in written and oral forms	- English language navigational publications and messages relevant to the safety of the ship are correctly interpreted and drafted - Communication are clear and understood
Seafarers working in navigational watch	Steer the ship and comply with helm orders also in the English language	- Communications are clear and concise at all times and orders are acknowledged in a seamanlike manner
Officers in charge of engineering watch in a manned engine room or designed duty engineers in a periodically un manned engine room	Use English in written and oral forms	- English language publications relevant to the engineering duties are correctly interpreted
GMDSS radio operators	Transmit and receive information using GMDSS subsystems and equipment and fulfilling the functional requirements of GMDSS	- English language messages relevant to the safety of the ship and persons on board and protection of the marine environment are correctly handled.

Table 2:

English language requirement for maritime training and certification (STCW code 1995, p. 110)

Category	English/ communication competence
Safety training for personnel providing direct service to passengers in passenger spaces	- Ability to communicate with passengers during an emergency - Ability to use elementary English vocabulary for basic instructions with passengers in need of assistance
Guidance regarding the training and certification of ratings forming part of the navigational watch	- An understanding of wheel orders given by pilots
All the categories	- Use of SMCP
All the categories	- Elementary English vocabulary with an emphasis on nautical terms

Other English training requirements have also been recommended during this convention, the most important of which are related to interaction with passengers (see table 2 above). Thus, future ship crews are required to develop elementary level English language abilities, with special emphasis on SMCP, for the sake of granting the safety of ships and passengers.

3. Methodology
3.1. Context of the Study: Bejaia's Port Enterprise

Bejaia's Port Enterprise is the company that is in charge of all the harbour's management activities. It has undergone, since 1998, several organisational reforms to suit the principles of market economy adopted by our country (Algerian maritime code, 1998), and as an attempt to reduce the states' financial burden in the fields of maritime transportation and port services inherited from the socialist era (Algerian maritime code, 1998; Tadjine & Ahmed-Zaid, 2012). These reforms have separated the management of the commercial missions from the prerogatives of public power: 1) keeping the management of the functions of development and safety, handling, piloting, etc. in the public domain; 2) opening the marketing activities for free for competition (Merzoug & Djenane, 2017; Tadjine & Ahmed-Zaid, 2012).

According to its official website, Bejaia's Port Enterprise (EPB, henceforth) is composed of eight directions, grouped into two main structures: a functional structure and an operational structure. (1) The functional structure includes four main directions: the general direction, the integrated management direction, the finance and accounting direction, and the human resources direction. These directions are assigned the mission of managing the administrative, financial, managerial, and human resources matters (EPB, official website). (2) The operational structure, is also composed of four directions, and is responsible for true maritime work such as handling and stevedoring, towing, pilotage and safety, management and delivery of goods...etc. The four directions which compose this structure concern the harbourmaster's direction, the handling and stevedoring direction, the towing direction and the field and development direction.

The present research took place in the Harbourmaster's Direction, which is concerned with security and safety operations within port limits (EPB, official website). This choice is justified by the fact that the harbourmaster's office direction has permanent contacts with foreigners. It (Harbourmaster's Direction) belongs to the operational structure and is considered as the most important structure in the port. It is composed of two departments: *the police and security department and the piloting department.*

a. The *police and security department* is responsible for terrestrial safety, maritime safety, internal security and dangerous hydrocarbon goods. Terrestrial safety includes the security of staff, operations and different port installations. On the other hand, maritime safety concerns keeping watch on vessels' security while internal security and dangerous goods involves the safety of water basins and the transit of dangerous products.

b. *The piloting department is* also called the *navigational aids department*. Its function is to welcome the vessels arriving to Bejaia's port, to provide foreign vessels with assistance during entry to and exit from the port, internal manoeuvres and the vessels' mooring.

3.2. Population and Sample

The population of the study involves all the officers and pilots of the harbour masters' office direction: safety officers, port officers, radio officers and pilots. Thus, three port officers, two radio officers and two pilots accepted to respond continuously to our questions during the observation period, which took place from February to April 2016.

3.3. Data collection and Analysis

The present research adopted a case study methodology with non-participant observation and ethnographic interviews as the main instruments for collecting data. The results of the study were then analysed and discussed using a combination of two investigative models: Hymes 1974's SPEAKING model and Hutchinson and Waters 1987's model of the Target Situation Analysis (see the table below).

Table 3:

The study's investigative framework

Target Situation Analysis (TSA, henceforth)	Concepts taken form Hymes' SPEAKING
1. Why is language needed? • for study; • for work; • for training; • for a combination of these; • for some other purposes, e.g. status, examination, promotion **2. How will the language be used?** • Medium: speaking, writing, reading, etc.; • Channel: e.g. telephone, face to face; • Types of text or discourse: e.g. academic text, lectures, catalogues, etc. **3. Who will the language be used with?** • Native speakers or non-native; • level of knowledge of receiver: e.g. expert, layman, student; • relationship: e.g. colleague, teacher, customer, superior, subordinate. **4. What will the content areas be?** • Subjects: e.g. medicine, biology, commerce, shipping, etc.; • Level: technician, craftsman, postgraduate, etc. **5. Where will the language be used?** • Physical setting: e.g. office, lecture theatre, hotel, workshop, library; • Human context: alone, meetings, demonstrations, on telephone; • Linguistic context: e.g. in own country, abroad. **6. When will the language be used?** • Concurrently with the ESP course or subsequently; • Frequently, seldom, in small amounts, in large chunks.	**End**: involves the communication purposes and outcomes of the community **Communicative situation/Setting**: corresponds to the physical (space and time), and the psychological environments **Participants**: concerns language users' interlocutors and the relationship among them **Instrumentality**: involves the medium, modes and channels of communication **Communicative event**: refers to the communicative activities in which the participants take part productively or/and receptively

4. Results

Two main objectives are focused upon in this research: (a) language practices in the Port of Bejaia, (b) English-based communicative situations and events. The study of communicative events involves the analysis of the purposes for using English, status and identity of the foreign interlocutors, modes of communication and/or interaction, and the topics dealt with. Communicative situations are identified on the basis of physical and psychological settings: that is to say, time and place of English language use, and the communicative occasions.

4.1. Language practices in the port of Bejaia

Non-participant observations which took place in the two main sites of our research context (Harbour Master's office and the piloting department) revealed that five main languages were used in the port of Bejaia: Tamazight, Modern Standard Arabic (MSA, henceforth), Algerian Arabic, French and English. These languages were used for different purposes, however.

The analysis of the interview responses revealed that English was used for ship-to-shore and shore-to-ship communications and for direct face-to-face (FTF, henceforth) interaction between Bejaia's port regulation staff and foreign ship crews onboard the foreign vessels. In addition, English is used during informal encounters that took place between Algerian port officers and foreigner ship crews on the dockside. Those interactions are generally related to social and personal needs, such as asking for and showing the way, and asking for and giving locations of hotels, restaurants and other amenities.

The interviewees affirmed that French was used for maritime communication and administrative work and for ship-to-shore communication with some French, Algerian and Maghrebi vessels. However, non-participant observations enabled us to notice that the interlocutors from the two sides were mixing SMCP expressions within sentences made in French. It was also noticed that English dominated French in shore-to-ship communication. In one situation, it was the Algerian radio officer who took the initiative to use French with a French Vessel. The interviewees explained that the main language of communication with vessels was English and that the use of SMCP was compulsory and unavoidable.

Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) is used with the vessels of the Middle East and the Gulf countries. The use of MSA is rare and is always mixed with SMCP English. On the other hand, Tamazight and Algerian Arabic are often used among Algerians in shore-to-ship, shore-to-shore and frequently during informal interactions. The recourse to SMCP English is also unavoidable even with Algerian vessels.

4.2. Purposes for using English

The analysis of the observations and interviews showed that the three main sub-groups of this community had different communicative purposes in relation to their professional tasks: (1) To start with, the radio officers' task was to welcome foreign ships, prepare the ships until their berthing, collect information about the entering ships, and apply the CNP. It happens that the language used for this kind of communication is English. (2) Port officers were in charge of organising navigation within the port and of ensuring the safety of water basins, port quays and stores. (3) Pilots, who have long experiences as international ship masters, are required to go on-board the entering ships and to direct and assist foreign ship masters or pilots to bring their vessels into or to take them out of the port.

However, it was also observed that port officers and pilots gathered regularly in the piloting department and participated in shore-to-ship communication. These latter were simultaneously implicated in Very High Frequency (VHF, henceforth) communications and were expected to contribute spontaneously to the safety of the port equipment. That is to say, there was a kind of versatility and multidisciplinarity among the port's personnel.

The results of the interviews showed that English was the main language of maritime communication, and was used for a number of purposes, which we list as follows:

- To welcome foreign ships;
- To prepare the ships for the different manoeuvres until pilot's embarkation;
- To regulate the navigation in the port (entry, movements, exit);
- To give port entry directions to foreign ships from control tower;
- To communicate with foreign navigational officers during pilotage onboard ships;
- To communicate with other foreign marine personnel at berth;
- To communicate with foreign passengers/ tourists;
- To collect information and write them down;
- To do ship safety and control checks.

5.3. Mode of Communication

5.3. 1. Media and means

The results of interviews and observations showed that the port regulation staff communicated with their foreign interlocutors through: FTF, VHF means, traditional telephones, mobile technologies, Telex, internet (emails) and paper-based written correspondence. The interviewees explained that the VHF means was the most frequently used, due to its practicality and efficiency. However other means were also used in special conditions: (1) The telephone and the mobile means were used when more precise information and elaborate discussion were needed; (2) Emails were used to ask for meteorological information or port conditions; (3) Traditional paper-based written correspondence was used, for administrative concerns, when the ships are inside the port.

Concerning language skills, the analysis of data revealed that all the language skills were practised by Bejaia's port regulation staff. However, the oral skills were reported to be of a greater importance in comparison with the written skills (refer to table 4 below). The interviewees justified this importance by the permanent need for spontaneous and efficient FTF interaction, and by the fact that the safety of the vessels and port equipment depended on the mutual understanding between the Algerian port regulation staff and the foreign ship crews. Reading and writing were considered less important because they constitute a kind of delayed communication that is necessary but not urgent, as it is not directly linked to the safety of staff and equipment.

Table 04:

Use of English language skills

Skills	Degree of importance	Justification
listening	Very important	Safety depends on immediate understanding what is said during oral communication
Speaking	Very important	Safety depends on being instantly understood during oral communication
Reading	Important	Delayed written communication is necessary
Writing	Important	Delayed written communication is necessary

5.3.2. Language aspects

The interviewed port officers, radio-officers and pilots agreed on the fact that the use of SMCP was a prerequisite for efficient maritime communication. This jargon with special vocabulary and phrases does not allow for elaborate grammatical variation. It was observed that the port regulation staff used English with varying degrees of fluency but mastered the SMCP well enough. However, as far as English pronunciation is concerned, the interviewees expressed a serious difficulty to understand some non-native English users due to inappropriate

pronunciation. Those interlocutors involved, among others: Russians, Chinese and Filipinos. The interviewees also revealed that US southerners, Texans particularly, were hard to understand because of their difficult accent.

5.3.3. Topics dealt with

Results for this section enabled us to identify the main topics dealt with during maritime communication. Eleven main topics were mentioned by the members of this community. These can be classified into four categories: *social interaction, exchange of information, institutional issues, and orders/ directions.*

- *The category of orders/ directions* is concerned with the instructions related to the entry to, departure from and movements within the port of Bejaia.
- *The category of institutional issues* involves the legal issues and the environmental concerns in national and international waters.
- *The category of social interaction* includes welcoming, directing and socialising with foreign ship crews and passengers.
- *The category of information exchange* involves getting and/or providing information about the engines, the cargo, the ten last ports, foreign ship crews, the ships' thrusters, and the weather forecast (meteorology).

5.4. Identity and Status of the Foreign Interlocutors

Although the status and identity of foreign language users varies (see table 5 below), the port regulation staff revealed that the greatest amount of interaction with foreign crews happens with expert mariners. Foreign interlocutors' mastery of the English language was found to vary greatly among the ship crews as most of them were non-native speakers using English only as a lingua franca of maritime communication. The ship's master is the person with whom most interaction takes place, followed by the radio and piloting officers. Although rare, foreign ship engineers and technicians also take part in interaction, mainly with Algerian safety officers, on board ships during safety and security checks.

Table 5:

Identity and status of foreign interlocutors

Mastery of English	Rank	Professional Experience
• NS • NNS: English as L2 • NNS: English as a Lingua Franca	• Ship Masters • Pilots • Officers • Engineers • seafarers • technicians	• NS experts • NNS experts • Students • Trainees • Mariners

5.6. Situations: Setting and Scene (Time and Place) of English Language Use

As shown in table 6 below, English is used in five main places in the port. It is also used at special moments in each of those places. The analysis of the moments and places also reveals the existence of a number of maritime activities around which English-based communication is required: entry of foreign ships to Bejaia's port, pilot's embarkment, towage, pilotage, ship controls, safety and security checks, informal encounters.

Table 6:

Setting and scene (time and place) of English language use

Place	Time
1. In the Harbour Master's office 2. In the control tower	- Before foreign ships are allowed to enter the port - During pilot's embarkment - During towage
3. On-board a foreign ship entering the port	- During pilotage
3. On-board a foreign ship at berth	- During ship controls - During safety/security checks
4. On dockside	- During safety/security checks - During informal encounters/ discussion

5. Discussion

6.1. Language Practices

This study made it possible to draw a model of language practices in the port of Bejaia, which can be summarised in the following figure.
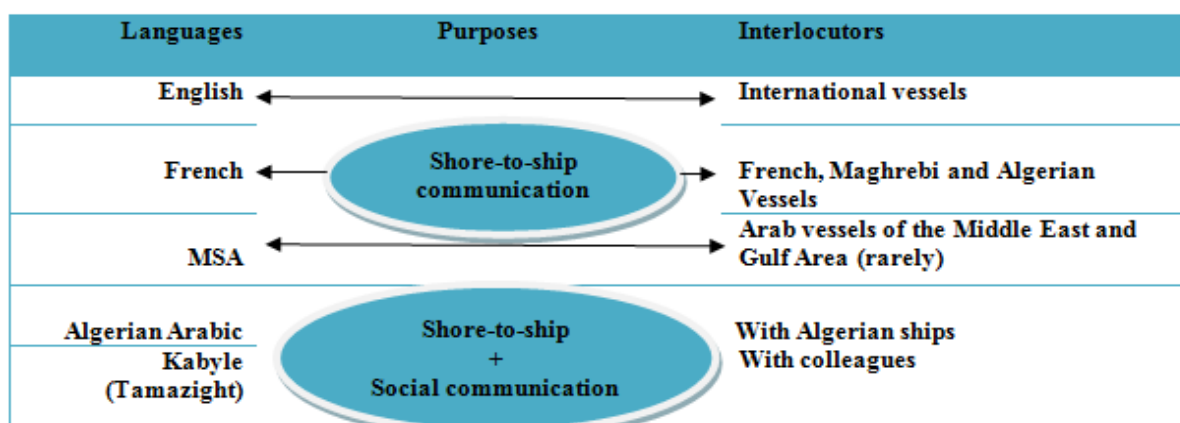

Figure1: language practices in the port of Bejaia

As shown in figure 1, the sociolinguistic situation within the speech community of Bejaia's port regulation staff can be described as very complex with specific forms of multilingualism and diglossia, the existence of three competing languages, and the co-existence of two local vernaculars: (1) This community can be considered as multilingual as five languages are used simultaneously by its members; (2) the linguistic situation in this context is diglossic in relation to the Arabic language as MSA is used as a higher variety and the Algerian Arabic vernacular as a lower variety; (3) Each of the five languages practised in the port is used in a specific domain: English is employed for maritime communication with international vessels, French for internal technical and administrative concerns, MSA with local and national public institutions, Kabyle and/ or Algerian Arabic for social and informal concerns; (4) English is the dominant language in shore-to-ship communication and is usually used with all international vessels, while French is used only occasionally with some French speaking vessels, and MSA rarely used with some Arab vessels; (5) The last feature of language practices in the port of Bejaia is code mixing. The regulation staff and foreign ship masters of the French, Maghrebi and Arab vessels mix their national languages with SMCP expressions and phrases. Accordingly, the use of SMCP is unavoidable for Bejaia's port regulation officers regardless to the language being used by their interlocutors.

6.2. Communicative Situations and Events

According to Hymes (1972), a communicative event refers to a particular communicative activity in which the members of a particular speech community engage using speech communication, i.e. language-based exchange is a prerequisite for the existence of any speech/communicative event. According to Hymes' SPEAKING model (1974), each communicative event is composed of *Setting and scene (place and time), Participants, Ends (purposes), (speech) Acts, Key, Instrumentalities, Norms and Genres*. The communicative situations, on the other hand, refer to the context in which communication occurs and are identified on the basis of time, place and desire to communicate (Hymes, 1972).

As far as the present research is concerned, it has been possible to identify eight English-based communicative events and eight communicative situations (see table 7 below). In fact, Bejaia's Port regulation staff use English in four main places in the context of Bejaia's port: control tower & harbour master's office, on-board a foreign ship entering the port, on-board a foreign ship at berth, on dockside (refer to the following table).

a. ***Control tower & harbour master's office:*** three main communicative events happen at three separate moments in this place (see events 1, 2 and 3). Communication with foreign ship crews happens via the VHF means, but other means, like the telephone and the internet, can also be used. The main role is played by the radio officers from the Algerian side while the main foreign interlocutors are either the ship masters or the piloting officers. Algerian port officers may take the role of radio officers whenever necessary. At the very moment Bejaia port's pilot gets onto the entering vessel, direct face-to-face interaction takes place and his main interlocutor is either the ship master or the piloting officer. Uses of SMCP, speaking and listening are characteristic of this phase, in which the main communicative purposes are to welcome foreign ships, to give entry directions and to provide navigational assistance for foreign vessels within the water basins.

b. ***On-board a foreign ship entering the port:*** the second event that happens in this place (event 4) concerns *informal interaction with foreign ship crews,* and which takes place during pilotage. Once on-board the foreign vessel, Bejaia's pilot welcomes the foreign ship master or pilot, socialises with the ship crews and attempts to create a relaxed atmosphere. SMCP, speaking and listening are the main skills used in this event.

c. ***On-board a foreign ship at berth***: there are two main communicative events in this place (events 5 and 6). The first one concerns *the ship's control interviews* and happens during ships' safety controls, and the second one concerns *the ship's security checks* and happens during the quests about security threats (terrorism and piracy threats). During safety controls, the port officers ask for information in relation to the navigational, handling and storing conditions of the ship. The aim, here, is to ensure the safety of the port by checking the technical safety of the foreign ships. Their main interlocutors are foreign ship masters, pilots and engineers. On the other hand, during security checks, the safety officers go onto the vessels and check ship crews' identities and the ten last ports in order to ensure the absence of suspected individuals or equipment on-board. Their target interlocutors involve the whole ship's crew. Communication, in these situations, is based essentially on oral face-to-face interaction between Algerian port and safety officers and the foreign crews. SMCP, reading and writing are also needed as many information forms are filled in during the checks.

d. ***On dockside:*** English-based communication happens at two separate moments (refer to events 7 and 8). The first situation concerns *informal meetings and discussions* during which port and safety officers communicate orally with foreign seafarers, through direct face-to-face interaction. On the other hand, the second situation relates to ship repair requests, during which foreign ship masters correspond, in written

form, with Bejaia Port's Harbour Master to request the permission to start repair works on his ship. SMCP, reading and writing are the main skills needed in this situation.

Table 7:

Target communicative events and situations

Events	Situations		Purposes	Topics	Participants	Mode of communication	
	Place	Time				Means	Means
1- Welcoming foreign ships	Control tower & Harbour Master's office	Before foreign ships are allowed to enter the port	To welcome foreign ships	- Welcoming/ socialising - Entry directions -	- Port/ Radio-officers - Ship master	VHF Telephone Internet (email)	SMCP Speaking /listening
2- Giving entry directions		Until pilot's embarkment	To prepare the ships for the different manoeuvres until pilot's embarkation	Meteorological information - Information about the water basins - Legal issues	- Radio officers/ pilots - Ship master/ piloting officers	VHF Telephone Internet (email)	SMCP Speaking/ listening Reading writing
3- providing navigational assistance		During towage/ pilotage	To give port entry directions to foreign ships from control tower		Port/ Radio-officers/pilots - Ship masters/piloting officers	FTF VHF	SMCP Speaking/ listening
4- Formal interactions during pilotage	On-board a foreign ship entering the port	During pilotage	To communicate with foreign navigational officers during pilotage on-board ship	- welcoming/ socialising - Entry directions	- Pilots - Ship masters/ piloting officers	FTF	SMCP Speaking/ listening
5- Ship safety control interviews	On-board a foreign ship at berth	During ship safety controls	To do ship safety controls to check the ship's navigational, handling and storing safety.	Information about the engine (machine) Information about the cargo Information about the ship's thrusters and cranes	- Port officers - Ship masters/ piloting officers/ engineers	FTF VHF	SMCP Speaking/ listening Reading/ writing
6- ship's security checks		During security checks	To do ship security checks to ensure there is no terrorist or pirate threats	Information about the ten last ports Information about the ship crews Legal issues	- Safety officers - Ship masters/ piloting officers/ engineers	FTF Information forms	SMCP Speaking /listening Reading/ writing

7- Informal encounters with foreign seafarers	On dockside	During informal meetings/ discussions	Socialising with and welcoming foreign visitors	- Welcoming & socialising - Locations, amenities, commodities	- port officers/ safety officers - foreign ship crews	FTF Inform-ation forms	Social Communication Speaking/ listening Writing
8- requesting permission for ship's repair		Ship repair requests	Requesting and giving permission to do ship repairs	- Environmental concerns - Legal issues	- Ship masters - Harbour Master	letters	SMCP Reading/ writing Professional discourse

7. Conclusion

The present paper has attempted to examine language practices and needs of the Bejaia's port regulation staff. It has focused on the description of language practices, English-based communicative situations and events, and the communicative components of these events. The research has applied a case study methodology with non-participant observations and ethnographic interviews as the main instruments for collecting data and a combination of two investigative models for the analysis of the results: Hymes 1974's SPEAKING model and Hutchinson and Waters 1987's Target Situation Analysis (TSA).

The results of this study have enabled us to draw a framework of language practices of Bejaia's port regulation staff and have revealed the existence of a very complex linguistic situation in the port of Bejaia with multilingualism, diglossia, domain specific language uses and code mixing as the main features of communication. It was also found that English is the dominant language of maritime communication and that its use is characterised by a noticeable combination of SMCP and oral skills. Besides, English is used in eight main communicative events and eight communicative situations, in which Algerian maritime officers and pilots interact with foreign seafarers of different nationalities and on a variety of topics and purposes.

The findings of the present study made it possible to suggest a set of guiding principles for the design of an ESP course for Bejaia's port regulation personnel:
  a. Focusing on the main purposes English-based communication, among which: welcoming and preparing the foreign ships until their berthing/ embarkment, regulating the navigation, ensuring the safety of port equipment, ensuring the safety of water basins, port quays and stores; guiding and assisting the foreign vessels entering/leaving Bejaia's Port.
  b. Taking in to account the features of professional versatility and multidisciplinarity of the port's regulation personnel.
  c. Use of different means of communication during shore-to-ship interactions: Face-to-face, VHF means, Telephone, Mobile means, Telex, Internet (emails).
  d. Understanding of what is said and being understood during oral communication, and delayed written communication.
  e. Communicating efficiently with foreign ship crews of different ranks, maritime experience and language proficiencies: NS, NNS, masters, pilots, officers, seafarers, technicians, trainees, students...etc.
  f. Communicating efficiently with foreign ship crews at different moments of interaction: before foreign ships enter national waters/the port, during pilot's embarkment/ship's berthing, during pilotage, during ship controls, during towage, during safety checks.
  g. Communicating efficiently with foreign ship crews in all the places of encounter: in the Harbour Master's office, on-board a foreign ship entering the port, on-board a foreign ship at berth and on dockside.

Last but not least, the present study is entirely qualitative, so there is an urgent need to carry on follow-up quantitative investigations in order to order to confirm and generalise the results of the qualitative investigation. After the identification of the detailed needs and the design of an EMP course, it will be necessary to conduct experimental studies with the port regulation staff.

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