ANOTHER APPROACH TO LEARNING ENGLISH. ABANDONING SHIP DRILL

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Abstract: Among the most important and time consuming activities on board ships are drills. Taking into account the importance of these types of physical exercises on board, that are compulsory for the crew, and passengers if any, we tried to make the students aware of such activities in a way that might be more attractive for English classes. The following Scenario was developed as structure, within the project Intermar, a European project involving many universities and academies interested in new teaching methods which involves cultural awareness and intercomprehension among the crew members on board merchant or navy ships. We developed some activities for a two hour seminar, Maritime English, to get the students acquainted to emergency drills and especially to abandon ship drill.

Keywords**: **Maritime English, teaching method, drill, cultural awareness, intercomprehension.

Among the most important and time consuming activities on board ships are *drills*. The noun 'drill' has some different meanings; however two of them could be joined to describe the actions taking place on board ships:

a**:** "a method of teaching students, sports players etc. something by making them repeat the same lesson, exercise etc. many times";

b**:** "military training in which soldiers practise marching";

There is also a definition for **fire/emergency drill**in the same Longman Exams Dictionary 2010 "an occasion when people practise what they should do in dangerous situations such as fire".

Part of the definition given by the meanings above is confirmed by the Maritime Administration that is the agency within the U.S. Department of Transportation that states on its website that: "Once each week, a Fire and Boat Drill is conducted on board ship. The purpose of this weekly drill is to make sure that each crew member knows exactly what to do in case of a fire or other disaster that would require a person to leave the ship." (1)

About the same requirements can be found on SOLAS referring to the drills the crew members should participate at:"Every crew member shall participate in at least one abandon ship drill and one fire drill every month. The drills of the crew shall take place within 24 h of the ship leaving a port if more than 25% of the crew have not participated in abandon ship and fire drills on board that particular ship in the previous month".(2)

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Student-centred activity

Taking into account the importance of these types of physical exercises on board, that are compulsory for the crew and the passengers (if any), we tried to make the students aware of such activities in a way that might be more attractive for English classes. The following Scenario was developed as structure, within the project *Intermar*, a European project involving many universities and academies interested in new teaching methods which involves cultural awareness and intercomprehension among the crew members on board merchant or navy ships. We developed some activities for a two hour seminar, Maritime English, to get the students acquainted to emergency drills and especially to abandon ship drill.

The first activity taking about 10 minutes is a Warm–up Activity intended for brainstorming and mind mapping completion. The student will see some images (signs and pictures) and hear the sound of an alarm. The signs and pictures are those a cadet can see on board a merchant ship; he tries to use the vocabulary related to them in Romanian and find similarities to English vocabulary (appeal to their previous knowledge).



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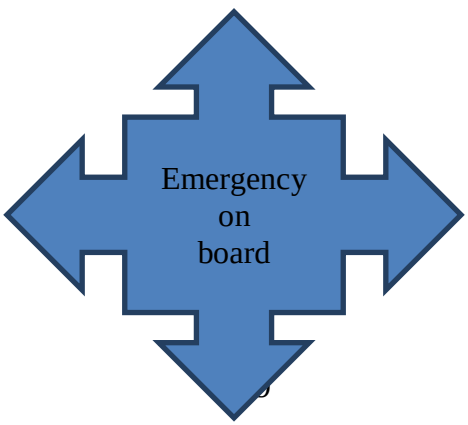
1. barca de salvare; 2. pluta de salvare; 3. colac de salvare; 4. vesta de salvare; 5. nuatingeti; 6. radioportabil; 7. loc de adunare; 8. primajutor; 9. telefon de urgenta.

The students are going to recognize almost all the signs and give the equivalents into English starting from the basic international words (in case they have not studied English before): radio, telephone, portable, and continuing with first aid, and the picture showing the activity not to be performed. If they do not know the phrases for the safety equipment, the connection to the first language could be beneficial; all the compounds are formed with the word 'life' following the same pattern, but inverted in comparison to the Romanian phrases: lifeboat, life raft, lifebuoy or life ring and lifejacket. The only sign that might be difficult to be connected to the Romanian word is "muster station" corresponding to picture no 7.

The second activitycan start with a brainstorming exercise fulfilled with a very simple mind map completion containing the types of emergencies that can be experienced on board ships and the corresponding drills: fire alarm, man overboard, general alarm and abandon ship given from right to left according to the type of hazard and the difficulty of the situation.

FIRE ALARM

MAN OVERBOARD



ABANDON SHIP

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Once we established the alarm types we can go on with the next exercise with the duration of about 20-30 minutes, which is a listening or video activity based on audio information in the form of an announcement (on the public address system summoning of all crew members and passengers at muster station). If the announcement on the public address system is a listening activity, it is to be spoken in three or four languages that can be Romanic and/or Germanic or others (if the announcement can be pronounced correctly in other languages) but not in English. If the exercise is based on a video (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gO7bdJb_IhM), the students should guess from the audio signal the type of alarm. The students should point the right direction on the mind map or, if we have images to show the emergency they should show or go to the right picture.

The main alarms that are installed in the ship to give audio-visual warnings are as follows:



1) General Alarm: The general alarm on the ship is recognized by 7 short ringing of bell followed by a long ring or 7 short blasts on the ship's horn followed by one long blast. The general alarm is sounded to make aware the crew on board that an emergency has occurred. The real sound could be listened on the video for the passenger ship Allure of the Seas. (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZbZL5i0LPN8)

2) Fire Alarm: A fire alarm is sounded as continuous ringing of ship's electrical bell or continuous sounding of ship's horn.

3) Man Overboard Alarm: When a man falls overboard, the ship internal alarm bell sounds 3 long rings and ship whistle will blow 3 long blasts to notify the crew on board and the other ships in nearby vicinity.

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4) Abandon Ship Alarm: When the emergency situation on board ship goes out of hands and ship is no longer safe for crew on board ship. The master of the ship can give a verbal Abandon ship order, but this alarm is never given in ship's bell or whistle. The general alarm is sounded and everybody comes to the emergency muster station where the master or his substitute (chief Officer) gives a verbal order to abandon ship.

Different Alarm signals of the vessel are clearly described in the muster list along with the action to be carried out so that all the crew members can perform their duties within no time in actual emergency.(http://www.marineinsight.com/misc/marine-safety/different-types-of-alarms-on-ship/)

The third activity is a vocabulary one:checking of all crew members and passengers for completeness and suitable dressing. It is a recognition activity based on images and audio information (if available) and taking about 30 minutes.

Recognize the suitable equipment worn by crew members for abandon ship: for each picture a short text will be read in a different language and the students should match the pictures with the text and try to compose the English text. If the audio text is not available the students will read the texts and try to find words that are similar to those in Romanian or English and which can help them.

1. El **guardapits (o armilla, castellanisme) salvavides** és una peça d'equipament que va situat a la part del tronc de la persona i serveix per mantenir la flotabilitat del cos i el cap per sobre de l'aigua. S'utilitza enpiscines, llacs, rius i mars.(Catalan)

2. Der **Überlebensanzug** ist ein maritimes Kleidungsstück, das als Rettungsmittel dient. Es verbessert die Überlebenschance einer Person, die in kaltes Wasser gefallen ist, indem es zusätzlichen Auftrieb bietet, wie eine Schwimmweste, und gleichzeitig wärmeisolierend gegen das umgebende Wasser wirkt. Die Überlebenszeit in 4° C kaltem Wasser beträgt dabei mehrere Stunden. (German)

3. Este **botiquín** que es exclusivamente para Balsas Salvavidas son especialmente los que pueden llevar los buques que no tengan bandera Comunitaria, es decir, los buques que no

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sean de la Comunidad Española y que por lo tanto no están obligados a cumplir la Directiva 92 / 29 / CEE, que es el ordenamiento jurídico español que impone las medidas mínimas de Seguridad y Salud para promover la mejor asistencia médica cuando vamos a bordo de buques. (French)

4. En **redningskrans** (eller bjærgemærs i maritimt sprog) er en flydende anordning (en slags bøje), som anvendes ved livreddning i vand.En redningskrans er udformet som en ring af et hårdt flydende materiale som kork eller skumplast betrukket med stof og med en ring af reb påsat den ydre kant.Redningskranse skal forefindes på både, ved bådebroer, havne og andre kystområder.Disse må ikke forveksles med baderinge, som anvendes som legetøj. (Danish)

5. A maioria dos equipamentos são de cores fortes (a mais usada é a vermelha), são à prova d'água, medem cerca de 30 cm de lado, e pesam cerca de 2 a 5 kg. Podem ser comprados em lojas de suprimentos náuticos, aeronáuticos ou lojas de campismo especializadas. As unidades têm uma vida útil de 10 anos, e são fabricadas de modo a operar em condições adversas (-40°C a 40°C), e transmitem o sinal durante 24 ou 48 horas. (Portugues)

6. Cankurtaran filikası (Tahlisiye sandalı veya Can filikası olarak da bilinir), denizde kazaya uğrayanları kurtarmakta kullanılan özel tekne.Filikalar gemiden matafora adı verilen vinçli donanımlarla veya kızaklı düzeneklerle denize indirilirler. Sac, ahşap ve fiberglastan yapılan bu filikalar kürekle, motorla ya da yelkenle seyredilebilir. Ayrıca baş ve kıç bölümlerine yerleştirilen yüzüdürücü tanklar su dolması halinde bile batmasını önler. Modern can filikalarında çiftdip düzeniyle teknenin batmazlığı sağlanır. Günümüzde kullanılan can filikalarının bazılarının üstü kapalıdır; böylece kazazedelerin hava koşullarından etkilenmesi önlenir.

   All the texts were taken from the same sitehttp://en.wikipedia.org/wiki), the only one with similar texts in more languages.

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Match these words with the right pictures:water, food rations, first-aid kit, life buoy, sea painter, EPIRB, life raft, life jacket, immersion suit, flash light.

Conclusions

Life at sea is difficult and besides hard work it implies communication on board in all types of situations. Our students should learn the specialty terminology, SMCP (Standardized Marine Communication Phrases) and moreover it would be a plus for them to understand some terms in

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other languages. Sometimes in emergency situations intercomprehension may be useful, as long as people are scared and they may use their own lan
guage.

Even if the future seafarers will never be placed into position of communicating to their colleagues on board in another language than English, we believe that the best way of long term learning is by discovery. The activities described try to make the students thing in a different way and understand and remembered the things learned because they were taught in another way.

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