

Full Length Research

Teaching in a Merchant Navy Academy

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Teaching the reading skill is a challenging task for the foreign language teacher since many learners lack efficient reading skills and strategies even in their mother tongue. Furthermore, course books are not always helpful. The present paper presents a lesson designed to practice the reading skill in a Greek Merchant Marine Academy. Students of this educational structure study to become merchant marine officers, either captains or engineers. The learner interests were taken into consideration in creating the lesson. The course book as well as authentic in origin reading texts were used and learners practices both 'intensive' and 'extensive' reading. They both 'skimmed' and 'scanned' reading texts and applied the newly acquired knowledge to already existing mental schemata. Overall, the reading session encouraged learners to become more active readers by further developing their existent reading abilities. It was successful in attracting learner interest and making a good start towards more creative reading sessions to follow.

Keywords: Merchant Marine Academy, reading, skill, reading strategy, authentic in origin, 'intensive' reading, 'extensive' reading,

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INTRODUCTION

This paper touches upon the teaching of reading skill. Though many a time reading is considered to be an easy passive activity it seems that this is not really so. Teaching how to read is a challenging task for the foreign language teacher since many learners lack efficient reading skills and strategies even in their mother tongue and coursebooks are not always helpful. Trying to introduce theory to practice and aiming at enhancing learners' reading skill, I have modified a coursebook reading lesson which is here presented and evaluated.

A Typical Reading Comprehension Lesson

The Coursebook the class uses is Papaleonida, P, L (2012). *Maritime English for the 1st Semester*, Athens: Evgenidou Foundation. A typical reading comprehension lesson (see Appendix I, p11) includes a lead-in listening activity where learners listen to seafarers talking and then

complete a grid with information from the listening extract. After that, there is a text listing Captains' and Engineers' ranks, duties and responsibilities. Following the reading comprehension text there is a glossary and then start a number of 'process-targeted activities' (Calfoglou, C, 2004:74). These activities invite learners to look for general and specific information in the text without having a coherent purpose for doing so.

Evaluation and criteria for the reading class

Coursebook activities mostly aim at practicing language per se. Following the glossary, there are a number of gap filling tasks which are actually vocabulary and grammar exercises. The pre-reading activity which includes a listening task is also a bit awkward. The activities overall do not seem to follow a coherent purposeful pattern. The pre-reading activity introduces the topic but then the post reading tasks are purposeless in relation to the reading text. Only at the end of the lesson is there a listening task

where the exercise following is in a sense relevant to the listening excerpt since learners take information from it in order to complete the task.

Effective teaching of the reading skill though first involves activating readers' mental schemata. As mentioned in Anderson and Pearson, comprehension involves the 'interaction of new information with old knowledge' (Anderson, R, Pearson, D 1984: 37). New ideas have meaning only when they can be related to what the reader already knows. In order for learners to acquire new knowledge, they need to integrate the information they find in reading texts with pre-existing knowledge. In this way new knowledge becomes part of their mental store. This mental store includes mental 'content schemata' which are modified (Carrell, Eisterhold, 1988:79).

Besides content schemata there is another concept related to schemata however. This is the notion of 'formal schemata' that reflect the differences in structural form among the different writing genres (Carrell, Eisterhold, 1988:79).

New ideas or concepts can also be acquired when learners are engaged in either bottom up or top down mental processing. In bottom up processing readers have the reading text as a starting point and main source of information while in top down processing readers make additional use of their pre-existing knowledge and background experiences so as to make inferences and finally comprehend the reading text (Calfoglou, C, 2004:57).

Among the challenging tasks that an EFL teacher undertakes is to facilitate learners develop their language abilities (Grabe, W, Stoller, F 2011:8). This means that the teacher needs to teach learners how to employ their knowledge resources and enhance their reading skills and strategies. While reading skills are rather automatic linguistic processes, learners still develop them through engaging in purposeful reading. Reading strategies are more conscious activities on the part of the readers which yet again need to be practiced.

Reading skills include 'skimming' a text, which means reading for general content information. This may be effectuated by reading headings or the topic sentences of paragraphs. Another skill is 'scanning', which means reading the surrounding text for detail. In fact, skimming and scanning seem to be two crucial reading skills so as to have even been described as approaches (Beaumont, M 1996:30-31).

Developing learners' 'intensive reading skill' is also important. This is done through reading practice in class while 'extensive reading' of greater in length extra reading material is also recommended for the consolidation of reading skills.

Concerning strategies, EFL teachers need to help learners become 'strategic readers' (Calfoglou, C 2011:41). To achieve this, learners need to develop their

cognitive as well as metacognitive strategies. Cognitive strategies include, for example, paying attention to text structure or connecting one part of a text to another (Grabe, W, Stoller, F 2011:10). Metacognitive strategies involve more conscious actions on the part of the reader such as planning what steps to take, connecting text to background knowledge or reflecting on what has been learnt from the text (Grabe, W, Stoller, F 2011:10).

When learners process texts, they engage in either lower-level or higher-level mental processing which takes place in short term working memory. In lower-level or 'text-driven' processing (Calfoglou, C, 2004:85), the working memory is briefly activated to deal with lexical, grammatical or semantic language unit processing. In higher-level or 'knowledge-driven' processing (Calfoglou, C, 2004:85), readers process text content while at the same time they activate their existing mental schemata. In this way the readers interact with the text and build up more mental associations which consolidate learning.

Other effective reading criteria include the concepts of process vs product reading. Product reading means focusing on the text as an end product while process reading means that the point of reference moves from the text to the reader. Fish mentions that researchers and teachers should be interested in the reader's experience rather than the text itself (Fish, S, 1976/1988:314). So, learners become more skilled and strategic readers if they engage in process reading. When teachers aim at the building up of reading strategies in learners, they inevitably encourage process reading and make learners into more purposeful readers.

Reading skill being so much researched upon, Williams is yet another researcher who has proposed a set of ten principles for effective reading. These have been much commented upon as well as criticized and are thus worth mentioning. According to these principles (Williams, R 1986: 42-45), the most important parameter in teaching reading is that texts are interesting to readers. The latter will contribute meaning to them. Classroom procedure should reflect the interactive nature of real reading while reading should aim at the development of the reader's linguistic ability. Teachers should learn to be quiet and choose texts which are close to learners' cognitive reality. Using a written text as a source for a reading class does not necessarily mean that a teacher practices reading neither does the learner become a proficient reader simply by attending a reading class. Finally, it is advisable for learners to listen to their classmates or the teacher reading texts aloud in class.

A typical reading comprehension lesson modified

Description

The lesson entitled "Seafaring" was conducted in a class of students of the Merchant Marine Academy of

Aspropyrgos. The learners are approximately from 20 to 30 years old and their language level is B1.

The topic is one of interest to them since they want to become merchant ship engineers. First, the learners are presented with an information grid where they have to fill in the different types of professions that work aboard a vessel. Afterwards, they are presented with half of a coursebook text about the duties of officers. The part given to learners is the second part of the textbook's text—the one describing duties and responsibilities of engineers while the first part describes duties of captains and is left out. The learners are asked to read the text aloud twice. The first time they complete a task which requires them to skim the text for gist while the second reading is accompanied by a grid completion task asking learners to scan for detail.

Later, learners are presented with an authentic text taken by an Internet source. The topic of this text also includes the job qualifications necessary for someone wishing to work as a merchant ship engineer. Teaching how to read is a challenging task for the foreign language teacher since many learners lack efficient reading skills and strategies even in their mother tongue and coursebooks are not always helpful. It is taken from a British source; this is something that interests learners since many wish to take post-graduate courses in Britain which has a good reputation for nautical education.

The learners read the authentic text aloud too and afterwards they are presented with two open-ended tasks. First, they are asked to suppose that a shipping company wants to employ a merchant ship engineer and asks for people with qualifications mentioned in the text. Students need to assess their personal qualifications and explain whether they could undertake this type of job.

The following task includes a job advertisement in a newspaper. A shipping company asks for a third engineer aboard one of its tankers. Candidates are asked to send their curriculum vitae. Learners should work in pairs and imagine that they will soon have a job interview with the company crew manager. So, they take notes on what they are going to say about themselves, try to predict what the manager will ask them and prepare themselves so that they embark on the tanker as third engineers; learners role play the dialogue in class.

For homework, learners are given two extensive reading articles as well as the portraits of a seafarer and a shore employee. They are asked to read the texts and take content notes and also to prepare their own portrait based on the samples they are provided with.

Justification

In the modified reading lesson, two reading texts are chosen. The first is the coursebook text and the second an authentic text taken from an Internet source. Concerning the textbook, half of the text is used since

this half was of interest to the learners. The second text comes from the National Careers Service Agency, a British organization. It is an authentic-in-origin text which is of interest to learners since Britain is known for its nautical tradition and education.

Since the text excites learner interest, authenticity can be achieved in the sense that Widdowson describes it (Widdowson, 1979). According to his view, authenticity is achieved when the reader can 'interpret the intentions of the writer and respond appropriately to them'. The text's language level may be beyond that of the readers'; still their motivation stemming from their interest in the text's content makes them willing to read it.

Learners are asked to read both of the lesson reading texts aloud. The reason behind this is to first help them make accurate associations between language graphemes and phonemes (Gibson, 2008:30). Reading aloud builds up learner confidence since they become less shy in speaking in front of an audience—even if that speaking entails only reading aloud from a written source. Reading aloud is also a good diagnostic tool for learners' oral inefficiencies. It is also a memorization technique (Gibson, 2008: 33) helping learners remember linguistic items they see in written form.

The lesson's pre-reading and while-reading tasks include information grids. This is done so that learners will contain and organize the ideational content of texts. Grids are a medium through which learners can conceptualize meaning and retain it to memory (Burgess, 1994:310).

In dealing with intensive reading in class, efforts were made to provide learners with interesting texts and activities were purposeful in the sense that they were interactive and encouraged learners not only to speak themselves but to also hear their classmates read as well as contribute meaning to text (Williams, 1986:42).

Finally, the extensive reading assignment includes multiple interesting texts. Learners can choose what to read and they can use the last two texts as samples for their homework assignment which is writing a text of the same genre. The reading material is easy and reading purpose is related to pleasure (Day, R, Bamford, J, 2002).

Evaluation

The modified reading lesson went well. Learners participated in tasks as well as the reading aloud of texts. One drawback was that they mostly used language structures or items exactly as they are written in the text. For example, when asked to mention the general as well as the more specific duties of engineers, learners copied the text in answering. They had little spontaneous answers and mostly followed the text as a guide. During pair work, learners also imitated the text in their utterances and seemed to be in need of fixed

expressions in order to engage in interaction.

Despite drawbacks, almost all learners participated in the lesson and found the topic quite interesting. In doing so they were encouraged to open up and speak of their personal experiences as seafarers; this made them contribute meaning to text, add new information to previous knowledge thus achieving comprehension.

CONCLUSION

Practicing reading is a more demanding task than one would suppose. It necessitates engaging learners in purposeful interactive reading that demands the exercise of top down, process oriented mental strategies. In the lesson proposed above learners participated in a reading lesson aiming to make them more active readers by further developing their existent reading abilities. The lesson was successful in attracting learner interest and making a good start towards more creative reading sessions to follow.

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Appendix I Coursebook Reading Lesson

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_____ (carry) petroleum and we _____ (load) the cargo by means of pipes. Working here is not very easy. I _____ (work) for many hours a day so I can't sleep a lot. When I _____ (have) time I watch DVDs or read books.

The captain is very good. He always _____ (help) me when I _____ (not/know) what to do. I have a friend, too. He is Greek. He's from Volos. We _____ (talk) a lot when we have free time.

The problem is that I _____ (not/go) out very often. We _____ (not/stay) at ports for a long time because loading and discharging _____ (not/take) a long time.

But, what about you? Are you OK? _____ (you/work) a lot? Say hi to Litsa for me.

That's all for now. Take care.

Manthos

6. Crew Ranks and Roles

I. Maritime Jobs: Officers

a) *Lead-in. Listen to the seafarers. What is their rank? Choose one of the following:*



Chief Engineer / Chief Officer / Master / Chief Cook / Cadet Engineer

Speaker 1 _____

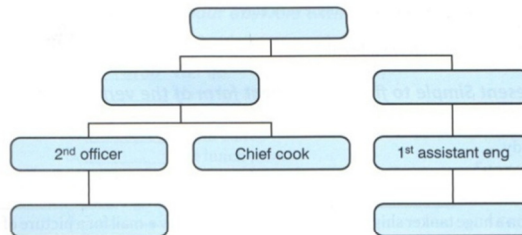
Speaker 2 _____

Speaker 3 _____

b) *Write the jobs in the correct position on the diagram.*



Chief Engineer	Master	3 rd Officer
Chief Officer	2 nd Assistant Engineer	





Read about the activities of the various officers on board. Remember, the role and responsibilities of officers varies, depending on the country, the flag, the type of ship, etc.

So, you want to go to sea... Look at the following maritime jobs:

- The Master

On most legal documents in the merchant shipping industry, the captain is referred to as the ship's Master. The Master of a merchant vessel is the representative of the company that owns a ship and s/he makes sure that the vessel is legal according to local, international and company regulations. S/he deals with all shore and port officials and is responsible for the well being of the crew and the safety of the ship. The Master also maintains discipline and pays the crew.

- Chief Mate (C/M) or Chief Officer (C/O)

S/he is the head of the deck department and is in charge of the ship's cargo and deck crew. S/he is responsible for the loading and discharging of the vessel as well as for fire-fighting drills and boat drills. This means s/he supervises the Bosun, 2nd and 3rd Mates for cargo, maintenance, repairs and drills. S/he normally stands a navigational watch (4-8) and a cargo watch. S/he is typically the ship's Damage Control Officer, Safety Officer and Training Officer; this means that s/he has to make sure that the station bill and the muster bill are properly prepared and posted and that the fire-fighting equipment and the life-saving equipment are accessible and operational.

- Second Mate (2/M) or Second Officer (2nd/ O)

S/he is responsible for all aspects of navigation (voyage planning, chart correction, navigation equipment communications) while at sea, and is in charge of a cargo watch while in port. S/he is often designated Medical Officer and GMDSS operator, in charge of maintaining distress signaling equipment. S/he usually stands the 12-4 navigational watch and is responsible for the upkeep of onboard publications. On oil tankers the Second Mate assists the Chief Mate with tank cleaning operations.

- **Navigational officer:** the role of the navigational officer is to make sure that bridge electronics, navigational and alarm systems, and ship's lights are in good working order. S/he regularly checks bridge instruments and makes sure that up-to-date charts and navigational publications are available on board. S/he plots the voyage track and works out the course.

- Third Mate (3/M) or Third Officer (3rd/ O)

S/he is responsible for all safety inspections and the upkeep of all Life Saving Appliances and Fire Fighting Equipment on board. S/he usually stands the 8-12 navigational watch while at sea.



On bridge: Officer charting route / helmsman steering.

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and is, sometimes, appointed ship's Safety Officer.

- **Safety Officer:** the duties related to the role of safety officer focus on responsibility for items such as firefighting equipment, lifeboats, and various other emergency systems.

– **Chief Engineer (C/E)**

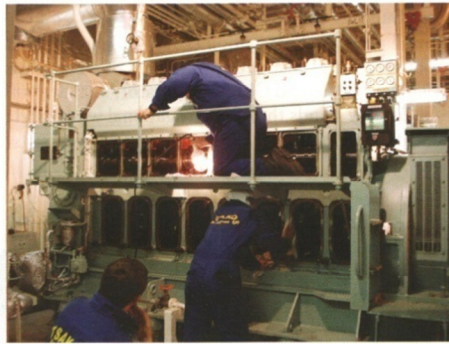
A day worker, s/he is in charge of the engine department and is responsible for E/R personnel and the proper operation, overhauling, and safety of the vessel's propulsion system, power generation system and all auxiliary machinery and spaces.

- Responsible for ordering spare parts.
- Supervises critical engine repairs.
- Decides on repairs and reports defects that may affect the ship's performance to the Master.
- Advises the Master on all matters relating to fuel requirements.
- Logs fuel consumption.

– **Second Engineer (or 1st Assistant Engineer, in some countries)**

S/he keeps an E/R watch and reports directly to the Chief Engineer about the daily maintenance and operation of the engine department.

- Is in charge of engine room repairs.
- Allocates daily duties to E/R officers and crew.
- Keeps overtime records.



Inspecting and repairing generator.

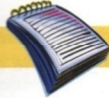
– **Third Engineer (or 2nd Assistant Engineer)**

S/he keeps an E/R watch and is responsible for the smooth operation of all engine room systems.

- Performs system checks.
- Normally in charge of electrical systems, generators, boilers, fuel, auxiliary engines and feed systems.
- Is typically in charge of bunkering, if the officer holds a valid Person In Charge (PIC) endorsement for fuel transfer operations.
- supervises tank soundings, monitors boiler room equipment.

- Chief Cook

S/he creates daily menus, orders and stocks sufficient amounts of food, cooks, bakes, and prepares food.



Glossary

representative	acting, serving as agent
regulations	body of rules
supervise	direct and watch over the work and performance of others, oversee
operational	ready for immediate use
designated	appointed, assigned as, selected for a duty or a specified purpose or role * e.g. DPA, Designated Person Ashore, for Safety Management
upkeep	maintenance, in proper operation, condition and repair
proper	suitable, appropriate, correct, fitting
overhaul	check carefully and make any necessary repairs
critical	so serious as to be at a point of crisis
defect	deficiency, imperfection, flaw
overtime	time somebody works beyond normal working hours, payment for additional work done outside the regular schedule
smooth	without difficulties, obstructions or irregularities, note the saying "A smooth sea never made a skilled mariner"
valid	legally sufficient and authorized by law
endorsement	official approval, authorisation
sufficient	enough, adequate

c) Fill in the correct prepositions.

1. Responsible ____ safety.
2. He is ____ charge ____.
3. She is ____ command ____.
4. The head ____ the engine department.
5. I am ____ duty.

d) Fill in the correct verb to make phrases.

chart / correct / report to / perform / steer / stand / complete

1. _____ a navigational watch.
2. _____ paper work, forms, documents.
3. _____ checks on engine systems.
4. _____ the chief engineer.
5. _____ the vessel.
6. _____ the charts.
7. _____ the route.

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_____ : My work is similar to that of the A/B, but I do no steering, and I concentrate more on cleaning. I still need sea time and additional qualifications before becoming an A/B.

_____ : I clean the officers' rooms and the galley area, I set tables, etc.

_____ : My work on deck involves chipping rust, painting, lubricating fittings, cleaning various areas. I also stand a watch under the supervision of the OOW and I am responsible for keeping a lookout and steering the vessel. I am a fully-trained seaman, with good knowledge of all deck gear and equipment. I carry out maintenance of deck rigging and machinery, such as the loading gear, cranes, ramps, doors, lifts and hoses, and the mooring equipment, such as the windlass, anchors, cables, wires and hawsers. The deck hands help me clean, chip, scrape, wirebrush, prime and paint the hull, bulkheads, decks, passageways, deck machinery or spaces.

_____ : I do sheet-metal work, welding and plumbing. I fabricate and install steel pipe work, which means that I do the measurement, preparation and installation of pipe work of varying lengths and diameters.

- Qualified Members of the Engine Department (QMEDs) are trained in all crafts necessary to engine maintenance, welding, refrigeration, lathe operation, electricity, pumping, water purification, oiling, evaluating engine gauges.
- The pumpman takes care of the pumps of an oil tanker - operates pumps and discharges petroleum products.
- The A/B stands a watch when the ship is underway as "helmsman" (or "quartermaster") and steers the ship under the direct orders of the deck officers. This means he has to understand steering commands and have certain knowledge of nautical terms, Rules of the Road, fog and distress signals, running lights, the compass, etc.



Glossary

handyman	a worker skilled in various odd jobs or other small tasks
senior	of higher rank (compare to "junior": lower in rank)
prime	to prepare a surface for painting by covering with primer or an undercoat
hawser	thick rope or cable used for mooring or towing the ship
underway	a vessel in motion, not at anchor, or made fast to the shore, or aground
Rules of the Road	Collision Regulations (COLREGs)

7. Interviews with merchant marine cadets



Listen to the interviews to find out about the various duties of deck and engine cadets (sometimes also called "apprentice deck officers or engineers") on board².

² The interviews are authentic and spontaneous, and, since the cadets are non-native speakers/learners of English, there might be some minor grammar errors in them. Such minor errors do not actually disrupt natural oral communication, so don't pay attention to them.

Appendix II**Lesson Plan****Lesson Plan : Seafaring****Students**

Class of 8ss,

Level: B1

Age range: 20-30

Main Aim

To practice the reading skill (learning to read) using a coursebook text of interest to learners.

Objectives

- To evoke background knowledge
- To encourage inferencing/ to activate mental content schemata
- To make learners read for information
- To make predictions
- To use text information in combination with personal knowledge for a real –life like purpose task
- To communicate with fellow learners and practice speaking skill

Difficulties anticipated

--The learners do not feel very comfortable in using the English language

--The learners are not fluent

--The learners may not be able to retrieve from memory all vocabulary or language structures they will need for the task

--The learners usually speak by copying the written text. They do not use spontaneous language; they reiterate what they see written in the textbook

Assumptions

Ls are already familiar with related to text nautical terms; they also roughly know about the duties of all merchant ship engineers and the way interviews for getting a job as an engineer are conducted. They are also familiar with language used to justify one's opinion.

Timetable fit

Ls have not had much experience in role plays in class.

Teaching materials include the coursebook's text on the different kinds of engineers, a job interview between a candidate engineer and the personnel manager of a shipping company as well as some extensive reading texts.

The stages of the lesson**Pre-Reading**

Steps	Objectives	Time- Interaction
1. Teacher introduces topic She asks learners how many different types of merchant ship engineers there are. She also asks them to complete a grid with seafaring professions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to evoke background knowledge • to arouse learners' interest since they guess they will be talking about their chosen profession • to recall vocabulary related to the ship engineer work 	5 mins / T-Ls-T

While-Reading

Steps	Objectives	Time/ Ls Interaction
<p>2. One learner reads the coursebook text aloud once.</p> <p>3. Other learners read the text again; each learner reads one kind of engineer.</p> <p>4. While each learner reads one type of engineer the Teacher asks learners to name the different duties each rank officer has</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to read aloud so as to associate written symbols with sounds/ graphemes with phonemes • to recall known vocabulary • to spot new unknown vocabulary 	<p>10 mins / Ls-Ls</p>
<p>5. Learners fill in a grid with basic information from the text.</p> <p>6. Learners complete a tree diagram with more specific information from the text.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to record the basic responsibilities of each type of engineer • to distinguish between the different responsibilities of each engineer rank 	<p>10 mins / Ls-Ls</p>

Post-Reading

Steps	Objectives	Time/ Ls Interaction
<p>7. Learners are given an authentic text taken from a British internet source. The text is about the job description of Merchant Navy engineering officers</p> <p>8. Learners are asked to think about and take notes on their personal work qualifications.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to make the lesson more interesting since learners all want to embark on a voyage and are looking for employer ship companies • to see which are the requirements for a merchant navy engineer to work for a foreign shipping company • to evaluate their work skills and present them in the L2 	10 mins / Ls-Ls
<p>9. Learners are asked to work in pairs and create an imaginary interview between the E/R Personnel Manager and a third engineer candidate. They are advised to create a dialogue where the candidate will get the job.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to practice speaking • to speak in front of a public • to present one's abilities • to use information from the lesson reading texts to build up one's professional profile • to explain why one should get a job in the shipping industry 	10 mins / Ls-L

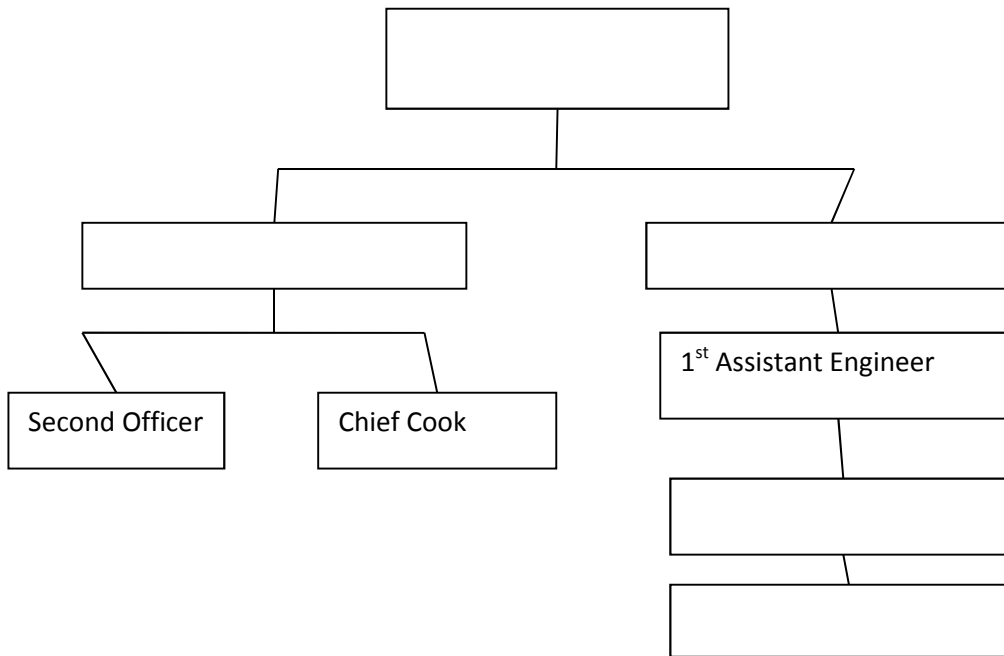
Homework

Learners are given three Extensive Reading texts taken from a magazine that addresses seafarers. They are also given two professional portraits of people working in the shipping industry: a seafarer and a shore employee and they are asked to write their own portrait as seafarers at home. The professional portraits given to them can be used as samples.

**Appendix III
Tasksheets**

Task 1. Write the jobs in the correct position on the diagram

Chief Engineer	Master	3 rd Engineer
Chief Officer	Second Assistant Engineer	



Task 2. Read the following text and complete the tables about the different ranks of engineers.

--Chief Engineer (C/E)

A day worker, s/he is in charge of the engine department and is responsible for E/R personnel and the proper operation, overhauling, and safety of the vessel's propulsion system, power generation system and all auxiliary machinery and spaces.

- Responsible for ordering spare parts.
- Supervises critical engine repairs.
- Decides on repairs and reports defects that may affect the ship's performance to the Master.
- Advises the Master on all matters relating to fuel requirements.
- Logs fuel consumption.

--Second Engineer (or 1st Assistant Engineer, in some countries)

S/he keeps an E/R watch and reports directly to the Chief Engineer about the daily maintenance and operation of the engine department.

- Is in charge of engine room repairs.
- Allocates daily duties to E/R officers and crew.
- Keeps overtime records.

--Third Engineer (or 2nd Assistant Engineer)

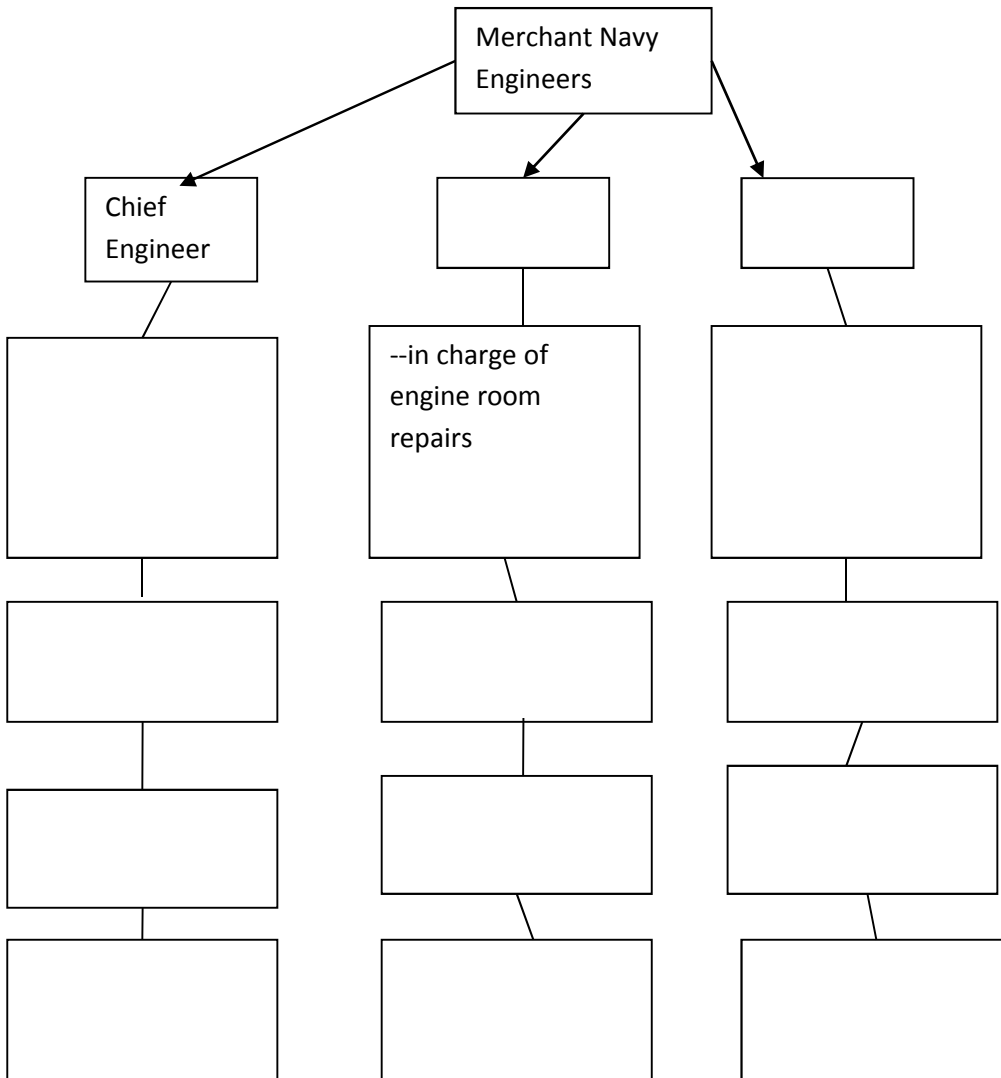
S/he keeps an E/R watch and is responsible for the smooth operation of all engine room systems

- Performs system checks.
- Normally in charge of electrical systems, generators, boilers, fuel, auxiliary engines and feed systems.
- Is typically in charge of bunkering, if the officer holds a valid Person In Charge (PIC) endorsement for fuel transfer operations.
- Supervises tank soundings, monitors boiler room equipment.

Task 3. Read the text quickly and fill in the following table with the information missing

Officer Rate	Basic Responsibilities
Chief Engineer	
Second Engineer	
Third Engineer	

Task 4. Read the text more carefully and complete the tree diagram



Task 5. Look at the following text taken from a British National Careers Service Agency about the work requirements of Engineers.

The work ¹

As a Merchant Navy engineering officer, you would operate and maintain the machinery and support systems on a ship, both above and below deck. You would work with the engines, ventilation systems, navigation and communications equipment, and deck fittings such as cranes, hoists and landing craft.

Your job would be graded according to your experience and qualifications, with each grade having slightly different responsibilities:

- Chief Engineer – overall authority for planning engineering tasks and allocating staff
- Second Engineer – supervising the day-to-day duties of staff and engine crew
- Third Engineer – assisting the second officer and looking after electrical systems and machinery
- Junior/Fourth Engineer – carrying out general machinery maintenance. This is often the first posting for an officer trainee.

Whatever your engineering grade, your duties would include:

- running scheduled maintenance checks on machinery and systems
- responding to equipment failure alerts and repairing faults
- maintaining fuel levels and stocks of spare parts
- updating record management systems
- mentoring and supporting trainees.

In the Merchant Navy, you could work on passenger ferries, cruise liners, container ships, bulk carriers, tankers, and salvage and supply vessels. In the Royal Fleet Auxiliary (civilian-crewed ships that support the Royal Navy), you could have responsibility for weapons maintenance.

Hours

You would work shifts, known as 'watches', which would vary according to the size of the ship. On a large vessel, you might work four hours on duty followed by eight hours off.

The amount of time you would spend at sea could last from a few days or weeks to several months. Your shore leave between voyages would also vary in length. You would spend most of your shift in the engine control room and the engine room. You may also have to work in uncomfortable conditions, like confined spaces in the vessel's hull or refrigerated areas.

If you are with the Royal Fleet Auxiliary, you may be required to work in conflict zones.

<https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/advice/planning/jobprofiles/Pages/merchantnavyengineeringofficer.aspx>

Income

Sponsored trainee salaries are usually around £8,000 a year. Newly qualified engineering officers earn around £25,000 a year. Experienced officers earn from £26,000 to £50,000. Chief engineering officers can earn between £32,000 and £65,000.

The employer will pay for food and accommodation at sea, and some travel costs when ashore.

Figures are intended as a guideline only.

- Suppose that a British Shipping Company had an engineer job vacancy in a merchant tanker ship and asked for people with the above qualifications. Do you think that you would be suitable for this job?
- Why/ Why not?

Task 6. You see the following advertisement in a newspaper :

“Third Engineer wanted for tanker ship LOUISA. Naval experience required. Send your CVs at tankers@shippingindustry.com”.

Imagine that you want to apply for that position. Write down your qualifications (you can consult the text on the duties of the engineers as well as the British Service Agency’s requirements), work in pairs and make a role play between yourselves and the Crew Manager. Try to convince him to hire you.

Yourself

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Crew Manager

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<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/piracy/4208438/Sirius-Star-oil-tanker-released-after-2m-ransom-paid.html>

Extensive Reading

02/shore activities

Masters & Chief Engineers Conference

On October 1st and 2nd 2013 the Seagoing Vessels' Masters & Chief Engineers' conference was held in Piraeus. Twenty-one Masters and eighteen Chief Engineers were able to attend this Conference along with Management representatives from our offices in Antwerp, Nantes and Piraeus.

On the first day all the guests gathered at Euronav Office Auditorium, among the topics presented were, Company & Market Update by Captain Alex Staring, Working together towards better results by Captain Luc Larbalestrier, Christof Van de Gaer and Annemie Bryssinck, Propelling through rough waters and tough markets, by Theodore Mavraidis, The Need for Safety Excellence by Captain Jan De Brabandere, Feedback from the Crew Satisfaction Survey by Captain Nikos Koulouris, IT Systems & Policy Update by Stelios Kostopoulos, Vendors Evaluation by Kostas Bougiouris & Port Agents Performance by Maria Rapti. After a short lunch break, there was a discussion on topics suggested by the sea staff under the coordination of Stephane Huchet. At the end a movie, called 'The Human Element', was played and a discussion was followed under the coordination of Captain Jan De Brabandere.

The day ended with a nice buffet dinner with all the participants and guests from Euronav Hellas office, at the Aegean Ballroom of the Metropolitan hotel, where everyone had the chance to meet and discuss with colleagues. The second day of the Conference was dedicated to discussion groups/workshops which has been very well received and very welcomed by the Officers. The event ended successfully with a short buffet lunch on Wednesday, October 2nd.

Contributed by Anna Katsika, HR Officer.

Offshore Incident-Free Meetings

Two Offshore sea staff meetings were held during the third quarter of 2013 towards an Incident Free Working Environment.

The first was held in Metropolitan hotel in Athens, on October 2nd and 3rd; where a total of 22 officers have attended along with Euronav Management Representatives from Antwerp and Doha as well as MOQ Management representatives.

The second meeting was held in PTC premises in Manila, on October 22nd with the attendance of a total of 48 Officers and ratings along with Management representatives from Antwerp.

Both meetings were concentrated on the following topics/values which are considered to be of the greatest importance towards the ultimate goal of an Incident-Free Working Environment:

- Behavior Based Safety
- Leading a Safer Culture
- Risk Assessment & Risk Management

Both meetings were a great success and the rendez-vous for the next meetings has been set in the 3rd quarter of 2014.

Contributed by Capt. Panagiotis Mpikas.



05/our core business



Review of the tanker market

Overall, oil demand improved throughout 2013 and has been revised upward to grow by 1.3% to 92 million barrel per day (Mbpd) in 2014. It was initially estimated at 91.95 Mbpd. The large portion of this growth is allocated to non OECD countries in general and China in particular with Europe remaining the only region with a negative oil demand growth (although better than 2013) at -0.7% representing a demand of 13.4 Mbpd for 2014.

On the oil supply side, some changes have been noticeable. The lift of sanctions on Iran should not have any effect on oil exports for the next six months but will put additional supply both in cargo and vessel into the market in the future. It is still uncertain how that will affect shipping market but will only be positive if Saudi Arabia keeps production unchanged and does not decrease it again to support the supply/demand balance. Civil unrests in Libya had resulted in a cut from the nation's exports which have reached alarming levels toward the end of 2013. Most of the country's ports stopped their regular operations. Libyan crude oil production had reportedly dropped below 150,000 barrels per

day, compared to its production capacity of 1.5 million barrels per day. However, by the beginning of 2014 it seemed that production was restarting in some of the key Libyan oil fields which should be positive for the tanker market.

VLCC deadweight demand was projected to increase by 2.9% by the end of 2013 and for the full year to 169 million deadweight. Crude trade volumes are expected to increase by 1% as a result of more long-haul voyages. That trend has contributed in spreading further the tonnage list around the world, reducing the amount of tonnage available in some loading areas. The VLCC fleet continued to grow throughout 2013 with 30 additional vessels delivered.

Whilst demand has remained firm, it has not been sufficient to offset the size of the fleet if all ships reverted to sailing at full speed. Despite 31 Suezmax being delivered in 2013, the crude oil trade for that type of vessels was projected to increase by 3.8% by the end of 2013 also as a result of an increase in long-haul voyages and thanks to an increase variety of trading routes from the Med. That



Contributed by Pauline Sessou,
Chartering Executive.

increase in ton mile might help counterbalancing the increase of US shale oil production resulting in a decrease of oil import from the US.

The current VLCC order book is showing about 80 vessels expected to be delivered between 2014 and 2016. The total number of VLCC orders for 2013 was 44, 23 of those were ordered in December 2013. In comparison only a marginal number of Suezmax were ordered in 2013, 4 including 1 shuttle Suezmax tanker.

There has been an increase in activity and rates from West Africa on both the VLCC and the Suezmax spot markets in the final quarter of 2013 with mid December cargo dates being fixed as early as mid November. Activity in the Black Sea remained firm for the final quarter of the year with delays accumulating up to 2-3 days each way in the Bosporus area, which helped regulating the tonnage lists.

There was a trade increase toward the East from the Arabian Gulf (AG) and West Africa (WAF). Rates have remained firm in the final quarter of the year with AG East trading around WS63-65 returning up to USD 50K per day. TCE returns on

Ras Tanura/Chilba route (TD3) for modern VLCC went from USD 16,350 per day in November to USD 50,600 per day in December. Rates out of WAF have been strengthening in the past weeks with cargoes being fixed pretty early. TCE returns on Bonny/Loop route (TD4) for modern VLCC went from USD 19,860 per day in October to USD 51,400 in December.

Rates on the Suezmax market went from being soft at the beginning of the quarter to pretty firm toward December. That was thanks to a balanced tonnage list and an increasing number of cargoes available out of West Africa. Rates on the WAF/USAC trading route went from USD 8,000 per day in October to USD 45,900 per day in December. In the Black Sea and the Med the market was also buoyant due to a reduction in tonnage in the area and increasing delays in the Black Sea. Rates on the on the Black Sea/UKCM area went from USD 8,300 per day in October to USD 59,000 in December.

Despite the number of deliveries expected for 2014, the outlook for the year remains positive as the number of cargo available has been increasing gradually the past year and the trend is set to continue.

06/our people

Portrait of a seafarer

Full name: Aronis Antonios
Year of birth: 1981
Country of origin: Greece
Marital status: Single
Children: Not yet.
Rank: Chief Officer



How old when first to sea: 16 years old

How long at-sea in total: 7 years

How long with the Euronav Group: 6 years

What made you choose this career?

Widening the horizons of my thoughts through traveling the globe, improvement of my social status and building a career in a healthy and rewarding environment.

Where do you usually travel when not working?

My island of origin 'Paxos' in the northwestern part of Greece.

Likes: Music, theatre

Dislikes: Hypocrisy

Name one of your vices: Adherent to quality materials.

Name one of your virtues: Unbendable when it comes to the target

Your favourite TV program: Friends

The last movie you saw: Les Misérables

The last book you read: 'The devil and Ms Prim' by Paulo Coelho

Your favourite city in the world: Singapore

Why? It's a midpoint that combines Asian and Western civilizations on a very small piece of land covered by a quality enclosure of a tropical paradise.

Which area in the vessel do you prefer to be in?

Being on bridge during hours of darkness is a time of quietness and meditation.

What do you miss the most when you are at sea?

Times of unconcerns with friends and family.

Your favourite meal: Spaghetti in all forms.

Hobbies: Water and winter sports

Motto: One day your life will flash before your eyes. Make sure it is worth watching.

06/our people

Portrait of a shore employee

Full name: Aurélie Lelièvre
Year of birth: 1979
Country of origin: France
Marital Status: married
Children: 1 son, 3 years old
Job Title: Crewing Manager



How long with the Euronav Group: 4.5 years

How long at current position if different than above: 1 year

Where do you usually travel?

Mostly in Europe or France for vacations, to Antifer and Greece for work

What made you choose this career?

Honestly I didn't choose, I started as an HR/recruiting assistant to make the most of my English knowledge. There was an opening in Euronav as crewing assistant so I applied and there I am!

Likes: a good time with friends and family

Dislikes: laziness, stubbornness and dishonesty

Name one of your vices: gluttony

Name one of your virtues: perseverance

Your favourite TV program: Friends

The last movie you saw at the cinema: 'Now you see me' by Louis Leterrier

The last book you read: '7 ans après' by Guillaume Musso

Your favourite city in the world: New York City

Which room of your house do you prefer: The garden (now that I have one!)

Your favourite meal: anything I don't have to cook myself!

One yet to realise dream: Go to New Zealand

Motto: Don't worry, be happy!

Ideal vacation:

Somewhere I have never been before with many places to discover and to relax.

Hobbies: cycling, reading and spending time with my son

The Gazette (2014), Winter Edition, Ed. Serroyen Elisa, Belgium: Euronav, 18, 28-29, 32, 36

Homework

Write your portrait as a seafarer. You can use the portraits given as samples.