

Professional Training for Involvement in Maritime Education

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Abstract. The article is devoted to the issues of involvement of teachers and maritime professionals in maritime education. In particular, authors discuss professional training for basic subject teachers in order to become experts in teaching e.g. Ships Stability, MARPOL, and Environmental Pollution etc.

The higher education institutions have specific qualification requirements for their academic staff members. This also applies to maritime lecturers who in addition need an appropriate sea experience as well as sufficient knowledge of related subject(s). Maritime professionals need to pass special trainings on order to get permission to deliver lectures in Maritime Academy. The authors make an attempt to analyze the possibility of passing professional training for those who are not involved in Maritime field and get special expertise to become specialist of profile subjects.

Keywords: MET, STCW, Professional Training, Basic Subject, Profile Subject, qualification.

Actuality of the Article: Due to the fact that MET in general is of a vital importance, all the issues related to Maritime Education are relevant and this applies to our article.

The aim: The aim of the article is to eliminate all the issues related to Professional Instructors/Trainers/Teachers qualifications.

The Objectives: The objective of the article is to work out so called Professional Training for basic subject teachers in order to have more qualified personnel engaged in Maritime Education.

The Subject: The subject of the article is the need of specialized training for Maritime Professionals and Basic Subject Teachers.

Research methods: For this article we used derived/Compiled Data method. We used existing data points, from different data sources, to create new data through some sort of transformation. Our intention is to make survey-oriented research and get the result we are trying to achieve.

The Education and Training of Seafarers plays vital role in Maritime Safety and Protection of Marine Environment. Maritime Education is regulated by STCW convention (Standards of Training, Certification and Watch keeping for Seafarers 1978), with Manila amendment 2010. The stated purpose of this document is "... to promote safety of life and property at sea and the protection of the marine environment by establishing in common agreement international standards of training, certification and watchkeeping for seafarers". ([3]). STCW imposes a skill-based training framework upon mariner qualification, with deep roots in the apprenticeship model. In addition, the regulations of MET vary from country to country and in case of Georgia besides STCW convention MET is regulated by Law on Education and Certification of Seafarers (2012 with amend. 2014), Law on Higher Education (2005), Law on Vocational Education (2007).

" Each graduate of the maritime institutions should be well educated and trained as an Officer of Watch (OOW) hence well-versed with the operational and management responsibilities on-board an ocean-going vessel. At the same time that s/he must be prepared to fulfill the officer's role ashore. A well-developed MET programme must include theoretical and practical education and training in a well-balanced curriculum and must ensure there are well-designed and internationally recognized programmes of education and training leading to higher qualifications and certifications for career progression as well as for job diversification. There is therefore a need for clear education and training pathways recognized internationally with clear progression routes onto degree and higher qualifications in the related subjects." ([1], p 63)

STCW code reads "... instructors, supervisors and assessors are appropriately qualified for the particular types and levels of training or assessment of competence of seafarers either on board r ashore, as required under the Convention, in accordance with the provisions of this sections". To be an instructor in the world of Maritime Education and Training means to be a different person, special one having instructional techniques and training and assessment methods, besides maritime educational background. The knowledge, skills and attributes required for maritime instructors and trainers varies. A goods instructor/trainer needs to be aware of the human element issues that can affect the design, management and operations of ships. They need to be aware of how humans interact with other humans, machines and systems, and they need to be aware of how social conditions can affect wellbeing of crews. Maritime instructors/trainers must be good teachers in its true sense. "They must be capable of engaging with their students; they must possess good leadership and motivation skills; they must demonstrate solid presentation and classroom management skills; and they must seek feedback from their students so as to build confidence and promote credibility". ([2], p 1).

The higher education institutions have specific qualification requirements for their academic staff members. Maritime lecturers follow the same rules; in addition, they need an appropriate sea experience as well as sufficient knowledge of related subject(s). It's not possible for academic maritime staff member to continuously update their seafaring skills and competence as opportunities of going to sea is not reasonable. This is an issue - to be experienced seafarer or a profile subject lecturer. This specific situation creates a difficulty to find qualified seafarer background academics to teach in the MET institutions.

If we compare difficulties of working ashore for seafarers, we can say that working ashore is completely different. The traditional hierarchy on board a ship provides a structure of responsibility and authority not usually replicated on shore. The desire to help others learn is very much a prerequisite for the aspiring educator. Helping others to learn requires a number of key attributes such as: subject knowledge, communicating, integrity, cultural awareness, patience, pedagogy etc. We encountered many issues on how a professional seafarer becomes a good, qualified instructor/trainer. In order to facilitate the delivery of training in the competence standards required by the IMO Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978, as amended training course for instructors (6.09) was implemented. Its aim is to provide a useful introduction for those with limited teaching experience and introduce new approaches or serve as a reminder of skills and techniques for those who have been teaching for some time. It is not the aim to provide a full course of trainee instructor training. In addition, it provides a sound basis for the delivery of other training programmes.

Moreover, Train the Simulator Trainer and Assessor based on the IMO Model course 6.10, is largely practical and experiential in nature and each course participant will have adequate hands on training on the simulator. This course is intended to provide a conceptual understanding of the importance of maritime education and simulator training with a view of the human element in shipping and the special working environment on board a ship. In addition, trainees will understand the psychology of learning in a simulator, in order to design and conduct simulator based training programmes, including exercises and detailed briefing and debriefing. (4)

Let's look at the issue of a professional instructor/trainer from different point of view. Coming out of the fact that lack of professional seafarers involved in educational process is worldwide issue we should find a solution. It's very hard to attract an acting seafarer to be involved in educational process because of many reasons: long vacation, low salary, need of CoC refreshment, etc. In our

educational institution we have Non-Profile Subject (Basic Subjects) instructors/trainers with high expertise and experience with no experience in maritime field. What is the solution in this case? How should we assist the professional of basic subjects to become experts in teaching e.g., Ships Stability, MARPOL, and Environmental Pollution etc. A very experienced teacher of physics trained in specialized course of Maritime Field will become an expert instructor of Ship's Stability; a teacher of Chemistry will teach MARPOL or Environmental protection with more precise units. Of course, this will not cover all subjects, only the ones which have so called pre-requisite of the Maritime Education.

Let's imagine teachers with absolutely no practical background coming from various industries and trying to adopt seagoing experience by literature only. In this case the professionals of different subjects should pass specialized refreshment courses in order to get more specialized knowledge in the subject. In order to achieve the set goal, we need to carry put a fundamental research. The specialized courses are to be created (coming out of the specification of profile subject) in order to enhance the expertise of the profile subject teacher in maritime field. This course will help a teacher to acquire more practical skills; s/he will learn specification of the subject, usage of the knowledge in practice or in industry; so that the profile subject lecture will be equivalent to the lecture delivered by professional seafarer or a representative of a maritime field. These courses will change the approach to the maritime education; it will be more flexible than a model course or a training course.

The fundamental research should be carried out in the following directions:

1. Qualification/Background Requirement;
2. Experience in the field;
3. The basic subject to be delivered (possibility to deliver the subject);
4. Which profile subjects need practical experience (sea experience)

In diagram 1, created based on our survey, we can see what stages are needed for a seafarer or a PhD Student in order to become a professional teacher and we will see the difference.

We are going to do a survey concerning the seafarers engaged in Maritime Educational process worldwide. We are working on a survey which will help us to find out what we need to do in order to achieve the set goal.

Instructors need to develop competence in explaining quite difficult and complex tasks in a simple manner in order to reach the students and to motivate them. The basic elements of didactics and learning methodology are crucial and a key to the learning success. Further, instructors in maritime institutions bear a high responsibility with regard to the development of interpersonal skills

of the students. Past experiences have shown that human negligence and lack of responsibility have caused a lot of major incidents in shipping. The experienced instructors are good enough in all above mentioned but need to develop expertise in new areas.

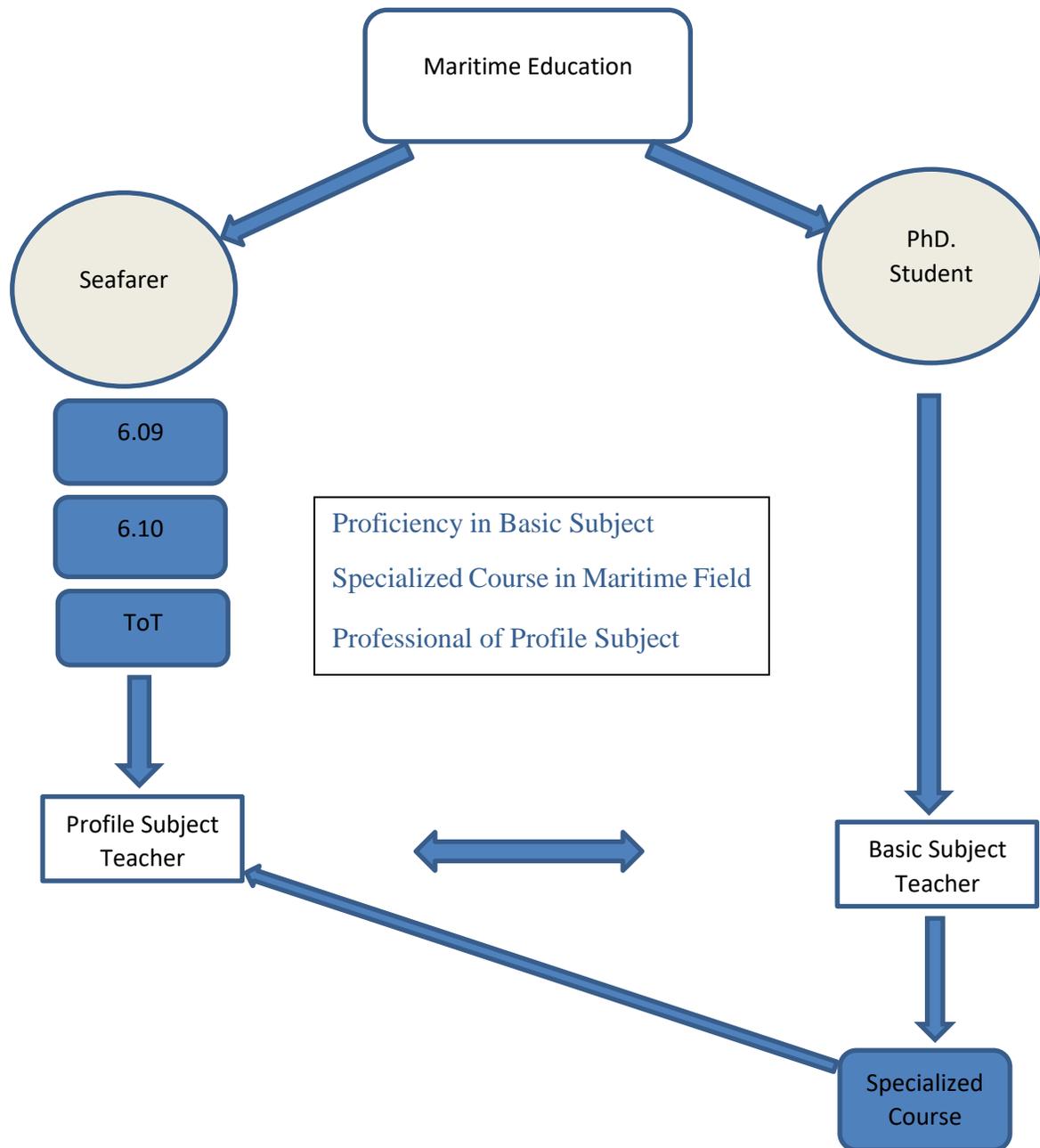


Diagram 1

Based on our own experience, we would say that teaching offers a lot of direct response and feedback from the students and working with young people daily is brainstorming in every respect. It's essential for teachers to continuously update their know-how and keep track of the latest

developments – not only within the technical elements such as engineering, ship building, nautical and forensic development, the daily shipping business etc., but also within the social aspects and skills, which are not to be underestimated. Being an instructor/trainer means daily self-study if you take your job seriously. On the one hand, it's a great opportunity to take part of laying foundation for young people's future career development and on the other hand, to work on key issues within shipping whilst taking advantages of the previously gained valuable skills.

References

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