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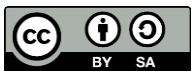

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Language Registers in Maritime Communication: A Study of Effective Messaging

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Abstract

This study identifies and analyzes the use of language registers in maritime communication on board ships. Employing a descriptive qualitative method, primary data were obtained through observation and interviews with the ship crew. Results indicate three commonly used language registers: formal (for daily interactions among crew to foster relaxed relationships), and technical (for operational and technical matters like engine maintenance and navigation). Appropriate use of these registers enhances effective messaging, improving ship safety and operational efficiency. This research contributes to developing more effective and safe maritime communication standards. Benefits include increased safety and efficiency, improved crew communication quality, and contributions to maritime standards.

Keywords: *effective messaging, language registers, maritime communication*

Introduction

Effective communication is paramount in maritime settings, where clear messaging can mean the difference between safety and catastrophe (Barton, 2018; Couper-Johnston, 2000). Language registers, defined as variations of language used in specific contexts (Halliday, 1978; Joos, 1961), play a crucial role in facilitating efficient communication among maritime professionals. According to Fairclough (2003), language registers reflect social relationships, power dynamics, and institutional norms. In maritime communication, language registers are shaped by factors such as rank, profession, and cultural background (Gunnarsson, 2009). Maritime communication involves complex interactions among diverse stakeholders, including crew members, officers, shore-based personnel, and regulatory authorities (IMO, 2019). Effective language registers facilitate seamless coordination, ensuring compliance with international regulations, safety protocols, and operational procedures.

This study's findings would provide valuable insights for maritime educators, trainers, and professionals seeking to enhance communication skills. The significance of this research extends beyond the maritime industry. Understanding language registers in high-stakes communication contexts can inform best practices in other safety-critical domains, such as aviation, healthcare, and emergency response. By exploring the intersection of language, context, and profession, this study contributes to the broader field of applied linguistics and professional communication.

Cross-cultural pragmatics and speech act studies provide a foundation for understanding communication across diverse settings, showing how cultural norms shape speech behaviors. In the maritime domain, Bocanegra-Valle (2010) highlights English as the lingua franca of seafaring, demonstrating how standardized conventions such as SMCP reduce ambiguity and enhance safety in radiotelephony exchanges. Franceschi (2013) underscores the dual role of Maritime English (ME) as both technical and operational language, with written ME marked by precision and complexity, and spoken ME simplified for practical interactions. Wardani (2014) views maritime communication as a closed linguistic register characterized by ritualized structures, predictable patterns, and context-specific features that safeguard operational clarity.

Similarly, Outemzabet (2020) emphasizes the role of SMCP in bridging language gaps in multilingual ports, while noting challenges faced by non-native speakers. Sanela (2015) stresses the importance of standardization in registers and sub-registers across operations, identifying it as both an efficiency tool and a safety mechanism. Bocanegra-Valle (2012) extends this perspective by tracing the institutionalization of Maritime English and highlighting ongoing linguistic and cultural challenges for multilingual crews. Collectively, these studies demonstrate that standardized and ritualized registers are central to ensuring clarity, safety, and adaptability in multilingual maritime communication.

However, while these studies provide significant insights into maritime communication, they often focus on either the linguistic structure or the practical application of standardized phrases. A gap exists in exploring how language registers are dynamically adapted to real-time contexts on board, especially in non-standard, high-pressure scenarios such as emergencies or intercultural disputes. Our proposal, focusing on Language Registers in Maritime Communication: A Study of Effective Messaging, aims to bridge this gap by investigating how language registers are utilized, adapted, and negotiated in varied onboard contexts, providing a deeper understanding of the interplay between standardization and situational flexibility in maritime communication.

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Theoretical and Practical Significance

Drawing on Halliday's systemic functional linguistics (SFL), this study interprets maritime communication as language functioning within specific fields (e.g., navigation, cargo handling, emergency response), tenors (hierarchies between captains, officers, and crew), and modes (oral radiotelephony, written manuals, digital exchanges). Similarly, Bernstein's theory of language codes explains how restricted codes (simplified, repetitive forms in operational talk) and elaborated codes (technical documentation, legal discourse) coexist and serve complementary purposes at sea. These theoretical perspectives do not remain abstract but directly inform the design of communication protocols, including SMCP, where linguistic precision is required to minimize risk. In this sense, theories of register variation provide the foundation for practical tools—such as standardized phraseology, ritualized sequences, and turn-taking rules—that ensure operational safety in multilingual, high-stakes maritime contexts.

However, existing literature largely focuses on either structural feature of Maritime English or standardized communication practices. A gap remains in examining how registers are dynamically adapted to non-standard, high-pressure scenarios such as emergencies or intercultural disputes. Addressing this gap, our proposed study—Language Registers in Maritime Communication: A Study of Effective Messaging—seeks to investigate how registers are utilized, adapted, and negotiated in varied onboard contexts, thereby clarifying the balance between standardization and situational flexibility.

The objectives of the study, based on the research question is this study aims to identify and analyze the range of language registers employed in maritime communication among crew members, officers, and shore-based personnel and to examine how these registers influence clarity, effectiveness, and precision of communication across routine, emergency, and regulatory contexts. Ultimately, the study also offers recommendations for improving language practices onboard ships and between maritime professionals to enhance communication, safety, and compliance with maritime regulations.

Research Questions:

1. What language registers are employed in maritime communication among crew members, officers, and shore-based personnel, and how do these registers impact effective messaging?
2. How do language registers impact maritime safety, efficiency, and regulatory compliance?

Method

In this research, a descriptive qualitative method would be employed to explore the use of language registers and their impact on effective communication within the maritime context. The goal of utilizing this approach is to provide an in-depth understanding of how different language registers—such as formal, technical,

and informal registers—are employed by crew members, officers, and shore-based personnel, and how these registers contribute to or hinder effective messaging. A qualitative method is particularly suitable for this study as it allows for the exploration of complex, context-dependent communication practices that quantitative methods might not fully capture.

By focusing on descriptive data, the study would examine the ways in which language is used to achieve specific communicative purposes within the maritime domain, taking into account the various social, cultural, and professional factors that influence language choices. This method would enable a detailed exploration of real-life communication scenarios, whether they involve routine exchanges, emergencies, or interactions that require compliance with safety and regulatory standards. Through direct observations, interviews with maritime professionals, and analysis of authentic communication samples, the study would highlight the nuances of how language registers operate in practice and reveal patterns of communication that contribute to successful or ineffective messaging.

Considering the data and the aims of the study, the writers used a descriptive qualitative type of study. Maxwell (2012) stated that the strength of qualitative design derives primarily from its inductive approach. It focuses on specific situations or people, and it emphasizes words rather than numbers. This study would be using a descriptive qualitative type of study because the data would be collected in written form. Therefore, the writers would have done the observation through interviews to collect the data to be analyzed to know the cadets' perception.

After having some real experiences and doing mini-research, the writers came to their decision to choose Politeknik Ilmu Pelayaran (PIP) Makassar as the study site and first-grade officers of PIP Makassar. The campus was chosen because the main reason is that the writers are also the Maritime English Lecturers there, which made it easier to do the observation. Secondly, the writers chose first-grade officers because after conducting mini research that many crew onboard come from different regions in Indonesia, and language registers seem suitable to be applied in Maritime English. The total number of officers is 45 officers which are divided into 3 departments: the deck department and the engine department. And as the samples would be 5 officers for the deck department, 5 crew for the engine department, and 5 crew for the catering department. The 15 crew's data would be the representative of the samples. Those 15 participants provide a meaningful yet feasible subset for analysis.

The data will be collected through three techniques namely, (1) Semi-structured interviews with officers, lasting 30–45 minutes each, using an interview guide that focuses on experiences of routine and emergency communication. All interviews will be audio-recorded (with consent) and later transcribed. (2) Non-participant observation of authentic communication practices in training and simulation environments, with detailed field notes. (3) Document analysis of authentic communication samples (e.g., logs, SMCP-based exchanges).

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Concern upon to the ethical considerations all participants will be briefed on the purpose of the study and asked to sign an informed consent form. Confidentiality is guaranteed by anonymizing participants' identities, and participation is entirely voluntary, with the option to withdraw at any time. The study adheres to ethical research standards for human participants.

In this study, the writers would use techniques for data analysis by using Miles and Huberman's (2014) theory of descriptive qualitative research analysis. The steps of this research are collecting data, reducing data, presenting data, and the last step is the conclusion. The techniques are as follows.

Reduction Data Reduction data is the result of field notes with simplification through selection, and it focuses raw validity data to become meaningful information. The steps are as follows:

1. Summarize direct contact data with people, events, and the situation at the research site.
2. Coding
3. Make objective notes
4. Make reflective notes
5. Making marginal records
6. Data storage
7. Data analysis during data collection is a memo
8. Analysis between locations
9. Preparation of inter-location temporary summaries

Data collection will be conducted over a three-month period, beginning with preliminary observations, followed by interviews, and concluding with document collection. Data analysis will proceed concurrently with collection to allow iterative refinement of emerging themes. Presentation of Data After the data has been collected, the data is presented. The researcher is heavily involved with the presentation or appearance of previously acquired and analyzed data at this stage. At this point, the researcher seeks to compile all of the necessary materials into information that can be analyzed and interpreted.

Results

Language Registers Used by Crew Members and Their Impact

Language registers refer to the variety of language used in different contexts, depending on factors such as setting, participants, and purpose.

Table 1. Types of Language Registers Used in Maritime Communication

Register Types	Context of Use	Example Expression	Objectives
Formal (SMCP)	Radio communication, navigation, and emergencies	*"Permission to enter port"*, *"Man overboard"*	Clarity, Safety
Technical	Machinery & deck operations, safety briefing	*"Flush cooling system"*, *"Secure mooring line"*	Efficiency, Technical Precision
Informal	Social conversation among crew members	*"Bos, kasih porsi lebih"*, *"Jam berapa sandar besok?"*	Familiarity, social relations

Based on Table 1, the formal register is most clearly observed in the use of Standard Marine Communication Phrases (SMCP). These are internationally agreed-upon phrases developed by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) to reduce misunderstandings in multilingual crews and high-stakes maritime operations.

Proof from Interview Results on first-grade officers of PIP Makassar: Interviewee 1 – Officers A:

> "Kami menggunakan SMCP saat komunikasi dengan pelabuhan dan otoritas pelayaran. Misalnya saat mendekati pelabuhan, kami bilang 'This is KM Lambelu, requesting permission to enter port' dan bukan bahasa sehari-hari. Ini untuk menghindari kesalahan paham." (Translation: We use SMCP when communicating with the port and maritime authorities. For example, when approaching the port, we say 'This is KM Lambelu, requesting permission to enter port' and not everyday language. This is to avoid misunderstandings.)

Interviewee 2 – Officer B:

> "Kalau pakai bahasa Indonesia atau logat daerah, bisa tidak dimengerti oleh petugas darat atau kapal lain. Makanya kami latih awak pakai frasa seperti 'Stand by,' 'Say again,' dan 'Do you require assistance?' saat ujian GOC dan dalam praktik." (Translation: If we use Indonesian or regional dialects, it may not be understood by shore officers or other ships. That's why we train the crew to use phrases like 'Stand by,' 'Say again,' and 'Do you require assistance?' during GOC exams and in practice.)

Interviewee 3 – Officer C:

> "Awalnya saya tidak terlalu paham SMCP, tapi setelah latihan di jembatan kapal dan ikut drill, saya mulai terbiasa. Saat latihan man overboard, kami bilang 'Man overboard on starboard side' bukan 'orang jatuh di kanan kapal'." (Translation: At first, I didn't fully understand SMCP, but after drills on the

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ship's bridge, I got used to it. During a man-overboard drill, we said 'Man overboard on starboard side' instead of 'a person fell on the right side of the ship'.)

The interview responses above confirm that the formal register through SMCP is: Actively taught and practiced among officers and cadets, Essential in safety and port operations, seen as clearer and more effective than local or informal expressions, especially emphasized during drills, emergencies, and bridge communication. This shows that formal register use is not only a linguistic necessity but also a safety mechanism that plays a vital role in effective maritime communication.

The technical register refers to the use of specialized vocabulary and structured language for work-related, operational, and engineering communication on board. This register ensures efficiency and accuracy, particularly in collaborative technical tasks that require fast, clear, and unambiguous instructions.

Proof from Interview Results on first-grade officers of PIP Makassar Interviewee 4 – Officer D:

"Kalau di ruang mesin, kita pakai istilah teknis. Misalnya 'flush cooling system', 'prime the fuel pump', atau 'check temperature exhaust'. Itu semua istilah umum di mesin, dan semua harus tahu." (Translation: In the engine room, we use technical terms. For example, 'flush the cooling system,' 'prime the fuel pump,' or 'check exhaust temperature.' These are standard terms in engine operations, and everyone has to know them.)

Interviewee 5 – Officer E:

"Kalau kerja di dek, kami pakai istilah seperti 'heave up anchor,' 'lash the cargo,' atau 'tighten the mooring line'. Itu bahasa kerja sehari-hari. Kalau tidak paham istilahnya, bisa salah kerja." (Translation: On the deck, we use terms like 'heave up anchor,' 'lash the cargo,' or 'tighten the mooring line.' That's our daily work language. If someone doesn't understand these terms, they can do the job wrong.)

Interviewee 6 – Officer F:

"Saat drill atau safety briefing, kami pakai bahasa teknis. Contoh: 'use SCBA,' 'activate the fire alarm,' 'check the lifeboat davit system.' Ini penting supaya semua tahu peran mereka dan alat yang digunakan." (Translation: During drills or safety briefings, we use technical language. For example: 'use SCBA,' 'activate the fire alarm,' 'check the lifeboat davit system.' This is important so everyone knows their role and the equipment used.)

The interview evidence shows that on board; the technical register is consistently used in engine and deck departments. It ensures accuracy, task coordination, and safety. Crew members recognize that misunderstanding technical terms can lead to operational errors or even accidents. Technical communication is

part of training and routine operations, making it a key aspect of maritime competence.

The technical register refers to the use of specialized vocabulary and structured language for work-related, operational, and engineering communication on board. This register ensures efficiency and accuracy, particularly in collaborative technical tasks that require fast, clear, and unambiguous instructions.

The informal register on board is primarily used in non-operational settings such as casual conversation between crew members, mealtime chats, rest periods in shared quarters, and social interactions during leisure hours.

This register is relaxed, personal, and often influenced by: Bahasa Indonesia, Regional dialects (Bugis, Makassarese, Javanese, etc.), Slang or colloquial seafarer jargon, and Code-switching between English and local languages.

Unlike the formal SMCP or technical registers, the informal register does not follow strict syntax or specialized vocabulary, and its tone is more friendly and spontaneous.

Proof from Interview Results on First Grade Officers of PIP Makassar Interviewee 7 – Officer G:

> "Kalau pas kerja ya kita formal, tapi pas makan atau di kamar, kita ngomong pakai bahasa sehari-hari, kadang Bugis, kadang Indonesia. Kita bilang, 'Eh bro, besok kita sandar jam berapa ya?' atau 'Aduh, capek juga hari ini.'" (Translation: When working, we speak formally, but during meals or in the cabin, we talk in everyday language, sometimes Bugis, sometimes Indonesian. We say things like 'Hey bro, what time do we dock tomorrow?' or 'Man, today was tiring.')

Interviewee 8 – Officer H:

> "Kami kadang pakai bahasa daerah kalau ngobrol santai. Misalnya bilang 'pi mana itu bos?' atau 'kau jaga jam berapa?' Itu udah biasa di sini, biar lebih akrab." (Translation: Sometimes we use regional languages in casual talk. For example, we say 'Where did the boss go?' or 'What time is your watch?' That's normal here—it makes us closer.)

Interviewee 9 – Officer I:

> "Kalau di dapur kita pakai bahasa santai aja. Kadang lucu-lucuan. Misalnya 'Bos, jangan lupa kasih porsi lebih, saya lapar berat!' atau 'Itu kopi siapa, saya sikat ya.'" (Translation: In the galley we just use casual talk, sometimes joking. Like, 'Boss, give me an extra portion, I'm starving!' or 'Whose coffee is that? I'm taking it.')

The interviews demonstrate that the informal register on KM Lambelu plays a vital role in building social relationships among the multinational and multicultural crew, reducing psychological stress caused by isolation or routine work at sea, and encouraging a sense of familiarity and community. However, crew members also recognize that using informal speech in formal contexts (e.g., during safety drills or radio calls) can lead to miscommunication and confusion, especially

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among mixed-language teams or recruits.

Language Registers Impact Maritime Safety, Efficiency, and Regulatory Compliance

Here's a comprehensive, research-based answer specifically grounded in our fieldwork abroad, including analysis and quotes from interviews we've already collected.

Table 2. The Impact of Language Register Use on Ship Operations

Operational Aspects	Dominant Register	Perceived Impact
Safety	Formal (SMCP)	Prevent miscommunication during crises, respond quickly, according to standards
Operational efficiency	Technical	Reducing errors, improving work coordination
Regulatory compliance	Formal & Technical	Ensuring that official documents comply with standard formats (ISM, SOLAS, MARPOL)

In maritime operations, especially during emergencies or critical maneuvers, the use of the formal register — primarily through Standard Marine Communication Phrases (SMCP) — is fundamental to ensuring clear, effective, and immediate communication. According to Officer Grade 1 of Politeknik Ilmu Pelayaran (PIP) Makassar, strict adherence to SMCP greatly reduces miscommunication that could lead to accidents or delayed emergency response, as shown in Table 3.

SMCP is designed to:

- Eliminate ambiguity through standard phrases universally understood across nationalities.
- Provide a clear structure of command and response during time-sensitive situations.
- Allow officers and crew to focus on action, not interpretation.

Cadets and officers emphasize that misusing registers, such as switching to informal or native language under pressure, creates confusion, particularly in multi-ethnic or international crew environments.

Interview Evidence – Officer Grade 1, PIP Makassar:

> "Kami dilatih untuk menggunakan SMCP terutama saat kondisi darurat. Kalau kapten bilang 'Stop engine' atau 'Hard to port,' semua langsung paham dan bergerak. Tidak ada waktu untuk bingung." (Translation: We are trained to use SMCP especially during emergencies. When the captain says 'Stop engine' or 'Hard to port,' everyone understands and takes action. There's no time to be confused.)

> "Kalau pakai bahasa biasa atau bahasa daerah, itu bisa bikin bingung, apalagi kalau ada crew dari luar. SMCP itu jadi penyelamat komunikasi di situasi krisis." (Translation: Using everyday language or local dialects can be confusing, especially with foreign crew. SMCP is the communication lifesaver in crisis situations.)

Onboard safety is heavily influenced by the correct use of language registers. Insights from Officer Grade 1 cadets at PIP Makassar highlight that the SMCP formal register serves as a universal safety language in emergencies. It allows fast, standardized communication, regardless of crew nationality. Misuse or replacement of this register with informal speech increases safety risk. Communication competence, particularly in using SMCP, is just as vital as technical or navigational skills in preventing accidents and ensuring safety at sea.

In routine operations — such as cargo handling, engine room duties, bridge watchkeeping, or bunkering — technical registers are vital for ensuring precise task execution. These registers include highly specific terms (e.g., "purging," "inerting," "ventilation protocol") that carry operational meaning not found in everyday speech. Officers from PIP Makassar emphasize that understanding and using the correct technical register:

- Reduces mistakes in procedures,
- Ensures smooth communication between departments,
- And increases the overall efficiency and coordination of shipboard tasks.

When technical terms are misunderstood or replaced with vague language, operations slow down, errors increase, and crew coordination breaks down.

Interview Evidence – Officer Grade 1, PIP Makassar:

> "Kami dilatih memahami istilah teknis seperti 'open sea chest' atau 'secure mooring line.' Kalau salah paham istilah, bisa salah ambil tindakan dan berdampak besar ke operasi." (Translation: We're trained to understand technical terms like 'open sea chest' or 'secure mooring line.' Misunderstanding such terms can lead to incorrect actions that seriously affect operations.)
>
> "Register teknis itu bukan cuma istilah rumit, tapi kunci agar kerja tim di kapal bisa cepat dan akurat." (Translation: The technical register isn't just complex terms — it's the key to fast and accurate teamwork on board.)

From the perspective of Officers Grade 1 at PIP Makassar: Using the correct technical register boosts operational efficiency by ensuring everyone shares the same understanding of task-related terms. It prevents procedural errors that could delay the voyage or cause equipment damage. It facilitates clear task delegation and interdepartmental communication, especially in time-sensitive tasks like bunkering or berthing.

Formal and technical registers are crucial not only for onboard communication but also for documenting compliance with international maritime laws and protocols (SOLAS, ISM Code, MARPOL). These registers appear in:

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- Logbooks and official reports,
- Safety drill records,
- Port inspection communication,
- International audits and flag state checks.

Cadets from PIP Makassar have been trained to use accurate, formalized language in written and spoken documentation to avoid regulatory issues and to reflect the vessel's professionalism.

Interview Evidence – Officer Grade 1, PIP Makassar:

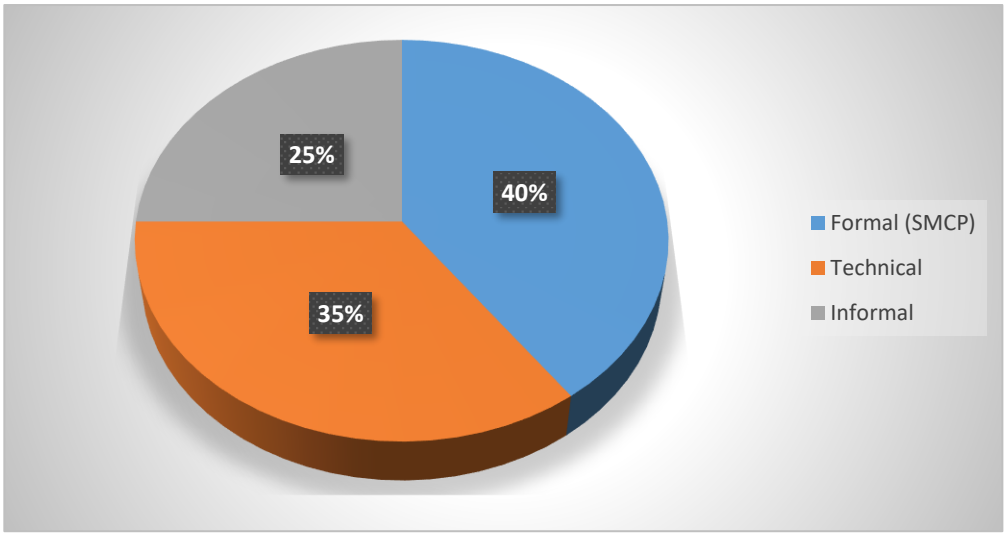
> "Kami diajari bahwa semua laporan, drill log, dan komunikasi resmi harus pakai bahasa formal. Misalnya saat drill, kami menulis 'Fire drill commenced at 0900 LT' bukan 'Kita mulai latihan jam 9.'" (Translation: We're taught that all reports, drill logs, and official communication must use formal language. For example, in a drill, we write 'Fire drill commenced at 0900 LT,' not 'We started the drill at 9.')
>
> "Kalau auditor lihat laporan yang tidak sesuai format, bisa dianggap tidak kompeten. Jadi register itu bukan soal gaya bahasa, tapi soal patuh aturan." (Translation: If an auditor sees a report that doesn't follow the format, it may be seen as incompetence. So, register use is not about style — it's about regulatory compliance.)

According to Officer Grade 1 cadets at PIP Makassar, Proper register use ensures that all ship documentation aligns with legal expectations. Inaccurate or informal language in logbooks and drills can lead to penalties, failed audits, or even detentions. The formal and technical registers serve as the linguistic foundation for professionalism and legal conformity in maritime contexts.

Discussion

Based on the two results that the writers had formulated above, the discussion that the writers formulate as follows

1. Research Question 1: The findings indicate that maritime communication is characterized by the dynamic use of three primary language registers: the formal register, the technical register, and the informal register. Each serves distinct communicative functions and plays a specific role in ensuring operational success and mutual understanding.



Figures 1. Distribution of the Use of Registers in Maritime Communication

The formal register, particularly shaped by Standard Marine Communication Phrases (SMCP), is essential in high-stakes or safety-critical scenarios. It takes 40% usage, like from the pie chart 1. Officers Grade 1 of PIP Makassar consistently highlighted the use of commands such as "Stop engine," "Hard to port," or "Stand by" as part of their standardized communication training. This formalized language minimizes ambiguity, especially under pressure or during emergencies, and is crucial when working with multinational crews.

In parallel, the technical register accounts for 35% of overall usage, indicating that technical terms also play an important role, particularly in the operational and technical context of ships. Terms like "open sea chest," "vent the tank," or "secure mooring line" are examples of how specialized vocabulary supports precision and reduces errors. As Officer cadets explained, mastering these terms is essential to prevent misinterpretation that could disrupt critical procedures or cause accidents.

Meanwhile, the informal register accounts for only 25%, making it the least frequently used type of register in this context. This often emerges during off-duty communication or informal exchanges among crew members. While this register helps build camaraderie and interpersonal rapport, cadets emphasized that it is not suitable for operational contexts. Its use is consciously avoided during professional tasks to prevent misunderstandings.

Overall, the officers interviewed demonstrated a clear awareness of context-based register switching, using different language forms appropriately depending on their communicative purpose and operational environment.

2. Research Question 2: This study found that register competence directly influences three core aspects of shipboard communication: safety, efficiency, and regulatory compliance.

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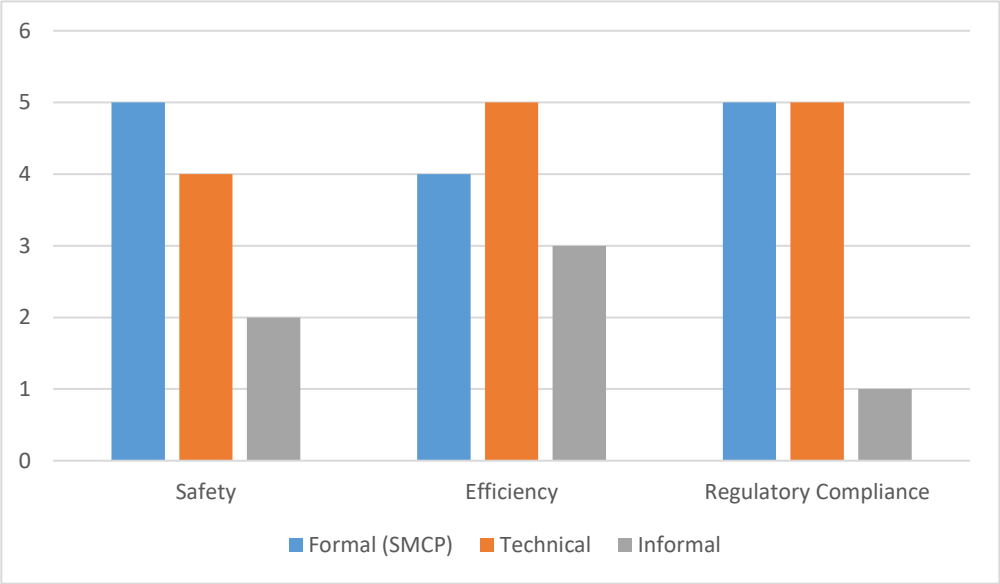

Figures 2. The Impact of Language Register Use on Three Key Aspects of Maritime Operations

In terms of maritime safety, the use of the formal register (SMCP) plays a critical role. Officer Grade 1 cadets repeatedly emphasized that SMCP enables quick, standardized communication during navigation and emergencies. Because SMCP is internationally recognized, it acts as a linguistic bridge for multicultural crews, helping to avoid potentially life-threatening misinterpretations. The cadets viewed SMCP not merely as formal language, but as a core safety tool embedded in international maritime training.

When discussing efficiency, the cadets pointed to the importance of the technical register in managing deck and engine room operations. The shared understanding of task-specific terminology allows for clear delegation, swift execution, and error-free coordination. Technical terms carry a precise meaning that cannot be replaced with casual language. As highlighted by interviewees, even minor miscommunications can result in serious procedural mistakes or delays, especially during berthing, bunkering, or maintenance operations.

Lastly, the findings show that both formal and technical registers are essential for regulatory compliance. Officers acknowledged that all official documentation — including logbooks, safety drill reports, and audit records — must be written using standardized, formal maritime language. Inaccurate or informal entries may raise red flags during inspections, suggesting incompetence or negligence. This reinforces the idea that register accuracy is tied directly to the vessel's compliance with international maritime conventions such as SOLAS, ISM Code, and MARPOL.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis and discussion of the data collected from interviews with Officers Grade 1 of PIP Makassar, this study reveals that maritime communication on board vessels and between ship and shore relies on three primary language registers—formal, technical, and informal—each serving distinct roles in ensuring effective operations. The formal register, particularly through the use of Standard Marine Communication Phrases (SMCP), proves essential in safety-critical operations such as navigation, emergency drills, and command exchanges, providing clarity and standardization to prevent misunderstandings in high-stakes scenarios.

In contrast, the technical register is applied during routine tasks involving machinery, deck work, and engineering procedures, guaranteeing task clarity, operational accuracy, and precise coordination among crew members. Meanwhile, the informal register emerges in casual conversations among crew members, fostering social cohesion and maintaining morale, though it remains inappropriate for official or safety-related communication to avoid potential confusion. The ability of Officers Grade 1 to appropriately shift between these registers underscores their linguistic competence and situational awareness, which are vital for successful maritime communication.

Furthermore, the use of language registers significantly impacts three major dimensions of maritime operations: safety, where the proper application of the formal register, especially SMCP, minimizes miscommunication during emergencies and ensures a unified response among international crew members; efficiency, where the technical register promotes clear instructions, faster task execution, and effective teamwork; and regulatory compliance, where both formal and technical registers align logbooks, safety documentation, and inspections with international maritime regulations, thereby helping to avoid audit failures and penalties. Ultimately, the mastery of appropriate language registers transcends mere communication skills, emerging as a strategic competence essential for maritime professionalism, enhancing overall safety, efficiency, and adherence to standards in the industry.

Building upon the findings and conclusions, several suggestions are proposed to advance maritime communication training and research in the future. Maritime academies, such as PIP Makassar, are encouraged to enhance their curricula by strengthening training modules focused on language register awareness, incorporating practical applications of Standard Marine Communication Phrases (SMCP), real-time simulations, and workshops on technical vocabulary to better prepare cadets for real-world scenarios. Additionally, shipboard personnel, including cadets and officers, should participate regularly in multilingual communication drills that weave register awareness into authentic emergency and operational situations, thereby improving their ability to adapt language use under pressure. Finally, there should be a greater policy emphasis on integrating these practices into broader maritime regulations and guidelines to ensure consistent

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implementation across the industry, ultimately contributing to safer and more efficient global maritime operations.

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