

## **Linguistic Profiling of VHF Maritime Communication in Northern Adriatic Ports: A Comparative Study of Koper and Rijeka**

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The aim of this paper is to analyse and describe a corpus of spoken VHF communication recorded in the area of Northern Adriatic, specifically the ports of Koper (Slovenia) and Rijeka (Croatia). Spoken maritime VHF communication is a specific subvariety of Maritime English achieved exclusively by speech via VHF radio. As the participants in the maritime exchanges have no face-to-face contact, they rely solely on language to convey meaning. Another distinctive feature of this spoken interaction is its standardisation through specific rules and guidelines with the aim of achieving clarity, avoiding misunderstandings, and ensuring efficiency and speed in the transfer of messages. The study focuses on the spoken discourse of Harbour Master officers in Koper and Vessel Traffic Service (VTS) operators in Rijeka with the goal of making a linguistic profile and comparing the two corpora in terms of topics and complexity. The corpora cover about 17 hours of spoken maritime exchanges between Harbour Master officers and VTS operators with ship crews, which includes about 600 exchanges, and was collected in the framework of the Erasmus+ project DigiMar. The recordings were granted by the Slovenian Maritime Administration for the Slovenian corpus and by the Maritime Safety Directorate of the Croatian Ministry of the Sea, Transport and Infrastructure for the Croatian corpus provided that the recordings are handled in strict compliance with the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The corpora contain authentic, unconstrained communication exchanges in everyday situations. The data from the corpora, including wordlists, frequencies of different parts of speech, keywords and n-grams, will be used to identify characteristic features of the corpora as well as similarities and differences between the Slovenian and Croatian subcorpora. Such analysis may provide additional insights into authentic spoken maritime communication, which in turn may have implications for maritime education and training of future seafarers as well as Harbour Master officers and VTS operators.

*Key words: corpus analysis, maritime communication, spoken corpus, VTS operators, Maritime English*