

A large blue and red tanker ship is docked at a port. The ship has a white superstructure with a "NO SMOKING" sign. Two speech bubbles are overlaid on the image. The first bubble, on the left, points to the ship's superstructure and contains the text "I'm at anchor." The second bubble, on the right, points to the ship's hull and contains the text "I'm a tanker." The background shows a port area with buildings and a tall apartment building in the distance under a clear blue sky.

I'm at anchor.

I'm a tanker.

**Improving maritime communication
between ship and shore**

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Abstract

The importance of effective and clear communication in ensuring the safety of vessels at sea has received widespread attention over recent years, as has the recognition that specialised English language training for those involved in maritime communication needs to be improved. As key participants in maritime communication between ship and shore VTS operators' (VTSO) English language competencies are of especial importance in this regard. This session reports on an analysis of recent Korean VTSO ship-to-shore conversations and discusses implications of the findings on future English language training.



Outline

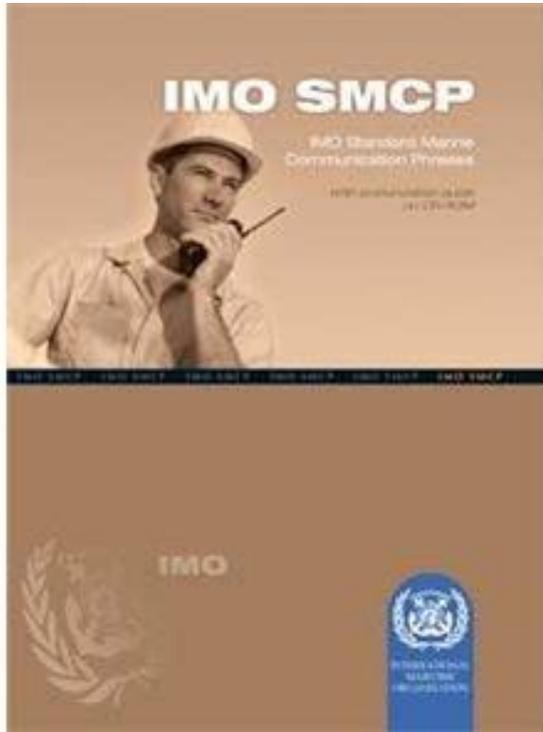
- The data
- Discussion and implications

Korean VTS corpus

- 360 (mostly routine) conversations
- 1002 word types
- 18304 tokens

- Additional conversations received but still transcribing them

SMCP



Standard Marine Communication Phrases

SMCP - issues

- Not specifically designed for VTS
- Changing needs – new equipment (eg AIS (Automatic Identification System))
- The reality – users are “flexible”

SMCP - eight message markers

Instruction

Instruction: Do not cross the fairway

Advice

Warning

Information

Advice: Stand by on VHF channel six nine

Question

Answer

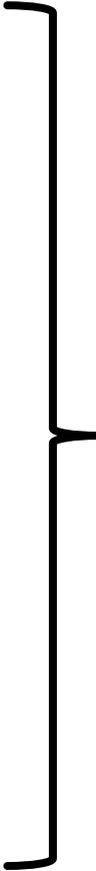
Request

Request: I require two tugs

Intention

Message markers - evidence

- Question 4
- Answer 0
- Information 0
- Instruction 0
- Advice 2
- Request 0
- Intention 1
- Warning 0



360 conversations

High frequency words

1-10	11-20	21-30
[SN]	sir	and
VTS	position	call
you	I	go
is	thank	calling
anchor	degrees	good
over	your	ahead
ok	please	the
yes	to	drop
this	port	my
ABC	pilot	copy

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Anchor

- We are dropped anchor because bad weather
- Good morning where drop anchor?
- My drop anchor time 2050LT
- I'd like to heave up my anchor and reposition my anchor because now my anchor is stretching
- I finally anchor aweigh over

copy

- High frequency item – 30 on the list

Yes copy

Copy that

Ok I copy

Copy sir

Proword - copy

VTS	Your cargo is crap. that is correct? Crap?
Vessel	Scrap Sierra Charlie Romeo Alpha Papa
VTS	Ah scrap copy your message
Vessel	Thank you your cooperation

Proword - copy

VTS	I give you anchor position over.
Vessel	You give a anchor position.
VTS	Yeah that's correct.
Vessel	Are you ready to copy over?
VTS	Yeah you give anchor position I will write it.

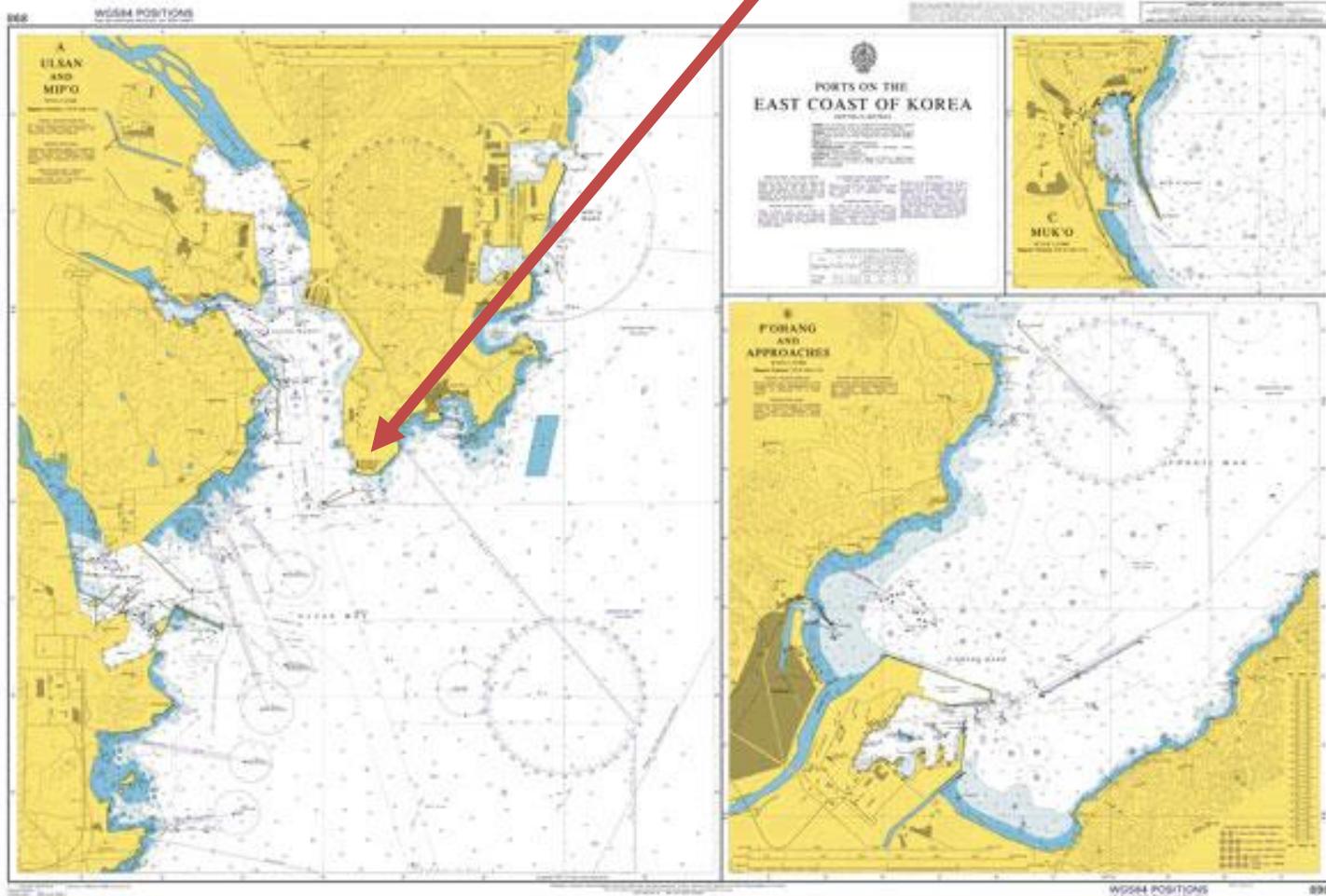
Proword - copy

VTS	Yes this is XXX VTS.
Vessel	Copy.
VTS	I will give you anchor position. Let it copy.
Vessel	Anchor position.
VTS	Yes correct.

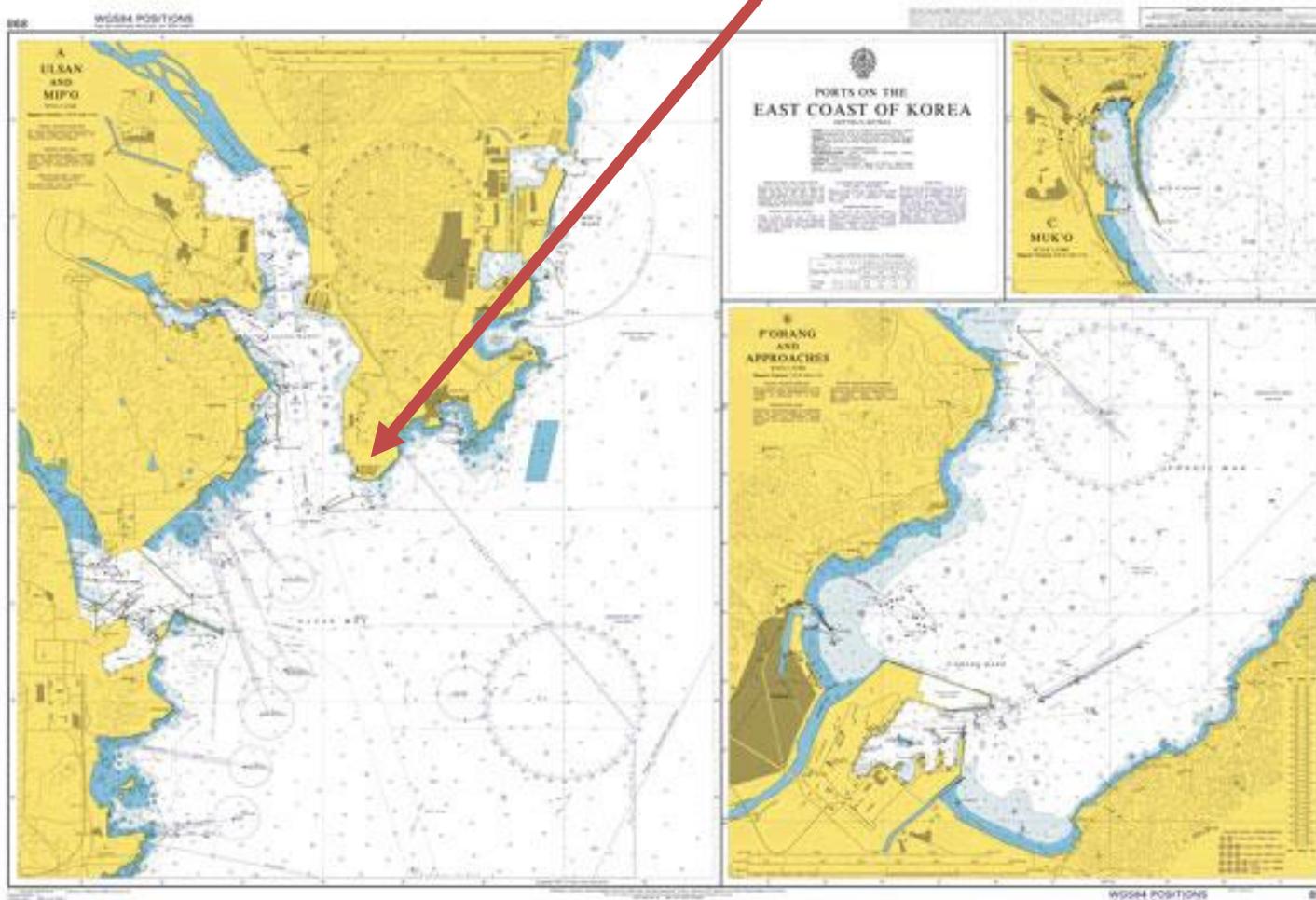
Proword - copy

VTS	XXX VTS [SN], go ahead.
Vessel	VTS, I will give you anchor position and copy.
VTS	Copy, copy.

화암추 lighthouse



Hwaamchu lighthouse



Giving positions (SMCP)

11.1 When latitude and longitude are used, these shall be expressed in degrees and minutes (and decimals of a minute if necessary), North or South of the Equator and East or West of Greenwich.

Example: "WARNING. Dangerous wreck in position 15 degrees 34 minutes North 061 degrees 29 minutes West."

11.2 When the position is related to a mark, the mark shall be a well-defined charted object. The bearing shall be in the 360 degrees notation from true north and shall be that of the position FROM the mark.

Example: "Your position bearing 137 degrees from Big Head lighthouse distance 2.4 nautical miles."

28 conversations which mention Hwaamchu

VTS	From Hwaamchu Hwaamchu lighthouse bearing 167 bearing 167 degrees distance 2.6 distance 2.6 nautical mile.
Vessel	Can you repeat ma'am? Bearing from lighthouse?
VTS	Bearing 16...7... [inaudible]
Vessel	Ok from lighthouse bearing 167 distance 2.6 nautical miles that is correct ma'am?
VTS	Yes that's correct. Do you know Hwaamchu lighthouse?
Vessel	Yes now I'm proceeding to lighthouse.
VTS	OK, thank you.
Vessel	Thank you.

Vessel	Could you please give me anchor position? Give me anchor position, over.
VTS	Ok, I'll give you anchoring position. [SN] please ready to write down.
Vessel	Yes, I'm ready. I'm ready.
VTS	Hwaamchu lighthouse bearing 195 degrees distance 1 nautical mile.
Vessel	Pardon? Pardon?
VTS	[SN], standby, I'll call you back.
Vessel	Standby.
VTS	Yes standby standby.

ULAR57

28 conversations which mention Hwaamchu

None seem to show any serious communication difficulty

Of course absence of evidence in the corpus is not proof that no difficulties exist

Anecdotal evidence vs corpus evidence issue

Implications

- Routine conversations rarely cause problems.
 - However more focus needed on specific language (e.g. message markers)
 - Awareness of potential local issues (e.g. Hwaamchu lighthouse)
- SMCP is a useful guideline, but VTSOs need to deal with vessels who do not use it. (e.g. *copy*)
- VTSOs need to be prepared to deal with non-routine conversations. Since these are rare in VTS conversations, regular continuation training should be considered.

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