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USE OF MIRO BOARD DURING DISTANCE LEARNING OF MARITIME ENGLISH

Abstract. The article identifies the features of online board Miro as a workspace for distance learning of Maritime English. Miro advantages and disadvantages for ensuring learning efficiency in higher education are analyzed. The possibilities of its use for developing student's interaction during group tasks are explored.

The author suggests examples of exercises involving Miro for conducting practical classes in Maritime English. The article provides examples of introduction and reinforcement of new vocabulary, as well as organization of work in groups or pairs to practice dialogic and monologue speaking skills, and verification of new material. The function of sticky notes is one of the advantages of Miro board. Students can post answers to tasks aimed at testing their understanding of the content of the text they listened to or read. Another way to engage students in active learning is to present task in the form of kanban. The advantage of this tool is that students can move blocks from columns around the board.

It was concluded that Miro online board contributes to the development of students' creative abilities while Maritime English studying. Virtual whiteboard services are an effective tool both for organizing the educational process in the classroom and during individual work or doing homework. The online board ensures the efficiency and effectiveness of training in higher education institutions, which allows for the productive organization of active interaction between students and teachers in the process of Maritime English teaching, the results of which are saved in the cloud environment. Miro allows teachers to improve interaction between students, provide feedback, and attract them to creative collaboration.

Keywords: distance learning, blended learning, Maritime English, Miro online board, synchronous learning.

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ВИКОРИСТАННЯ ДОШКИ «MIRO» ПІД ЧАС ДИСТАНЦІЙНОГО НАВЧАННЯ МОРСЬКОЇ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВИ

Анотація. У статті розглядаються особливості використання онлайн-дошки Miro як робочого простору під час дистанційного навчання морської англійської мови. Проаналізовано переваги та недоліки використання Miro задля забезпечення ефективності навчання в закладах вищої освіти та досліджено можливості її використання для розвитку взаємодії студентів під час виконання групових завдань.

Автор пропонує зразки типових завдань із використанням інтерактивної дошки Miro для проведення практичних занять з морської англійської мови. У статті наводяться приклади, як викладач може представити та закріпити нову лексику, а також організувати роботу у групах або парах для відпрацювання навичок діалогічного і монологічного мовлення, перевірити засвоєння нового матеріалу. Функція використання “стікерів” для відповідей є однією з переваг дошки Miro. Студенти можуть розміщувати відповіді на завдання, націлені на перевірку розуміння змісту прослуханого або прочитаного тексту. Ще один спосіб залучити студентів до активного навчання – це запропонувати завдання у формі канбану. Перевага цього інструменту полягає в тому, що можна переміщати блоки зі стовпців по дошці.

Зроблено висновки про те, що онлайн-дошка Miro сприяє розвитку творчих здібностей студентів під час навчання морської англійської мови. Сервіси віртуальної дошки є ефективним інструментом для організації освітнього процесу на занятті, так і під час індивідуальної роботи або виконання домашнього завдання. Онлайн-дошка забезпечує ефективність й результативність навчання в закладах вищої освіти, який уможливорює продуктивну організацію активної взаємодії студентів і викладачів у процесі навчання морської англійської мови, результати якої зберігаються у хмарному

середовищі. Miro дає змогу покращити інтерактивну взаємодію між студентами, забезпечити зворотний зв'язок, заохотити їх до творчої співпраці.

Ключові слова: дистанційна освіта, змішане навчання, морська англійська мова, онлайн-дошка Miro, синхронне навчання.

The global pandemic and wars have made changes to the educational process, which has necessitated the transition of education at all levels to distance learning. For the successful consequences of such a transition, it is important to take care of increasing the efficiency of the educational process and creating comfortable learning conditions, which would help adapt to the individual needs of students, intensify the learning process, increase their motivation and cognitive activity. These problems can be solved through the use of information and communication technologies in general and online whiteboards as a means of increasing the effectiveness of learning in particular.

Recent research and publications. The analysis of the main research and publications shows the increasing attention of both Ukrainian and foreign scientists to the problem of creating an information educational environment for the training of future specialists in higher education, in particular, to the use of cloud technologies and the application in the process of teaching English of online services, the study of various aspects related to their use in distance and blended learning (N. Aristova, N. Buriachenko, D. Varganova, L. Dankevych, V. Kukharenko, A. Kushnir, O. Kuzmenko, O. Malykhin, Yu. Lisova, I. Myskiv, A. Naidonova, S. Nikolaeva, R. Popov, N. Tsypanova, T. Yarmolchuk; R. K. Allah, S. Boell, A. T. Cram, A. J. Brock). However, it should be noted that despite the presence of a significant number of publications, we consider it necessary to continue researching this issue, since certain problems constantly arise in the use of new information technologies, in particular for teaching Maritime English, requiring both theoretical coverage and the search for practical ways solutions.

The purpose of the article. This article aims to analyze the features of using the Miro virtual board during distance learning and determine its advantages and disadvantages when teaching Maritime English.

Main text. In the digital era, the education is continuously evolving. Traditional teaching methods are gradually making way for innovative and interactive approaches, providing an enriched learning experience. Among these innovative tools, the Miro Board stands out as a versatile and dynamic platform, transforming the way university students engage with their coursework. As a digital collaborative whiteboard, Miro has revolutionized the education landscape, offering a myriad of possibilities for teachers and learners alike. Among the main advantages of Miro is that the application does not need to be downloaded and installed. Teacher just needs to first register on the site (both the teacher and students), and then share the link to the online board with students.

Miro is a digital whiteboard platform that enables real-time collaboration, providing an expansive canvas for users to create, collaborate, and communicate visually. Its intuitive interface allows users to brainstorm, organize ideas, and work on projects collectively, irrespective of geographical barriers. Miro is a tool that can be used effectively in several ways such as: remote brainstorming; mind mapping; designing; planning; demonstrating concepts, presenting in a creative way. Miro facilitates a comprehensive and interactive learning experience [10].

Miro's basic functionality is like a lot of other interactive whiteboard tools although it does offer additional tools. Miro functionality is the following:

Boards – it is what all content will be created on within Miro – if the teachers are using the free educational account, they will have access to unlimited boards and be able to invite unlimited collaborators. Boards in Miro are also infinite so one can continue scrolling within a board and continue to create new content.

Frames – it is a tool teacher can use to separate different items/ ideas within the boards, this means one can have many different things all within one board. Frames are also a great way of navigating within Miro as teacher can switch between frames and focus on the content within them.

Shapes – this tool can be used to draw various shapes onto Miro board, these can be used as design features or as a space to hold text.

Text – this tool in Miro works the same as a text box in other software's. Once selected teacher can use this tool to create a space that can be filled with the text. The teacher can use this tool to populate shapes and frames with text.

Miro platform is designed for collaborative remote operation and can accommodate a lot of information. This online board provides the use of various functions and tools: working with a pen and elastic, adding pictures (note that Miro has accelerated search pictures and photos), color stickers, as well as attachment of documents, tutorial (whole) or separate pages from books; creating all sorts of schemes, tables, mental maps; writing text, comments, chatting, exporting whiteboards in PDF format.

Miro interactive whiteboard not only allows to visualize many ideas, but can also become the basis for an entire lesson. Using this service, teacher can create and classify different materials for lessons, explain and practice various lexical and grammatical topics, organize brainstorming sessions, and organize project work [7, p. 286].

Miro can be used within a synchronous session to engage with students as they can access and interact with the Miro board or used by students to collate and present project work in an inventive way. There are multiple ways to share the boards on Miro such as:

Sharing with teams/projects. In Miro the teacher / student can add other users to his team – once he has done this, he can set his Miro board's permissions so that other members in his team can view and edit his boards.

Sharing via shareable links. Alternatively, to avoid enrolling other users to teams in Miro the teacher can set the permissions so anyone with a link can view/edit his Miro board and then distribute this link.

Embedding into blackboard sites. Once the permission is set to anyone with link can view/edit it is also possible to embed Miro boards directly into teacher's blackboard site.

Exporting as Image/PDF. It is also possible to export the frames within Miro board as an image or PDF.

Miro board can also be an alternative or an excellent addition to interactive textbooks, which are likely to begin to actively appear on the educational market in the near future. According to psycholinguistic observations, for high efficiency in learning the material in the classroom, it is necessary to use different types of memory: emotional, motor, verbal and figurative. Using of Miro virtual whiteboard is a great way to emotionally engage the audience. Interactive tasks provide motor activity. Exercises in speaking, writing, and listening, supported by visuals, ensure the functioning of verbal memory. Miro tools and features can also make it easier for teachers to deliver complex content [7, p. 288]. An undeniable advantage of Miro is the ability for several people to work on the board simultaneously. Teacher can see the actions of each student and monitor his movements.

Since all participants in the educational process can jointly edit notes within the canvas, the service can be used to practice various aspects of grammar and vocabulary: writing sentences or questions, filling in etc.

Having instant feedback when working within a group canvas allows for successful collaborative brainstorming. Students use sticky notes to present their ideas as they work together.

It is also advisable to use Miro to complete listening or reading tasks. The functions of sharing files of various formats and the use of sticky notes for answers are a clear advantage in choosing the learning tool. Students can post answers to tasks aimed at checking their understanding of the content of the text they listened to or read (Checking for understanding (Reading/Listening), for example, exercises with multiple choice or "true/false").

Special attention is paid to monitoring and involving students in distance learning. Miro online whiteboard as a learning tool helps to conduct peer review, which can be the basis for working together in an online learning environment. As stated earlier, students can share information and edit all materials located on the canvas. It is this factor that leads to a significant increase in their motivation to be actively involved in the educational process and contributes to the implementation of the system-activity approach in the modern education paradigm.

Miro supports individual, group, and whole class collaboration in discussions, even in very large classes. Students can reflect, analyse and critically engage with material together in real time. Teachers can set activities up on the Miro board and

use it as a presentation, seamlessly moving from static slides or “frames” to interactive activities in sequence and building student contributions.

With Miro, it’s possible to easily and quickly monitor multiple groups at scale. Initially created as a design thinking tool where teams can interact and share ideas on a large canvas, Miro offers a vast space where users can share post-it-notes, documents, pictures and tables. Teachers can make use of this by pre-populating a Miro board with instructions and slides replicated in groups, that scaffold classroom activities to guide student interaction [9].

According to Nur Aziemah Mohd Azman, Miro board serves as a hub for group projects and teamwork, enabling students to work collectively on assignments, brainstorm ideas, and provide feedback seamlessly. Through its interactive features, Miro facilitates peer-to-peer learning, enhancing communication and teamwork skills among students. The platform’s versatility empowers students to unleash their creativity and hone critical thinking skills. Students can express their ideas visually, fostering a deeper understanding of the subject matter with tools like templates, shapes, and various media integrations. This process encourages innovative thinking and problem-solving, crucial skills of future marine specialists [10].

An important element of English lesson at Maritime Academy is the opportunity to conduct a group discussion. The use of online whiteboards and stickers as personal recording space provides some opportunities for verbal and graphical representation of students' opinions in visual form. Joint discussion of a problematic issue is focused not only on the development of speaking skills, but also on the formation of system analysis skills.

Group members can briefly express their opinions in the form of abstracts written on personal stickers (sheets) that are attached to the online board. Due to limited space, students learn to express their points of view clearly, concisely and in a structured manner. Also, among the functionality of the board, one should highlight the use of stickers for the presentation of short student essays or structured notes. This option can be used to add tasks to test writing skills [1, p. 140].

Miro as a learning tool is recommended to use at English lessons to organize various forms of group work of students with elements of creative activity. Modern web services of virtual boards are not limited to maintaining visual contact of all participants of the group. The resource considered is convenient for organizing students’ educational activities, monitoring, recording progress and mutual verification in the format of cooperation. This online whiteboard promotes the development of creative abilities, critical thinking, and independent / teamwork skills of students during a lesson [1, p. 140].

As noted by S. Boell et al., Miro isn’t the only visual collaboration tool on the market, it’s similar to Padlet. Other EdTech tools are great for one-off activities, but Miro can support a sequence of activities or even a whole semester of classes all in

the one place. The platform has been built for design thinking and flexibility, so provides more options both for teachers designing activities and for students in completing them. It's also easy to add additional resources, like Powerpoint slides, so students have everything they need in the one place. Finally, it's easy to copy sections of Miro boards and entire boards to reuse activity templates across classes and semesters [9].

Among other *benefits* of Miro, we can mention the following:

Collaboration: Miro facilitates real-time collaboration, allowing students to work together on projects and ideas remotely.

Visual Thinking: It's a good tool for visual thinking and planning, helping to convey complex concepts through diagrams, mind maps, and flowcharts.

Templates and Frameworks: Miro offers a variety of templates and frameworks that can be customized for different educational purposes, saving time in the design process.

Integration: It integrates well with other tools and platforms, enhancing its versatility and making it easier to incorporate into existing workflows.

Accessibility: With an online platform, Miro provides easy access to content from various devices, fostering flexibility in learning and collaboration.

O. Kuzmenko singled out such advantages of using the Miro online whiteboard in English classes: the ability to comment; collaboration on projects; real-time collaborative editing; text, voice and video chat; ability to customize change messages on the board canvas; setting the "highlighting" of updates on the board canvas during a new visit; the ability to post boards on blogs, websites, and social networks; the presence of a visual library: templates for conducting surveys, tables and diagrams, business templates, templates for design management, project management, brainstorming [4, p. 271].

Miro has got not only advantages but also several *limitations*. Some users might find it initially challenging to navigate the interface, especially if they're new to collaborative online tools. There is a free version of Miro but some advanced features and higher usage capacities may require a subscription, which might be a consideration for budget-conscious users.

According to O. Kuzmenko, overcrowding the board with materials can lead to visual distraction in the lesson, so the material should be distributed correctly. The board can freeze due to large applications, and it takes too long to load from a mobile phone [4, p. 272].

Speaking about working with Miro, we cannot fail to mention some of its disadvantages. One of the main drawbacks is the inability to attach audio files. This problem is easily resolved if the teacher, in parallel with their work in Miro, communicate using other instant messengers and platforms, such as Zoom, Telegram or Viber. When working with a virtual whiteboard, it is important to have a good Internet connection. If the connection is poor, images load very slowly. Next, we'll

consider some options for working with Miro virtual board when teaching Maritime English.

Here are some examples of using interactive whiteboard at Maritime English lessons.

Mind map tool (Fig. 1) extends the association activity into a more organized, visual plan. Working in pairs or individually, teacher writes the topic word in the centre of a page and then students list associated words into categories scattered around the frame. With the help of this tool, teacher can engage students into the topic, encourage students to think about different synonyms or vocabulary groups and grammar structures based on some common features. The important thing is to allow your students to use the tool themselves so that their creativity can flow.

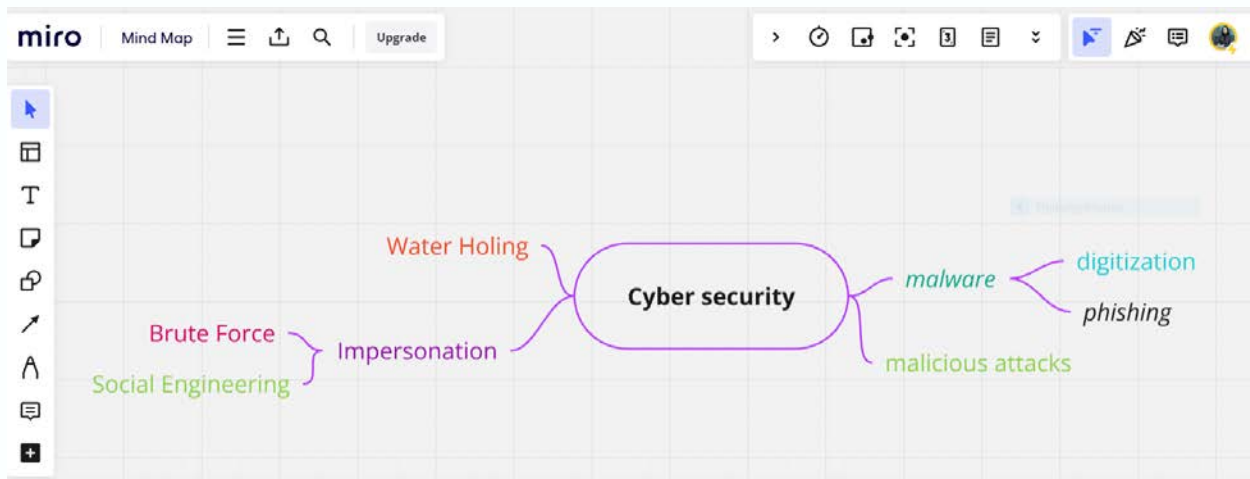


Fig. 1 Example of task Mind map

Teacher can use upload different pictures and use them for discussions as starters for the topic or like pre-reading tasks (Fig. 2, 3)

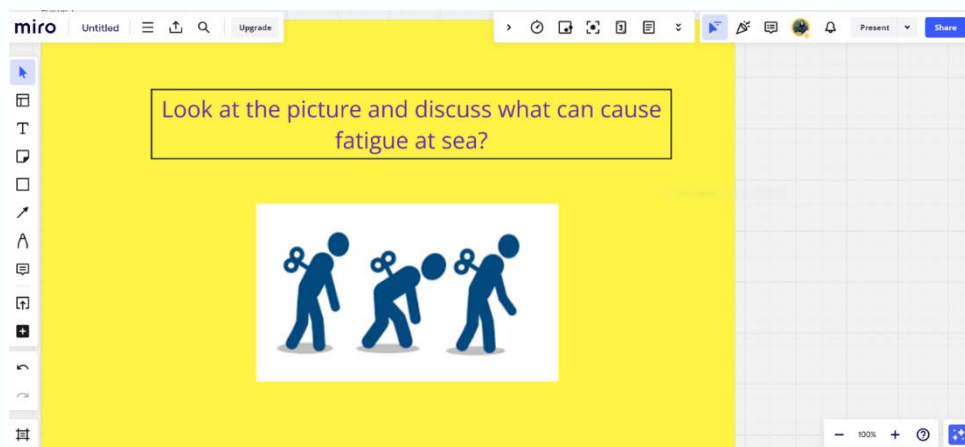


Fig. 2 Example of discussion task (starter)

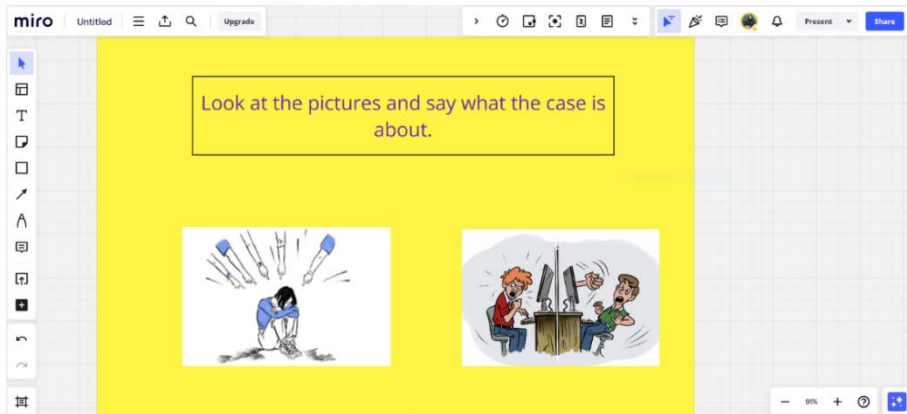


Fig. 3 Example of discussion task (pre-reading stage)

Pictures can be used for learning and revision of new vocabulary and grammar constructions (Fig. 4)



Fig. 4 Example of task with pictures

Another way to engage your students in active learning is to offer a task in a *kanban form*. The benefit of this tool is that you can move blocks from columns around the board. You can prepare some target words or structures, toss them, and ask students to replicate the correct order (Fig. 5)

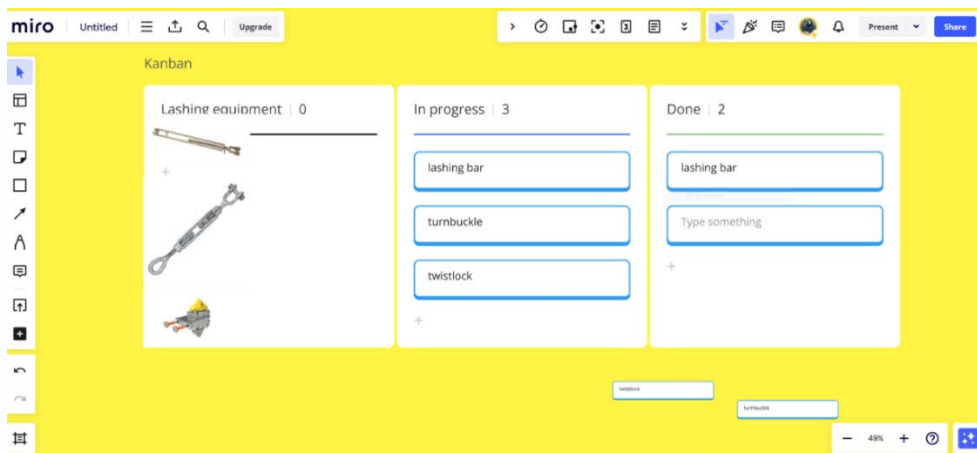


Fig. 5 Example of Kanban tool

Miro has such tool as *stickers*, this activity is fun and super-exciting for students. Teacher may use the sticker notes or shapes to hide parts of or whole objects. He asks students to guess what is under the sticker. It's possible to use the same tool as a part of reading or writing tasks. For example, read a text, hide some parts of it, and rewrite it using the target vocabulary (Fig. 6).

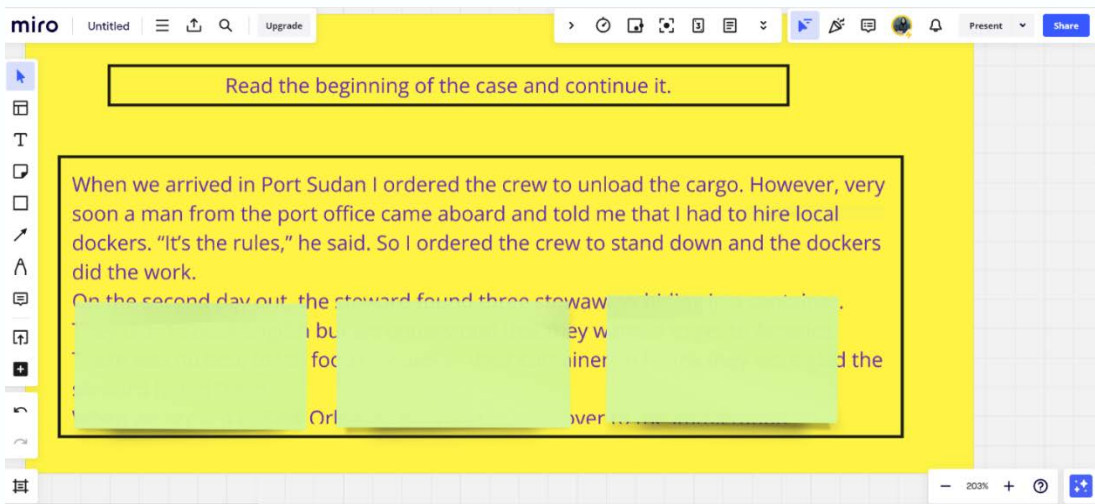


Fig. 6 Example of task with stickers

Stickers can be used for various tasks, e.g. watch the video and complete the table, develop an accident prevention plan or create countermeasures for each type of hazard (Fig. 7, 8, 9).

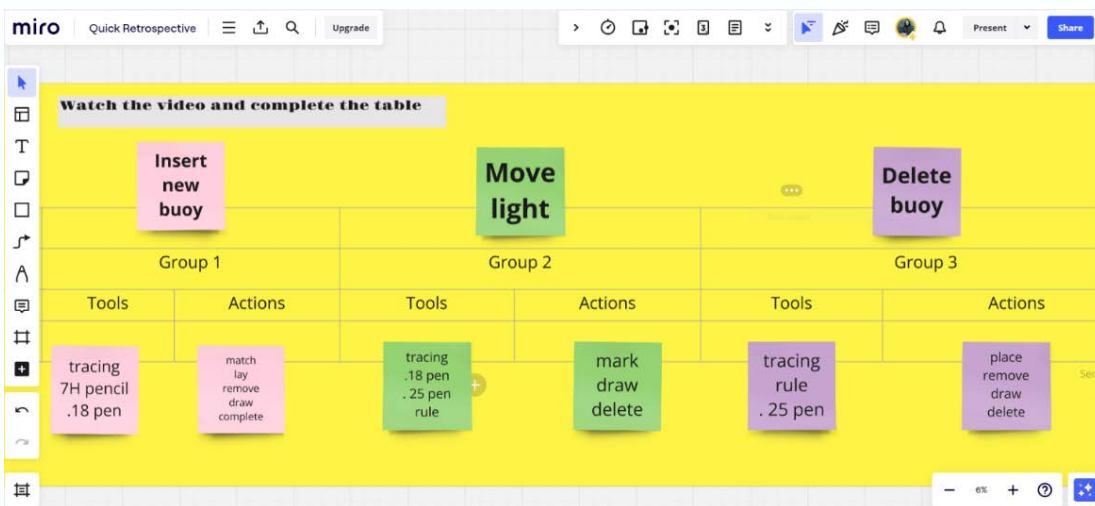


Fig. 8 Example 2 of task with stickers

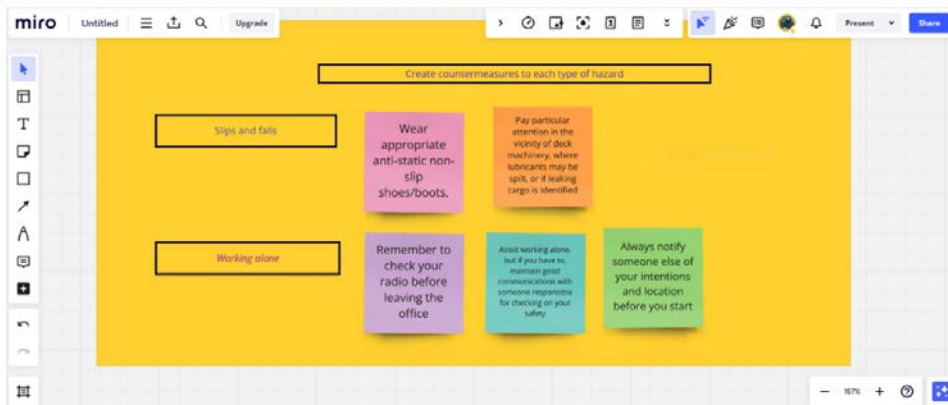


Fig. 9 Example 3 of task with stickers

Miro has many templates with charts and diagrams that can be used both for pair and group work (Fig. 10).

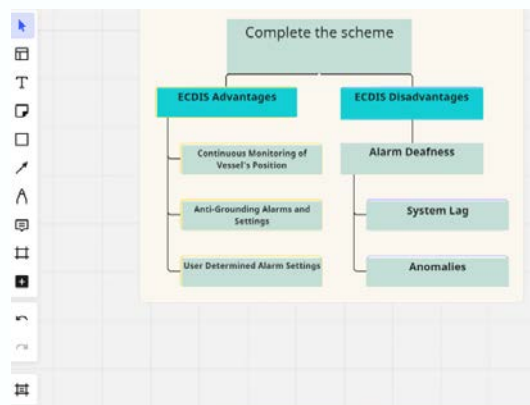


Fig. 10 Example of task with scheme

Students can perform task matching / fill in using such instruments as arrow or pencil (Fig. 11).

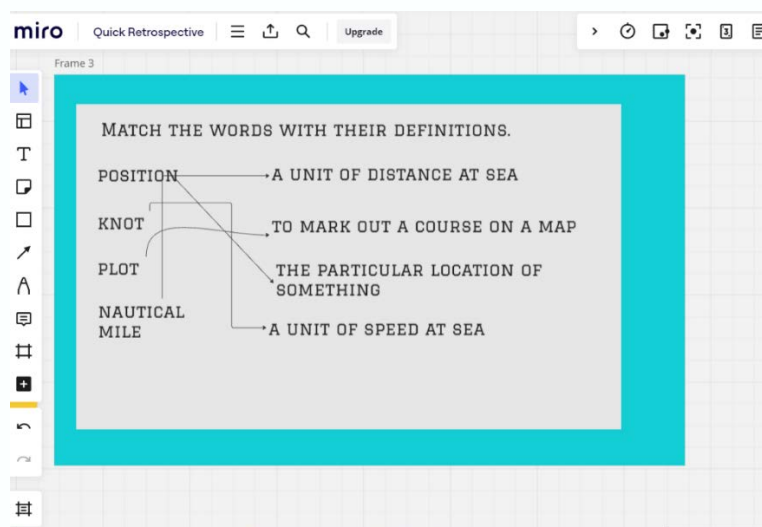


Fig. 11 Example of matching task

Conclusions. Miro virtual whiteboard is an indispensable tool for distance learning of Maritime English, which greatly simplifies the process of sharing educational material, and also allows all students to see the work of others without having to access and switch screens. The built-in tools of the Miro board provide much greater functionality than traditional chalkboards, in particular the ability for several students to work on the same area at the same time. In rare cases, the board can also replace handouts. At the same time overcrowding the board with materials can lead to visual distraction in the lesson, so the material should be distributed correctly. The use of Miro online board stimulates student activity, combining elements of creativity, cognitive activity and independent, interactive collaboration.

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