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**Nursing Faculties' Perceptions of Teaching
Students Who Speak English as Second
Language**

**POSTER
PRESENTATION**

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Abstract

Nursing students who speak English as a second language (ESL) often struggle due to language barriers, the complexity of the medical vocabulary, and the knowledge base that they must develop in a short time. The purpose of this basic qualitative research study was to develop a greater understanding of nurse educators' perceptions when teaching ESL students. Thematic data analysis identified four themes on how to support ESL students, the academic gap, teaching environments, and faculties' development needs. Caring for high acuity patients requires a high level of cognition. It is crucial to help this population by investing in nursing faculty.

Capstone Research

Problem

A significant challenge to overcome in nursing is related to language barriers (Meuter, Gallois, Segalowitz, Ryder, & Hocking, 2015; Newton, Pront, & Giles, 2018; Squires, Miner, Liang, Lor, Ma, & Stimpfel, 2019). Equally, developing critical thinking skills which are vital to make safe and competent clinical decisions because it is dependent on higher-level of cognitive language development (CALP).

Nursing students who speak English as a second language (ESL) often struggle due to language barriers, the complexity of the medical vocabulary, and the knowledge base that they must develop in a short time. These struggles may be due in part to the preparation of nursing educators to meet the specific needs of the ESL student population.

Purpose

The purpose of this qualitative basic research study was to develop a greater understanding of nurse faculties' perceptions when teaching nursing students who speak English as a second language (ESL students). Also, learn what they believe their needs are for professional development when teaching members of this population.

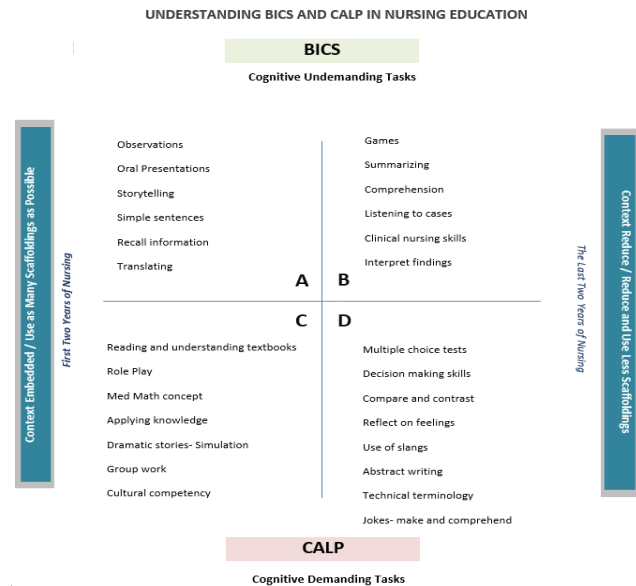
Significance

Studies have acknowledged a gap in the academic achievement of ESL students related to language barriers (Choi, 2005; Phillips & Hartley, 1990; Salamonson et al., 2011). However, the problem continues, particularly in nursing education, which is a discipline with advanced vocabulary and high levels of cognition (Crawford & Candlin, 2013).

There is a need to learn more about faculties' perceptions toward teaching ESL students in the nursing program and what they know of ESL learning needs. Current studies offer essential information on the student side, but only a few explore the faculties' side.

Theory or Framework

The conceptual framework used for this study is Cummins' framework for the development of language proficiency because it helps to recognize the differences between interpersonal communication (BICS) and cognitive academic language (CALP). Also, it supports the promotion of CALP in the nursing program. For example, the graphic below that I designed, helps to visually define the nursing class/clinical activities that requires less or more CALP.



Relevant Scholarship

The stigmatization of ESL students has created an environment of anxiety and unwelcome feelings affecting the learning process (Gillen-O'Neel, Ruble, & Fuligni, 2011; Olsen, 1997; Valdes, 2001; Zhu & Bresnahan, 2018).

Cummins's cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) can understand academic content that leads to academic success (Haynes, 2007). It is a **higher level of thinking** and is focused on academic content (Cummins, 2009). Belongs in theory part?

In nursing education, the development of language is an essential competency because it gives the ability to communicate efficiently with patients and to practice safely (Ali & Watson, 2018). It also helps produce a more **linguistically diverse workforce** needed for the current multicultural and multilingual community (Oikarainen et al., 2018).

The nursing education is a rigorous curriculum due to the multitude of complex and challenging concepts (Hyland, 2012) . Therefore, the risk of failing is always higher than other disciplines, especially for diverse **ESL students** (Olson, 2012). De Jong (2019) warned the importance of developing a multilingual pre-service for teachers to avoid the current monolingual biases in learning environments.

Nurses with **high levels of critical thinking skills** have a meaningful impact on the diverse healthcare community, including the care of acuity patients (Papathanasiou, Kleisaris, Fradelos, Kakou, & Kourkouta, 2014).

Frey (2018) stated that we are experiencing a "diversity explosion" that brings significant changes in the country. Therefore, there is a need for **competent and skilled healthcare professionals** with critical thinking skills in practice to serve and represent diverse patients safely and effectively.

Research Question

RQ1: What are nursing faculties' perceptions about teaching ESL students?

RQ2: How do nursing educators describe the learning needs of ESL nursing students?

RQ3: How do nurse educators describe their knowledge and experience in language development and the use of ESL strategies in the nursing classroom or clinical setting?

RQ4: How do nursing educators describe their needs for training or support for teaching ESL nursing students?

Participants

Sampling: Purposeful sampling

- active or inactive, experience teaching in ADN & BSN programs in US, and FT or adjunct
- from: TX, TN, NJ, GA, IO, FL, CA, and Qatar

Procedures

Sources of data & collection:

- 18-question online survey and 10 in-depth interview questions. Both instruments were designed using Cummins's language development framework.
- Daily posts in social media to participate in study from December 2019 - February 2020.

Procedure:

- Step #1- online survey (link in postings)
- Step #2- 18 phone interviews - only if interested and qualified (using Google Voice)

Analysis

Thematic analysis of the interviews using Cummins's framework. The transcripts helped to identified four themes.

Findings

Theme #1:

Interpretations of how to support ESL students

- *Inclusion in nursing programs*
- *It is challenging to provide support, but positive and rewarding after time*
- *Majority believe in a “global language proficiency”*
- *Find external help to develop “English”*

Theme #2:

CALP versus BICS

- *Language challenges in clinical and classrooms*
- *Faculty do not understand the difference between BICS & CALP*
- *Most participants do not believe in language development in the nursing program*

Theme #3:

Teaching environments

- *Trial and error due to the lack of knowledge*
- *All participants promote active learning environments*
- *Most participants incorporate visual scaffoldings in their teachings*

Theme #4:

Faculty development needs

- *ESL learning strategies*
- *Cultural awareness*
- *Student engagement strategies*

Interpretation

The study revealed that nursing programs in the United States could do more to support nursing ESL learners and faculty.

Inclusive learning environments may help to avoid attrition.

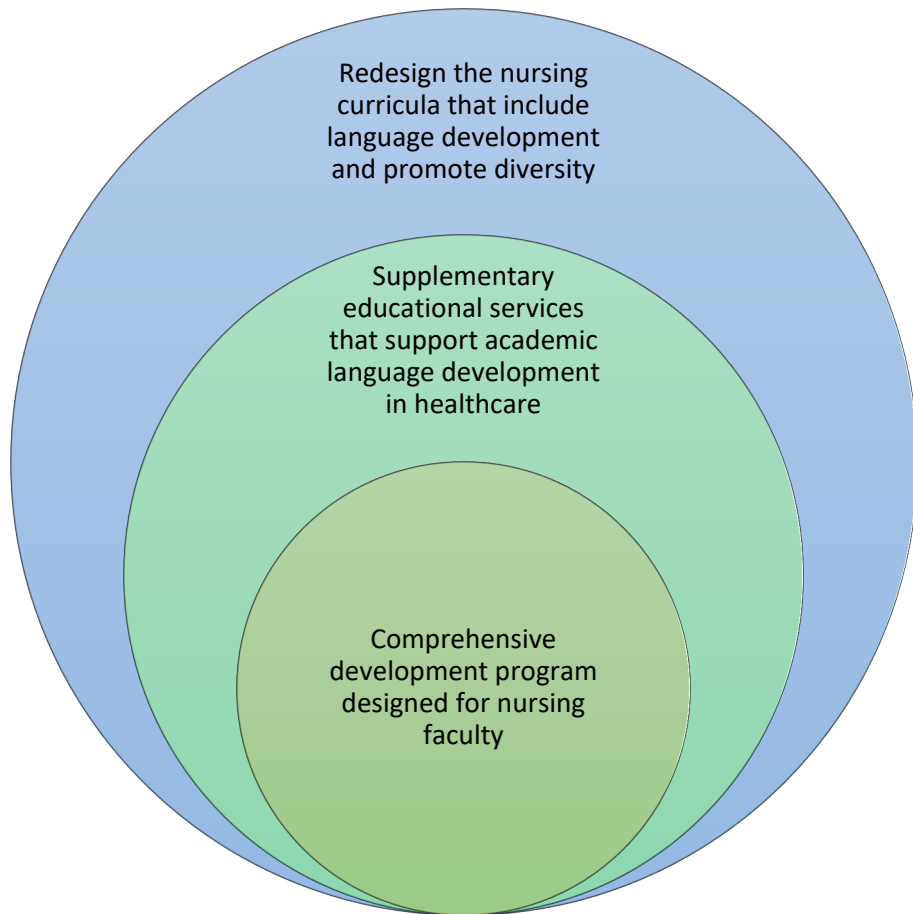
Most of the participants did not understand that they can develop academic language and increase cognitive skills at the same time.

Nursing faculty is in need of professional development opportunities in cultural sensitivity, ESL teaching strategies, and active learning strategies.

Limitations

Although thick in-depth descriptions were used, the results of the study might not apply to another group of educators.

Recommendations



Social Change Implications

This study may contribute to a researched-based foundation that supported a positive change in faculty feelings of success.

It might also bring a positive social change at state and local levels by advocating for a standardized nursing curriculum that meets the academic needs of linguistically diverse nursing students improving their graduation rates.

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