The Critical Factors That Influence Faculty Attitudes and Perceptions of Teaching English as Second Language (ESL) Nursing Students

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Learning Objectives

• Describe the research problem: Facilitating the academic success of ESL nursing students
• Understand the research methodology chosen to investigate the research problem
• Analyze the steps used in the grounded theory method
• Discuss the findings of the study and implications for nursing education, nursing research, nursing practice, and health/public policy

There is no conflict of interest with any party. There was no sponsorship or commercial support given to conduct this research project
Background

• With the changing demographics of the United States, nursing will need to become more ethnically diverse to meet the healthcare needs of the general population.

• Currently, the ethnicity of Registered Nurses contrasts with the proportion of minorities in the general population – National Sample Survey of Nurses (U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, 2010)

• The NLN (2009), IOM, (2011), and AACN (2010) have recommended that greater diversity is needed in the nursing profession
Background

- Recruitment efforts from schools, professional organizations, and stakeholders have led to an increase in culturally diverse nursing students who speak English as a Second language.
- Unfortunately, ESL nursing students have been reported to have higher rates of attrition, lower levels of academic achievement, and lower pass rates on the RN Licensure Examination.
Background

• Language and communication barriers in the academic environment have been creating challenges that may be contributing to the higher attrition rates of ESL students.

• Faculty challenges of teaching ESL students have been amplified by their lack of cultural competence, inadequate preparation, and adherence to traditional educational practices.

• If attrition rates continue, diversity in the nursing profession will be affected and the provision of culturally competent care will be compromised.
Purpose of this Study

• The purpose of this study was to use the grounded theory method to gain a more in-depth understanding of the critical factors that influence faculty attitudes and perceptions of teaching ESL nursing students.
Research Questions

1. What are the critical factors that influence faculty attitudes of teaching ESL nursing students?
2. What are the critical factors that influence faculty perceptions of teaching ESL nursing students?
3. What challenges do faculty encounter in working with ESL nursing students?
4. Do faculty believe they are adequately prepared to facilitate the success of ESL nursing students?
Literature Review

• The literature regarding this topic was reviewed, synthesized, and categorized into three content areas:


• **Academic challenges of ESL nursing students** — Mullholland, Anionwu, Atkins, Tappen, & Franks (2008), Bosher & Bowles (2008), Salamonson et al. (2011), Salamonson, Everett, Koch, Andrew, & Davidson (2008)

• **Cultural competence of faculty** — River-Goba & Campinha Bacote (2008), Wilson, Sanner, & McAllister (2010), Ume-Nwagbo (2012)
The Gap in the Literature

• The gap in the literature: Faculty perspectives and the challenges of teaching and facilitating the success of ESL nursing students
The Research Methodology

• The qualitative approach using the grounded theory method was chosen to guide this study

• Grounded theory based on the philosophical underpinnings of symbolic interactionism and pragmatism guided the inquiry

• The procedural approach of Strauss & Corbin (1998) was used as the framework to guide the research process
Grounded Theory Method

Data Analysis

Open coding

Categories

Axial Coding

Selective Coding

Individual interviews – constant comparative analysis

Comparative analysis, grouping concepts into categories, memos, journaling

Reducing categories, memos, journaling, focus group interview

Data saturation – forming relational statements

Core Category

Grounded Theory

Schematic representation of grounded theory (Starkey, 2013). Adapted from Strauss & Corbin (1998)
Protection of Human Participants

• Barry IRB approval was obtained along with IRB approval from other academic institutions
• Permission to access schools were granted by Deans/Nursing Program Chairs of academic institutions
• There were no risks or direct benefits to the participants
• Informed consent was obtained from each participant
• Pseudonyms were chosen by the participants to maintain confidentiality
• All audiotapes were destroyed after member checking
• All data was stored in locked computer with password and/or secured in a locked file cabinet in the researcher’s office
Sample and Setting

- **Sample**: A purposive and theoretical sampling of 16 participants was used.
- **Phase I** – Individual face to face audio taped interviews of a purposive sample of 13 nurse faculty.
  - **Inclusion Criteria**: Full and part-time nurse faculty who have had at least one year experience teaching ESL nursing students and were currently teaching.
- **Phase II** – Focus group of 3 nurse faculty where purposive sampling turned to theoretical sampling.
  - **Inclusion Criteria**: Full time and part time nurse faculty who had at least five years of experience teaching ESL nursing students, were currently teaching, and who did not participate in the individual interviews.
- **Setting**: Participants from various schools of nursing in the Southeast Florida area.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Narrative</th>
<th>Open coding</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summer 7/11/13</td>
<td>I was concerned about them when they took tests and that they were doing really poorly...more poorly than the other students...my concern was about their knowledge and whether they were able to interpret the language...they would say I have to read it in English convert it to whatever my language was and then answer it- it was hard for them to keep up with the readings- it was hard for them to keep up with everything</td>
<td>Open coding Being aware Feeling concerned Translating Hard to keep up (in vivo coding)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Field Notes</td>
<td>Quiet venue. Calm, direct eye contact, attentive, appeared to be reflecting</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Memos</td>
<td>Explore concerns, challenges barriers and their relationship with and meaning of ‘hard to keep up.’ It was apparent she was concerned and challenged by this – explore how she dealt with this.</td>
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Axial Coding

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elsie</th>
<th>Narrative</th>
<th>Axial coding</th>
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<tr>
<td>7/25/13</td>
<td>They could not figure it out because of the language barrier...not stupid...but they struggle...even when I wrote the test I was overly cognizant of it. It’s extra work—but I do it...some people say it should all be the same no matter who they are...but somehow I feel like there is this unfairness thing. If you can provide a multifaceted way of teaching like something visual and auditory so they can better understand.</td>
<td>Coming to know (Awareness) Overcoming (barriers, Attitudes) Facilitating (Modifying)</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field Notes</th>
<th>Memos</th>
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<tr>
<td>Quiet office, door closed, no distractions, attentive throughout interview.</td>
<td>Desire to help students, appeared deep in thought, leaned forward when she spoke of ‘unfairness thing.’ Hearing main categories – overcoming, coming to know, facilitating – having a realization, critically looking at the situation.</td>
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Conceptual Model of Conscientization

Facilitating
- modifying
- balance
- change

Conscientization
- reflection
- dialogue
- action

Coming to Know
- awareness
- understanding
- sensitivity
- acceptance

Overcoming
- language and cultural barriers
- attitudes
- desire
- responsibility

Starkey (2013). Conceptual Model of Conscientization
Research Rigor

Credibility – Ensured that the finding and interpretations were credible:

Member checking, theoretical sampling, peer debriefing, and bracketing

Dependability - More than one method of data collection used and the research process was described in detail so that the study could be replicated:

The focus group interview that provided confirmation of the categories, demographics gathered on each participant was the same, detailed documentation of study was provided, and an audit trail was kept

Confirmability – Investigator bias was minimized:

Field notes, memoing, journaling, maintaining reflexivity, audit trail, reflective commentary, and detailed methodological descriptions and diagrams

Transferability – Information was sufficient to enable findings to be used and compared to similar instances of the phenomenon within a similar context:

Providing thick rich descriptions of data, explaining each step of research process in detail, providing an accurate representation of participants, and the use of purposive and theoretical sampling
Emergent Categories

- **Overcoming** - surmounting the difficulties that challenge effective interactions between ESL students and faculty
- **Coming to Know** - the process by which one learns or gains knowledge
- **Facilitating** - a deliberate and valued process of interactive problem solving and support that occurs within the context of a recognized need for improvement
Interpretive Analysis of the Findings

Overcoming

- **Subcategories** – language and cultural barriers, school environment, attitudes, desire, and responsibility
- **Voices of the Participants:**

<table>
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<th><strong>Empress:</strong></th>
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<td>If we understand their mannerisms...the lack of direct eye contact...the quietness...knowing they probably won’t raise their hand or won’t come to your office...they won’t email you questions...so that helps me but puts the responsibility on me to seek them out...some of your old school teachers are like if you’re successful you are successful if you’re not- don’t care</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Dorothy:</strong></th>
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<td>The students many times have said they really appreciate the time that I’ve taken to help them for success-because it had not been provided for them previously...so it takes setting aside the time.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Rerun:</strong></th>
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<td>The lack of resources, management support...it’s not important because of the economics</td>
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<td>Reference</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jirwe, Gerrish, &amp; Emami</td>
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<tr>
<td>(2010)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amaro, Abriam-Yago, &amp;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yoder (2006)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference</td>
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<td>----------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>San Miguel &amp; Rogan</td>
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<td>Wood, Saylor &amp; Cohen</td>
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Interpretive Analysis of the Findings

Coming to Know

Subcategories – awareness, understanding, sensitivity, caring, and acceptance

Voices of the Participants:

Anna:  
We use the Purnell and Purlanka model...I felt like we all needed to learn more about each other so we could be more accepting of each other and be a better team and better nurses

Peggy:  
Coming to understand somebody different from me...the more exposure I got the easier it became to understand-like yes I know where you’re coming from

V:  
Having been to other countries where English is not the first language- I came to realize how scary and how frustrating that can be- so I’m sensitive to that
## Coming to Know

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Design</th>
<th>Findings</th>
<th>Connection to Category</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beck, Scheel, De Oliveira, and Hopp (2013)</td>
<td>To look at effect on cultural awareness after repeated exposure to various dimensions of culture</td>
<td>A quantitative descriptive design using a Likert Scale was used to analyze cultural awareness at 3 different intervals during cultural sensitivity training program</td>
<td>Regression analysis found that cultural awareness scores were found to significantly increase through duration of course on all 31 items of Likert Scale (p&lt;.05)</td>
<td>Participants noted that being exposed to various cultures led them to feel more accepting and culturally sensitive although they still felt they had a limited knowledge base in this area</td>
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<tr>
<td>Smith-Miller, Harlan, Dieckmann, &amp; Sherwood (2010)</td>
<td>To improve cultural awareness and the awareness of global health issues of nursing students by incorporating global immersion experiences into the nursing curricula</td>
<td>A qualitative design was used to assess the changes in student perspectives following an immersion experience in a Spanish speaking country. A thematic analysis was performed of 15 reflection papers written by BSN and Masters level nursing students who participated in the immersion experience</td>
<td>Six themes revealed the students enhanced cultural sensitivity: leaving the comfort of the familiar, bridging cultures, the impact of poverty, doing the best with what they have, giving a face to immigration, and increased understanding.</td>
<td>Participants comments revealed how their cultural awareness, sensitivity, and acceptance was enhanced through their experiences and exposure to other cultures</td>
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## Coming to Know

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<tr>
<td>Peiying, Goddard, Gribble, &amp; Pickard (2012)</td>
<td>To examine the impact of international placements on the cultural sensitivity and competency of health care students (PT, OT, and Speech Therapy)</td>
<td>A mixed method design was used. Quantitative analysis involved the use of The Intercultural Development Inventory Tool to measure cultural sensitivity of 17 PT, OT, and ST students pre and post international placement. Qualitative analysis involved data obtained from student journals.</td>
<td>Paired t tests found that overall cultural sensitivity scores increased however the only score that reached statistical significance was the component that addressed cultural acceptance and adaptation (p=.03). Five themes were revealed from student journal reflections: uncertainty, feeling humble, appreciating differences, and cultural immersion and development.</td>
<td>Similar themes regarding cultural acceptance, were voiced by study participants including; perceiving differences as strengths, being committed to cultural diversity, staying humble, and realizing that cultural competence is an ongoing process.</td>
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<td>Dupre &amp; Goodgold (2007)</td>
<td>To explore the development of student cultural competency through participation in an international community service course trip</td>
<td>Project was created to demonstrate students' lack of awareness of ethnocentrism and prejudices. Six PT students completed questionnaire pre and post international service trip to Nicaragua. The Continuum of Cultural Competence was used to stage students cultural competence pre and post experience.</td>
<td>Thematic analysis of findings revealed that students were initially in Stage 3 - culturally blind. Post – experience students progressed to Stage 4 – cultural pre-competence. Students revealed a self awareness of their lack of cultural competence. Language was significant barrier to understanding cultural differences.</td>
<td>Several study participants similarly voiced their growth in cultural awareness and sensitivity and the realization of their limited knowledge on the subject.</td>
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Interpretive Analysis of the Findings

**Facilitating**

*Subcategories*: modifying, change, and balance

**Voices of the Participants:**

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<tr>
<th>Diane:</th>
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<tr>
<td>What I have done differently is...I have made more hand outs with definitions with visuals...I’ve added more power-point slides with pictures- thinking that will facilitate their understanding...and I really try to pay attention to facial expressions and try to read if whatever I am saying is not being understood</td>
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<tr>
<th>Joanna:</th>
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<tr>
<td>I don’t think it’s right to accept students when their English language capability is so low that they are not prepared for that higher level of study...we should identify those people well in advance-get those language labs and tutorials done well ahead of time before they come into the nursing program- otherwise we are setting them up for failure</td>
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<tr>
<th>Michelle:</th>
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<td>I think you have to draw the line at some point</td>
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<td>Reference</td>
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<tr>
<td>----------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rogan and San Miguel (2009)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weaver &amp; Jackson (2011)</td>
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<td>Reference</td>
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<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bosher &amp; Bowles</td>
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<tr>
<td>(2008)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mulready-Schick</td>
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<td>(2013)</td>
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Interpretive Analysis of the Findings

Conscientization

- *Conscientization* was the central theme that connected the main categories and supported their inter-relationships
- *Conscientization* provided the explanation of the factors that influence faculty attitudes and perceptions of teaching ESL nursing students
- *Voices of the Participants:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elsie:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Faculty has the responsibility to acknowledge and recognize that these students are not stupid and they belong in our profession...we have a responsibility to educate ourselves...use better teaching techniques...provide multifaceted ways of teaching</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>May:</th>
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<tr>
<td>I reflect back and wonder how many other students have been afraid to come to me and where did I lose them- was I that instructor that would overlook them</td>
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Significance of the Study

**Nursing Education:**
- Curriculum reform
- Development of teaching strategies that are more inclusive of diverse students
- Increasing the cultural competence among nurse faculty

**Nursing Practice:**
- Augment retention and graduation rates of ESL nursing students
- Greater diversity in nursing leading to increased access to care, greater pt. satisfaction, improved health outcomes of minorities, and decreased healthcare disparities
- Recruit and retain more diverse faculty
Significance of the Study

Nursing Research:

• Conduct research into alternative pedagogies that could be used to facilitate the success of ESL students
• Lend support to the need for language assistance centers
• Encourage the process of **Conscientization** among nurse educators in order to create more inclusive learning environments and implement the changes that are needed in nursing education
Significance of the Study

Health/Public Policy:

• Encourage policy makers and stakeholders to provide: Nationwide collaborative efforts and financial support for schools to recruit more diverse faculty, provide additional learning resources, language assistance centers, time needed to reform curriculum and develop alternative teaching strategies

• Impact current polices involving healthcare reform legislation that encourages the provision of culturally responsive health care to the general public
Recommendations

• Replicating this study in other culturally diverse areas
• Quantitative studies including theory testing and developing an instrument to further substantiate this grounded theory model
• Development of cultural awareness courses specifically geared for faculty and measuring the effectiveness of these interventions
• Development of language support centers for ESL students
• Investigate the effectiveness of language support centers on ESL student success
Summary and Conclusions

- This qualitative study using the grounded theory method explored the critical factors that influenced faculty attitudes and perceptions of teaching ESL nursing students - filling a gap in the literature.
- The three dominant categories that emerged from data: Overcoming, Coming to know, and Facilitating.
- The core category Conscientization was found to be the basic social processes involved in teaching ESL nursing students.
Summary and Conclusions

• The findings from this study has implications for nursing education, nursing practice, nursing research, and health/public policy

• This study provides a basis from which future studies in the areas of nursing education reform, alternative teaching strategies, and the cultural competence of faculty could be developed

• Studies such as this will ultimately lead to greater diversity in the nursing profession and enhance the ability of nurses to provide culturally responsive health care
“Many political and educational plans have failed because the authors designed them according to their own personal views of reality” (Freier, 1970, p. 94).
Thank You!
Questions/Comments
References

References


