Title:
Reducing Disparities to Transform Practice: Connecting the Dots Between Student Success and Linguistically Modified Exams

Jo Ann Mulready-Shick, EdD, MSN, RN, CNE, ANEF
Jean Edward, PhD, BSN
College of Nursing and Health Sciences, Nursing Department, University of Massachusetts Boston, Boston, MA, USA

Session Title:
Use of Testing to Foster Success in Students
Slot:
F 05: Saturday, April 9, 2016: 2:45 PM-4:00 PM
Scheduled Time:
3:05 PM

Keywords:
Diverse Nursing Students, English as a Second Language and Test Construction

References:

Abstract Summary:
This oral presentation will report the findings from a funded nursing education research study which explored student perception of linguistically modified multiple choice exam items. Results indicate that the majority of participants, who identified as non-native speakers of English, preferred exam questions which had been linguistically modified.

Learning Activity:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEARNING OBJECTIVES</th>
<th>EXPANDED CONTENT OUTLINE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Examine the findings of a nursing education research study addressing student perceptions of non-native speakers of English about multiple-choice type items on teacher-made exams.</td>
<td>Present funded and completed recent research study's background, methods, results, and conclusions</td>
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<td>2. Relate this current evidence to best practices for improving educational outcomes of non-native speakers of English and diversifying the nursing workforce, locally and globally.</td>
<td>2a.Connect to additional evidence of best practices for improving student success , reducing disparities , and improving educational outcomes for nursing students who identify as non-native speakers of English. 2b. Include Implications for nursing education policy 2c. Include implications for Practice and Global concerns in diversifying the nursing workforce (as reported by NLN, STTI, ICN, WHO)</td>
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3. Value the need for research collaboration in funding future studies, advancing the science of nursing education, and transforming practice.

3a. Elicit audience response for input and questions related to: 3b. Explore new funding sources and research collaborations 3c. Conclude with emphasis on mutual goals and shared vision in advancing the science and improving outcomes 3d. Conclude with additional comments and questions and thank conference leaders and organizers.

**Abstract Text:**

**Background:** Nursing education programs report increasing numbers of culturally and linguistically diverse students and the call to diversify the nursing workforce continues (Benner, Sutphen, Leonard, and Day, 2010; IOM, 2010; NLN, 2015). Yet educational outcomes, including graduation rates and first-time licensure pass rates, for non-native speakers of English have demonstrated little improvement over the years (NCSBN, 2006). XXX presenting author (2013) and Murray (2015) recommend renewed faculty efforts and greater inclusion of student perspectives for improving educational processes and outcomes.

One educational intervention, linguistic modification, has shown promise in reducing construct-irrelevant variance in test performance in earlier studies (Bosher & Bowles, 2008; Lujan, 2008). However, more recent examinations of this intervention have not been reported. The primary purpose of this funded nursing education research study was to specifically explore the impact of linguistic modification on multiple-choice exam-type test items for Asian American nursing students who identified as non-native speakers of English.

**Methods** The research question asked, “How do non-native speakers of English perceive differences on multiple-choice type exam items that have been linguistically modified?” Teacher-made multiple-choice type exam items were reviewed and revisions were made by a linguistic modification expert. The expert reviewed all questions to verify that the linguistic complexity of test items and semantic complexity of non-content vocabulary had been substantially reduced. Faculty participants served as content experts and validated that the modified question form did not change each question’s nature. The original and modified questions were randomly positioned (a random number set was used) and placed on a written student survey. Student participants at the sophomore, junior, and senior levels completed a written survey which presented questions about both exam item forms. Students responded to the questions and also indicated their preferences for either the original or linguistically modified form of the exam items.

**Study Results:** Twenty-six students from a baccalaureate nursing program in an urban public university participated in this study. Participants reported first learning English at the average age of 10 years and reported speaking and writing English for 15 years on average. A total of 206 exam items were assessed. Data was analyzed in SPSS. The majority (60%) of participants preferred the linguistically modified exam questions. Additional comments made by student participants will likely be of interest to the audience.

**Study Conclusions:** Linguistic modification of exam questions may promote improved student understanding and assist in exam performance among non-native speakers of English who identify as Asian American.

**Implications:** Strategies to improve student success and educational outcomes and reduce disparities will be addressed. Implications for nursing education policy and future research collaborations and funding opportunities will also be discussed, along with related practice issues for diversifying the nursing workforce, locally and globally.