

English for Specific Purposes: Case of Nursing Students at the Institute of Paramedical Higher Education, Sidi Ouali- Bejaia

*Anglais à des Fins Spécifiques : Cas des Infirmiers à l'Institut
Supérieur Paramédical Sidi Ouali-Béjaia*

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Abstract

The present article focuses on the design of English for specific purposes mainly English for Nursing Purposes at the institute of paramedical higher education in Sidi Ouali-Bejaia (Algeria). The aim is to show the importance of English in scientific fields since it is the lingua franca and the language of technology and development. In this regard, we provided an account of the main methods, activities and materials that can be used in order to assist nursing students acquire the necessary skills that permit them to function effectively in the workplace. In addition, the article highlighted the problems that nursing and midwifery students encounter during their English language course, and suggested strategies to remedy them. The majority of students found the course interesting and beneficial in their professional career.

Keywords: English language, English for specific purposes, Lingua Franca, Needs and interests, Nursing students, Skills.

Résumé

Le présent article porte sur le design de l'Anglais à des fins spécifiques spécialement l'anglais pour science infirmière au niveau de l'institut d'enseignement supérieur paramédical de Sidi Ouali Bejaia (Algérie). L'objectif est de montrer l'importance de l'anglais dans le domaine scientifique puisqu'il est la lingua franca et la langue de la technologie et du développement. A cet égard, nous avons présenté les principales méthodes, activités et matériels qui peuvent être utilisés pour aider les étudiants en soins infirmiers à acquérir les compétences nécessaires pour leur permettre de fonctionner efficacement dans le milieu de travail. De plus, l'article a souligné les problèmes rencontrés par les étudiants infirmiers et pendant leur cours d'anglais et nous avons suggéré des stratégies pour y remédier. La majorité des étudiants ont trouvé le contenu du programme intéressant et bénéfique dans leur domaine du travail.

Mots-clés : Anglais à des fins spécifiques-Besoins et intérêts-Etudiants en soins infirmiers -Compétences-Langue anglaise-Lingua franca.

Introduction

English nowadays is getting a high status in the worldwide. In the domain of sciences, most of articles are required to be in English language and hence learning it is a necessity. The present article is interested in English for specific purposes mainly teaching English for nursing. In the Institute of paramedical higher education, Sidi Ouali-Bejaia (Algeria), the majority of nursing students experience difficulties to communicate and write in English language as well as understand scientific articles. In order to remedy those problems, this article attempts to provide an account of the appropriate methods, strategies and materials that might be used with that category of students in order to facilitate their learning of medical English which was a new module for them. In this concern, we relied on practical empirical studies which have relation with the theme under investigation and suggested an ESP course design that might be used for nursing students. In doing so, ESP teachers will have an idea of the kind of students they are addressing to in the class and mainly succeed in their teaching practices.

I. Literature Review

I.1. English for Specific Purposes

ESP is defined as the language instruction that aims to serve learners' communication needs in English in a certain domain (Isik-Tas & Kenny, 2020, p. 1). In other words, teaching English in a specific field means adapting new techniques and strategies that go with the demands of students in their academic and professional careers. Many studies have been interested in investigating English for specific purposes mainly English for Nursing purposes (ENP). English for Nursing Purposes (ENP) is a sub-branch of EMP (Henceforth, English for Medical Purposes) and emphasises on the use of English both in the clinical setting and in nursing education. For instance, Pavel (2014) investigated the current practices, challenges and innovations in English for specific purposes instruction; the scholar designed an ESP course for 3 sub-specialisations (medicine, registered nurses + Balneophysio-Kinetotherapy). According to the researcher, students are motivated to learn general and medical English and the main problem concerns the level differences of students. In support, Canziani (2020) stated that teachers experienced two major problems when designing an English course in Nursing such as (1) the identification of students' needs, which are technical and specific, and (2) the development of a heterogeneous syllabus. We agree with Canziani when he mentioned that nurses have the capacity to adopt various linguistic registers in order to translate the Medical language of doctors into accessible and flexible everyday language of patients to assist them in feeling at ease when communicating health information. Badrov and Jurkovic (2017) explored the attitudes of nursing students toward the importance of communication skills in the English language; the result was that spoken communication is viewed as a paramount component. As far as ENP is concerned, relevant studies on the needs analysis of nursing students showed that these category of students need mostly speaking and listening (in terms of skills). However, in terms of language, they require a combination of general English and ENP when they interact with medical professionals (Medical terms) and when plain English when they communicate with patients in specific situations such as explaining nursing procedures, drug reactions, medical treatment, taking the patient's history or giving advice (Lu, 2018).

2. ESP Course Design

In order to design a course for nursing students, we relied on the model proposed by Dudley-Evans and St Jhon (1998). According to them, needs assessment has to include the analysis of three main situations (the learning situation, the present situation and the target one). First, the present situation means the analysis of students' strengths and weaknesses in language in terms of what skills and knowledge learners have before the course begins. Second, the learning situation has to do with learners' perspective regarding their subjective needs (reasons for taking up that course and their learning preferences). Third, the target situation focuses on the specific professional context and objective needs of the learners.

2. 1. The Learning Situation

Before designing the ENP (English for Nursing Purposes) course, we wanted to understand primarily the students' views concerning the English language. The researcher of the present research taught second year nursing students at the institute of paramedical higher education, Sidi Ouali of Bejaia for about three years (2019-2021), the participants of the present article concerns only the students of the academic year 2019 since it was the first experience to teach ESP (mainly English for Medical Purposes). In order to succeed in our teaching of this speciality, we tried to apply the model of Dudley-Evans and St Jhon (1998). In this regard, to investigate the learning situation of the students we did a pre-test which was an informal interview with 39 nursing students (2 males and 37 females) ranging between 19 and 25. The interview lasted two hours and four main questions have been asked for each students; these are as follows:

1. Present yourself
2. Why did you opt for nursing speciality?
3. What do you expect to study in medical English?
4. What do you want to learn in medical English?

The researcher listened to each students and took notes of their responses; some students could answer the questions others just presented themselves. We summarised the responses of the participants in the table below:

	Nurses Responses	Percentage
Q1	Taking care of patients	30%
	Nursing is a noble job	30%
	The job is guaranteed	60%
Q2	Grammar, medical vocabulary.	80%
	Communication	20%
Q3	Communication and medical vocabulary	100%

Table I. The Learning Situation of Nursing Students

For question 1, it seems that the majority of students (60%) opted for nursing specialisation because the job is guaranteed. However, 30% of participants chose to work as nurses because they like to take care of patients and the same percentage (30%) of respondents wanted to become nurses because it is a noble job. Concerning what students expect to study in medical English, a great number of respondents (80%) stated grammar and medical vocabulary, whereas low percentage (20%) is given to communication.

2. 2. The Present Situation

To understand the present situation of the participants, we did a diagnostic test (See appendix A1) to assess the students' strengths and weaknesses in English language. The test comprises four questions; question 1 and 2 seek the participants' knowledge about grammar, question 3 explores their capacity to translate from French to English language. The last question aims to assess the participants' writing skill. The result of the test

indicated the participants' weaknesses in grammar, translation and writing. When correcting the diagnostic test in the class, the participants said that they forgot the English language since they started to study at the institute and that is why the marks of the test were bad.

2. 3. The Target Situation

Concerning the target situation, the participants' objective was to be able to communicate effectively in English language and gain a background knowledge about medical English vocabulary. They also want to enhance their writing skill for example writing medical report and a cover letter.

After having analysed the above situations (i.e. Learning, present and target situations), we started to plan for the design of the ENP course (henceforth, English for Nursing Purposes). The course syllabus that was given to us by the responsible of the speciality turns around medical vocabulary and anatomy; hence, we adapted the present course syllabus based on the learners' needs and objectives; it comprises both theory and practice. The course design is as follows:

1. Seminars
2. Activities
3. Methods and Strategies
4. Materials

1. Seminars

Seminar One: Introduction to medical vocabulary and nursing profession.

Seminar Two: Health and Illnesses.

Seminar Three: Indicating directions.

Seminar Four: Making appointments.

Seminar Five: Writing a shift handover report.

Seminar Six: Symptoms and signs.

Seminar Seven: Types of medication.

Seminar Eight: Surgical instruments.

Seminar Nine: Scientific research.

2. Activities

For each activity, we made sure that the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) were present; however, since the participants emphasised on the need to improve their communication skills, we gave more importance to it compared to other skills. Example of some of the activities are presented below:

A. *Listening Activities:*

In order for the participants to practice their listening comprehension, we showed them a video about Florence Nightingale, a British nurse and a pioneer of modern nursing. We asked them to listen carefully and take notes. Another video was about nursing leadership which aims at raising the participants' awareness of leadership and its importance in their career.

Speaking Activities:

- A man has just come in frantically to the hospital through the Emergency Unit. He comes across a nurse in the hall. Imagine the situation between the nurse and the visitor.
- A patient has made an appointment with the doctor. Before going into the physician's office, the nurse asks some preliminary questions. According to you, what kind of questions did the nurse ask?
- Describe your symptoms and pains to the doctor.

B. *Writing Activities:*

- The participants were asked to write a shift handover report in which they will include the following elements: Name of the patient, ward or room, age doctor's name, medical diagnosis, illnesses, priority nursing diagnosis, response to intervention, lab tests performed and results, new test orders (lab tests), conditions for the new tests.
- The participants were asked to write a narrative journal concerning their experiences and perspectives of medical English.

C. Reading Activity:

- The reading activity constituted of a scientific article in which the participants were recommended to read it and then state the objective of the research, the method used, the participants, results and discussion as well as their interpretation of the results.

3. Methods and techniques

We have adopted the eclectic method with the nursing students because they have different learning styles and hence our mission was to suit their needs and objectives. For the techniques, we emphasise mostly on group work to encourage cooperative learning and negotiation of meaning. We used also other techniques such as whole classroom discussion and role-plays.

3.1. Materials

We have relied on different materials in order to design our course such as a datashow and books from Riley (1994), Muratte (2004), Ribes and Ros (2006), Glendinning and Howard (2007).

3. 2. Students' Response to the ENP (English for Nursing Purposes) Course Design

The students' response to the ENP course was positive and this was shown from their integration and collaboration during the classroom as well as motivation to learn the English language. The majority of students showed appreciation and interest to the course and seemed ambitious to discover more about medical English. There are some students who requested useful websites to learn the language which increased our interest in ESP field as well as curiosity to search for more appropriate materials to gain deeper knowledge in the future. Importantly, we have noticed that nursing students seemed interested to continue their studies abroad such as Canada and USA; hence, introducing medical English sounded a fruitful experience for them. When asked the students about their attitudes towards the course, the majority founded the content beneficial and they asked for more sessions in order to practice their communication skills. Some important recommendations are worth mentioning; these are as follow:

- ESP teachers need to prepare tests that examine the strengths and weaknesses of students as well as tests that examine their knowledge of the content of specialisation.
- ESP teachers have to understand the needs and interests of their students as well as their expectations from them.

Conclusion

The present article provided a model of an ESP course design of second year nursing students at the institute of paramedical higher education, Sidi Ouali-Béjaia. We followed the model of Dudley-Evans and St Jhon (1998) in the design of the ENP course which permitted us to understand the needs and objectives of the students. The latter wanted to learn medical vocabulary as well as improve their communication skill which was among the problems that the majority of nursing students encounter in their medical English. Finally, the students' reaction to the ENP course design was positive and rewarding.

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Appendices

Appendix A I

Question 1: Complete the sentences using the past tense verbs below:

**Adapted/ broke /controlled/ /developed/overcame/picked up/prolonged/
recovered/required/ rebuilt/received/ strained/suffered/
underwent/aggravated**

1. He must have the disease when he was travelling to London.
2. He a new kidney from his brother.
3. He his back lifting the table.
4. Shefrom her concussion in a few days.
5. The doctors decided that her condition surgery.
6. Sheher disabilities and now leads a normal life.
7. Shefrom poor circulation, which made her feel the cold.
8. After the accident, her pelvis was completely
9. She several operations.
10. She well to her new diet.
11. She fell off a wall and her leg.
12. He his asthma with a bronchodilator.
13. The sore throat into an attack of meningitis.
14. Playing football onlyhis knee injury.
15. The treatmenther life by three days.

Question 2: Rewrite the sentences below using nouns instead of verbs. Do not change the meaning of the sentences.

1. I diagnosed that the patient had a heart condition.
2. I examined the patient fully.
3. I prescribed a course of antibiotics.
4. He suffered very little.
5. We operated immediately.

Question 3: Translate the words in the table below into French

English	French
A nursing-aid/ a nursing assistant	
A nurse	
A male nurse	
A clinical nurse manager/ a matron	
A midwife/ a male midwife	
A surgeon	
A speech therapist	
A physiotherapy	
An occupational therapist	
A dietician	
A psychologist	
A chemist (GB)/ a pharmacist (US)	
A dentist	
A senior resident	
An attending physician	
A service chief	
A general practitioner (GB)/ a primary care physician/provider (US)	
A family doctor	
A locum	
An anesthetist (GB)/ anesthesiologist (US)	

Question 4: Write a short paragraph explaining the reasons behind choosing to study in paramedical higher education rather than university.