



The critical factors that influence faculty attitudes and perceptions of teaching English as Second Language nursing students: A grounded theory research study



Traci J. Starkey*

14 Windward Isle, Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33418, United States

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:
Accepted 20 January 2015

Keywords:
English as a Second Language
Diversity
Nurse faculty
Critical consciousness

SUMMARY

Background: As the demographics of the United States change, nursing will need to become more ethnically diverse in order to provide culturally responsive healthcare. Enrollment of English as Second Language nursing students is increasing; however, these students often encounter academic difficulties. The increase in English as Second Language nursing students in the classroom and clinical setting has posed challenges for nurse faculty. *Objective:* To explore the critical factors that influence faculty attitudes and perceptions of teaching English as Second Language nursing students.

Design: A grounded theory method based on the philosophical underpinnings of symbolic interactionism and pragmatism was used to explore the critical factors that influence faculty attitudes and perceptions of teaching English as Second Language nursing students.

Settings: The study took place at various schools of nursing in the Southeast Florida area.

Participants: Educators teaching in an associate, baccalaureate, and/or graduate nursing program at an accredited school of nursing.

Methods: Semi-structured interviews and a focus group were conducted to collect data from nurse faculty. Data segments from interviews were coded, categorized, and analyzed. Theoretical sampling and a focus group interview were used to validate the concepts, themes, and categories identified during the individual interviews. A substantive level theory was developed.

Results: The core category that developed was conscientization. The three dominant categories that emerged from the data were overcoming, coming to know, and facilitating. The theoretical framework of conscientization provided an explanation of the social processes involved in teaching English as Second Language nursing students.

Conclusions: The theoretical framework developed from this study can be used to increase the effectiveness of teaching English as Second Language nursing students, improve their chances of success, and enhance diversity in the nursing profession.

© 2015 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

Introduction

The changing demographics of the U.S. population have led to a shortage of racial and ethnic minorities in the healthcare workforce. According to the National Sample Survey of Registered Nurses, 65.6% of the U.S. population is non-Hispanic White, while 83.2% of RNs are non-Hispanic White (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2010). The American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN, 2011) and the Institute of Medicine (IOM, 2011) have recommended the need to increase diversity in the nursing workforce and in student populations.

Recruitment efforts have resulted in a growing number of diverse English as Second Language (ESL) nursing students. These students often have limited English proficiency, which can result in academic, language, and cultural barriers that impede their success in nursing programs. ESL students have been found to have higher rates of attrition and lower levels of academic achievement (Mullholland et al., 2008; Salamonson et al., 2008; Salamonson et al., 2011). Some of the common language barriers that ESL students face include difficulty understanding lecture material, reading comprehension, correlating written material with verbal lectures, interpreting colloquialisms, taking notes, and academic writing (Condrey and Derico, 2012). ESL students have also reported difficulty with teaching/learning methods, perceived inferiority, stereotyping and discriminatory practices, lack of faculty support, and the need for additional academic assistance (Donnelly et al. (2009a); Jeong et al., 2011; Junious et al., 2010). With the increasing

* Tel.: +1 561 301 7383.

E-mail addresses: traci.starkey@wgu.edu, tracijstarkey@gmail.com.

enrollment of ESL students, nurse educators need to be more actively involved in finding strategies to promote the success of these students. To gain a more in-depth understanding and explanation of this phenomenon, the critical factors that influence faculty's ability to effectively teach and facilitate the success of ESL students were investigated.

Background

The challenges ESL nursing students face related to language barriers are not only evident in the United States, but in other English-speaking countries as well. Australia, like the United States, has been experiencing increasing numbers of international students enrolling in nursing programs, with Asians comprising a significant proportion of the nursing student population (Wang et al., 2008). Wang et al. (2008) investigated the experiences of Taiwanese baccalaureate and graduate nursing students studying in Australia. Language difficulties were found in the areas of oral communication, reading, understanding, and writing. ESL students also reported a lack of cultural awareness and understanding from faculty, social isolation, and differences in teaching/learning styles. Sanner and Wilson (2008) had similar findings and revealed that ESL students perceived that the primary reason for failure was due to discrimination and stereotyping. ESL students felt the need to prove themselves due to assumptions of being weaker than the other students (Sanner and Wilson, 2008).

Jeong et al. (2011) investigated the experiences of culturally and linguistically diverse nursing students, academic faculty, and clinical staff in a baccalaureate nursing program in Australia. Four major themes were revealed: a) lack of English language competence, b) feelings of isolation, c) limited opportunities for learning, and d) inadequate academic support. Junious et al. (2010) explored the essence of stress and faculty support perceived by foreign-born students in a baccalaureate nursing program in Texas. Students reported stress and strain related to a lack of institutional support, difficulty with personal relationships, and financial issues. Donnelly et al. (2009a, 2009b) conducted two studies at a university in Canada in order to identify the factors that influence the academic performance of ESL nursing students from the perspectives of the students and from the perspectives of instructors. In the first study, Donnelly et al. (2009a) used a qualitative approach to focus on ESL student perceptions. Student challenges included limited language and writing skills, cultural differences, social isolation, perceived inferiority and discrimination, and lack of academic support. In the second study, Donnelly et al. (2009b) focused on faculty perspectives. Challenges for the instructors included a lack of university resources, concern for patient safety in the clinical setting, and balancing the needs of ESL and non-ESL students. The challenges of the students from the instructors' perspectives were the lack of university support and resources, lack of English proficiency, and cultural differences.

Though language and cultural barriers were prevalent throughout these studies, the lack of cultural understanding by faculty seemed to contribute to the negative feelings experienced by the students. Since only 12.6% of nursing faculty is from a minority background, it may be difficult for some educators to recognize the additional learning needs of diverse students (AACN, 2011), particularly those who have ESL. Some of the greatest frustrations and challenges for students and faculty relate to the language and communication differences that exist in the classroom Bednarz et al. (2010). The challenges that come with teaching a diverse student body may make it difficult for educators to teach all students equally and effectively. Challenges of teaching ESL nursing students may thus be amplified by faculty's lack of cultural competence, their inadequate preparation in teaching students with limited English proficiency, and the traditional pedagogical approaches that have been ingrained in nursing education. Rivera-Goba and Campinha-Bacote (2008) using a phenomenological approach to gain a deeper understanding of the experiences of Latina nursing students found that obstacles reported by ESL students included faculty's lack of cultural

competence, cultural ignorance, and bias held toward students with language differences.

Nursing education has often been criticized for its emphasis on objectivity and its lack of focus on how social and political differences can shape social practices, representations, and identifications (Bednarz et al., 2010; Campesino, 2012; Waite and Calamaro, 2009). This focus on objectivity has left little room for the consideration of the social, cultural, and language differences that exist in the classroom. Open dialogue, critique, and debate on cultural diversity topics tend to be discouraged. The NLN (2009) has called for higher education to reflect on the status quo through dialogue and discussion as a means to raise awareness to the need to assess decades of tradition and practice in nursing education. Since the faculty has the responsibility for instituting nursing curriculum, their perceptions and attitudes of teaching ESL students need to be explored. Generating theory from data grounded in faculty perspectives provided the insight that was needed to gain a better understanding of the interactional processes occurring between ESL nursing students and faculty.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this grounded theory study was to use an inductive approach to gain an in-depth explanation of the meaning of the critical factors that influence faculty attitudes and perceptions of teaching ESL nursing students. The overarching research questions were:

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 in teaching ESL nursing students?
3. How is student diversity affecting the attitudes and perceptions of faculty?

Method

The nature of a research problem lends itself to a particular paradigm and philosophical lens is used to help guide the inquiry. In view of the emphasis that this research problem placed on exploring interactional processes, it lent itself to the qualitative approach and the grounded theory method. The philosophical underpinnings of grounded theory are symbolic interactionism and pragmatism. Symbolic interactionism involves the meaning-making process and the construction of meanings as human beings engage in their world (Blumer, 1969). The meaning that the faculty has ascribed to the learning environment is the result of the interactions between previously ascribed meanings, meanings embedded in the institution, and meanings being newly constructed.

Pragmatism emphasizes the usefulness of practical knowledge over established theoretical frameworks. When studying the interactional processes of individuals within a social environment that is time and context dependent, an inductively developing theory can provide the most effective means of getting to the truth (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Therefore, the generation of theory provided a useful explanation of how student diversity is affecting the attitudes and perceptions of faculty.

The sample size for this study consisted of 16 participants: 13 participants for the individual interviews and 3 participants for the focus group. In order to select a purposive sample of participants who could offer valuable information to the problem under inquiry, nurse faculty who had experience teaching ESL students were chosen. Participants included full and part-time nurse faculty that were employed at various accredited schools of nursing in the Southeast Florida area.

Approval to initiate the study was obtained from Barry University Institutional Review Board (IRB). Any further IRB approvals from the various schools of nursing were sought as needed. Once IRB approval was granted, the Dean/Program Chair from each of the designated

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/367984>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/367984>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)