

## English Needs Analysis for Nursing Students: A Workplace Survey for Designing English for Nursing Purposes Materials

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### Article info

### Abstract

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*Need analysis is an important stage before designing the material English for Specific Purposes. The study aims to (1) identify the role of English in a healthcare setting (2) identify the need of English for nursing students in their workplace (3) design the appropriate syllabus for nursing students at Al-Irsyad University of Cilacap. The respondents were nurses studying for bachelor's at UNAIC and working in some health settings in Cilacap. A learner-centered learning approach was applied in this study. The result of the study showed they hardly ever practiced English in their workplace with a mean of reading (1,8), listening (1,6), writing (1,5), and speaking (1,3). The need of English for nursing in their workplace was neither rare in using. They had difficulties in learning four English skills with a mean for speaking (2,4), listening (2,3), reading (2,2), and writing (2,1). Nevertheless, they thought that English was important for them to obtain information, get a scholarship, and fulfill their personal needs. Some material topics were mentioned to learn during the nursing study such as checking identity bracelets and some therapeutic communication topics. Based on the result mentioned, the syllabus is then designed with the four skills in English and put them all in their learning.*

**Keywords:** English for Nursing Purposes, Need Analysis, Syllabus, Healthcare Setting

### Abstrak

Analisis kebutuhan merupakan tahap penting sebelum merancang materi English for Specific Purposes (ESP). Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk (1) mengidentifikasi peran bahasa Inggris dalam lingkungan layanan kesehatan, (2) mengidentifikasi kebutuhan bahasa Inggris bagi mahasiswa keperawatan di tempat kerja mereka, dan (3) merancang silabus yang sesuai untuk mahasiswa keperawatan di Universitas Al-Irsyad Cilacap. Responden penelitian ini adalah perawat yang sedang menempuh pendidikan sarjana di UNAIC dan bekerja di berbagai fasilitas kesehatan di Cilacap. Pendekatan pembelajaran yang berpusat pada peserta didik diterapkan dalam penelitian ini. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa mereka hampir tidak pernah mempraktikkan bahasa Inggris di tempat kerja, dengan rata-rata penggunaan keterampilan membaca (1,8), menyimak (1,6), menulis (1,5), dan berbicara (1,3). Kebutuhan penggunaan bahasa Inggris dalam pekerjaan keperawatan mereka tergolong tidak jarang digunakan. Mereka mengalami kesulitan dalam mempelajari empat keterampilan bahasa Inggris dengan rata-rata untuk berbicara (2,4), menyimak (2,3), membaca (2,2), dan menulis (2,1). Meskipun demikian, mereka menganggap bahwa bahasa Inggris penting bagi mereka untuk memperoleh informasi, mendapatkan beasiswa, serta memenuhi kebutuhan pribadi. Beberapa topik materi yang disebutkan untuk dipelajari selama studi keperawatan antara lain memeriksa gelang identitas pasien dan

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beberapa topik komunikasi terapeutik. Berdasarkan hasil tersebut, silabus kemudian dirancang dengan mengintegrasikan keempat keterampilan bahasa Inggris dan memasukkannya secara menyeluruh dalam proses pembelajaran.

**Kata Kunci:** Bahasa Inggris untuk Keperawatan, Analisis Kebutuhan, Silabus, Lingkungan Layanan Kesehatan

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## INTRODUCTION

English is being an important means of communication among nurses with their clients. Nurses are subjects who use communication as their routine to find out the problems' solutions analysis as the goal of their job (Moon et al., 2014). They need some preparation to go during their study in school, especially for their communication. Nursing students as learners need English learning to achieve competency in accordance with their respective fields (Hidayati & Meisani, 2023). They learn about the need for their study and workplace as their professionalism agreement. It states that "Learners of English as an auxiliary to academic or professional skills are generally more aware of what they want to use English for" (Mackay, R. & Mountford, 1978). The statement emphasizes that students are subjects who know exactly what their real needs are.

Since upcoming the Asean Economic Community (AEC) today, the industrial world continues to develop, including the industry in Cilacap regency. Quoting from Radar Banyumas newspaper (Nasyadin, 2018), the increase in the number of large investments in Cilacap is followed by the increase of foreign workers. They need health services in their daily life. For this reason, as a health practitioner, a nurse needs to have good communication skills, especially in terms of using English to serve patients in their workplaces such as hospitals, and other health services (Arifin et al., 2025). Therefore, the learning plan/ syllabus of English for Nursing Purposes (ENP) becomes very important as a reference and guideline for nursing student learning which is adjusted to the language needs in the workplace or health service.

The need of English for nurses in their workplace setting is still in high demand to be implemented. The previous qualitative research describes clearly that the nurses need effective communication skills in English to build trusting nurse–patient relationships and provide quality nursing care (Lu, 2018). Here speaking is highlighting skill to be mastered by nurses. Likewise, the English is needed when nurses have close communication with patients, especially when miscommunication could deal to serious medical errors (Hisako, 2018). It surveys vocabulary used in the nursing hospital most are “symptoms”, “body parts”, “body organs”. Other clinical experience needs by nurses are in terms of (1) Speech Production Accuracy, (2) Academic Performance, (3) Clinical Performance, (4) Dialect (Cultural) Variation, and (5) Inferencing Skills (Cameron, 1998). In addition, Indonesian students also need general English learning as a language of social interaction, preparing academic tests, behaviour learning in communication according to the Indonesian culture (Febriani, et al., 2019).

Some issues mention that nurses still have difficulties in applying the English in their daily job activities (Sasabone et al., 2024). Study conducted by Nurakhir reveals the nursing students problems in Indonesia for a number of reasons, naming speaking, limited vocabulary and poor grammar are most highly rated problems they perceived in their study (Nurakhir, 2018). Other study (Ching et al., 2020) also emphasizes on communication needs of nursing in clinical situations. Those would make an attention of English for nursing material purposes.

The curriculum of nursing which based on the Indonesian National Curriculum mentions the competencies for nursing students in mastering English. They are supposed to be able to communicate with therapeutic communication, write, read, and listen topics relate to nursing in English. They have to ensure their English skills. Teachers and learning designers need material investigation which is important for nursing students in order to achieve effective language learning. An analysis of students' needs is an appropriate concept to identify the English material for their study. The suggested syllabus from Bae's study (2017) contains topics, language functions, language strategies, and language focus.

Based on the various reasons mentioned above, the researcher formulates several questions in this study, they are (1) What is the role of English in the nursing workplace? (2) What are the English requirements for nursing students at their workplace? (3) What is the appropriate learning plan for nursing students at Al-Irsyad University of Cilacap (UNAIC)?

## **METHODS**

### **Research Approach**

This study employed a needs analysis research design within the framework of English for Specific Purposes (ESP). It adopted a descriptive quantitative approach supported by qualitative interview data. The quantitative data were obtained through structured questionnaires, while the qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews to enrich and validate the findings.

### **Research Instruments and Participants**

The researcher used interview and questionnaire as the instrument. Thirty-four nurses who are also students at UNAIC were randomly selected and given questionnaires. Five of them and two graduates' nursing students who worked overseas were chosen to be interviewed.

### **Interview Questions**

The questions of the interview were asking about the hospital/ nursing setting they worked, the period they had been working, their job position, the use of English in their workplace, how importance the English is used around the nursing workplace. Additionally, other questions were asked to the graduates' students who worked as an

overseas nurse in Belgium and Saudi Arabia related with nursing topic deal with the conversation in the workplace, the problem encountered during the interaction with native patient, the motivation to be a nurse in other country, the material should be learned by nursing students during study, how to behave and the attitude should have to be nurses abroad.

### **Use of Interview Data**

The results of the interview were used to complete the interpretation of information from the questionnaire data. It was formulated to gain the data of three research purposes.

#### **First Purpose**

First purpose described the role of English in the nursing workplace. It observed the frequencies and roles of English used in the nursing workplace. The questionnaires asked about the English language used and the frequency of English skill used in the nursing workplace (hospital, health community service, clinic, etc.). The used of English in the workplace consisted of the frequency of speaking English with native patients, Indonesians, coworkers; communicating with English in the workplace by phone, and by e-mail or chatting. The frequency of English skill used were about the frequency of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. And the last questionnaires for describing this first purpose was about the English achievements in respondents' workplace and daily live for career success, getting/ exchanging information, scholarship, personal needs.

#### **Second Purpose**

Second purpose analyzed the English requirements for nursing students during the study which were used in the nursing workplace. It explained the categories of using English in the nursing workplace. The questionnaires asked about the respondents' ability in learning English in four language skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

#### **Third Purpose**

The last purpose designed for formulating the learning syllabus of English for Nursing Purposes (ENP). The questionnaires asked about material English topics to learn by nursing students which were used in the nursing workplace. The list of the materials' topic on the questionnaire were adapted from previous research (Bae, 2017). The interviewing data from the graduates' students gave importance respond to identify the material needed in designing the syllabus because they gave a real experience about English around their nursing workplace. It also observed the trends of using English in the nursing workplace.

## Data Analysis

Data from interviews and questionnaires were analyzed in quantitative descriptive type. The results of both data were used to guide and then design the syllabus of English language learning on campus. The researcher with the English team teaching at campus formulated the syllabus using the identified materials from the result of data questionnaires and also some facts and suggestions from interviewing result of this study. After that, it was presented in front of nursing department in curriculum reviewing meeting to be checked for suitability and approved. The approving syllabus design then was informed and implemented in the class.

## Data Analysis Procedure

The data analysis procedure was done in some steps using an average score as listed below.

**Table 1. Data procedure analysis**

Score	Frequency	Difficulty	Importance
1	Never	Easy	Unimportant
2	Rare	Medium	Less important
3	Often	Difficult	Important
4	Always	Very difficult	Very important

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

The role of English used in daily nursing workplace and health services in Cilacap according to respondents who are nurses is still very limited. English is rarely used in the workplace both to patients and colleagues. According to respondents, up to now, there has not been found any native patients (English speakers) who require them to communicate in English and all those around them both patients and coworkers are Indonesian. Based on the average scores below, respondents often practice with reading on nursing forms which are in English compared to other skills that are very rarely used in their workplaces.

Table 2. The frequency of English skills is used at work

Skill	Total	Mean
Listening	56	1,6
Speaking	44	1,3
Reading	62	1,8
Writing	52	1,5

The use of English is rarely used at work. From the perspective of the respondents they never speak English with native nor Indonesian patients, colleagues

neither indirect way, telephone, e-mail or chat with a mean of 1,3; 1,2; and 1,1. As such they communicate rarely with English in their workplace.

Table 3. Use of English in the workplace

Skill	Total	Mean
Speak English with native patients	45	1,3
Speak English with Indonesian people	40	1,2
Speak English with coworkers	42	1,2
Communicate in English in the workplace	40	1,1
Communicate in English by phone	38	1,1
Communicate in English by e-mail or chatting	43	1,2

The list of the most important things mastering English based on the results of the questionnaire is, first to get or exchange information, to get a scholarship, to gain personal needs such as being able to speak English in daily life, and success in a career. It can be concluded that they consider to learn English more since they need many information for their daily profession life.

Table 4. The importance of mastering English in the nursing workplace

Skill	Total	Mean
Career success	97	2,7
Get/ exchange information	103	2,9
Get scholarship	99	2,8
Personal needs	97	2,7

Based on a questionnaire to measure the level of difficulty of respondents in learning English, the respondents answer with the category of difficult and moderate. It was found that speaking is the most difficult skill to learn. While listening, reading, and writing obtained in turns below it. It can be concluded that respondents still find difficulties and need to learn the four English skills.

Table 5. Ability to learn English

Skill	Total	Mean
Listening	81	2,3
Speaking	83	2,4
Reading	76	2,2
Writing	75	2,1

The English syllabus design is formulated based on the identifying materials from the result data in questionnaires and also interview. Material topics that need to be studied by students based on the results of the questionnaire are in the top is checking

identity bracelet. The topics below are in sequences of greeting/ welcoming patients, giving directions, asking patient details/ information, checking vital signs, giving instructions to patients, giving advice/ suggestions, and therapeutic communication have the same important role to be learned in English for nursing students. Meanwhile, daily conversation, patient observation, and others need are listed after. Unfortunately, respondents did not write the specific requirements needed in the choice of having others need. In the lowest choices is filling patient admission.

The interview with some nurses shows in line with the data result from the questionnaires. They need to learn all skills in English to gain the information from any sources in supporting their daily work. They mention all of those need to practice and prepare during study.

Another interview with the graduate students who work in Belgium and Saudi Arabia mentions that nurses there use English and their countries' language in their communication in the nursing setting such as in the hospital. The topic they interact with patients depends on what is going on that day, which kind of cases do they have like cancer, dementia, etc. Checking vital signs is an important thing to follow up. Generally Standard Operational Procedures (SOP) is not so much different if they would compare to Indonesian SOP, but the mentality of workers is the thing that learners should be trained better. They describe them as people who are so disciplined, diligent, punctual, and assertive. Those what learners should learn about.

They told that it was not easy in the beginning, but now they describe as like habit. It was kind a challenging being surrounded by people with different races, languages, cultures. And they just needed something that they had to improve. From those data, list of topic will be a guidance to determine the syllabus of ESP for Nursing.

Table 6. Material topics that need to be studied

Skill	Total	Mean
Filling patient admission	94	2,7
Conversation	98	2,8
Greeting / welcoming patient	100	2,9
Giving direction	101	2,9
Asking patient details	101	2,9
Checking identity bracelet	105	3
Patient observation	99	2,8
Vital signs	102	2,9
Giving instruction to the patient	100	2,9
Giving advice and suggestion	100	2,9
Therapeutic communication	101	2,9
Giving injection	98	2,8
Lainnya	97	2,8

English learning plans for nursing students based on the results of this study of need analysis above mention all skills in English, they are speaking, listening, reading, and writing. The material topics that need to be included in the English learning plan for nursing are asking patient identity bracelet, greeting / welcoming patient, giving directions, asking patient details/information, checking vital signs, giving instructions to patient, giving advice and suggestions, therapeutic communication, daily conversations, patient observation, giving injection, as well as other material topics that the respondents did not specify to mention. However, this choice becomes an important criterion for them to be studied. For that reason, the author interprets other topics not mentioned that can still be included in the learning plan which has a correlation and the benefits for learning English in nursing. The last topic the respondent mentioned was filling patient admission. For the author this is also important, considering the results of the questionnaire that indicate an important category for respondents.

## **Discussion**

### **The Role of English in the workplace**

Representing the role of English in the nursing workplace, it is described by looking of the data of English used in the workplace, the frequency of having four skills in English language around nursing workplace, and the importance of English should achieve in respondents' job and daily life.

The use of English is rarely used at work. From the perspective of the respondents they never speak English with native nor Indonesian patients, colleagues neither indirect way, telephone, e-mail or chat. As such they communicate rarely with English in their workplace. It is also mentioned in the previous result research conducted by Bae (2017) stated that graduate students almost never use English as a mean of communication in hospitals. I can assume that the situation is not used to be the daily culture around the nursing workplace generally in Indonesia.

The role of English used in daily nursing workplace and health services in Cilacap according to respondents who are nurses is still very limited. English is rarely used in the workplace both to patients and colleagues. According to respondents, up to now, there has not been found any native patients (English speakers) who require them to communicate in English and all those around them both patients and coworkers are Indonesian. Based on the result above, respondents often practice with reading on nursing forms which are in English compared to other skills that are very rarely used in their workplaces. The English role is also known from how importance of using English is in the nursing workplace and daily life. It represents how English has the role to achieve the target plan either in the job or daily life.

Respondents assume that English is important for them to master. The list of the most important things mastering English based on the results of the questionnaire is, first to get or exchange information, to get a scholarship, to gain personal needs such as being able to speak English in daily life, and success in a career. It can be concluded

that they consider to learn English more since they need many information for their daily profession life. That information is provided a lot in the global world which is written in using global language of English. And it is also as a sign to the education purposes in applying and improving the English as their education curriculum to overcome the solution of their difficulties of mastering the English.

### **English requirements to study for nursing students in school**

The difficulties in learning English are still found during the study at school. It was found that speaking is the most difficult skill to learn. While listening, reading, and writing obtained in turns below it. It can be concluded that respondents still find difficulties and need to learn the four English skills. Not only the area of English which nurses have to learn but also they need elaboration learning to study about attitude and behavior for their services work.

### **Language functions/topic materials which need to learn in school and use in the nursing workplace**

The English syllabus design is formulated based on the identifying materials from the result data in questionnaires and also interview. Material topics that need to be studied by students based on the results of the questionnaire are in the top is checking identity bracelet. The topics below are in sequences of greeting/ welcoming patients, giving directions, asking patient details/ information, checking vital signs, giving instructions to patients, giving advice/ suggestions, and therapeutic communication have the same important role to be learned in English for nursing students (Wu et al., 2020). Meanwhile, daily conversation, patient observation, and others need are listed after. Unfortunately, respondents did not write the specific requirements needed in the choice of having others need. In the lowest choices is filling patient admission (Hekmati et al., 2020).

The interview with some nurses shows in line with the data result from the questionnaires. They need to learn all skills in English to gain the information from any sources in supporting their daily work. They mention all of those need to practice and prepare during study.

Another interview with the graduate students who work in Belgium and Saudi Arabia mentions that nurses there use English and their countries' language in their communication in the nursing setting such as in the hospital. The topic they interact with patients depends on what is going on that day, which kind of cases do they have like cancer, dementia, etc. Checking vital signs is an important thing to follow up. Generally Standard Operational Procedures (SOP) is not so much different if they would compare to Indonesian SOP, but the mentality of workers is the thing that learners should be trained better. They describe them as people who are so disciplined, diligent, punctual, and assertive. Those what learners should learn about.

They told that it was not easy in the beginning, but now they describe as like habit. It was kind a challenging being surrounded by people with different races, languages, cultures. And they just needed something that they had to improve.

### **Learning Plan or syllabus which is suitable for nursing students at UNAIC**

English learning plans for nursing students based on the results of this study of need analysis above mention all skills in English, they are speaking, listening, reading, and writing. The material topics that need to be included in the English learning plan for nursing are asking patient identity bracelet, greeting / welcoming patient, giving directions, asking patient details/information, checking vital signs, giving instructions to patient, giving advice and suggestions, therapeutic communication, daily conversations, patient observation, giving injection, as well as other material topics that the respondents did not specify to mention (Ibrahim et al., 2024). However, this choice becomes an important criterion for them to be studied. For that reason, the author interprets other topics not mentioned that can still be included in the learning plan which has a correlation and the benefits for learning English in nursing. The last topic the respondent mentioned was filling patient admission. For the author this is also important, considering the results of the questionnaire that indicate an important category for respondents.

The previous research suggests that Social English is more important because it is closely related to the ability/communication skills to patients and improves personal language skills (Kayaoglu & Akbas, 2016). It supports the statement of this result study and is very useful for completing the material syllabus of ENP. The result interview also suggests to elaborate learning on how to behave in giving good service to patient and their loved ones. Attitude is very important to apply as giving the clients in a good feeling. After the author compiled and socialized in class, all respondents gave positive responses to the design of the learning plan as the result of the study.

### **CONCLUSION**

The role of English used in daily nursing workplace and health services in Cilacap is still very limited. Nurses often practice with reading on nursing forms which are in English compared to other skills that are very rarely used in their workplaces. Event they still get difficult to learn English language skills, however they consider that English is important to master. It is useful for exchanging information, getting scholarships, personal needs for conversation, and for career success. English is very essential for them to master. For this reason, the design of a learning plan that is adjusted to the need for English language analysis in the nursing workplace is very helpful for the teacher team to create good English learning plan for nursing. Not only the skill of English but also attitude and behavior should apply in the learning process. the students have a positive response to the topic of material included in the learning plan as a result of this research's need analysis.

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