

ESP NEEDS ANALYSIS FOR MIDWIFERY STUDENTS: A LEARNER CENTERED APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

English as the international language has affected many domains of life and society. The midwifery learners in STIKes Prima had previous experiences of learning English for about six years. Still their level of proficiency in English was not so good. The purpose of this study is to find out the needs and wants required for effective professional communication in English writing and speaking proficiency for midwifery students at STIKes Prima, Jambi. The study attempts to investigate the needs of students, analyses the existing teacher content and pedagogical knowledge and finally suggest to compromise with the learner demands in terms of the context situations and other barriers. To do so the subjects were invited to provide their opinions through a set of questionnaire containing 20 close ended questions. From the study result, the ESP course should include problem solution based pair and group works, mandatory use of target language in class, prompt and preparatory class presentations, dialogues related to the clinical history and medical situation, instructions, telephone conversations, procedures description and viva voce in addition to writing may be introduced. For selection of course materials an instructor should consult different sources. The design of course materials will depend on the instructor's discretion on the basis of learners' needs. The course teachers should deliver the instructional materials not only face to face, but also using Internet and multimedia presentations with sound system. Hopefully based on this finding, ESP needs analysis will perhaps contribute greatly to the development of midwifery students' English proficiency in writing and speaking.

Keywords: ESP, needs analysis, learner demands, effective professional communication

INTRODUCTION

English is the language that mainly used in many fields. And of these fields perhaps education is the most significant one. The evidence to it is the inclusion of English as a compulsory course at different levels of education. Especially for health field, being able to communicate is an essential skill for all health professionals. Midwives need to communicate so they can find out about the people in their care by taking a clinical history, give them information about their care and teach them about managing their pregnancy and illness. The needs of rapid communication being what they are today, proficiency in a common language is a necessity. It is no matter of wonder that local organizations at present prefer employees with better proficiency in writing and speaking English. Accordingly, our students want to prepare themselves fit for the job market by learning English better.

The midwifery students of STIKES Prima study the courses on English for Specific Purposes focus on Communication that concentrates on their needs for writing and speaking proficiency.

Hence, the first step in improving their proficiency in writing and speaking is to identify their specific learning needs as stated by K. Westerfield, "A thorough organizational and instructional needs assessment lies at the heart of a well-designed, effective ESP course".

The term ESP stands for English for Specific Purposes. It is a linguistic field of study that addresses the immediate and very specific needs of learners for a target language which is required for academic or professional purposes. It is a subdivision of Language for Specific Purposes (LSP), which J. Swales define that as, "...the area of inquiry and practice in the development of language programs for people who need a language to meet a predictable range of communicative needs". Therefore, communicative competence is a very significant issue in ESP.

Hence, a number of terms and phrases are very important for ESP. Those are specific needs, language skills, designed for specific disciplines, and designed for adult learners. Accordingly, Hutchinson and Waters maintain that what

distinguishes ESP from general English is an awareness of the need. Again Robinson views, "ESP first arose, and has continued to develop, in response to a need: the need of non-native speakers of the language to use it for some clearly defined practical purpose. As purposes change, so must ESP".

The purposes of this study were to identify the needs and demands of the midwifery learners of STIKes Prima in improving their English writing and speaking proficiency and accordingly develop teacher content and pedagogical knowledge in teaching English Communication for midwives. To do so the study investigated types of problems midwifery students face in improving their proficiency in English writing and speaking, sorts of teaching aids they demand from their ESP instructors, types of materials they think their ESP course should include and the roles their ESP facilitators should play for coping up with their demands.

Since this investigation was conducted with an aim to improving the writing and speaking English proficiency of the subjects it is hoped that it will benefit the midwifery students greatly in their future professional communication. It will also be of assistance to their ESP facilitators in developing a learner-centered curriculum and delivering instructions accordingly. Furthermore, it will guide STIKes Prima to realize the needs for reorganizing the current facilities for ESP courses in terms of the learners' needs and demands.

METHODOLOGY

Every situation is dissimilar. So, there is no single approach to needs analysis in foreign language teaching. Hutchinson and Waters view, "The choice of method will depend on time and resources available and the procedures of each will depend on accessibility". Qualitative method was used in this study. The information was collected through a questionnaire because it seemed to be the most appropriate tool for gathering the views and demands of the learners. A closed end interview was also conducted with a few chosen subjects in order to

verify the data collected from the questionnaire. However, the interview data were not recorded in the findings and results.

A pilot survey for this research initially included 120 participants chosen randomly from midwifery programs of STIKES Prima. The participants were enrolled in short semesters in 2016.

The questionnaire of this research conformed to face and content validity. It contained three sections – part 1: 6 questions, part 2: 7 questions and part 3: 7 questions. Part 1 was developed to analyze the Target Situation, part 2 was developed to analyze the Present Situation and part 3 to analyze the Context Situation. The participants chose their answers from multiple options each question set. However, in a few questions the respondents could pick more than one option if they liked.

The frequency of the subjects' opinions and views about their needs and wants for improving their English proficiency in writing and speaking were treated as data. The statistical devices used for analyzing those data were arithmetic means, percentage and frequency distribution.

THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY

Part I of the questionnaire investigated about the Target Situation of the subjects. Most of the respondents (51.4%) belonged to 20-21 age group and all participants (100%) were females. It was found that most of the respondents (65%) had an average level of proficiency in the target language, i.e. English. The second question found that nearly all (78%) needed to learn Advanced English Communication for their future profession. Next, the largest number of learners (92%) voted that the language would be used for both writing and speaking. However, a good number of them (55%) realized that they would use the language for face to face communication also. The third necessary communication (53%) where the language would be required was voted as the clinical history. Afterward, the largest portion of the learners (71%) demanded that the content areas should be related to personal care of the patients

because majority of them would work as midwives in the hospital, health centre and birthing centre. Again maximum subjects (55%) chose that the language would be used in field level and majority of them (45%) would use it alone. The second highest number of respondents (39%) realized that they would require the language to use for demonstrations to the patient. The last question of this section inquired when and how often the language will be used. Maximum learners (75%) said that the language would be used after completion of their studies and they would use it often in their profession as well as in social life.

The second section of the questionnaire surveyed the Present Situation of the ESP learners. The highest number of participants (65%) viewed that they were good in writing while maximum (57%) said that they were average in speaking. Next question found that most of them (70%) could write grammatically correct sentence and maximum (50%) could speak with grammatical correctness. About their weaknesses the majority (89%) said that they could not produce analytical, coherent and cohesive writing while the second largest participants (74%) told that they failed to create well-organized paragraphs. Regarding weaknesses in speaking all of them (100%) agreed that they could not speak in context, with fluency and intonation. The second highest number of respondents (85%) failed to speak fluently and the third highest (78%) had problem with speaking in context. After that, 92%, picked up the option that they lacked the skill of job interview. Next, the largest part (46%) answered that their past language learning experiences were average. The last question of this section inquired about their purpose of doing Communication in health field. Nearly everyone (63%) replied that their purpose was to develop professional communication in writing and speaking.

The third and last section of this questionnaire surveyed on the Context, the environment where the language learning would take place. In answer to the first question, 80% participants chose the option that the instructional materials

should be delivered not only face to face, but also using Internet and multimedia presentation with sound system. To answer the second question, majority (73%) viewed that the Communication course should be held in a classroom which would be Internet and multimedia facilitated with sound system and decorated with posters and maps with speaking and writing tips, phrases and idioms, puzzles, vocabulary learning tips, etc. Next, maximum (51%) learners voted for the option that attendance should be mandatory and a part of course evaluation. The sixth question was about selection of course materials. The majority (86%) of the respondents said that the course materials should be chosen from different sources like textbooks, instruction/equipment manuals, CDs, DVDs, videotapes, and other materials used in content courses or to train people for a job; materials used on a job, such as work forms, charts and samples of relevant course assignments and student papers; and from websites providing dialogues, instructions, telephone conversations, podcasts, vodcasts, etc. In answer to the last question of the questionnaire, the highest no. of learners (73%) viewed that the course classes should be held in the early hours of the morning or evening.

From the results of the study a number of important facts could be found. The learners had an average level of proficiency in the target language, i.e. English. So they needed to learn English Communication for use in their future profession in their home country mainly. And they would use their communication proficiency for writing as well as for oral communication.

The content areas of English Communication should be related to medical English because in future they would work as midwife in their fields. Though many of them could write and speak correctly, they were better in writing than speaking. Moreover, they could not produce analytical, coherent and cohesive writing and often failed to create well-organized paragraphs. None of them could speak in context, with fluency and intonation. Therefore, improvement of

writing and speaking skills are very urgent for them.

The instructional materials should be delivered not only face to face, but also using Internet and multimedia presentations with sound system. Therefore, a classroom with Internet and multimedia facilities along with sound system and decorated with posters and maps with speaking and writing tips, phrases and idioms, puzzles, vocabulary learning tips, etc. was required. Attendance in the course classes should be mandatory and an integral part of course evaluation. The course materials should be chosen from different sources like textbooks, instruction equipment manuals, CDs, DVDs, videotapes, and other materials used in content courses or to train people for a job; materials used on a job, such as work forms, charts and samples of relevant course assignments and student papers; as well as materials from websites like dialogues, instructions, telephone conversations, pod-casts, vodcasts, etc. The course classes should be held in the early hours of the morning or evening.

CONCLUSION

The midwifery students need to learn HealthEnglish Communication for use in their future job profession. Thereby, focus should be given on both writing and speaking skill. Hence, they should be exposed to extensive writing and speaking practices in and outside classroom. Accordingly, Task Based Instructions (TBI), problem solution based pair and group works, mandatory use of target language in class, prompt and preparatory class presentations, dialogues related to medical situation, instructions, telephone conversations, procedures description and viva voce in addition to writing may be introduced. For selection of course materials an instructor should consult different sources like textbooks, instruction/ equipment manuals, CDs, DVDs, videotapes, materials used in content courses or to train people for a job, materials used on a job, such as work forms, charts and samples of relevant course assignments and student papers; and related websites which provide

dialogues, instructions, telephone conversations, pod-casts, vodcasts, etc. Since there is time constraint, the design of course materials will depend on the instructor's discretion on the basis of learners' needs. And the summative assessment of the course should include both writing and speaking proficiency. Moreover, attendance in the course classes should be declared mandatory and made a vital part of course evaluation.

The course teachers should deliver the instructional materials not only face to face, but also using Internet and multimedia presentations with sound system. It is better in the teaching and learning process, the classroom should be provided with Internet and multimedia facilities along with sound system and decorated with posters and maps with speaking and writing tips, phrases and idioms, puzzles, vocabulary learning tips, etc. Regarding the class schedules, the early hours of the morning or evening are preferred which may aid learners absorb and learn the course materials better.

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