



**NURSING CARE REPORTING:
AN IMPLEMENTED CONTEXTUAL LEARNING
TO ENHANCE NURSING STUDENTS' WRITING SKILL
AND ATTITUDES TOWARD ENGLISH**

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Abstract

Giving vocational students meaningful writing experiences is very crucial in terms of how and what to write. Contextual learning seems to bemuse any English teachers, especially for vocational education, that writing might become enjoyable and meaningful. Considering English as specific purposes (ESP), English for nursing students meets the same problems. When the time and interest are spent much for nursing learning materials and process, English has become such a difficult and queer “matter” to learn, moreover the English writing. This situation otherwise has the teacher to provide writing experiences which are able to promote not only the writing skill but also the attitude toward English of the nursing students. Thereupon, this paper focuses on to what extent and how nursing care reporting, as implemented contextual learning, is able to enhance the students' writing skill and attitudes toward writing. For evidential explanation, some research results are inserted.

Keywords: nursing care reporting, contextual learning, nursing English, attitudes toward English, English writing

INTRODUCTION

The technology development in nursing science gives challenges for any nursing education institutions in Indonesia to boost the quality of their nursing students. The quality comes from many aspects of the students, not only nursing skills but also soft skills which the students are expected to be able to compete in this globalization era. Soft skills commonly cover the ability of using technology, character building, and also the skills of using foreign languages actively.

In other cases, nursing education institutions in Indonesia also face the tight defiance and competition due to the big number of the institutions. Data show that there have been so many nursing education institutions in Indonesia. *Direktorat Jenderal Dikti Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan (Ditjen Dikti Kemdikbud)*, or Directorate General of Higher Education, Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia, (2011) reports that there are around 308 private nursing academic programs and 279 private nursing graduate programs in Indonesia. The data simply shows that there have been many nursing education institutions in Indonesia nowadays.

In South Sumatera, meanwhile, the data ascertain that there are seven nursing academic programs and seven nursing graduate programs (Ditjen Dikti Kemdikbud, 2011, p. 89). As the result, Ditjen Dikti Kemdikbud notes that there are about 29.920 nursing graduates in Indonesia and 1.730 nursing graduates in South Sumatera in 2009. Meanwhile, there have been more than “17.400 nurses spread in South Sumatera” (p. 91). It shows that the nursing graduates or outcomes in Indonesia, especially South Sumatera, are not comparable with the job availability. The data and the unexpected



possibility of this situation seem to give more challenges to the institutions to enhance their outcomes' quality and, not less important, to provide job demands for them.

One idea the institutions have chosen to avoid unemployment of their fresh graduates is to promote the students to work abroad. The data from *Badan Nasional Penempatan dan Perlindungan Tenaga Kerja Indonesia (BNP2TKI)*, or Indonesian National Board for the Placement and Protection of Indonesian Overseas Workers, (2012) showed that the United Kingdom still needs more than 9.000 nursing staffs in 2013, while Japan needs around 15.000, and many other countries in the United States of America and Middle East still provide many nursing job vacancies. The data underline that some countries abroad still open the wide opportunity for nursing students to work in those countries.

In order to fill those vacancies, the nursing students need not only nursing skills but also English language skills for them to communicate well. Considering the role of English as a global language, English no longer becomes the urgent need of the students to master. TIM BNP2TKI (2012) reports that the most problem of Indonesian nursing staffs when they work abroad does not lie on their skills but meanly the English language competency as the means of communication.

English For Nursing Purposes

Responding the needs of English for nursing students, English for specific purposes (ESP) for English as a second language (ESL) and English as a foreign language (EFL) students has been developed for many decades all over the world. In Indonesia as a non-English-speaking country, ESP is developed through the good understanding that English is the students' foreign language and should match the students' real needs in their field. ESP may vary in the name of the program; the name depends on the program or the major, i.e. English for secretary, English for technician, English for nursing students, Economics English, etc.

In the challenge of bringing the students to learn English as an international language, teachers of ESP should be ready with many kinds of instruction or teaching methods which are beneficial for their students. Before coming to how to teach, the primary thing to bother about is what the students should learn and what they are expected to able to by the end of the certain English programs. It shows teachers should consider both the intended competences and how the students are able to achieve the competences successfully and meaningfully.

Considering those things to prepare, English activities for nursing students are not easy to provide. Teachers as the one who takes responsibility in giving the students experience of learning should consider English as not only the foreign language but also learning process in specific purposes. As the consequence, all planning and class activities should be comprehended along with English teaching-learning for nursing purposes. In order to getting well prepared with ESP program, English teachers should see the specific needs of the English program for the students. The program here should be designed carefully to meet the students' particular needs in the context of nursing for the students' nursing profession. The designing process is becoming more crucial where the students are not regarded as the native English speakers. It gives the challenge to nursing English teachers as well to provide learning activities which are meaningful for their professional and able to gain their interest towards English as their foreign language.

In addition to English as a foreign language and English for specific purposes, English language teaching should also be understood in the good perspective of language as a means for communication. In relation to teaching, that principle is put in the effective process of teaching and learning. English, as one language to teach and learn, should be placed in three major language usages



and domains, i.e. English as a mother tongue, English as a foreign language, and English as a second language. It means that English is necessarily learned as foreign language, parallel to other foreign languages such as Mandarin, Japanese, and Arabic.

TIM KBK AIPNI, or AIPNI team for Competence Based Curriculum (2010) states that English is the required subject in the Nursing Science Study Program; AIPNI stands for *Asosiasi Institusi Pendidikan Ners Indonesia*, or Association of Indonesian Nurse Education Center. Thereupon, many nursing education institutions have regulated the importance of English in academic guidelines book as the main additional competences. STIKesPerdhakiCharitas Palembang, for instance, regards English as the main local content of the insituttin (STIKesPerdhakiCharitas Palembang, 2012, p. 52). In that institution, the students learn English in 8 credits during finishing their study in their study program.

The names of English subject must clearly be derived from the importance of English for the students. Each vocational institution, even study program, designs and names the English programs based on the major. It means the program and the name may vary from one institution to another. Comparing to the needs of English learning, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) identify three key reasons commonly to the importance of all ESP, which are “the demands of a Brave New World, a revolution in linguistics, and focus on the learner”.

Nursing Care Reporting And Contextual Learning

The contextual learning theory has been defined by many experts. As the word defines itself, it can be easily understood that the theory merely provides teaching and learning activities which are contextual to the learners. Some experts define contextual teaching and learning as a concept that helps teachers and students relate the meaning and real world situations with the subject matter in the right way (Johnson, 2002; Sears, 2002). In other words, this theory motivates the learners to learn some materials depending on the their context and to relate between knowledge and its application to the various contexts of their lives.

In its implementation, there are some teaching strategies associated with contextual learning, as proposed by Berns and Erickson (2001), as follows: problem based learning, cooperative learning, service learning, work based learning, project based learning, and REACT (Relating, Experiencing, Applying, Cooperating, and Transferring) strategies. Those strategies are able to be adopted in implementing contextual learning. In this paper, the piece of teaching design is elaborated in the teaching procedure.

Nursing care reporting is associated with contextual teaching and learning because the teaching and learning activities involve the students’ learning material context. This nursing care is considered a new writing because the form or the product of the writing is different from what is going to be expected in English subject. The intended form of the writing will be more closely with report. The standard of the writing must meet the nursing process, which consist of four steps: assessment, diagnosis, planning, implementation, and evaluation (Potter & Perry, 2004).

The first step of writing the nursing care is assessment, as the process to collect the data toward the patient. After the assessment, the nurse should diagnose the patient through the data mentioned by the assessment. In nursing context, Potter and Perry (2004) suggest that the diagnosis should be based on the diagnosis classification and definition of the North American Nursing Diagnoses Association (NANDA). After diagnosing the sickness or disease of the patient, the nurse will decide which care measures are appropriate for the patient. In this phase, the nurse plan the treatment, intervention and rationales. After planning, the nurse comes into the implementation.



Having a good preparation for implementation ensures “efficient, safe, and effective nursing” (Potter & Perry, 2004, p. 344). The last phase of all is evaluation, where the nurse determines whether the use of the nursing process is effective.

A study conducted by some lecturers from University of Indonesian Education (UPI) concerned on the implementation of contextual learning method to teach English writing and aimed to investigate the strategies and the advantages of the implementation of contextual learning (Satriani, Emilia, & Gunawan, 2012). The writers of the study implemented contextual teaching through REACT strategy based on Crawford’s theory; REACT stands for Relating, Experiencing, Applying, Cooperating, and Transferring. In the end, the research found out that contextual learning was proved to be able to improve the students’ writing manners, writing composition, and writing interest, motivation, and attitude. Besides, the implementation could help the students summarize and reflect the lesson, solve their problems and build their social skills.

The findings of that study seems to give a proof that contextual learning is simply believed to be able to influence the students’ self-attitudes. As a result, this learning strategy is commonly applied when there are some problems about attitudes, not except motivation. In this paper, the contextual learning strategy is collaborated with nursing care reposting as the media. The collaboration is detailed on teaching procedure.

Learning Attitude, English, And Writing Skill

Some experts, or psychologists, define attitude as a tendency or inclination to behave in a certain way. For example, Lefrancois (1983) as stated by Ruggiero (1998) writes, “An attitude is typically defined as a prevailing and consistent tendency to reach in a given way” (p. 9). It maintains that an attitude is not a feeling at all but a thought, more specifically an opinion. In Ruggiero’s viewpoint (1998, p. 13), “an attitude is a habitual emotional response driven by belief... Beliefs are ideas we hold to be true”. Unlike feelings and tendencies, an attitude can be clearly indentified and articulated.

Discussing the importance of attitude in the teaching-learning context, Elyildirim and Ashton (2006) prove that most members of the language teaching profession realize that their students’ learning potential increases when attitude is positive. It shows that there is correlation between attitude and students’ learning achievement. Harmer (2004) states, “One of obstacles that writing teachers have to overcome, at times, is a reluctance of the part of their students to engage in writing activities with any enthusiasm” (p. 61). It certainly shows that activities should make the students enthusiastic, build their confidence and make them feel comfortable with writing. In other words, attitude, which covers beliefs, can be taught and since it includes behaviors, it can be observed based on certain situation. Purwanto (1998) similarly classifies the characteristics of attitude into five; they are an attitude is not permanent but it is formed and learned, an attitude can change, an attitude is not independent – always related to the objects or things, the object of attitudes can be single or in a group or cluster, and attitude has motivational and emotional aspects.

In general, since the attitude cannot be assessed, the indicators of its achievement are surely required. Therefore, as some former researchers found out, the writing attitude is assessed through the students’ beliefs and behaviors toward the writing activities in the classroom (Rokeach, 1980; Purwanto, 1998; Azwar, 2003; Harmer, 2004; Ruggiero, 2004). Then, the writing beliefs and behaviors are formulated in statements for student questionnaire. The questionnaire is adopted from Writing Attitude Survey (WSA) developed by Kear, Coffman McKenna, and Ambrosio (2000). They say that the Writing Attitude Survey provides a quick indication of student attitudes toward writing



English for nursing purposes, as being observed in a nursing education institution in Palembang, South Sumatera, especially dealing with teaching English writing, meets some common teaching-learning problems, first the students' assumption that English is not their major to learn, and second the definite needs to improve and their tendency to use *Google Translate* in order to create English sentences. Then, nursing field gives them difficulties on finding an interesting topic to write. Those attitudes can be changed into positive, according to Azwar (2003). It is also proved by Boughton, Halliday, and Brown (2010) that when all skills of English language seem to be recovered, it is indicating that they require significant levels of support to not only achieve academically in their nursing program, but also to perform English abilities at the expected level during clinical placements.

An obvious strategy to help the students' writing improvement is to give the students appropriate and "touchable" writing learning activities. As Harmer (2004) and Muschla (2006) suggest and prove that giving the students learning experiences, which are closely related to their major, context, and situation, is more effective in teaching rather than giving them experiences in doing something which is the students rarely get deal with. They seem to give suggestions for any teacher, especially English teachers, to give the students relevant learning experiences to their need. Therefore, in this study, the researcher wants to relate the English writing material and activities with other subject the students learn.

A research conducted by Lee (2000), as a reference, tried to see why the students need English for nursing purposes, what language skills to develop in order to perform their professional tasks and study, and what their response toward the program. By the end of the study, he found out that the students did need English merely for their professional. relating to what to learn, the result showed that medical college, Kang Ning Junior College of Nursing, should give the students the experience to learn the four language skills, English terminologies and prefixes/suffixes of medical terms to fulfill students' needs. Besides, the data from the attitude questionnaire revealed that more than 77%, or 290 of 379 students, had a positive attitude toward English for nursing purposes.

The study about the implementation of contextual learning also mentions attitudes in its result. It shows that attitude takes a role in students' learning. Even it has become such a big assumption among researchers that having a positive attitude is the most important thing to master the subject being learned. Aik and Tway (2006) clarify that "If learners have negative attitudes towards learning, instead of having the positive one, this can make it more difficult to learn" (p. 30). This also happens in learning English language. A positive attitude toward English can help the mastery of the English. It sounds easy for those who are majoring English language to have a good attitude toward English. Otherwise, it is different from those who are not majoring English language.

In relation to the writing abilities, it is assumed surely that the writing score in class is influenced by that attitude. Harmer (2004) and Elyildirim and Ashton (2006) argue that the improvement of the writing abilities of the students can be influenced by the students attitudes – positive attitude brings better improvement. This underlines that the most to set up in the learning activities situation is trying to alert the researcher to have a good strategy to enhance the students' writing competence.

Teaching Procedure For Writing

The following is the details of the procedure of teaching and learning for writing through the implementation of nursing care reporting. Particular needs of the target should be taken into account in designing a syllabus (Savignon, 2002). Savignon is just to remind all teachers that any design of English for specific purposes should meet the real needs of the students.



Any English teachers might have their own teaching procedures for their own teaching objectives. In this paper, as the example, the contextual teaching and learning theory is implemented through nursing care reported by the sample of the study. The word nursing care, or *asuhankeperawatan* in Bahasa Indonesia, is to describe the stages of a nurse should do toward patients. Nursing care reporting refers to the writing activities of the nursing students where they need to use their Indonesian nursing care they have written in other subject, which is Digestive System Course, or *Mata Kuliah Sistem Pencernaan*, in English writing to produce a new writing. That is why it is called nursing reporting, which is writing a report, based on the nursing care they have written in Bahasa Indonesia.

The following is the only example how contextual learning by using nursing care reporting might be applied to teach writing for nursing students. There are at least three main teaching-learning procedures.

Nursing care reporting

The students brought their Indonesian nursing care that they had written and submitted to their supervisors. The Indonesian written nursing care is summarized in five points (five phases of nursing care), i.e. assessment, diagnosing, planning, intervening/implementing (giving intervention), and evaluation. The details of those five stages are summarized as below:

The Detail Points of Five Phases

Five Phases	Points
Assessment Phase	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The patient's identification2. General condition of the patient3. Medical data, subjective and objective
Diagnosing Phase	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The results of the medical checkup (medical diagnose)2. The most problem of the patient (nursing diagnose)
Planning Phase	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The preparation of the medical treatment2. The medicine that will be given3. The goal of each planning item based on the diagnose
Intervening/ Implementing Phase	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The time schedule of the treatment2. The treatment given each day
Evaluating Phase	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. S = Subjective data after the intervention2. O = Objective data after the intervention3. A = Last Assessment4. P = planning (before patient leaves)

Writing activities

The writing process is based on the theory of scaffold writing (Elicker, 1995; Bliss & Askew, 1996; Bodrova & Leong, 1998; Palincsar, 1998). Those theories underline the similarity that writing should have preparation, for a matter of readiness of the students. This preparation, or some experts name it as prewriting, includes brainstorming, specifying the task, planning and outlining, collecting data, making notes, and encouraging the participation (no answer is wrong). Then, drafting is the step in which the students produce a rough draft and get through on paper. After they make up the draft, they need to check and recheck the cohesiveness and the coherence of the ideas and the grammar. In this step, the teacher may apply pair or group correction among the students. This step is commonly recognized as editing and revising. Editing and revising end with the final paper that the students will



submit. Throughout the steps, the role of the teacher is to give instructions to the class, monitor the activities and make sure whether the students make any fatal mistakes or not.

Writing assessment

The writing product will be assessed through the rubric of writing. There are several theories of assessing the students' writing. The theory chosen should match the criteria of the students' level, the use of English, even the time allocation. In this paper, the rubric is based on holistic scoring, where the entire written response is taken into account to assign an overall score for the performance (White, 1985). O'Malley and Pierce (1996) state holistic scoring uses a variety of criteria to produce a single score. The rubric of holistic scoring is developed by ESL teachers in Prince William County, Virginia. This rubric has six levels. The criteria of rating are assigned fall along five dimensions, they are meaning, organization, use of transitions, vocabulary, and grammatical/mechanical usage.

CONCLUSION

As the name mentions, nursing care reporting is considered as the teaching media for the implementation of contextual learning. Five phases of nursing care, which the students also do in their nursing practice at hospitals, widely gives them the experience of systematic thinking that the students are able to adopt for writing in English subject. In order to set the learning process of writing, the media should be implemented in collaboration with some teaching strategies, namely REACT, or other writing strategies. The implementation of nursing care reporting for English learning is believed to be able to gain the students' attitudes of nursing students since it gives the students the experience of learning which is close to their major. Therefore, this teaching design of the collaboration between nursing care reporting, contextual learning, and other teaching-learning and writing strategies is recommended when students, especially nursing students, sustain problems in English writing and attitudes toward English, not except any motivational problems. As the suggestion, this teaching procedure or design might be implemented in teaching-learning process of Bahasa Indonesia since the design also provides the students the experience of thinking systematically based on their own experience. Most of all, any English teachers should remember that the goal of English learning is mainly the enablement of the students to use English in their own field or context.

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