

PRACTICAL STRATEGIES FOR NURSING STUDENTS TO IMPROVE ENGLISH SPEAKING

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Abstract: Nursing students need English-speaking skills to provide effective and compassionate care. The English for Nursing Purposes (ENP) course helps students improve these skills by simulating real-world nursing scenarios, despite limited course time. Acquiring English-speaking skills requires consistent practice, and this research explores the strategies nursing students use in their practice. The study involved 100 voluntary participants from a vocational nursing program. Data was collected via an online Language Learning Strategies Questionnaire (LLSQ) with 20 statements and two open-ended questions for deeper insights. The findings revealed that students used metacognitive, cognitive, and technology-based strategies through various activities to enhance their English-speaking skills. The study concludes that a balanced integration of these strategies is effective for improving English-speaking abilities, highlighting the importance of combining practice with thoughtful strategy implementation.

Keywords: english for nursing purposes; english-speaking practice; language learning strategies

Abstrak: Mahasiswa keperawatan perlu menguasai bahasa Inggris untuk memberikan perawatan yang bertanggung jawab, efektif, dan penuh kasih. Program *English for Nursing Purposes* (ENP) membantu mereka meningkatkan kemampuan ini dengan menghadirkan skenario dunia nyata yang relevan dengan keperawatan, meskipun waktu pembelajaran terbatas. Penguasaan keterampilan berbicara bahasa Inggris membutuhkan latihan, sehingga mahasiswa diharapkan menerapkan strategi dalam praktik berbicara. Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi strategi yang digunakan mahasiswa keperawatan dalam praktik berbahasa Inggris melalui survei dengan kuesioner *Language Learning Strategies Questionnaire* (LLSQ). Survei diikuti oleh 100 mahasiswa keperawatan dari program pendidikan tinggi kejuruan secara sukarela. Kuesioner yang didistribusikan online melalui *Google Forms* berisi 20 pernyataan dan dua pertanyaan terbuka untuk mendapatkan wawasan lebih lanjut. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa mahasiswa menggunakan strategi metakognitif, kognitif, dan berbasis teknologi dalam praktik berbicara bahasa Inggris mereka. Kesimpulannya, penerapan berbagai strategi secara seimbang dapat meningkatkan kemampuan berbicara bahasa Inggris secara efektif.

Kata kunci: bahasa Inggris untuk tujuan keperawatan; praktik berbahasa Inggris; strategi pembelajaran bahasa

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INTRODUCTION

English proficiency is not only an additional ability, but moreover a crucial need in today's ever-growing era of globalization. English not only serves as a worldwide communication instrument but also plays a more profound role as a portal to the more extensive world. By using this language, one can not only communicate effectively on a worldwide scale but also get to the most recent information, data and innovation universally. Within the quickly changing worldwide flow, the role of English is getting to be progressively crucial in planning for different challenges, particularly within the wellbeing segment. Those who can communicate effectively in English can gain less demanding access to worldwide health resources, facilitate data exchange between nations to address crisis circumstances, and effectively take an interest in worldwide forums to improve in general open wellbeing (Handayani, 2023). It is the key to understanding the most recent inquiry about medical conventions and worldwide health data.

Nursing students, NS hereafter, often face significant challenges when learning to speak English as a foreign language, particularly due to a lack of basic knowledge and vocabulary mastery, as well as low self-confidence. A limited grasp of vocabulary and foundational knowledge can hinder NS' ability to comprehend study materials, while a lack of self-confidence prevents them from actively participating in speaking practice with peers and teachers. As a result, NS may hesitate to engage in conversational practice, which is crucial for language acquisition (Daar, 2016). To achieve proficiency in speaking, NS require substantial practice, and one effective method is through activities that involve listening and repetition. These techniques not only reinforce language comprehension but also help NS build confidence in their speaking abilities, enabling them to become more comfortable in real-world communication scenarios (Ghafar & Raheem, 2023).

Students enrolled in the Bachelor of Nursing program share common goals but exhibit diverse learning preferences, particularly in The English for Nursing Purposes (ENP). As an integral part of the curriculum, ENP focuses on English for Specific Purposes (ESP), providing students with the language skills essential for nursing practice. However, mastering ENP presents significant challenges, as it requires students to navigate a foreign language with a specialized focus on nursing terminology and communication. These challenges are further compounded by the variety of individual learning styles among students, making it difficult for a single teaching method to cater effectively to everyone. This diversity demands that instructors employ a range of adaptable and inclusive teaching techniques to accommodate differing preferences. A mismatch between teaching methods and students' learning styles can hinder comprehension and limit their ability to engage with the material, ultimately affecting their success in the course (Suryati et al., 2022).

As a basic classification scheme, following O'Malley et al., (1985)'s classification, metacognitive, cognitive and social categories were used to identify language learning strategies implemented by students in Indonesia. The basic classification scheme proposed was used to develop a language-learning strategy questionnaire (LLSQ). The three categories were considered initially for collecting data since they were also common terms utilized by language learning taxonomies developed by previous studies (Setiyadi, 2016).

Being a student is a complex system. As a complex system, the student is developing and changing through contact with other systems (parents, classmates, teachers, friends, TV, computer games, internet sites, movies, religion), and demonstrating a unique collection of needs, intelligences, learning preferences, learning styles, learning strategies, beliefs, perceptions and attitudes (Oxford & Amerstorfer, 2018). This ongoing development influences a distinctive blend of cognitive characteristics, affective responses, and personal preferences, such as individual learning styles, strategies, and intelligences. Consequently, every student possesses a unique set of beliefs, perceptions, and attitudes that influence their approach to acquiring knowledge and navigating the world. Speaking proficiency can be enhanced by engaging in activities that include listening and repeating. Engaging in a diverse array of activities that involve both actively reiterating what is heard and listening to native speakers or fluent models can significantly improve speaking proficiency. This activity reinforces sentence structures and vocabulary, in addition to enhancing intonation, and pronunciation. Learning to respond swiftly and accurately in real-life situations is enhanced by the development of a more intuitive sense of language patterns, which is achieved by mimicking the natural flow of conversation. Furthermore, this method enables students to concentrate on the nuanced aspects of speech and pronunciation, thereby enhancing their speaking confidence and minimising hesitation during communication. Moreover, students learn to participate effectively in collaborative discussions and exchange ideas. They learn to be fluent and confident in speaking. They can choose appropriate words and express their opinions and feelings clearly. Thus, students who practice peer conversation improve their speaking skills continuously (Ahmmed, 2017).

Complex systems, such as language learning strategies (LLS), exhibit several key features. These include situatedness, being embedded in a specific context, and nestedness, with various interconnected levels of influence. Complex systems are also open, interacting with other systems to fuel growth. They exhibit emergence, where new patterns form unpredictably from interactions, and interconnectedness, where components are holistically and bidirectionally linked. Multiple causes influence outcomes, and multiplicity acknowledges the diversity of learners and contexts. While moments of stability occur, change is always possible, and systems display adaptiveness, learning and evolving with experience (Oxford & Amerstorfer, 2018). These systems are marked by nonlinearity and dynamism, where outcomes are disproportionate and unpredictable.

This study aims to explore the strategies NS use in their English-speaking practice, focusing on their activities and experiences during English speaking activities. It examines how nursing students engage in English speaking tasks and their experiences with interactive speaking activity, which plays a vital role in improving language proficiency.

Based on the statements that have been presented above, this study will answer several research questions: What is nursing students' strategy in English Speaking practice? and What is the nursing student's activity in their English-speaking practice?

METHOD

Research Participants

There was a total of 100 respondents in this study, all of whom were nursing students enrolled in the Nursing programme at a vocational higher institution in Jakarta. Most of the students that participated were from the second- and third-year students. Regarding gender, the majority of respondents were mostly female and only 8% are male. In terms of age, the respondents were in the age 19 - 25 years old.

Table 1. Respondent's demographic data

Category	Subcategory	Percentage (%)	Count
Gender	Male	92%	92
	Female	8%	8
Age	19 years old	26%	26
	20 years old	65%	65
	21 years old	5%	5
	25 years old	1%	1

The table presents the distribution of participants in a study based on three key categories: gender, and age. For gender, the study has a significant male majority, with 92% (92 participants) being male, while females account for only 8% (8 participants). Age distribution shows that most participants are 20 years old, making up 65% (65 individuals) of the group. This is followed by 19-year-olds at 26% (26 participants). A smaller proportion of participants are 21 years old, comprising 5% (5 participants), while only 1% (1 individual) is 25 years old.

Data Collection Procedures

Data collection for this study was carried out using a questionnaire through Google Forms, which was distributed online to nursing students. The instrument used in this study was the Language Learning Strategies Questionnaire (LLSQ), which consisted of 20 statements designed to assess the strategies employed by respondents in their language learning process. The respondents answered each statement by selecting from a range of options, which included: Always or Almost Always True of Me, Usually True of Me, Somewhat True of Me, Usually Not True of Me, and Never or Almost Never True of Me. This Likert-scale format allowed participants to reflect on the frequency with which they applied certain strategies in their learning.

In addition to the 20 statements, the questionnaire also included two open-ended questions where respondents provided short answers to offer further insight into their personal language learning experiences. The data collection process received informed consent from the respondents, ensuring their voluntary participation in the study.

Data Analysis Procedures

The data taken from the statements from the questionnaire were quantitatively analyzed. Moreover, the data taken from the open-ended questions were analyzed qualitatively and presented based on the themes.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Nursing Students' Strategies in English Speaking Practice

Table 2. Nursing students' strategies in English speaking practice

No	Strategies	Statements	Student's Responses				
			Never	Usually not true of me	Somewhat true of me	Usually true of me	Always
1	Metacognitive strategies	I try to correct my mistakes that I produce orally	0%	1%	26%	40%	33%
		I try to speak with myself to improve speaking	0%	3%	21%	37%	39%
		I try to evaluate my utterances after speaking	0%	3%	26%	41%	30%
		I notice my English mistakes, and use that information to help do better	0%	4%	21%	41%	34%
		I speak a word or a sentence several times to remember it	0%	0%	17%	47%	36%
		I try to correct my mistakes that I produce orally	0%	1%	26%	40%	33%
		I try to evaluate my utterances after speaking	0%	3%	26%	41%	30%
		I notice my English mistakes and use that information to help me do better.	0%	4%	21%	41%	34%
		Before I respond orally to questions, I write out the answers.	0%	3%	23%	52%	22%
2	Cognitive Strategies	I try to speak with myself to improve my speaking	0%	3%	21%	37%	39%
		I prepare a topic or grammatical rules in speaking practice	0%	8%	28%	41%	23%
		I try to learn a new pattern by making a sentence orally	0%	7%	26%	40%	27%

		I try to remember what the English word equivalent to Indonesian word is	0%	0%	17%	52%	31%
3	Deep level cognitive strategies	I use rhymes to remember new English words	0%	11%	29%	30%	30%
		I try to remember new English words by pronouncing them,	0%	0%	22%	40%	38%
		I speak a word or a sentence several times to remember it,	0%	0%	17%	47%	36%
		I try to translate Indonesian sentences into English sentences and produce them orally	0%	0%	17%	46%	37%
4	Social category	I ask somebody to correct me when I talk	0%	4%	21%	47%	28%
		I practice speaking with my friends or my teachers	2%	6%	28%	39%	25%
		I practice English with native speakers	4%	16%	25%	33%	22%
		I practice asking the speakers to clarify what they said	4%	16%	25%	33%	22%

Table 2 presents the questionnaire responses from 100 nursing students, which were analyzed by categorizing their use of speaking language acquisition strategies. The data highlights nursing students' language learning behaviors for speaking, including internal processes like mastering speaking techniques, preparation, building confidence, self-regulation, and speaking fluency. The students' experiences were categorized in the questionnaire with options such as "never," "usually not true of me," "somewhat true of me," "usually true of me," and "always." The nursing students received positive feedback on their English-speaking practice strategies, activities, and responses in the speaking phase.

Most nursing students use metacognitive and cognitive strategies regularly to improve their speaking. From the data presented in Table 2, the strategy with the largest percentage of responses is talking to oneself to improve speaking ability in cognitive strategies. Talking to oneself to improve their speaking skills is the biggest percentage' strategy: Always true: 39%, Usually true: 37% and total: 76% of the students stated that they always or usually use this strategy. The most frequently used strategies include self-correcting mistakes, talking to oneself, and repeating words or sentences to remember them. In addition, social strategies such as asking for correction and practicing with

friends or teachers are also considered very useful. The results of table 2 data are reinforced by other research conducted by Humairoh et al (2021) talking to oneself, helped students improve their confidence when speaking in English. Self-talk provides opportunities for students to practice the language independently, focuses attention on important aspects of speaking skills, and provides a motivational boost. Study conducted by Fagan, (2022) explores how nursing students utilize self-talk to overcome challenges and maintain motivation throughout their education. The findings suggest that positive self-talk helps students build confidence and resilience, which are crucial for effective communication skills, including speaking in English.

Similarly, other study conducted by Marlin et al., (2021) have also shown that metacognitive strategies are used during the language learning process and these metacognitive strategies provide opportunities for students to practice improving English speaking skills. In the context to improve English speaking skills the findings in study on 107 students shows that the metacognitive strategies showed prominent responses from the participants. In general, most students always use self-monitoring as their strategy. 46.7% of students prefer to use self-monitoring to help them learn. In addition, there are 37.3% who often use self-evaluation in English classes (Basalama et al., 2020). This systematized review conducted by Asadzandi et al., (2022) identifies factors that enhance metacognitive skills in nursing students. The study emphasizes the importance of reflective practices and self-assessment in improving students' learning outcomes, which can be applied to developing English-speaking skills. Study conducted by Ibrahim et al., (2023) investigates the language learning strategies employed by nursing students to improve their English-speaking abilities. The study highlights those metacognitive strategies, such as self-monitoring and self-evaluation, are frequently used by students to enhance their speaking skills.

The findings from various studies highlight the effectiveness of self-talk and self-correcting as manifestation of metacognitive and cognitive strategies in improving English-speaking skills. Self-talk helps students build confidence, practice independently, and focus on key aspects of speaking. Similarly, metacognitive strategies, such as self-monitoring and self-evaluation, provide structured opportunities for students to enhance their learning process. The studies demonstrate that a significant proportion of students actively use these strategies, indicating their practical importance in language learning.

Nursing Students' Activity in Their English-Speaking Practice

Table 3. Nursing students' activity in their English-speaking practice

Category	Responses
Technology based learning	I practice by watching many movies and listening to music
	I have only learned by watching movies with English subtitles and listening to songs
	I watch films in English, listen to English songs, and talk to friends in English
	My approach is listening to music and analyzing some of the lyrics, watching movies with English subtitles, and listening to podcasts
	I watch movie and listen to music

Peer interaction	I practice speaking by myself in front of the mirror
	I challenge myself to describe everything I see around me in English
	I try to speak in sentences with myself in front of the mirror
	I practice speaking English in front of a mirror to work on my confidence and body language
	I try to think in English, which helps me to express myself better when speaking
	I set aside time every day to talk with friends in English, even if briefly
Self-talk and mirror practice	I practice speaking by myself in front of the mirror
	I challenge myself to describe everything I see around me in English
	I try to speak in sentences with myself in front of the mirror
	I practice speaking English in front of a mirror to work on my confidence and body language
	I try to think in English, which helps me to express myself better when speaking
Daily practice and routine	Consistent practice
	I practice daily at home
	I practice everyday
	I practice daily in class with friends
	Practice in daily
Recording and Self-Evaluation	I record my voice and review it to improve pronunciation
	I practice by recording myself speaking and then reviewing it to improve pronunciation
	I use recording to track my progress and improve my fluency
Use of Technology and Language Apps	I use language apps
	I use social media to practice English to practice
	I play language games that focus on quick thinking in English
	I use language learning apps and practice with native speakers whenever possible
	I practice using media platforms to improve my speaking skills
Vocabulary Building	I focus on vocabulary building through reading books or websites in English
	I focus on learning new vocabulary every day
	I learn and use the new vocabulary when I talk
	I use vocabulary apps and try to incorporate new words into conversations
	I focus on vocabulary expansion by reading and listening

The students' responses to English-speaking practice strategies reveal a wide range of approaches, with a strong focus on technology-based learning and self-directed methods. Many students rely on media like movies, music, and podcasts as their primary exposure to real-life language use, often watching films with or without subtitles and analyzing song lyrics to improve comprehension and fluency. Common techniques such as self-talk and mirror practice help build confidence and improve pronunciation in a low-pressure setting, with students often challenging themselves to describe daily activities in English. Daily practice and consistency are crucial for many learners, with students dedicating time to practice both at home and in the classroom. Additionally, some students use recordings and self-assessment to track their progress and refine their pronunciation. Technology and language apps are highly valued, the students using those to get to know more vocabulary. Lastly, vocabulary expansion through reading and digital resources underscores the importance of continuous learning and integrating new words into conversation. Overall, the findings suggest that successful language learners employ a mix of technology-based learning, interactive practice, and self-evaluation, often supported by technology and focused on building vocabulary. Consistency and a personalized approach are key to their progress.

Based on the findings, the most used approach in language learning is technology-based learning. The utilization of technology can be categorized as compensation strategies, which are tools that assist learners in understanding or expressing meaning in a new language, even with limited knowledge. Many students rely on watching movies, by learning from English movies, the students focus on how the actors pronounce the words, and thus they have a reference to repeat the words they have heard (Gani et al., 2015). Besides, many of the students also listen to music and analyzing lyrics or podcasts to improve their language skills. These methods provide real-life exposure to the language, helping learners improve comprehension, pronunciation, and fluency in a more engaging and enjoyable way. Technology-based learning stands out because it allows learners to practice listening and speaking skills in a natural, low-pressure environment, making it a popular and effective strategy.

Technology plays a crucial role in enhancing the learning experience by providing opportunities for self-directed, paced interactions in a safe and private environment. It allows learners to engage in various scenarios that stimulate their playfulness and encourages exploration. Feedback from technology, such as error tracking and tailored exercises, offers immediate and specific support. Additionally, qualitative feedback, through links to explanations and further resources, enriches the learning process, making technology an invaluable tool for improving language skills and fostering more personalized learning experiences (Fussalam et al., 2019).

Language learning can be through various media of learning and in this research, media used one media that is mostly used is music. Music is one of the most used because the language that is used in the lyrics is easy to understand and it is more interesting because the content of the lyrics in the music is fun and that will be their motivation in language learning. Using music in language learning for young learners is very effective for the development of language. Through music or songs, young learners find many new vocabularies and indirectly affect language learning (Assadilah & Barokah, 2018).

Besides, the use of watching movies is also one method that is mostly used by the nursing students. Using movies as a medium for learning significantly improves students'

English-speaking skills (Nita & Dewanti, 2020). It actively engages students, improves their vocabulary, pronunciation, and overall speaking fluency. It also enhances students' confidence and motivation in learning English. Watching movies provides a listening activity where students can engage with the actors' dialogues, mimicking their speech patterns, pronunciation, intonation, and sentence fluency. This process of listening and imitation is essential for language learning. By listening to native speakers, students gain insight into correct pronunciation, intonation, and rhythm, while imitating helps solidify these skills. With consistent practice, students become more confident in speaking English, feeling increasingly comfortable with their own pronunciation (Rahmah & Pranata, 2024).

In accordance with the findings that show in the table 3. suggest that successful language learners employ mixed methods often supported by technology. The utilization of technology is manifested in the use of smartphones. Smartphones can be one of the learning resources and increase students' competency to their capacity (Surahman et al., 2019). A study on 16 students conducted by Paiman et al., (2022), on the findings in the point of students' perceptions related to the use of smartphones in improving speaking skills found that 75% of students believed that using smartphone as a learning tool helped them in overcoming speaking difficulties. Smartphones offer several features that can be used in various ways to support English teaching and learning. One advantage is the use of dictionary apps, which allow students to look up the meanings of new words, as well as check their pronunciation and spelling. Dictionaries that include language-related information, such as usage examples and pronunciation guides, can further assist learners in the process of acquiring a foreign language. The use of smartphones can progressively improve students' speaking skills through their consistent and intensive engagement with the device (Sitanggang et al., 2024).

CONCLUSION

Our findings show that nursing students primarily use self-directed and technology-based learning strategies to improve their English skills. Metacognitive and cognitive strategies, like self-talk, self-monitoring, and self-evaluation, boost confidence and fluency, while social strategies, such as seeking feedback, complement these methods. Technology-based learning through movies, music, and language apps provides exposure to authentic language in an engaging environment, enhancing comprehension, pronunciation, and vocabulary. In conclusion, a customized multimodal approach combining practice, media exposure, interactive methods, and technology is the most effective way to enhance English learning.

The limitations this study reveals that nursing students use a variety of effective strategies to improve their English-speaking skills, particularly through technology-based and self-directed learning. Multimedia resources like movies, music, podcasts, and apps help enhance comprehension, pronunciation, and fluency. Practices such as self-talk and mirror exercises further build confidence and proficiency. The integration of technology, especially smartphones and learning apps, plays a key role in making language learning more accessible and engaging. The findings suggest that a personalized, consistent approach using these tools leads to better outcomes.

Future research should include diverse nursing student samples to enhance generalizability and explore the long-term impact of self-directed and technology-based

learning strategies. Studies could focus on integrating metacognitive, social, and technological methods, such as AI-based tools, to improve English proficiency. Additionally, qualitative research on students' experiences balancing language learning with academic demands could guide the development of tailored support systems for better outcomes.

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