Evaluating Esp Nursing Textbooks: Perspectives of Nursing Students on Language Learning Resources

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Abstract: This study evaluates the effectiveness of two English for Specific Purposes (ESP) textbooks, used at the Health Polytechnic in Solok, Indonesia. The research aims to assess how well these textbooks align with the academic and professional needs of nursing students. A survey was conducted among 80 second-year nursing students enrolled in the English for Nursing course. Data was collected through a 19-item questionnaire covering five key dimensions: aims and approach, design and organization, language content, skills, and topics. The results revealed that students generally responded positively to the textbooks, highlighting their well-organized structure, relevant grammar coverage, and practical clinical scenarios. However, some areas were identified for improvement, particularly the coverage of pronunciation and writing activities. The lack of focus on these aspects could hinder students' communication skills and documentation abilities, which are essential in medical settings. This study emphasizes the importance of refining textbook content to better support students' language development and professional preparation. Future research is encouraged to explore the long-term impact of these textbooks on students' language proficiency and to compare similar materials used internationally for further improvement.

Keywords: *ESP textbooks, nursing education, textbook evaluation*

INTRODUCTION

In the healthcare field, nursing has evolved into a complex, multidimensional profession that requires a broad set of skills to meet diverse patient needs (Flaubert et al., 2021). Nurses are now expected to excel not only in clinical expertise but also in critical thinking, problem-solving, and effective communication within collaborative, multidisciplinary teams. This evolution has highlighted the importance of adaptability, as nurses must respond effectively to rapidly changing healthcare scenarios (Mlambo et al., 2021). Furthermore, the development of a comprehensive skill set has become crucial for managing complex patient care situations, where holistic, patient-centered approaches are essential (Bernabeo & Holmboe, 2013). These expanding professional demands underscore the significant role nurses play in ensuring the quality and safety of patient care in modern healthcare environments.

Given the global nature of healthcare and the importance of effective communication, English language proficiency has become essential for nursing students (Gidey Takele et al., 2022). English skills support their ability to communicate within various medical contexts and

access current healthcare information, while also enhancing their career growth and professionalism (Bosher & Stocker, 2015; Rogan & San Miguel, 2013). Studies have shown that nurses with strong English language skills demonstrate better performance in documentation, patient education, and interdisciplinary communication (Oducado et al., 2020; Sudusinghe & Gamage, 2023). Additionally, proficiency in English enables nurses to stay current with international medical research and best practices, contributing to improved patient outcomes (Wannas, 2023).

To build these language skills, nursing students require textbooks that are not only linguistically appropriate but also practical for medical settings. However, commercially available textbooks used in educational institutions may not fully align with the specific teaching context or meet real-world healthcare demands. Textbooks may present irrelevant content, an unengaging sequence of topics, or activities that fail to capture students' interest (Gak, 2011; Riyani, 2016). This challenge is particularly relevant to English for Specific Purposes (ESP) textbooks, which are often adapted from general English curricula rather than tailored to healthcare needs (Pavel, 2021). Studies indicate that nursing students frequently encounter difficulties with medical terminology, professional communication scenarios, and healthcare-specific vocabulary in their ESP materials (Noviana et al., 2019). Consequently, some students find their ESP textbooks do not meet their learning expectations, nor do they address the practical realities of their future work environments (Poedjiastutie, 2017; Basheer, 2019; Fekri et al., 2022).

Therefore, it is crucial to conduct comprehensive evaluations of textbooks used in nursing education. Evaluating textbooks in nursing education is an essential way to ensure that nursing students receive the highest quality resources to prepare them for their future roles as healthcare professionals. These evaluations encompass various aspects, including language proficiency (Sarem et al., 2013), meeting the academic and social needs of learners (Umar & Ameen, 2022), relevance to real-world nursing scenarios, and alignment with the specific requirements of nursing students pursuing diverse specializations (Utami, 2019).

In addition, since almost everything in education is determined based on students' needs and goals, it is also necessary to consider students' opinions on textbooks with regard to systematic evaluation (Atigh & Khabbazi, 2021). Feedback from students is crucial, as it provides valuable insights beyond the structured textbook evaluations conducted by experts in the field. Students' feedback regarding the materials used in ESP courses can assist teachers in selecting more suitable textbooks and guide textbook designers in creating materials that better suit students' needs and objectives (Salehi et al., 2015).

A range of studies have examined the evaluation of nursing textbooks in a variety of settings and have provided useful insights. For example, Umar & Ameen (2022) found that Nursing One, a textbook endorsed to teach medical English to premedical students at Umm-Al-Qura University, was highly suitable for premedical students and met their academic and professional needs. Similarly, Salehi et al. (2015) found that an ESP medical textbook in Iran was aligned with the needs of both instructors and learners. Le et al. (2021) examined medical students' evaluation of an ESP course book. The results found that students were satisfied overall, but identified some limitations: the course book lacks communicative skills practice, the grammar examples are uninteresting, the illustrations lack diversity and quantity, and the cover design is too simple. In line with this, Sattarpour et al. (2022) compared ESP books for nursing students published by Oxford University Press and SAMT. They found that the SAMT book no longer seems suitable for today's students, while the Oxford book does not fully meet the needs of Iranian students since its major focus is on language use in career-related contexts rather than specific skills. Finally, AlMithqal (2019) assessed nursing textbooks in English and showed a positive attitude overall. However, he identified limitations such as restricted creativity and a lack of emphasis on critical technical writing abilities for healthcare.

Despite the valuable insights from existing research, a noticeable gap emerges regarding the comprehensive evaluation of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) textbooks for nursing undergraduates from multiple essential dimensions. While previous studies have examined various aspects of nursing textbooks, limited research has conducted a thorough evaluation encompassing the critical aspects of aims and approach, design and organization, language content, skills, and topic relevance simultaneously. Most existing studies have focused on isolated aspects of textbook evaluation or specific geographical contexts, rather than providing a holistic assessment framework. To address this gap, the present study aims to evaluate nursing students' perspectives on their ESP textbooks through a comprehensive lens that examines these five crucial dimensions. This systematic approach will provide valuable insights for both educators and material developers in creating and selecting more effective ESP textbooks for nursing education.

METHOD

Population and Sample

The study was conducted at the Health Polytechnic Solok, West Sumatera, Indonesia. The target population consisted of 120 first-year nursing students enrolled in the English for Nursing course during the academic year 2023/2024. Using purposive sampling technique, 80 students were selected as participants based on their active enrollment in the two-credit English for Nursing

course. These students utilized two ESP textbooks during their instruction: "Active English for Nurses" and "English for Nursing. Both o them are from local publishers. As the authors claim, these textbooks were specifically designed as ESP resources for nursing students to prepare them for future professional challenges and job opportunities. The textbooks are structured into ten chapters, covering various nursing topics in English. Additionally, they incorporate key features such as daily conversations, language focus sections, practice exercises, nursing vocabulary, and reading text activities.

Research Design and Data Collection

This study employed a quantitative research method through a survey design, which according to Ahmad et al. (2019) is effective for investigating social phenomena that affect individuals. The survey design was chosen for its systematic approach to collecting numerical data and its non-intrusive nature, allowing respondents to complete the survey at their convenience. Data was collected using a 19-item questionnaire distributed via Google Forms through WhatsApp messenger. The questionnaire was developed based on five key indicators adapted from established sources (Cunningsworth, 1995; Dedi, 2017; Ratminingsih et al., 2021), as detailed in Table 1:

Table 1. Indicators of the questionnaires

No	Indicators	Number of Statements
1	Aims and Approach	2
2	Design and organization	5
3	Language content	4
4	Skills	5
5	Topic	3
	Total	19

Data Analysis

The collected data was analyzed using descriptive statistics through SPSS version 26.0. The analysis involved calculating frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations for each indicator. To ensure reliability, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated, yielding a value of 0.85, indicating high internal consistency of the questionnaire items.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, a comprehensive analysis is presented based on students' evaluations of the textbooks employed in the course. The findings are categorized into several aspects, which include aims and approach, design and organization, language content, skills, topics.

Aims and Approach of the textbooks

Aims and approach of the textbooks were evaluated in two items. Both of them were received positively by the students in the questionnaire. Table 2 below shows the students' evaluation of the aims and approach of the textbook.

Table 2. The students' view regarding aims and approach of the textbooks

Item No	Statement	Rating Category								Total Number of Students	Mean
		Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor			
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%		
1	The textbooks correspond correctly with the aim of teaching programs and the need of the learners	15	18.75	59	73.75	6	7.5	0	0	80	3.11
2	The textbooks suited to the learning/teaching situation	17	21.25	55	68.75	8	10	0	0	80	3.11

Table 2 shows nursing students' opinions toward the aims and approach of the textbooks. From the results obtained, 59 out of 80 students generally considered the textbooks to be moderately relevant to the objectives of the program and the needs of the learners. In response to the suitability of the textbook to the teaching or learning situation, most students frequently chose 'good', which indicates that the textbooks are suited to the learning or teaching situation (mean = 3.11). It can be inferred that most of the students had a positive view toward the content of the textbooks, which corresponds with the aim of teaching programs and the needs of the learners. Besides that, they agreed that the textbooks were suited to the learning and teaching situation. A similar conclusion was reached by Rahma et al. (2017) and Makhubele et al. (2022), which showed that nursing textbooks were aligned with the needs and objectives of the educational

program. The presence of clear learning objectives in ESP textbooks is crucial for effective language learning (Parsaei et al., 2017).

Design and organization

Students were asked to evaluate five items relating to the design and organization of the textbooks. The results can be shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3. The students' view regarding design and organization of the textbooks

Item No	Statement	Rating Category								Mean
		Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	
3	The textbooks have a logical and well-organized structure	26	32.5	50	62.5	4	5	0	0	3.28
4	The content in a textbook is systematically organized and follows a logical sequence of learning	26	32.5	46	57.5	8	10	0	0	3.23
5	The complexity of the material is arranged from easy to difficult	7	8.75	45	56.25	28	35	0	0	2.74
6	The textbooks have a readable layout with adequate spacing between text, images, and other elements	32	40	36	45	12	15	0	0	3.25
7	The textbooks provide a reference section that includes grammar, rules, and relevant examples	26	32.5	44	55	10	12.5	0	0	3.20

Table 3 shows students' views about the design and organization of the textbook. Generally, the results showed that the design and organization of the textbooks were good. The textbooks were well structured, systematically organized, had a readable layout, and contained section references. Although there were some differences of opinion, especially regarding the complexity of the material, the textbooks were generally of good quality. The students agreed that the textbooks have a logical and well-organized structure. It could be seen from the analysis that a significant number of respondents rated them as 'excellent' (26 respondents) and 'good' (50

respondents). Then, the content of the textbooks was perceived as being systematically organized and following a logical learning sequence, with a mean rating of 3.23.

On the other side, the students had a varied view of the complexity of the materials. To this statement, 7 students rated it as 'excellent', 45 as 'good', and 28 as 'fair', with a mean score of 2.74, which indicates that the students show a moderate level of satisfaction with the complexity of the textbook. Meanwhile, analysis of statements 6 and 7 showed the students' positive opinion about the readable layout and a reference section provided in the textbooks. 36 students believed that the text book had a readable layout with adequate spacing between text, images, and other elements (mean = 3.25). Meanwhile, 44 students also agreed that the textbooks provide a reference section that includes grammar, rules, and relevant examples (mean = 3.20).

This positive opinion indicates that the design and organization of textbooks meet students' expectations and contribute to a positive learning experience. This finding is similar to that of Umar & Ameen (2022), who admits that nursing textbooks are adequately organized and their contents are selected carefully to cater to students' academic and professional needs. Developing a well-designed and comprehensive textbook is crucial to ensure effective students' learning (Kasmaienezhad-Fard et al., 2017).

Language content

There were four items for students to evaluate the usefulness of language content in the textbooks. The statements include the integration of grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, clinical practice and everyday language usage. The results are presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4. The students' view regarding language content of the textbooks

Item No	Statement	Rating category								Mean
		Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	
8	The textbook covers essential grammar items suitable for each language proficiency level	10	12.5	65	81.25	5	6.25	0	0	3.06
9	The textbook provides a variety of resources for vocabulary teaching, such as example sentences, exercises, or	21	26.25	58	72.5	1	1.25	0	0	3.25

	activities								
10	The textbook includes relevant material for teaching pronunciation	0	0	40	50	39	48.75	1	1.25	2.49
11	The textbook provides examples or scenarios relevant to clinical practice and everyday language usage	20	25	60	75	0	0	0	0	3.25

Table 4 above shows that the textbooks effectively covered essential grammar points, with 65 students rating it as "good" and 10 students rating it as "excellent". This positive rating is supported by a mean score of 3.06, which indicates that the textbooks provide adequate grammar coverage for each level of proficiency. In addition, 72.5% of students felt that the textbooks provided a variety of vocabulary-building resources, with a mean score of 3.25. This is in line with Nashir et al. (2022) who state that basic grammar and vocabulary of nursing terms are essential to help students communicate and write nursing reports in English well. However, in terms of pronunciation, the textbook was considered less effective, with no students rated the textbook as "excellent", 40 respondents rated the textbook as "good", and 39 respondents rated the textbook as "fair", with a mean score of 2.49.

Finally, the use of examples and scenarios relevant to clinical practice and everyday language received strong support, with 60 students rated it as "good" and 20 students rated it as "excellent". Overall, these results show that language textbooks had covered grammar topics, provided a variety of resources for teaching vocabulary, and provided examples or scenarios relevant to clinical practice and everyday language use. However, there is still room for improvement in the area of pronunciation, which received lower scores.

Skills

This section asks whether nursing textbooks provide adequate language skills. The appropriateness of these skills was evaluated through five statements of this questionnaire, as shown in Table 5.

Table 5. The students' view regarding the adequacy skills of the textbooks

Item No	Statement	Rating category								Mean
		Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	
12	The textbook provides sufficient instruction for all four language skills	0	0	39	48.75	41	51.25	0	0	2.49
13	The textbook presents readings that are appropriate for the students' level and the nursing context	24	30	55	68.75	1	1.25	0	0	3.29
14	The textbook integrates relevant listening content within the nursing context	0	0	45	56.25	35	43.75	0	0	2.56
15	The speaking material in the textbook is well-designed to prepare students for real-life interactions	6	7.5	65	81.25	9	11.25	0	0	2.96
16	The writing activities in the textbook are structured with appropriate guidance and oversight, considering accuracy, writing organization, and the use of appropriate style	0	0	16	20	58	72.5	6	7.5	2.16

Table 5 shows that 48.75% of the students believed that the textbooks provided sufficient instruction for all four language skills. In response to the second statement in this section, 98.75% of the students agreed that the textbooks presented reading material appropriate to the students' level and the nursing context. In response to the third statement, 56.25% of the students agreed that the textbooks integrated relevant listening content within the nursing context. Then in response to the fourth statement, more than two-thirds, i.e., 88.75% of the students, agreed that the speaking materials in the textbook are well-designed to prepare students for real-life interactions.

In contrast, writing activities received lower ratings, with no students rating them 'excellent', 16 students rating them 'good', 58 students rating them 'fair', and 5 students rating them 'poor'. The mean score of 2.16 indicates a moderate level of satisfaction. In summary, these findings highlight the need for improvement in certain areas of language textbooks for nursing education. While listening, speaking, and reading materials were well received, writing activities require further attention and improvement.

Based on the findings above, certain areas in the textbooks need to be developed, particularly in terms of pronunciation content and writing activities. The lack of these two key components has a significant impact on the language proficiency of nursing students, especially in their preparation for the medical field, where writing skills are crucial. As Niazi (2014) stated, nursing students need to use writing skills for various tasks such as taking notes, answering exam questions, and completing writing assignments throughout their academic and professional journey. Therefore, it is important for nursing educators and curriculum developers to address these deficiencies and incorporate comprehensive writing instruction, including discipline-specific writing skills, into the nursing curriculum (Mitchell, 2018). By doing so, they can better prepare nursing students for success in their future careers and ensure that they have the necessary skills to communicate effectively in writing. Similarly, pronunciation content was not given sufficient attention in textbooks. This lack of pronunciation skills can lead to misunderstandings, confusion, and a potential threat to the overall quality of care. Therefore, it is crucial to include pronunciation materials in the textbooks. This will ensure that students are equipped with the skills necessary to practice nursing. In this regard, nurses are ideally placed to facilitate discussions with patients and families about illness, healing, and treatment, to listen to their fears and hopes, and to provide information about treatment options and advice to help patients make informed choices (Adams et al., 2011).

Topics

There were three items for students to evaluate the appropriateness of the topics in the nursing context. The results are presented in Table 6 below.

Table 6. The students' view regarding topics of the textbooks

Item No	Statement	Rating Category								Mean
		Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	
17	The textbook provides	23	28.75	39	48.75	16	20	2	2.5	3.04

	engaging material for learners								
18	The chosen topics in the textbooks help broaden students' awareness of the world around them	0	0	50	62.5	30	37.5	0	0	2.62
19	The topics in the textbook have an adequate depth of content	3	3.75	67	83.75	10	12.5	0	0	2.91

Table 6 shows that the textbooks were generally considered to be engaging, with 23 students rating them as 'excellent', 39 as 'good', 16 as 'fair', and 2 as 'poor'. In the response to item no. 18, the majority of students point out that the topics in the textbook contribute to broadening students' awareness of the world around them, with 50 students (62.5%) choosing 'good and 30 students (37.5%) choosing 'fair'. Finally, the students also showed positive responses to the topics contained in the textbook, which have an adequate depth of content. The results revealed that 3 students (33.75%) rated it as "excellent," 67 students (83.75%) rated it as 'good', and 10 students (12.5%) rated it as 'fair'. Therefore, the students' responses in the above table generally show that the students largely satisfied with the topics of the textbooks, which provide engaging material for the students, help to broaden the students' awareness of the world around them, and have an appropriate depth of content. The findings are similar to those of Salehi et al. (2015), who showed that the students have been found to be generally satisfied with the content and topics of the textbooks, indicating a good relevant with their needs.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals that the English textbooks used in nursing education at the Health Polytechnic in Solok received generally positive feedback from students. The textbooks were appreciated for their logical structure, well-organized content, and alignment with nursing students' academic and professional needs. Key strengths included the inclusion of relevant grammar and vocabulary, as well as practical scenarios related to clinical practice and daily communication.

However, some areas require improvement, particularly the coverage of pronunciation and writing activities. The lack of adequate pronunciation materials may hinder students' ability to communicate effectively in medical settings, potentially leading to misunderstandings. Similarly, the limited emphasis on writing activities indicates a need for more structured exercises that develop students' ability to document and communicate professionally in written form, which is critical in nursing practice.

The findings of this study underscore the importance of continuous improvement in textbook design to better meet students' needs and enhance their learning outcomes. Further research could involve a longitudinal evaluation to assess the long-term impact of these textbooks on students' language proficiency and communication skills in healthcare environments. Additionally, a comparative study between these textbooks and similar materials used internationally could offer new insights for refining the content to ensure nursing students are well-prepared for the demands of their profession.

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