

# Addressing the Learning Needs of the ESL Nursing Student

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# Disclosures

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- No conflicts of interest were identified with the speaker.
- There is no commercial support or sponsorship for this session.

# Objectives

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1. Discuss the need for diversification within the nursing profession.
2. Explore the challenges faced by the ESL nursing student.
3. Identify support that promotes academic success for ESL nursing students.

# Diversity Within The Nursing Profession

	Registered Nurse Workforce	Practical/Vocational Nurse Workforce	Virginia	USA
White	74.5%	63.2%	70.8 %	77.7%
Black/African American	9.9%	23.6%	19.7%	13.2%
Hispanic/Latino	4.8%	7.5%	8.6%	17.1%
Asian	8.3%	3.6%	6.1%	5.3%
American Indian/Alaska Native	0.4%	0.6%	0.5%	1.2%
Multiple/Other	1.3%	1.4%	2.7%	2.4%

Health Resources and Services Administration (2013), U.S. Census Bureau (2014)

The state of diversity in the nursing workforce does not reflect the diverse makeup of our patient population.

# Need for Workforce Diversification

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- Within the last decade, the United States Hispanic population has grown by 43%. This group now comprises 17% of the total United States population.
- Overall, racial and ethnic minorities comprise 36.3% of the United States population.
- It is anticipated that by the year 2050, the United States will have a “majority minority” population; meaning that over 50% of the population will belong to a minority group.
- The rate of aging is five times that of overall population growth. By the year 2050, it is estimated that 30 percent of the United States population will be over the age of 65 years.

# Need for Workforce Diversification

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Increasing racial and ethnic diversity within nursing is important because evidence indicates that **diversity** is associated with **improved access** to care for racial and ethnic minority patients, **greater patient choice** and **satisfaction** and **better educational experiences** for health professions students.

# Need for Workforce Diversification

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# ESL Student Population

Henrico County Adult ESL Program			
Program	Number of Students	Number of Countries Represented	Percentage Hispanic/Latino
ABE/GED	41	20	41%
ESOL	601	60	44%

Jackson & Fagan, personal communication, 2015



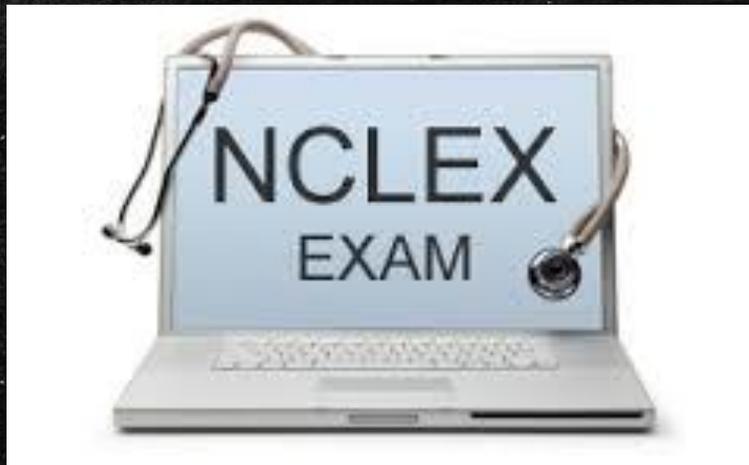
	Virginia	USA
Foreign Born Persons	11.3%	12.9%
Language Other Than English Spoken At Home	14.9%	20.7%

# Challenges for the ESL Nursing Student

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As High as 85%



20 – 40% Lower

# Challenges for the ESL Nursing Student

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There are four main areas of concern that have an impact on academic success for the ESL Nursing Student:

- ✓ Language
- ✓ Learning Models
- ✓ Test Taking
- ✓ Cultural Differences

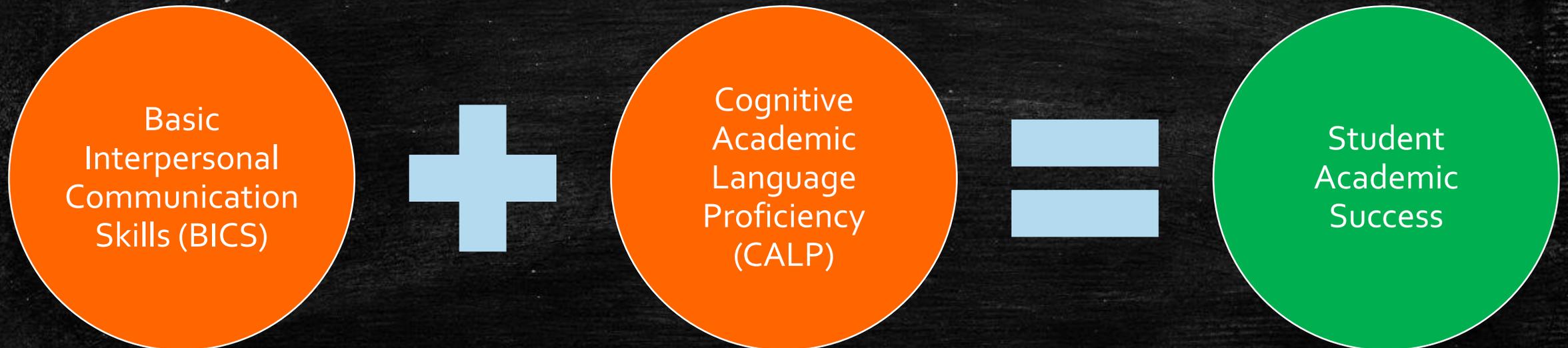
Effective Strategies To  
Promote Academic Success

# Language

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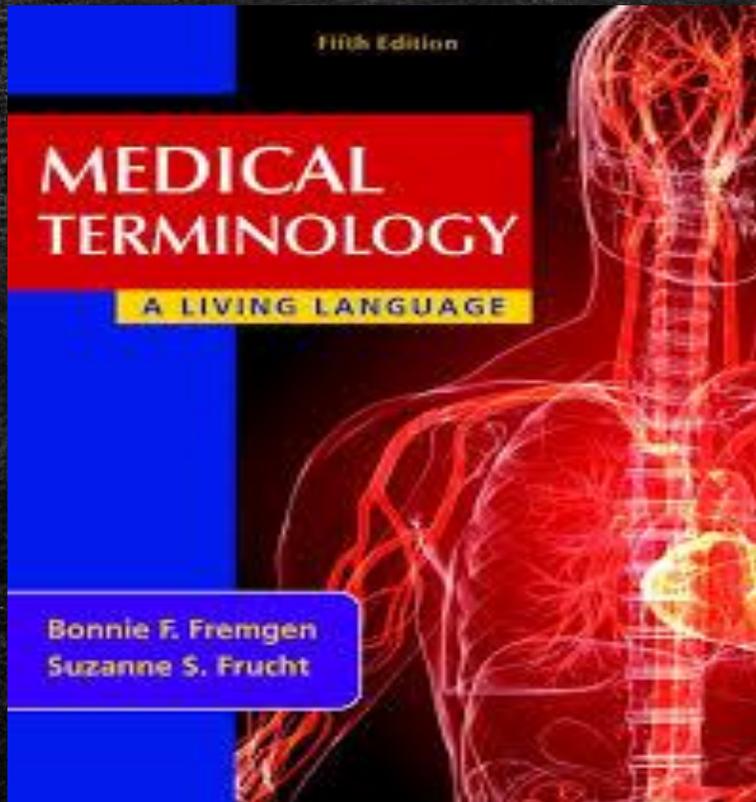
- ✓ Universally mentioned as the primary concern – particularly in the clinical setting.

## Cummins Model of Language Acquisition



# Language

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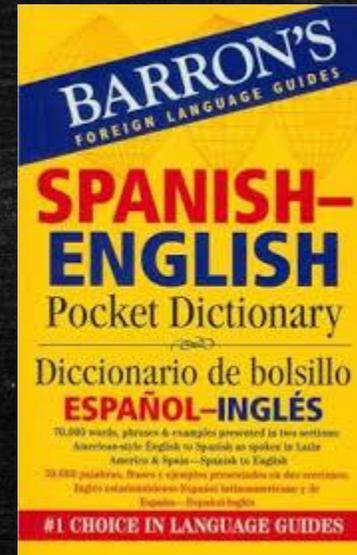
The medical field presents a unique challenge for the ESL student; this student must not only be proficient in general English, but they must also learn medical terminology, another language in itself (Guhde, 2003, p. 114).

# Language – Success Strategies

**PRACTICE**



Cornell Notes		Class: _____
Cue Column	Note-taking Column	Date: _____
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Key words</li><li>- Key questions</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Key ideas</li><li>- Important dates, people, places</li><li>- Diagrams and pictures</li><li>- Formulas</li><li>- Repeated (stressed) information</li></ul>	
<b>Summary</b> - Summary of your notes in your own words		



# Learning Models

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- ✓ ESL students are likely to have experienced different learning models in their native countries.
- ✓ Transmission model of education versus active learning model.
  - ✓ ESL students have likely been successful as passive recipients of information.
  - ✓ Asking questions of the instructor may not be considered respectful.
  - ✓ Memorization is the primary learning technique.

Emphasize critical thinking rather than rote learning.

# Learning Models – Success Strategies

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- ✓ Faculty must make their expectations clear, explaining the active learning process and the role that students play in their own learning.
- ✓ Tutoring Resources and Mentoring Programs – help bridge language and cultural differences. They also increase opportunities for English immersion in social settings that can lead to improvement in language skills.
- ✓ Examples of completed assignments.
- ✓ Study guides.
- ✓ Exit Pass – may build confidence with asking questions.
- ✓ Concept mapping or the use of nursing mnemonics may prove to be successful when presenting new information.

# Test Taking

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- ✓ There is a relationship between lack of English proficiency and NCLEX performance.
- ✓ Language difficulties cause problems on course tests and multiple-choice questions are particularly difficult for ESL students.
- ✓ Many ESL students are coming from an environment where their subject matter understanding was evaluated using essay type questions.
- ✓ Wordy scenarios intended to provide context for the questions can challenge the language skills of ESL students rather than accurately assess their nursing knowledge.
- ✓ Linguistic complexity and grammatical errors can lead to confusion, lack of clear directions and cause difficulty for non-native English speakers.

# Test Taking – Success Strategies

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- ✓ Effective study strategies should be introduced

<http://www.how-to-study.com>

- ✓ ESL students may require extended testing time for reading and processing testing items initially.
- ✓ Alternate testing environments should be considered.
- ✓ Use of a bilingual dictionary should be permitted during testing initially.

# Test Taking – Success Strategies

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- ✓ Students must practice NCLEX style multiple choice/select all that apply type questions:
  - ✓ Utilize practice questions from textbooks and questions from NCLEX review books
  - ✓ Help students to understand the importance of reviewing rationale for practice questions even if the correct answer was selected – helps to improve English language comprehension.
- ✓ Simplify the vocabulary and sentence structure of nursing test questions.



# Test Taking – Success Strategies

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- ✓ Reduce linguistic complexity of test questions by:
  - ✓ Use shorter, simpler sentences
  - ✓ State information directly; don't hide it in the sentence.
  - ✓ Avoid completion format questions – fill in the blank
  - ✓ Highlight key words, such as **MOST, LEAST, and BEST**
  - ✓ Use common words
- ✓ Post testing academic counseling
  - ✓ Were test items missed due to
    - ✓ Problems with language
    - ✓ Misunderstanding of nursing content

# Cultural Differences

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- ✓ Issues such as therapeutic communication, including eye contact and touch; meeting assignment deadlines or patient medication schedules; planning for patient care; and providing appropriate patient education are all affected by cultural values.
- ✓ ESL students are likely to have difficulty with psychosocial content because of their different cultural backgrounds.
- ✓ ESL students frequently feel isolated and may need assistance in accessing language, tutoring, and counseling resources.

# Cultural Differences – Success Strategies

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- ✓ Faculty commitment and support are significant factors in minority student success
- ✓ Need for faculty development related to cultural competence.
- ✓ Do you know your students? Particularly from a cultural and academic background.
- ✓ ESL students identify faculty discrimination and stereotyping as a greater challenge than academics.
- ✓ Get to know the names of your ESL students and how to pronounce their names correctly.
- ✓ Incorporate the knowledge and cultural experiences of students into class discussions about appropriate care for patients of different cultural backgrounds.

# Addressing The Language Learning Needs ESL Students

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The literature demonstrates that the ESL student has unique language learning needs. By addressing these needs in a comprehensive program, resources and tools can be directed to the student thereby increasing their opportunity for success.

Resources      Academic      Cultural

Admission Requirements

Timing and Pacing      Bicultural Functioning

# What Is Happening In Your Program?

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