

# Exploring English Language Needs: An In-depth Analytical Approach

Dr. Elenita P. Galvez<sup>5</sup>

## ABSTRACT

*This study explores the English language needs of students through a quantitative analytical approach, identifying key areas where learners require support in their linguistic development. By employing structured surveys and statistical analysis, the study examines students' proficiency levels, challenges, and specific requirements in reading, writing, listening, and speaking. The findings reveal significant gaps in academic and communicative English skills, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions. The study concludes with recommendations for curriculum development, instructional strategies, and policy improvements to enhance English language acquisition among students.*

**Journal:** Boston Research Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities

**Keywords:** English language needs, quantitative analysis, language proficiency, curriculum development, instructional strategies

**Accepted:** 03 July 2025

**Published:** 25 September 2025

**ISSN:** Online ISSN: 2834-4863 | Print ISSN: 2834-4855

**Language:** English

**Research ID:** 297d92e1-9d91-4ca7-95b4-28c51bcc6290

**Type:** Peer-Reviewed Research Article (Open Access)



The authors declare that no competing interests exist. The authors contributed equally to this work. This article is distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License as an "open access" article. CC BY-NC-ND license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>)

**Read Online:** <https://rebrand.ly/rjfu500>

**Author(s):** <sup>5</sup> – Bulacan State University, Malolos, Bulacan, Philippines

## I. INTRODUCTION

English proficiency is a crucial skill in academic and professional settings, influencing students' ability to succeed in diverse learning environments. Despite its importance, many learners face challenges in mastering different aspects of the language, which can hinder their academic progress and career opportunities. Understanding students' specific English language needs is essential for designing effective teaching

strategies that address skill gaps and improve overall language competency.

This study aims to provide an in-depth quantitative analysis of students' English language requirements, focusing on reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. By gathering data through structured surveys and assessments, the study identifies key areas where learners require additional support. The results will help educators and policymakers develop targeted interventions,

curriculum enhancements, and instructional methods that better align with students' linguistic needs. The findings of this research will contribute to the broader field of language education by offering data-driven insights into the challenges students face and the resources needed to improve their proficiency. By identifying specific areas of difficulty, this study seeks to facilitate the development of language programs that enhance learning experiences and outcomes.

## II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study aimed to quantitatively explore the English language needs of learners by conducting a systematic analysis. The specific objectives include:

1. To identify the key English language skills required by learners in academic and professional settings.
2. To assess the proficiency levels of learners in different aspects of the English language, such as reading, writing, speaking, and listening.
3. To analyze the challenges faced by learners in acquiring English language proficiency.
4. To examine the correlation between learners' English proficiency levels and their academic or professional performance.
5. To recommend pedagogical strategies that address the specific English language needs of learners.

## III. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study seeks to provide empirical data that can guide the improvement of English language education, ensuring that students receive the necessary support to develop their proficiency effectively.

1. What are the primary English language needs of students in terms of reading, writing, listening, and speaking?
2. How do students perceive their proficiency levels in different language skills?
3. What challenges do students face in acquiring English proficiency?
4. What instructional strategies and curriculum modifications can help address students' English language needs?
5. How can educators and policymakers enhance language education to improve student learning outcomes?

## IV. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

### Related Literature

1. Theoretical Foundations of Language Needs Analysis

Language needs analysis (LNA) is a crucial component of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) research. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) emphasized the importance of conducting a needs analysis to tailor language instruction to the learners' specific goals. Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998) further expanded this framework, highlighting the necessity of understanding both target and learning needs.

2. Empirical Studies on English Language Needs

Numerous studies have examined English language needs across various domains. A study by Long (2005) utilized task-based needs analysis to determine the linguistic demands in professional settings. Similarly, Hyland (2006) focused on the academic English needs of university students, stressing the importance of genre-based instruction.

3. English Language Proficiency and Performance

Research has consistently demonstrated a strong link between English proficiency and academic success. For instance, a study by Elder and Kim (2004) found that students with higher English language proficiency tend to perform better in standardized assessments. In the professional context, Baker and Boonkit (2004) examined workplace communication and concluded that insufficient English skills hinder career advancement.

4. Challenges in English Language Acquisition

Several challenges impact English language acquisition, including motivation, exposure, and socio-economic factors (Krashen, 1982). Additionally, Kormos and Csizér (2008) identified linguistic anxiety as a significant barrier to developing proficiency in English.

5. Pedagogical Implications and Strategies

Recent studies advocate for tailored instructional methods to address learners' specific language needs. Richards (2015) emphasized communicative language teaching (CLT) as an effective approach, while Nation (2007) highlighted

the role of vocabulary acquisition in language competence.

## V. THE CONCEPT OF NEEDS ANALYSIS IN LANGUAGE LEARNING

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) define needs analysis as a process of identifying what learners need to achieve in their language learning journey. Their work highlights the importance of distinguishing between target needs (what learners are required to do with the language) and learning needs (how learners acquire the language effectively). Similarly, Richards (2001) emphasizes the role of needs analysis in curriculum design, stating that an effective curriculum must be grounded in a clear understanding of learners' linguistic and communicative needs. Long (2005) provides a more comprehensive examination of needs analysis methodologies, distinguishing between subjective and objective needs. He argues that combining learner self-assessments with real-world language use analysis results in a more holistic approach. Brown (1995) further supports this idea, proposing a systematic approach to needs analysis that includes target situation analysis, deficiency analysis, and means analysis.

## VI. CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT BASED ON NEEDS ANALYSIS

Graves (2000) asserts that curriculum design should be learner-centered, meaning that instruction should be shaped based on learners' identified needs. Similarly, Nation and Macalister (2010) argue that needs analysis provides a foundation for selecting appropriate materials, teaching methods, and assessment techniques. Their work underscores the need for continuous assessment of learners' evolving needs, rather than relying on a one-time evaluation. McKay and Bokhorst-Heng (2008) add a sociolinguistic perspective, discussing how globalization and the spread of English as a lingua franca have influenced language learning needs. Their study suggests that English learners today require not just grammatical proficiency but also intercultural communication skills.

The existing literature underscores the significance of needs analysis in language instruction. This study aims to contribute to this body of knowledge by quantitatively assessing English language needs and providing

evidence-based recommendations for improving language learning strategies. Understanding the English language needs of learners is crucial for developing effective curricula, instructional strategies, and language policies. Needs analysis plays a significant role in identifying learners' requirements, gaps, and expectations in various contexts, whether academic, professional, or general English learning. This review explores key literature and studies that have contributed to the understanding of English language needs analysis, particularly in ESL/EFL contexts.

## VII. RELATED STUDIES

### 1. Empirical Research on Needs Analysis in ESL/EFL Contexts

West (1994) conducted a meta-analysis of needs analysis models and concluded that different educational contexts require context-specific approaches. His research demonstrates that while general frameworks for needs analysis exist, they must be adapted based on learners' backgrounds, goals, and institutional requirements. Similarly, Nunan (1988) conducted a study on learner-centered curricula and found that when learners' needs are actively considered in syllabus design, motivation and retention rates improve. His study provides empirical support for tailoring English programs based on learners' personal and professional objectives. According to Brindley (1989), he investigated the role of needs analysis in adult ESL education and found that ongoing needs assessments improve learning outcomes by ensuring that instructional methods remain relevant. Similarly, Seedhouse (1995) explored needs analysis in general English classrooms and concluded that a well-conducted needs assessment enhances learner engagement and course effectiveness.

### 2. Practical Applications of Needs Analysis

Jasso-Aguilar (1999) conducted a workplace needs analysis on hotel staff in Waikiki, demonstrating that needs analysis must consider real-life language use rather than relying solely on learner perceptions. Similarly, Kormos and Csizér (2008) examined age-related differences in English language needs and found that younger and older learners have distinct motivational factors that influence their learning priorities. Cowling (2007) investigated intensive workplace language courses and found that tailoring language instruction to

specific job-related tasks enhances workplace communication and overall job performance. His study emphasizes that needs analysis is crucial not only in academic settings but also in professional environments where English is a necessity.

The reviewed literature and studies highlight the importance of needs analysis in designing effective English language programs. From theoretical frameworks to empirical studies, the consensus is that understanding learners' needs leads to more relevant, engaging, and successful language learning experiences. As English continues to be a global language, future research should focus on technological advancements in needs analysis, such as AI-driven assessments and adaptive learning platforms, to further refine language learning approaches. This review serves as a foundation for exploring how needs analysis can be applied in diverse learning contexts to ensure that English language instruction meets the evolving demands of learners worldwide.

Curriculum and Instruction (Course Design, Teaching Methods, Assessment); and (4) Learning Outcomes (Improved Communication Skills, Proficiency Development, Academic/Professional Success).

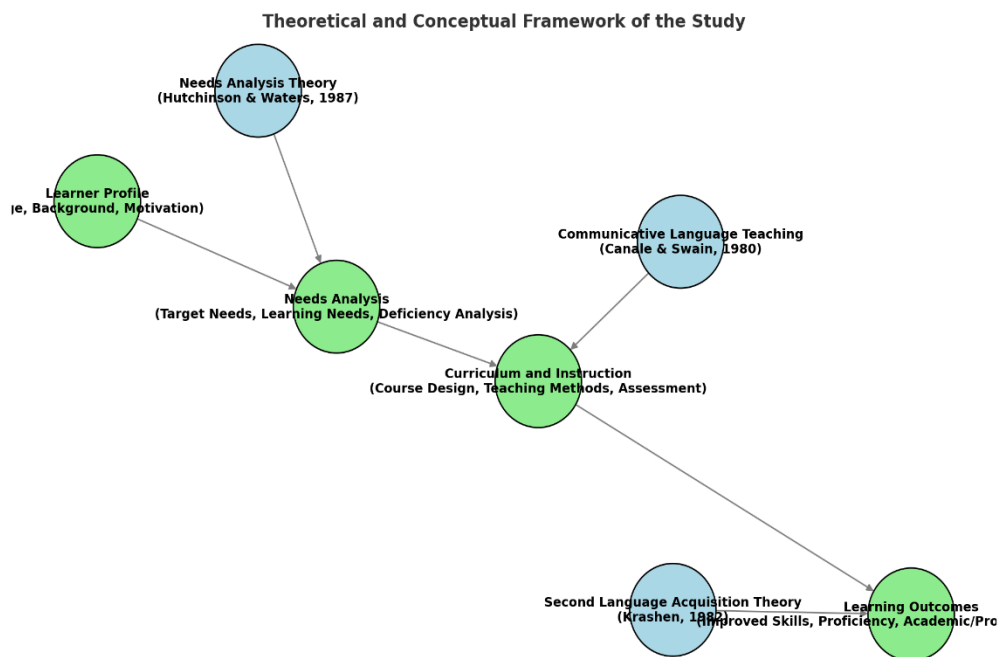
### VIII. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The Theoretical Framework below provided the foundation for understanding English language needs analysis. It included established theories supporting the research.

The study is anchored on the key theories. The first was the Needs Analysis Theory by Hutchinson and Waters (1987), which would differentiate target needs (what learners need to do with the language) and learning needs (how they could acquire them). The second was the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) by Canale and Swain (1980), which focuses on real-world communication as the goal of language learning. And, the third was Second Language Acquisition (SLA), Krashen's Theory (1982), which explains how learners could acquire a second language through input, interaction, and motivation.

### IX. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The Conceptual Framework was a visual representation of how different variables in the study were related. It explains the flow of needs analysis, curriculum development, and language learning outcomes. For the key components, these were: (1) Learner Profile (Age, Background, Motivation); (2) Needs Analysis (Target Needs, Learning Needs, Deficiency Analysis); (3)



The Theoretical Framework (blue nodes) consists of established language learning theories that provide a foundation for understanding needs analysis, curriculum design, and learning outcomes, while the Conceptual Framework (green nodes) illustrates how different elements, such as learner profiles, needs analysis, curriculum, and learning outcomes, were connected in the research process.

## X. METHODOLOGY

The study utilized a descriptive research design with a mixed-methods approach to comprehensively analyze learners' English language needs. Below is a structured methodology, including respondents, sampling techniques, data collection, and the entire research process

## XI. RESEARCH DESIGN

The study employed a descriptive research design using both quantitative and qualitative methods to analyze the English language needs of learners. For the quantitative part, a survey questionnaire was used to gather numerical data on respondents' language proficiency, challenges, and learning preferences. And, for the qualitative part, a focus group discussion (FGDs) and interviews were conducted to gain in-depth insights into learners' perspectives.

## XII. RESPONDENTS OF THE STUDY

The study will involve 100 respondents who were ESL/EFL learners and were classified based on the key demographic factors such as age, educational background, English proficiency level, and learning motivations (academic, professional, or general communication).

## XIII. SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

A stratified random sampling technique was used to ensure representation from different groups of English learners. The steps included: (1) Defining Strata: The population was divided into subgroups (e.g., students, working professionals, adult learners); (2) Random Selection: Respondents were selected randomly from each stratum to ensure diversity in perspectives; and (3) Ensuring Proportionality where each subgroup represented according to its size in the target population.

## XIV. RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

The study used the following instruments for data collection: (1) Survey Questionnaire (Quantitative Data Collection), which included demographic profile, self-assessment of English proficiency, learning challenges and preferences, and frequency of English usage in different

contexts. Another method used was Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Interviews for Qualitative Data Collection conducted with selected respondents to explore deeper insights into learning needs and questions focused on challenges, motivations, and preferred learning strategies. Finally, the use of the Needs Analysis Checklist to categorize learners' needs into target needs, learning needs, and deficiency analysis.

## **XV. RESEARCH PROCESS**

There were steps followed. For step 1, the planning and preparation, the researcher defined research objectives and scope, obtained ethical clearance and consent from participants then prepared survey questionnaires and interview guides. For step 2, the selection of respondents, she identified potential respondents from schools, language centers, and workplaces, then applied stratified random sampling to ensure fair representation. For step 3, the data collection, this part was done in phases. In phase 1, a survey was administered for the quantitative data and distributed questionnaires to 100 respondents the collected and encoded responses in a database for statistical analysis. The Phase 2 or FGDs and Interviews for qualitative data, she selected a subgroup of 15 to 20 participants for focus group discussion then conducted one-on-one interviews with key informants (teachers, learners, and experts). In Step 4, the Data Analysis, she used quantitative analysis or descriptive statistics with frequency, percentages, and mean scores to summarize survey data followed by the qualitative analysis which was done through thematic analysis on interview and FGD transcripts to identify themes in learners' responses. For Step 5, the Interpretation and Conclusion, the researcher compared findings from both quantitative and qualitative data, identified key patterns and implications for English language teaching and provided recommendations for curriculum improvement and instructional strategies.

## **XVI. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

To follow ethical standards, the researcher obtained informed consent from all participants, maintained confidentiality of responses, and ensured voluntary participation with the option to withdraw at any time.



## XVII. RESULTS, FINDINGS, AND DISCUSSION

**Table 1:** Demographic Profile of Respondents

Category	Frequency (n=100)	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	48	48%
Female	52	52%
Age Group		
16–20 years old	30	30%
21–30 years old	45	45%
31–40 years old	15	15%
41 and above	10	10%
Primary English Learning Purpose		
Academic (Students)	40	40%
Professional (Workplace)	35	35%
General Communication	25	25%

Table 1 shows that the majority of respondents, or 45% were aged between 21 and 30 years old, indicating that young adults were the primary learners of English. Most respondents, or 40% used English for academic purposes, followed by professional with 35%, and general communication with 25%. A nearly equal gender distribution suggests no significant gender-based influence on English learning needs.

**Table 2:** Self-Assessment of English Proficiency/ English Proficiency Levels

Proficiency Level	Frequency (n=100)	Percentage (%)
Beginner	20	20%
Intermediate	55	55%
Advanced	25	25%

Table 2 revealed that the majority of respondents 55% assessed themselves at the intermediate level. The 20% were beginners, indicating a need for basic grammar and vocabulary instruction, while the remaining 25% considered themselves advanced, meaning they could require specialized learning such as business English or academic writing.

Table 3 below depicts the Vocabulary limitations, or 40% being the most common challenge, suggesting that learners struggle with understanding and using diverse words. This also proved of Grammar difficulties or 35% indicating the need for structured lessons focusing on syntax and sentence construction. Pronunciation issues or 20% stemmed from L1 interference and required phonetic training. Listening comprehension or 25% and speaking confidence (30%) highlighted the need for more conversational practice.

**Table 3:** Primary Difficulties in Learning/Learning Challenge Faced by Respondents

Learning Challenge	Frequency (n=100)	Percentage (%)
Vocabulary Limitations	40	40%
Grammar Difficulties	35	35%
Pronunciation Issues	20	20%
Listening Comprehension	25	25%
Speaking Confidence	30	30%

**Table 4:** Preferred English Learning Methods/ Preferred Learning Methods

Learning Method	Frequency (n=100)	Percentage (%)
Face-to-Face Classes	50	50%
Online Courses	30	30%
Self-Study	20	20%

Table 4 shows the 50% who preferred face-to-face classes, suggesting that traditional classroom settings were still the most effective for learning English. The 30% preferred online courses, likely due to flexibility and accessibility. And, 20% relied on self-study, meaning they used resources like books, apps, and online videos for independent learning.

**Table 5:** Frequency of Using English in Different Contexts/ Frequency of English Usage

Context of Use	Daily (%)	Weekly (%)	Rarely (%)
Academic Writing	30%	40%	30%
Workplace Emails	25%	50%	25%
Casual Conversations	35%	45%	20%
Public Speaking	10%	35%	55%

The above table, Table 5 proved that academic writing (30% daily, 40% weekly) shows that students often write in English. The workplace emails (25% daily, 50% weekly) indicated that English was a crucial professional tool. Casual conversations (35% daily, 45% weekly) suggested regular practice, while public speaking was rare (55%), indicating the need for confidence-building activities.

**Table 6:** Recommended Enhancement in English Learning/Suggested Improvements in English Instruction

Suggested Improvement	Frequency (n=100)	Percentage (%)
More Speaking Activities	45	45%
Interactive Learning (Apps, Games)	30	30%
Focus on Practical Writing	25	25%

Table 6 shows the 45% who wanted more speaking activities, reinforcing the need for oral communication training. The 30% preferred interactive learning tools, suggesting a demand for modern, tech-based learning. And the 25% needed a practical writing focus, aligning with academic and professional needs.



## XVIII. RESULTS, FINDINGS, AND DISCUSSION

1. Demographics: The Majority were young adults (21-30 years old) studying English for academic and professional purposes.
2. Proficiency Levels: Most learners, or 55% were intermediate, with 20% at beginner level.
3. Challenges: The most common difficulties included vocabulary (40%) and grammar (35%).
4. Preferred Learning: Traditional face-to-face learning (50%) remained the top choice, but 30% preferred online methods.
5. Usage: English was frequently used in academic writing (70% daily/weekly) and workplace emails (75%), but public speaking was rare, with 55%.
6. Learners suggest more speaking practice (45%), interactive tools (30%), and writing-focused lessons (25%).

The findings suggest that English learners require more interactive and communicative learning approaches, with a focus on vocabulary, grammar, and oral skills. Teachers and institutions should integrate technology-driven methods, speaking practice, and practical writing exercises to enhance English proficiency effectively.

## XIX. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings from 100 respondents, the following key conclusions were drawn: Diverse Learning Needs: Learners had varying motivations for studying English, with academic (40%) and professional (35%) purposes being the most common. This suggests that English instruction should be tailored to meet both academic writing and workplace communication needs. Intermediate Proficiency with Key Gaps: Most respondents (55%) consider themselves at an intermediate proficiency level, but many struggled with vocabulary limitations (40%) and grammar difficulties (35%). This indicates the need for structured vocabulary enhancement and grammar-focused instruction. As to Speaking Confidence and Practical Application, despite frequent use of English in writing (academic and workplace settings), public speaking remained a significant challenge, with 55% rarely engaging in it. More conversational practice, pronunciation training, and confidence-building exercises should be incorporated into English learning programs.

With a Preference for Interactive and Communicative Learning, while face-to-face learning (50%) remained the most preferred method, 30% of learners favored online learning, and many recommended interactive tools such as language apps and gamified learning. This highlighted the importance of modern, technology-driven approaches in language instruction. As to Need for Enhanced Instructional Strategies, respondents suggested more speaking activities (45%), interactive tools (30%), and a stronger focus on practical writing skills (25%). This emphasized the need for English programs to incorporate engaging, real-world communication exercises rather than relying solely on traditional teaching methods.

## XX. RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings of the study, the following recommendations were drawn:

A longitudinal approach to track learners' progress over time.

The effectiveness of interactive learning tools in improving English skills.

Cultural and psychological factors affecting English language acquisition.

By addressing these areas, future research could contribute to more effective and personalized English learning programs to meet the evolving needs of learners.

## XXI. REFERENCES

1. Basturkmen, H. (2010). *Developing Courses in English for Specific Purposes*. Palgrave Macmillan.
2. Brindley, G. (1989). The role of needs analysis in adult ESL program design. *The Second Language Curriculum*, 63-78.
3. Canale, M., & Swain, M. (1980). Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing. *Applied Linguistics*, 1(1), 1-47. <https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/1.1.1>
4. Ellis, R. (2008). *The study of second language acquisition* (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press.
5. Graves, K. (2000). *Designing language courses: A guide for teachers*. Heinle & Heinle.

6. Hutchinson, T., & Waters, A. (1987). English for specific purposes: A learning-centred approach. Cambridge University Press.
7. Hyland, K. (2006). English for academic purposes: An advanced resource book. Routledge.
8. Kormos, J., & Csizér, K. (2008). Age-related differences in motivation and second language acquisition. *Language Learning*, 58(2), 327–355.
9. Krashen, S. D. (1982). Principles and practice in second language acquisition. Pergamon Press.
10. Jasso-Aguilar, R. (1999). Sources, methods, and triangulation in needs analysis: A critical perspective in a case study of Waikiki hotel maids. *English for Specific Purposes*, 18(1), 27–46.
11. Long, M. H. (2005). Second language needs analysis. Cambridge University Press.
12. Nation, I. S. P., & Macalister, J. (2010). Language curriculum design. Routledge.
13. Nunan, D. (1988). The learner-centered curriculum: A study in second language education. Cambridge University Press.
14. Richards, J. C. (2001). Curriculum development in language teaching. Cambridge University Press.
15. Richards, J. C. (2015). Key issues in language teaching. Cambridge University Press.
16. Robinson, P. (1991). ESP today: A practitioner's guide. Prentice Hall.
17. Seedhouse, P. (1995). Needs analysis and the general English classroom. *ELT Journal*, 49(1), 59–65.
18. Widdowson, H. G. (1990). Aspects of language teaching. Oxford University Press.
19. West, R. (1994). Needs analysis in language teaching. *Language Teaching*, 27(1), 1–19.