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# A Study On Need Analysis On English Language Needs Of Undergraduate Students In Bangladesh

Sumona Sharmin

*World Univerisity of Bangladesh.*

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**Abstract:** This study explores the English language needs of undergraduate students of a private university. The findings of this study reveal some similarities and differences between the students' and teachers' perceptions about learners' English language needs. It also reveals the confusion in the students and the teachers about learners' English language needs for undergraduate students in Bangladesh. The researcher selected 60 students (43 male and 17 female) and 10 (6 female and 4 male) English teachers from a private university. Students were selected from four different departments where English was taught as the foundation course. The findings from the study show different English language needs of the students both from teachers and students perspectives. This study is very significant for practising English language educationalists with insightful information on learners' English language needs as input for designing more effective English language courses.

**Keywords:** needs analysis, English language needs, syllabus design, target needs, undergraduate students in Bangladesh.

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**Introduction:** Needs Analysis is a procedure for collecting information about learners and classroom activities to design a syllabus (Nunan1988). It is an essential part of designing a language course. When a language course is designed, a teacher needs to have reliable information on their learner variable to reduce any gap among learners, teachers, teaching methods and teaching materials. Need analysis is fundamental to planning all language courses (Richard 1990 cited in Khandi 2003). However, it is a matter of regret that despite considering needs analysis as a starting point and one of the essential main parts of curriculum planning, few published studies on needs analysis (Richard2001 cited in kikuchi2005).

The success of English language programs depends on how accurately and intensively Needs Analysis on English language needs is done. To a considerable part, how assessment techniques are planned, implemented, monitored, and assessed determines whether or not curriculum goals and objectives are accomplished. In Bangladesh, English language learning has failed terribly, and inefficient assessment systems are partly to blame (Islam et al., 2021).

In Bangladesh, syllabus and curriculum are designed only from teachers' and experts' perspectives, but students' perspectives are always neglected. However, students' perspectives are critical. According to (Mahbub, 2019) the findings revealed that the pupils have diverse ideas about what they need, want, and do not have. The findings also revealed the students' learning requirements, including learning inputs, teaching-learning methods, the instructor and learner roles, and teaching-learning environments.

Due to one-sided assessment or no needs analysis, Bangladeshi students have poor performance in the World Competence Index. The E.F. English Competence Index 2019 shows that Bangladeshis have a low level of English proficiency (Education First, 2019). The indicator identifies five levels of English proficiency: very high, high, moderate, low, and very low. Bangladesh is ranked at the bottom of the list, in 71st place, whereas the Netherlands ranks top. (Islam et al., 2021)

Again language planning and development can have a tremendous effect on social justice and overall development. Initiatives in development aid and language planning can make a more significant difference in holistic development and social fairness (Erling, 2017).

According to the findings, there was always a disconnect between the assessment concepts established in the curriculum and the actual assessment processes. Furthermore, having been severely harmed by high-stakes testing, the curriculum, students, and instructors must be freed from this heinous regime. The review found that instructors should develop assessment literacy through teacher education programs that are critical in assisting teachers in gaining knowledge, skills, professionalism, and assessment competence (Islam et al., 2021).

For the effective outcome and coping up with other countries, there is a severe need for Needs Analysis in teaching and learning. The findings of (Ganefri et al., 2020) revealed a reasonable demand for production-based entrepreneurship training, which included elements of learning and teaching.

This study's objective was to analyze the English needs of private university undergraduate students based on both teachers' and learners' views. Some critical factors related to learner language needs, like their problems encountered in learning English and their level of proficiency in different English language skills, have been analyzed in this study. The relation between students' English needs and their current syllabus has also been discussed here. The data obtained through this study will help identify the gaps between the teachers' and learners' perceptions regarding students' English needs. The findings of this study will focus on whether the current English syllabus needs any change.

**Literature review:** Needs Analysis is a procedure for collecting information about learners and classroom activities to design a syllabus (Nunan 1988). It is an essential part of designing a language course. When a language course is designed, a teacher needs to have reliable information on their learner variable to reduce any gap among learners, teachers, teaching methods and teaching materials. Need analysis is fundamental to planning all language courses (Richard 1990 cited in Khandi 2003). However, it is a matter of regret that despite considering needs analysis as a starting point and one of the essential main parts of curriculum planning, few published studies on needs analysis (Richard 2001 cited in Kikuchi 2005).

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**Introduction:** this chapter has discussed many important issues related to needs analysis. Different types of needs and needs analysis, their historical background, their importance and different kinds of frameworks for needs analysis have been discussed here. This chapter will help the reader to understand the subject of the study.

**Needs and Need Analysis:** it has been found that different linguists have looked upon the issue of "needs" from different points of view. As a result, different types of definitions of needs analysis have evolved. To Kavaliuaskiene and Uzpaliene (2003), a "need describes an item or an ability which is important to a person and which he does not have or not very good at". According to Dickinson (1991:88 cited in Kavaliauskiene and Uzpaliene 2003), "Needs are those skills which a learner perceives as being relevant to him". Brindley (1984:28 cited in Richards 2001:54) defines needs as a term which is "used to refer to wants, desires, demands, expectations, motivations, lacks, constraints and requirements". Furthermore, Berwick (1989:52 cited in Xiao 2006) claims that a need is "a gap or measurable discrepancy between a current state of affairs and a desired future state".

According to Nunan(1988:13), needs analysis refers to "techniques and procedures for collecting information to be used in syllabus design". In more formal terms, Richards et al. (1992:242&243 cited in Khandi 2003) state that needs analysis is "the process of determining the needs for which a learner or group of learners of a language requires a language in the needs according to priorities". In simple terms, Fatihi(2003:39)defines needs analysis as "a device to know the learner's necessities, needs and lacks to develop courses that have a reasonable content for exploitation in the classroom". Brindley (1984:29), cited in Richards 2001:54) comments that analysis is a process of identifying "learner's wants, desires, demands, expectations, motivation, lacks, constraints and requirements". From the above discussion, it can be said that needs analysis is a process that gathers information from learners, teachers and language courses to find out what language skills the learners need to develop, why they should develop those skills and how they can develop those in the best ways.

**Historical Background of Needs Analysis:** Needs Analysis (N.A.) has a long history in language teaching. It was first proposed by the council of Europe Modern Language Project group before the 1970s. They analyzed the grammatical complexity of sentence structures and designed a structurally graded syllabus. However, during the 1970s, this syllabus came under criticism that language cannot be taught effectively only through teaching structures because one structure may have many functions, and one function can be expressed through many structures (Nunan 1988). Consequently, in 1971, the Council of Europe felt the learner's communicative needs to be analyzed to design a curriculum for the language learners (Van Ek and Trim 2001 cited in Fatihi 2003). With this view, the 'Threshold Level' specification emerged. It analyzed only the communicative language needs of the learner. It was not concerned with the learners' learning needs at all (fatihi2003).

Later, at the second phase of the communicative approach, the syllabus designer began to identify the learner's needs (Munby 1978cited in Richards and Rodgers1986). As a result, a broad point of view has been focused on N.A for the first time. Based on a broad approach to NA, Munby (1978) developed an

N.A. model, which was accepted widely by the syllabus designers (fatih2003). In Munby's N.A. model, two types of data were collected. One type of data was related to the learner's identity, while another type was related to the language needs of the participant (Munby 1978 cited in Nunan1988). Though Munby's model is considered the most sophisticated application of N.A., it has received criticism for being too mechanistic and paying little attention to the learners' perception (Nunan1988).

Over the years, a significant shift from a narrow approach to a broader approach regarding N.A. has broadened the scope of N.A. and has a range of frameworks for N.A. Different types of frameworks for N.A. have been designed to identify different needs related to the language learning program. As a result, the adoption of a particular type of N.A. depends on the purpose of conducting an N.A.

**Kinds of Needs Analysis:** Different linguists have claimed different types of N.A. Nunan(1988) refers to two types of N.A. used by syllabus designers. They are a) Learner Analysis and b) Task Analysis. Learner analysis carries information about the learner, whereas Task analysis carries information about classroom tasks and expectations. Nunan(1988) states that both types of analysis should be carried out because learner analysis helps establish communicative purposes. The learner wishes to learn the language skills required for carrying out real-world communicative tasks. In addition, it often follows the learner analysis. Basturkmen(1996) conducted both learner analysis and task analysis together at Kuit University. He found that their College of Engineering and Petroleum students wanted to learn English for their careers by learner analysis. They were weak in writing; the students and teachers claimed reading texts were more critical than writing lab reports.

Richterich(1983 cited in faith 2003) advocates two other types of NA. a) Subjective Needs Analysis and b) Objective Needs Analysis. Subjective needs analysis carries subjective information while Objective analysis carries objective information. According to Nunan(1988:18), "Subjective information reflects the learner's perceptions, goals, and priorities. It will conclude, among other things, information on why the learner has undertaken to learn a second language and the classroom task and activities which the learner prefers." In contrast, objective information is factual information about the learner. For example, biographical information on age, nationality, home language is objective information. Richterich(1983 cited in Fatih2003) comments that objective needs analysis is the starting point of needs analysis, and the subjective needs analysis later follows it.

For this reason, objective needs analysis is done before the course. He also asserts that when learning starts, language needs analysis begins to change. During that time, some learning needs which were not specified earlier are required. This fact leads to subjective needs analysis to be followed to collect information from the learners to guide the learning process. Both subjective and objective needs analysis can be done together. Basturkmen(1996) and Kikichi(2005) have maintained these two analyses together in their studies. They have gathered information about students' and teachers' age, educational backgrounds, and teaching experiences through objective needs analysis. The subjective analysis of Basturkmen(1996) showed that reading in English was more important than writing and speaking to the students of the College of Engineering and Petroleum of Kuwait University.

Hutchinson and Waters (1987cited in khandil 2003) identify the following types of needs to be analyzed in a N.A.

1. Target Needs: Target needs include necessities, lacks and wants of the learners. Using target needs analysis, Khan (2007) identified that students wanted to learn English for their career purpose and them speaking was the essential skill for learning English.
2. Learning Needs: Learning needs explain the ways needed to be followed by the students to move from their (lacks) starting point to destination (necessities).

West (1994 cited in Khandil2003) has developed ideas of N.A. taxonomies and speaks of the following types of N.A.

1. Target Analysis: It identifies the necessities, i.e. what the learners need to know to function effectively in the target situation.
2. Deficiency Analysis: It analyzes the gap between the present knowledge of target learners and the knowledge they need to know or do at the end of the program.
3. Strategy Analysis: It identifies the learner's preferred learning styles. It focuses on methodology and other related areas, i.e. reading in and out of class, grouping size, homework, learning habits etc.
4. Means Analysis: It deals with the logistics, practicalities and constraints of the needs-based language courses.
5. Language Audits: this is a broad type of N.A. and is used to form the basis of strategic decisions on language needs and training requirements. This type of N.A. is carried out by or for (i) individual companies, (ii) professional sectors, (iii) countries or regions.

Benesch(1996 cited in Khandil 2033) states a good point regarding N.A. She advocates the other two types of N.A. They are (i) Descriptive Need Analysis (D.N.A.) and (ii) critical Needs Analysis (CAN). In D.N.A., there is no attempt to change the status quo. In contrast, CAN attempts to change the target situation.

Various Kinds of N.A. have been presented to show a theoretical feature of it. Some theories of N.A. have been applied to this study. It will help the reader to understand what type of Needs analysis it is.

Importance of Needs Analysis: Needs analysis (N.A.)is a valuable tool to understand students' needs and help implement educational policies (Munby 1978 cited in Lun 1996). Nuanan(1988) claims that information obtained through N.A. can serve the following purposes.

1. N.A. can be used to design a syllabus reflecting the goals and aspirations of the learners.
2. It may be used to set the goals of the course and guide the selection of the contents.
3. The teacher can modify the syllabus and methodology to minimize the gap between the teachers and learners' expectations. For example, Banu(1993), in her research at the Institute of Modern Languages(I.M.L.) of Dhaka University, found a clear gap between the objective of English courses of I.M.L. and the projected purposes of the students of that institute. She found that the objective of the English courses of I.M.L. was to develop language skills related to their academic works. At the same time, students of that institute wanted to learn English for higher studies abroad or build a promising career. Based on this finding, Banu (1993) suggested modifying the syllabus and including communicative competence-based tasks to minimize the gap between the teachers' and learners' expectations.
4. Moreover, it may identify the gap between the teachers' and learners' expected teaching and learning approach; teachers may modify the syllabus and negotiate with the learning approach. The needs analysis of Kikuchi (2005) at the College of International Relations, Nihon University showed that

both teachers' and students' responses were the same regarding many teaching issues of that institute. However, their perceptions varied concerning some other teaching issues. Fatihi (2003) also said that the I.I.T. Kanpur team's survey revealed a conflict between the course makers and students' perception regarding the students' English language needs.

Richards (1990 cited in Khan 2007) considers N.A. as fundamental to the designing of general language courses. Khan (2007) comments that N.A. can be utilized in many ways for planning language curriculum. For example:

1. N.A. can help in setting goals, objectives and setting content for a language program.
2. It can be used for reviewing and evaluating an existing language program.
3. It can help teachers understand students' needs and make decisions and assessments to improve their teaching methods.

Furthermore, West (1994 cited in Khan 2007) states that data obtained through Na can be used in testing materials to develop autonomous learning, teacher evaluation, and re-education. In addition, N.A. helps the syllabus designer discover the discrimination among various learners and design courses based on their everyday needs (John 1982 cited in White 1988). Richards (2001) claims that in a language teaching program, N.A. can be used for the following purposes.

1. To determine the required language skills for a learner to perform a particular role, such as a sales manager or university student.
2. To help in evaluating the existing program in terms of fulfilling the needs of the learner.
3. They are identifying a change of direction that learners feel is essential.
4. To find out a gap between their present proficiency level and required proficiency.
5. To find out the problem areas of the learners.

From the above discussion, the general uses of N.A. are perceived. It can serve a language program from its beginning to the end. It can be used in determining the objectives and goals of the language course and learners. It can also be used in evaluating a language program by finding out how far the goals of the language course match or diminish with the objectives and goals of the learner. If a language program is found deficient, the data from N.A. can suggest what kind of change should be brought into the program and how they should strike a balance between the teachers' and learners' needs. In a word, N.A. plays a vital role in every stage of a language program.

Frameworks for Needs Analysis: Different types of procedures are suggested for conducting an N.A. The selection of procedures depends on the purpose of N.A. For example: If one tries to conduct an N.A. of writing problem of the students at the tertiary level, the information can be obtained from the following sources:

1. Samples of student writing.
2. Test data on student performance.
3. Report by teacher on typical problems students' face.
4. Opinions of the experts.
5. Information from students via interviews and questionnaires.

6. Analysis of textbooks, teaching and academic writing.
7. Survey on related literature (Richards 2001)

Moreover, Dudley-Evans and John(1998 cited in Khan2007) advocate the following frameworks of N.A. to evaluate learners' and teachers' attitudes, opinions, and beliefs towards an intended change or innovation.

1. Information about why the learners are learning English, learners' attitude to learning English, their previous learning experience and cultural background.
2. Information about the effectiveness of the prevailing program in terms of future and present needs of the learners.
3. Information about learners' preferred learning style.
4. Information regarding the importance of particular skills for the learners and their preferred learning styles for learning those skills.
5. Information about the preferred teaching-learning activities.

The most sophisticated application of N.A. is designed by Munby (1978cited in Nunan1988). His model of N.A. contains the information of the following nine components.

1. Participant: The information on the learners' identity and their required language skills is gathered under this component. For example, This parameter includes information on age, sex, nationality, and learner's mother tongue.
2. Purposive domain: This includes information about learners' purpose for which they want to learn the language.
3. Setting: This parameter contains the information of where the learner will use the language.
4. Interaction: This includes the information with which types of people the learner will use the language.
5. Instrumentality: This parameter includes three types of information.
  - a) The medium: What type of language skill the learner needs.
  - b) The mode: What type of communication the learner requires.e.g. whether it is monologue or dialogue?
  - c) The channel: What type of channel the learner needs to learn. e.g., whether it is face to face communication or direct communication.
6. Dialect: Under this parameter, the variety of language and dialect is specified.
7. Target Level: This parameter states the level of proficiency that the learner will need to gain over the target language.
8. Communicative event: This includes the information on the productive and receptive skills that the learner will need to achieve.
9. Communicative Key: Under this parameter, the syllabus designer specifies what type of interpersonal attitudes and tones the learner will be required to master.

Later, Clark (1979 cited in White 1988) reports a less mechanistic survey and pays attention to the learners' perception. His survey was based on the needs of the learners and carried out the following types of information

1. Why do the learners want to learn the language?
2. Which types of jobs do the learners have in mind to use the target language?

3. Which areas of the language does the learner want to learn?
4. What type of skill do they prefer?
5. Which modes of communication do they need?
6. Does the learner expect Which types of activities for learning the target language?

Nunan & Burton (1985 cited in Nunan 1988) proposed a N.A. model based on subjective and objective information. Their suggested model includes information from the following parameters.

- |                 |                       |
|-----------------|-----------------------|
| 1) Name,        | 5) Occupation         |
| 2) Age,         | 6) Proficiency        |
| 3) Nationality, | 7) Communicative need |
| 4) Education,   | 8) Learning goals.    |

From the above frameworks on N.A., it is found that there are some standard features in all of them. The common features are-

1. Background information about the learner.
2. Learners' purpose of learning the language
3. Communicative needs-which areas of language the learners want to learn.

The Framework for the study: The researcher has extracted some features from these sources and used those as a framework for this study. In this regard, the researcher will use the following features in this study.

1. The objective of the course.
2. The learner's purpose of learning English.
3. The background information of the learners and teachers.
4. Language problem areas of the learner
5. Opinion about English language courses.
6. The reason behind the poor performance of the learner.

Needs analysis is like a diagnosing process to find out specific problems from direct sources and prescribe the medicines accordingly. This helps both the learners and teacher to carry out a purposive education and training. It helps to address the real needs and requirements of the learners and makes learning effective and less time-consuming.

**Research methodology:** Information about the institution where the study took place has been discussed here. In addition, descriptions of the participants, the validity and reliability of the study, and study limitations have also been explained here. The researcher has collected all this information from the information centre of the institution where she conducted the study.

**Institution:** The researcher conducted the study in 'X' university situated in Dhaka. The university was a medium grade university in terms of teaching and administrative qualities. The final grading list of U.G.C.



was selected as one of the top ten private universities among twenty selected universities. The reason behind choosing this university was that one of her friends had been teaching there for two years. As a result, she had easy access to the students and the teachers. The university was established in 2002. While conducting the study, it had five campuses situated in Dhaka. Three of these were situated at Dhanmondi, and the other two were at Siddeshwari and Bijoyagar. It had 14 departments that were running 23 programmes. The researcher visited four departments (Business Administration Department, Computer Science Department, Microbiology Department, Pharmacy Department) of two campuses situated at Siddeshwari and Bijoyagar. The tuition fees of this university's different programmes were medium so that any middle-class family could afford it. The number of full-time faculty members of this university was more than 350. There were 45 full time and 12 part-time English teachers in the university. All the teachers had at least postgraduate degrees from reputed universities of home and abroad. More than 8000 students were studying in different programmes of this university. The university designed four general English courses for almost all the undergraduate programmes of the university. The names of general English courses were English Fundamental, Public Speaking, Composition and Advanced Reading Strategies and Writing. The four departments the researcher visited had these four general English courses. In the Computer Science Department, Advanced Reading Strategies and Writing was replaced by technical writing and communication.

**Subjects:** The researcher selected 60 students (43 male and 17 female) and 10 (6 female and 4 male) English teachers from this university. Students were selected from the four departments mentioned above. From each department, 15 students were selected. All the selected students studied English as a compulsory subject in Bengali medium institutions (adopted from the students' questionnaire data). All these students completed three general English courses among four. While conducting the study, they were at the end of their last English course. The researcher did not include the students' of the English department in the study as it had more English courses than other departments. In addition, the English syllabus of the English department was different from the syllabus of the departments mentioned above. The researcher selected ten English teachers who had experience teaching all four courses in the four departments. From the teachers' responses, it was found that among these ten teachers, nine teachers completed their Post Graduation in English Literature. Only one teacher completed her Post Graduation in English Language Teaching.

**Tools for the Study:** Questionnaires, interviews, observation, assessments are the best data collection methods for needs analysis (Dudley-Evans and John 1998 cited in Kavaliauskiene and Uzpaliene 2003). Among these methods, the researcher has used (a) two formal, logically sequenced and carefully developed questionnaires and (b) interviews with teachers and students. Questionnaires were used in the study because, through this method, much information can be gathered from many people within a short time. In addition, responses in the questionnaires are most often precise and clear. Interviews were used to go deeper into the respondents' reasons. Along with questionnaires, short interviews were taken for the triangulation of data analysis.

**Validity and Reliability of the Study:** According to Seliger and Shohamy (1989), validity refers to the extent to which the data collection procedures measure what it intends to measure. Reliability refers to the consistency and accuracy of the data collection procedure (Seliger and Shohamy 1989). Many critics claim that qualitative research lacks validity and reliability (Rahman 2000). As a result, LeCompte and Goetz (1982 cited in Rahman 2000) proposed improving the reliability of the data by handling problems relating

to several factors. Of these, the researcher had enlisted the following factors to ensure the reliability of the study.

a) **The choice of informants:** The researcher collected information from teachers and students about students' English language needs as they are directly related to teaching-learning situations and can provide reliable information about the student's language needs. The students were chosen from different departments so that they could represent the students of the whole university.

b) **The social situations and conditions:** Most of the public universities of our country are of middle grade, and their tuition fees are most often medium (Section 2.2). The university selected for this study was of the same category. As a result, the findings of this study can be used as the embodiment of the findings of other universities like it.

c) **And above all, the data collection and analysis methods:** Data was collected through questionnaires and interviews. Consequently, the researcher got precise responses with their reasonable explanation. Moreover, data was collected from students and teachers so that the researcher could reach neutral findings by seeing the issues from two different standpoints. For ensuring the validity of this type of study, Rahman (2000) advocates maintaining comparability of findings and triangulation. "Comparability requires that characteristics of the group studied (details such as sex, age, etc.) or constructs are generated and defined so clearly that they can serve as a basis for comparison with like and unlike groups (Rahman 2000)". In this study, the comparison of findings is revealed by comparing teacher group and student group perceptions. Triangulation advocates collecting data from different standpoints (Cohen and Manion 1994 cited in Rahman 2000). For triangulation, data was collected from students and teachers of four departments through questionnaires and interviews. In the end, it can be said that the study sought to maintain both validity and reliability through choosing the right type of institution, subjects and methods of data collection and using comparability of findings and triangulation.

**Pilot Study:** A pilot study was conducted by selecting five university students to complete a questionnaire and participate in a focused interview. Another pilot study was conducted by selecting two teachers of this university to complete a teacher's questionnaire and participate in an interview. The objective of the pilot study was to find out whether the questions of both questionnaires and interviews are appropriate in length, understandable and whether the wordings of the questions are appropriate. After the pilot study, the questionnaires and interview questions were modified and used for the actual study. See Appendix 1 and 2 for the questionnaires and Appendix 3.1 and 3.2 for the interview questions.

**Description of the Questionnaires:** The questionnaires were designed based on a survey developed by Helen Basturkmen (1996). The survey was conducted to identify the needs of the students at the College of Petroleum and Engineering, Kuwait University. In his study, Basturkmen (1996) used questionnaires only for students. However, in the study, questionnaires were designed for both teachers and students. Some items of the original questionnaire developed by Basturkmen(1996) were deleted as they were not relevant to the present study.

On the other hand, some items were included in the questionnaires to obtain vital information about the learner's needs. In the questionnaires, the attitude rating scale devised by Likert (1932 cited in Rahman 2000) was used to record almost all the subjects' responses. As a result, the respondents were asked to register their reactions on the "4, 3, 2, 1" scale. It was used to get numerical values from the respondents'

opinions and show significant patterns on certain statements (Rahman 2000). The teachers' and students' questionnaires were divided into parts (Part A, Part B, Part C and Part D). In part A of the teachers' questionnaire, teachers were asked about the teachers' background information and the courses' objective.

Similarly, in part A of the students' questionnaire, students were asked about their background information. However, instead of the courses' objective, the students were asked about their purpose of learning English at the university level. Later in parts B, C and D of both questionnaires, both groups were asked the same type of questions. Part B asked about the importance of different English language skills for undergraduate students. Part C inquired about the performance of the students in different language areas. Part D worked with the following three issues.

- a) The English language skills on which the current syllabus emphasized.
- b) The English language skills of the current syllabus should give more emphasis.
- c) The degree of the success of the current English language syllabus.

**Description of the Interview Questions:** The teachers and students were asked five questions in their interview session. They were asked about the importance of different English language skills, the success of the general English courses, students' proficiency in English and the language skills the current English syllabus should emphasize. In addition, teachers were asked about the objectives of the courses, while the students were asked about the purpose of learning English at the university level.

**Administration of the Questionnaires and Interviews:** The study was conducted in three days at the beginning of August. Both questionnaires and semi-structured interviews were used for collecting data. The researcher arranged group interviews for the students and one to one interviews for the teachers. The questionnaire data from the students were gathered at the end of their English classes. Ten minutes were given for providing data through it. Before giving questionnaires, students were clearly explained its different parts. During its completion process, the researcher was present to monitor and help the respondents understand specific points. At the end of questionnaire data collection, respondents were asked whether they would participate in a short interview. Ten students who showed a positive response towards having an interview were selected for each department. Ten students were divided into two groups.

Each interview lasted for 25 minutes. The setting of the student interview was casual. It took place in the standard room. The reason for choosing a casual setting was to avoid feeling the nervousness of the students. As a result, they could express their feelings and attitude freely. From the teachers, both the questionnaire and interview data were collected individually. The researcher met the teachers at their desks. At first, she gave them questionnaires and gave them ten minutes to provide data. After completion of this part, the researcher took their interviews. Though questionnaire data were collected from ten teachers, interview data were collected from eight teachers. Each interview took 15 minutes.

**Limitations of the study:** Any study which involves an evaluation of attitudes, perceptions and beliefs, there is a possibility that people may answer questions to save face. The same possibility also existed for this study. This study probed the choices, beliefs and perceptions of the students and teachers. To know whether the responses were genuine or just an effort to save face, there was a need to use more sources (e.g.

classroom observation, studying the syllabus) for collecting data to verify the responses. This could not be done because of the period available. Besides, when the researcher collected data, the semester final examinations were going on in many departments. The university did not allow her to collect data from the examination hall. During that time, classes were going on only in four departments. As a result, though she wanted to collect data from eight departments, she could collect data only from four departments. Therefore, the sample size was relatively small. Despite its limitations, this is one of the few studies that have analyzed the undergraduate students' English language needs appropriately and given an accurate and reliable picture of learners' English language needs.

**Data Analysis:** Data has been collected from various sources using different methods detailed in the previous. Here all the data has been analyzed and discussed in detail. First, the data has been presented and discussed. Next, the findings have been presented and discussed. After that, it has shown the implications of the findings for pedagogy. Process analysis data collected from the students' and teachers' questionnaires has been analyzed on SPSS regarding frequency counts and percentage scores. researcher how the group as a whole performs & thus provides more significant Information.

	Frequency	Per cent
student	50	83.3
teacher	10	16.7
Male	32	53.3
Female	28	46.7
Business Administration	15	25
Computer Science	15	25
Pharmacy	15	25
Micro-biology	15	25

Table: A

**Presentation of Questionnaire Data:** In this section, students' and teachers' responses to items on the questionnaires have been presented and discussed. They are organized area wise related to areas of students' learning English, the objective of general English courses, importance of different English language skills, students' proficiency in different skills and opinions about the current English language syllabus. Teachers' and students' responses in each area are presented together.

Purpose of Learning English		
	Frequency	Per cent
Academic purpose	6	10
career purpose	54	90
Total	60	100

Table: B

Table B presents the objective of general English courses. It shows that 90% of teachers and students have claimed that the objective of the English courses is entirely based on students' future careers. On the other hand, only 10% of teachers and students believe it is partly based on academic purpose. Therefore, the data shows that the objective of the course is based more on their career than on academic purpose.

### Importance of Different Language Skills:

No	English Language skills	very important		important		not important	
		Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
1	Listening	32	53.3	18	30	10	16.7
2	speaking	43	71.7	12	20	5	8.3
3	Writing	46	76.7	14	23.3	0	0
4	reading	42	70	16	26.7	2	3.3
5	grammar	40	66.7	13	21.7	7	11.7
6	vocabulary	34	56.7	16	26.7	10	16.7

Table: C

The table above shows that 40% to 46% of students and teachers consider writing, speaking, grammar, and reading very important. While some other students and teachers (32%-34%) have felt that listening and vocabulary are not crucial for learning English at the university level.

### Proficiency in Different Language skills:

No	English Language skills	weak		satisfactory		good	
		Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent

1	Listening	11	18.3	21	35	28	46.7
2	speaking	14	23.3	42	70	4	6.7
3	Writing	8	13.3	19	31.7	33	55
4	reading	30	50	19	31.7	11	18.3
5	grammar	36	60	22	36.7	2	3.3
6	vocabulary	47	78.3	7	11.7	6	10

Table: D

The table above shows that 30% to 47% of students are weak in reading, grammar, and vocabulary. Similarly, 8% to 14% of students are weak in listening, speaking and writing. That means their productive skills are not up to the mark. 55% of students are good at writing, and 46.7% of students are good at listening. On the other hand, 3.3 % to 18.3 % of students are good at vocabulary, speaking, reading and grammar.

#### Opinion about the Current English Language Syllabus:

No	English Language skills	to a great extent		to some extent		to less extent	
		Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
1	Listening	22	36.1	15	24.6	23	37.7
2	speaking	25	41	6	9.8	29	47.5
3	Writing	46	75.4	2	3.3	12	19.7
4	reading	31	50.8	20	32.8	9	14.8
5	grammar	21	34.4	4	6.6	35	57.4
6	vocabulary	24	39.3	14	23	22	36.1

Table: E

Regarding the English language syllabus, both students and teachers opine that the current syllabus emphasized a great extent on writing, 46% and bit emphasis on reading which is 31%. On the other hand, 21% to 25% of participants opine that listening, speaking grammar, and vocabulary are greatly important. The highest less importance is given to grammar and speaking, which is 47.5% to 57.4%. The minor importance is given to writing, reading, listening and vocabulary.

#### The skills on Which the Current Syllabus Should Give Added Emphasis:

No	English Language skills	to a great extent	to some extent	to less extent
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		Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
1	Listening	4	6.6	34	55.7	22	36.1
2	speaking	42	68.9	12	19.7	6	9.8
3	Writing	18	29.5	2	3.3	40	65.6
4	reading	9	14.8	6	9.8	45	73.8
5	grammar	19	31.1	17	27.9	24	39.3
6	vocabulary	19	31.1	1	1.6	40	65.6

Table:

F

The table shows that all the teachers and students agree that the current English syllabus need not emphasize different skills. However, some extra emphasis should be given to speaking is claimed by 42% of students and teachers. However, grammar and vocabulary should be equally crucial while less importance should be given to listening and reading.

**Presentation of Interview Data:** Here, the students' and teachers' interview responses are presented with the respective questions. Presentation of questions with interview data will help to understand the data. Students' and teachers' interview data has been again presented together to compare their opinions. Here S.Q represents students' questions, and T.Q refers to teachers' questions. Similarly, S.A stands for students' answers, and T.A denotes teachers' answers.

**S.Q.1: What is the primary purpose of learning English at the university level?**

S.A.1: Five groups of students have claimed that they want to learn English at the University level for their future career and academic purpose. In this regard, they want to Learn English to develop formal writing and speaking skills. Two groups of learners want To learn English for their future career only. They think that they have enough knowledge Of English to do academic works. For this, they want to learn English to develop speaking Skill only. One group of students wants to learn English for academic purposes. As a result, they want to develop academic writing like thesis writing.

**T.Q.1: What is the main objective of the general English courses of the university?**

T.A.1: Among ten teachers, five teachers have stated that the main objective of general English courses of their university are to make students able to do well in both academic Works and future career. Therefore, the objective of the courses is to develop formal Writing and speaking among students. Three teachers assert that the main objective is to Make students able to write and speak without any errors. Another two teachers have She argued that developing a basic knowledge of English is the main objective of the courses.

S.Q.2. What is the essential skill to learn at the university level? Why?

S.A.2. Among five students, three groups believe that speaking is an essential skill to learn at the university level. They have said that they have already learnt reading, writing, grammar at S.S.C and H.S.C levels. Besides, it is also essential for them to build a promising career. In contrast, two groups of students consider writing as the most critical skill. They think that both in the academic and career field, they have to write a lot.

T.Q.2. What is the most crucial skill for undergraduate students? Why?

T.A.2. All the teachers agree that writing is an essential skill for the undergraduate Students. They believe that writing is more used than speaking both in academic and



career field. In addition, they also believe that writing involves many aspects of learning English. Moreover, students need to write a lot in their academic field.

S.Q.3. How far have the general English language courses been able to fulfil your English language needs? How?

S.A.3. three groups of students have claimed that their English courses have partly fulfilled their English language needs. They said that their English courses have helped them a lot to know how to write different types of writing and developed their speaking skill. However, they have affirmed that they cannot speak and write correctly. Furthermore, another group of students have stated that their English Language courses have fully fulfilled their language needs and developed their English language proficiency to a great extent. Only one group of students has asserted that their English courses cannot fulfil their English language needs at all. This group is from Pharmacy Department. They hope that after completing graduation, they will go abroad for higher study. Consequently, they want to develop English language skills related to GRE or TOFEL. But they have complained that nothing related to GRE or TOFEL is taught in the class. Moreover, they have to do research work. But in writing course, nothing related to research work is taught.

T.Q.3. How far have the general English language courses been able to fulfil the English language needs of the undergraduate students? How?

T.A.3. All the teachers agree that the English language courses have been fully able to fulfil the English language needs of the students. All these teachers believe that the undergraduate students should develop writing and speaking skills as these would help them in building their promising future career. According to the needs of the students, the Courses have developed students' writing and speaking skills. Nevertheless, the teachers have affirmed the fact that though the students can write different types of writing and can speak in English, they cannot write and speak correctly. Teachers have made students' background educational system responsible for their poor performance in writing and speaking.

S.Q.4. In your view, in which area of the English language are you very weak? Why?

S.A.4. Two groups of students have stated that they are very weak in speaking English. They have said that it is because of lack of enough practice, their poor grammatical Knowledge and low vocabulary. On the contrary, two groups of students have claimed their weakness in grammar and vocabulary. According to them, lack of sincerity and their Previous English learning system are responsible for that. One group of students has asserted that they are weak in both speaking and writing. This group believes that lack of grammatical knowledge is responsible for their weakness in those areas.

**T.Q.4. In your opinion, in which area of English language are the students very weak? Why?**

T.A.4. Six teachers have asserted that the students are very weak in grammar and vocabulary. Subsequently, the students cannot write and speak in English correctly. According to them, it is because of students' background educational system. Conversely,



four teachers have acknowledged that students are weak in speaking in English. They believe that lack of practice and students' previous learning systems are responsible for this as the students did not have any speaking courses in their S.S.C and H.S.C levels.

**S.Q.5: On which area of English language should the current syllabus give the most emphasis? Why?**

S.A.5: Four groups of students have claimed that the current syllabus should give the most emphasis on speaking in English as they are very weak in speaking. Moreover, they also believe that it is also important for their future career. In opposition, one group of students has stated that on writing in English the most emphasis should be given. This group is from Pharmacy department. They have supposed that developing writing skill will help them in their research works. Conversely, two groups of students have argued that on grammar the English language syllabus should give the most emphasis. They believe that good knowledge in grammar and vocabulary will help them to write and speak in English correctly,

**T.Q.5: On which area of English language should the current syllabus give the most emphasis? Why?**

T.A.5: Seven teachers have stated that the current English syllabus should give the most emphasis on writing as they believe that it is very essential for students' academic works and future career. They also feel that writing covers many aspects of language learning e.g. style of writing, grammar, vocabulary etc. Consequently, it is their belief that if the students are good at writing, they will be good at other language skills as well. In contrast, two teachers have claimed that the current syllabus is fully well organized and need not to give any added emphasis on any skill. On the other hand, one teacher has said about the extension of time for the practice of different language skills. To him if students get enough time to study and practice different language skills according to the current syllabus, they can develop their language skills properly.

**Findings:** The purpose of the study is to find the English language needs of the undergraduate students. The findings have revealed what students and teachers think about the needs. It has also revealed how far their current syllabus reflects students' needs on English language learning. All these findings have been presented below.

- According to the students, at the university level they need to learn English more for their career than for academic purposes. Accordingly, with regard to the importance of different English language skills, they consider speaking as the most important skill to be learnt. In addition, considering their performance indifferent English language skills, they want to improve their grammar. However, they want a little help from the university in developing grammar. According to the teachers, the objective of general English courses is based more on their career than on academic purpose. This indicates that the educational specialists of the university want students to learn English more for career objectives than for academic purposes. As a result, considering the importance of different English language skills, they have claimed that students need to develop writing skills. Furthermore, evaluating students' performance, they have stated that students should develop their speaking skill. The findings have shown how far the syllabus reflects the

English language needs of the students. The students claim that the current English language syllabus partly reflects their language needs whereas teachers have found the syllabus fully reflecting students' English language needs.

**Discussion:** Based on a careful examination of the findings above, it has been found that teachers and students see eye to eye about many issues related to students' English language needs. Nevertheless, it is important to note that there are significant contrasts in their opinions concerning other issues. All these matters have been discussed below. The findings indicate that both the students' learning purpose and the objective of the course are the same. Students want to learn English more for their future career than for any academic purpose. Similarly, teachers believe that the objective of the current syllabus is fully based on career objectives and partly for academic purposes. Thus, for both groups, the career objective has more significance than an academic purpose. This was somehow different from the findings of Banu (1993) who found a gap between the objectives of the Institute of Modern Languages and the projected English language purposes of the students of that institute. Regarding the importance of English language skills, both the teachers and students' responses in the questionnaires are the same. Both the groups think that all the language skills are very important for the undergraduate students. However, in the interviews, students' and teachers' perceptions appear to vary. In the interviews, learners consider speaking to be the most important skill whereas teachers view writing as more important than speaking. Here learners' views match with the findings of Khan (2007) presented in the literature review. With regard to the students' performance in English, the findings of this study contrast with that of Basturkmen (1996) who found that in writing students are the most weak. Conversely, here both groups have claimed in the questionnaires that in grammar most students are the weakest. With regard to speaking, in this study, there is a contradiction in the viewpoints of teachers and students. The teachers have claimed that most students are weak in speaking while the students have stated that they are good at that skill. Furthermore, regarding the same skill (i.e. speaking) another divergence is seen in the students' responses in the questionnaire and their responses in the interview. Though in the questionnaire they have stated that they are good at speaking, in the interviews they have said that they are weak in that. Most of the students believe that the current syllabus gives emphasis more on writing than on speaking whereas the teachers argue that the current syllabus gives almost equal emphasis on both writing and speaking. It is interesting to note that though the students believe that they are weak in grammar, they want more emphasis on speaking than on grammar. To them, developing speaking skill is more important than developing grammar. This is somehow similar to the situation described by Khan (2007) who found that developing speaking skill was the most important thing for the students of secondary level of Pakistani State boarding Schools. On the issue of giving emphasis on different English language skills, a divergence is seen in the questionnaire and interview responses of the teachers. In the questionnaires, the teachers have stated that the current syllabus should give more emphasis on speaking than on writing but in the interviews they have said that on writing the most emphasis should be given. This is rather curious because teachers at least need to be clear about students' needs and course objectives. Regarding the success of the current English language syllabus, another variation is seen between the teachers' and students' perceptions. The students believe that the current syllabus has partly fulfilled their English language needs while the teachers claim that the syllabus has fully fulfilled students' language needs. The above discussion reveals that both teachers' and students' perceptions are the same regarding some issues of the students' English language needs. However, their perceptions differ in other issues. This finding supports an earlier study by Kikuchi (2005). He also found some similarities and differences between the perceptions of these two groups regarding many teaching issues in a university.

Moreover, sometimes both students and teachers are found confused about students' language needs. Finally, considering all the issues it has been found that learners' main English language needs are to develop speaking, writing and grammar.

**Implications for Pedagogy:** The study gives information on the students, their required language skills, their level of proficiency in English and the success of current English language syllabus. This kind of information is important for both teachers and students to know. With students' needs in mind, teachers can modify and develop course contents that will be very helpful for the students. In addition, teachers' opinion on students' language needs will help the learners to understand their real language needs. The findings of the study show that students are confused about their performances in English. Hence, teachers can help the students to make the students aware of their real proficiency level in English and their real English language needs. Moreover, teachers are also found confused in determining the language skill on which the syllabus should give the most emphasis. Based on these findings, the university can arrange teachers' training that will help them to be more confident and efficient in teaching. It will also be helpful for their professional development. Besides all these, the analysis of learner needs described in this paper has some other major implications.

1. The implications of the findings point towards a need to update the current course content.
2. There is a need to strike a balance between teachers and students' views in designing course contents.
3. It is inappropriate for teachers to ignore learners' needs by sticking to their own unaided intuitions in teaching the students. They should be sensitive to learners' needs.

**Conclusion:** The study has examined the English language needs of the undergraduate students of a private university. To examine that the researcher has analyzed what skill the learners need to improve more and in what areas they are weak. In addition, the importance of different skills for the learners and the success of the current syllabus in fulfilling students' needs have also been analyzed here. Thus the researcher has used target needs analysis and deficiency analysis to find out the language needs of the students. As a whole it can be called a learner analysis. From this study it has been found that the main English language need of the students is to develop English language skills that are related to their career. To develop these language skills students, need to develop their speaking and writing. In addition, although students feel they have no need for grammar, there is actually a real need for language accuracy and therefore it should be included in the language courses. It is evident that the role of needs analysis in a teaching learning setting is crucial as the focus is very much on learners and their language skills. The present study is a preliminary step towards identification of the language needs of students studying at one private university. It shows that only general English courses help students to some extent but do not adequately develop the required proficiency in English language. An elaborate and focused needs analysis can be conducted on a large scale across the university to assess the learner's specific language needs. A thorough analysis of ongoing learner's needs may allow teachers to adjust the course contents to students' changing needs by providing meaningful experience with language.

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