

ELT in junior high schools: a dual-perspective needs analysis of language skills and digital-AI integration

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ABSTRACT

Needs analysis (NA) is a fundamental process that helps both teachers and students in planning, adjusting, and optimizing lessons. This study investigates the dual-perspectives on English language teaching in terms of needs, lacks, and wants. This research adopts a quantitative research approach, employing a survey method. A total of 1,074 students were selected through stratified random sampling technique, along with 29 English teachers in five schools. In terms of needs, teachers viewed all language aspects as equally important, while students prioritized grammar and vocabulary over the others. Both groups recognized digital and artificial intelligence or AI as essential. The results reveal discrepancies between students' and teachers' perceptions of lacks. Students reported listening and speaking difficulties, followed by vocabulary and grammar, whereas teachers emphasized grammar and writing. Additionally, students perceived greater lacks in digital and AI technology, while teachers had less technological challenges. Regarding wants, both expressed a strong interest in improving language components and skills through the integration of digital and AI tech as the learning media. These findings imply teacher training should enhance listening-speaking instruction and digital-AI integration, whereas the curriculum should adopt a balanced, skill-integrated approach that addresses receptive and productive needs, and embeds technology for effective 21st century English language teaching (ELT).

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1. INTRODUCTION

English plays a vital role in improving students' academic performance. Studies have shown that English language proficiency is a key predictor of academic success [1], [2]. However, students still face challenges in achieving expected learning outcomes, such as limited vocabulary knowledge, difficulties in understanding texts and expressing ideas, which significantly affect their academic achievement [3], [4]. Previous study also revealed that differences in instructional practices and learning contexts may lead to mismatches between learners' needs and classroom implementation, which result in less effective learning outcomes [4]. Thus, needs analysis (NA) becomes a crucial element for effective English language instruction. It is a systematic process used to identify students' needs in terms of what they should learn (target needs) and how they prefer to learn (learning needs) [5], [6].

Furthermore, Hutchinson and Waters [5] divide the target needs into three components including needs (what learners need to know), lacks (what learners do not yet know), and wants (what learners wish to learn). Meanwhile, learning needs encompass learning style, preferences, and contextual factors influencing learning [7]. NA also supports teachers in making informed decisions regarding curriculum development, instructional planning and challenges, material selection and development, and identifying teachers' competencies [8]–[11]. Regarding teacher-focused NA, needs refer to the abilities required by teachers to deliver effective instruction; lacks refer to the gap between teacher competence and learner needs; and wants refer to teachers' expectations for future learning improvements [12], [13].

NA is also necessary to identify teachers' technological readiness and to support the integration of digital tools and AI in instruction [14]. However, senior teachers face barriers due to insufficient training, limited infrastructure, and low digital literacy, while junior teachers may be more receptive but still lack pedagogical guidance [15]. Therefore, technology related NA should consider not only student preferences, but also teacher capacity, ensuring that instructional design remains feasible and sustainable in real classroom contexts [16].

Previous studies have emphasized the importance of designing learner-centered instruction based on thorough NA. Many existing curricula are often top-down, including input from students and resulting in instruction content that lacks. The authors [17] assert that without structured NA, teaching strategies and assessments are at risk of being misaligned with learners' actual conditions. Nevertheless, Sudana *et al.* [18] criticize the common practice of applying generalized learning materials without considering learners, specific goals or sociocultural contexts. Most of these studies primarily focus on either students, teachers, or instructional materials, while limited attention has been given to analyzing both student and teacher perspectives in terms of the needs, lacks, and wants in relation to English learning skills and components that integrate digital and AI tech.

In response to this gap, the present study aims to investigate the NA in English learning as perceived by junior high school students and English teachers' perspectives of their students' needs in English as a foreign language (EFL) context in Bali. Henceforth, the novelty of this study lies in its dual-perspective approach, the integration of needs, lacks, wants, and learning needs within a single framework, and its focus on a specific local context in junior high schools in Bali. Using questionnaire instruments grounded in the NA framework (needs, lacks, wants, and learning needs), this research seeks to gather empirical evidence that can guide the development of more relevant, engaging, and context-sensitive English language instruction. By focusing on both learners' and teachers' perspectives, the study contributes to the development of a more comprehensive, learner-informed, and context-specific EFL education. Henceforth, this study attempts to answer the following research questions: i) how are the students' perspectives of their needs for English language instruction? and ii) how are the teachers' perspectives of the students' needs for English language instruction?

2. METHOD

This study employed a quantitative approach using a survey method. The population consisted of 29 English teachers and 5,584 students from five junior high schools in Singaraja City, North Bali, Indonesia. All teachers were selected through total sampling, while students were determined using stratified random sampling technique to ensure the proportional representation across grades 7, 8, and 9 in five schools [19], [20]. The final samples consisted of 382 grade 7, 367 grade 8, and 325 grade 9 students.

To obtain the data, two instruments were used, namely student perspective questionnaire and teacher perspective questionnaire. The questionnaire for students consisted of 30 items with 27 close-ended questions and 3 open-ended questions, while the questionnaire for teachers consisted of 31 items with 27 close-ended questions and four open-ended questions. The questionnaires used a 4-point Likert scale in data processing process. The instruments were developed according to the theory of target needs (needs, lacks, and wants), and learning needs (current learning strategies and desired learning strategies) [5].

Before being used for data collection, both instruments went through two validation processes, content validity and empirical validity. Based on the results of the content validity judgment, both instruments obtained the score of 1.0 which indicates that the instrument has a high level of content validity. While the empirical validity test was carried out using a tryout in order to test the validity and reliability empirically. The implementation of this tryout involved 30 teachers and 40 students as respondents which were conducted via Google Forms.

The results of tryout instrument to the students showed that 25 out of 27 items have r value ≥ 0.312 and a significance value < 0.05 , which means the items are statistically valid. Two items did not meet the validity criteria and were not included in further analysis. Furthermore, the reliability test was conducted on 25 valid items using Cronbach's alpha. The test results demonstrated the value of $\alpha = 0.896$, which indicates that the instrument has high internal consistency and can be relied upon to measure the variables under study. Meanwhile, in the tryout instrument to the teachers resulted those 23 items out of 27 met the validity criteria

with r value ≥ 0.361 and significance < 0.05 , while 4 items were declared invalid and were not included in the reliability analysis. Furthermore, the reliability test was conducted on 23 valid items using Cronbach's alpha technique. The results revealed the value of $\alpha = 0.908$, which means that the instrument has a very high internal consistency and is reliable to use to measure teachers' perceptions in this study. Thus, both instruments were considered feasible and ready to be used for the data collection process of this study.

Regarding the data analysis, this study employed a quantitative approach to examine the collected data systematically. The analysis was conducted by calculating the percentage of each main component, namely needs, lacks, and wants, to identify the distribution of students' responses. Through this process, the study aimed to obtain a comprehensive picture of students' needs in English language learning, which can serve as a basis for developing more appropriate instructional strategies.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Results

3.1.1. Students' responses

Table 1 shows the students' responses based on need analysis dimensions. In the needs dimension, the language aspects most frequently rated as highly necessary or necessary were grammar (96.93%), vocabulary (96.18%), and speaking (94.97%). Other important aspects included pronunciation (94.60%), comprehension (94.60%), listening (94.13%), and writing (93.67%). Reading (92.64%) was also considered a significant need. Digital technology integration was viewed as necessary by 90.60% of students, and artificial intelligence (AI) technology was acknowledged as necessary by 77.09% of students.

Regarding the lacks dimension, the areas perceived as the most difficult included listening (93.11%), speaking (93.11%), and vocabulary (92.09%). Grammar (91.90%), reading (91.81%), and pronunciation (90.13%) were also reported as difficult by a majority of students. Writing was the least difficult skill (68.53%). For technological integration, the students found the lack usage of digital tools (83.80%) and AI applications (81.19%). In accordance to wants dimension, the most highly desired language aspects were grammar (94.23%), speaking (93.85%), and vocabulary (93.48%). Writing (92.74%) and pronunciation (92.36%) were also strongly preferred, followed by reading (91.62%). They also viewed strong interest in using digital technology (91.15%) and AI technology (86.22%) for their learning activities.

Table 1. Students' responses based on need analysis dimensions (n=1,074)

Category	Aspect	Score				Total positive (3+4)	Percentage
		1	2	3	4		
Needs	Grammar	4	29	443	598	1.041	96.93%
	Vocabulary	8	33	369	664	1.033	96.18%
	Speaking	9	50	385	635	1.020	94.97%
	Pronunciation	7	26	481	535	1.016	94.60%
	Comprehension	10	48	477	539	1.016	94.60%
	Listening	10	34	426	585	1.011	94.13%
	Writing	10	58	485	521	1.006	93.67%
	Reading	12	67	450	545	995	92.64%
	Digital tech	10	91	535	438	973	90.60%
Lacks	AI tech	25	194	521	307	828	77.09%
	Listening	16	58	439	561	1.000	93.11%
	Speaking	19	55	406	594	1000	93.11%
	Vocabulary	14	71	498	491	989	92.09%
	Grammar	18	69	453	534	987	91.90%
	Reading	17	71	434	552	986	91.81%
	Pronunciation	18	88	471	497	968	90.13%
	Digital tech	38	136	522	378	900	83.80%
	AI Tech	34	168	511	361	872	81.19%
Wants	Writing	64	275	372	264	736	68.53%
	Grammar	12	50	434	578	1.012	94.23%
	Speaking	13	53	394	614	1.008	93.85%
	Vocabulary	12	58	445	559	1.004	93.48%
	Writing	8	70	526	470	996	92.74%
	Pronunciation	15	67	470	522	992	92.36%
	Reading	14	76	451	533	984	91.62%
	Digital tech	10	85	516	463	979	91.15%
	AI Tech	19	129	503	423	926	86.22%

The analysis of students' open-ended responses reveals several key themes regarding their current learning practices and preferences. The most prominent theme was the dominance of teacher-centered instruction. A large number of students (94.4%) reported that their primary learning activity involved listening to the teacher's explanation.

The second theme emphasis on form-focused and repetitive activities. Students' responses also highlighted a strong reliance on traditional, form-focused practices. Activities such as completing worksheets (86.4%), translating texts into Indonesian (84%), answering reading comprehension questions (80.8%), memorizing vocabulary (79.2%), and copying notes from the teachers or lesson written on the board (78%) were frequently mentioned.

Another theme identified was the growing, though not yet dominant, integration of technology. While 76% of students reported reading from textbooks, a notable proportion also engaged with digital resources, such as watching English YouTube videos (73.2%) and 70.8% of students reported using digital platforms and social media (such as WhatsApp or TikTok) for learning English. In contrast to their current experiences, students expressed a strong preference for more interactive and engaging learning strategies. They selected educational games such as Kahoot as their preferred learning strategy (76.6%). This was followed by interactive animated learning videos (74.8%). The students also conveyed preference for short stories (56.5%). The majority of students preferred learning in groups for learning arrangements (82.3%).

3.1.2. Teachers' responses

Table 2 shows the teachers' responses based on needs analysis dimensions. In the needs category, the teachers found that all language aspects are necessary for the students to learn (100%). Dealing with the technology integration, they regraded both the digital tools (100%) and AI application (96.55%) as highly important to be integrated in the learning activities.

For the lacks category, the teachers perceived that the students found difficulties in grammar (86.20%), followed by writing, vocabulary, and speaking (82.75%) respectively. Other skills such as pronunciation, listening, and reading were also considered hard for students (72.41%). In regard to technology use, AI technology obtained 58.62% and digital technology reached 51.72%.

Regarding the wants category, the teachers expected the students to develop the vocabulary, reading, speaking, and grammar (96.55%), while pronunciation, writing, and listening (93.10%). This result signified those teachers strongly perceived the importance of all language aspects. Additionally, the teachers wanted to improve the integration of AI technology (100%) and digital technology (96.55%).

Table 2. Teachers' responses based on needs analysis dimensions (n=29)

Category	Aspect	Score				Total positive (3+4)	Percentage
		1	2	3	4		
Needs	Grammar	0	0	7	22	29	100.00%
	Pronunciation	0	0	3	26	29	100.00%
	Listening	0	0	6	23	29	100.00%
	Speaking	0	0	3	26	29	100.00%
	Reading	0	0	6	23	29	100.00%
	Writing	0	0	5	24	29	100.00%
	Digital tech	0	0	13	16	29	100.00%
	Vocabulary	0	0	4	25	29	100.00%
Lacks	AI tech	0	1	11	17	28	96.55%
	Grammar	0	4	18	7	25	86.20%
	Writing	0	5	18	6	24	82.75%
	Vocabulary	0	5	19	5	24	82.75%
	Speaking	0	5	18	6	24	82.75%
	Pronunciation	0	7	16	5	21	72.41%
	Listening	1	7	16	5	21	72.41%
	Reading	0	8	18	3	21	72.41%
Wants	AI tech	3	9	13	4	17	58.62%
	Digital tech	8	6	13	2	15	51.72%
	AI tech	0	0	14	15	29	100.00%
	Vocabulary	0	1	12	16	28	96.55%
	Reading	0	1	15	13	28	96.55%
	Speaking	0	1	12	16	28	96.55%
	Grammar	0	1	13	15	28	96.55%
	Digital tech	1	0	13	15	28	96.55%
	Pronunciation	0	2	10	17	27	93.10%
	Writing	0	2	13	14	27	93.10%
	Listening	1	1	17	10	27	93.10%

The analysis of teachers' open-ended responses presents several key themes related to their use of digital and AI technologies in English teaching. It was found a predominant use of presentation-based tools for lesson design. The digital technology most commonly used was Canva (62.07%), followed by PowerPoint (34.48%). Then, it also concerns on gradual integration of interactive classroom technologies. In classroom implementation, teachers reported a moderate use of interactive digital tools. Quizizz was the most frequently used digital tool (51.72%), followed by Canva (44.82%).

In regard to AI tools, it was found an emerging but uneven adoption of AI used in lesson planning. ChatGPT was used by 11 teachers (37.93%) and Gemini was employed by 6 teachers (20.69%). Interestingly, a total of 6 teachers (20.69%) reported they did not use AI tools for designing lessons. It shows varying levels of digital and AI readiness, and familiarity among teachers.

The theme was also concerning on limited integration of AI in English teaching. Compared to lesson planning, the integration of AI in actual English teaching remains relatively limited. The use of AI in the English classroom was highly on using ChatGPT which was the most mentioned AI tool, used by 9 teachers (31.03%). Meanwhile, 8 teachers (27.59%) confirmed they did not use AI tools in classroom teaching.

From all of the findings, there was a strong consensus among teachers regarding the importance of English skills, language components, as well as digital and AI technologies in English language learning. However, teachers reported uneven perceived lacks in relation to digital and AI technologies, that indicates existing challenges in these areas. This finding highlights a gap between teachers' awareness of instructional needs and their readiness to integrate emerging digital and AI technologies into classroom practices.

The relevance of the findings lies in their ability to provide a clear picture of both students' and teachers' needs in English learning. The results imply two main areas for improvement, namely the adoption of integrated language instruction with a strong emphasis on vocabulary and grammar as foundational elements across all skills. In addition, the identified gaps in digital and AI technologies emphasize the need for teacher training in digital and AI-based pedagogy. Although this study was conducted in Indonesia, its findings may be applicable to other EFL contexts with similar conditions.

3.2. Discussion

The findings of this study provide insights into the dual-perspectives of students and teachers dealing with English learning needs of junior high schools in Bali particularly in Singaraja. This approach corroborates existing research [5], [6], [10] that NA must address both target needs or what the students must do in the target situation and learning needs or how they need to learn seen from both sides, students and teachers. The present data confirm the relevance of this dual framework, as students and teachers demonstrate both overlapping and distinct priorities.

The results of this study indicate that vocabulary and grammar are the students' primary needs, which strengthens language skills [21], [22] and language structure and clarity [23]. Vocabulary and grammar become pivotal aspects due to their function. The results also underline the necessity of speaking, pronunciation, listening, comprehension, writing, and reading which were confirmed by teachers. Pronunciation develops accurate speech production [4] and listening facilitates language acquisition and understanding the texts [3], [24]. Comprehension helps the students connect spoken and written language with meaning [1], [12], [25].

Both students and teachers viewed writing is important because it is used for expressing ideas, completing academic tasks, and reinforcing grammar and vocabulary use. Research results demonstrate that writing activities help students organize thoughts and improving language proficiency [12], [16], [26]. Meanwhile, reading is perceived the least need among the core aspects by the students. However, teachers still viewed it as a prioritized need. This indicates that reading is as important as the other skills as a means of increasing vocabulary, building grammatical awareness, and supporting literacy [8], [17], [27].

In terms of digital-AI integration, AI and digital technologies were scored highly needed by students and teachers to enhance English competence. Interestingly, teachers acknowledged the increasing role of technology in the future English instruction. These findings reinforce previous studies that appropriate media brings effective and efficient English language education [14], [16], [28].

Regarding lacks, the most identified challenges are listening and speaking, often caused by lack of exposure and practices, as well as speaking anxiety, insufficient contextual interaction, fast speech and unfamiliar accents [24], then followed by lack of vocabulary and grammar which restrict both comprehension and expression, highlighting its importance for language fluency [27], [29]. Grammar remains problematic, as students still struggle with sentence structure and accuracy in spoken and written tasks [30]. In contrast, teachers perceived grammar as the greatest lack, followed by writing, vocabulary, and speaking. These results reveal differences between students and teachers. Students emphasized oral skills, while teachers focused on structure accuracy, strengthening previous studies [8] and [13]. Moreover, students perceived writing as the least difficult skill, whereas teachers still viewed writing as a significant challenge for students due to weaknesses in written communication [17].

Both students and teachers identified pronunciation and reading also as challenging aspects. Pronunciation challenges are related to limited native-like input and corrective feedback, while reading problems arise from limited exposure unfamiliar vocabulary, and weak comprehension strategies [1], [4], [8], [12], [30]. In addition, technological aspect presents another challenge, with students struggling more with the use of digital-AI tools and teachers facing difficulties in their instructional integration due to limited digital competence and pedagogical readiness. This emphasizes the need for sufficient infrastructure and professional development [12], [16], [28].

In the wants dimension, both students and teachers showed strong interest in grammar, speaking, and vocabulary emphasizing the importance for effective communication and supporting previous studies on contextualized language learning and communicative practice [30], [31]. They also considered pronunciation, writing, and reading important, as these aspects contribute to communication confidence, academic writing, and literacy development [3], [12], [16], [17]. Additionally, both groups expressed strong desire in integrating digital-AI technologies into English learning, which reinforce their role in creating engaging and flexible learning atmosphere [26], [28].

The open-ended responses highlighted that the current process of learning practices is mostly teacher-centered, which rely on teacher's explanation and students' working on the worksheets given, rather than interactive strategies. Nevertheless, the students demonstrated a strong preference in through educational games such as Kahoot, interactive videos, storytelling, and collaborative learning, indicating a need for more engaging and socially interactive instruction [23], [32], [33]. They also conveyed the importance of enjoyment, motivation, and clarity in learning, that support the view that meaningful learning should align with students' interests and learning styles [7] and [27].

Students' responses revealed the need for technology-based and interactive learning through digital platforms, social media, storytelling, animated videos, dictation, role-play, game-based activities to enhance engagement, comprehension, and motivation [16], [28], [32], [34]. Likewise, teachers recognized the potential of digital-AI tools to enrich English learning experiences. However, they also emphasized the need for professional development to integrate them productively [15].

Overall, both students and teachers perceived the importance of comprehensive language development in English instruction. It reflects the needs that supports academic success and real-life communication. This aligns with the 21st century English language teaching or ELT principles, which focus not only language aspects but also meaningful use, critical thinking, and communication skills [33], [35]. Digital and AI technologies support students' engagement and motivation. Therefore, English instruction should be grounded in language competence, while integrating relevant technological tools need to be implemented in order to improve the students' interaction, creativity, and participation [28].

4. CONCLUSION

This study provides the English language needs, lacks, and wants of junior high school students and teachers. Grammar, vocabulary, speaking, listening, reading, writing, pronunciation, and comprehension were identified as essential components of English learning. Students reported listening and speaking as their main challenges, while teachers emphasized grammar and writing. Both groups express a strong desire to improve English proficiency through the integration of digital and AI technologies. The findings also indicate that teacher-centered practices remain prevalent. The students prefer more interactive, engaging, and collaborative learning experiences. Therefore, policymakers, schools, and teachers should promote the effective integration of digital and AI technologies through continuous professional development, training, and innovative classroom practices. Future research should also examine the impact of these technologies on English language learning outcomes.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS STATEMENT

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Name of Author	C	M	So	Va	Fo	I	R	D	O	E	Vi	Su	P	Fu
Ni Made Ratminingsih	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	
I Gede Budasi		✓				✓		✓	✓			✓		
I Gde Putu Agus Pramerta	✓		✓	✓			✓			✓	✓		✓	✓
I Putu Yoga Laksana		✓			✓		✓	✓		✓	✓			

C : Conceptualization

M : Methodology

So : Software

Va : Validation

Fo : Formal analysis

I : Investigation

R : Resources

D : Data Curation

O : Writing - Original Draft

E : Writing - Review & Editing

Vi : Visualization

Su : Supervision

P : Project administration

Fu : Funding acquisition

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest in this project.

DATA AVAILABILITY

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author, [IGPAP], upon reasonable request.

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