Needs Analysis of Nursing Students in English Online Learning

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Abstract

It is necessary to re-analyze the needs of students to capture their current conditions since the Covid-19 has forcefully changed traditional into online learning. This study implies collecting data on students' needs to help English lecturers map the urgency of students and help formulate an appropriate syllabus. This quantitative study employs a descriptive analysis method. The participants are 85 sophomore students of the nursing bachelor program at STIKes YPIB Majalengka. This study aims to describe the needs of students categorized into six aspects as follows: 1) the students' current situation, which shows that the students need more support to facilitate internet networks and online learning devices (61%, n=52); 2) The skills and prior knowledge; this shows that numerous students tremendously need to develop their vocabulary, structures, and four basic language skills (76%, n=66); 3) The learning difficulties, it describes that many students need assistance in finding their online learning styles (52%, n=44); 4) The motivation, many students need intense initiation to find their online learning motives (62%, n=53); 5) They need strong encouragement to increase their self-esteem in an online classroom setting (60%, n=51). The last, 6) the expectation, almost all students need online learning methods that are more varied and interesting (98%, n=83).
Keywords: Needs analysis, English online learning, nursing students

INTRODUCTION

Based on the fact that the student needs always change; where the needs of students ten years ago will be different from the needs of students today. Thus, before lecturers formulate their syllabus, they need to analyze the needs of their students. Needs analysis

has developed since the 1960s as part of the necessary stages in curriculum development to respond to the needs of workplaces (Pratt, 1980). Many studies have addressed the core of needs-analysis questions on English teaching and learning, and thus, they could develop appropriate strategies to meet the gap between their students' needs and the goals of a work-based curriculum (Canziani, 2020; Ali, 2021; El-Messaoudi, 2021; Suryadi, 2021; Zglobiu, 2021). Therefore, the syllabus developed by lecturers is the syllabus that responds to changing needs caused by situations, challenges, competitions, and demands both regionally and internationally.

"Student needs" refer to wants, desires, demands, expectations, motivations, lacks, constraints, and requirements (Brindley, 1989). Richards (2002) states that need refers to linguistic deficiencies that describe the difference between what the learner "can do" and what "should be able to do." Needs analysis could be carried out before, during, and after courses to discover demographic profiles, gaps between student and society desires, and specific student problems. Needs, indeed, are not always obvious, so it is advisable to identify and analyze student needs carefully (Richards, 2002; Porcher 1977 in Brindley, 1989).

The fact that the needs of students are sensitively changeable and very dependent on many circumstances and undoubtedly the Covid-19 has significantly altered the students' needs (Suryadi, 2021; Ali, 2021; Zglobiu, 2021). The massive alteration of traditional into online learning becomes a big deal for English teaching and learning implementations. All agree that online learning is learning when it takes place over the internet. According to Allen and Seaman (2008), online learning is a course where most or all of the content is delivered online. The contents are served digitally. It typically has more than eighty percent (80+%) face-to-face meetings. This online learning has its characteristics both in strengths and weaknesses that lecturers and researchers believe it needs different approaches as Surani and Hamidah (2020) and Maulana and Lintangsari (2021) have implemented distinctive strategies focused on the effectiveness of emergency teaching methods.

In its uniqueness, online learning reforms the students' situations where they are forced to stay at home, need to adapt their study habits, and face technological challenges at the same time (Tran et al., 2020). Telepresence affects interaction patterns and student engagement among student-instructor-content. This distance learning situates students in a different sense of community and different ways how they engage with the material presented (Lear et al., 2010). In a learning activity, student engagement is very pivotal because it raises student satisfaction, increases student learning motivation, reduces the sense of isolation, expands student performance in online courses, and creates successful learning (Martin & Bolliger, 2018; Ginting, 2021). In addition, online learning changes students' attitudes, and positive attitudes are formed by learning readiness, as Herguner et

al. (2020) stated that readiness has a strong correlation where learning readiness has a meaningful effect on a positive distance learning attitude.

Online learning also situates students in diverse behaviors such as learning hours, preparations, strategies, and outcomes (Hsiao et al., 2019; Tran et al., 2020; Raza et al., 2020). Furthermore, the influence of online learning behavior on learning outcomes has a significant effect on long-term learning outcomes (Hsiao et al., 2019). In addition, online learning also has a powerful impact on students' perspectives, where students' perspectives can be influenced by several variables such as subjective norms, perceived ease of use, and perceived benefits on students' intentions to use e-learning systems (Al-Okaily et al., 2020). Moreover, Chen et al. (2020) stated in their findings that the students' positive perceptions covered an engaging, real-time medium for feedback exchange, knowledge sharing, and virtual community building. Yet, it is also a phenomenon that despite appreciating the lecturer's telepresence, some students preferred not to show their faces or/and activate the voice chat feature.

Due to those situations, analyzing students' needs is expected to cover all those issues both in intrinsic and extrinsic domains. To be noticed, it is essential to consider some points to implement a valid and reliable needs analysis. Analysts must know the meaning of needs and what factors influence those needs (Brindley, 1989). Then, the analysts must interpret the student's condition because needs are not as simple as they may appear, and needs are highly variable depending on particular situations, (Richards, 2002). It is essential to separate the needs into categories to simplify data analysis and make them more meaningful. An instance, Rossett 1982 in Brown (1995) identified five aspects of questions designed to identify problems, priorities, abilities, attitudes, and solutions. Therefore, unlike previous studies, this study focused on analyzing interrelated specific aspects between intrinsic and extrinsic domains. This study came from the gap in the students' behavior that appeared in the distinctive area.

The family background and socioeconomic level are two extrinsic aspects where diverse students' needs. Lynd 1929 in Ornstein et al. (2011) found that students' social class level contributes to stimulating verbal skills and successful behaviors. He also claimed that the student's family is the most important agent of their educational outcomes. The ugly truth states that upper class or higher socioeconomic status is better for classroom learning outcomes (Miller, 2002; Hogan, 2005; Lareau & Conley, 2008). Furthermore, students' home environment impacts three main characteristics of their schooling: a) knowledge and understanding, b) cognitive and verbal skills, and c) values and attitudes. Therefore, the student's current situation will strongly interrelate to the five intrinsic aspects elaborated below.

Li and Richard (1995) stated that the internal conditions determine the priority scale of student needs. Motivation, perception, prior knowledge, learning difficulties, and expectation are part of the internal conditions that are pivotal to be determined by

lecturers. Motivation and perception are essential to mapping because they can increase or decrease students' desire to learn ESP in difficult situations such as in the pandemic era. Spolsky (1989) emphasized that the more motivation a learner has, the more time he/she will spend and be eager to learn. Meanwhile, observing students' learning difficulties is a crucial aspect of grasping problematic situations in ESP, thus by this activity, the lecturers could diagnose and help their students (Gravatt et al., 1997).

Moreover, prior knowledge is one of the five pivotal aspects that affect learning outcomes. Greene et al. (2010) stated that prior knowledge and intelligence are related to independent learning and performance in hypermedia learning environments. Furthermore, students' expectations can picture students' learning preferences in their virtual classrooms, such as approaches, methods, strategies, or media assistance. Also, it is capable of mapping students' learning strategies and learning styles. Several studies had focused on students' expectations of their lecturers and found gaps among students' beliefs, lecturers' views, current conditions, and societal requirements to formulate the proper syllabus (Gravatt et al., 1997; Liu, 2005; Lubna & Ee-Ling, 2007; Herdlein & Zurner, 2015). Furthermore, Stufflebeam et al. (1985) scrutinized the students' expectations of language assessment. Later on, Sander et al. (2010) followed the study; they analyzed student needs focusing on "what methods do they want" and "what type of assessments do they expect".

Based on the explanations above, to seek the purpose of this research, this study states four research questions as follows: 1) how do the students' current situations in online English learning? 2) How do the students' prior knowledge of English? 3) What are the students' learning difficulties with online English learning? 4) How do the students' motivations for learning online English? 5) How do the students' perceptions of online English learning? The last, 6) how do the students' expectations of online English learning? From there, it can help in formulating or modifying their syllabus and ensure whether the syllabus is under the needs of the students to fulfill its goals, targets, and objectives. Meanwhile, a further purpose is to serve data for lecturers, schools, local governments, stakeholders, and administrators in determining whether the treatments and services of the syllabus are appropriate for performing online English learning. In addition, colleges with the same characteristics can adapt this study as a reference to make the best decisions to meet their students' needs and stakeholders' requirements based on their capacity.

METHOD

This research is a quantitative descriptive study. This study uses all populations as its sample. The eighty-five sophomore students of the nursing bachelor program were chosen because of the English lesson presented this year. The health institute of YPIB Majalengka, located in the Majalengka district, West Java, Indonesia, has the following characteristics: a) the students are not very diverse, b) most of the residents are Sundanese, c) the influence of Islam and local wisdom are quite intense, d) the majority of

parents' professions are agrarian and seller, e) based on the national GDP scale, the students' socioeconomic levels are low to average, the last f) the student residences spread from remote areas to nearby areas.

The instrument of this research was the closed-questionnaire adapted from Li and Richards (1995) in Richards (2002). Some questionnaire items had modified to be relevant to the research object and re-validated to ensure validity and reliability. The questionnaire had distributed before the semester began and right after the respondents signed the informed consent. The questionnaires were divided into six categories: questioning the students' extrinsic conditions in 1) the current conditions, such as the facility of devices and the availability of internet connection. Next, questioning students' intrinsic conditions, are discovering 2) prior knowledge, 3) learning difficulties, 4) motivations, 5) perceptions, and 6) expectations of online English learning. Furthermore, this study used the percentage technique to analyze the data.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Considering the findings are divided into six categories; they are 1) the students' current situations, 2) the skills and prior knowledge, 3) the learning difficulties, 4) the motivations, 5) the perceptions, and 6) the students' expectations, then the graph and explanations are given per paragraph below:
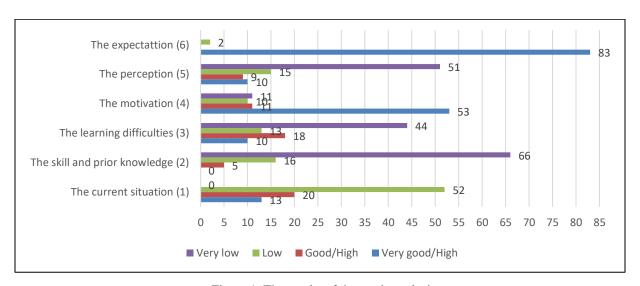

Figure 1. The results of the needs analysis

The current situation of students is categorized into external factors. This is to capture student learning facilities and family support. The results showed that the facilities owned by students were strongly adequate for as many as 13 students (15%), they had certain facilities in the form of adequate gadgets such as a laptop/notebook and cellular phone, strong internet connection, and sufficient balance for the internet. Their family was

a solid support system that was very concerned about the online learning situation. Next, those who faced fair conditions were 20 students (24%), in this case, the students had a laptop/notebook and cellular phone. They had enough balance for their internet but sometimes had trouble with the connection. Their family was a typical support system who was concerned about the online learning situation. Of the students who had insufficient facilities were 52 students (61%), they dealt with the unstable internet connection, and the only facilities they had were cell phones and also had a fairly balanced internet connection. Their family was rather unsupportive that lacked concern for the online learning situation. The last, group of the very unsupportive facility and family was zero (0%), thus, no student had anything.

The statistical data of students' current situations above show that they need more support to facilitate internet networks and online learning devices. Some previous studies emphasize that learning facilities have an influence on student performance during learning and have a significant impact on learning output because they face technological challenges (Tran et al., 2020; Absah et al., 2021; Yudiawan et al., 2021). Meanwhile, the relationship between the socio-economic conditions of the student's family is the primary point to be analyzed. Ornstein et al. (2011) stated that family is the pivotal agent in shaping their educational outputs, where the children's home environment fosters three key characteristics of their school: a) knowledge and understanding, b) cognitive and verbal skills, and c) values and attitudes. The result of students' current situation shows that they require more support to facilitate internet networks and online learning tools. Therefore, the domain of schools, lecturers, families, and stakeholders need to pay attention to the needs of students on online learning equipment.

Students' prior knowledge of English is also divided into four. Students who were in the intermediate (upper) category were zero (0%). Therefore, there were no students who were fully proficient in general and specific vocabulary and idioms, competent in grammar, proficient in pronouncing words or sentences and understanding the medical topics presented. Next, there were 5 students (6%) in the intermediate (lower) category. Five students were quite proficient in general and specific vocabulary and idioms, fairly competent in grammar, relatively proficient in pronouncing words or sentences, and understanding some of the medical topics presented. There were 16 students (18%) in the basic (upper) category. Quite a several students were less proficient in general and specific vocabulary and idioms, moderately incompetent in grammar, little less competent in pronouncing words or sentences, but they still understood some easy medical topics. Next, there were 66 students (76%) in the basic (lower) category. The majority of students lacked the general and specific vocabulary and idioms, lacked grammar mastery, were less proficient in pronouncing words or sentences, and did not understand the medical topics presented.

From this finding, it shows that numerous students tremendously need to develop their vocabulary, structure, and four basic skills. English lecturers need to manage suitable English materials, appropriate topics, complexity, and level of difficulty of the materials. They also need to manage appropriate English online learning strategies in transferring materials. Greene et al. (2010) stated that prior knowledge and intelligence are related to independent learning and performance in hypermedia learning environments. Next, Li and Richard (1995) stated that prior knowledge is very important to be analyzed by lecturers in knowing students' internal conditions. The same situation also happens at a faculty of Medicine in Sudan that the result of needs analysis finds that the students lack the basic skills, especially speaking and listening skills. The students want more involvement in technical aids that suit the trends, desirable and motivated. Therefore, the study recommends reviewing the current syllabus for some changes to meet the students' medical learning needs (Ibrahim, 2020).

Another internal condition that affects the students' needs is learning difficulties. It was found that many students considered some aspects of distance learning English problematic. The results showed that learning English online was easy for 10 students (12%), and some students found that learning English online was easier than the traditional one. They considered that learning English material online (vocabulary, pronunciation, structure/grammar, and four basic skills) was easier to learn. Online learning methods were more interesting so they improved their learning mood. Also, there were no significant distractions that reduced their focus as found in conventional classrooms. Next, it found that 18 students (21%) were in the moderate category. They thought that English materials presented online were fairly easy to learn. Online learning was quite interesting so it was enough to improve their learning mood, but they still found some minor distractions that decreased their focus on learning.

Furthermore, 13 students (15%) stated that learning English online was difficult. They considered that learning English materials were more difficult to learn through online learning. Online learning techniques tend to be monotonous and teacher-centered so it becomes quite boring. Some major distractions reduced their learning focus. In the last category, online English learning was strongly difficult as claimed by 44 students (52%). Half of the students considered that learning English online was very difficult to do. Online learning techniques became monotonous, teacher-centered, and monopolized by certain students and the majority of them became passive and neglected. Some major distractions reduce the willingness to learn, such as lack of readiness to learn due to not bathing, not changing clothes, and even lying on the bed during learning. In addition, being disturbed by siblings and being told to do house jobs by parents were two disturbances from the environment that became unavoidable obstacles in online learning.

Learning difficulties illustrate that many students need help in maintaining their new learning system. Since distance learning is situated students in diverse behaviors, such

as study hours, learning preparation, learning strategies, and learning outcomes (Hsiao et al., 2019; Tran et al., 2020; Raza et al., 2020). The students later found new challenges during online learning, that was the learning readiness. In the traditional class, students used to give their focus on "preparing to go to school", they used to manage all things, such as arranging the schedule the night before, preparing clothes, choosing what books to be brought, getting up early, taking a shower, having breakfast and getting ready to go to school. The series of those activities unconsciously drive students to build a strong intention to focus on learning. While in online learning, they are less prepared. Since they don't have to do any "preparatory rituals", they take it easy at school. Therefore, they are unconcerned, neglected, and less focused on learning. Thus, online learning changes student attitudes, and indeed, lecturers must notice this issue and direct students to shape new positive attitudes. A positive attitude can be formed by learning readiness, and readiness has a strong correlation with primitive distance learning attitudes (Herguner et al., 2020). In conclusion, the learning difficulties explain that many students need help in maintaining their new behaviors, online learning styles, and strategies.

Move on to the motivation category. Motivation also has a significant influence on student needs, more than half of students were strongly motivated as many as 53 students (62%). Some fairly motivated students were 11 students (13%). However, there were still many students who needed strong initiation to find their online learning motives. Students who were not motivated were 10 students (12%), and very unmotivated were 11 students (13%). It be noticed that motivation in this study is focused on intrinsic motivation, which is the reason why students have the will to learn English even in extreme conditions like this pandemic era. The more motivation a learner has, the more time he/she will spend and be eager to learn (Spolsky, 1989). The students' primary reasons for being highly motivated to master English found in this study are: first, they realized that English helps them to get information from media, online, and in books and to communicate with foreigners both on social media and in the real world. Second, the most popular activities today are blogging, vlogging, status updates on social media, and other activities that upload to the internet and most of these activities use English. Third, they need to master English for their future careers and continue in higher education. Need to be noticed, lecturers need to focus on students who have low motivation. They need a strong initiation to find their motives for online English learning.

The next category is the students' perceptions. The result found that the students who perceived that online English learning was very effective were 10 students (12%). Meanwhile, students who thought that online English learning was fairly effective were 9 (10%). Next, among the students who considered that online English learning was quite ineffective were 15 (18%). Meanwhile, the students who perceived that learning English was strongly ineffective were 51 students (60%). Students' perspectives can be influenced by several variables such as subjective norms, perceived ease of use, and perceived benefits

on students' intentions to use e-learning systems (Al-Okaily et al., 2020). Students who thought that online English learning was effective were the students who have been able to adapt to distance learning. However, many students were still struggling to adapt to this new pattern and experienced culture shock, therefore many students preferred not to show their faces or used the voice chat feature. A similar condition also occurred in Chen et al. (2020) that students could do feedback exchange, share knowledge, and build virtual communities, but they refused to turn on their cameras and voices. Therefore, students explicitly require strong encouragement to boost their positive perceptions in online classroom settings.

The last category in finding students' needs is expectations of learning English online. It was found that students who expected a variety of methods in their online English classes were 83 students (98%). Meanwhile, there were only two students (2%) who expected the learning to use only one method. Based on these findings, it can be concluded that almost all students need online learning methods that are more varied and interesting. Student expectations are important to meet the gap between student needs and college conditions. Several studies by Gravatt et al. (1997), Liu (2005), Lubna and Ee-Ling (2007), and Herdlein and Zurner (2015) focused on students' expectations of their lecturers and to find gaps among students and lecturers' views, current conditions and community requirements to formulate the proper teaching method in their syllabus.

In similar cases, Ibrahim (2020) captures the gap between students' needs and the current syllabus at the faculty of medicine in Sudan, and the finding finds that students want to improve their productive skills by using more involvement of technical aids that suit the trends, desirable and motivated. In the study of El-Nabawi and Shaalan (2020), they fulfilled the needs of students by applying the method of project-based learning in the ESP course to develop dental vocabulary by involving English-native speakers in their classroom, Maulana, and Lintangsari (2021) preferred to use the platform of LMS in the Covid-19 era at Brawijaya University to answer the requirements of students since that tool is a very effective platform to use. Lecturers need to dig more into what methods students prefer as Sander et al. (2010) mention lecturers must focus not only on methodology but also on assessments that students desire. Therefore, with this expectation analysis, a complete and comprehensive syllabus can be created that meets all requirements in all circumstances.

In addition, many studies reveal needs analysis in countries where English is a foreign language. The study at a medical faculty in an Indonesian university, Sujana et al. (2020), portrays the wide gap between the policy, learning programs, and goals. Thus, the students' English competence did not meet the requirements of the Indonesian Standards Competency of Medical Doctors. They suggest that the faculty reevaluate the syllabus, especially the learning outcomes, materials, and time allocation policy. Meanwhile, Lou, Li, and Zhao (2020) study the ESP needs at several faculties in China. The results show that

the students want to increase their productive and receptive skills. The students perceive that mastering English plays an important to gain major-related knowledge, vocational knowledge, and eligible academic writing papers. Therefore, they emphasize that in conducting a syllabus, lecturers must consider meeting the needs of target learners, choosing proper methodologies and strategies, and centering on the language appropriate related to the needed skills of that discipline.

Concerning the fulfillment of students' needs, Kuzembayeva and Zhakanova (2021) inquire whether the course is appropriate or not. Their study, conducted at a medical faculty in Kazakhstan, shows some results; first, the students' attitude toward English is a potential skill to achieve the future carrier, such as they expect to pass the IELTS or TOEFL. Second, learning difficulties generally appear in learning grammar and speaking skills. Third, the students perceive that the courses are slightly effective in developing their skills and providing for their language needs. As a suggestion, the study implies that the faculty needs to conduct more practical courses design.

In the studies of Nurakhir and Palupi (2018), Ahmmed et al. (2020), Ibrahim (2020), Thepseenu (2020), Syakur et al. (2020), Belachew (2020), Septiana et al. (2020), and Basri et al. (2020), they stated the similar results in which they emphasize to improve four basic language skills. The needs of students in ESP are to achieve communicative skills, particularly productive skills, receptive skills, and sub-skills in work-related situations. Also, the students perceive that ESP has a significant role in achieving their careers. Thus, the schools need to bridge the gaps between the needs of students and the requirements of the workplace. At the last, student needs are different and constantly changing. Therefore, before formulating a syllabus, lecturers need to analyze the fundamental needs of their students.

CONCLUSIONS

The transformation from the traditional to the online classroom changes distinctive aspects of student needs. The findings of this study reveal six categories of the needs which they are all interrelated. First, the student's current situation indicates that students need more support to facilitate internet networks and online learning tools. Second, the student's skills and prior knowledge show that many students certainly need to develop their vocabulary, structure, and four basic skills. Third, the learning difficulty illustrates that many students need assistance in finding their online learning styles. Fourth, the motivation finds that many students require strong initiation to find their online learning motives. Fifth, the perception discovers that the students need strong encouragement to increase their self-esteem in an online classroom setting. Sixth, the student's expectations confirm that almost all of them need online learning methods that are more varied and interesting.

The extrinsic and intrinsic aspects of needs are a wide range. Therefore, it is necessary to develop further aspects to collect more in-depth and holistic data. Indeed, the

student needs always change from time to time, so needs analysis must be carried out periodically by all parties to be relevant to the situation.

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