A NEEDS ANALYSIS OF UNIVERSITY LECTURERS IN AN IELTS® PREPARATION PROGRAM

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ABSTRACT

The internationalization of higher education has increased the demand for English proficiency among university lecturers, particularly in English as a Foreign Language context. As an internationally recognized assessment, the International English Language Testing System (IELTS®) is widely required for academic mobility and professional advancement. This study investigated the target needs, learning needs, and preferred learning conditions of university lecturers enrolled in an IELTS® preparation program at the language center of a state university in West Java. A descriptive survey design employing a needs analysis framework was used. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire consisting of Likert-scale items and open-ended questions. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, while qualitative responses were examined through thematic categorization. The findings indicate that lecturers perceive all four IELTS® skills as essential but experience challenges related to accent comprehension, structured academic writing, spontaneous speaking, and time-managed reading. Participants expressed strong preferences for authentic materials, strategy-based instruction, individualized feedback, IELTS® simulation practice, and flexible learning arrangements. The study highlights the importance of needs-based IELTS® preparation tailored to the professional demands and learning characteristics of university lecturers.

INTRODUCTION
The globalization of higher education has considerably raised the demand for English proficiency among university lecturers, particularly in contexts where English serves as a foreign language. As universities increasingly engage in academic mobility and professional advancement (e.g., pursuing a PhD degree abroad, participating in an international conference, gaining a career promotion, etc.), lecturers are expected to demonstrate a level of English proficiency that enables them to participate effectively (Altbach & Knight, 2007). One of the most widely recognized tests of English proficiency is IELTS®, which is administered by the trusted organizations, such as, British Council, IDP IELTS®, and Cambridge English.

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According to the British Council (2026), IELTS® opens opportunities for candidates to live, study, and work abroad, and its results are accepted by thousands of institutions globally, including universities, employers, and professional bodies. The test evaluates competence in four core language skills (listening, reading, writing, and speaking), and is offered in different formats (e.g., Academic and General Training) to suit varying purposes and goals. IELTS® outcomes are widely trusted and serve as a benchmark for English proficiency in academic and professional contexts, institutions and individuals increasingly prioritize targeted preparation programs to ensure successful performance on this high-stakes examination (British Council, 2026). As a result, many universities have begun offering IELTS® preparation programs designed specifically for university lecturers. However, the effectiveness of such programs is heavily reliant on how well they address lecturers' actual needs.

Despite the increasing availability of IELTS® preparation courses for lecturers, questions remain about how these programs are systematically constructed based on empirical evidence of learner needs. University lecturers are a unique group of adult language learners whose reasons for taking the IELTS® differ greatly from those of students or general test candidates. While students normally take the IELTS® as a requirement for studying abroad, lecturers typically require IELTS® certification to meet institutional language standards, qualify for promotion, apply for international scholarships, or participate in academic exchange programs. (Coleman, 2006; Kirkpatrick, 2014). These professional motivations shape lecturers' expectations of IELTS® preparation programs and influence their engagement with course content and learning activities.

In many EFL contexts, university lecturers possess advanced subject-matter expertise and extensive teaching experience, yet their exposure to high-stakes standardized English tests may be limited. Although lecturers frequently use English for reading academic texts or writing research articles, IELTS® can pose substantial challenges, similar to those commonly faced by students in EFL contexts (Muklas et al., 2024). The writing module, for instance, requires candidates to produce well-organized responses within strict time limits (one hour) while adhering to specific genre conventions and assessment criteria (Hyland, 2019). Similarly, the speaking module evaluates candidates' ability to communicate fluently in spontaneous interaction with a native speaker. It requires skills that may not be regularly practiced in academic settings where English is not the medium of instruction. These challenges suggest that IELTS® preparation programs for lecturers should be tailored to their specific needs.

Nevertheless, many IELTS® preparation programs offered by universities adopt standardized curricula originally developed for general test takers. Such approaches often fail to account for lecturers' prior language learning experiences, time constraints, and academic responsibilities. University lecturers typically juggle teaching, research, and administrative duties, leaving limited time for intensive language study (Borg & Alshumaimeri, 2019). When preparation programs overlook these contextual factors, they risk reduced learner motivation, inefficient use of instructional time, and limited gains in test performance. This mismatch between course design and learner needs highlights the importance of conducting a

systematic needs analysis prior to the implementation of IELTS® preparation programs for lecturers.

The needs analysis refers to the systematic process of identifying learners' language requirements, learning preferences, and target language use in specific academic or professional contexts (Hutchinson & Torres, 1994). Graves (2000) adds that the needs analysis involves acquiring and analyzing information about students' needs to design an effective course. Within English for Specific Purposes (ESP), needs are commonly categorized into target needs and learning needs. Target needs refer to what learners must be able to do in the target situation and include necessities, lacks, and wants (Hutchinson & Torres, 1994). Necessities represent the linguistic demands required to function effectively in academic or professional contexts, whereas lacks refer to the gap between learners' current competence and required proficiency. Wants, in contrast, reflect learners' subjective perceptions of their needs. Learning needs, on the other hand, focus on how learners prefer to learn and the conditions that facilitate effective learning. These include preferred instructional approaches, materials, classroom organization, and time availability.

In the context of IELTS® preparation for university lecturers, target needs may involve achieving specific band scores, mastering test-specific discourse conventions, or developing fluency for academic communication. Learning needs may include flexible scheduling, discipline-relevant materials, and strategy-based instruction. Distinguishing these dimensions is essential because effective IELTS® preparation programs must address both performance requirements and learning processes. Through needs analysis, course designers can determine the gap between learners' current proficiency and the competencies required in the target situation. In the context of IELTS® preparation for university lecturers, needs analysis can reveal not only deficiencies in specific language skills but also test-related needs, learning expectations, motivational orientations, and affective factors.

Despite its recognized importance, research on IELTS® preparation has largely focused on students in general, particularly candidates preparing for undergraduate or postgraduate study abroad (Hawkey, 2007). Previous studies have examined issues such as IELTS® washback, test-taking strategies, and score improvement among students (Green, 2006). Similarly, some scholars also conducted needs analysis for the IELTS® course, for example, (Matiini et al., 2020) who conducted a needs analysis for an IELTS® preparation program based on a learner's competency and requirements including materials, practice, and evaluation. Moreover, Farid and Saifuddin (2018) did a needs-based analysis specifically for IELTS® writing materials for low-proficiency learners, and Eshtehardi (2017) who offered a framework for incorporating needs analysis in exam course design, including IELTS®. However, among these previous studies, little attention has been paid to university lecturers as IELTS® test takers. Furthermore, existing studies that involve teachers often emphasize perceptions of test difficulty or institutional language requirements rather than providing a comprehensive needs analysis framework (Paul & Elder, 2019). This lack of empirical research represents a significant gap, given the increasing pressure placed on lecturers to obtain internationally recognized English proficiency certification.

Moreover, university lecturers represent experienced adult learners whose learning characteristics differ from those of traditional students. Adult learning theory suggests that mature learners are goal-oriented, self-directed, and motivated by immediate relevance to professional needs (Knowles, 1984). They bring prior knowledge, established learning strategies, and strong expectations regarding instructional relevance. Consequently, IELTS® preparation programs that rely on generic test-drilling approaches may not align with lecturers' learning orientations. For example, lecturers in science and engineering disciplines may demonstrate strong reading skills due to frequent engagement with English research articles but encounter difficulties in extended writing or oral interaction (Flowerdew, 2012). Conversely, lecturers in the humanities or social sciences may be more accustomed to argumentative writing yet still struggle with meeting IELTS®-specific task requirements and assessment criteria. A detailed needs analysis is therefore essential to capture these differences and inform the development of targeted instructional strategies.

In addition to linguistic and contextual factors, affective variables play a crucial role in lecturers' IELTS® preparation. Test anxiety, lack of confidence, and fear of negative evaluation can negatively influence performance, particularly in speaking and writing tasks (Horwitz, 2001). For university lecturers, who are accustomed to being authorities in their academic fields, the experience of being assessed on language proficiency can be psychologically challenging. If IELTS® preparation programs fail to address these affective needs, learners may experience increased stress and decreased motivation, which can ultimately hinder learning outcomes.

Institutional policies and expectations further shape lecturers' needs in IELTS® preparation contexts. Many universities establish minimum IELTS® score requirements for promotion, international collaboration, or participation in global academic initiatives. While such policies may provide extrinsic motivation, they can also encourage a narrow focus on test scores rather than sustainable language development. Needs analysis can assist institutions in balancing test-oriented goals with broader academic English development, ensuring that lecturers acquire skills that remain useful beyond the IELTS® examination. Given these considerations, conducting a needs analysis of university lecturers in IELTS® preparation classes are both theoretically and practically significant. By systematically examining lecturers' target needs (what they must do with English) and learning needs (how they prefer to learn and what support they require), course designers can develop more effective, relevant, and context-sensitive programs (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998).

The present study aims to investigate the needs of university lecturers enrolled in an IELTS® preparation class adopting a needs analysis framework from Hutchinson and Torres (1994) Specifically, it seeks to identify lecturers' target needs and learning needs which cover four skills (listening, reading, writing, and speaking) and general learning conditions which consist of preferred learning mode, preferred learning size, and duration of class meeting. It also explores the open-ended questions discussing the skills they find challenging, preferred IELTS® materials, and other expectations. Therefore, the study seeks to answer the

following questions: (1) what are university lecturers' target needs in joining an IELTS® preparation class? (2) what are university lecturers' learning needs in joining an IELTS® preparation class? (3) what general learning conditions do university lecturers need in joining an IELTS® preparation class? The findings are expected to inform the development of needs-based IELTS® instruction tailored to university lecturers' professional and academic demands.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a descriptive survey design incorporating both quantitative and qualitative data to investigate the target needs, learning needs, and general learning conditions of university lecturers participating in an IELTS® preparation program at the language center of a state university in West Java. The study was grounded in a needs analysis framework adapted from Hutchinson and Torres (1994), which examines learners' target needs, learning needs, and learning conditions in a specific educational context.

Participants

The participants were university lecturers enrolled in an IELTS® preparation class conducted by the language center of a state university in West Java. Total sampling was applied (12 participants), in which all lecturers participating in the program were invited to respond to the questionnaire. The participants came from diverse academic disciplines and represented experienced adult learners in an English as a Foreign Language environment.

Research Instrument

Prior to data collection, the questionnaire was reviewed and validated by the Head of the Language Center of the university to ensure its clarity, relevance, and alignment with the objectives of the study. The validation process focused on evaluating whether the questionnaire items appropriately represented the constructs of target needs, learning needs, and learning conditions based on the needs analysis framework proposed by Hutchinson and Torres (1994). Minor revisions were made based on the feedback provided before the questionnaire was distributed to the participants. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered via an online survey platform. The instrument was developed based on the needs analysis model proposed by Hutchinson and Torres (1994). It consisted of four sections:

1. Target needs, examining lecturers' perceived necessities, lacks, and wants across listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills.
2. Learning needs, exploring preferred instructional approaches, materials, and types of feedback.
3. General learning conditions, including preferred learning mode, class size, and duration of instruction.
4. Open-ended questions, designed to capture participants' perceived challenges, preferred materials, and expectations toward IELTS® preparation programs.

Closed-ended items employed a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

Data Collection and Data Analysis

The questionnaire was distributed online to lecturers attending the IELTS® preparation class. Participation was voluntary, and responses were collected within a designated period. The online format allowed participants to respond flexibly according to their professional schedules. Quantitative data from closed-ended items were analyzed using descriptive statistics, particularly percentages, to identify patterns in lecturers' perceived needs across language skills and learning conditions. While, the qualitative responses from open-ended questions were analyzed through thematic categorization. Recurring themes were identified and used to complement and clarify the quantitative findings. The integration of both data types enabled a comprehensive description of lecturers' IELTS® preparation needs.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Finding

The findings are presented according to the three research questions: target needs, learning needs, general learning conditions, and qualitative data from open-ended questions. In the tables presented in this section, the abbreviations SA, A, N, D, and SD represent the Likert-scale responses Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree respectively.

1. **Target Needs**
   a. **Listening**

   A large majority strongly agreed that they need to understand academic lectures (75%) and follow seminar discussions in English (67%). Understanding different English accents was also widely recognized as important (50% strongly agree; 42% agree). Although most participants agreed that they could identify main ideas in spoken texts (92%), fewer reported confidence in understanding fast, naturally spoken English, with 58% expressing uncertainty. Participants expressed clear expectations for instructional support. The majority requested focused training in IELTS® listening strategies (58% strongly agree) and authentic academic listening materials (58% strongly agree). A strong need for detailed feedback on listening performance was also evident (75% strongly agree).

   b. **Reading**

   Reading was perceived as essential for professional academic activities, with 75% strongly agreeing that they need to read academic journals and reports. However, confidence in meeting IELTS® reading requirements was moderate, with only 42% agreeing that their current reading ability meets IELTS® standards and 42% remaining neutral. Half of the participants expressed uncertainty about their ability to read efficiently under time pressure. Despite this, lecturers reported relatively strong ability to identify argument structures in academic texts (75% agree). Participants indicated clear learning priorities, including explicit instruction in IELTS® reading strategies (75% agree) and practice materials resembling real IELTS® tests (75% strongly agree). Support for academic vocabulary development was also widely requested (58% strongly agree).

c. Writing

Most lecturers strongly agreed that they need to write academic texts (75%) and express complex ideas clearly (67%). However, perceived competence in IELTS®-level writing was relatively low. Only 33% agreed that their writing meets IELTS® requirements, while 50% expressed uncertainty. Participants reported challenges in developing and supporting arguments effectively, with 67% agreeing but 25% remaining neutral. Similarly, confidence in using appropriate academic vocabulary and grammar was moderate. Lecturers expressed strong expectations for writing instruction, particularly intensive practice for IELTS® Writing Task 1 and Task 2 (50% strongly agree; 50% agree), model answers (100% agreement), and personalized feedback (58% strongly agree).

d. Speaking

Most participants agreed that they need to explain academic concepts clearly (50% agree) and participate confidently in academic discussions (58% strongly agree). However, only 33% agreed that their speaking ability meets IELTS® expectations, while 42% remained neutral. Fluency and appropriate academic vocabulary were also areas of uncertainty. Participants expressed strong demand for speaking practice opportunities (58% strongly agree) and feedback on pronunciation, fluency, and accuracy (58% strongly agree). Anxiety management was identified as an important need, with 67% strongly agreeing that they require strategies to manage speaking test anxiety.

Table 1. Target Needs of University Lecturers in an IELTS® Preparation Class

Target Needs	SA	A	NAND	D	SD	Total
Listening						
I need to understand academic lectures in English.	75%	17%	0%	8%	0%	100%
I need to follow seminar discussions and meetings in English.	67%	33%	0%	0%	0%	100%
I need to understand different English accents.	50%	42%	8%	0%	0%	100%
My current listening skill is sufficient for IELTS® tasks.	8%	67%	17%	8%	0%	100%
I can identify main ideas and supporting details in spoken texts.	0%	92%	8%	0%	0%	100%
I can understand fast, naturally spoken English.	0%	42%	58%	0%	0%	100%
I want focused training in IELTS® Listening strategies.	58%	33%	8%	0%	0%	100%
I want more practice with authentic academic listening materials.	58%	42%	0%	0%	0%	100%

I want detailed feedback on my listening performance.	75%	17%	8%	0%	0%	100%
Reading						
I need to read academic journals, articles, and reports in English.	75%	17%	8%	0%	0%	100%
I need to understand complex academic arguments in English.	58%	33%	8%	0%	0%	100%
I need to extract key information efficiently from long texts.	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%	100%
My current reading ability meets IELTS® requirements.	0%	42%	42%	17%	0%	100%
I can identify argument structures in academic texts.	0%	75%	25%	0%	0%	100%
I can read efficiently under time pressure.	0%	33%	50%	17%	0%	100%
I want explicit instruction in IELTS® Reading strategies.	25%	75%	0%	0%	0%	100%
I want practice materials similar to real IELTS® Reading tests.	75%	25%	0%	0%	0%	100%
I want support in developing academic vocabulary for reading.	58%	42%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Writing						
I need to write academic texts.	75%	25%	0%	0%	0%	100%
I need to express complex ideas clearly in written English.	67%	25%	8%	0%	0%	100%
I need to write logically organised and coherent essays.	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%	100%
My current writing is at the level required for IELTS®.	0%	33%	50%	17%	0%	100%
I can develop and support arguments effectively in writing.	0%	67%	25%	8%	0%	100%
I can use appropriate academic vocabulary and grammar.	8%	42%	42%	8%	0%	100%
I want intensive practice for IELTS® Writing Task 1 and Task 2.	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%	100%
I want clear models and sample answers to study.	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%	100%
I want personalised feedback on my writing.	58%	42%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Speaking						

I need to explain academic concepts clearly in English.	42%	50%	8%	0%	0%	100%
I need to participate confidently in academic discussions.	58%	42%	0%	0%	0%	100%
I need to express opinions and justify arguments in English.	50%	42%	8%	0%	0%	100%
My current speaking ability meets IELTS® expectations.	8%	33%	42%	17%	0%	100%
I can speak fluently and coherently without frequent pauses.	8%	42%	33%	17%	0%	100%
I can use appropriate academic vocabulary when speaking.	0%	50%	33%	17%	0%	100%
I want more opportunities for speaking practice.	58%	42%	0%	0%	0%	100%
I want feedback on pronunciation, fluency, and accuracy.	58%	33%	8%	0%	0%	100%
I want strategies to manage anxiety during speaking tests.	67%	25%	0%	8%	0%	100%

2. **Learning Needs**
   a. **Listening**

Most participants also reported benefiting from exposure to various English accents (50% strongly agree; 42% agree), reflecting the challenges identified in target needs. In addition, guided note-taking strategies were widely perceived as necessary, with 33% strongly agreeing and 58% agreeing that structured support is required for listening tasks.

   b. **Reading**

All respondents agreed that they require step-by-step guidance on reading strategies, suggesting a need for systematic support in managing IELTS® reading tasks. Vocabulary support was also identified as essential, with 50% strongly agreeing and 50% agreeing that lexical development facilitates reading comprehension. Furthermore, most lecturers indicated the need for practice in identifying arguments and writer viewpoints (33% strongly agree; 67% agree), demonstrating the importance of analytical reading skills in IELTS® preparation.

   c. **Writing**

All participants agreed that learning through model texts and examples supports their writing development. Similarly, detailed feedback on language use and organization was universally recognized as beneficial. Support for planning and structuring essays was also strongly endorsed, with 58% strongly agreeing and 33% agreeing.

   d. **Speaking**

Most participants preferred interactive speaking activities and discussions (67% agree), indicating the importance of communicative practice. All respondents agreed that a supportive learning environment is

necessary to reduce speaking anxiety, highlighting the role of affective factors in language learning. Additionally, participants reported benefiting from feedback on pronunciation and fluency (50% strongly agree; 50% agree), suggesting that corrective input is considered essential for speaking development.

Table 2. Learning Needs of University Lecturers in an IELTS® Preparation Class

Learning Needs	SA	A	NAND	D	SD	Total
Listening						
I prefer listening activities using authentic academic recordings.	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%	100%
I benefit from practising with various English accents.	50%	42%	8%	0%	0%	100%
I need guided note-taking strategies for listening tasks.	33%	58%	8%	0%	0%	100%
Reading						
I prefer step-by-step guidance on reading strategies.	42%	58%	0%	0%	0%	100%
I benefit from vocabulary support when reading.	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%	100%
I need practice identifying arguments and writer viewpoints.	33%	67%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Writing						
I prefer learning writing through model texts and examples.	42%	58%	0%	0%	0%	100%
I benefit from detailed feedback on language and organisation.	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%	100%
I need support in planning and structuring essays.	58%	33%	8%	0%	0%	100%
Speaking						
I prefer interactive speaking activities and discussions.	33%	67%	0%	0%	0%	100%
need a supportive environment to reduce speaking anxiety.	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%	100%
I benefit from feedback on pronunciation and fluency.	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%	100%

3. General Learning Conditions

Participants showed a strong preference for blended learning (58%), followed by offline learning (33%), while online-only learning was least preferred (8%). Regarding class size, most lecturers preferred small to medium classes, with 50% favoring groups of 6–10 participants and 42% preferring 1–5 participants. In terms of instructional duration, 90-minute sessions were most preferred (50%), followed by 180-minute sessions (25%), indicating a preference for extended instructional time.

Table 3. General Learning Conditions of University Lecturers In an IELTS® Preparation Class

	Offline Learning	Online Learning	Blended Learning		
Preferred learning mode	33%	8%	58%		
	1 - 5	**6 - 10**	**11 - 20**	**> 20**	
Preferred class size	42%	50%	8%	0%	
	60 minutes/week	90 minutes/week	120 minutes/week	150 minutes/week	180 minutes/week
Duration of the class meeting	8%	50%	17%	0%	25%

Discussion

The present study investigated the target needs, learning needs, and learning conditions of university lecturers participating in an IELTS® preparation program at the language center of a state university in West Java. By integrating quantitative questionnaire results with qualitative open-ended responses, the study provides a comprehensive understanding of how lecturers perceive IELTS® preparation in relation to their professional responsibilities and language development goals. Overall, the findings indicate that lecturers recognize English proficiency across all four IELTS® skills as essential for academic participation and professional advancement, yet they simultaneously perceive clear gaps between their current abilities and the performance requirements of the IELTS® examination. These gaps are not limited to linguistic knowledge but extend to strategic competence, performance confidence, and contextual learning conditions.

The qualitative findings provide important explanatory depth to the quantitative results by illustrating how lecturers experience IELTS® preparation challenges in real learning contexts. Participants' emphasis on difficulty understanding accents, producing structured writing, and responding spontaneously in speaking tasks confirms the performance gaps identified in the target needs analysis. These perceived challenges reflect the distinction between general academic language exposure and test-specific communicative competence. As explained by Hutchinson and Torres (1994), needs analysis must address learners'

lacks in relation to target performance requirements rather than general language ability. Although many lecturers routinely read academic texts or engage in professional communication, such experiences do not automatically prepare them for the procedural and strategic demands of standardized language assessment. The findings therefore reinforce the ESP perspective that language instruction must be tailored to specific target situations rather than generalized competence.

The prominence of listening difficulties related to accent variation, fast speech, and unfamiliar vocabulary highlights the role of authentic input in language development. Participants consistently reported challenges in recognizing words accurately and following naturally spoken English, particularly when exposed to unfamiliar accents. At the same time, they strongly preferred authentic listening materials and opportunities to interact with proficient speakers. This pattern suggests that lecturers perceive exposure to real-world discourse as essential for improving comprehension and confidence. Such findings align with ESP principles emphasizing the importance of target-situation language use in instructional design (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998). Authentic materials enable learners to develop familiarity with discourse patterns, pronunciation variation, and communicative conventions characteristic of real academic interaction. The lecturers' emphasis on authentic input therefore reflects an awareness that language learning must extend beyond simplified instructional materials to include exposure to naturally occurring language use.

Similarly, lecturers' reported challenges in organizing arguments and producing advanced written responses highlight the specialized rhetorical demands of IELTS® writing tasks. Participants frequently described difficulty elaborating ideas, structuring paragraphs, and producing high-level academic language under time constraints. These challenges suggest that writing performance in IELTS® involves not only linguistic accuracy but also mastery of genre conventions and rhetorical organization. According to Hyland (2019) academic writing requires control of discourse structure, argumentation strategies, and discipline-sensitive conventions that must be explicitly taught. The lecturers' strong preference for model texts, structured guidance, and individualized feedback therefore reflects a need for explicit instruction in academic discourse practices rather than general language support. This finding also reinforces the importance of strategy-based instruction that helps learners understand assessment criteria and performance expectations.

The findings also reveal that reading challenges are primarily associated with time management, identifying paraphrased information, and maintaining concentration when processing lengthy texts. These difficulties are characteristic of performance under assessment conditions rather than general reading ability. Participants' request for step-by-step strategies and practice resembling real IELTS® tasks suggests that they perceive reading success as dependent on procedural competence and test familiarity. This observation supports research indicating that strategic processing and task familiarity play important roles in standardized test performance (Green, 2007).

Participants' emphasis on speaking difficulties further illustrates the interaction between linguistic competence and performance conditions. Lecturers

reported challenges related to fluency, vocabulary use, spontaneous response organization, and unfamiliar discussion topics. Some participants specifically highlighted the lack of opportunities for daily English conversation as a barrier to speaking development. These findings indicate that speaking competence in IELTS® is perceived not only as a linguistic skill but also as a performance skill requiring practice, confidence, and interaction. The strong demand for communicative practice and feedback reflects an understanding that speaking development depends on sustained engagement in meaningful communication.

Another important dimension emerging from the findings is the role of learning preferences and instructional expectations. Participants consistently expressed preference for structured guidance, practice-oriented activities, and individualized feedback across all skills. These preferences support the view that effective language programs must be grounded in systematic analysis of learners' needs and learning contexts. As emphasized by Graves (2000), curriculum design should be informed by learners' goals, experiences, and contextual constraints to ensure instructional relevance. The lecturers' expectations for strategy training, model-based instruction, and feedback-oriented practice demonstrate a desire for transparent and goal-directed learning processes.

The emphasis on flexible learning formats and extended instructional time reflects characteristics commonly associated with adult professional learners. Participants frequently mentioned scheduling constraints, preference for blended or online learning, and the need for longer instructional sessions. These preferences correspond with adult learning principles proposed by Knowles (1984), which emphasize goal orientation, self-direction, and immediate applicability of learning. As working professionals with teaching, research, and administrative responsibilities, lecturers require instructional arrangements that accommodate time limitations while maintaining opportunities for meaningful practice. The preference for IELTS® simulation tests and measurable outcomes further demonstrates a pragmatic orientation toward professional development and performance improvement.

The qualitative findings also highlight the importance of affective factors in IELTS® preparation. Participants frequently expressed the need for supportive learning environments, repeated practice, and confidence-building opportunities. Such expectations suggest that psychological readiness plays a crucial role in perceived language competence. This observation is consistent with research demonstrating that anxiety and fear of negative evaluation can significantly influence language performance in high-stakes testing contexts (Horwitz, 2001). For university lecturers, who typically function as authorities in their academic fields, being evaluated in a language test may create additional pressure that affects performance. Addressing affective needs through supportive instruction and structured practice is therefore an important component of effective IELTS® preparation.

Institutional and contextual factors also shape lecturers' learning needs. Participants' expectations regarding flexible scheduling, program continuity, certification, and simulation testing indicate that IELTS® preparation is perceived as part of broader professional development rather than isolated language training.

This finding supports the view that language programs for professionals must respond not only to linguistic needs but also to organizational and institutional conditions. As noted by Graves (2000) effective language programs are shaped by contextual realities, including learner roles, institutional goals, and available resources. The present findings therefore suggest that IELTS® preparation for university lecturers should be conceptualized as a context-sensitive professional development initiative rather than a standardized test-preparation course.

Overall, the integration of quantitative and qualitative findings confirms that university lecturers constitute a distinct group of adult language learners whose needs are shaped by professional responsibilities, academic experience, and institutional expectations. Their perceived challenges reflect performance-specific demands rather than general language deficiency, and their learning preferences emphasize relevance, structure, authenticity, and flexibility. These findings reinforce the importance of systematic needs analysis as a foundation for designing IELTS® preparation programs that are responsive to professional contexts and learner characteristics.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This study investigated the target needs, learning needs, and preferred learning conditions of university lecturers participating in an IELTS® preparation program at the language center of a state university in West Java. The findings indicate that lecturers perceive English proficiency across all four IELTS® skills as essential for academic communication and professional advancement. However, both quantitative and qualitative results reveal persistent performance-related challenges, particularly in understanding natural speech and accent variation, organizing written arguments, responding fluently in speaking tasks, and managing time in reading tasks. The qualitative data further demonstrate that these challenges are closely associated with limited exposure to authentic language use, performance anxiety, and constrained opportunities for practice. Lecturers expressed strong preferences for authentic materials, structured strategy instruction, individualized feedback, IELTS® simulation practice, and flexible learning arrangements that accommodate professional responsibilities. Overall, the study confirms that university lecturers represent a distinct group of adult professional learners whose language needs extend beyond general proficiency to include test-specific performance competence and contextual learning support. The findings underscore the importance of systematic needs analysis as a foundation for designing IELTS® preparation programs that are context-sensitive, professionally relevant, and responsive to learners' cognitive, affective, and institutional learning conditions. This study involved a relatively small number of participants from a single university, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Future research could involve a larger number of lecturers from multiple institutions to provide a broader understanding of lecturers' needs in IELTS® preparation programs. In addition, further studies may investigate the effectiveness of needs-based IELTS® preparation courses or explore how specific instructional strategies influence lecturers' test performance and language development.

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