

Special English for MA Students of Water Science

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Preface

English has acquired a unique status among the other languages of the world in that it has been acknowledged as a 'global language'. English is now spoken in over forty countries as a first language and in over fifty-five countries as a second language, and the language seems to be on an ever increasing and unstoppable trajectory of use.

From the early 1960's, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) has grown to become one of the most prominent areas of EFL teaching today. Its development is reflected in the increasing number of universities offering an MA in ESP and in the number of ESP courses offered for overseas students in English speaking countries.

English has become a lingua franca in many areas of modern science and technology leading to the growing demand for English for specific purposes courses. As the abbreviation suggests, such courses should cater for very specific needs - those of particular groups of people working in various narrow fields. Most universities who acknowledge this tendency try to equip their students with both knowledge of the subject matter and the skills to cope with the foreign language.

ESP concentrates more on language in context than on teaching grammar and language structures. It covers subjects varying from accounting or computer science to tourism and business management. The ESP focal point is that English is not taught as a subject separated from the students' real world (or wishes); instead, it is integrated into a subject matter area important to the learners.

One of the most important factors in an efficient education process is students' motivation; their wants and weaknesses in studying

a particular subject are crucial and should be taken into consideration in the process of syllabus design. Overall, the needs of the students should be of vital importance in designing ESP books. Needs analysis (also known as needs assessment) has a vital role in the process of designing and carrying out any language course, whether it is English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses. It generally refers to the activities that are involved in collecting information that will serve as the basis for developing a curriculum that will meet the needs of a particular group of students.

Thus, the present course book, considering the needs of the water science students extracted in an oral interview with some of them, is designed to fulfill their need for proficiency in special English. It hopes to be a good source for study because of comprehensiveness of the reading parts which are selected from different topics and also its capacity to provide the students with food for discussion and writing abilities.