

**English for Academic Purposes
(EAP)**

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Dr. Mahdi Dahmardeh

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Preface

The teaching of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) has expanded with the increasing use of English for study, teaching and research in further and higher education institutions worldwide. EAP has evolved rapidly over the past twenty years or so. From humble beginnings as a relatively fringe branch of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in the early 1980s, it is today a major force in English language teaching and research around the world. Drawing its strength from a variety of theories and a commitment to research-based language education, EAP has expanded with the growth of university places in many countries and increasing numbers of international students undertaking tertiary studies in English. As a result, EAP is now situated at the front line of both theory development and innovative practice in teaching English as a second/other language. (Hyland, 2006)

This book was created with the intention of filling what I, the author, along with many teachers and colleagues, considered to be a world-wide gap within the available English language learning texts designed specifically for EAP. There are loads of books available based upon the individual skills of academic writing, reading, listening or speaking, and currently, a few based around critical thinking, but there is only one single course book that attempts to cover the varied skills necessary for success within tertiary education and offers content and task types that acknowledge the multiple intelligences of students. This book includes the many skills that you will require in order to be successful in English tertiary education (education after high school or post-secondary education). This is a course book of around 240 hours for teaching EAP to students aiming to attend a college or university, or to study in an English speaking country, or attending an international conference or seminar where Upper Intermediate and advanced level of English is required.

The book takes a holistic approach to learning in a tertiary environment. To that end, meaningful, varied and relevant tasks are provided which show how grammar creates meaning and how all language is used within a social context and has a social purpose. Largely, my theoretical principles are grounded upon aspects of systemic functional linguistics combined with explicit traditional grammar points. All language is presented as language within context.

I did my best to bring to the writing of the book my understanding of the learning difficulties and cultural challenges that face students when they undertake study in a language other than their first. There are intellectual shifts that may be required as they learn new ways to present their ideas and arguments in writing and speaking contexts; question texts rather than accept them as necessarily correct; increase their ability as independent learners or become independent learners for the first time and strive for cross-cultural understanding as well as critical cultural consciousness.

The aims of the book include providing students with ways and means to comprehend, question, evaluate and produce a range of discourses which are relevant to academic contexts. The course is designed for students to be able to examine models relevant to the tasks, then relate these models to further realia and, through the exploration of grammar, make their own necessary language choices to write and say what they themselves mean.

Briefly, the aims of the *English for Academic Purposes* are:

- to provide a single book which is an EAP course;
- to enable students to become familiar with, and to practise applying, English medium academic conventions;
- to teach students to consider texts, discourses and issues in a critical light by analysing the power relations that create the purposes behind those texts;
- to provide listening and speaking skills particularly suitable to academic environments;
- to enhance students' abilities to be independent learners;
- to facilitate a process for students so that they recognise and appreciate cultural viewpoints that may be different from their own;
- to make as smooth as possible the transition from studying in the students' own countries and languages to studying in English.

Each unit contains eight skills which are thematically linked. These are:

1. Learner Independence and Study Skills
2. Academic Communication Skills
3. Academic Listening
4. Academic Reading
5. Critical Thinking
6. Academic Writing
7. Grammar for Academic Purposes
8. Vocabulary for Academic Purposes

I would also like to indicate that the current course book is the second EAP book that exists in the world and during the process of writing I was inspired to a great extent by the works that have been done by Kathy Cox & David Hill in their very first and wonderful book of EAP (EAP Now!, 2004) as well as Andy Gillett and his brilliant website (www.uefap.com)

Finally, I would appreciate your kind feedback and comments so that I can make this course book more compatible with your needs within the next editions. Also, I would like to take this opportunity to recommend visiting the website (<http://www.dahmardeh.com/2/eap>) regularly for supporting materials.

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