

## English for Specific Purposes: A Study Investigating the Mismatch between the “*Cutting Edge*” Course Book and the Needs of Prince Sultan Air Base Students

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### Abstract

Needs analysis is generally believed to be important in an English for Specific Purposes (ESP) context because it enables practitioners and material writers to find out about their learners' needs. Thus, the main research question focuses on the perceived English language needs of the learners at Prince Sultan Air Base (PSAB), and the study involves an investigation into the mismatch between the *Cutting Edge* course book and the needs of PSAB students. A total of 70 students from different technical sections at Prince Sultan Air Base (PSAB), Saudi Arabia participated in the study. Two types of data collection methods were used in this study: quantitative (questionnaire) and qualitative (interviews). The results obtained reveal that the current course book being used at PSAB does not meet their needs because the activities provided are not relevant to the specific context of their field, which is mainly military and aviation. Finding and adapting a textbook that is clearly linked to these students' needs and to the course objectives is suggested as one possible solution. In the context of PSAB, data from the interviews and surveys shows the need to assess the content of the course book in relation to the needs of the learners. It also indicates the strong demand of the students for supplementary materials that provide linguistic input to match their needs. Finally, offering supplementary materials and content-based instructions for those students would help to bridge the gap between language training and practical performance needs in real situations.

**Keywords:** aviation, curriculum, English for Specific Purposes (ESP), textbooks

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