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Oxford English for Careers: Tourism 3 Student's Book			
Author:	Robin Walker and Keith Harding (2009)		
Publisher:	Oxford University Press		
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144 pages	0194551067	\$21.19 USD	

This critical review evaluates the appropriateness of the *Oxford English for Careers: Tourism 3 Student's Book* for students enrolled in an undergraduate Tourism Management program. The evaluation is based upon the observed effectiveness of the text as a course book during a first-year English lecture within the Tourism, Sport and Event Management program (TSE) offered by the School of Economics and Management at the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano (FUB). The FUB is a trilingual university where students attend content courses taught in Italian, German and English. All students must document at least a B2 proficiency level according to the *Common European Framework* in two of the three official languages of instruction prior to admission into an undergraduate degree program. By the end of the first year of study, students in the School of Economics and Management must demonstrate at least a B1 proficiency level in the third official language, and before graduating they must demonstrate at least C1 in one language and B2 in the other two. Language proficiency is certified by the University Language Center, which also organizes courses and autonomous learning programs to help students meet language requirements. Students enrolled in the TSE program must, in addition, complete two of three first year language lectures at the B2 level. Native speakers of German must attend English and Italian, while native speakers of Italian must attend English and German. The lectures are not intended to satisfy language

requirements, but are conceptualized as “specialized” language courses (i.e., for Specific Academic Purposes) that prepare students for the linguistic demands of the degree program. The *Oxford English for Careers: Tourism 3 Student’s Book* was used as a course book for the TSE English lecture.

Tourism 3 was selected due to the absence of EFL texts for Sport or Event Management, and because most recent EFL books for the tourism industry are designed for working professionals, rather than first-year, multilingual university students. The Oxford *Tourism* series is likewise intended for professional purposes, but the third book turns from interactions with customers to concepts and issues of tourism management. Furthermore, it covers specialized language at a B2 to early C1 level, which is ideal for a B2 academic setting.[1] The greatest strength of the book is that each chapter contextualizes a series of communicative tasks to a contemporary tourism management theme, many of which can be expanded to the sport and event markets. The most pertinent themes include: historical and future market trends, the role of national tourism organizations, the impact of information and communication technologies, quality control, negative externalities, sustainability, and social tourism. Each unit builds upon native-like texts and audio recordings featuring managers and educators in the field. The reading and listening activities proceed from comprehension checks to pair and group discussions, and are interspersed with contextualized information gaps, vocabulary building, inductive reviews of linguistic features, pronunciation tasks, speaking tasks and writing assignments that can be completed in class or as homework. The book is accompanied by a student’s website that offers additional practice with vocabulary, grammar and listening, and the *Teacher’s Resource Book* contains background information on key concepts and follow-up activities.

Tourism 3 is ideal for current managers who are upper intermediate learners of English or for Tourism Management students and recent graduates who are about to enter the job market. The thematic content is practical, relevant, current and intellectually stimulating. But the book has three major limitations in a European academic setting. First, its communicative-functional approach to language fails to systematically review the key grammar of the B2 level. The two *Language Spots* in each unit require students to notice, process and practice useful formulaic phrases, but do not systematically review the linguistic features on which B2 students are universally tested in Europe, for example, all tenses, mixed conditionals, the passive voice, etc. Second, some of the reading, listening and vocabulary tasks and many of the speaking and writing tasks are too practical in nature for the university. As higher education throughout the world shifts to vocational training, this might seem appropriate. In reality, however, skills for writing a cover letter and C.V., preparing for a job interview, responding to complaints, giving a professional presentation, and negotiating, etc., are not urgent matters for students occupied with achieving B2 and passing Economics and Management courses conducted in English. It might be helpful for the students in the long run to acquire practical skills, but it is unfair to spend valuable class time on skills they will not be tested on. Finally, the book omits one of the most crucial aspects of both Tourism Studies and Language Studies: the challenges and benefits of being/becoming multilingual and engaging in intercultural communication. This is especially important for a multilingual and multicultural group of students preparing for study and eventual employment in a field

founded upon intercultural encounters. *Tourism 3* surveys international opinions, uses examples from around the world, and discusses the need to respect host communities. It confronts students with the need to be environmentally friendly and socially responsible. Yet it never asks students to reflect upon the barriers to communicating and doing business across languages and cultures, nor how different cultures produce different solutions to problems like the sustainable development of tourism products and the inaccessibility of sites and services to various segments of society. In the book's defense, however, most foreign language texts and most tourism studies programs around the world lag behind in this regard as well.

As one of the most suitable books on the market, *Oxford English for Careers: Tourism 3* exposes a gap in EFL teaching resources. There are simply few options available to instructors of English for the specific academic purpose of Tourism Studies. But all foreign language textbooks must be used with caution and must be complimented and supplemented with custom learning material and activities from other sources to meet the demands of a specific course. If one is willing to apply *Tourism 3* as a sourcebook, as opposed to a course to be followed from cover to cover, then it provides numerous reading and listening comprehension activities and numerous discussion prompts that are appropriate and effective in even the most academically demanding EFL contexts.

Note

[1] I considered 12 recent ESP series that are intended for the field of tourism. Only two had content that was also adequate for academic purposes: *OEC: Tourism 3* and *English for Tourism and Hospitality in Higher Education Studies* (2009) from Garnet Education. Both books covered similar content, and while the latter is perhaps more appropriate for academic purposes, it is too advanced for B1 students.

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