

# CREATING INTERACTIONS in English for Specific Purposes



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*U.S. Department of State*

*Office of English Language Programs*

*Shaping the Way We Teach English Webinar Series*

# Agenda

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- Defining English for Specific Purposes
- Designing a Course in ESP: Step-by-Step
  - Needs analysis
  - Identifying scenarios for interaction
  - Creating supporting activities
  - Assessing learning
  - Course evaluation

# RELO Rebecca Smoak's Definition

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*“ESP is English instruction based on actual and immediate needs of learners who have to successfully perform real-life tasks unrelated to merely passing an English class or exam. ESP is needs based and task oriented. Teaching ESP is demanding, time consuming, and different for every group of students. ESP is a challenge for all who teach it, and it offers virtually unlimited opportunities for professional growth.”*

Smoak, R. 2003. What is English for Specific Purposes. English Teaching Forum, 41, 2.

# Lessons from RELO Rebecca Smoak

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1. ESP is not simply about teaching technical vocabulary.
2. ESP involves teaching “sub-technical vocabulary” based on needs analysis, discourse analysis, and linguistic corpora.
3. We cannot assume to know how English is used in a specific context—we need to observe it.
4. Tasks and materials should be appropriate and authentic.

Smoak, R. 2003. What is English for Specific Purposes. *English Teaching Forum*, 41, 2.

# Step 1: Conduct needs analysis

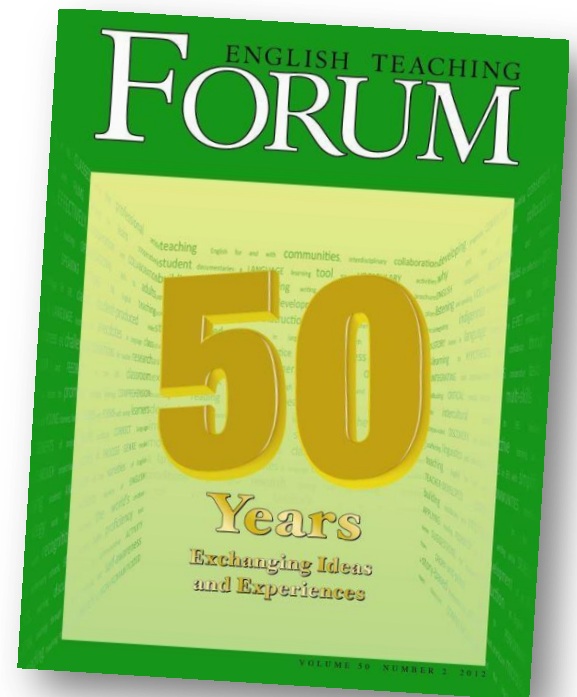
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- ❑ **Specific Purposes Focus:** Education
- ❑ **Audience:** Teachers of English as a Foreign Language
- ❑ **Skill Focus:**
- ❑ **Communicative Task:**

## Step 2: Identify communicative tasks

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- ❑ **Specific Purposes Focus:** Education
- ❑ **Audience:** Teachers of English as a Foreign Language
- ❑ **Skill Focus:** Professional writing
- ❑ **Communicative Task:** Write an article for *English Teaching Forum*



## Step 3: Map out course units

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- **Specific Purposes Focus:** Education
- **Audience:** Teachers of English as a Foreign Language, Advanced Proficiency
- **Skill Focus:** Professional writing
- **Communicative Task:** Write an article for English Teaching Forum
  - **Lesson 1:** Paraphrasing
  - **Lesson 2:** Writing citations
  - **Lesson 3:** ...

## Step 3: Map out course units

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- **Specific Purposes Focus:** Hospitality
- **Audience:** Hotel Staff, Low Intermediate Proficiency
- **Skill Focus:** Telephone Interactions
- **Task:** Taking a reservation
  - **Lesson 1:** Listening for stressed words
  - **Lesson 2:** Asking for clarification/repetition
  - **Lesson 3:** Pronunciation—Question intonation
  - **Lesson 4:** Suggesting alternatives



# Step 4: Develop supporting activities

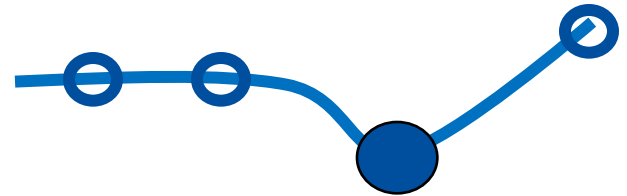
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- **Lesson Focus:** Pronunciation–Question intonation
- **Objective: Students will...**
  - Ask information questions with rising intonation.
  - Ask yes-no questions with falling intonation.
  - Ask choice questions with rising-falling intonation.
- **Materials:**
  - Small papers with questions or intonation patterns written on them (one for each student)
- **Procedure:**
  - Students work in small groups to find the classmate with the question or intonation pattern that matches theirs.

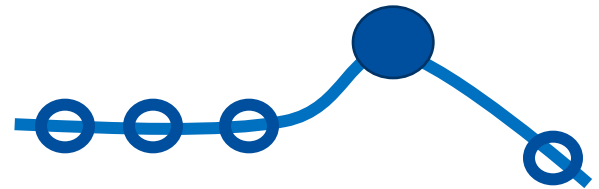
# Sample materials



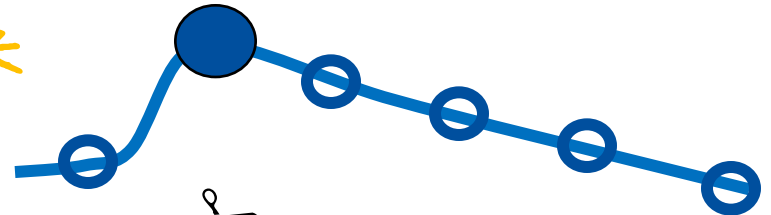
May I help you?



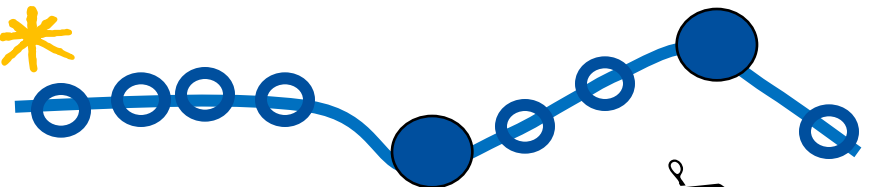
How may I help you?



What date are you  
looking for?



Would you like a single  
or double?



# Sample materials

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# Step 5: Create communicative tasks

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STUDENT A: Hotel guest

Travel dates: Friday, June 16  
- Sunday June 18th

Guests: Yourself, your son,  
and your son's friend (3)

Budget: \$150.00

STUDENT B: Hotel reception

Weekend rates:

- \$109/night for a single
- \$169/night for a double
- \$30 fee for an extra person
- \$0 for a cot

# Sample communicative tasks

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- **Specific Purposes Focus:** Tourism
- **Audience:** Local Tourism Bureau Employees, Intermediate Proficiency
- **Skill Focus:** Promotional writing
- **Communicative Task:** Publishing a Tourist Brochure
  - **Lesson 1:** Genre analysis

Once Upon A Nation

MAP INSIDE

EVERY corner of HISTORIC PHILADELPHIA has a story to tell.



Official Visitors Guide / Spring & Summer 2012

# PHILADELPHIA

## 10

REASONS to Love Philadelphia Right Now



World Premiere of THE BARNES on the Parkway

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EVENTS Calendar

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# PHILLY'S MORE FUN AT NIGHT

## Carpe Noctem

[gophila.com/nightlife](http://gophila.com/nightlife)



# PLAYTIME IN THE CITY

Philadelphia nightlife invites you to be a kid again

Wake up your inner child and get ready to giggle, play and explore all of Philadelphia's whimsical charm. These lively, young-at-heart attractions will keep the fun going well after the sun goes to bed.



Throw a few frames at **Lucky Strike Lanes**. In addition to stellar bowling, this date-night hotspot is outfitted with comfy lounge areas and a creative menu of American classics with a twist. Grilled cheese sliders, anyone?

Don't be shy — pick a goofy '80s song, jump on stage and belt out the lyrics at one of the **karaoke bars** dotted throughout Northern Liberties

Take a guided **Lights of Philadelphia Segway Tour** and snap some amazing photos while you cruise around the twinkling Museum District, Fairmount Park and Boathouse Row at sunset on a two-wheeled human transporter.

Head to Citizens Bank Park and join in the fan frenzy at a **Philadelphia Phillies Major League Baseball** game. Spend the evening cheering,



# Sample communicative tasks

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- **Specific Purposes Focus:** Tourism
- **Audience:** Local Tourism Bureau Employees, Advanced Proficiency
- **Skill Focus:** Promotional writing
- **Communicative Task:** Publishing a Tourist Brochure
  - **Lesson 1:** Genre analysis
  - **Lesson 2:** Defining audience and purpose
  - **Lesson 3:** Using vivid adjectives
  - **Lesson 4:** Crafting complex, imperative statements
  - **Lesson 5:** Developing a conversational tone.



# Sample communicative tasks

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## □ Project-Based Learning

**Working in a team of 4 - 5 students, create a brochure for young people studying abroad in your city**

1. Each of you should find one tourist destination that would appeal to an educated young adult with a sense of adventure.
2. Individually, write 1 - 2 paragraphs describing the destination. Keep your tone conversational and paint an intriguing picture using vivid adjectives to persuade the reader to visit the destination.
3. As a group, compile all of the paragraphs and do a final copyedit to ensure cohesion.

# Sample communicative tasks

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- **Specific Purposes Focus:** Medicine
- **Audience:** Emergency Room Nurses, Intermediate Proficiency
- **Skill Focus:** Conversation Strategies
- **Communicative Task:** Putting a patient at ease
  - **Lesson 1:** Direct vs. Indirect language
  - **Lesson 2:** Colloquial vocabulary & euphemisms
  - **Lesson 3:** Non-verbal communication

# Sample materials

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It's nothing serious. You'll get **in there** for a couple more minutes...



The pain medicine should **kick in** at once. Let's review.



Almost finished! Just try to **hang in** any second now.



It's a lot of information to **take over** this in a week or so.



# Sample communicative tasks

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## Patient Card

You are five years old, and you fell off a swing in the playground and hurt your nose. The nurse is taking x-rays, and you are afraid the machine is going to hurt you.

## Nurse Card

Your patient is five years old and fell off a slide. You believe his/her nose is broken and need to take x-rays.

# Sample communicative tasks

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- **Specific Purposes Focus:** International Business
- **Audience:** Mid-level managers at various companies, Advanced Proficiency
- **Skill Focus:** Negotiation
- **Communicative Task:**
  - **Lesson 1:** Relationship building with small talk
  - **Lesson 2:** Structuring the negotiation
  - **Lesson 3:** Stating & Eliciting Needs
  - **Lesson 4:** Encouraging suggestions & offering alternatives
  - **Lesson 5:** Active Listening
  - **Lesson 6:** Stalling
  - **Lesson 7:** Non-verbal communication



# TEAM A – Vaccin Nation

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- ❑ You are a team of research biologists working for a pharmaceutical firm called **Vaccin Nation**.
- ❑ You have developed a vaccine that is made with a chemical taken from the rind (skin) of the Ugli orange, a very rare fruit. Unfortunately, only 4,000 of these oranges were produced this season.
- ❑ A fruit exporter in South America named **Cardoza** has a stock of 3,000 Ugli oranges, which would be enough for you to produce the vaccine.
- ❑ Another pharmaceutical firm, **Rx Health**, also wants to purchase the Ugli oranges and is aware of Cardoza's supply.
- ❑ Cardoza will sell the oranges to the highest bidder. You have been authorized to bid as high as \$250,000.

# TEAM B – Rx Health

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- ❑ You are a team of research biologists working for a pharmaceutical firm called **Rx Health**.
- ❑ You have developed a vaccine that is made with a chemical taken from the juice of the Ugli orange, a very rare fruit. Unfortunately, only 4,000 of these oranges were produced this season.
- ❑ A fruit exporter in South America named **Cardoza** has a stock of 3,000 Ugli oranges, which would be enough for you to produce the vaccine.
- ❑ Another pharmaceutical firm **Vacci Nation**, also wants to purchase the Ugli oranges and is aware of Cardoza's supply
- ❑ Cardoza will sell the oranges to the highest bidder. You have been authorized to bid as high as \$250,000.
- ❑ **Before approaching Mr. Cardoza, you have decided to talk directly with Vacci Nation to influence them so that they will not prevent you from purchasing the oranges.**



# Step 6: Curriculum Review

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- ❑ **Specific Purposes Focus:** International Business
- ❑ **Audience:** Mid-career professionals working in multi-national corporations, High Intermediate
- ❑ **Skill Focus:** Writing a “bad news” letter
- ❑ **Communicative Task:** Rejecting an employee’s request for a promotion
  - **Lesson 1:** Read samples to discover how to soften bad news and emphasize the positive.
  - **Lesson 2:** Analyze the sample to determine how to organize information in a “bad news sandwich.”
  - **Lesson 3:** Peer review

# Writing Prompt

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- Write a letter to an employee who applied for a promotion to explain that he or she has not been chosen for the job.

# Students' Feedback

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- ❑ “In my company, I could never apply for a promotion. My career path is decided by my superiors.”
- ❑ “Personally, I would not deliver this news in a letter. I would meet with the employee face-to-face.”

# Learning from this example

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- ❑ We can't assume that our own experience (or another teacher's) transfers to our students.
- ❑ Base assignments on “a needs analysis that documents the type of workplace English that employers and employees require by collecting data through interviews, questionnaires, and on-site observations.”\*

\* Bouzidi, H. 2002. Between the ESP classroom and the workplace: Bridging the gap. *English Teaching Forum*, 41, 2.

# Step 7: Revise

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- Write an email to a loyal customer announcing an increase in prices.

# Steps for designing an ESP Course

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- ❑ Step 1: Needs Analysis
- ❑ Step 2: Identify tasks (scenarios for interaction)
- ❑ Step 3: Map out course units
- ❑ Step 4: Develop supporting activities
- ❑ Step 5: Create communicative tasks
- ❑ Step 6: Review the course
- ❑ Step 7: Revise
- ❑ **Step 8: Write about your experience for *English Teaching Forum!***

# **THANKS FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!**

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Let's continue the discussion on our NING!