



The English Language Teachers'
Association Frankfurt / Rhine-
Main-Neckar

ELTAF NEWSLETTER

1-2025

Welcome to your Newsletter! This is the first ELTAF Newsletter in the new format and the ELTAF Editor and the ELTAF Committee would be delighted to hear what you think of it. Let us know what you like, don't like and anything else you would like to include in future issues. We are looking forward to hearing from all who read it.



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The English Language
Teachers' Association
Frankfurt / Rhine-Main-Neckar

ELTAF is a regional professional organization for teachers of English as a foreign language.

We strive to provide our members with all the tools they need to continually develop both their teaching skills and their businesses by offering workshops and networking opportunities. Our members come from all over the world and from all ELT and related areas.

ELTAF is a registered association in Germany. All Committee work is done on a voluntary basis, at weekends and in off-hours. Although this does not excuse mistakes or delays, we hope that what we do and our services will be seen in this light. Nevertheless, we strive continuously to improve the quality of our work and are grateful for constructive suggestions and comments. For more information see www.eltaf.de

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Vice-Chair / Events Coordinator:
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Treasurer: Daniel Payne
Publicity Coordinator: Larry Henry
**Newsletter Editor & Advertising
 Coordinator:** Judith Mader
Recording & Membership Secretary:
 Rhiannon Tan
Website Coordinator:
 Kristen Speer

Welcome to new ELTAF members

Cynthia Ruppert - Alastair Simpson - Diana Pounsford
 Valerie Gulotta - Valentina Mitkova-Helbig

Advisory Board

Jobs Hotline: Jacki Merritt
Events: Wendy von der Pforte
Social Media: Emily Zimmermann
TalkShop Coordinators:
Frankfurt: Martina Weyreter
Mainz: Katherine Steinmetz
Wiesbaden: Wendy von der Pforte

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ELTAF EDITOR



Judith Mader

Editorial

The new ELTAF editor and the ELTAF Committee welcome you to this first issue of the Newsletter in its new format and hope you enjoy reading it. I will say something about myself further on and here only want to express my thanks to Barbara Born, who has stepped down from this position after many years, for all the good work she has done with the Newsletter and the help she has given me to get started.

Readers will recognise regular features, such as About Members; in this issue new member **Alastair Simpson** and long-standing member **Julia Roseveare** introduce themselves. There are (possibly provocative) articles from **Paul Abbott**, **Richard Tily** and **Larry Henry** who have provided us with food for thought for some time on English and ELT matters. I am very grateful to them for agreeing so readily to continue with their always interesting contributions.

Thanks to all contributors to this first issue.. As well as the regular features, I have been able to develop some new ideas. Thanks to ELTAF members and non-members who have contributed to this Newsletter. For teachers at universities, **Emma Gledhill-Schmitt** has written on the ELTAF *Tertiary Treff* and the *Arbeitskreis Sprachen an Sprachenzentren (AKS)*. For ideas for anyone who wants to use English outside the classroom, **Nick Jefcoat** tells us about the *Deutsch-Britische Gesellschaft* and **Madeline Bohr** introduces us to St Augustine's Church in Wiesbaden, both places to meet like-minded people and use English. I hope to be able to continue with more pieces about places to use English and meet people in future issues. You can also read the first in a series of Confessions of ... by **Barbara Yoder-Scherer**, who writes about films in English in the Frankfurt area.

Thanks to **ELTAF members** who sent me their tips for successful marketing as a freelancer. I hope to be able to continue this idea with tips on other subjects important to us as ELT professionals. Thanks to Rudi Camerer for layout help

I still have almost all the issues of the ELTAF Newsletter, which first came out in 1989, so I have included the welcome message by the initiator and first editor, **Colin Smith** and a reproduction of the title page. You can see what a long way we have come since then!!

If you have any more ideas on the topics addressed here or any others, please let me know. I would love to hear from you, on the list or for the next issue of the Newsletter! Also please forgive me for any errors or omissions, but feel free to point them out to me.

It would be great if more members could contribute here, as this is one of ELTAF's primary channels of communication, in addition to all the events, workshops, Talkshops, Members' Day and the email list.

Let's keep in touch!

Judith

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



Liz Jolliffe

Chair of ELTAF

Dear ELTAF Members

I hope this newsletter finds you well and enjoying the start of summer! As Chair of ELTAF, it's always a pleasure to share good news and celebrate the people who help make our association the welcoming and dynamic community it is.

I'd like to start with a big thank you to our new Newsletter Editor, Judith Mader, for putting together this wonderful first edition! Many of you will know Judith as one of ELTAF's founding members, and it's fantastic to see her actively involved again. Her experience, eye for detail, and clear passion for English language teaching shine through in this edition. Judith – we're lucky to have you back on board!

A strong community is built not only on good ideas but on great people who are willing to get stuck in – and that's exactly what makes ELTAF special. Whether you've been a member for years or just joined recently, I encourage you to take a moment to get involved, share your knowledge, and connect with colleagues.

One perfect opportunity to do just that is coming up: Members' Day on Saturday, 20 September! Our signature event is always a highlight, offering plenty of time to network, learn something new, and – who knows – maybe even give a workshop yourself! If you have an idea, a classroom tip, a tech tool, or a topic you're passionate about, we'd love to hear from you. Members' Day is about inspiration, exchange, and fun – and it's shaped by you.

So please, save the date, tell a colleague, and think about how you might contribute. And of course, don't forget to enjoy Judith's first newsletter – a great read from start to finish.

All the best,
Liz

OBITUARY

TIMOTHY PHILLIPS

* 3. July 1959 † 21. February 2025



Judith Fortey

Founder member ELTAF

I first met Tim in the early days of ELTAF in the 1980s and it was not so long afterwards that he became a colleague at the European Business School. He quickly fitted into the team, bringing with him new ideas, enthusiasm and a large dollop of humour. I remember at that time we were developing a case study based on the Morgan Motor Company, which produced hand-made “vintage” cars. Their factory was in Malvern, England, the part of the world where Tim came from, and his enthusiasm resulted in him ordering a car even though the waiting time for delivery was 10 years.

Like many EFL teachers, Tim’s university degree was not languages. He studied musicology and music was a bigger part of his life than many people knew. In fact, something many of us heard for the first time at his funeral was that in his youth Tim was a member of a folk rock group called *The Beastly Boys*. However, it wasn’t music, but the EFL world to which Tim dedicated much of his working life, wearing many different hats in the process. He was a member of IATEFL BESIG and the first conference he attended was in 1994 in Wiesbaden, which was organised in cooperation with ELTAF. Also in the 1990s, he co-developed an in-company business English e-learning programme for in-company training. Tim was ahead of his time where CATS (Computer Assisted Training Systems) was concerned. There was quite a strong resistance to it from both trainers and participants but as Tim once said “just look where we are now”.

In 2004, Tim set up his own company *Skylight* offering corporate training, which he ran for 10 years before moving into publishing. He also trained as a coach using the REACH method and applied the skills he learned to his own training. Coming full circle, or “back to basics” as a good friend of Tim put it, he returned to teaching. He taught university students at the WHU, Vallendar, and at the Volkshochschule in Bonn.

However, regardless of which hat Tim was wearing, throughout his working life he was always willing to give support to others. Sharing is a word that might be used too often these days, but Tim certainly was never slow to share his knowledge and ideas with others. He was the vice-chair of ELTA-Rhein and he ran endless workshops and talks at conferences and to ELTAs. Looking through old ELTAF newsletters, the first workshop I could find which Tim gave together with the author was in 1994 relating to the book *Money Matters*.

Talking to people at his funeral and in the tributes to Tim that I’ve read, certain descriptions of Tim were repeated: kind, generous, creative, humorous, calm, and resilient, among others.

Tim will be very much missed and is a great loss to the EFL community.

THE NEW EDITOR



Judith Mader

Those of you who have been around for a long time and / or who were at the last AGM will know me, but for the many who don't, here are just a few words about who I am and my connections with ELTAF. I was one of the five original founding members of ELTAF in September 1985. Two more were needed to form an official association in Germany which we did a year later. So ELTAF will be 40 next year! I am sure there will be plenty more to say at the 40th birthday party and I am also hoping to be able to get a bumper issue of the ELTAF Newsletter together for the occasion. But back to me...

I was on the ELTAF committee for several years and was Newsletter Editor for some years too until family life took over. I lived outside Frankfurt for over 20 years and so rarely made it to ELTAF events in that time. I moved back to Frankfurt 13 years ago and have now been retired from full-time employment for 5 years so have more time to devote to ELTAF again. As many of you will realise, I have a close connection with IATEFL and was an active IATEFL volunteer for over 10 years, ending up as a Trustee until the end of my term.

Professionally, like many others, I started teaching English for want of any other way of earning money and although I had never intended to become a teacher, I found I enjoyed it and so went on to do an MA in Applied Linguistics, carried out teacher-training and started writing – articles on ELT and ELT coursebooks. My main passion however was, for many years, test development and I was incredibly lucky to be able to do this full-time as a member of the academic staff of the *WbT-Weiterbildungs-Testsysteme gGmbH* (later telc) which remains my idea of a dream job with a dream company. I left in 2008 and worked as Head of Languages at the Frankfurt School of Finance and Management, also a great place to work, where I was responsible for all the languages taught. I retired from there in 2005 and now work freelance again, doing what I am offered and what appeals to me, but with lots of time for my family, friends, and leisure and of course now again ELTAF!

Although I don't teach any more, I am very interested in finding out what it is that English teachers want from ELTAF, so would love to hear your ideas and hope I can meet more of you at ELTAF events.

THE FIRST ELTAF NEWSLETTER

1/1989

THE

ELTAF

NEWSLETTER

1/89

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WELCOME TO YOUR NEWSLETTER!!!

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ELTAF - a loose association of professional dabblers, old world curiosities, penny-scrappers and the occasional linguist - is now reaching the age of maturity. At three-and-a-bit years, the ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION FRANKFURT/RHEIN-MAIN has a healthy membership, the intriguing prospect of "Europe 1992", and even some cash in the piggy-bank. Bleary-eyed, battle-worn and often still bemused at how they managed to end up in Frankfurt, an assortment of teachers and trainers gather in Frankfurt every 4 - 6 weeks in their best loose-fitting outfits, ready to respond to any of the lively, provocative and at times bizarre activities thrown at them by a guest speaker.

And now you can read about it too. The ELTAF Newsletter has been launched after a number of requests for further, and above all more regular information on what is going on in the English teaching world, as well as on the many English language activities in the Frankfurt area. It is hoped that this will provide greater coordination between the increasing number of members and friends: the first newsletter should reach upwards of two hundred readers.

Just what goes in is up to you. The following proposals are a first idea of what might be of interest:

*** write-ups of events in EFL both in ELTAF and outside (a god-send for the poor note-taker)

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*** information on forthcoming events (seminars, conferences, English-speaking theatre, etc.)

*** teacher-based reviews of books

here ELTAF could show its true muscle, by offering constructive criticism from teachers rooted in practical experience.

*** teaching tips.

Nothing "heavy", but simply ideas, suggestions, or ways of making text-book ideas work in a particular classroom situation.

*** reports on events or ideas which have some bearing on English language teaching (e.g. rhetoric, Management Training, literature ...)

2.

THE FIRST ELTAF NEWSLETTER 1/1989

Here is the editorial in the first ELTAF Newsletter in 1989.

The initiator of the Newsletter and first Editor was Colin Smith. The Newsletter consisted of 4 DINA4 pages, typed in two halves and then folded to make a Newsletter of 16 DINA5 pages.

Content was usually typed and sent on paper, but could even be handwritten. It was retyped by the Editor, copied, folded and sent to members in envelopes by post. The names, addresses and home telephone numbers of the Committee were printed in the Newsletter. The Newsletter included a membership form and the fee could be paid in cash or by cheque. The give and take column included a book for sale, a request for information and information on how to use the word processing programme WORD.

There were no or very few (and rather obscure) users of

- Computers (for everyday things)
- Printers at home
- Mobile phones of any kind
- Email
- GDPR
- Internet
- EBay
- AI
- ...

So it is surprising what has stayed the same and that several articles and reports are still relevant today. More to come!

WEBINAR REVIEW

GETTING CREATIVE WITH GRAMMAR

with

ALAN MARSH



Margarete
Durand

Alan Marsh's webinar *Getting Creative with Grammar* was an absolute delight, combining innovation and entertainment in teaching with one of the trickiest aspects of language learning: grammar. Alan showcased a range of engaging and fun activities that can breathe life into what is often considered a dry and difficult subject.

He says : "Creativity in language teaching is when we take something familiar and tweak it some way so that it becomes new and fresh and contains an element of surprise".

The session was packed with creative techniques that grabbed the audience's attention right away. Starting with the grammar issue: what is the difference between *since* and *for*? Learners had to work out the rule by themselves. In one of the exercises learners stood up for *for* and sat down for *since* while reading *a* text.

In a story about Adam and Eve and the meaningful admission of Eve: *I have eaten an apple!* participants were encouraged to "act it out," which not only brought humor and energy into the room but also made grammar concepts (present perfect v. past tense) stick in a memorable way. Another highlight was the activity involving a choice of pictures to make a story. This hands-on exercise allowed learners to approach grammar in a contextualized, creative manner, fostering both imagination and linguistic accuracy.

My absolute favorite was a quote from Nelson Mandela and follow up activities about *if* clauses:

"If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his own language, that goes to his heart."

What stood out most, however, was Alan Marsh's approach to grammar-guided discovery. Instead of delivering rigid rules, he emphasized letting learners find the rules themselves through exploration and practice. This method promotes deeper understanding and retention, empowering students to take ownership of their learning process.

In short, Alan Marsh delivered a webinar that was informative, dynamic, and refreshingly innovative. What an entertaining way to spend a morning on a rainy day in January! Thank you, Alan!

For those who want to know more about grammar, here is Alan Marsh's latest book: *The Creative Teacher's Compendium* by Antonia Clare and Alan Marsh, Pavilion Publishing and Media Ltd 2020

THE FRANKFURT ELTAF TALKSHOP

On Saturday 15 March I went to a Talkshop for the very first time (I know, shame on me for leaving it so long!) and really enjoyed it. We were a small group in Café Mina and had very pleasant conversations about all sorts of things, including ELT. It occurred to me that when ELTAF first started, I actually met a lot of people who are still friends, even though most of us are retired or working less in ELT.

So especially for those new to Frankfurt, it's a perfect opportunity to make new contacts. Please do come along next time if you can!

The Frankfurt Talkshop is organised by Martina Weyreter and meets at irregular intervals. The dates and venue are announced on the mailing list.



ELTAF Talkshops
Frankfurt
Martina Weyreter
weyreter@paed.psych.uni-frankfurt.de

Mainz
Katherine Steinmetz
katherine@steinmetz-fam.de

Wiesbaden
Wendy von der Pforte
wendy912@outlook.de

A DAY IN THE LIFE



Richard Tily

Introduction: This is the first part of a tale heard by a colleague not so long ago in the teacher's room at a large EFL training establishment. He related it to me and I have endeavoured to retell it here to the best of my recollection. The tale went as follows:

It's Monday, March 16 in central London. On this cool, sunny morning, in the narrow street of London known as Rochester Row, people are heading to the bus stop, and a delicious aroma of baking bread rises out of the warmly lit baker's shop. Roderick Crawford stands in line to buy his morning breakfast. Two whole-wheat cheddar cheese rolls with cucumber, tomato, and fresh lettuce leaves.

Not long afterwards, he steps off the platform at his usual bus stop and walks the few steps to a building where, a large sign proclaims: *Roderick's Language Lounge*, among other names. Opening the door, he ascends the stairs to the small kitchen shared with the other building's occupants and sees Mr. Singh, the Indian Yoga Coach, from across the hall.

"Morning Sanjay! How are things?"

"Great! Gave up social media over the weekend."

"Impossible!"

"Yes, but true! On Saturday, I walked down the street and told passers-by what I'd eaten, how I felt, what I'd done the night before, and what I'd planned to do the following day. Then I showed them pictures of my family, my dog, and me gardening. I also listened to their conversations and told them I loved them. And it worked! I soon had three people following me?"

Roderick: "Really?"

Sanjay: "Yes!" two police officers and a psychiatrist!"

Roderick: "Damn it! You fooled me again."

"Well, I have to go, see you later." said Sanjay. Placing his papadams, onion bhajis and 6-minute rice next to the microwave, he picked up his copy of, "Yoga: New Positions on Today's Global Stage" and left the kitchen.

Not long after, Roderick had eaten his breakfast and finished his first cup of tea of the day. He leaves the kitchen and makes his way down the corridor to the bright corner classroom he calls his very own. He unlocks the door, walks across the room, opens the window, and briefly looks out along the street, to see if his new group is coming. The group is three engineers from a renowned automobile manufacturer on the continent. They are here to re-engineer their English prior to some production training, and today is their first session with Roderick.

"No sign yet." Moving to the table, he opens his bag and reaches in to get his tablet with the morning's lesson. "Horror upon horror! It is not there!"

Just at that moment, the downstairs door opens, and he hears his three participants enter the building and their footsteps on the wooden stairs. But, being a busy teacher, this situation is not so unfamiliar to Roderick, nor indeed for many others who, for a variety of reasons,

some intended, some not, have chosen TEFL as their livelihood. However, help is at hand. Taking out the small book from his jacket pocket he quickly scans through the lines. Almost straight away, he finds something: number 83 "What are your earliest memories of being in a car? How did you learn to drive? What model was your first car? What happened to it? How many have you owned in your lifetime? When to buy a new car and when second-hand? What is essential, or just "nice to have?"

"These will do nicely." As for the rest of the morning, Roderick learned long ago that his most important resource is his learners. With a familiar sigh of relief, and feeling his old, sovereign self again, he walks over to the door, opens it with a broad smile and extending a warm hand says, "Good morning Carmen, Imran and Stefan!" Welcome! Please, come in. You can hang your coats up over there. Let's have some tea?"

"Made it, just about." He thinks as they walk to the kitchen.

Some hours later, after they had left, Roderick's mind was now free for the afternoon client - a Member of Senior Management in the Japanese synthetic Micro-Nutritional Additives for the animal fodder industry. She had an appointment with a prospective customer up in the highlands. The course had been worked out in minute detail and consisted of presentation and practice of the finer (mostly redundant) articulation of received pronunciation, namely, plosives, fricatives, labials, and not forgetting, in particular, the silent "r" and "b".

But, little-known to him, he would soon be initiated into the ancient Japanese art of Kamasutra for Managers. At first, it seemed she was pulling (or should we say "stroking") his leg. But, needless to say, always an eager candidate for up-skilling, he decided to risk it.

Unfortunately, the next part of the tale will have to wait until the next issue, assuming, of course there is any interest.

As heard and related this day 20 March 2025

Roderick's book was ***Time to Speak*** a pocket-sized collection of 1000 "spontaneous" activities. It's unique on the EFL world market and can also be used for other target languages! Teach up or down, switch context, or genre, combine, compare, adapt, or just use as given! ***Time to Speak*** is a practically infinite collection of activities to effortlessly maximise learner interaction. If you'd like to attend an on-line demonstration, just mail me at my-working-english@gmx.de. I'll be showing lots of activities for a variety of coursebooks, genres and levels, plus press articles, realia, etc. You will see just what a great aid this is!

And the first five to register will receive a free pre-release copy!

Richard

my-working-english@gmx.de

ATTENTION PEDAGOGY



Paul Abbott

Attention is everything in the transactional, performative markets of the Society of the Spectacle. Education is one of these markets and attention pedagogy is the movement of educational prospectors who, out of a sense of adventure, or desperation, or both, have left our coffee-stained coursebooks, our anxious wait at the copier, and our fear of AI-driven obsolescence, to join the trek to the goldfields of attention. We are the '25ers. The trainers training us are apex attention-getters who appear before vast audiences, produce pixelated soundbites and get rich. They mark the trail with clickbait. Our vocation is to follow the trail to the mother lode of attention and dig deeper.

The trail is amazingly short. Using attention pedagogy is incredibly easy. Teachers enjoy spectacular advantages in the rush for attention. With clerics and news anchors, we belong to the order of sanctioned attention-getters. We ascend the marble steps of society's pulpit to gaze down upon the gathered and proclaim that we know what you do not know and you better pay attention.

Educators have historically failed to exploit this opportunity to self-actualize and grow wealth. Institutionally there have been exceptions, for example Eton, Harvard and Berlitz. Too often however individual teachers have acted more like deer in the headlights than deal-makers. For centuries we've been hampered by a sense of duty, of social responsibility. 20th century movements even urged us to voluntarily step away from the podium, to leave the center of attention and instead to "empower" learners. Don't be the sage-on-the-stage, we were told, be the guide-on-the-side. Socrates got a lot of attention, and a cup of hemlock. This was unfortunate because our duty is in fact to stay in the spotlight and monetize the attention that we enjoy there. It is our duty because by monetizing the attention of our students we expand the economy.

To get and hold the attention of students, I recommend using attention pedagogy (AP). Follow these basic rules:

1. Never wear Birkenstocks! They reek of explanation.
2. Suit up. Create the impression of coherence, of being all-in.
3. Be hyper-punctual – start at 12, not 5 minutes before 12, not 5 minutes after 12.
4. Everything is *Bahnhof*. There can be no justification for input. Avoid rational argument.
5. No sequencing. Present/Practice/Perform is antithetical to AP.
6. There is no sequence, no progress to accuracy, no accuracy, no standard beyond what we say.
7. We are THE authority – we may not be questioned.
8. No jokes! We ARE the center of attention – we do not have to earn it.
9. Partner with advertisers.

Have you got it? Then take this AP playbook for teaching EFL and run with it: Begin by standing in front of the class, in the crosshairs so-to-speak. In a loud voice utter a string of sounds, maybe even words. Remember: the string cannot make sense! Pause, maybe for several minutes. Repeat the string. Pause again. During pauses remain in place and command the attention of the class. Repeat the string. Pause again. When you know that the students are listening with heightened interest, repeat again and pause, this time for a shorter period. Vary the duration of pauses. Always repeat the same string. After 45 minutes, assign homework ("You have heard String 1. Repeat it often for friends and family.") and dismiss the class. With your phone, record your performance. Send the video to your AI marketing tool to optimize and upload to platforms.

I suggest the following as String 1: cat – wow – delicious – bagel – sharp – sleep – a (pronounced "ah"). As preparation for the next class, ask AI to generate String 2.

WORDS OF WISDOM



Larry Henry

One of the activities I often do with my course members, particularly those in upper-level Business English groups, is have them think about what advice they would give to a young person just getting started in their field. This gets a lot of interesting cross-conversation going, and also opens up opportunities for language elements to be discussed (unreal conditionals, passive vs. active forms, possessives, and so on).

So, when Judith asked me to contribute something to her first newsletter that involved advice for those who are relatively new to our field, I thought this would be a chance for me to use my own assignment!

After giving this a fair amount of consideration, I feel that one of the best pieces of advice I could give to someone interested in teaching English would be to be sure to be clear on what the physical environment should be for each instructional situation you accept, and be prepared to explain your reasoning to both your participants and the person or people who contracted you.

Here are a couple of examples:

When I first started teaching basic conversation classes at the VHS in the early 2000's, I always set the room up with chairs in a half-circle facing the front of the room. Why? First, so as not to have tables behind which participants could hide; and second, to leave plenty of room for mixing and moving, and forming and re-forming small groups. Although not everyone liked this layout, it usually worked quite well, and I kept setting classrooms up this way for many years.

After I had been teaching VHS courses for a few years, I agreed to run one of my first in-company teaching situations. I arrived on the first day to see the course participants eagerly setting up the conference room where we had been scheduled to meet. To my surprise, this procedure involved assembling quite a beverage and snack buffet, and this right in the middle of the table we were going to use! So, the first group task was to break all of this down, and set it up on a side table, well out of anyone's line of sight. As they seemed to be somewhat confused by my request, this became our first topic, during which I explained that I wanted the focus of our sessions to be conversation, discussion, interaction, and so on; not eating and drinking. Once they got the idea, things went pretty well, and snacking during our sessions never really was much of an issue.

My take-away message: The physical environment is one of the most important components that can directly impact the success (or lack of it) in a new or continuing teaching situation. Don't be afraid of making the room yours. After all, it is!

MARKETING TIPS FOR FREELANCERS

Members-for- members

I asked this question on the ELTAF member's mailing list. *What is your best tip for marketing and acquiring customers / clients / learners / courses?*

The responses I received on what did and did not work are below in no particular order. As I was sent some by more than one person, they have all been anonymised.

- Put together a course offering for the chamber of commerce. The participants tend to be from a variety of companies and institutions and often – if they liked the course – are interested in trying to get you to come and do the same or similar for their place of work.
 - Let it slip into conversations with anyone you meet that you teach English and make sure you have business cards with you! I have just started a course to support the dying; the daughter of one of the participants is coming for her first lesson today. I mentioned it in the get-to-know-you round and got an email the next day. One of my first private kitchen coachees was a guy from a dancing course I went on way back when!
- Leave your business cards in restaurants.
- Teach a course at the local *Volkshochschule*. Although the pay is not brilliant, it is a good way to meet people and, especially in evening courses, many of the participants work for companies and can recommend you. I got much of my company work this way.
- Teaching at any language learning institution (private school or university) can also lead to recommendations of additional work.
- Although ELTAF members may be in competition with each other, some companies, educational institutions or language schools may have more work than can be covered by existing staff. Teachers are more likely to recommend people they know personally. All ELTAF events are a good way to make contacts like this!
- Use the neighbourhood platform www.nebenan.de
- Have a good website!
- Use social media to spread the word about what you do.
- Call on new companies in person and – less effectively – send mailshots with a tri-fold flyer and introductory letter. After calling in person, the response I had was very delayed but it still proved worthwhile in the long run.
- Printed material can be deposited and passed on physically as well as electronically.
- Door-knocking / cold calling can be effective if you are in the area. Find an excuse for calling ("I was in the neighbourhood and thought I'd just drop in to see what your requirements might be").
- A number of the companies I contacted were from a list of names I obtained from the local *Industrie- und Handelskammer* but I am not sure if lists like this still exist.
- I actually picked up my best clients from word of mouth publicity and even did some work for my hairdresser's husband's company!




From the Members

New to ELTAF



Alastair Simpson

English by birth, German by bureaucracy

I was born British on 12th July 1970 and, thanks to Brexit, was "born" German in June 2018 – a fact I've yet to confess to my parents, who (ironically) voted for it, despite having three grandchildren in Germany.

My journey to teaching English was anything but direct. Growing up in Wolverhampton and then Sussex, I originally studied Russian and Economics with International Business at the University of Surrey. But after meeting my now-wife, I swapped student life for Germany in 2001. I spent my early years as a self-employed consultant, creating presentations for firms until a mini-recession in 2004 nudged me into English teaching. I loved it so much that I soon abandoned presentations and translations altogether – and haven't looked back since.

Since 2005, my main client has been a large chemical and pharmaceutical company in Darmstadt, where I teach on-site three days a week. Over the years, I've had the privilege of not just teaching, but also gaining fascinating insights into the jobs and lives of everyone – from architects and CEOs to engineers, lab workers, bankers, telecoms specialists, airline staff, and even hairdressers – after one found themselves cutting Jamie Oliver's hair, only to realise "mid-snip" that their English wasn't quite up to the task.

I live in Rödermark with my wife, two of our three children (the eldest is off studying in Heidelberg), and our Old English sheepdog. When I'm not in the classroom, I'm usually in my office or out jogging, cycling, spending time in the garden, or walking the dog.

For me, teaching is not just about the constant learning from my students but also about the diverse experiences and new perspectives gained from every moment.

After being in Germany for so many years and hearing about ELTAF from colleagues, I felt it was finally time to join in and connect with fellow English teachers who share the same passion for the profession. I look forward to exchanging ideas, experiences, and, undoubtedly, a few good stories along the way.

Manage your ELTAF Membership

If you need to change/update/cancel your email address for the ELTAF mailing list or the ELTAF Newsletter, please write to Contact@eltaf.de.

This is also the email address to send a cancellation of membership and any questions about payments.

If you have questions concerning the www.eltaf.de website, please write to Kristen Speer: webmaster@eltaf.de.

To join ELTAF go to www.eltaf.de

From the Members



Julia Roseveare

Hello everyone, my name is Julia Roseveare, I'm English and I have been a member of ELTAF for thirteen years. I have learnt a great deal from the many in-person and online events, enjoyed meeting other trainers and keeping up to date. A couple of years ago, Markus Tischer and I tried running a Mannheim-Heidelberg TalkShop, but sadly it didn't continue because not enough people were interested.

I've lived in Heidelberg for over thirty years and met my husband here. He's also English, and we have two adult sons with young families of their own. We love living here. It's wonderful to be able to walk out of our door and into the woods with our dog. We are also close to the river, and I was a member of a rowing club for about ten years.

I was born in Essex, England, and went to school in Chester until I was thirteen, with a six-month spell in India at eleven. Fortunately, I remember it clearly. When I was thirteen, we moved to The Hague, which I liked very much, so leaving there after three years for a village in Cheshire was a great wrench – not a good swap for a sixteen-year-old!

After studying French and German at Aston University in Birmingham, my first job was with management consultants, working near Paris and in Wales. My partner at the time started work in Singapore and I thought my languages would help me find a job there. However, I was wrong. You needed a skill that Singaporeans didn't have, and many Singaporean graduates had studied abroad.

I therefore went back to England and did a TEFL course (now CELTA) at International House in Hastings, and almost immediately found work in a language school in Singapore, where I lived for two years. Teaching English was meant to be temporary, but I enjoyed working there with mainly Japanese students

Not long after that, I came to Heidelberg and trained as a copy editor, but soon decided that desk work was not for me. Since then, I've been a freelance English trainer, mainly in Heidelberg, in companies, at Heidelberg University (teaching both students and staff) and in a research institute. With the start of the pandemic, my teaching went online and remains so. I find my job very interesting and fulfilling and feel privileged to have gained an insight into many different working environments.

CONFESSIONS OF A FILM FAN (ATIC)



Barbara Yoder-
Scherer

How do we first become involved with our hobbies? How do we discover unknown passions?

Drive-in movies were popular in the U.S. when I was growing up. My dad would put down the back seat of the station wagon so that my brother and I would have a place to lie down later on. The first feature was always a family-friendly movie. Then my brother and I would crawl into our sleeping bags and fall asleep while Mom & Dad watched the more adult film.

When I was 17, I spent a year in Denmark and was introduced to reading subtitles, not just in the movie theater, but also on TV. During college I worked at the Performing Arts Center at the State University of New York at Albany, starting as an usher, and working my way up to House Manager and Box Office staff. Of course, we got to see all the productions for free. Foreign films were also shown. This was the era of Francois Truffaut, but I was also introduced to films from all over the world. Later, after I married, we lived in Buenos Aires. Calle Lavalle, the street with one movie theater after the other was right near the language institute where I was working. At the time, I could see a movie for the equivalent of \$1.00. All films were shown in the original, which pretty much meant English, with Spanish subtitles. I saw lots of films, got used to reading subtitles, and learned lots of Spanish in the process.

After my son was born, I made sure that I had a chance to get downtown to the movies once a week. That was my „sanity afternoon“. I think it was during those years in Argentina that I officially became a movie fan (atic).

The highpoint of my year is, of course, the Oscars. What a show! Because of the time difference between N.Y. and B.A., and due to not being able to stay up till all hours because of my responsibilities as a mother, I would tape the Oscars. However, I never seemed to get the whole thing on one VHS tape. So my mom, a fellow movie fan, would tape it for me and send it to me thru the mail.

Technology has moved on, sometimes for better, sometimes for worse. The worst was watching the Oscars in Germany with a simultaneous voice-over (horrible!), but thank goodness they stopped that. Now I look forward to recording it every year on my TV hard drive and watching it at least 2x. Since becoming a retired person, I have the luxury of taking off the morning afterwards, sitting there with my coffee and printed-out sheet of all the nominees and just enjoy marking off the winner in each category. The second time is days later, after I've had a chance to digest all of the decisions. Then I can concentrate more on the presenters, the gowns, and all the commentaries following the

show. My goal each year is to be able to see all of the nominated films before the Oscars. Never possible, but fun trying. This means going to the movies once a week. Many of you probably remember a Newsletter called Wichary. This was compiled by someone who would list all of the films shown during the week in a language other than German. A kindred soul! Unfortunately (for me), this person retired and that was the end of that. Now I receive a weekly Newsletter from Arthouse Cinemas (Cinema, Harmonie, & Eldorado) arthouse-kinos.de Casablanca (Bad Soden) casablanca-badsoden.de and Kronberger Lichtspiele <https://kronberger-lichtspiele.de/>. I also get one from Kinopolis, but they, like many other cinemas, pretty much show only Blockbusters – not my thing
<https://www.kino.de/kinoprogramm/stadt/frankfurt-am-main/>

I don't mind going to the cinema by myself, and I hate crowded theaters. I pick out a Monday movie (that's when the arthouse cinemas show theirs in the original language version) and write to my friends in the hope that someone will also be interested and have time. In this way I've kept up with friendships I've made thru the past 26 years here in the Frankfurt area.

I go back to the States once a year. A 10-hour flight, in my way of thinking, means five movies in a row (with bathroom breaks and stretching legs in between). I do my homework before I get on the plane. I have a list of all the movies I still haven't seen that were nominated for an Oscar, and I search for them as soon as I get into my seat. If you take your own headphones, you can start watching movies while the other passengers are still finding their seats. Do I remember everything I see? No. But I enjoy it immensely while watching. I live for the moment!

I will end with a few comments about the 2025 Oscars. It was not one of the most spectacular, and there were no scandals, but I was not disappointed. Conan O'Brien was pleasantly funny, the stage looked fantastic, the gowns were gorgeous, and the presenters were very good. In spite of all the time I spend in movie theaters, I failed to see *Anora*, the movie that won for Best Picture. I've wanted to see it, but it was never shown during the day.

Should there be more movie fan(at)ics out there who want to get together with other film fans, you can contact me toni1barb@aol.com

DEUTSCH- BRITISCHE GESELLSCHAFT RHEIN-MAIN E.V.: AN UPDATE

Nick Jefcoat
Chairman

What later became the Deutsch-Britische Gesellschaft e.V. was originally founded in 1949, with the aim of healing wounds and restoring the relationship between Germany and Britain after WWII. The prestigious Königswinter annual conferences, launched in the early 1950s and held alternately in Germany and Britain, are the DBG's most important and lasting contribution to German-British relations. There are three separate conferences annually: the Main Conference for seasoned business people, academics, politicians, journalists etc. from both countries; the Young Conference for up to 32-year-olds from both countries; and the Defence Conference for those involved in defence and security in both countries. More information can be found here: <https://www.debrige.de/2024/12/07/koenigswinter-konferenz/>

The Deutsch-Britische Gesellschaft Rhein-Main e.V., based in Frankfurt, was founded in 1951, and we are looking forward to celebrating our 75th anniversary next year. Our objective is to foster German-British relations within the Frankfurt Rhein-Main region and beyond. We hold one major hybrid evening event per month (excepting those months where most people are away on holiday). Typically, a native English speaker addresses us on a cultural or socio-political subject, with occasional economic or business topics, followed by Q&A and further discussion with the speaker in a smaller group over dinner. The physical location is normally the Frankfurter PresseClub and further participants join online from throughout the Frankfurt Rhein-Main region and sometimes further afield. In addition, we hold a summer party for members most years, and offer occasional museum tours and theatre and concert visits. Good recent examples of our monthly events include a talk on the Henley Royal Regatta with a guided tour of Germania Rudergesellschaft and a picnic in their gardens in September, a talk on Oscar Wilde (fuelled by tots of Irish whiskey!) in November and a guided tour of German-British exhibits at the Historisches Museum Frankfurt followed by dinner together at a French Bistro this January. Furthermore, we offer online access to numerous events organised by other members of the DBG group, in particular Berlin and Dusseldorf.

Annual membership for individuals and couples costs €100 and students pay €25 p.a. We currently have about 200 members and a longer Members & Friends list, the latter of whom we gently encourage every year-end to become paying members.

We have three (soon to be four) corporate or institutional members, and each pays €1,000 p.a., enabling 10 of their employees to attend all our events.

We are always on the lookout for new members, with a special focus on younger generations. We are currently also on the lookout for new Board members; our hope is significantly to reduce the average age of the Board as well as to increase female participation.

We send our invitations, except those to some Members-Only events, to everybody on our Members & Friends list. Send me nick@jefcoat.de contact details if you would like to be added to this list. Further information is available at www.debrige.de/Network/Frankfurt/Main

ST. AUGUSTINE'S CHURCH IN WIESBADEN – MY STORY



Madeline Bohr

I'm sure that each one of us has a story to tell about how we “ended up” in Germany. Here's mine. As a Canadian, I came to Germany about 50 years ago and stayed. My husband is German, our sons are German, and most of our friends are German. When I retired from corporate business a few years ago, I went into teaching English. Fortunately, shortly after that I discovered ELTAF, and am very grateful for the help and support as well as the networking opportunities the organisation has given me.

Perfectly bilingual, I had become well-integrated into German life. However, at the same time I discovered I was losing touch with my own background. About 20 years ago, I visited St. Augustine's Church in Wiesbaden to participate in a workshop. The familiar hymns and the Lord's Prayer in English were just two things that reminded me of my own religious background and original faith, and immediately, I felt at home. The Episcopal-Anglican service is sufficiently ecumenical that members of all Christian faiths can feel comfortable. And since that first visit, I have been a regular member of St. A.'s in varying functions - as a member of the Vestry and our small but excellent choir, and most recently as Events Manager.

Along with the familiar traditions of the service, the wonderful international community has kept me there. Members of the congregation come from all over the world, although predominantly from the USA and the UK, with a large group of parishioners from Nigeria. A perfect example of our diversity is our priest, Rev. Chris Easthill, who was born in Singapore of English parents, studied in the USA, is married to a German and has lived in Germany since 1982. He is just one of many of us with similar backgrounds.

Our little historical building is easy to find, located right on the Wiesbaden Kurpark and well-known Wilhelmstrasse and has been home to English-speaking visitors to the area since Queen Victoria's days. In more recent history, many Americans, connected with the military community in Wiesbaden, have found their way to our doors. But our community is also home to Australians, South Africans, New Zealanders, and many more.

This year, we are celebrating our 160th anniversary with special events in Wiesbaden. And we regularly host a variety of concerts and events, with visiting artists from all over the world. For more information on who we are and what we do, check out our website:

www.staugustines.de

But better than that, drop in for a visit! Our Nearly New Shop and Bookstore are open every Saturday (February to November), and there is a lovely weekly Sunday service at 10:00, accompanied by a full choir.

Like me, you might discover you have found a “home away from home”.

References

- Hilary Norman's “The English Church in Wiesbaden, a History”
- www.staugustines.de

TERTIARY TREFF: AN ELTAF GROUP FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS IN GERMAN UNIVERSITIES

Emma Gledhill-
Schmitt

Head of the Language Centre,
Hochschule Geisenheim University

The Tertiary Treff is a group of ELTAF members working in higher education institutions. Our group aims to provide a platform for university English teachers to exchange ideas, share best practices, and discuss current trends in English language teaching at the tertiary level.

We try to meet once a year (although this tends to fluctuate 😊), to discuss whatever topics we feel are relevant to university-level English teaching, such as assessment strategies, and the integration of digital tools into the classroom.

Whether you are an experienced lecturer or new to teaching English in a German university, we warmly welcome new members. If you are interested in joining us or learning more, please get in touch. We look forward to connecting with colleagues who share a passion for ELT in higher education!

For further info about our ELTAF sub-group Tertiary Treff for English teachers working in the university system, please contact:

Emma.gledhill-schmitt@hs-gm.de



AKS CONFERENCE IN BOCHUM MARCH 12-14, 2025

Emma Gledhill-
Schmitt

Head of the Language Centre,
Hochschule Geisenheim
University



The *Arbeitskreis der Sprachenzentren an Hochschulen e. V. (AKS)* was founded in Bochum in 1970 and has since developed from a small interest group into a large association and important network. Over 150 language centres and comparable higher education institutions in Germany, China, Italy, Austria and Switzerland belong to the AKS. Its focus is the continuous development of research-based language education at universities, and to this end, various conferences and symposia are regularly organized.

I am just back from this year's (33rd) conference, held at the Ruhr-Universität Bochum, the theme of which was Teaching, learning, living – language centres navigating new realities. The plenaries and workshops provided many impulses for reflection and exchange regarding the current situations and challenges facing university language centres.

The world in which students and teachers live is changing: climate issues, immigration waves, demographic shifts and geopolitical conflicts are increasingly shaping our world, which is no longer just globalised but increasingly multipolar. Universities in general, and foreign language centres in particular, must also respond to these new realities in terms of educational and language policy.

Plenary lectures provided us with some interesting insights regarding sensitivity to diversity and its growing importance, and teacher wellbeing. There were also numerous workshops focusing on various aspects of the new realities facing university language centres, from externally-influenced ones such as policy changes and geopolitical upheavals, to changes forced by the necessity for future-proofing our workplaces.

All the current important subjects were covered: diversity; AI; core competencies; sustainability; multilingualism – buzzwords which all of us working in the university sector are very familiar with (and which I covered in a Members' Day workshop a couple of years ago!).

In her conference brochure welcome piece, the AKS President, Dr Maike Engelhardt, wrote, "too often we lose sight of our core business – the language, its teaching and the stakeholders at its heart: the teachers and the learners". Conferences such as this are a chance for us to focus on what is important in what we do.

Further info about AKS: <https://www.aks-sprachen.de/>

IATEFL EVENTS

Here is a link to upcoming IATEFL events, many of which are online and for non-members and members alike. Do have a look as there may well be something in your area of interest. There is often a lot of interesting chat at webinars which lets you know what others (from around the world) have to say!

<https://www.iatefl.org/events>

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- Get discounted prices on a range of publications and resources
- Join one or more of the 16 Special Interest Groups (SIGs) and shape your membership to your specific areas of professional interest (SIGs are not automatically included in Associate Individual Membership, but can be added for £24 each).
- Receive e-Bulletins, our bi-monthly Magazine and our annual publication 'Conference Selections'
- Benefit from member prices to attend the annual IATEFL International Conference and Exhibition
- Apply for a range of IATEFL scholarships only available to members
- Submit a proposal to speak at conference, or have your first article published with our support

How do I join IATEFL through my teaching association?

1. Contact your teaching association
2. If you're a current member, they'll give you a specific discount code
3. Create a free account on the IATEFL website: www.iatefl.org
4. In your 'dashboard' choose to join IATEFL as an Associate member
5. Put in your discount code, and then complete the rest of the form
6. Make payment of the discounted membership fee

IATEFL Individual membership: £76 per year

IATEFL Associate Individual Membership: £27 per year

Prices shown are for year: 1 September 2024 to 31 August 2025



ELTAF EVENTS

Do try and attend!
ELTAF events are a
great way to meet
new people and
make professional
contacts.

17.05.2025 / 10:30 – 12:00 / Think like Leonardo da Vinci and teach your students too! Bring creativity into all your lessons webinar with Susan Hillyard

Born in a Tuscan hamlet in 1452, Leonardo da Vinci sketched, worked on inventions, explored the human anatomy, drew landscapes and crafted magnificent paintings. His influence on life and art during the Renaissance was profound. In this interactive webinar we will practice the seven Da Vincian principles so that you can try them out yourself and take them into your language classroom to help your students develop their own creative thinking in English. The session will be largely interactive with very little theory. We will be DOING!!!!

14.06.2025 / 10:30 – 12:00 / Talking Pictures with Robert Kirstein

Activities revolving around texts and audios are commonplace in language classrooms. But do we really exploit the full potential of the many great visuals available in our materials? In this webinar we'll be taking to heart the old saying 'A picture is worth a 1000 words' by exploring the various possibilities pictures and illustrations provide. We'll be focussing on ways in which you can use images to help consolidate and expand your students' vocabulary and grammar. You'll have the chance to try out a range of activities based on photos and illustrations in various course books, and which you can adapt for use with other materials. Come along, enjoy English, enjoy pictures and enjoy yourselves!

Cost for ELTAF or other ELTA members: free; non-members: €10

20.09.2025 / 09:30 – 16:00 / Members' Day

Members' Day is one of ELTAF's signature events. This year it will again be at the ISM in Frankfurt. Members Day is YOUR day with workshops facilitated by members for members. We try to give the day a very personal feel with a lot of opportunity to network. This event is also open to other ELTA members.

Bring a friend to the event at the regular price. If they decide to join ELTAF on the day, they will receive one year free membership.

Cost for ELTAF and other ELTA members and friends: €30.

13:30 – 16:30 / 29.11.2025 / ELTAF Christmas Party
Save the date! More information to come.

For more details of ELTAF events and to register go to www.eltaf.de/future-events

IATEFL Highlights / HELTA online / 16.05.25 / 17:30 - 19:30

Join us for a fun and interactive swap shop where we share insights, inspiration and highlights from the recent IATEFL English teaching conference in Edinburgh! It's a great chance to connect with fellow ELT professionals, exchange ideas and be inspired. More details on the HELTA website.

To register: <https://kurzelinks.de/mpsa>

IATEFL ENGLISH TEACHING CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

a HELTA online swap shop event

16 MAY 2025

(FRIDAY)

17:30 - 19:30 CET

ONLINE



Image created with AI (DALL-E by OpenAI)

JOIN US FOR A FUN AND INTERACTIVE SWAP SHOP WHERE WE SHARE INSIGHTS, INSPIRATION, AND HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE RECENT IATEFL ENGLISH TEACHING CONFERENCE IN EDINBURGH!

IT'S A GREAT CHANCE TO CONNECT WITH FELLOW ELT PROFESSIONALS, EXCHANGE IDEAS, AND BE INSPIRED.

Were you at IATEFL Edinburgh?

We'd love for you to contribute to the programme!

Contact us at: chair@helta.de

Register here to attend:

<https://kurzelinks.de/mpsa>

Upon registration, the zoom link will be sent to you.



Open to all HELTA and ELTA members and friends

Admission is free

Professional Development Certificates can be provided

There will be more information about the recent IATEFL International Annual Conference in the next issue of the ELTAF Newsletter.