

ELTAS News

English Language Teachers Association Stuttgart Newsletter

“ *Who dares to teach
must never cease to learn* ”

— John Cotton Dana —



Letter from the Chair

Welcome to the August edition of ELTAS News

Dear Members,

We are proud to present the second edition of our **ELTAS newsletter**.

I hope you are all enjoying the summer, taking a little time to pause and recharge, and gathering some fresh energy for the months ahead.

In this edition, you can read the review of our July workshop with **Patricia de Griesse**. Personally, I took a lot out of it. The psychological concepts she presented are very helpful for understanding ourselves and others.

We're also looking forward to seeing many of you at our upcoming workshop with **Andy Vogt-Nas** on **19th September 2026**. **Break the Ice – Crack the Discourse** will be a highly interactive workshop designed to get us warmed up and ready for the new semester.

Additionally, we are happy to share an article by **Ridha Mejri** on **Rethinking Business English Training in the Age of AI**, and we update you on our **Tech Group**, **ELTAU** activities and this year's **BESIG Conference in Vienna**.

Please also have a look at our **Save the Date** page.

Enjoy the read, enjoy the rest of the summer, and we hope to see you soon!

Best wishes,

Katrin

Your ELTAS Committee



From left to right: Katrin Beringer (Chair), Mauline Lawrence (Deputy Chair), Tanja Delgorge-Engelhardt (Treasurer), Haripriya Pareek (Secretary)



BREAK THE ICE CRACK THE DISCOURSE

Adapting icebreakers for successful language training

PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES · REFLECTION · LINGUISTIC INSIGHT



ANDY VOGT-NAS



DATE
Saturday,
19 Sept. 2026



TIME
2-5 p.m.



VENUE
ISM
Maybachstraße 20
70469 Stuttgart

WHY THIS WORKSHOP?

Icebreakers can do much more than get learners talking. Used strategically, they reduce pressure, encourage genuine interaction and reveal how language works in real-life communication.

In this interactive workshop, Andy Vogt-Nas will invite you to try a range of icebreaker activities and then explore the discourse they generate. Together, we'll examine language choices, pragmatic features and interaction patterns – and consider how these insights can help learners communicate more confidently and effectively.

TAKEAWAYS

- Adaptable icebreakers for different groups and purposes
- Fresh ideas for engaging, low-pressure learning environments
- Practical ways to analyse classroom interaction
- A framework for helping learners use language strategically to collaborate and achieve their goals

YOUR SPEAKER

Andy Vogt-Nas

Andy Vogt-Nas is a trainer of Business English and German as a Foreign Language working with adults in business and university settings. Her priority is finding enjoyable ways to make language learning more approachable for learners and trainers alike. Live and love the language.

Registration

Free for ELTAS members and members of other German ELTA associations.
Guests: €25

Register now:
events@eltas.de

Rethinking Business English Training in the Age of AI

By Ridha Mejri (M.A., D.E.A.)

Artificial intelligence is no longer a novelty hovering at the edge of the language classroom. It is woven into the everyday working lives of the professionals we train and, increasingly, into our own practice as trainers. Learners routinely turn to tools such as ChatGPT to draft emails, rehearse role-plays and clarify grammar; some use them for purposes as unexpected as spiritual reflection. Whatever we think of this shift, it is already here. The question is no longer whether AI belongs in Business English (BE) training, but what BE training should become now that it does.

My argument is a straightforward one, though its implications are far-reaching: AI is not merely an auxiliary tool to be bolted onto existing courses. It is a disruptive force that requires us to rethink our instructional aims, our methodologies and, above all, our professional identity. I frame this rethinking around three **“Ch’s”**: embracing **change**, empowering **choice** and seizing the **chance** to redefine what human communication means in a digitally evolving world.

The question AI forces us to answer

If AI can already draft a fluent email, translate instantly and support pronunciation, what distinctive value can a human BE trainer still offer? This is the uncomfortable question at the heart of our profession today and it deserves a direct answer rather than a defensive one.

The future of BE training does not lie in linguistic mechanics. It lies in communication strategy, human connection and critical facilitation. The moment we accept that machines can handle much of the mechanical work of language, we are free to concentrate on what only people can do.

From scarcity to abundance

Traditional approaches tend to focus on grammar instruction, memorisation of functional phrases, standardised test preparation, email templates and one-size-fits-all curricula. All of these quietly assume scarcity: limited contact hours, restricted access to authentic communication contexts and delayed feedback.

AI can draft. Human trainers help learners decide what works.

AI dismantles those assumptions. It offers unlimited practice opportunities, adaptive learning pathways, immediate error correction and realistic simulations. Today’s systems function as fluent, fast and essentially free co-communicators, performing many of the functions once reserved for human instructors. When the scarcity that shaped our methods disappears, the methods themselves have to be reconsidered.

From accuracy to effectiveness

A client once told me he preferred good business conducted in poor English to excellent English that produced no business at all. That remark captures a genuine shift in professional priorities. In volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) business environments, linguistic accuracy alone no longer guarantees communicative effectiveness.

What learners increasingly need are competencies that extend well beyond grammar and vocabulary: digital communication strategies, intercultural intelligence, agile messaging across diverse platforms, collaborative virtual communication and the capacity to build strategic relationships. Seen this way, BE training belongs within the broader framework of global business communication, not within linguistic instruction alone.

Redefining the trainer’s role

This transformation calls for a threefold redefinition of who the BE trainer is. We move from content deliverer to learning designer, cultural consultant and strategic advisor. The shift foregrounds precisely those human capabilities that AI cannot replicate: cultural intelligence, emotional resonance, creative problem-solving, ethical judgment and authentic interpersonal connection. These are not soft add-ons. In an AI-enhanced learning environment, they become the foundation of the work.

Four pillars of modern BE training

To give this vision practical shape, I propose a pedagogical model built on four pillars, each addressing a core competence for navigating AI-infused professional contexts.

AI literacy. Learners need to critically interpret, refine and integrate AI-generated output into real-world communication. Comparing several AI outputs, using AI as a first draft rather than a finished product and practising prompt engineering are concrete ways to develop this skill.

Critical thinking. AI-generated language carries inaccuracies, biases and contextual misalignments. Learners must be guided to analyse outputs for appropriateness, refine them to include their own voice, verify facts and cultural assumptions and optimise messages against their communicative objectives. Done well, this turns AI from a passive content generator into an analytical object through which learners build higher-order cognitive skills.

Intercultural sensitivity. AI models tend to default to Western, English-speaking norms. They can miss indirect communication styles, relationship-oriented norms and culturally specific etiquette. In multinational corporate settings, those gaps can lead to miscommunication or unintended offence. Here the trainer's human cultural intelligence becomes indispensable for contextualising AI assistance and ensuring cross-cultural appropriateness.

Ethical communication. Integrating AI into business communication raises questions of authenticity, accountability, privacy, bias awareness and transparency. Learners have to balance efficiency against authenticity and understand the boundaries of appropriate AI use in professional settings. The trainer's task is to act as an ethical guide, helping learners make responsible decisions.



Redesigning what we actually do in the room

If the trainer's role shifts toward orchestrating learning experiences, offering strategic feedback and fostering human meaning-making, then the tasks we set need to change too. AI handles the data-driven work; we handle the judgment.

In practice, familiar activities are reconceptualised. Email writing becomes an exercise in critiquing tone and cultural fit rather than producing correct sentences from scratch. Presentations start from an AI-generated outline that learners then tailor and make their own. Negotiation practice incorporates AI role-play partners that give immediate feedback, and virtual meeting simulations allow for more realistic communicative rehearsal. In each case, the machine does the drafting; the human does the thinking.

The five competencies that endure

Thriving in AI-augmented professional environments comes down to five core competencies: – the **5 Cs: communication, collaboration, critical thinking, creativity and curiosity**. These reflect a broader pedagogical shift toward capabilities that cannot be automated. The enduring value of education, after all, lies in human connection, the development of wisdom, the cultivation of curiosity and the nurturing of creativity.



Not artificial – intelligently human

Where does this leave us? With a clear message rather than a defensive posture. AI should be embraced as a tool, not feared as a competitor. Scalable personalisation is now genuinely possible. Integrating real-world communication tasks into our training is essential. And the human skills that matter most – judgment, empathy, cultural understanding and creativity – remain the trainer's greatest assets.

Far from being a threat to our profession, AI is a catalyst: for pedagogical innovation and for a renewed appreciation of the uniquely human contributions we make. Through AI literacy, critical thinking, intercultural sensitivity and ethical awareness, Business English training can meet the demands of contemporary global communication while strengthening the human-centred competencies that define effective business interaction.

The future of Business English training, then, is not artificial. It is intelligently human.



About the author

Ridha Mejri (M.A., D.E.A.)

Ridha Mejri was raised in a bilingual Arabic-French environment and is a Business Communication and Intercultural Management lecturer at Worms University of Applied Sciences. As a trainer and consultant, he conducts seminars and workshops for executives and expats to enhance their intercultural skills and management competence. He has lived, studied and worked in several countries.

Pause, Recharge, Reimagine

Managing Uncertainty and Strengthening Self-Belief



Saturday, 25 July 2026



2-6 p.m.



ISM Stuttgart, Maybachstraße 20



Patricia de Griesse

MA Positive Psychology
Certified Systemic Coach
Experiential Workshop Designer
Emotional Intelligence,
Performance & Wellbeing Coach
NLP Master Practitioner

Review of the KLETT-ELTAS workshop „Pause, Recharge, Reimagine“ held by Patricia de Griesse at ISM Stuttgart on Saturday 25th July 2026,

written by Karin Scheffold-Mokler and Katrin Beringer

What a refreshing and informative interactive workshop that invited us all to reflect and recharge for the months ahead!

Our speaker Patricia de Griesse asked us to think about our personal strengths, combat negativity, worry less about the future, and focus on our zone of control.

“**Whatever challenge you are facing at the moment: it will pass!**”

She explained the concept of the “window of tolerance”, which is the moment when you feel good because you are in the “optimal arousal zone”. Outside this window you are either in “hyper arousal”, which often comes with racing thoughts, anger, and impaired judgement, or you are stuck in a state of “hypo arousal”, which manifests itself in feelings of isolation, numbness, and even depression. How do you get out of the extremes? Through physical activation (bottom to top) or mental reflection (top to bottom). Patricia - and participants - shared examples of both.

The question arose as to what we can control in our life. “We tend to try to predict the future and control the world!” said Patricia. She recommended reading the book “A Random Walk Down Wall Street” by Burton Malkiel. It mentions an experiment where nine monkeys made better predictions than humans!

Patricia visualized three zones: The Zone of Control - The Zone of Influence - The Zone of No Control. Too often we worry about things we cannot control such as climate change, war, or politics. This is draining! Why not start making use of our “self-efficacy” in the other zones instead, where we can at least have an influence on the world around us?

There was so much more that Patricia shared on that day such as the cognitive triangle and the PIE model. She even gave us a brief overview of how the brain works. What a resourceful and energetic speaker she is! Participants were grateful and inspired, which they expressed on their “take away” cards at the end of the session. Here are some examples:



TAKE-AWAY CARDS

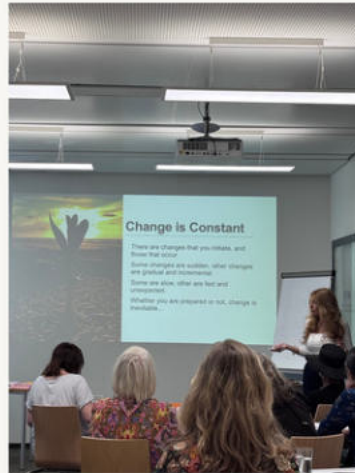
- Be aware of what you can control and be kind to yourself.
- Practice self-compassion and be mindful.
- I'll hug myself more often
- Interesting thoughts on the brain and how to apply it practically

Many thanks to **Patricia**, and also to **Jonathan Lobb from Klett** and the **ELTAS team** for organizing this engaging and inspiring workshop and the treats provided during the break!

Impressions from the workshop

Pause, Recharge, Reimagine

Managing Uncertainty and Strengthening Self-Belief



Voices from the Workshop

Positive Feedback from Our Recent ELTAS-Klett Workshop

“ It was another extraordinary workshop that I enjoyed very much. ”

“ Patricia was great. ”

“ Everything was perfectly organised. ”

“ I am looking forward to future events. ”

“ I also enjoyed the dinner afterwards – what a wonderful conclusion to the event. ”

“ It certainly was an enjoyable afternoon. ”

“ Good to see ELTAS back in the swing of things! ”

“ Keep up the good work! ”

“ GREAT! ”

“ Great to get together with ELTAS friends after a long time. ”

“ Good to be with the ELTAS crowd again! Missed it!!! ”

“ Many thanks for another enjoyable event! ”

“ Very inspiring workshop! ”

“ Looking forward to workshops to come. ”

Thank you to everyone who joined us!



Networking Meet-Up





ROAST MY PRESENTATION - AND PRIME MY PREP!

*Working with AI to save time and increase quality in your teaching
(while still being a healthy sceptic)*

an ELTAU e.V. workshop with
ANDY LEAL (Ulm) and ALEXIA SCHEMIEN (Berlin)

In this hands-on workshop, you'll explore how AI tools can support your teaching—saving time, sparking creativity, and helping you design more engaging materials.

We move quickly from inspiration to action. After a short input on how AI might impact our industry over the next five years, you'll see concrete examples of how you can use AI as an assistant to expand what is possible in your teaching. We will explore ways to optimise planning, material creation, tailoring resources and feedback, as well as how to help learners use AI to take greater control of their learning.

Then it's your turn: you'll experiment with AI tools to create your own materials and develop and refine ideas in a supportive, collaborative environment.

A key focus throughout is the exchange and development of best practice: sharing experiences, comparing approaches, and reflecting on what works (and what doesn't) in different teaching contexts.

You'll leave with:

- a ready-to-use teaching resource
- practical strategies for integrating AI into your workflow
- greater confidence in using AI critically and effectively

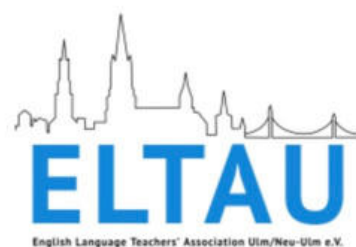
Saturday 26
September
10:00 – 17:00

vh Ulm
Kornhausplatz 5
89073 Ulm

Free for members of
ELTAU
or other German
ELTA

40€ for external
guests

Register for the
workshop by clicking
[here](#)



July update: practical exchange, smart tools, and digital safety.



The ELTAS Tech Group met twice in July. It was a wonderful opportunity for members to get to know each other and exchange tips and experiences.

What we discussed

Topics included phishing e-mails, AI prompting and tools, fobizz.de (which offers helpful webinars, teaching materials, and access to AI chatbots), the vhs.cloud learning platform, and ideas for games workshops.

Further details:

[ELTAS Tech Group Agenda.xlsx](#)

Next meeting in August

Emails have already gone out confirming that **the next Tech Group session** will take place on **Thursday, August 27 at 6 p.m.**

Register here:

[Tech Group Meeting](#)

Tech Group tip!

Phishing does not only happen by email. Be aware of phishing WhatsApp messages too. If in doubt, contact the person via another channel to double-check.

by Tanja Delgorge-Engelhardt

by: Tanja Delgorge-Engelhardt
Moderator - ELTAS Tech Group

39th Annual IATEFL BESIG Conference

Building Bridges, Preparing for Global Business



DATES

20-22 November 2026

LOCATION

Vienna, Austria

VENUE

Flemings Hotel Wien-Stadthalle

Conference overview

The 39th Annual IATEFL BESIG Conference, Building Bridges, Preparing for Global Business, will take place in Vienna, Austria, from 20-22 November 2026. The conference brings together Business English and professional communication specialists from around the world for three days of inspiring plenaries, practical talks, valuable networking opportunities and engaging discussions on the future of Business English and professional communication.

Early-bird registration is open until 30 September 2026. Further details and registration information are available on the [IATEFL BESIG Annual Conference page](#).

Accommodation

The conference will be held at Flemings Hotel Wien-Stadthalle, a comfortable and conveniently located hotel near Wien Westbahnhof, one of Vienna's main transport hubs.

A limited number of rooms is available at special conference rates. To book, please contact the hotel by email at res.wien-stadthalle@stay-flemings.com and quote the allotment keyword: **IAT191126**

How to get to the conference venue

The conference venue is conveniently located near Wien Westbahnhof. From Westbahnhof, Flemings Hotel Wien-Stadthalle is within walking distance.

Wien Westbahnhof is only approximately five minutes away on foot from the conference venue.

Travelling by train from Stuttgart

Westbahn offers a direct connection from Stuttgart to Wien Westbahnhof twice daily, with departures at 7:12 a.m. and 3:12 p.m. Tickets are available at very affordable prices, making this a convenient and attractive option for colleagues travelling from the Stuttgart region.

Tickets can be booked via the [Westbahn ticket shop](#).

If you arrive at Wien Hauptbahnhof, you can reach the hotel in approximately 15-20 minutes by underground (U1 to Stephansplatz, then change to the U3), by tram 18, or by taxi.

Travelling by plane

There are daily direct flights from Stuttgart Airport to Vienna. From Vienna International Airport, the city centre and Westbahnhof can be reached easily by public transport, airport train connections or taxi.

Public transport and ticket tips

Vienna has an excellent public transport network. For getting around the city, tickets and route information are easy to access online and via official transport apps.

For public transport within Vienna, the official journey planner [BusBahnBim](#) is especially useful for checking routes and connections. Rail tickets within Austria can also be booked through ÖBB.



The 39th **BE**sig Annual Conference



Building Bridges: Preparing for Global Business

Friday, 20 November –
Sunday, 22 November, 2026 ⚡

**REGISTER
NOW**

Flemings Hotel Wien Stadthalle
Vienna, Austria



Save the Date

Upcoming Workshops & Events

19
September



ELTAS Workshop

Break the Ice - Crack the Discourse

Speaker: Andy Vogt-Nas

26
September



ELTAU Workshop

Roast my presentation - and prime my prep!

Speakers: Alexia Schemien and Andy Leal

7
November



Workshop - TBD

20-22
November



39th Annual IATEFL BESIG Conference

Bridging the Gap: Preparing Learners for Global Business
Venue: Hotel Flemings Wien Stadthalle - Vienna, Austria

5
December



ELTAS Christmas Party

23
January



ELTAS-OUP Workshop

Multimodality in the Classroom

Your ELTAS committee

A volunteer team committed to supporting you and strengthening our community



CHAIR

Katrin Beringer

This is the second time Katrin Beringer has taken on the role of Chair of ELTAS. After completing her degree in English and Theatre Studies, she began her career in public relations. She later discovered that teaching English was far more creative than writing copy. With the support of her friends at ELTAS, she has successfully expanded her client base and navigated fluctuations in demand for English language training. Katrin also works as a Job Coach.



DEPUTY CHAIR

Mauline Lawrence

A long-standing and active ELTAS member, Mauline has served the association in several roles over the years. As Deputy Chair, she looks forward to organising engaging workshops, welcoming inspiring speakers and creating more opportunities for members to connect, exchange ideas and grow professionally.

She is a Business English and ESP trainer, designing and delivering tailored language courses and workshops for companies across the Stuttgart region.



TREASURER

Tanja Delgorte-Engelhardt

Having previously served as treasurer of the jazz choir in which she sings, Tanja has now taken on the same role at ELTAS, where she has been a member since 2020.

Being interested in digital tools, she has also taken on the role of IT support and is currently migrating ELTAS to another GDPR-compliant club software to optimize accounting and document storage. In addition, she moderates the ELTAS Tech Group where members can exchange tips and ideas.



SECRETARY

Haripriya Pareek

Haripriya Pareek holds a PhD in English Language Teaching and has over nine years of teaching experience in India and Germany, working with universities and language institutions.

She joined ELTAS as Secretary in 2023, supporting the committee with meeting minutes, workshop certificates, and other ELTAS events. She enjoys exploring languages and cultures, which enrich her professional and personal perspectives.

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About This Publication

ELTAS News is a non-commercial publication produced by the English Language Teachers Association Stuttgart e.V. on a not-for-profit basis. Its purpose is to inform, connect, and engage ELTAS members by sharing association news, workshop updates, teaching ideas, professional development opportunities and contributions from our wider English language teaching community.

Disclaimer

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Contact

Subscribe/contact us with your queries and suggestions at:

www.eltas.de | info@eltas.de

Newsletter Design & Layout

Mauline Lawrence

Connect. Learn. Grow.

Thank you for reading this issue of ELTAS News.

ELTAS brings English language teachers, trainers and coaches together for professional development, practical exchange, networking and mutual support in the Stuttgart region and beyond.

**Have an idea for a workshop, article, Tech Group tip
or member contribution?
We would love to hear from you.**

1

Contribute

Send us your ideas for future newsletter issues.

2

Attend

Join upcoming workshops and other ELTA partner events.

3

Connect

Meet English language teachers, trainers, and coaches across the region.

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ELTAS Facebook group