

TeachingEnglish

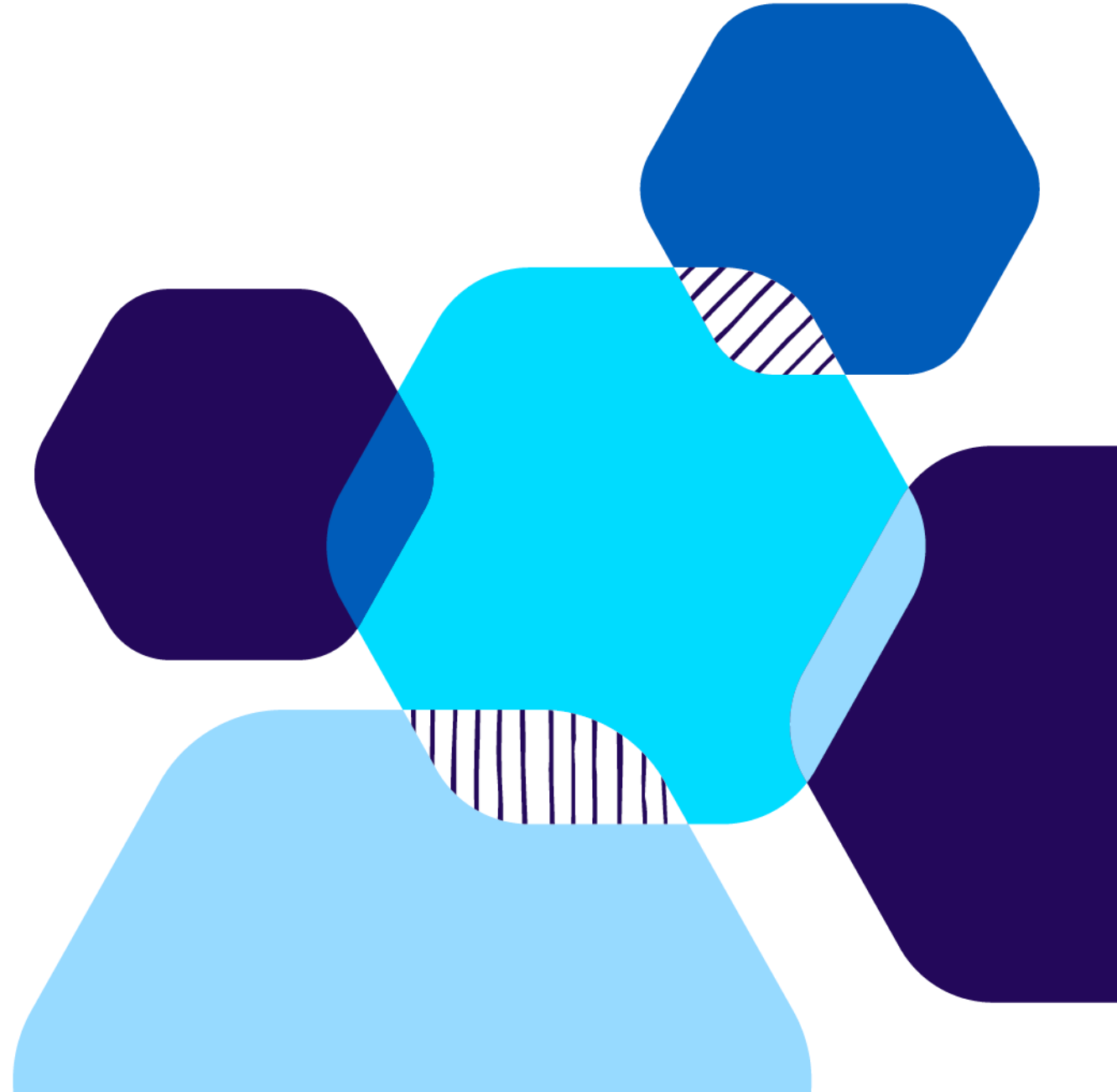
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# Maximizing Your Professional Growth through Communities of Practice

Saturday 15 March 2025

**Presenters: Fozia Temam,  
Blessing Epum, Abel Ochika**

[www.britishcouncil.org](http://www.britishcouncil.org)



# About the speakers

**Fozia Temam**, a dedicated English language teacher with nearly two decades of experience in Ethiopia, is a lecturer at Hawassa University and a doctoral candidate in early grade education. An active member of the English Connects Telegram group, she was honored as Member of the Month for championing community-driven professional development. She also serves on the executive committee of SEELPA, empowering educators at all levels. Her commitment to collaboration inspires teachers to engage in professional growth and innovation.



**Blessing Epum** is one of the British Council's social media consultants for Sub-Saharan Africa where she moderates posts on the Telegram Teachers CoP and the English Connects Teacher-educator CoP. She is currently the Head of Academics, Curriculum and Assessment in the school where she works in Lagos, Nigeria. She is passionate about digital literacy and currently running her Masters degree at the prestigious Nexford University where she is enrolled as a student in the Digital Transformation program.

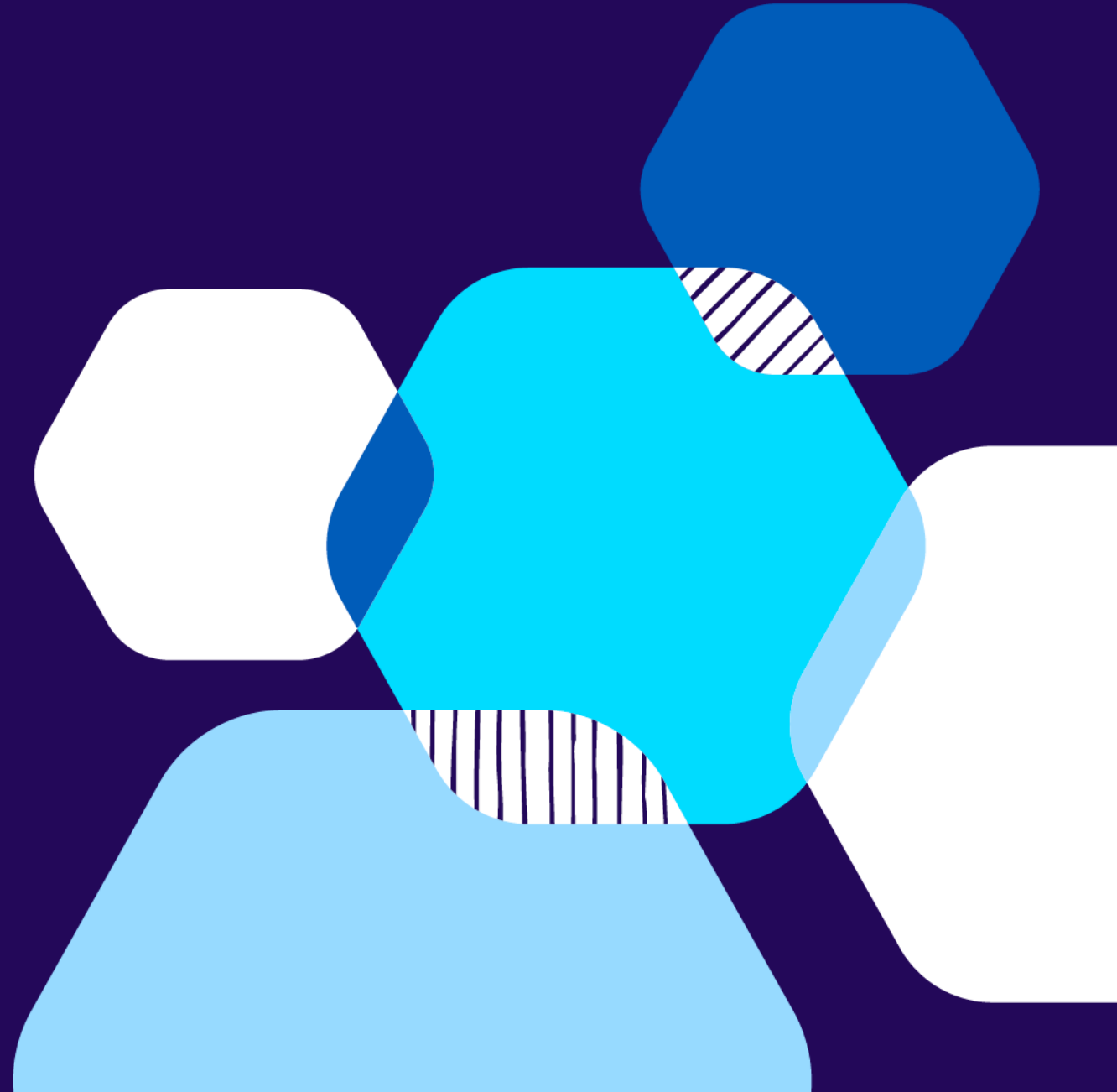


**Abel E. Ochika**, M.A. English Language, is a teacher, teacher trainer, and consultant for the British Council in SSA with over 15 years of experience. His research interests include TESOL, Digital Communication, and Applied Linguistics, and he is passionate about advancing teacher professional development.



# Objectives

- To showcase the English Connects Telegram group
- To inspire ELTAs around SSA to actively participate in this group.
- To raise awareness of the benefits of joining and contributing to a Community of Practice.
- To gather insights and feedback from participants on their experiences and needs.



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# Brief overview of English Connects

A global programme that provides inclusive teaching and professional development resources and content.

Brings together teachers and teacher educators of English worldwide through the British Council global online TeachingEnglish and regional TeachingEnglish Africa platforms and communities

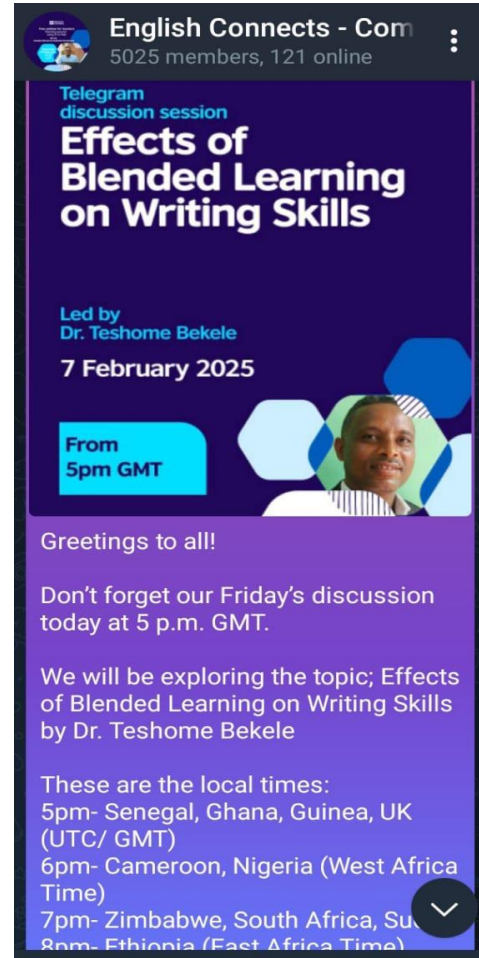
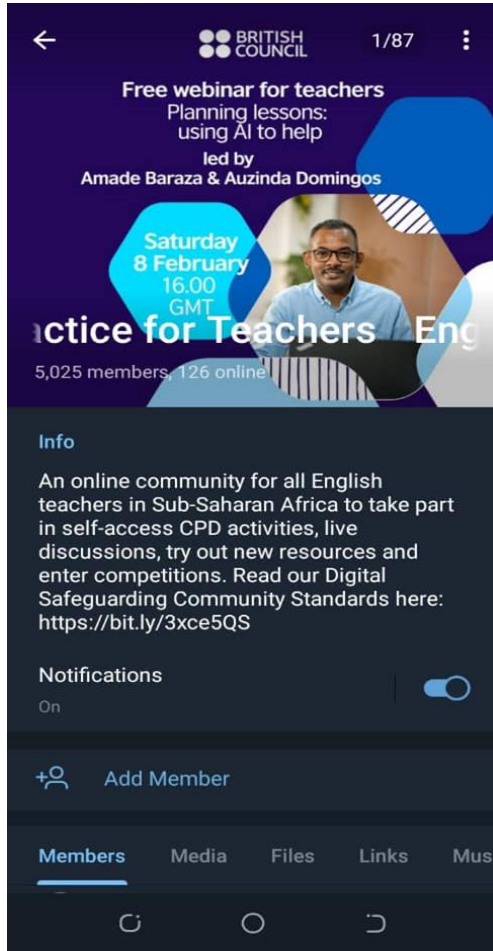
# How the group has developed

Over the years, the English Connects programme has grown to be active in many countries across Sub-Saharan Africa - Nigeria, Ethiopia, Senegal, Kenya, Sudan, Tanzania, Benin, Ghana, Mozambique and many others.

The active engagements on the Community of Practice group for teacher educators on WhatsApp and the Community of Practice group for teachers on Telegram.

As of March 2025, our community has grown to over 5,000 members from diverse countries around Sub Saharan Africa.

# Real-Time Engagements on the Telegram CoP



# Strategies for Sustainable Success

- **Diverse and Relevant Content**

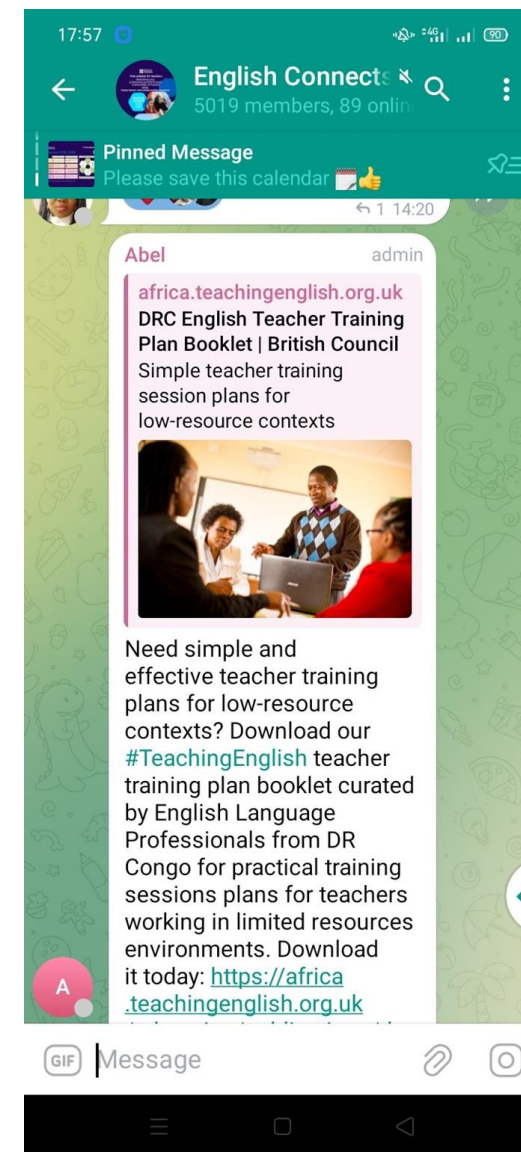
**Thematic Approach:** bimonthly themes to ensure a wide range of topics that cater to our members' interests.

- **Regular Communication**

**Announcements and Updates:** Keeping members informed about upcoming events, including invitations to webinars and online courses available on the TeachingEnglish and TeachingEnglish Africa websites

- **Engaging Activities:** Utilizing polls and quizzes to encourage interaction and gather feedback.

- **Support for the bi-weekly webinars:** pre-webinar poll / takeaway tips before post webinar discussion, sharing slides and excerpts



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## Strategies for Sustainable Success cont.

- **Practical, Hands-On Activities** - Providing useful tips and activities that members can apply in their teaching journey.
- **Encouraging Contributions** - Creating opportunities for all members to share their experiences and showcase their unique perspectives.
- **Networking Opportunities** - Facilitating connections among members from diverse backgrounds, enriching our collective experience.
- **Recognising active participants** - Introducing Members spotlight to motivate members to become more active and committed. (Examples of members on the spotlight so far are; Japhet, Mohammed, Fozia and Tesfaye ...as monthly spotlight examples.





# Members Spotlight

These are some very committed members who have distinguished themselves so far in English Connects Telegram CoP for Teachers through their active participation and volunteering to lead topics of discussion with other group members;



**Japhet  
Kwaku  
Gyagri**



**Fozia  
Temam**



**Yihunle  
Alemayehu**



**Mohammed  
Saif**



**Dr.  
Tefsaye  
Negash**



**Pierre  
Ndione**

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# Success stories

- **Community Impact:** Over 5,000 members are benefitting from our discussions and resources.
- **Course Participation:** Many members have enrolled in courses and received certification.
- **Webinar Engagement:** the average of about 100 members have learned about webinars through our channel, attended, and achieved certification.
- **Model for Others:** We serve as a model for Telegram CoP groups, including SEELPA, ELTAN and so on.
- **Diverse Perspectives:** We have brought together educators from various contexts, creating a platform for the exchange of valuable experiences.
- **Commitment to Inclusivity:** We prioritise inclusivity by welcoming teachers and teacher educators from diverse backgrounds and professional experiences.

# Traffic - British Council Evaluation

Total users for TeachingEnglish Africa website in SSA

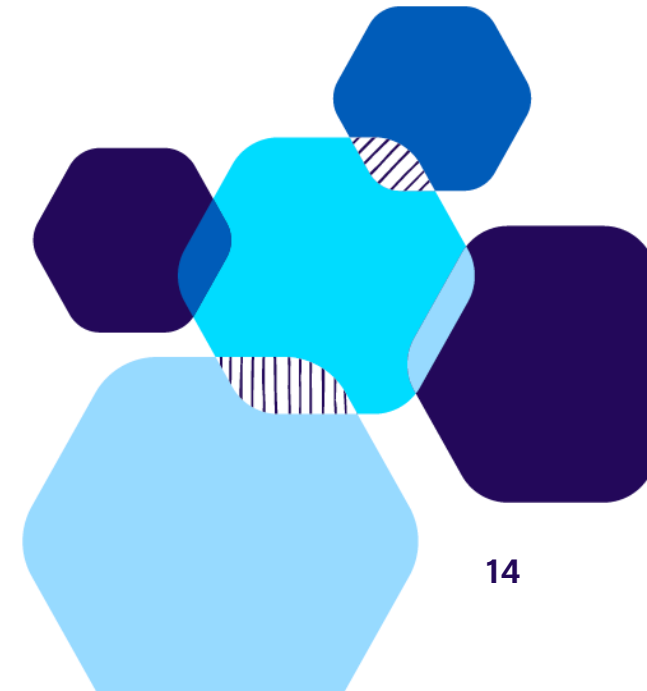
Year	Number of Users
2023-24	285,530
2024 - 25	<b>A ?</b>

Total members in WhatsApp teacher educators' group

Year	Number of Users
2023 - 24	693
2024 - 25	<b>B ?</b>

Total members in Telegram teachers' group

Year	Number of Users
2023 - 24	3,473
2024-25	<b>C ?</b>



# Traffic - British Council Evaluation

Total users for TeachingEnglish Africa website in SSA

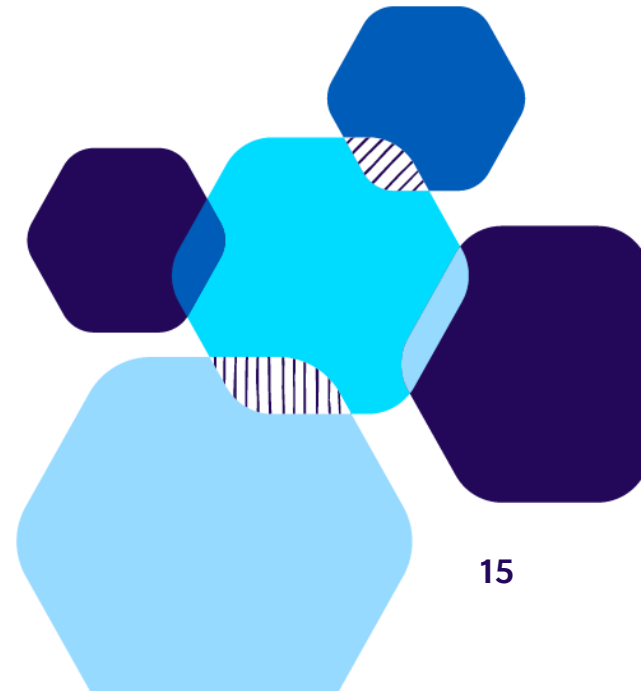
Year	Number of Users
2023-24	285,530
2024 - 25	<b>762,747</b>

Total members in WhatsApp teacher educators' group

Year	Number of Users
2023 - 24	693
2024 - 25	<b>1,028</b>

Total members in Telegram teachers' group

Year	Number of Users
2023 - 24	3,473
2024-25	<b>5,027</b>



# Benefits of the English Connects CoP

**Learning from Anywhere**  
Accessing materials & connecting with others no matter where you are.

**Community of 5,000+ Members**  
Connecting and collaborating with fellow educators.

**Educational Resources**  
Access articles, strategies, and best practices.

**Professional Development**  
Enrolling in courses and earn certifications.

**Exclusive Webinars**  
Attending informative sessions with experts.

**Networking Opportunities**  
Sharing experiences and insights with diverse peers.

**Real-Time Updates**  
Getting the latest news and announcements directly.

**Inclusive Environment**  
Join a welcoming space valuing all backgrounds.

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# Connect, Learn, and Grow Together in Our Community of Practice!

- **Experienced Teacher?** Embrace your professional responsibility! Mentor and inspire novice teachers right here.
- **Novice Teacher?** Welcome to the profession! Meet the experts in English Language Teaching (ELT) and gain insights to shape your journey.
- **Different Time Zone?** No problem! Scroll back, read, and watch recorded discussions at your convenience. Share your perspective—your voice matters!

**Let's make the most of this vibrant Community of Practice and collaborate for collective growth!**

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# How to get the most from the Community

1. Visit the group every day.
2. Take advantage of resources and training courses shared.
3. Register for webinars as soon as it is posted and be sure to attend.
4. Don't miss the every Friday group discussion for about hour.
5. Ask questions and participate actively in ongoing discussions.

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# Teaser

**“ Alone we can do so little;  
together we can do so much”**  
Helen Keller

**“If you want to go fast, go  
alone. If you want to go far,  
go together.”**  
— African Proverb

**What do these famous sayings mean in the context of  
community of Practice?**



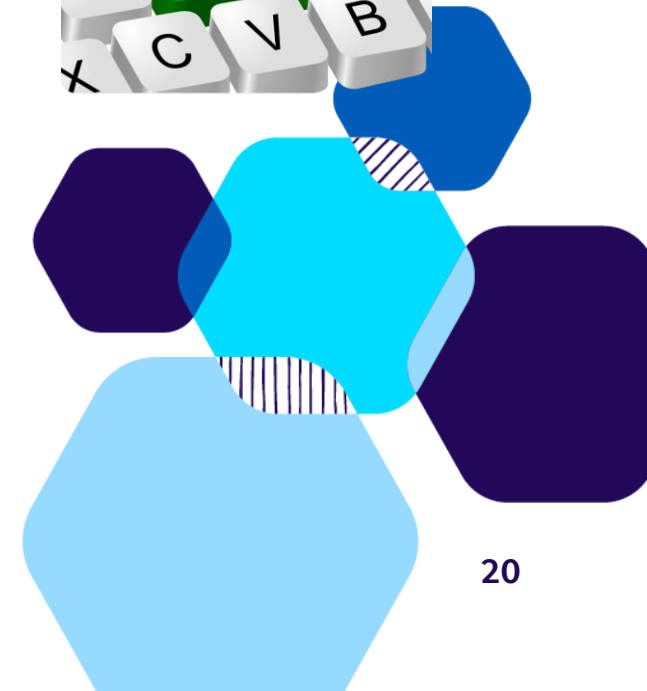
# Challenges Faced vs. Solutions

Match the most appropriate options on the left to the right



1. **Low/ Passive engagements**
2. **Spamming**
3. **Time Zone Differences**
4. **Sustaining long-term interest**
5. **Content overload or irrelevance (sometimes)**

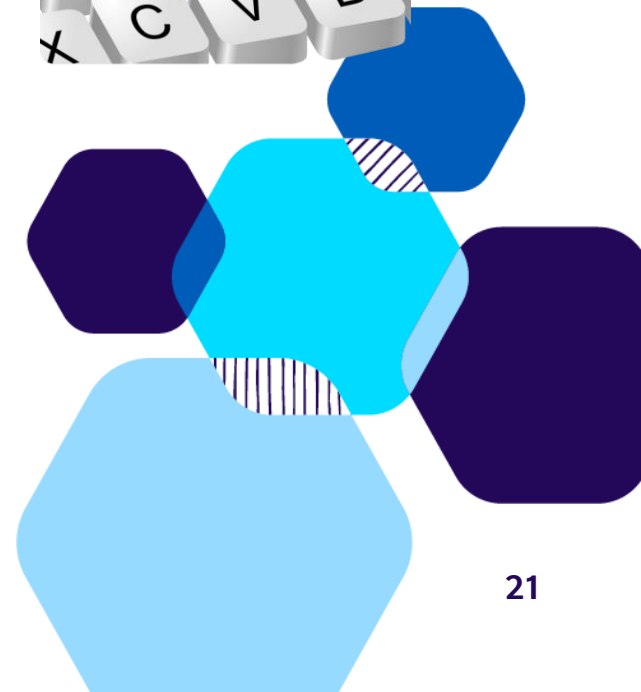
- A. **De-centring weekly facilitation of discussion**
- B. **Using moderators to curate and maintain quality content and providing guidelines for lead discussants**
- C. **Constant moderation of posts**
- D. **Create time to go over what you have missed**
- E. **Encourage peer collaboration**



# Challenges Faced vs. Solutions



- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| 1. <b>Low/ Passive engagements</b>                    | → | A. De-centring weekly facilitation of discussion   |
| 2. <b>Spamming</b>                                    | → | B. Using moderators to curate and maintain quality content and providing guidelines for lead discussants |
| 3. <b>Time Zone Differences</b>                       | → | C. Constant moderation of posts  |
| 4. <b>Sustaining long-term interest</b>               | → | D. Create time to go over what you have missed   |
| 5. <b>Content overload or irrelevance (sometimes)</b> | → | E. Encourage peer collaboration  |



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## Take-away tips

- 1. Embrace Technological Opportunities:** Leverage technology to transcend time and space, enhancing learning experiences.
- 2. Harness the Power of Synergy:** Collaborate and share knowledge; collective efforts yield greater results than individual ones.
- 3. Learn from Diverse Realities:** Overcome English language teaching challenges by drawing insights from various contexts and experiences.
- 4. Commit to Lifelong Learning:** Acknowledge that learning is a continual journey—join in with enthusiasm!
- 5. Strive for Excellence:** As language professionals, we must embrace change and keep updated with innovative teaching methods.

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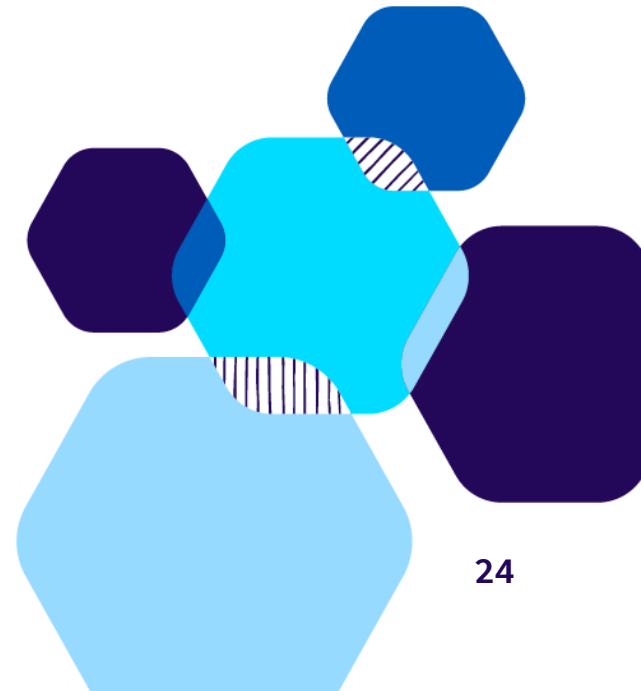
# Teaser

How excited are you about participating in this community? Use an Emoji that best expresses your feelings about this community.

# Together, We can!

“There is no power for change greater than a community discovering what it cares about.”

— Margaret Wheatley



**Thank you.  
Any questions?**

