



Transcript from the Freelance Friday #EFAChat, February 21, 2014

Topic: Finding and Managing ESL Clients

- [EFA International @efafreelancers](#) Welcome to our February Freelance Friday! Use hashtag [#EFAChat](#) to be included in today's conversation.
- [EFA International @efafreelancers](#) Today's #EFAChat is being moderated by Lucy Spencer, an EFA member and online proofreader from Northwest Indiana.
- [EFA International @efafreelancers](#) This will answer questions about finding and working with ESL clients. Q1 is question 1; reply with A1 for answer 1, etc.
- [EFA International @efafreelancers](#) In this [#EFAChat](#), ESL is an adjective meaning "related to material written by those whose first language is not English."
- [EFA International @efafreelancers](#) Q1: Let's introduce ourselves. Where are you from, and what do you do?
- [K. O'Moore-Klopf @kokedit](#) Q1: Hi, all. I'm a medical editor from Long Island (NY), and a large portion of my clients are ESL physician-authors.
- [Jennifer Holmes @jenmededit](#) A1: Joining #EFAChat. My name is Jennifer Holmes and I am a freelance medical editor with many ESL clients.
- [EFA International @efafreelancers](#) Hi, Katharine! Glad you could make it.
- [James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A1: I'm a full-time freelance copy editor, proofreader & writer from northern NJ. Mostly academic & nonfiction trade/business.
- [EFA International @efafreelancers](#) Hi Jennifer! Glad you could join us.
- [Liz Hunter @humbieditorial](#) [@EFAFreelancers](#) Liz, new editor/proofreader from Scotland. Interested in best way in to ESL work. I have some university contacts.
- [Laura Dangerfield @re_pro123](#) Q1: Hello, I'm a copyeditor and proofreader in CA. I'm a new freelancer and interested in working with ESL clients.
- [James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A1: I've also worked with a number of ESL clients who came to me for dissertation copyediting.
- [EFA International @efafreelancers](#) Hi James! Glad you could join us.

[Adrienne Montgomerie](#) @scieditorIM A1: F/T FL specializing in science textbooks. I teach e-editing for the EFA & write for Copyediting.com. Dipping in & out of #EFAChat.

[EFA International](#) @efafreelancers Hello everyone!

[Eve Levavi Feinstein](#) @evefeinstein Q1: I'm in Palo Alto, CA. Background mainly in academic editing. Work with ESL clients but want to target more directly.

[Mark Allen](#) @editormark @EFAFreelancers Mark Allen, Columbus Ohio. Freelancer, mostly as an in-house contractor for two clients.

[EFA International](#) @efafreelancers Q2: Do you specialize in ESL editing, is it on your list of many services, or are you still thinking about offering ESL editing?

[Tara Agacayak](#) @taraagacayak A1: Hi, I'm joining from Istanbul. I'm exploring my next career move and considering freelance copyediting.

[Gillian McGarvey](#) @gmcgarv Joining #EFAChat. A1: I'm a freelance editor with a tech background. I've worked with several ESL clients. My business is @WheelhouseEdits.

[James M. Fraleigh](#) @jamesfraleigh A1 @humbieditorial University contacts are where I actually picked up my ESL dissertation-editing clients!

[James M. Fraleigh](#) @jamesfraleigh A2 It's on my list of services but not as something I've specif. developed. But it's a good value-add now that I've had a few.

[K. O'Moore-Klopf](#) @kokedit MT @jamesfraleigh A1 University contacts are where I picked up my ESL dissertation-editing clients! // Yes, unis are a good source.

[EFA International](#) @efafreelancers Q3: How did you find your first ESL client?

[Carole Edits](#) @cacudnik To my followers: For the next hour, I'll be taking part in the #EFAChat. Join me if you want.

[Mark Allen](#) @editormark @EFAFreelancers A2: I do some academic editing for ESL authors through university connections.

[James M. Fraleigh](#) @jamesfraleigh A1 @KOKEdit My % of referrals is the highest among the diss. edit jobs; former clients have passed my info on to fellow students.

- [K. O'Moore-Klopf @kokedit](#) A3: When I worked in-house for med publishers, I was always given ESL mss. Those authors followed me when I went solo.
- [Michael S. Altus @michael_altus](#) A1 Michael Altus, freelance medical writer-editor in Baltimore MD who often works with ESL authors to edit their manuscripts.
- [K. O'Moore-Klopf @kokedit](#) Yes, [@jamesfraleigh](#), word of mouth is another excellent source of clients.
- [Gillian McGarvey @gmcgarv](#) A2 My biggest ESL client found my [@EFAFreelancers](#) profile & contacted me. They were interested in my tech background as well.
- [James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) Q3 A former colleague w/ a full plate asked if anyone could take on a job w/ a gent who happened to be ESL. So not by design.
- [Eve Levavi Feinstein @evefeinstein](#) Q3: All through personal contacts (not very helpful, I know).
- [Michael S. Altus @michael_altus](#) Q2Q3 I don't specialize in ESL. I find some by referrals from med journal editors.
- [Liz Hunter @humbieditorial](#) [@jamesfraleigh](#) Did you contact students, go through staff you knew, contact particular departments?
- [Jennifer Holmes @jenmededit](#) A3: I got my first ESL clients through a US journal for which I had done freelance editing.
- [K. O'Moore-Klopf @kokedit](#) Q3: Referrals from colleagues are great. Tell all colleagues what you do. [@Michael_Altus](#) & I have referred clients to each other.
- [James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A3 My 2nd ESL client was thru a client I acquired through the [@EFAFreelancers](#) list; she was their diss. adviser & suggested me.
- [EFA International @efafreelancers](#) [@EveFeinstein](#) Networking is a great way to find new clients!
- [K. O'Moore-Klopf @kokedit](#) A3: When I get to know fellow med eds through Twitter & Facebook & e-mail lists, they go on my list of colleagues to refer.
- [Jennifer Holmes @jenmededit](#) The [#1](#) way I get new ESL clients is to ask my current client to refer me to a colleague when I return the edited manuscript.
- [EFA International @efafreelancers](#) Q4: Where are your favorite places to find ESL clients?
- [James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) [@humbieditorial](#) It was both: referrals thru students and then thru a prof I was working for as a copy editor.

[James M. Fraleigh](#) @jamesfraleigh [@humbieditorial](#) But contacting specific departments might be a good way to ensure yr editing subject matter you click with.

[Mark Allen](#) @editormark I forget to do this. MT [@JenMededit](#): The #1 way I get ... clients is to ask my current client to refer me

[Gillian McGarvey](#) @gmcgarv My ESL clients have been business/tech--my background. Perhaps ESL is peripheral? Is content specialty more important?

[Jennifer Holmes](#) @jenmededit I say “I am accepting new clients. I would greatly appreciate your sharing my name and contact information with your colleagues.”

[K. O'Moore-Klopf](#) @kokedit A4: Hang out where ESL authors hang out—universities, blogs on topics that you edit, etc.

[James M. Fraleigh](#) @jamesfraleigh A3 [@KOKEdit](#) Yes! I need to add my diss. editing to my LinkedIn and note my ESL experience.

[Liz Hunter](#) @humbieditorial [@jamesfraleigh](#) Thank you - very helpful.

[EFA International](#) @efafreelancers If you're just joining the [#EFAChat](#), welcome! Jump in at any time!

[James M. Fraleigh](#) @jamesfraleigh [@EditorMark](#) So do I. And some of my academic/trade production editors hoard their fave freelancers. Share me far & wide!

[K. O'Moore-Klopf](#) @kokedit MT [@JenMededit](#) I say “I would ... appreciate your sharing my name & contact infor with your colleagues.” // I do this too.

[Stephanie Watt](#) @wattsteph [@KOKedit](#) A4: What do you mean by hanging out at universities? Attending scholarly conferences?

[Eve Levavi Feinstein](#) @evefeinstein [@gmcgarv](#) I agree that content matters more.

[K. O'Moore-Klopf](#) @kokedit [@wattsteph](#) I mean posting notices on uni web sites that you offer ESL editing services. Ask uni writing centers for referrals.

[Gillian McGarvey](#) @gmcgarv [@jamesfraleigh](#) [@EditorMark](#) I forget, too. Right now I'm afraid to having too much on plate which might risk missed deadline.

[Carole Edits](#) @cacudnik [@EFAFreelancers](#) A3. My Second life avatar networks as an editor. I've gained two indie author clients from Europe via SL.

[K. O'Moore-Klopf](#) @kokedit [@wattsteph](#) Though if you can attend scholarly conferences, do it! And bring your biz cards.

[EFA International](#) @efafreelancers Referrals seem to be the big winner here for finding new ESL clients! Network, network, network.

[James M. Fraleigh](#) @jamesfraleigh [@gmcgarv](#) [@EditorMark](#) Ah, the eternal struggle. Shake the tree and risk getting buried by apples!

[Gillian McGarvey](#) @gmcgarv What do others here think about this? RT [@EveFeinstein](#): [@gmcgarv](#) I agree that content matters more.

[Mark Allen](#) @editormark [@gmcgarv](#) [@jamesfraleigh](#) Yes, same here. I have to force myself to remember I might be twiddling my thumbs in two months.

[Ann Marie Gamble](#) @amgamble My ESL work has been with comparative literature scholars--dissertations & first books--and all referral. So yes to networking!

[Stephanie Watt](#) @wattsteph [@kokedit](#) Excellent advice. I haven't approached uni. writing centres yet.

[Eve Levavi Feinstein](#) @evefeinstein [@KOKEdit](#) Whom do you typically contact to post to university websites, etc.?

[K. O'Moore-Klopf](#) @kokedit [@wattsteph](#) Uni writing centers often have more students who need help than they can handle.

[EFA International](#) @efafreelancers Q5: Do you offer add-on services as a translator or a writing coach in addition to ESL editing?

[K. O'Moore-Klopf](#) @kokedit [@EveFeinstein](#) I look for contact info on student-oriented pages on uni websites.

[Gillian McGarvey](#) @gmcgarv Q5: Yes, I was hired to edit but also specifically to coach an ESL client in American English, which is really fun.

[EFA International](#) @efafreelancers Q5: Maybe the question is, do you think it's helpful to offer add-on services as a translator or a writing coach?

[Michael S. Altus](#) @michael_altus Go to AMWA FREIDA (qub.me/gDWGTZ) for links to med shl depts.

[James M. Fraleigh](#) @jamesfraleigh Q5 Haven't offered either of them specifically as I've no tutoring exp, but I can guide toward AmE idiom while editing.

[Michael S. Altus](#) @michael_altus Q5 No coach. Just get manuscript revised to send for resubmission for publication in med journal.

[Mark Allen](#) @editormark [@gmcgarv](#) I've never marketed myself as a specialist. But that means I get a variety of clients. So it's a trade-off. [@EveFeinstein](#)

[Eve Levavi Feinstein](#) @evefeinstein Q5: Yes. Coaching services are especially good for ESL students.

[K. O'Moore-Klopf](#) @kokedit A3: Approach professional groups (e.g., science groups @ universities) & offer to speak gratis @ meetings on editing and writing.

[Michael S. Altus](#) @michael_altus Q5: What do you mean by coaching?

[Laura Dangerfield](#) @re_pro123 [.@gmcgarv](#) That sounds interesting, and fun to me too.

[EFA International](#) @efafreelancers [@Michael Altus](#) Coaching in this case means teaching the client why what they wrote was grammatically incorrect.

[Michael S. Altus](#) @michael_altus Sorry, that's AMA Freida.

[Stephanie Watt](#) @wattsteph Q5: I don't officially. But I do have "pre-editing" discussions with clients. We get to the heart of what they want to say.

[James M. Fraleigh](#) @jamesfraleigh A5 It's more "spot coaching" w/ me: if I edit heavily, I'll explain why it will help their ideas & the readers' comprehension.

[EFA International](#) @efafreelancers Great blog post about finding ESL clients from [@KOKEdit: ow.ly/tSbf2](#)

[Jennifer Holmes](#) @jenmededit A5: I try to do more explaining of my changes to my ESL authors. Helps with the next manuscript from same author. [#coaching](#)

[James M. Fraleigh](#) @jamesfraleigh [@wattsteph](#) That sort of pre-game discussion sounds good for all clients, ESL or not!

[CHICAGO STYLE HULK](#) @manualofhulk [@gmcgarv](#) HULK CURIOUS--WHAT ASPECTS OF AMERICAN ENGLISH DID COACHING FOCUS ON? (SPELLINGS? IDIOMS?)

[Ann Marie Gamble](#) @amgamble [@EFAFreelancers](#) [@Michael Altus](#) Coaching in the sense of "You can do it!" is a helpful stance for every dissertation client. ;)

[Stephanie Watt](#) @wattsteph [@jamesfraleigh](#) For sure. A lot of people have a hard time getting on paper or screen what's in their head.

[Eve Levavi Feinstein](#) @evefeinstein A5: Love tutoring/coaching. Teach a man to fish, etc.

[Stephanie Watt](#) @wattsteph Dear followers: I'm taking part in an [#EFAChat](#) until 4pm. Join me or mute me.

[James M. Fraleigh](#) @jamesfraleigh [@amgamble](#) [@EFAFreelancers](#) [@Michael Altus](#) Super-agree. Juggling education & even a part-time job's tough even w/o language barrier.

[EFA International](#) @efafreelancers [@amgamble](#) Yes! Encouragement is definitely part of being a writing coach.

[EFA International](#) @efafreelancers Q6: What are some strategies for working with ESL clients?

[Carole Edits](#) @cacudnik [@MANUALOFHULK](#) I try to help them understand basics of sentence construction & grammar. Some ESL clients have a hard time w/ tenses.

[Gillian McGarvey](#) @gmcgarv [@MANUALOFHULK](#) Mostly incorrect (but cute) phrasing, awkward wording. They tend to use very formal English, too formal.

[Stephanie Watt](#) @wattsteph [@jamesfraleigh](#) But it's more like developmental editing.

[K. O'Moore-Klopf](#) @kokedit A6: Always communicate as simply & clearly as possible. Idioms may not cross language barrier.

[K. O'Moore-Klopf](#) @kokedit A6: Remember that your experience of publishing world isn't same as author's, so explain & don't use jargon.

[K. O'Moore-Klopf](#) @kokedit A6: Make sure that your respect for the author's hard work comes through in every communication with the author.

[K. O'Moore-Klopf](#) @kokedit A6: When you uncover patchwriting or nonsourced direct quotes in ms., explain the problem unemotionally & w/o judgment.

[EFA International](#) @efafreelancers [@KOKEdit](#) Leaving the jargon out of your conversation with ESL clients can be difficult, but worth it.

[K. O'Moore-Klopf](#) @kokedit Yes, [@EFAFreelancers](#). We editors really have to be aware of how effective our communication actually is.

[Michael S. Altus](#) @michael altus [@EFAFreelancers](#) [@KOKEdit](#): Please give example of jargon.

[James M. Fraleigh](#) @jamesfraleigh A6 More for the editor than the client: Read as much of the text as you can before quoting a price so your hourly rate is sound.

- [K. O'Moore-Klopf @kokedit](#) [@Michael Altus](#) I avoid using publishing jargon w/ authors, such as "callout" and "folio."
- [EFA International @efafreelancers](#) Q7: What are some of the most common problems associated with ESL work? (I vote for prepositions! ~ Lucy)
- [Ann Marie Gamble @amgamble](#) [@KOKEdit](#) Hear, hear. Some gesture of appreciating the material helps motivate the next round of rewrites.
- [Liz Hunter @humbieditorial](#) [@cacudnik](#) How do you avoid crossing the line re academic standards? Writing/improving rather than correcting what's there?
- [James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A6 If you suddenly have to untangle more sentences, check more sources, etc., you don't want to slow to a crawl w/o being covered.
- [K. O'Moore-Klopf @kokedit](#) A7: The dropping of articles (a, an, the).
- [Michael S. Altus @michael_altus](#) Q7: Incorrect word usage. Ask me on EFF list and I can look up some.
- [K. O'Moore-Klopf @kokedit](#) [@humbieditorial](#) Get approval & guidelines from author's university or institution.
- [James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A7 Use of Google or other translator services to change text to English, resulting in overly stiff/formal/byzantine diction.
- [CHICAGO STYLE HULK @manualofhulk](#) [@cacudnik](#) AH, THAT MAKE SENSE. AS FOR TENSES, PERHAPS SOMEONE USE PRESENT TENSE BUT PAST TENSE BETTER FIT—THAT KIND OF THING?
- [Mark Allen @editormark](#) [@Michael Altus](#) I agree. Word usage. Odd syntax. Sentences that can require six readings.
- [Michael S. Altus @michael_altus](#) Q7: Writing queries takes huge time.
- [Stephanie Watt @wattsteph](#) [@KOKEdit](#) Yes, and plagiarism norms aren't universal!
- [K. O'Moore-Klopf @kokedit](#) [@amgamble](#) Yes, I find that a few kind words to my authors go a very long way. I congratulate them when their work is published.
- [Eve Levavi Feinstein @evefeinstein](#) A6: When applicable, I tell clients that I can be a heavy editor & it's not a reflection of their English.
- [Gillian McGarvey @gmcgarv](#) I find it's extremely helpful to edit and then have a Skype meeting with ESL client to go over changes/coach them.

[Michael S. Altus @michael_altus](#) @[EveFeinstein](#) Thank you Eva. I tell them that it takes time because I am thorough, but when we are done, you will be proud of it!

[K. O'Moore-Klopf @kokedit](#) @[EveFeinstein](#) I tell some of my authors that their English is better than my [Japanese, Chinese, Korean, etc.].

[Eve Levavi Feinstein @evefeinstein](#) @[KOKEdit](#) Avoiding publishing jargon is equally applicable for non-ESL clients, IMO

[K. O'Moore-Klopf @kokedit](#) RT @[EveFeinstein](#) .@[KOKEdit](#) Avoiding publishing jargon is equally applicable for non-ESL clients, IMO //Yes!

[Gillian McGarvey @gmcgarv](#) Yes, don't be afraid to be charming (genuinely so, affectionately so) with clients. Don't be shy. Friendliness is good!

[Stephanie Watt @wattsteph](#) A6: Don't drown your client in suggested rewrites/edits. Offer two. That's it.

[EFA International @efafreelancers](#) @[gmcgarv](#) Does the language barrier get in the way of Skyping? Some write AmE better than they speak, and vice versa.

[K. O'Moore-Klopf @kokedit](#) A6: Write queries from the standpoint that it's you who isn't understanding the sentence & you need author's help.

[Jennifer Holmes @jenmededit](#) A7: The order of phrases in a sentence. Not starting the sentence with the subject (it is often last).

[Eve Levavi Feinstein @evefeinstein](#) A7: Depends on author's native language. But I've found that whether or not I know the language doesn't matter much.

[Gillian McGarvey @gmcgarv](#) A6 My ESL clients are much more open/personal than Americans are in business relationships. Be sensitive to their norms and adapt.

[Stephanie Watt @wattsteph](#) @[gmcgarv](#) Is that service always included in your rate, or is it an add-on that a client can request at any point in the contract?

[Carole Edits @cacudnik](#) @[MANUALOFHULK](#) @[EFAFreelancers](#) Yes, that's the type of tense problems I encounter. I'm an INFJ; it's rewarding to help others :-)

[Michael S. Altus @michael_altus](#) Q7: Clarity, clarity, clarity. But's that's with everything else. No matter if ESL.

[K. O'Moore-Klopf](#) @kokedit MT @[gmcgarv](#) A6 My ESL clients are much more open than Americans are in biz relationships. Be sensitive to their norms & adapt.

[James M. Fraleigh](#) @jamesfraleigh A6 If they live outside your country, try to share awareness of any nat'l holidays you both must navigate around.

[K. O'Moore-Klopf](#) @kokedit @[jamesfraleigh](#) I've found that my international authors feel appreciated if I e-mail them good wishes on their nat'l holidays.

[EFA International](#) @efafreelancers Q8: Have you ever changed your work hours to accommodate overseas clients?

[Gillian McGarvey](#) @gmcgarv @[EFAFreelancers](#) Hm, yes that can be a factor. I have to remember to speak more slowly. Still useful for sense of connection.

[CHICAGO STYLE HULK](#) @manualofhulk @[gmcgarv](#) AND WITH CORPORATE CLIENTS, MANY USE FORMAL ENGLISH EVEN IF ENGLISH FIRST LANGUAGE! ANY GO-TO BOOKS ON FIXING FORMALITY?

[K. O'Moore-Klopf](#) @kokedit A8: Yes, I often work late at night so that email back-and-forth w/ international clients doesn't go on for days and days.

[Gillian McGarvey](#) @gmcgarv @[wattsteph](#) This particular client pays hourly; it's an ongoing relationship so the Skypes just get added to monthly bill.

[Jennifer Holmes](#) @jenmededit Ditto. Excellent advice. MT @[KOKEdit](#): A6: Write queries from the standpoint that it's you who isn't understanding the sentence...

[Michael S. Altus](#) @michael_altus @[wattsteph](#) "A6: Don't drown your client in suggested rewrites/edits." Most of what I do it total rewrite for clarity and org.

[EFA International](#) @efafreelancers For listeners and those who missed the chat, a full transcript of this [#EFAChat](#) will be available on the EFA website soon.

[Gillian McGarvey](#) @gmcgarv A8: I work any (but not all) hours, so yes.

[Eve Levavi Feinstein](#) @evefeinstein A8: Yes, but I think the client has to respect the time difference, too.

[Gillian McGarvey](#) @gmcgarv @[EveFeinstein](#) Good point! I agree.

[EFA International](#) @efafreelancers @[EveFeinstein](#) Good point. Time zone issues are everyone's problem. Meeting in the middle is a good thing.

[Stephanie Watt](#) @wattsteph @[Michael_Altus](#) A6. Do you offer only 1 suggestion for each sentence/parag? How do you maintain the line between author/editor?

[Michael S. Altus](#) @michael_altus @[EFAFreelancers](#) @[EveFeinstein](#): About all of my work is through email, so time difference is not a big concern.

[EFA International](#) @efafreelancers Q9: Do you have any advice for someone who wants to transition into ESL editing?

[K. O'Moore-Klopf](#) @kokedit A9: Make sure you have patience & good manuscript-side manner. Know that this type of editing goes slowly—no zooming.

[Michael S. Altus](#) @michael_altus @[wattsteph](#): I insert queries with yellow highlighting. under text that I am querying about. Below the query I put Reply in red.

[Gillian McGarvey](#) @gmcgarv @[wattsteph](#) @[Michael_Altus](#) I have struggled with this issue even with native English speakers!

[Michael S. Altus](#) @michael_altus @[wattsteph](#): I make as many queries as necessary. I believe that my record is 3 queries for the same sentence.

[EFA International](#) @efafreelancers @[KOKEdit](#) "Manuscript-side manner" - good one! Patience and kindness are key when working with someone's precious magnum opus.

[Michael S. Altus](#) @michael_altus @[gmcgarv](#) @[wattsteph](#): Yes, yes, YES! I struggle too like you. With ESL, word usage and idiom are difficult, but clarity is intl.

[Gillian McGarvey](#) @gmcgarv @[wattsteph](#) @[Michael_Altus](#) For ms that need very heavy edit, establish expectations up front. My ESL client *wants* me to rewrite.

[Stephanie Watt](#) @wattsteph A9 If you've never taken a lang. course, do it! You'll have more empathy for the ESL writer + a fresh perspective on English!

[EFA International](#) @efafreelancers Interesting article about working with ESL clients from Geoff Hart: ow.ly/tSfc8

[EFA International](#) @efafreelancers We're almost done with today's [#EFAChat](#), but please feel free to continue the conversation!

[EFA International](#) @efafreelancers It's time to end today's [#EFAChat](#). The written transcript will end here. Thanks for a great discussion! See you next time.