

## **ABOUT TESOL**

English is the most widely learned second language in the world. Many children, youth and adults worldwide are required to learn at least some English, and a working knowledge of English is required in many fields and occupations. The demand for teachers with ESL/EFL (English as a Second Language/English as a Foreign Language) training is already large and still growing.

### **What is the difference between TESOL, TEFL and TESL?**

TESOL stands for Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages and courses of this nature seek to provide for the needs of all students.

TEFL stands for Teaching English as a Foreign Language and refers to teaching English in a country where English is not widely used, such as China, Brazil or Greece.

TESL stands for Teaching English as a Second Language and refers to teaching English in an English-speaking environment such as the UK, or in a country where English is very widely used such as India or Zambia.

In practice, there is no difference. Teachers with any one of these qualifications will be able to find teaching posts around the world. Employers are unconcerned about the certificate title as long as the certificate has been accredited by a professional body.

**ESL** (English as a second language), **ESOL** (English for speakers of other languages) and **EFL** (English as a foreign language) all refer to the use or study of English by speakers of other languages. The precise usage, including the different use of the terms ESL and ESOL in different countries, is described below. These terms are most commonly used in relation to teaching and learning English, but they may also be used in relation to demographic information.

**ELT** (English language teaching) is a widely-used teacher-centered term, as in the English language teaching divisions of large publishing houses, ELT training, etc. The abbreviations **TESL** (teaching English as a second language), **TESOL** (teaching English for speakers of other languages) and **TEFL** (teaching English as a foreign language) are all also used.

Other terms used in this field include **EAL** (English as an additional language), **ESD** (English as a second dialect), **EIL** (English as an international language), **ELF** (English as a lingua franca), **ESP** (English for special purposes, or English for specific purposes),

**EAP** (English for academic purposes). Terms that refer to those who are learning or acquiring English are **ELL** (English language learner). A somewhat similar term, **LEP** (limited English proficiency), and **LOTE** (language other than English). LEP was created in 1975 by the Lau Remedies following a decision of the US Supreme Court. ELL was created by Charlene Rivera in an effort to label learners positively, rather than ascribing a deficiency to them. LOTE is a parallel term used in Canada, Australia, and New Zealand.

### ***Terminology and types***

The many acronyms used in the field of English teaching and learning may be confusing. English is a language with great reach and influence; it is taught all over the world under many different circumstances. In English-speaking countries, English language teaching has essentially evolved in two broad directions: instruction for people who intend to stay in the country and those who don't. These divisions have grown firmer as the instructors of these two "industries" have used different terminology, followed distinct training qualifications, formed separate professional associations, and so on. Crucially, these two arms have very different funding structures, public in the former and private in the latter, and to some extent this influences the way schools are established and classes are held. Matters are further complicated by the fact that the United States and the United Kingdom, both major engines of the language, describe these categories in different terms: as many eloquent users of the language have observed, "England and America are two countries divided by a common language." (Attributed to Winston Churchill, George Bernard Shaw, and Oscar Wilde.) The following technical definitions may therefore have their currency contested.

### **English outside English-speaking countries**

*EFL*, English as a foreign language, indicates the use of English in a non-English-speaking region. Study can occur either in the student's home country, as part of the normal school curriculum or otherwise, or, for the more privileged minority, in an Anglophone country which they visit as a sort of educational tourist, particularly immediately before or after graduating from university. *TEFL* is the teaching of English as a foreign language; note that this sort of instruction can take place in any country, English-speaking or not. Typically, EFL is learned either to pass exams as a necessary

part of one's education, or for career progression while working for an organization or business with an international focus. EFL may be part of the state school curriculum in countries where English has no special status (what linguist Braj Kachru calls the "expanding circle countries"); it may also be supplemented by lessons paid for privately. Teachers of EFL generally assume that students are literate in their mother tongue.

### **English within English-speaking countries**

The other broad grouping is the use of English within the Anglo sphere. In what theorist Braj Kachru calls "the inner circle", i.e. countries such as the United Kingdom and the United States, this use of English is generally by refugees, immigrants and their children. It also includes the use of English in "outer circle" countries, often former British colonies, where English is an official language even if it is not spoken as a mother tongue by the majority of the population.

In the US, Canada and Australia, this use of English is called *ESL* (English as a second language). This term has been criticized on the grounds that many learners already speak more than one language. A counter-argument says that the word "a" in the phrase "a second language" means there is no presumption that English is *the* second acquired language (see also *Second language*). *TESL* is the teaching of English as a second language.

In the UK, Ireland and New Zealand, the term *ESL* has been replaced by *ESOL* (English for speakers of other languages). In these countries *TESOL* (teaching English to speakers of other languages) is normally used to refer to teaching English only to this group. In the UK, the term *EAL* (English as an additional language), rather than *ESOL*, is usually used when talking about primary and secondary schools.<sup>[1]</sup> In the United States, the term *English language learner* (*ELL*) is used by governments and school systems. It differs from the other terms above because it refers to learners rather than the language. Typically, this sort of English (called *ESL* in the United States, Canada, and Australia, *ESOL* in the United Kingdom, Ireland and New Zealand) is learned to function in the new host country, e.g. within the school system (if a child), to find and hold down a job (if an adult), to perform the necessities of daily life. The teaching of it does not presuppose literacy in the mother tongue. It is usually paid for by the host government to help newcomers settle into their adopted country, sometimes as part of an explicit citizenship program. It is technically possible for *ESL* to be taught not in the host country, but in, for

example, a refugee camp, as part of a pre-departure program sponsored by the government soon to receive new potential citizens. In practice, however, this is extremely rare.

Particularly in Canada and Australia, the term *ESD* (English as a second dialect) is used alongside ESL, usually in reference to programs for Canadian First Nations people or indigenous Australians, respectively.<sup>[2]</sup> It refers to the use of standard English, which may need to be explicitly taught, by speakers of a creole or non-standard variety. It is often grouped with ESL as *ESL/ESD*.

### **Umbrella terms**

All these ways of teaching English can be bundled together into an umbrella term. Unfortunately, all the English teachers in the world cannot agree on just one. The term *TESOL* (teaching English to speakers of other languages) is used in American English to include both TEFL and TESL. British English uses *ELT* (English language teaching), because TESOL has a different, more specific meaning; see above.

### **Which variety to teach**

It is worth noting that ESL and EFL programs also differ in the variety of English which is taught; "English" is a term that can refer to various dialects, including British English, American English, and others. Obviously, those studying English in order to fit into their new country will learn the variety spoken there. However, for those who do not intend to change countries, the question arises of which sort of English to learn. If they are going abroad for a short time to study English, they need to choose which country. For those staying at home, the choice may be made for them in that private language schools or the state school system may only offer one model. Students studying EFL in Hong Kong, for example, are more likely to learn British English, whereas students in the Philippines are more likely to learn American English.

For this reason, many teachers now emphasize teaching English as an international language (EIL), also known as English as a lingua franca (ELF). Linguists are charting the development of international English, a term with contradictory and confusing meanings, one of which refer to a decontextualized variant of the language, independent

of the culture and associated references of any particular country, useful when, for example, a Saudi does business with someone from China or Albania.

### **Systems of simplified English**

For international communication several models of "simplified English" have been suggested:

- Basic English, developed by Charles Kay Ogden (and later also I. A. Richards) in the 1930s; a recent revival has been initiated by Bill Templer
- Threshold Level English, developed by van Ek and Alexander
- Globish, developed by Jean-Paul Nerrière
- Basic Global English, developed by Joachim Grzega

Furthermore, Randolph Quirk and Gabriele Stein thought about a Nuclear English, which, however, has never been fully developed

#### ***Exercise 1***

***What are the systems of simplified English?***

### ***Difficulties for learners***

Language teaching practice often assumes that most of the difficulties that learners face in the study of English are a consequence of the degree to which their native language differs from English (a contrastive analysis approach). A native speaker of Chinese, for example, may face many more difficulties than a native speaker of German, because German is closely related to English, whereas Chinese is not. This may be true for anyone of any mother tongue (also called first language, normally abbreviated L1) setting out to learn any other language (called a target language, second language or

L2). See also second language acquisition (SLA) for mixed evidence from linguistic research.

Language learners often produce errors of syntax and pronunciation thought to result from the influence of their L1, such as mapping its grammatical patterns inappropriately onto the L2, pronouncing certain sounds incorrectly or with difficulty, and confusing items of vocabulary known as false friends. This is known as L1 transfer or "language interference". However, these transfer effects are typically stronger for beginners' language production, and SLA research has highlighted many errors which cannot be attributed to the L1, as they are attested in learners of many language backgrounds (for example, failure to apply 3rd person present singular -s to verbs, as in 'he make').

While English is no more complex than other languages, it has several features which may create difficulties for learners. Conversely, because such a large number of people are studying it, products have been developed to help them do so, such as the monolingual learner's dictionary, which is written with a restricted defining vocabulary.