

Acronyms in TESOL

| Acronym | Meaning | Usage |
|-----------|--|--|
| TESOL* | Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages | The term is often used to refer to the field of study, as in “Master’s degree in TESOL” |
| EFL | English as a Foreign Language | English learning in countries which do not have English as a national or dominant language; English is typically learned as a foreign language subject in school. |
| TEFL | Teaching English as a Foreign Language | Can be used to refer to the field of study, as in “Certificate in TEFL” |
| ESL | English as a Second Language | English learning in countries which have English as a national or dominant language; English is typically learned by children in school or by adults in programs for immigrants. |
| TESL | Teaching English as a Second Language | Can be used to refer to the field of study, as in “Certificate in TESL” |
| ESOL | English to Speakers of Other Languages | A term that can be used instead of both “ESL” and “EFL”; thus, it is increasingly used when speaking of all English learning contexts. |
| ENL | English as a New Language | Replacing “ESL” in some places, in recognition that for many students English is not a second, but a third or fourth language. |
| EAL | English as an Additional Language OR English as an Academic Language | Replacing “ESL” in some contexts; the dual meanings occasionally cause confusion. |
| EAP | English for Academic Purposes | Often used for secondary and post-secondary study that is specifically oriented towards preparation for university studies in English. |
| ELL or EL | English Language Learner or English Learner | Used to refer to students of English, especially in ESL contexts |
| ELT | English Language Teaching | Can be used to refer to the field of study, as in “a conference on ELT”; more prominent in EFL contexts |
| TOEFL | Test of English as a Foreign Language | An English test that is usually taken by foreign students to gain entrance into American universities |

*Note that *TESOL International Association* is an international professional organization of English teachers, based in the United States. It is sometimes referred to simply as “TESOL”.