Duke University Thompson Writing Program

Acronyms and Terms for Multilingual Contexts

EAL   **English as an additional language**
Adding English to an existing language repertoire. Could refer to using English as a second, third, fourth….language. Considered to sound neutral.

EAP   **English for academic purposes**
Often used to describe college courses that support multilingual students

EFL   **English as a foreign language**
Refers to English being studied or used in an environment where the primary language is not English

EL   **English learner**
Refers to someone who is multilingual and possibly enrolled in support courses. Could be interpreted as reflecting a deficit-based perspective. Often pronounced as the letter "L"

ELF   **English as a lingua franca**
The use of English to communicate across language barriers

ELL   **English language learner**
Refers to someone who is multilingual and possibly enrolled in support courses. Could be interpreted as reflecting a deficit-based perspective. Pronounced E-L-L

ELP   **English language proficiency**
Proficiency with the English language

ELT   **English language teaching**
The teaching of English, often in reference to teaching multilinguals

ESL   **English as a second language**
Used to describe students, teachers, and programs in settings where English serves as a primary language (also see **EFL**). Some dislike the *second* aspect, but second language is often used in linguistics to refer to any language acquired or consciously learned after the first language

ESOL   **English (for/to) speakers of other languages**
Used to describe students, teachers, and programs for English as an additional language in ESL or EFL settings. Circumvents possible concern with *second* in ESL

ESP   **English for specific purposes**
Specialized English (e.g., business English, engineering English, medical English)

IEP   **Intensive English program**
English skills-building program, sometimes a bridge program associated with matriculation at a particular university

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L1 **First language**
The first language acquired, also called the native language or mother tongue

L2 **Second language**
The second language acquired or consciously learned. In linguistics, could refer to any language acquired or learned after the first language

LEP **Limited English proficiency**
The No Child Left Behind policy uses this term to describe students in language support programs. Used in additional contexts (e.g., LEP.gov, labor , civil rights)

Multilingual Acknowledges linguistic strengths in more than one language. Often replaces the use of ESL acronym

NNES **Non-native English speaker**
Someone for whom English is not the L1. Use of the descriptor non-native is waning (also see **non-native speaker**)

NNS **Non-native speaker**
Someone for whom the language in question is not the L1. Use of this descriptor is waning; movement to instead address proficiency
https://reflectiveteachingreflectivelearning.com/2016/04/14/iatefl-2016-plenary-day-2-silvana-richardson/

NS **Native speaker**
Someone who speaks a language as an L1. Use of this descriptor is waning; sometimes replaced with expert speaker

SLA **Second language acquisition** (L2 acquisition)
Refers to the process of acquiring or consciously learning an additional language

TESOL **Teaching (of) English to speakers of other languages**
Used extensively, including for TESOL Inc., a key professional association

TOEFL **Test of English as a foreign language**
Exam often used by college admissions staff to determine English proficiency

Translanguaging This framework views a person's language repertoire as integrated and an asset. Considers a person's internal processing to construct meaning as well the external expression of that language repertoire through writing and speaking

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Rene D. Caputo
Duke University ESL Specialist
Thompson Writing Program
r.caputo@duke.edu