

Surviving Acronyms in English language teaching



I'm a NS EFL teacher, specializing in EAP. Right now I'm teaching a F2F course for IELTS, and I'm doing a GE course tied to the CEFR in a VLE.



When you join a profession, you need to understand the discourse of its members. This involves technical terms, jargon and especially acronyms and abbreviations. And the world of English language teaching (ELT) is awash with the latter! Here's a collection of the most common ones. Become fluent in them all and you'll be able to hold your own at any teachers conference!

Different kinds of English

ELT	English Language Teaching
ESL	*English as a Second Language
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ESOL	*English for Speakers of Other Languages
ELF	English as a Lingua Franca
EIL	English as an International Language
EAP	English for Academic Purposes
ESP	English for Specific Purposes
GE	General English
BE	Business English

Note: Acronyms marked with a * can be preceded by a T, which stands for Teaching.

Teaching methodologies

CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
TBL	Task-Based Learning (see also TBI)
TBI	Task-Based Instruction (see also TBL)
TPR	Total Physical Response
CLIL	Content and Language Integrated Learning (see also CBI)
CBI	Content-Based Instruction (see also CLIL)

Language learners

NS	Native Speaker
NNS	Non-Native Speaker
L1	Language one (or first language, mother tongue)
L2	Language two (second language)
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
YL	Young Learners

Organisations for teachers

IATEFL	International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language
TESOL	Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages
SIG	Special Interest Group

Ways of organising a lesson

PPP	Presentation Practice Production
ARC	Authentic Restricted Clarification
ESA	Engage, Study, Activate
OHE	Observe, Hypothesize, Experiment
TTT	Test, Teach, Test

English language exams referred to more commonly by acronyms

TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language
TOEIC	Test of English for International Communication
PET	Preliminary English Test
FCE	First Certificate in English (also called First Cert)
CAE	Certificate in Advanced English
IELTS	International English Language Testing System

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Teacher training acronyms

TKT	Teaching Knowledge Test
CELTA	Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults
CertTESOL	Certificate in English Language Teaching to Speakers of Other Languages
DELTA	Diploma in English Language Teaching to Adults
DipTESOL	Diploma in English Language Teaching to Speakers of Other Languages
CertTEB	Certificate in Teaching English for Business

Education Technology acronyms

F2F	Face-to-face
LMS	Learning Management System
MOOC	Massive Open Online Course
PLN	Personal Learning Network
VLE	Virtual Learning Environment

The following two are almost out-of-date but still used.

CALL	Computer-Assisted Language Learning
OHP	Overhead Projector

Miscellaneous acronyms

CEFR	Common European Framework
TTT	Teacher Talk Time
STT	Student Talk Time

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