



English Language Teaching

Subash Chandra Pathak

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ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

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Preface

Teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) refers to teaching English to students whose first language is not English. TEFL usually occurs in the student's own country, either within the state school system, or privately, e.g., in an after-hours language school or with a tutor. TEFL teachers may be native or non-native speakers of English. This article describes English teaching by native Anglophones working outside their own country, a small subset of English taught worldwide. To learn about other aspects of English teaching, see English language learning and teaching, which explains methodology and context, and explains abbreviations (e.g., the difference between ESL and EFL, or TESOL as a subject and an organization). For example, English language education in Japan began as early as 1600 with the initial contacts between the Japanese and Europeans.

In common with most language teaching, EAP instruction teaches vocabulary, grammar and the four skills (reading, writing, speaking - including pronunciation - and listening), but usually tries to tie these to the specific study needs of students; for example, a writing lesson would focus on writing essays rather than, say, business letters. Similarly, the vocabulary chosen for study tends to be based on academic texts. In addition, EAP practitioners often find that, either directly or indirectly, they are teaching study skills and often having to tackle differences in educational culture, such as differing attitudes to plagiarism. This trend has become more prominent as the numbers of foreign students attending UK universities, and other institutions across the Anglosphere, has increased over

the last decade. There is some debate amongst EAP teachers as to the best way to help students with academic English. On the one hand, students might be taught particular conventions but not expected to understand why they need to adapt their writing; a pragmatic approach. On the other hand students might be encouraged to challenge writing conventions and only adopt them if they seem justified; a critical approach. Recently attempts have been made to try and reconcile these opposing views.

This publication titled, “English Language Teaching” provides readers with an introductory overview of English studies and English language teaching. Focus lies on classroom pedagogy and English primary schools. Efforts are made towards learning English through weathers, seasons and animals. The aspects related to teaching and learning English through activities, play and fantasy are discussed. Attempts have been made towards linking, teachers, pupils and curriculum for English language teaching. Special focus lies on inter-curricular strategies, medium of instruction, teacher and standardized assessment. Focus also lies on basic, plain and simplified international English. An overview of history of English language in Europe is given. Special focus is laid on input hypothesis, phonology and task-based language learning. An overview of English medium education, dogme language teaching and communicative language teaching is provided herein. The elements and dimensions of English language proficiency test and skills assessment are covered with focus on preliminary and secondary aspects. The book is reader friendly as it is supported with bibliography and index.

—Editor

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Introduction to English Studies and English Language Teaching

INTRODUCTION

In general, English studies is an academic discipline that includes the study of literatures written in the English language, including literatures from the U.K., U.S., Ireland, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong, the Philippines, India, South Africa, and the Middle East, among other areas. English linguistics, including English phonetics, phonology, syntax, morphology, semantics, pragmatics, corpus linguistics, and stylistics and English sociolinguistics (including discourse analysis of written and spoken texts in the English language, the history of the English language, English language learning and teaching, and the study of World Englishes). More broadly, English studies explores the production and analysis of texts produced in English. It is not uncommon for academic departments of “English” or “English Studies” to include scholars of the English language, literature (including literary criticism and literary theory), linguistics, law, journalism, composition studies, the philosophy of language, literacy, publishing/history of the book, communication studies, technical communication, folklore, cultural studies, creative writing, critical theory, disability studies, area studies, theatre, gender studies/ethnic studies, digital media/electronic publishing, film studies/media studies, rhetoric

and philology/etymology, and various courses in the liberal arts and humanities, among others.

In most English-speaking countries, the literary and cultural dimensions of English studies are typically practiced in university departments of English, while the study of texts produced in non-English languages takes place in other departments, such as departments of foreign language or comparative literature. English linguistics is often studied in separate departments of linguistics. This disciplinary divide between a dominant linguistic or a literary orientation is one motivation for the division of the North American Modern Language Association into two subgroups. At universities in non-English-speaking countries, the same department often covers all aspects of English studies including linguistics: this is reflected, for example, in the structure and activities of the European Society for the Study of English. Literature and linguistics, along with List of academic disciplines, include the following:

- English Linguistics
- English Sociolinguistics
- Discourse Analysis in English
- English Stylistics
- World Englishes
- History of the English Language
- Composition Studies
- Rhetoric
- Technical Communication
- English Language Learning and Teaching
- English Literature
 - American Literature, including: (i) African American Literature; (ii) Jewish American Literature; (iii) Southern Literature
 - Australian Literature
 - British Literature
 - Canadian Literature

- Irish Literature
- New Zealand Literature
- Scottish Literature
- Welsh Literature

DESCRIBING THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING AND TEACHING

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 with a different native language. 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-centred 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). Some terms that refer to those who are learning English are ELL (English language learner), LEP (limited English proficiency) and CLD (culturally and linguistically diverse).

Understanding the 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 that 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. The Chinese EFL Journal and Iranian EFL Journal are examples of international journals dedicated to specifics of English language learning within countries where English is used as a foreign language.

English within English-Speaking Countries

The other broad grouping is the use of English within the Anglosphere. 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. *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. Other acronyms were created to describe the person rather than the language to be learned.

The term *LEP* (Limited English proficiency) was created in 1975 by the Lau Remedies following a decision of the US Supreme Court. *ELL* (English Language Learner), used by United States governments and school systems, was created by Charlene Rivera of the Center for Equity and Excellent in Education in an effort to label learners

positively, rather than ascribing a deficiency to them. LOTE (Languages other than English) is a parallel term used in Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. 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 programme. 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 programme 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 programmes for Canadian First Nations people or indigenous Australians, respectively. 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 programmes 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 many 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 refers to a decontextualised 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, among them:

- 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
- Nuclear English, proposed by Randolph Quirk and Gabriele Stein but never fully developed.

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).

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.

Pronunciation

- Consonant phonemes

English does not have more individual consonant sounds than most languages. However, the interdentalals (the sounds written with *th*), which are common in English (*thin, thing, etc.*; and *the,*

this, that, etc.) are relatively rare in other languages, even others in the Germanic family (*e.g.*, English *thousand* = German *tausend*), and these sounds are missing even in some English dialects. Some learners substitute a [t] or [d] sound, while others shift to [s] or [z], [f] or [v] and even [ts] or [dz]).

Speakers of Japanese, Korean and Chinese varieties have difficulty distinguishing [r] and [l]. The distinction between [b] and [v] can cause difficulty for native speakers of Spanish, Japanese and Korean.

- Vowel phonemes

The precise number of distinct vowel sounds depends on the variety of English: for example, Received Pronunciation has twelve monophthongs (single or “pure” vowels), eight diphthongs (double vowels) and two triphthongs (triple vowels); whereas General American has thirteen monophthongs and three diphthongs. Many learners, such as speakers of Spanish, Japanese or Arabic, have fewer vowels, or only pure ones, in their mother tongue and so may have problems both with hearing and with pronouncing these distinctions.

- Syllable structure

In its syllable structure, English allows for a cluster of up to three consonants before the vowel and four after it (*e.g.*, *straw, desks, glimpsed*). The syllable structure causes problems for speakers of many other languages. Japanese, for example, broadly alternates consonant and vowel sounds so learners from Japan often try to force vowels in between the consonants.

Learners from languages where all words end in vowels sometimes tend to make all English words end in vowels, thus *make* /mejk/ can come out. The learner’s task is further complicated by the fact that native speakers may drop consonants in the more complex blends.

- Unstressed vowels - Native English speakers frequently replace almost any vowel in an unstressed syllable with an unstressed vowel, often schwa. For example, *from* has a distinctly pronounced short ‘o’ sound when it is stressed (e.g., *Where are you from?*), but when it is unstressed, the short ‘o’ reduces to a schwa (e.g., *I’m from London.*). In some cases, unstressed vowels may disappear altogether, in words such as *chocolate* (which has four syllables in Spanish, but only two as pronounced by Americans: “*choc-lit*”).

Stress in English more strongly determines vowel quality than it does in most other world languages (although there are notable exceptions such as Russian). For example, in some varieties the syllables *an*, *en*, *in*, *on* and *un* are pronounced as homophones, that is, exactly alike.

Native speakers can usually distinguish *an able*, *enable*, and *unable* because of their position in a sentence, but this is more difficult for inexperienced English speakers. Moreover, learners tend to overpronounce these unstressed vowels, giving their speech an unnatural rhythm.

- Stress timing - English tends to be a stress-timed language - this means that stressed syllables are roughly equidistant in time, no matter how many syllables come in between. Although some other languages, e.g., German and Russian, are also stress-timed, most of the world’s other major languages are syllable-timed, with each syllable coming at an equal time after the previous one. Learners from these languages often have a staccato rhythm when speaking English that is disconcerting to a native speaker.

“Stress for emphasis” - students’ own languages may not use stress for emphasis as English does.

“Stress for contrast” - stressing the right word or expression. This may not come easily to some nationalities.

“Emphatic apologies” - the normally unstressed auxiliary is stressed (I really *am* very sorry)

In English there are quite a number of words - about fifty - that have two different pronunciations, depending on whether they are stressed. They are “grammatical words”: pronouns, prepositions, auxiliary verbs and conjunctions. Most students tend to overuse the strong form, which is pronounced with the written vowel.

Grammar

- Tenses - English has a relatively large number of tenses with some quite subtle differences, such as the difference between the simple past “I ate” and the present perfect “I have eaten.” Progressive and perfect progressive forms add complexity.
- Functions of auxiliaries - Learners of English tend to find it difficult to manipulate the various ways in which English uses the first auxiliary verb of a tense. These include negation (eg *He hasn't been drinking.*), inversion with the subject to form a question (e.g. *Has he been drinking?*), short answers (e.g. *Yes, he has.*) and tag questions (*has he?*). A further complication is that the dummy auxiliary verb *do /does /did* is added to fulfil these functions in the simple present and simple past, but not for the verb *to be*.
- Modal verbs - English also has a significant number of modal auxiliary verbs which each have a number of uses. For example, the opposite of “You must be here at 8” (obligation) is usually “You don't have to be here at 8” (lack of obligation, choice), while “must” in “You must not drink the water” (prohibition) has a different meaning from “must” in “You must not be a native speaker” (deduction). This complexity takes considerable work for most learners to master.

- Idiomatic usage - English is reputed to have a relatively high degree of idiomatic usage. For example, the use of different main verb forms in such apparently parallel constructions as “try to learn”, “help learn”, and “avoid learning” pose difficulty for learners. Another example is the idiomatic distinction between “make” and “do”: “make a mistake”, not “do a mistake”; and “do a favour”, not “make a favour”.
- Articles - English has an appreciable number of articles, including the definite article *the* and the indefinite article *a, an*. At times English nouns can or indeed must be used without an article; this is called the zero article. Some of the differences between definite, indefinite and zero article are fairly easy to learn, but others are not, particularly since a learner’s native language may lack articles or use them in different ways than English does. Although the information conveyed by articles is rarely essential for communication, English uses them frequently (several times in the average sentence), so that they require some effort from the learner.

Vocabulary

- Phrasal verbs - Phrasal verbs in English can cause difficulties for many learners because they have several meanings and different syntactic patterns. There are also a number of phrasal verb differences between American and British English.
- Word derivation - Word derivation in English requires a lot of rote learning. For example, an adjective can be negated by using the prefix *un-* (e.g. *unable*), *in-* (e.g. *inappropriate*), *dis-* (e.g. *dishonest*), or *a-* (e.g. *amoral*), or through the use of one of a myriad of related but rarer prefixes, all modified versions of the first four.

- Size of lexicon - The history of English has resulted in a very large vocabulary, essentially one stream from Old English and one from the Norman infusion of Latin-derived terms. (Schmitt & Marsden claim that English has one of the largest vocabularies of any known language.) This inevitably requires more work for a learner to master the language.

Differences between Spoken and Written English

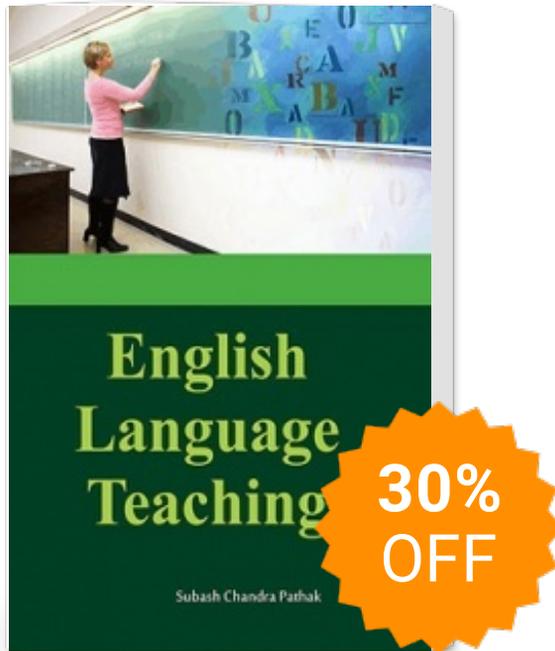
As with most languages, written language tends to use a more formal register than spoken language. The acquisition of literacy takes significant effort in English.

- Spelling - Because of the many changes in pronunciation which have occurred since a written standard developed, and the retention of many historical idiosyncrasies in spelling, English spelling is difficult even for native speakers to master. This difficulty is shown in such activities as spelling bees that generally require the memorization of words. English speakers may also rely on computer tools such as spell checkers more than speakers of other languages, as the users of the utility may have forgotten, or never learned, the correct spelling of a word. The generalizations that exist are quite complex and there are many exceptions leading to a considerable amount of rote learning. The spelling system causes problems in both directions - a learner may know a word by sound but not be able to write it correctly (or indeed find it in a dictionary), or they may see a word written but not know how to pronounce it or mislearn the pronunciation.

Varieties of English

- There are thriving communities of English native speakers in countries all over the world, and this historical diaspora has led to some noticeable differences in pronunciation, vocabulary and

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