

Glossary

Academic language: A register of the English language; the formal variety of language used for academic purposes (e.g., in academic conversations, lectures, and textbooks) and connected with literacy and academic achievement. Includes reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills used to acquire new knowledge and accomplish academic tasks. In the United States, sometimes known as academic English.

Accommodation (in speaking): The adjusting of language to an interlocutor's speech style in order to aid understanding.

Accommodation (in testing): A change in an assessment itself or the way in which it is administered, intended to make the test results more accurate by creating conditions that allow a test taker to demonstrate his or her knowledge or skills. Examples include allowing extended time and permitting the use of a bilingual glossary.

Authentic language: Language that has not been modified or simplified. Typically refers to language that is produced for a proficient audience and created by a proficient speaker to convey a message.

Authentic practice: Tasks which would be typically performed by proficient speakers of English to expose learners to opportunities to engage with the language and with others. Authentic practice is often done to engage learners in scenarios they will encounter while interacting in English in an English-speaking environment or with very proficient speakers of English.

Benchmark assessment: A short assessment administered at regular intervals to give teachers feedback on how well learners are meeting the academic standards that have been set; a tool to measure learner growth and tailor curriculum or design an intervention to meet individual learning needs. Sometimes known as *formative assessment*.

Bilingual education: A school program using two languages, typically the native language of some learners and a target language. The amount of time and the subject(s) in each language depend on the type of bilingual program, its specific objectives, and learners' level of language proficiency.

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR): A framework developed by Council of Europe "to provide a transparent, coherent and comprehensive basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses and curriculum guidelines, the design of teaching and learning materials, and the assessment of foreign language proficiency." <https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages>

Collaborative inquiry: Activity of a group of educators studying together to improve their practice. They identify a problem or critical question, research the topic, and decide what data they need to answer the question. They collect and analyze data, solve the problem/answer the critical question, and share their findings with colleagues. This process may be a cyclical form of teacher professional learning. Also known as *practitioner inquiry* or *action research*.

Collaborative learning: An approach to teaching in which learners spend the majority of class time working in pairs and small groups. They work as team members, talking and discussing, dividing tasks, and taking turns with different roles. Also known as *cooperative learning*.

Collocations: Words or terms that occur together in a language more frequently than chance would predict and that are used as fixed expressions (e.g., fast food, take a break, go online).

Communicative competence: A framework that consists of four areas of competence: linguistic, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic.

Communicative task/language analysis (CT/LA): Breaking down the communication tasks identified in a needs assessment into performance objectives based on a communicative competence framework.

Community of practice: A group of people who engage in a process of collective learning as they practice their profession. Each group member brings his or her own skill set, and the group actively shares knowledge, resources, experiences, and orientations to their work, while strengthening their relationships with one another, to enhance their collaborative efforts. Coined by Lave and Wenger (1991).

Comprehensible input: Oral or written input (e.g., new information) to the learner, structured or presented in such a way as to help him or her negotiate the meaning of the communication (e.g., through visuals, gestures, annotations). Over time, the input may increase in the complexity of the language structures used or the amount of information shared.

Criterion references: Measures of a learner's mastery of the material; rather than measuring performance in relation to other learners' scores or grades, criterion-referenced assessments measure individual learners' performance in relation to a standard or learning goal.

Cultural diversity: The variety of cultures that learners bring to an educational setting or may have to deal with in their target situation. Culture includes the customs, lifestyle, traditions, attitudes, norms of behavior, and artifacts of a given group of people. Culturally diverse learners may have different races, ethnicities, languages, professional backgrounds, and socioeconomic status. A goal in the classroom is to respect and honor diverse cultures and build on different ways of knowing or interpreting the world.

Culturally responsive instruction: An approach to classroom instruction that respects and builds on the different cultural characteristics of all learners and ensures that academic discussions are open to different cultural views and perspectives. Learners' ways of knowing are elicited, pedagogical materials are multicultural, and values are shared and affirmed. Also known as culturally responsive teaching or culturally relevant teaching.

Diagnostic tests: Tests that are used pre-instruction to identify learner difficulties and to inform decisions related to curriculum and lesson planning. Diagnostics identify strengths and weaknesses of individuals and the group of learners and often evaluate the four skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening as well as other areas, such as academic skills and strategies.

Discourse: A sequence of utterances—spoken or written sentences—that form a larger unit in a specific social context. Examples include a dinner conversation, a staff meeting, an academic lecture, a weather report.

Discourse analysis: Studying written or spoken language as it is used in real life situations.

Discourse community: A group of people who communicate in a certain way. According to Swales (1990), a discourse community has a broadly agreed set of common public goals, has mechanisms of intercommunication among its members, uses its participatory mechanisms primarily to provide information and feedback, utilizes and hence possesses one or more genres in the communicative furtherance of its aims, has acquired specific lexis, and has a threshold level of members with a suitable degree of relevant content and discursual expertise.

Dynamic bilingualism: The ability to use more than one language flexibly and strategically, depending on the audience, the conversational partners, or the situation.

English as a foreign language (EFL): The teaching and learning of English in countries where English is not the official language.

English as a lingua franca: Communication in the English language between speakers with different first languages.

English as a medium of instruction (EMI): The use of English by the teacher to teach the subject matter. EMI is increasingly popular in higher education contexts in countries where English is not the dominant language.

English as a second language (ESL): The teaching and learning of English in countries where English is the (or one of the) dominant language. May refer to the language teaching specialists and their teaching certifications or endorsements, or may refer to the learners (i.e., ESL students).

English for academic purposes (EAP): The language and related practices learners require to engage in study or work in English-medium higher education. The focus is to instruct learners on the linguistic, cultural and institutional practices within different academic disciplines.

English for occupational purposes (EOP): The language and related practices learners require to function in English-medium workplaces. Often used synonymously with workplace language training.

English for professional purposes (EPP): The language and related practices learners require to function in English-medium professional contexts, such as business, law, government, or medicine.

English for specific purposes (ESP): EFL/ESL instruction designed around the specific professional, occupational, or academic needs of the learners. An umbrella term that includes EAP, EOP, and EPP.

English language proficiency (ELP) standards: Sets of concise statements identifying the knowledge and skills that English learners are expected to possess in English; statement-by-statement articulations of what learners are expected to learn and what training programs or courses are expected to teach. May refer to national, state, or district standards.

English learners (ELs)/English language learners (ELLs): Children and adults who are learning English as a second, foreign, additional, or new language, at various levels of proficiency. English learners may also be referred to as limited English proficient (LEP), emergent bilinguals (EBs), and nonnative speakers (NNS).

English speakers of other languages (ESOL): Learners whose first language is not English and who do not write, speak, or understand the English language well. In some regions, this term also refers to the programs and classes for English learners.

English-speaking countries: Countries where English is the primary language of the majority of the population, such as the United Kingdom, the United States, Ireland, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. Because the use of English is widespread in other countries, some qualify those listed above as inner circle English-speaking countries. Note that many smaller nations are also English-speaking countries (e.g., Jamaica, the Bahamas, Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados).

Evaluation: The monitoring of student progress with respect to performance in language development and curricular outcomes using a variety of methods, such as quizzes, tests, exams, portfolios, projects, and presentations.

Feedback: A response by the teacher (or peer) to a learner's output with the intent of helping the learner with language learning. Common feedback types are the clarification request, repetition, recast, reformulation, explicit correction, and elicitation of self-repair/self-correction.

Filler phrase: A meaningless or redundant expression that speakers use to fill in gaps in their speech (e.g., *I mean, like, you know, the thing is that, stuff like that*).

Flipped learning: An instructional method that moves the lecture or presentation of information outside of the classroom and moves the follow-up activities, in which learners apply the information (e.g., as homework) inside of the classroom.

Formative assessment: Typically, classroom-based assessment of learner performance during instruction. Takes place frequently and is ongoing, involving simple but important techniques such as verbal checks for understanding, teacher-created assessments, and other non-standardized procedures. A type of informal assessment that provides teachers with immediate information on how well a learner is progressing.

Funds of knowledge: Knowledge gained through nonacademic means, usually from family and community members in traditional societies. It may include knowledge of the natural world, agriculture, food preparation, crafts, customs, personal histories, legends, and stories.

Genre: A form of communication that has recognized conventions. Examples include a work memo, a research report, a formal invitation, an editorial, a stand-up comedy routine, an academic lecture.

Genre analysis: The linguistic analysis of a communicative event (written or spoken) that is recognized by an established group or community (e.g., a profession or trade) as having a specific purpose and distinguishing features.

High-frequency words: Words that occur most frequently across many different types of texts and transcripts of language. Most are function words, such as articles (*a/an, the*), prepositions (*in, on, at, of*), auxiliaries (*do, be, have, can, may*), pronouns (*that, I, they, it, what, who*), conjunctions (*and, but, so*), conjunctive adverbs (*finally, however*), or quantifiers (*some, much*). They also include common verbs (*go, take, want, make*), nouns (*way, type, thing*), adjectives (*good, nice, great*), and adverbs (*here, now, sometimes, never, well*). For more, see The New General Service List (www.newgeneralservicelist.org).

Higher order thinking: Thinking that requires more than memorization, recall, and the comprehension of ideas from texts or teacher presentation. Higher order thinking involves using ideas actively: applying, analyzing, evaluating, synthesizing, and creating.

Input: Oral or written language provided to the learner.

Instrumental motivation: The motivation to learn a language or skill, or to accomplish some other goal, due to its utility for personal or professional gains. Learners are instrumentally motivated to learn English when they want to pass a standardized language test, obtain a job, or communicate when travelling in an English-medium country.

Intake assessment: A systematic approach to document learners' skills and knowledge before they begin a course of study. It usually involves the collection and analysis of different types of information: answers on forms and questionnaires, interviews, placement tests, transcripts.

Integrative motivation: The motivation to learn a language or skill, or to accomplish some other goal, due to the desire for personal or professional growth or inclusion as a member in a community. Learners have integrative motivated to learn English when they want to become recognized members of an English-speaking social or professional group.

Intensive English language program (IEP): Full-time programs of English that range between 22 and 30 hours of instruction per week in a classroom environment. The learners spend their time in intensive study, thinking, working, and interacting with peers in English. IEP courses develop language proficiency in a short period of time and are popular in English-medium countries. IEP programs may occur in the public or private sector and often lead to more specific ESP training for the workplace or academia.

Intercultural communication: Citizens of different cultures and countries possess specific cultural rules and norms. Intercultural communication explores the notion of understanding one's own frame of reference to interpret meaning in order to enhance communication with interlocutors from different cultural backgrounds.

Just-in-time teaching: A learner-centered strategy in which the teacher applies feedback from learners to determine what skills or information they need to make progress with a project or task and teaches that to them in small bursts. The advantage is that learners are motivated to obtain this knowledge and have immediate application for what they learn.

Language form: Typically refers to aspects of the structure of a language, such as the patterns, rules, and organization of words. Consists of parts of speech, sentence formation, usage, punctuation, and so on, sometimes referred to as the grammar of a language.

Language function: Typically refers to the specific purpose for which language is being used—to define, compare, persuade, evaluate, and so on.

Language input: Oral or written language that is directed to the learner. Differs from language uptake, which is the language that the learner hears, perceives, and processes.

Language modalities: Ways to refer to the four modalities of listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Language proficiency: A learner's degree of competence or performance in using a language for communicative purposes.

Language training specialist: A term used in workplace and professional settings instead of ESL/EFL teacher (see also "trainer").

Language transfer: A process that occurs when a learner applies knowledge of one language to another, often with regard to vocabulary, sentence construction, phonology, and cognitive skills. Positive transfer can take place when linguistic features and learned patterns of a known language (such as cognates, letter-sound correspondences, or ways to find the main idea in a text) are similar to those in the new language and a learner accurately applies them when learning the new language.

Lesson objective: A statement of what learners will be able to do by the end of the lesson. Its purpose is to focus learners' attention on what is important in the lesson. Teachers may have separate content and language objectives for the same lesson. The content objective relates to the content standards or content curriculum topic, and the language objective states what language skill, form, or function learners need to focus on during the lesson.

Lesson objectives (language, content, and learning strategy): Three kinds of objectives that clearly state what learners will know and/or be able to do at the end of a lesson.

Mainstream classes (in EAP): Classes whose subject matter is a specific area of expertise, such as geology or history or business management, rather than English language.

Mediation (as used in the CEFR): According to the CEFR, “. . . mediation combines reception, production and interaction. Also, in many cases, when we use language it is not just to communicate a message, but rather to develop an idea through what is often called ‘languaging’ (talking the idea through and hence articulating the thoughts) or to facilitate understanding and communication.” <https://rm.coe.int/cefr-companion-volume-with-new-descriptors-2018/1680787989>, p. 33.

Multilingualism: The use of more than one language by an individual or a community of speakers or within a geographical area. A multilingual person speaks more than one language. A multilingual community consists of a group with speakers of more than one language, but some members of the community may speak only one language.

Needs assessment: An inquiry process that documents the current conditions and the desired conditions of stakeholders. The goal is to use the information to identify approaches that can bridge the gap between the current and the desired conditions. Educators use this process to evaluate learners' skills and to analyze the skills they need to succeed with specific tasks.

Negotiated syllabus: A course plan which takes input from both the teacher and the learners into account.

Occupational English Test (OET): An English language test for healthcare professionals. <https://www.occupationalenglishtest.org/>.

Output: Oral or written language generated by a learner.

Placement tests: Used for internal purposes, placement tests determine the level of English proficiency of the learner to place learners into the appropriate class in multi-level programs. Tests may vary in length and scope. Institutions adopt varying practices for placement testing, including commercial online testing, in-house tests, and commercial standardized language tests.

Practice: The collective name of activities whose goal is to improve the fluency and accuracy of language use with any subskill (e.g., active listening, speaking, reading, writing, grammar, or vocabulary).

Register: A variety of language that is associated with specific social situations and topic areas. Examples include academic language, legal language, the language of mathematics, or the language of sportscasting.

Scaffolding: Classroom support given to assist learners in learning new information and performing related tasks. Often provided by the teacher through demonstration, modeling, verbal prompts (e.g., questioning), feedback, adapted text, graphic organizers, and language frames, among other techniques. Provided to learners over a period of time but gradually modified and then removed in order to transfer more autonomy to the learner, leading to independence.

Social capital: Resources, affordances, or various forms of support that a person can access through social connections.

Social language: A register of the English language that is also referred to as conversational language and is the basic language proficiency associated with fluency and vocabulary in everyday situations. Most English learners acquire social language more rapidly than academic language.

Speech community: A group of people who share the same language and/or dialect.

Stakeholders: Persons or groups interested in and affected by certain decisions or actions.

Strengths-based approach: An attitude in professional practice. Practitioners focus primarily on each individual’s abilities, skills, knowledge, and potential contributions over any weaknesses and special needs they may have.

Summative assessment: A formal assessment, such as an end-of-course exam or a state standardized test. Used to measure learner knowledge over an extended period of time, and may be used to measure growth in a subject area from year to year.

Target language: The language that a person is learning or wishes to learn. Also known as *new language*, *additional language*, *second language*, and *foreign language*.

Trainer: A person who focuses on specific skills in order to improve job performance, rather than the broader, more academic approach commonly associated with teaching.

Translanguaging: The strategic choice to mix two or more languages to serve a specific purpose in a communicative situation or to accomplish a task.

Utterance: A unit of language in spoken or written use; utterance is a broader term than sentence in that it includes spoken language as well as partial sentences.

Utterance control: The ability to produce well-formed, grammatically correct, and coherent language deliberately and purposefully when speaking or writing.

Utterance frame: A partially complete spoken or written sentence that a teacher can provide to help learners express ideas—for example, “I think _____ is relevant because _____”; “The reason I agree with _____ is that _____.” Also known as a sentence frame or academic language frame.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

CT/LA	Communicative task/language analysis
EAP	English for academic purposes
EFL	English as a foreign language
ELF	English as a lingua franca
EL/ELL	English learner / English language learner
EOP	English for occupational purposes
EPP	English for professional purposes
ESL	English as a second language
ESOL	English speakers of other languages
ESP	English for specific purposes
IEP	Intensive English program