

Jones, T. (2008). Teacher certification by states. In J. González (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of bilingual education*. (pp. 809-814). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc. doi: 10.4135/9781412963985.n310

state's department of education. However, there are some common characteristics related to teacher licensure across the country. This entry describes the historical development of bilingual certification in the United States and outlines the requirements in content and procedures across states today.

To be licensed to teach in any state, teachers must have a bachelor's degree, complete a state-approved teacher preparation program, and pass state examinations. Most, but not all, states have bilingual certification for teachers who work with English language learners (ELLs), and the number continues to grow as the population of ELLs spreads throughout the country. A bilingual teaching credential may consist of a license for that specific purpose or an endorsement to an existing license that expands the teacher's scope of licensure, adding the bilingual dimension. In actual practice, there is no functional difference between the two processes.

According to the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition (NCELA), 28 states and the District of Columbia offer bilingual/dual-language teacher certification or endorsements. Seventeen of these states have legislative requirements or state board requirements that teachers in bilingual classrooms must have bilingual certification. The remaining states carry out the credentialing process through administrative regulations.

Bilingual teachers generally are certified elementary or secondary teachers who complete regular teacher preparation programs and subsequently complete additional requirements to obtain a bilingual certificate or endorsement. Depending on the state, candidates for the bilingual endorsement generally take 12 to 21 university credits in addition to the regular elementary or secondary requirements. The additional study includes coursework in foundations of bilingual education, bilingual teaching methods, and second-language acquisition. Most states also require a language proficiency test in the language in which the candidate intends to teach. Because English as a Second Language (ESL) is a component of bilingual education and is included in the course of study, bilingual education teachers are usually credentialed to teach ESL as well. Hence, in most states, the requirements to become a bilingual education teacher exceed those of traditionally credentialed monolingual teachers.

Because state requirements dictate the program offerings at colleges and universities that prepare teachers for certification, this entry includes a brief

TEACHER CERTIFICATION BY STATES

In the United States, each state has the authority and responsibility for issuing and upgrading teacher licenses at the elementary and secondary levels and for special student populations. Because this function is decentralized, licensure varies from state to state and changes occur frequently. The most accurate and current information regarding specific certification requirements in a particular state is best obtained from each individual

discussion of teacher preparation programs across the country. The intent is to show how bilingual credentialing and teacher preparation fit in the national context and respond to societal needs and events.

Historical Background

During the 20th century, teacher preparation and credentialing in the United States grew more variegated and complex as educators responded to societal needs and demands for quality control in teaching. As public expectations for teacher knowledge and skills became more sophisticated, teacher preparation evolved from local apprenticeships through normal schools to bachelor's degree programs, including liberal arts, subject area specializations, and pedagogy. The states' oversight increased with codified requirements and assessments for those who wanted to teach. Credentialing was intended to assure districts and the public that teachers had good knowledge of subject matter, pedagogy, and child or adolescent development. In the case of bilingual certification, which didn't appear on scene until the 1970s, the credentials were intended to ensure that teachers were prepared to teach a particular population as well, namely, the population of ELLs, also known as limited-English-proficient (LEP) students.

Bilingual programs as they are configured in today's public schools started appearing in the 1960s. Prior to that time, speakers of languages other than English used their native languages in American schools to varying degrees and according to local tolerance levels at any given time. Things began to change in the early 1960s following the arrival of Cubans fleeing the Castro revolution. The goal of the first bilingual schools in Florida in the 1960s was to produce bilingual/biliterate students whose families were expecting to return to their native country. These initial instances of bilingual schooling were quickly followed by other bilingual education programs that had goals different than the production of biliteracy.

Bilingual Program Goals

As bilingual programs developed in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the first large-scale efforts to establish bilingual schools were made possible by Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1968. These programs sprang from a desire to remedy schooling for language minority children who had

been left to "sink or swim" in English-only classrooms, so programs took on a remedial purpose. They were seen as a way to overcome language barriers that had led to chronic lack of academic achievement on the part of language minority students. Advocates also stressed valuing the cultural and linguistic heritage of students and allowing children to use their native languages to learn content areas and literacy concurrently with learning English. The idea of promoting bilingualism and biliteracy was valued by bilingual educators but not necessarily by policymakers. In fact, federal and state legislation framed bilingual education as the most expedient way of teaching content to students who didn't know English and having them become proficient in English as quickly as possible. Everyone acknowledged the importance of learning English in the United States, and so the programs took on the role of transitioning students from using their native languages to becoming proficient in English. As numerous programs emerged, they were classified as *transitional*, *maintenance*, or *dual-language programs*, depending on their goals: transitioning to English; maintaining native languages; or developing bilingualism in two student populations, native English speakers and speakers of a language other than English. Today, the vast majority of programs are of the transitional type, but dual-language programs have become more and more popular.

Issues in Certification and Licensure

The sudden demand in public schools for bilingual teachers resulted in a wide range of qualified teachers staffing bilingual classrooms. Fully certified teachers who were also bilingual were difficult to find, and no one really knew what should constitute teacher preparation for bilingual classrooms. At the outset, there was no established body of research and content for preparing teachers to teach in the new programs. There was a scramble among classroom teachers and teacher educators to determine what bilingual teachers should know and be able to do. Teachers who staffed those early bilingual programs essentially pioneered the content of teacher training, and in the 1980s, more research about how children learn a second language, about methods for teaching content in a second language, and about bilingualism became available. In somewhat of a chain reaction that included demands from public schools for bilingual teachers that pushed institutions of higher education to develop bilingual

teacher certification programs, states began to adopt certification requirements and regulations for bilingual teachers. Today, all states that require bilingual certification programs also have college- and university-based bilingual teacher preparation to support those programs with appropriate personnel. The National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition, funded by the Office of English Language Acquisition in the U.S. Department of Education, offers the most comprehensive listing on its Web site of institutions with bilingual teacher preparation programs, by state and degree. For specific information on each state's certification programs and teacher preparation information, the best sources are the respective official Web sites of the various state departments of education. States with the highest numbers of ELLs, such as California, Texas, New York, and Illinois, tend to have the most options for bilingual teacher preparation programs in their respective colleges and universities. In some cases, certificates and licenses from one state may be accepted in other states. In *Certification and Endorsement of Bilingual Education Teachers: A Comparison of State Licensure Requirements*, Eva Midobuche compared credential requirements of states with large ELL populations. Some portions of that report are still valid, although some of it is now obsolete.

Bilingual Teacher Education

The 1968 Title VII legislation supporting bilingual education programs in the nation's schools did not speak to teacher preparation or certification. By the reauthorization of 1974, however, it was clear that states needed to establish teacher preparation programs. Funds were therefore allocated to public schools and to colleges and universities for teacher education. Some universities in states with significant numbers of language minority student populations began offering courses in bilingual education in the early 1970s, eventually offering full programs for certification as their own capabilities in this area matured.

Because of the transitional orientation and the expressed goals of federal legislation, training and teacher preparation for teachers in bilingual programs also stressed knowledge of and valuing the cultural heritage of children and stressed teaching ESL, but with uneven emphasis on developing biliteracy and bilingualism. The civil rights mandates of the 1960s and the court support for language minority rights in

the 1970s and early 1980s also influenced the content and goals of bilingual programs in public schools and therefore of teacher preparation programs as well. The mandate from the courts to remedy the situation for LEP students gave bilingual teacher preparation a remedial orientation. More often than not, teachers approached their jobs with this orientation. It should be noted that certification requirements and teacher preparation programs are the same regardless of what kind of bilingual programs are in school districts or what language populations are served. The only difference tends to occur in the language proficiency examinations. Historically, much of the demand for bilingual teachers has been for Spanish/English, but programs in other languages, such as Chinese, Vietnamese, Hmong/Lao, Korean, and indigenous Native American languages, are also needed and offered in various states.

A survey of member institutions conducted in 2001 by the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) found that 22% of member institutions (93) offered bilingual certification programs and the majority of those programs were at the bachelor's-, postbachelor's-, or master's-degree levels (58%). The study also concluded that state requirements dictated program/course offerings. A comparison of these results with an analysis of state licensure requirements by the former National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education (formerly NCBE, now NCELA) showed that teacher preparation programs emphasized the areas of pedagogy and cultural foundations, while linguistics received less emphasis. The study found that most universities do not require a demonstration of language proficiency in languages other than English but most states do require passing language proficiency examinations, chiefly Spanish, for credentialing teachers in bilingual education.

Emergency/Provisional Licenses

Given the difficulty of finding teacher candidates who were proficient in English and in the native language of ELLs, many teachers assigned to bilingual classrooms were not fully certified teachers. In those situations, school districts have often resorted to hiring people with bilingual skills but with no preparation for teaching. In short, they do not distinguish between *bilingual* teachers and *bilingual education* teachers. In some areas, states have been slow to require bilingual certification and have allowed school districts to hire

people with “emergency” or provisional licenses. The ranks of bilingual teachers have historically included an inordinately high percentage of teachers who were hired provisionally and then required to complete teacher preparation programs.

“Highly Qualified” Teacher Status

After passage of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) in 2002, with its requirement for highly qualified teachers, states are now under pressure to do away with emergency licenses. In general, under NCLB, a highly qualified teacher must have a bachelor’s degree, full state certification, and demonstrate competency in each core academic subject taught. States are charged with assessing competency in core subjects and in professional knowledge. According to NCLB, core subjects are English, reading/language arts, mathematics, science, history, civics/government, geography, economics, the arts, and foreign languages. Bilingual teachers are basically elementary and secondary classroom teachers who teach all of these subjects and therefore must be fully qualified per NCLB. The pressure is on for bilingual teachers to be certified in the subjects and grade levels they teach but not necessarily in bilingual methodologies or second-language acquisition. NCLB outlines minimum requirements related to content knowledge and teaching skills but gives states the option to develop their own definitions of “highly qualified” as long as those definitions are consistent with NCLB. This leaves states some leeway to determine highly qualified status for bilingual teachers.

As the new century moves into high gear, states are in such a bind to fully qualify their teachers that they are not yet ready to let go of emergency licensure. The struggle to obtain “highly qualified” status is exemplified by states, like Illinois and Texas, that have provisions allowing bilingual teachers to continue working on provisional licenses in core subjects but in which there is continued debate about the quality of bilingual teachers who cannot pass language proficiency assessments. Further, other than language proficiency examinations in Spanish, most states have not developed assessments specifically for bilingual certification. California was the first state to adopt specific assessments for language testing and bilingual content for certifying bilingual teachers.

At this writing, most states have not yet attended to what “fully qualified” means, specifically for bilingual teachers and teachers who teach English to students

who do not speak it as a first language. However, because states with large bilingual programs are likely to have high numbers of emergency-licensed teachers, they are under pressure to upgrade the qualifications of bilingual teacher population in core subjects. This, in turn, puts pressure on teacher education programs to address certification in core subjects, but not necessarily in the bilingual certification specialization.

Effect of Increase in ELLs

Besides the NCLB legislation, which profoundly affected assessment of academic achievement in schools and whose definitions for highly qualified teachers now impact state licensure and teacher preparation efforts, other trends and legislation since 2000 have affected credentialing for bilingual teachers. The rapid increase in the numbers of language minority students and in the numbers of different languages represented throughout the country has increased the demand for bilingual teachers. States that used to have relatively few ELLs now need to deal with certifying teachers to work with bilingual and ESL programs. The five states with the greatest growth in ELL populations since 1995 are South Carolina (714%), Kentucky (417%), Indiana (408%), North Carolina (371%), and Tennessee (370%). All have ESL certification, and Kentucky and Indiana have bilingual certification requirements as well. The numbers alone have resulted in a scramble to learn about teaching second-language learners, and states in the South are developing programs to address their needs. Whether these programs turn out to be bilingual programs or strictly English development programs will be determined by the highly political debates over immigration and the use of languages other than English in classrooms. This, in turn, will determine what states require in terms of teacher certification and what institutions of higher education will offer in teacher preparation coursework.

Effects of Antibilingual State Legislation on Bilingual Certification

Another phenomenon affecting bilingual teacher certification is that of state propositions that limit bilingual instruction in public schools. California, Arizona, and Massachusetts have all passed such legislation. This may cause prospective teachers to question the need or usefulness of going through bilingual teacher preparation programs. It is still not clear what the long-term

effects of these propositions will be on bilingual teacher certification. No state has eliminated the bilingual credentialing requirements, nor have universities done away with the teacher preparation programs. School districts continue to need and demand teachers with training in teaching a linguistically and culturally diverse population, so teachers with bilingual certification are in very high demand. Further, with the elimination of many bilingual classrooms after the passing of the propositions, ELLs are now more dispersed and assigned to “regular” classrooms, in which teachers are not likely to be bilingual certified. This has enormous implications for teacher preparation programs. In Arizona, for example, the state requires that all teachers have an endorsement in structured English immersion, so teacher preparation programs now have to include training for teaching ESL through structured English immersion in programs for all teachers.

This can be problematic, as can be seen in the 2001 survey of the AACTE mentioned above. Survey results indicated that less than one-sixth of the colleges of teacher education studied required preparation for mainstream teachers regarding the education of ELLs. The possibility of more legislation limiting bilingual instruction and the increasing numbers of ELLs may result in the expansion of training that was once reserved for bilingual teachers to all mainstream teachers.

Alternative Bilingual Certification

Even though most bilingual teacher preparation programs have been offered at state or private colleges and universities, there are a growing number of alternative paths to teacher certification, including bilingual certification. Programs are now being offered by community colleges, distance learning agencies, state departments of education and for-profit institutions. More professional organizations and credentialing agencies are also beginning to address standards for quality bilingual and ESL teachers. For example, the National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE) and Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) have developed a set of standards that universities and states can use in setting requirements. National certification groups such as the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) also are including knowledge about second-language acquisition as a requirement for teacher education programs.

To summarize, bilingual credentialing was not something that was well researched and then followed by teacher preparation programs with established knowledge about what bilingual teachers needed to know and be able to do. Instead, it developed by trial and error, and the first bilingual teachers were essentially “swimming or sinking” in terms of learning about effective practice in bilingual classrooms. The growing cadre of researchers in bilingualism, second-language acquisition, and instructional methodologies contributed to the knowledge base and helped inform teacher preparation.

The bilingual/ESL credentialing in the United States developed to address specific needs of LEP student populations. For bilingual and ESL teachers, their certification has historically been directly tied to that group of students. However, this is not necessarily the way it has to be, since bilingual teaching could be a way of teaching all students a second language regardless of their native languages. Native English speakers could learn a second language in bilingual classrooms taught by bilingual certified teachers, and this could expand the scope of bilingual programs to include everyone. This idea is becoming more popular through dual-language bilingual programs, though colleges and universities are short of teaching personnel who can develop and implement such programs on a wide basis.

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See also Bilingual Teacher Licensure; National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education; Teacher Preparation, Then and Now; Teacher Qualifications; TESOL, Inc.

Further Readings

- Menken, K., & Antunez, B. (2001). *An overview of the preparation and certification of teachers working with limited English proficient (LEP) students*. Washington, DC: National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education, ERIC Clearinghouse on Teaching and Teacher Education. Available from <http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/pubs/reports/teacherprep/teacherprep.pdf>
- Midobuche, E. (1999). Certification and endorsement of bilingual education teachers: A comparison of state licensure requirements. In J. M. González (Ed.), *CBER occasional papers in bilingual education policy* (pp. 1–62). Tempe: Arizona State University, Intercultural Development Research Association.

Web Sites

All Education Schools: <http://www.alleducationschools.com>

American Federation of Teachers: <http://www.aft.org>

Association for Career and Technical Education:

<http://www.acteonline.org>

Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence:

<http://www.cal.org/crede>

National Association for Alternative Certification:

<http://www.alt-teachercert.org>

National Association for Bilingual Education:

<http://www.nabe.org>

National Association for the Education of Young Children:

<http://www.naeyc.org>

National Center for Alternative Certification:

<http://www.teach-now.org>

National Center for Education Information:

<http://www.ncei.com>

National Council of Accreditation for Teacher Education:

<http://www.ncate.org>

National Education Association: <http://www.nea.org>

Recruiting New Teachers: <http://www.rnt.org>

Teacher Education Accreditation Council:

<http://www.teac.org>

Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages

(TESOL, Inc.): <http://www.tesol.org>

Teach for America: <http://www.teachforamerica.org>

U.S. Department of Education: <http://www.ed.gov>