
The study investigates the disproportion between the number of bilingual students and the number of bilingual instructors in public school. The review set out to find how high-stakes testing perpetuated the discrepancy in Texas, which has seen a significant increase in multilingual students in the system, with a large concentration of Spanish/English bilinguals.

The article is a review of previous research on high-stakes testing for teacher certification, statistical data on teachers in Texas, and two case studies of bilingual teachers. The authors give a history of high-stakes testing in college and teacher certification programs beginning in the 1970s to the late 1990s. Further, they provide two case studies of bilingual teachers who were required to sit the certification exam multiple times in order to become certified.

The studies reviewed find no correlations between certification tests and teaching performance/effectiveness or achievement in training. The teacher training is superfluous and unfairly holds back teacher candidates without predicting anything relevant about teaching qualifications.

Riojas-Clark and Flores conclude that teacher recruitment, training, and continuing development require a general overhaul and re-focus. Only this way, and not through slightly modified standardized testing, will Texas find a greater number of bilinguals to employ in classrooms. The authors call upon support in teacher training programs both on university campuses and in the school district for novice teachers to help recruit and retain bilingual and/or minority teacher candidates.

Although almost 18 years have passed since its publication, the authors provide a revelatory resource of information regarding the high-stakes testing of teacher candidates. This reality often goes unnoticed compared to the high-stakes testing of students. Indeed, the definition of bilingual has evolved significantly over this same period and a more clearly defined term would only serve to improve this valuable study. The testing requirements for undergraduates have evolved, and the same is probably true for teacher certification. However, the skill of teaching remains hard to quantify on a bubble-test and the researchers make note of the significance of a holistic view when assessing future (and current) teachers.