

TESOL Position Statement on Teacher Quality in the Field of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

English language learners, whether in an English as a second language (ESL) or English as a foreign language (EFL) setting, have the right to be taught by qualified and trained teachers. Native speaker proficiency in the target language alone is not a sufficient qualification for such teaching positions; the field of teaching English to speakers of other languages (TESOL) is a professional discipline that requires specialized training.

Qualified ESL and EFL educators not only should demonstrate a high level of written and oral proficiency in the English language (regardless of native language), but also should demonstrate teaching competency. Moreover, qualified ESL and EFL educators should be aware of current trends and research and their instructional implications in the fields of linguistics, applied linguistics, second language acquisition, sociolinguistics, language pedagogy and methodology, literacy development, curriculum and materials development, assessment, and cross-cultural communication. Where applicable, ESL and EFL educators should receive the necessary degree, licensing, validation, or certification as determined by their institution, country, or region from qualified ESL/EFL teacher educators. Most importantly, ESL and EFL educators, like all teachers, require ongoing professional development, and should receive both the resources and support for continued professional growth and achievement.

*Approved by the Board of Directors
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