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## Editor's Note

Tapestry Staff

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## Editors' Note

The topic of this special issue of the *The Tapestry Journal* addresses a critical question that is prevalent in many teacher preparation programs in the United States, both at the pre- and in-service stages of professional development. Given the increasing number of English Learners (ELs)<sup>1</sup> in PreK-12 classrooms in the U.S., what are the best ways to ensure that future and current teachers have the necessary theoretical and practical knowledge to meet the educational needs of ELs? One path many educational institutions take for a variety of reasons is that of infusion of English learner issues in their education curriculum. Therefore, the editors thought it appropriate to have this issue of the journal focus on the issue of EL infusion.

EL infusion can be conceptualized as the integration of EL-specific content into a general teacher education program in an interconnected, cohesive, and interdisciplinary manner. This EL-focused content can be built into EL-specific courses (also known as ESL Education or ESL Stand-Alone courses) as well as distributed across other teacher education courses and experiences. It is important to emphasize the purpose of EL infusion, which is to prepare teachers of all subjects and grade levels to support the academic achievement of ELs. Infusion programs do not replace the preparation of ESL and bilingual specialists but rather complements their preparation through educating generalists to partner more effectively with them. ESL and bilingual specialist do remain central figures in ensuring appropriate instruction and assessment for ELs.

Following the editors' note, **Jane Govoni** describes the evolution of EL infusion in Florida, where State rule requires that all teacher candidates are prepared to work with ELs as part of teacher preparation programs. In addition to discussing Florida-specific policies regarding EL infusion, "*The Evolution, Experiences, and Lessons Learned with ESOL Infusion in Florida*" also addresses the lessons learned from EL-inspired challenges and successes.

In their article "*Infusing EL Content into a Sociocultural Studies in Education Course*," **Lauren B. Isaac** and **Richard A. Quantz** describe the process of embedding English learner topics in the education course they teach. The article also offers several recommendations based on the authors' experiences teaching an EL-infused course, recommendations intended to facilitate a greater understanding of the basic situation that EL students and their teachers seek to address.

In her article, "*Infusing EL Content into a Foundations Course*," **Cynthia J. Hutchinson** recounts her experiences with ELs during her career, as well as with infusing EL-related topics in her own course. Her article focuses not only on the specific issues associated with infusion, but also on her own professional development as an EL-aware educator.

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<sup>1</sup> Consistent with recent trends in the education of English learners, we use the abbreviation 'EL' rather than 'ELL' to refer to English learners, which is briefer and whose meaning should be clear to any educator.

In “*Infusing EL Content and Instruction into English Education Courses*,” **Donna Niday** presents a five-stage process of infusing EL-relevant topics in her English education class. Her process emphasizes the idea that infusing EL content and instruction from the first days of her course allows students to view ELs as a natural part of the course instead of a problematic add-on.

In their article “*Preparing Teacher Candidates to Meet the Needs of English Language Learners: The TELLs Certificate*,” **Martha E. Castañeda, Jeannie Ducher, Amy Fisher-Young, and Bruce E. Perry** report their experiences creating the Teaching English Language Learners (TELLs) Certificate program at Miami University of Ohio. Their article starts with articulating the need to prepare generalist teachers. Then, it continues with the description of TELLs certificate design and implementation: the infusion process, faculty development, focus courses, and field experiences.

Given the increasing importance of EL infusion in the educational landscape in the United States, we hope this special issue of *The Tapestry Journal* provides practical directions in understanding what EL infusion is and how it should be developed and applied. As always, we invite your comments regarding the articles in this issue, and encourage you to submit manuscripts for publication consideration based on your experiences infusing EL content and instruction in your programs.