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Editor's Note

Tapestry Staff

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The articles in this issue discuss direct experiences with English learners (ELs), including those of researchers, teacher candidates, and classroom teachers. Offering details and insights on the learning context for K-12 ELs, each article provides a different view of the many factors impacting their success in and out of school.

"Classroom Assessment of Language Levels: A Quick Formative Assessment Tool," by **Paul Boyd-Batstone**, provides a clear, practical overview of how classroom assessment can help teachers differentiate instruction for English learners at five levels of English proficiency. Presenting a tool he developed for classroom teachers, which demystifies English proficiency levels and provides structure and directions for informal assessment, Boyd-Batstone also describes a wealth of instructional practices that are appropriate for English learners at each level. He notes that "teachers use formative assessment to know how to accommodate learning, revise instruction, and to shape instruction to specific needs of the learner," and he gives concrete examples that teachers of all subjects and grade levels can follow to assess their English learners, to provide level-appropriate instructional strategies, and to help their students progress to the next level of English proficiency.

In *"Preparing Teachers of English Learners: How Field Reports Bridge the Gap Between Theory and Practice,"* **Judy Lombardi** describes a course focused on English learners that is required of all teacher candidates. The centerpiece of this course is field observation and reflection, and Lombardi offers details of its structure that can be helpful to other teacher educators considering similar experiences. In addition, she recounts how she uses keyword searches to highlight important insights from student reflections, helping "students build community around their individual and shared experiences."

Mary Amanda Stewart examines adolescent English learners' use of social media in *"Living Here, Yet Being There: Facebook as a Transnational Space for Newcomer Latina/o Adolescents."* Basing her analysis on the theoretical framework promulgated by the New London Group, a perspective that stresses "local diversity and global connectedness" as well as a broader, more technology-inclusive view of literacy, Stewart followed four newcomer English learners over a period of five months, conducting interviews and observations, and analyzing their Facebook content. She found they used Facebook proficiently "to connect to their home countries, maintain their Latina/o identities, and acquire English" and recommends that educators use their English learners' capabilities and in these new forms of literacy to help them increase transnationalism, develop English proficiency, and build connections with other students.

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