

ESL Infusion Newsletter

First edition, October 2004



The ESL Infusion Initiative

Recent education policy in Ontario has led to a significant decrease in the amount of ESL support provided to students by ESL specialist teachers. Cutbacks have also affected other important services for ESL students and their parents. The current policy is that every teacher should be an ESL teacher.

In an attempt to respond to this challenge, a new initiative at OISE/UT was approved in the summer of 2001 to infuse issues related to ESL into the pre-service programs including the B.Ed., the Master of Teaching and the Institute for Child Study MA. This has been a multi-year initiative with short and long term goals, involving several components as listed below.

Project Components

1. ESL infusion workshops
2. ESL infusion website
3. Multimedia resources
4. ESL infusion team

(1) Workshops

The Infusion Team is prepared to offer workshops on a range of ESL and diversity-related topics to pre-service classes across grade levels and disciplines. Here are some of the workshops that teacher educators and candidates can select from:

The ESL Infusion Website - 1 to 2 hours

This interactive workshop introduces participants to the ESL Infusion website, an excellent resource for teacher candidates with information about ESL teaching strategies and issues for K-12 teachers.

Inclusive Teaching Strategies - 2 to 3 hours

Participants will enhance their understanding about how language is essential for learning to take place in their subject areas, and how to make appropriate language-related accommodations in lesson plans for ESL learners.

Critical Issues in ESL - 2 to 3 hours

Participants will explore one or more critical issues related to linguistically and culturally diverse learners and consider the implications for teaching.

Language Learning - 2 hours

Participants will consider important concepts related to learning English as a second language and implications for classroom practice.

ESL Policies - 2 hours

This workshop introduces participants to recent government education policies affecting the education of ESL learners.

(2) The ESL Infusion Website

Over the past three years, the ESL Infusion team has been developing a website for practising teachers, teacher candidates and teacher educators from different parts of Canada. The site includes a wide range of resources regarding ESL learners as well as numerous opportunities to interact with other educators concerned about better serving the linguistically diverse students in Canadian schools. The site is organized into three categories: planning and teaching ESL, sharing ESL/TESL experiences, and understanding ESL/TESL. The website also allows teacher candidates to complete assignments and take part in a number of learning activities online. You can visit the site at:

<http://eslinfusion.oise.utoronto.ca>

For support during the practicum, teacher candidates are invited to explore some of the useful resources available on the website:

Read subject-specific lesson ideas complete with accommodations for new language learners:

<http://www.eslinfusion.oise.utoronto.ca/teachingideas.asp>

Learn about inclusive classroom strategies:

<http://www.eslinfusion.oise.utoronto.ca/strategies.asp>

Enter the forum to pose questions and get support from ESL experts and colleagues:

<http://www.eslinfusion.oise.utoronto.ca/discussion/forum.asp>

Check out the extensive resources of books and journals, videos, and Internet sites:

<http://www.eslinfusion.oise.utoronto.ca/teachingresources.asp>

Read scenarios to learn what other teachers do when encountering similar scenarios in your teaching:

<http://www.eslinfusion.oise.utoronto.ca/scenarios.asp>

Watch excerpts from the Infusion Video Series
<http://www.eslinfusion.oise.utoronto.ca/videos.html>

(3) Multimedia Resources

Both practical and more theoretically oriented print and video resources to support instructors in their efforts to infuse specific ESL-related issues into their courses are available at the OISE/UT library and posted on the *ESL Infusion Website*. One notable recent addition is the *ESL Infusion Video Series* and accompanying user guides that allow pre-service and in-service teachers to explore the needs of ESL learners and teachers in diverse Toronto schools.

ESL Infusion Video Series - Voices of ESL Learners and Their Teachers

Four videos and companion guides have been created as support material for pre-service and in-service teachers who work with ESL students in the mainstream classroom. This video series is designed to raise awareness of issues facing ESL students and their teachers in the Canadian school context. This series allows teachers to actively engage with particular themes in order to facilitate the transfer of newly gained ESL awareness to daily practice in schools and classrooms.

(4) The ESL Infusion Team

The ESL Infusion program is run by a team that delivers workshops to OISE students, visit teacher candidates during practicum to provide support, and offer advice to practising teachers, teacher candidates and teacher educators through the ESL Infusion website.

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