

From the President of ASOCOPI

Dr. Carlo Granados-Beltrán

I want to take this opportunity that the editor of *HOW Journal* has offered me to update the readership about the initiatives ASOCOPI has taken to widen its influence and to strengthen its recognition nationally and internationally. Before doing this, though, the Board of Directors (BoD) wants to extend its gratitude to the former president, Dr. Harold Castañeda-Peña, who worked hard for the consolidation of a network involving all stakeholders interested in ELT in Colombia, and who also hosted two successful ASOCOPI Annual Congresses: *ELT classroom practices and the construction of peace and social justice* at Pontificia Universidad Javeriana in Cali, 2017, and *Exploring social and cultural diversities in ELT* at Universidad Tecnológica de Bolívar in Cartagena, 2018. To put it mildly, Dr. Castañeda-Peña left me some very big shoes to fill!

ASOCOPI is recognized as the meeting place for Colombian English language teachers to share experiences, build networks, and construct community; nonetheless, there are still challenges to face for the Association to become more solid day after day thus responding to Colombian teachers' diverse needs, international networking, and attracting more members. To cater for regional teachers' needs, Dr. José Aldemar Álvarez-Valencia, our treasurer, obtained, on behalf of the Association, a Hornby Trust Grant which will support two workshops on Teaching English to Children. These workshops will be offered in Cali, supported by Dr. Álvarez-Valencia; and in Neiva, supported by Prof. Jairo Castañeda Trujillo, our spokesperson, on September 20th and 27th, respectively. Prof. Claudia María Uribe and Prof. Evelyn Quiceno, facilitators and members of the SIG (Special Interest Groups) on Children's Language Learning, will lead these workshops.

10 For the development of international networks, Dr. Álvarez-Valencia and I attended the regional workshop '*Developing your teachers' association*', in Lima, Perú, sponsored by the British Council. The participation in this event produced many results. First, the formulation of a development plan for the Association. Second, the possibility of turning the ASOCOPI Annual Congress for 2020 into an international event. Third, the initiation of a volunteer scheme to attract more members to the Association. Prof. Clara Onatra Chavarro, the secretary of the BoD, is coordinating this volunteer scheme. Fourth, to attract more members, we developed a satisfaction survey to determine services that we can offer the Colombian ELT

community. This survey will be shared with our current and future members in due time. Fifth, in order to favor the construction of teacher communities, Prof. Jair Ayala Alzate is supporting the dissemination of the work carried out by the SIGs through the development of workshops in the Congress. He is also promoting the creation of new SIGs. This year, for example, Prof. Astrid Núñez Pardo will lead a SIG about Materials Development. All these tasks are underway, of course, with the unconditional support of our office manager, Prof. Myrian Cristina Vera.

To close, the ASOCOPI BoD cordially invites you to participate in our Annual Congress, whose topic this year is *Bilingual and Multilingual Processes: Educational Accomplishments and Challenges in Colombia and Latin America*. This will take place at Universidad Santo Tomás, Dr. Angelico Building, this coming October 10th to 12th. See you there!