

## **From the President of ASOCOPI**

**Jairo Enrique Castañeda Trujillo**

I am writing this letter just after finishing our 57th Annual & 3rd International ASOCOPI Conference. Seeing so many colleagues, classmates, and friends gathering to share and learn together was indeed so exciting. The experience was incomparable. The team of professors, undergraduate students, and the management and administrative staff of Universidad Católica Luis Amigó received us with unmatched warmth and a spirit of collaboration. To them, many thanks. This reunion reminded me of the importance of promoting spaces for sharing, not only from the academic but also from the personal, which makes ASOCOPI the association it is today, an association oriented to promoting English teaching, especially for the academic and human development of its members.

This year has been an up-and-down of emotions due to all the circumstances surrounding the pandemic and post-pandemic. However, the association has been kept on its feet thanks to the support of many of our partners and sponsors. It has not been an easy task, but we have succeeded with the other board members.

We maintained the broadcast of the monthly webinars that have been so helpful to English language teachers in the country and abroad. In this regard, I am very grateful for the collaboration of Adriana Bendeck, Blake Márquez, Carolina Rodríguez, Luz Ahida Aguirre, Zeila Restrepo, Carlos Andrés Sánchez, and Camilo Mazo. Additionally, I have to thank the sponsors who supported us by sending speakers to these webinars, such as Mauricio Ortega from LiveABC, Joseph Pearson from Moreland University, and Lorena Ojeda from Our StoryScape. These have become valuable learning spaces; therefore, we will continue to offer them to all English language teachers.

This year, we were fortunate to win the Horby Trust as part of our support for English language teacher associations. We used these funds in the strategy called “Nurturing and Sharing Local Expertise and Experiences in English Rural Education.” To lead this project, we had the coordination of Claudia Uribe and Yolanda Samacá; for their excellent work, thanks so much! Likewise, academic professors from Colombia donated their time to enrich even more what rural teachers have been doing in Colombia. Professors such as Bertha Ramos, Nancy Carvajal, Ferney Cruz, Astrid Núñez Pardo, Carlo Granados, Marlon Vanegas, among others; to these professors, thanks so much for their generosity and commitment.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Claudia Uribe, Adriana Sánchez, Evelin Quiceno, Claudia Suescun, Jhon Jairo Losada, José David Largo, Wilson Hernández, and Luís Ignacio Herrera. They have collaborated in designing the three diploma courses the association offered to all participating English language teachers. This initiative has brought many benefits to our associates from different parts of Colombia and the world to continue sharing and learning knowledge. The association seeks to continue with more courses, assuming this practice as a dissemination and contribution strategy to the ELT field.

Finally, I extend my gratitude and all my affection to those who, until these years, were my fellow board members. Claudia María Uribe, your charisma and generosity inspire me to work and to do it well. Kaithie Ramírez with that contagious joy, always attentive and willing to work. Adriana Sánchez, I love your order; you always get to the point; I admire your inexhaustible energy and enthusiasm. Eliana Alarcón, inseparable friend, tireless worker of ASOCOPI's social networks; I always receive the best personal and professional support from you. Yolanda Samacá, excellent friend and collaborator with the association's activities; thanks for your ideas and proposals. I also thank Miryam Cristina Vera, our officer manager, for all her excellent work and organization. I wish them all the best on the board in the coming years. Lastly, I cannot leave out two people who have been vital to what we do from ASOCOPI, Edgar Lucero, editor of HOW Journal, and José David Largo, assistant editor. HOW reflects their excellent work and commitment, not only with the journal but with the academic community; my eternal gratitude, appreciation, and respect for all they do for our profession.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the generosity of our plenary speakers at the 57th Annual & 3rd International ASOCOPI Conference. Dr. Clarissa Menezes, Dr. Bedrettin Yazan, and Dr. Barbara Noel, our international plenary speakers. They all taught invaluable insights and shared their experiences and knowledge in an open and disinterested way. I hope to see you soon. To our local plenary speakers, Mg. Oscar Pelaez, Dr. Adriana Castañeda, and Dr. Ximena Bonilla, your friendship is the most valuable gift; your contributions to the community of English language teachers and educators in the country and the world are incomparable. Thanks so much. A fraternal embrace.

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Finally, I would like to thank our associates, readers, students, and friends who have been present and supported us. Remember that your support is indispensable to continue strengthening the ELT in Colombia and the world. I want to take this opportunity to invite you to our next annual event, the 58th Annual & 4th International conference: "From the Global South: Our Roots, Perspectives and Transformations." This event will take place in Manizales, from October 12th to 14th, 2023. We all look forward to meeting you there to continue building community.