

Editorial 2025-1

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In recent years, English language teaching (ELT) in Colombia and Latin America has undergone significant transformations and responded to local sociocultural realities and global demands. The articles featured in this issue continue to reflect a growing trend toward reimagining pedagogical approaches that foster critical awareness, communicative competence, and innovative methodologies that embrace technology and student-centered learning.

One of the predominant themes in this issue is the enhancement of oral fluency and speaking skills, particularly in Colombia and Chile. The first four studies emphasize the need to go beyond traditional grammar-based instruction and encourage dynamic, interactive, and personalized feedback mechanisms that place learners at the center of the speaking process. From Colombia, Glenis Gamarra-Paatt and Zoila Liliana Giraldo-Martínez examine the potential impact of Project-Based Learning (PBL) on the speaking abilities of a group of seventh-grade students at a public school in Cartagena. In their study, PBL emerges as a powerful approach to developing those abilities and autonomy, critical thinking, and collaborative learning.

From Chile, Pablo Aedo Cancino presents an Action Research study on a course of undergraduate students from various programs to improve their English oral skills. The pedagogical experience also increased their self-confidence, reduced language-specific anxiety, and provided individual potential feedback. On the same line, Nicoll Stefanie Castillo-Torres and Angie Quintanilla-Espinoza study the ‘describing picture strategy’ in boosting English-language undergraduate students’ oral fluency. These two Chilean studies also illustrate how formative assessment and structured speaking tasks can make students gain confidence and reduce anxiety.

Francisca Lazcano-Santibáñez and Nataly Valeria Quezada-Telles explore an engaging and purposeful way to foster fluency in vocational education. They analyze how the Elevator Pitch technique increased the oral fluency of six English as a foreign language 11th graders

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in a rural at-risk context in Hualqui, Chile. The researchers show how students improved oral fluency and received a positive perception of the technique.

Integrating technology into language learning is the other recurring theme in this issue. The article on video-based listening activities, by Chilean researchers Ana Elizabeth Acuña-González and Claudio Heraldo Díaz-Larenas, underscores the importance of multimodal input for developing students' listening comprehension. The study reinforces the role of audiovisual materials in fostering engagement and retention and supports the belief that using video-based listening activities is an effective tool for those skills. Meanwhile, the documentary review of Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) experiences in Latin America, by Colombian researcher Yuranny Marcela Romero-Archila, highlights how technology can facilitate intercultural exchanges beyond physical mobility. The study opens new avenues for collaborative and globally connected language learning.

Another key area of focus in this issue is the critical and sociocultural dimensions of ELT in Colombia. Using the IMAGE model, Ana Maria Sagre-Barboza and Paula Andrea García-Montes challenge the persistence of stereotypes in English as a foreign language classroom. They advocate for a pedagogical shift that fosters cultural awareness and critical engagement with the English language. Similarly, Diego Ubaque-Casallas' theoretical review offers a thought-provoking analysis of how pedagogy is framed in ELT discourses, exposing the tensions between colonial influences and emerging decolonial, translanguaging, and anti-racist perspectives. This posture contributes to shifting the geography of reason concerning English language pedagogy. These two articles call for re-examining how English is taught, not merely as a skill but as a space for identity negotiation and ideological contestation.

Altogether, these eight articles reveal a pressing need to keep rethinking ELT in Colombia and Latin America through an interdisciplinary, inclusive, and research-informed lens. The authors in this issue demonstrate that effective English instruction goes beyond developing linguistic competence; it must also foster critical engagement, intercultural awareness, and innovative teaching practices. Drawing on reflective research and classroom experiences, these eight studies contribute valuable insights that can inform educators worldwide. These articles encourage a more reflective and contextually responsive approach to English language teaching.

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As a journal committed to maintaining communication among English language teachers and researchers, *HOW* has always been a platform for sharing knowledge that emerges from educational and research practices. This issue invites readers to engage with current trends in ELT, considering the integration of technology, innovative pedagogical strategies, and critical analysis of language ideologies in teaching. By fostering these conversations, *HOW* continues to support a global community of educators, committed to enhancing their teaching practices and contributing to the ongoing development of English language education in diverse contexts.