

HOW

Volume 33, Number 1, pages 18 - 22

<https://doi.org/10.19183/how.33.1.918>



## **Editorial 2026-1: Welcoming Time**

**SILVIA LUCÍA MOLINA-HIGUERA**

HOW's Editor

*Universidad de la Amazonia*

(Florencia, Caquetá, Colombia)

Email: [s.molina@udla.edu.co](mailto:s.molina@udla.edu.co)

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4741-8001>

**ELIANNA MARÍA SERNA-CORREALES**

HOW's Assistant to the Editor

*Universidad Pedagógica y Tecnológica de Colombia*

(Tunja, Boyacá, Colombia)

Email: [elianna.serna@uptc.edu.co](mailto:elianna.serna@uptc.edu.co)

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0004-3800-643X>

**How to cite this article (APA, 7th ed.):**

Molina-Higuera, S. L., & Serna-Correales, E. M. (2026). Editorial 2026-1: Welcoming time. *HOW*, 33(1), 18 - 22. <https://doi.org/10.19183/how.33.1.918>

# Editorial 2026-1: Welcoming Time

The Colombian Association of English-language Teachers - ASOCOPI, recognized for its sustained commitment to strengthening research and scientific development in English language teaching and learning, presents to the academic community a new issue of HOW Journal. This volume also marks the beginning of a new editorial team, as the responsibility for leading the journal is now assumed by Professor *Silvia Lucía Molina-Higuera* as HOW's Editor, accompanied by *Elianna María Serna-Correales* as HOW's Assistant to the Editor, under the leadership of President of ASOCOPI, Professor *Jhonatan Vásquez-Guarnizo* and the National Board of Directors.

In this issue, HOW Journal respectfully acknowledges the work carried out by Professor *Edgar Lucero-Babativa*, HOW's Editor since 2018, and Professor *José David Largo-Rodríguez*, HOW's Assistant to the Editor since 2019. They both contributed to maintaining the academic rigor, editorial quality, and trajectory of the journal. This issue represents both the culmination of a process carefully advanced by the outgoing editorial team and the beginning of a new stage that will continue the work of previous teams in fostering research trends and scholarly interests of English-language teachers.

In this context, it is important to highlight that ELT research in Colombia, and the interest of some Latin-American teachers, involves not only the teaching and learning of English as a language but also its sociocultural, political, and technological dimensions. The contributions included in this issue move beyond monolingual and standardized approaches toward more inclusive, reflective, and contextualized pedagogical frameworks. Together, they invite readers to rethink English language teaching in relation to the human beings who experience it, their realities, and their position within society.

In line with these discussions, *López Urbina* and *Bonilla Mora* analyze contra-hegemonic practices in language education in Colombia, advocating for pedagogical shifts grounded in translanguaging and the ecology of languages. By validating indigenous and minority languages, their study positions multilingualism as both a sociocultural and political stance that promotes inclusion, preserves linguistic heritage, and challenges monolingual paradigms. The authors argue for foreign language policies grounded in local knowledge - strengthened rather than replaced by international perspectives - highlighting the cognitive and societal benefits of sustaining linguistic diversity.

In this line of thought, recognizing feelings, perspectives, and lived experiences becomes essential to understanding how individuals interpret and assume educational principles in diverse ways. Within this research field, *Zapata-Arias*, *Valencia-Gómez*, and *Calderón-Vargas* explore how critical perspectives are enacted within teacher education programs. Their findings reveal the complexity of balancing solid linguistic proficiency with the development of critical awareness. The study emphasizes the need for negotiation between teacher educators and pre-service teachers, proposing that language as a system and language as ideology must be integrated rather than treated as isolated components. In doing so, teacher education can foster reflexive practitioners capable of questioning power dynamics while achieving high levels of proficiency.

Considering the importance of the teacher's role in society and in the formation of future citizens, *Castañeda-Londoño* presents a pedagogical experience grounded in place, inquiry, and community-based approaches. Conceptualizing places as socially constructed texts, her study extends learning beyond classroom boundaries, fostering higher-order thinking, autonomy, and social awareness. Students demonstrated stronger conceptual connections, greater confidence in English use, and more informed decision-making in their projects. The study highlights the teacher's role as a reflexive and compassionate guide, showing how learning through inquiry can cultivate transformative experiences and a deeper sensitivity among students toward the communities around them.

In this regard, technologies have increasingly emerged as mediating tools not only in communication and business but across all human spheres where education plays a central role. In this field, *Lagos-Monsalve* and *Cisterna-Zenteno* investigate the integration of Instagram to enhance EFL writing engagement. Their findings indicate improvements across affective, cognitive, behavioral, and social dimensions, alongside noticeable improvements in writing performance. By providing an authentic space for self-expression, Instagram reduced anxiety, strengthened the sense of classroom community, and encouraged extended writing practices, illustrating the pedagogical potential of socially situated digital environments.

Additionally, *Murcia* and *Jaramillo-Calderón* present a systematic review of AI-driven Natural Language Processing –NLP– tools in language education between 2015 to 2023, outlining their applications in personalized feedback, automated assessment, and literacy development. While these technologies offer promising opportunities for accessibility and instructional innovation, the review foregrounds critical concerns related to academic integrity, data privacy, inequality, and the limitations of automated evaluation. The authors call for stronger collaboration between educators and AI developers, the advancement of digital literacies, and the development of theoretical and policy frameworks to ensure ethical and responsible integration.

Finally, reflecting on educational policies as guiding frameworks for English language teaching in Colombia becomes essential. Policies provide direction and coherence; however, they should not prevent critical examination or transformation. Understanding and questioning policy discourses is part of being an active member of society.

In this vein, *Arias-Alzate*, *Perdomo-Santacruz*, and *Valencia-Giraldo* critically examine bilingualism discourses in local policies in Quindío through Critical Discourse Analysis. Their findings reveal a persistent conflation of bilingualism with English learning, reflecting processes of commodification and monoglossic ideology. While English is positioned as an economic asset, emerging local initiatives suggest alternative multilingual perspectives that could support bottom-up, context-sensitive policy development.

Taken together, the contributions included in this issue point toward the need to continue reexamining English language teaching through lenses informed by research, technology, community engagement, and critical perspectives that respond to the demands of contemporary multilingual and multicultural educational contexts.

With this new issue, *HOW* reaffirms the commitment of ASOCOPI to the dissemination of scientific knowledge and to the continued strengthening of educational research. More importantly, it

invites English-language teachers and researchers to engage critically with the ideas presented here and to situate their own practices within the broader sociocultural, technological, and political conversations shaping the profession, recognizing that teaching English goes beyond linguistic proficiency and involves the formation of reflective, sensitive, and socially responsible individuals.