

ASOCOPI Newsletter

Letter from the Editor

Carlos Rico Troncoso

I am very happy to announce that we are expecting to have 800 people in our 39th Annual English Congress. We have 7 plenaries, and 75 workshops. We have also the contribution of 9 English publishing houses, AVIAR Ltda., and the help of Universidad del Magdalena, Centro de Lenguas Extranjeras, with cultural activities, and with equipment. With all of this help and enthusiasm it is possible to have this wonderful Congress. The commitment we have put in this Congress and the acceptance and participation we have received from you, make me think about the importance of working together in an ELT community day by day. The participation in these conferences is the evidence that we, as language teachers, are interested in making changes and innovations in our classrooms and of course in our educational system. This is possible only if we work together and propose those changes. That's why this year Conference will deal with defining Standards in Language teaching. In this sense, it is important to listen to what our colleagues are doing in such a field and the most important goal is to listen to YOU.

What I want to highlight is that when we work together, we get more elements that strengthen what we do, so we have some good reasons for bothering (as said by Dick Allwright). The question that arises is why should teachers take the time and the trouble to associate with each other at all? The following are just a sample of the many and varied reasons teachers give for wanting to work together:

- ◆ To improve the practice of language teaching and learning
- ◆ To promote high standards of initial and in-service language teacher training
- ◆ To promote scholarship related to language teaching
- ◆ To foster high academic and professionals standards
- ◆ To break down the isolation that teacher experience both in their classrooms and in their institutional settings
- ◆ To encourage cooperation and mutual support
- ◆ To foster the exchange of ideas, resources, information, and experiences
- ◆ To foster the articulation and development of teacher-theory concerning classroom language learning
- ◆ To offer a regular forum for the introduction and exchange of new ideas and practices
- ◆ To offer a regular forum for the production and exchange of materials and other resources
- ◆ To encourage the development of foreign language teacher identity and collegiality
- ◆ To provide opportunities for personal language development

The above reasons reflect the sort of things teachers expect to get when they meet to work together on a purely informal basis. However, there are many other reasons for getting together in a strong *formal association*. Such reasons might include:

- ◆ To strengthen language teachers' sense of identity as members of a respected profession
- ◆ To take a lead in providing in-service training opportunities
- ◆ To disseminate information about language teaching
- ◆ To establish local and national professional journals for members
- ◆ To provide a focus and a forum for persons and organizations interested in the teaching of languages
- ◆ To foster and protect members' professional interests within the education system of the country
- ◆ To represent language teachers in dealing with government and other official bodies in professional matters
- ◆ To have a consultative and advisory role with regard to educational development and innovations
- ◆ To provide a consultation service for language teachers
- ◆ To provide information for members about opportunities and facilities both at home and abroad for professional development.
- ◆ To provide any necessary support for activities initiated at the local level
- ◆ To establish scholarships, perhaps with outside funding
- ◆ To establish contact, perhaps through "affiliation", with other national and international organizations of language teachers.

These reasons and some others encourage us to work so hard for our Colombian Teaching Association –ASOCOPI, but we are aware that what we are doing is only possible because you trust us. Let me finish inviting you to join us if you are not already a member of our ASSOCIATION.

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the 39th Annual ASOCOPI Conference. We are really happy to have such a massive response this year: Over 700 people participating, 6 plenary sessions, 72 workshops and presentations, the meeting of 4 national networks and, over 15 publishers in the book exhibit area definitely make this one of the most successful events in ELT in Latin America. And all is taking place in beautiful Santa Marta. I would like to thank everybody for the marvelous response: Presenters, publishers, universities, English teachers at large, volunteers, assistance in the office, and my colleagues in the Board of Directors.

When the theme was chosen, we were not thinking about endless discussions related to subtle differences among ESL, EFL, EAP or ESP or merely and simplistically adopt foreign schemes that may not apply to our situation in Colombia. As we mentioned in the previous Newsletter, with the exception of aborigine languages and Spanish, or cases like San Andres Islands, Colombia is not a bilingual country. Rigoberto Castillo mentioned in his article on English Teaching and Standards in the previous issue of this Newsletter: "language practitioners must make sure that educational processes meet the minimum requirements of quality accepted internationally by educational institutions... from all over the world". Therefore, the discussion on standards should be broadened and include the answers to many questions. It is our hope that this Conference will help answer some of them. I am speaking for the Board of Directors of ASOCOPI when I say that it is extremely important to differentiate between *adopting foreign standards and adopting a framework for the discussion of those standards*. As I see the discussion, we need to be able to see what is happening in the world and then decide what needs to be done in Colombia so that we can come up with local solutions to our local problems within the international context.

Reading the program carefully, you will notice that many scholars have already approached various ways of discussing the issue of standards, and some have even gone beyond this to include issues of national identity, cross cultural and cross curricular aspects. The challenge is for all the Special Interest Groups to have produced relevant documents dealing with standards in their respective areas within ELT for our 40th anniversary next year in Bogotá.

I would like to take this opportunity to summarize some of the questions that need to be addressed and discussed in the different forums at and after the Conference:

Standards in Teaching Preparation programs at the universities in Colombia

The meeting of the Colombian Network of TEFL Programs to be held on October 15 at the Simon Bolivar Room will continue the discussion on the definition of standards of TEFL programs in Colombian Universities that they started in Medellín a couple of years ago. Their discussions will also include a position of Universities with TEFL programs before the ECAES, the exams promoted by the Ministry of Education and ICFES to measure the quality of TEFL programs in Colombia, and standards of language proficiency for the students exiting those programs.

Standards in teaching English to Young Learners and Young Adults

These standards will have to consider the kind of preparation needed on the part of the teachers to be able to work with children and young adults (including their level of English), important considerations regarding the methods to be used, their cognitive development, and the materials used. Additionally, the group will have to define the minimum acceptable conditions for the teachers to generate a learning atmosphere, including resources, number of students per classroom, opportunities for training, among others.

English teachers' professional standards

Professional in-service teachers also need to discuss important issues related to our profession such as:

Our own proficiency in the language as compared to internationally accepted descriptions and ways to improve.

Our knowledge and views of culture including our local, national, and global identities.

Teacher's best practice or those specific practical elements that make our teaching effective, appropriate, or inconvenient in a certain context.

Our professional association, including active participation in the governing bodies and action taken to make it stronger.

Our social responsibility with our communities –national and international- including the discussion of ethical issues and the role of education in helping our country overcome the social, political, and economical problems.

Finally, there is one aspect in which we cannot make changes or adaptations in regards to international standards: English proficiency levels. We cannot tell lies to ourselves. We need to adopt international descriptions so that when we talk about a student in an intermediate level in Cali, we know in any part of Colombia what that particular student is able to do with the language. Adopting a particular description of levels of proficiency will always be an arbitrary decision as was the decision for Colombia to use the metric decimal system. It is our position that the standards of proficiency proposed by the Common European Framework are convenient for our association for yet another reason: ASOCOPI believes in the importance of teaching more foreign languages and our own language

–Spanish – in our context, and this framework provides clear descriptions for most of those languages. Additionally, the framework provides some important issues related to teaching, learning, and assessment that can serve as discussion generators in the academic community.

HOWEVER, adopting the measurement does not solve the problems we face in terms of language proficiency of our students. It is here where we need to study all the elements present in our context so that we can identify the problems and come up with our own solutions. October 2005 will be our deadline to present our findings. For the benefit of our students, let's get busy now because it is going to be a long way, and we need to persevere in the road we have already started to walk.

Teacher Education

PROFILE Teacher Development Programmes In Progress

Melba Libia Cárdenas B.

The Colombian General Law of Education states that the teacher as a fundamental actor of the teaching process "will be in a professional teachers' development programme... the teacher will put into practice the "PEI" (Institutional education plan) and s/he will constantly improve the teaching process by means of providing ideas and suggestions" (Chapter I, article 104). These requirements emphasize the need for constant teachers' development programmes with the purpose of contributing to and or fostering the changes needed by our current educational system.

PROFILE (Teachers of English as a Foreign Language Community) is a Teachers' Development Programme (TDP) for the improvement of teachers' communicative, pedagogical and research competencies in primary and high school. This programme is also concerned with the creation of an academic community at local and district levels.

Following the mission of the PROFILE Research Group which has led in-service teacher education programmes for several years, our TDP promotes the re-conceptualization of the English teaching processes through alternatives that help the teachers to improve their competence and make public the results of the innovations and research projects they carry out. Therefore, the TDP combines methodologies which permit in class, tutorial and field work so that one has opportunities to address topics of general and particular interest –according to schools' characteristics.

This year, 180 teachers from Bogotá and Cundinamarca have been working to achieve the said goals. One hundred and fifty of them have been sponsored by the Bogotá Secretariat of Education, whereas 30 teachers from private and public institutions from Cundinamarca decided to pay their fees due to the fact that they did not get support from their Secretariat of Education.

In order to share findings of innovations and action-research projects as well as reflections written by school teachers we have two important means of publication: the PROFILE Journal and our website:

<http://www.humanas.unal.edu.co/profile/>

It is hoped that, on the basis of this year's experiences, we can work further in the creation and maintenance of an English teachers' community. In doing so, we expect to sustain networking, which often fades when in-service programmes are over.

Melba Libia Cárdenas B. Foreign Languages Department, Universidad Nacional de Colombia - Bogotá

ASOCOPI 39th National Conference

Defining Standards in ELT

Plenary Sessions

"Teaching global unity"	Vivian Chu
"Teaching English as an International Language: Whose culture?"	Hara Papas
"Why don't they listen to me?: Defining students perceptions of the classroom"	Kate Cory-Wright
"A living language: Creating competent users of English" Simon Bolivar Room	Steve Lever
"Towards a framework for EFL standards in Colombia: A critical overview of national and international experiences"	Jan Van de Putte
"The imaginative approach"	Melanie Ann Procter

Workshops in Concurrent Sessions

"The teaching and assessment of essays"	Adriana Valencia	"Developing low-level students reading and writing skills"	Carol Brown
"Becoming bilingual: Myth and reality"	Alberto Fajardo Miguel A. García	"Revealing fifth grade student's life experiences through literature circles"	Carolina Piñeros Johana Mendez
"Music video through the computer: An amazing tool to improve students' listening and speaking skills"	Alexander Ortiz	"Show me your work" - Implementing portfolio assessment in EFL	César Montoya
"Technological development and pedagogical intervention in EFL teacher education programs"	Alvaro Quintero	"Teaching English to Children SIG"	César Nuñez
"Critical pedagogy: How making sense of it can help student-teachers propose and meet standards"	Alvaro Quintero P. Carmen H. Guerrero	"A critical perspective towards standardization in an EFL context"	Claudia Torres
"My grammar treasure"	Ana Palencia Cristina Jirón	"American Inside Out: Inspiration through personalization"	Denia de Fábrega
"The Connection to young adolescents"	Angela Andrade B.	"Curriculum development"	Denia de Fábrega
"This is ME' An inside-out approach to addressing culture in the North region of Colombia"	A.Christine Bailey	"Collaborative writing"	Donald Moore
"ELT and citizenship education through music and video"	Carlos Moreno	"Maps of International Cooperation in Educational Sciences: Mapas de Cooperación Internacional en Ciencias de la Educación"	Edilson Vargas Jose Eduardo Castro Oscar Torres Rigoberto Castillo
"RUAL Red Universitaria de Administradores de Programas de Lengua"	Javier Redondo Ruth Domínguez Ana María Valenzuela	"Raising listening standards"	Esperanza Vera Alba Olaya
"Promoting multicultural education: A way to achieve international communicative standards"	Carmen Zuluaga Margarita López	"Basic standards for elementary and secondary school in Colombia. A proposal from teachers"	Gilma Zúñiga Lilia Stella Bernal
"Reach into 'Backpack' for the most successful classroom ingredients!"	Carol Brown	"Enhancing practical strategies for teaching improvement: Methodological implications when implementing C.E.F."	Giovanni Anzola
"Worldview: Creating a MAP for fluency"	Carol Brown	"Reading English is fun"	Gloria Cardona
		"Effective techniques for teaching young adults"	Hara Papas

"What role do games play in the Primary EFL Classroom"	Hara Papas	"Go for it!"	Mary Sutton-Paul
"Promoting the use of English outside of class in a college course"	Imelda Zorro / María Helena Sanabria	"Drama : Become an actor and learn English at the same time"	Melanie Ann Procter
"Constructing standards in teaching English in public schools: Is it possible?"	Isabel C. Cadavid Diana Quinchia	"Red Nacional de Programas de Formación de Licenciados en lenguas"	Adriana González
"The standardization of teacher trainees at Universidad Distrital"	Janneth Velasquez	"Monograph projects by pre-service teachers: Which standards for effective achievement?"	Melba Libia Cárdenas Ma. Claudia Nieto Yudith Martin
"Student teachers' pedagogical research in a public university setting"	John Jairo Viáfara	"Drama in education: A new way of teaching"	Mónica Arbelaez P.
"The path to independence: Teaching our students how to learn"	John Andrade	"Standards for oral communication for all levels"	Nayibe Rosado Lourdes Rey
"Trends in information technology and Small Virtual Learning Environments in EFL Classroom"	Jorge H. Villegas	"Meeting English language proficiency standards through project work"	Odilia Ramírez Olga Umaña
"Get your gear together, hop on the jeep, and join us for Kids' Safari"	Jorge Sette	"Hacia unos estándares de formación pedagógica en lenguas extranjeras: La experiencia curricular Univalle"	Orlando Chávez
"A perspective of the Common European Framework standards on bilingual education in our Colombian socio-cultural context"	José Aldemar Alvarez Jair Ayala	"A skillful competence: Reading as a whole"	Oscar H. Montoya
"Developing oral proficiency through partner taping activities"	Jose David Erazo	"From goals and standards to value judgement: An approach to foreign language curriculum design"	Pedro Aguas Castillo
"Encouraging the zone of proximal development through email exchange between independent and proficient users"	Juan Carlos Ortiz Celso Carreño	"Defining standards for the communication strand: Towards the development of the interpretative mode"	Rene Cueto
"Making the most of dialogs"	Kate Cory-Wright	"Back to the basics: A Keynote to learn English in high school"	Ricardo Romero
"Becoming a better teacher: A SWOT analysis"	Ken MacIntyre	"Socio Political Concern Interest Section"	Ricardo Romero
"Let's get our English in Action"	Livia Orduz	"Teaching English to Young Adults SIG"	Rigoberto Castillo
"Literacy processes in a workshop environment"	Luz Angela Umaña	"Do you consider yourself bilingual?"	Rocío Monguí
"Literacy. Leadership and decision making skills and roles"	Luz Angela Umaña	"Fostering the development of autonomous behaviors in primary teachers to help them in their learning of English"	Rosalba Cárdenas Ricardo Lucumí
"Focusing on teenagers"	Magdalena Giraldo	"How to learn English and build cultural identity simultaneously"	Sandra H. Buitrago Liliana del P. Gallego
"Your students will <i>Cheer for English</i> "	Magdalena Giraldo	"Portfolios and kidwatching as a way to promote writing"	Sandra Torres Nubia Ruíz
"Computer Assisted Language Learning SIG"	Malcolm Peñaranda	"A task-based syllabus to promote effective language learning"	Sol Herrera Marieta Ruiz Ana Aguirre
"Standards in English as a foreign language: Adult and extension courses"	Malcolm Peñaranda	"A learner centered curriculum: An alternative approach to defining standards for English as a foreign language"	Sonia Ma. Jerez Daniliza Lorduy A.
"A pragmalinguistic study of EFL dialogues and native-nonnative speakers' conversations"	Marcelino Torrecilla	"Active, holistic, humanistic learning"	Steve Lever
"New technologies for ESP"	María Cecilia Pleded Ma. del Pilar Ramírez	"Knowing your coursebook"	Steve Lever
"Evaluation of the research component in an undergraduate FL teaching program"	María McNulty Tiffany Carvajal	"Understanding global culture through proverbs, metaphors, and storytelling"	Vivian Chu
"Design of a web-site for teaching and learning foreign languages at Univalle"	Martha Berdugo Nancy Pedraza	"Standards for student-centered activities: Are they for real?"	William Sastoque
"Go beyond the classroom with World Link"	Mary Sutton-Paul		

Events

September 16th - 18th

British Council - Universidad de Los Andes, Bogotá

ELT Conference around the topic "Self-access learning". Publishing Houses supported the event bringing international speakers. Among them were Philip Benson (British Council), Herbert Puchta (Cambridge), Paul Davies (Macmillan), Mary Meyer (Oxford), Izabella Hearn (Pearson) and David Gray (Richmond).

September 24nd - 26th

Corporación Universitaria del Caribe - Gimnasio Altair - Universidad de Sucre

Over one hundred people gathered around the topic "Improving practice, transforming lives", on the second ELT Conference. ASOCOPI supported the event with the Vice president's presentations and with the distribution of HOW journal and English Teaching FORUM. Universidad Tecnológica de Bolívar kindly sent Ph.D José Lobo; EAFIT had David Bustamante and Colegio Montessori of Medellín participated with César Montoya. ASOCOPI would like to praise the Local Leaders for their joint effort to promote quality education. Thanks to Dr. Laureano Mestra, president of CECAR, and to the organizing committee: José D. Herazo, Octavio Garay, Katy Contreras, Helmut Torres and Tania Mogollón. We look forward to seeing you in Santa Marta.

October 28th - 30th

Universidad EAFIT de Medellín
Universidad Politécnica de Valencia

First International Congress on Computer Assisted Language Learning. Featuring: C. Bauer-ramanzi from Saint Michael's College, Vermont; Thomas Robb from University of Kyoto; A. B. Chiquito from University of Bergen, Norway, and from Universidad Politécnica de Valencia: M.C. Pérez, A. Gimeno, R. Seiz, and M.A. Candel. For further information visit www.eafit.edu.co/call2004.

News

Ricardo Romero and Melba Libia Cárdenas, President and Treasurer of ASOCOPI participated as plenarists in the Third Symposium on Meaningful Contexts to Evaluate our Students of English at INEM Santiago Pérez, Bogotá, on August 27, 2004. The event was not only a forum to listen to specialists from universities, publishers or other institutes interested in displaying products or programmes, but also was an opportunity to keep in touch with school teachers who presented their innovations and who also had lots of things to contribute to our field. We want to congratulate the English Area of this school for having managed to sustain a local event that gathered teachers from all over the capital. Special recognition to Alba Luz Gallardo, Lila Urzola, and Victoria Isabel Pulido for the great job! All your efforts will surely enrich professional knowledge.

COLCIENCIAS offers in its website a link called "Mapas de Cooperación Internacional" developed in a joint venture with Universidad Distrital and Universidad Nacional. Professors of all areas interested in learning about programs, scholarships, fellowships and grants available worldwide for Colombian citizens, are recommended to visit www.colciencias.gov.co, then go to link "Cooperación Internacional".

The ELT VOICES, a magazine published twice a year by Corporación Universitaria del Caribe, welcomes articles about teaching issues. Those interested, please contact professor Octavio Garay at oga7025@hotmail.com

Social News

- ◆ Universidad Católica appointed Ms. Victoria Kolosovskaia as Director of the Language Center. She has taught and published in the area of Intercultural Communication, and is currently the Official Representative of Lomonosov State University, one of the most prestigious Universities in Europe.
- ◆ Congratulations to Ricardo Romero on the publication of the series «Keynote» that he co-authored. This textbook will be launched at the Conference in Santa Marta.
- ◆ Our best wishes for Nidia Sánchez who has left Anglo Publishing House. We would like to thank the support she always offered ASOCOPI.
- ◆ Best wishes also for Harold Castañeda from Universidad Javeriana de Bogotá, who left for England to pursue graduate studies. We welcome professor Javier Redondo, who took his office.
- ◆ Best of lucks to Sonia Delgado de Valencia who retired from Universidad Nacional de Colombia.
- ◆ Congratulations to the Centro Cultural Colombo Americano de Cali, that is celebrating its 50th anniversary.
- ◆ ASOCOPI would very much like to thank Universidad de Nariño for their support to HOW Journal for several years. The Committee led by professor Edmundo Mora worked professionally to select articles and to provide for funds from Universidad de Nariño to print the Journal. The Association appreciates their insights and contributions and hopes to count on them in the coming years.

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HOWmagazine

Dear Professors:

HOW Journal is published once a year by ASOCOPI, The National Association of English Teachers. It is the oldest journal in the field in Colombia. It has been characterized for divulgating research and teaching ideas of interest to a Colombian audience of researchers, teachers and students of EFL.

The coverage of the Magazine is both national and international with 1000 copies being distributed through subscription, exchange and donation to members of the scientific community, libraries, and research centers.

Contributions are accepted all year round. The deadline for entering articles for the next year's issue is June 30, 2005

Please contact: asocopi@yahoo.com to request guidelines.

Rigoberto Castillo

Convocatoria

En cumplimiento del Artículo 9 de los Estatutos de la Asociación Colombiana de Profesores de Inglés (ASOCOPI), la Junta Directiva Nacional se permite convocar a todos los miembros activos, fundadores, correspondientes, honorarios y vitalicios a la Asamblea General Ordinaria para el año 2004 que se llevará a cabo en el marco del 39º Congreso Nacional de la Asociación el día sábado 16 de octubre de 2004 a las 7:30 a.m. en el salón Punta Gaira del Hotel Santamar, Km 8 Pozos Colorados, Santa Marta, Departamento del Magdalena. La agenda será la siguiente:

1. Verificación del quórum
2. Lectura del acta de la asamblea anterior
3. Informes de la Junta Directiva
 - a. Informe del Presidente en representación de la Junta
 - b. Informe de estados financieros y presentación de presupuesto 2005 para aprobación por parte de la Tesorería
4. Informe del Revisor Fiscal
5. Elección de vacantes para la Junta Directiva Nacional
6. Asuntos varios

Atentamente solicitamos tener en cuenta los siguientes puntos:

Artículo 7 "Un asociado que no pudiere concurrir a la Asamblea se podrá hacer representar mediante poder escrito conferido a otro socio activo. Dicho poder deberá entregarse antes de la iniciación de la Asamblea a la Secretaría de la Junta Directiva Nacional. Un asociado no podrá representar a más de dos ausentes".

Toda propuesta que se desee tratar en asuntos varios deberá ser entregada por escrito a la Secretaría en forma de moción, antes de iniciada la Asamblea y deberá ser apoyado por lo menos por dos asambleístas para ser considerado en el orden del día.

Las candidaturas para los cargos vacantes deberán registrarse ante la Secretaría de la Junta Directiva antes de iniciada la Asamblea General. Este año habrá tres cargos vacantes. Una vez elegidos, la nueva Junta Directiva decide internamente la asignación de los cargos específicos.

Bogotá, 15 de septiembre de 2004
Junta Directiva Nacional

Firmado: Ricardo Romero Medina, Presidente
Carlos Rico, Secretario

ASOCOPI Mission Statement

- Improve the practice of English language teaching.
- Strengthen the sense of identity of language teachers through membership in a professional organization.
- Promote the exchange of ideas, resources, information, and experiences between language teachers on a national level, as well as at an international level.
- Promote high levels of education and professional development of university students in the field of foreign language teaching.
- Provide opportunities of continued professional development of teachers,
- Encourage research in the area of foreign language teaching learning.
- Provide a forum for the introduction and exchange of new ideas and practices and for the production of educational material,
- Encourage a high level of education and professionalism among its members.
- Provide a consultative and advisory role in the development of educational innovations, English for Special Purposes, Applied Linguistics, Material Development, and academic programs at the primary, secondary, and university levels.
- Stimulate the cooperation and mutual support among language teachers,
- Organize support activities for the development and maintenance of linguistic abilities of non-native students and teachers.