

Foreword

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As a Colombian teacher educator and researcher in the field of applied linguistics to English Language Teaching (ELT), I am pleased to have witnessed how the *Doctorado Interinstitucional en Educación* of Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas (DIE-UD) has long been committed to advancing critical, socially engaged, and transformative knowledge. Within this framework, the emphasis on ELT has become a fertile space for encouraging diverse ways of knowing, questioning orthodoxies, imagining alternatives to mere linguistic ability, and fostering a community of practice among doctoral students, faculty, and affiliated researchers.

The publication of *ELT Local Research Agendas IV* is the result of a collaborative effort that reflects the DIE-UD ethos. It marks an important contribution of its authors to the imperative of “reimagining ELT through the lenses of locality, inclusion, and critical engagement” (Quintero-Polo & Bonilla-Medina, 2025, p. 1). This volume also continues the tradition of the earlier *Local Research Agendas* books while advancing it by explicitly positioning methodological uncertainty and decolonial reflection as central to the formation of new researchers. In this sense, the book consolidates a path of collaborative and critical inquiry within the emphasis of DIE-UD on ELT.

As with the previous volumes in the series, this book brings together the voices of doctoral actors committed to situating their research in the realities of Colombian classrooms, schools, universities, and communities. Meanwhile, they also dialogue with broader debates in applied linguistics and educational research.

The book has six chapters, each derived from an individual doctoral research proposal. Together, they present updated perspectives on key topics: multilingual teacher identity; English teacher leadership; the social classification of English teachers by race, gender, and epistemology; emotions and identity in

English teacher training; and transpedagogies that dismantle obedience to colonial representations of pedagogy. Although diverse in focus and approach, these chapters converge in their commitment to critical research practices and decolonial reflection. They also follow a textual structure that highlights the place of enunciation of each author, a review of the literature, the individual research interest, and the potential contributions of each study.

This plurality of topics underscores a central message of the volume: there are multiple legitimate research paths, each shaped by the positionalities of the researchers, the institutional contexts, and the ethical commitments. Topical and methodological diversity informed by reflexivity is not only inevitable but also desirable. Therefore, each chapter contributes to critical discussions both locally and globally, amplifying the voices of ELT actors in Colombia and foregrounding the power relations and symbolic forms of domination that currently underpin the field.

I envision this book as a resource for multiple audiences. For doctoral students and early-career researchers, it offers models of inquiry that embrace rather than shy away from complexity. For experienced scholars, it provides fresh perspectives on the ongoing debates on methodology, identity, and pedagogy. For teachers and practitioners, it opens a window into the ways in which research can be connected to classroom realities while also inspiring new possibilities for professional practice.

I reaffirm my conviction that ELT research must remain critically engaged, contextually grounded, and open to uncertainty. In doing so, it can contribute to broader conversations about the role of English in Colombian society, the possibilities and limits of educational research, and the responsibilities of scholars and educators in contexts marked by inequality, diversity, and transformation. Beyond Colombia, this volume is a significant contribution from the Global South to global debates in ELT, demonstrating how situated perspectives can enrich and challenge dominant paradigms.

References

Quintero-Polo, Á. H., & Bonilla-Medina, S. X. (2025). Reimagining ELT through locality, inclusion, and critical engagement. *Colombian Applied Linguistics Journal*, 27(1), 1-3. <https://revistas.udistrital.edu.co/index.php/calj/article/view/23933>