**NA-SFLA Newsletter #7**

**Gulbahar Beckett and Nan Fries, Editors**

**1. NA-SFLA/LSA Meeting**

The North American Systemic [Functional Linguistics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Functional_theories_of_grammar) Association (NA-SFLA) held a very successful mini-conference in association with LSA Summer Institute at Michigan State University, East Lansing MI from July 25-27, 2003. Nancy Fries, the VP, opened the conference with welcome and organizational remarks. About 42 participants enjoyed individual papers given by American and Canadian scholars, a colloquium by “Team California”, six lunch-time movies about encultured great apes, and an exhibition of latest SFL resources.

Topics covered during this three-day conference ranged from introduction to SFL, application of SFL theories in second language literacy research, medical research, and college composition courses, as well as the human and ape discourse studies. Peter Fries from Central Michigan University began the conference with a short description of the fundamental tenets of [Systemic Functional Grammar](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Systemic_functional_grammar). Robyn Woodward-Kron from [the University](http://www.seasonaldesigns.com/) of Western Ontario shared her research that investigated the ways that some Australian under-graduate students learned specialist knowledge by focusing on the types of linguistic processes drawing on their writing. The “Team California” headed by Mary Schleppegrell and Cecilia Colombi presented findings from various SFL studies that investigated writing development of Asian immigrant students, the use of “cuando” by Spanish bilingual children, oral academic language development of Hispanic children, and the causal representation in Chilean history texts. Elisa Asp from Saint Mary’s University shared what she and her colleagues learned about cognition and language from a functional discourse analysis of patients with Alzheimer’s type dementia.

Carolyn Hartnett, Professor of Emeritus, College of Mainland discussed and shared her book: “Meaning first: A functional handbook of fifty ways to polish your writing” with the audience. William Greaves demonstrated how he conducted a multi-stratal analysis of Bonobo-Human discourse using Systemic Coder. Bernard Mohan, the NA-SFLA President, from the University of British Columbia discussed how he investigated some claims made in the literature about the developmental path of school science through data he analyzed using concordance techniques. Finally, Peter Fries presented a paper which addressed four factors which contribute to the perception of coherence.

The movies about encultured great apes included *Keeli & Ivy: Chimps like us; They call him Chanteck;* [*Kanzi*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kanzi)*: An ape of genius; The baby and Ai; Kanzi II;* and *A conversation with Koko.* The titles and abstracts of these and other papers can be found at: <http://www.yorku.ca/cummings/nasfla/meetings/index.html> Click on and scroll down until you see the links.

Participants and presenters enjoyed the conference, the beautiful Michigan State University campus, the Sultan’s feast at a local restaurant, and each other’s company.

by [Gulbahar](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gulbahar) Beckett

**2. Conference notice**

FIRST LATIN-AMERICAN REGIONAL SYSTEMIC [FUNCTIONAL LINGUISTICS](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Functional_theories_of_grammar) CONFERENCE "SYSTEMIC FUNCTIONAL LINGUISTICS IN LANGUAGE EDUCATION"
April 8th and 9th, 2004
English Department
Facultad de Filosofía y Letras
Universidad Nacional de Cuyo
Mendoza, ARGENTINA
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FIRST CALL FOR PAPERS
"Language is a political institution: those who are wise in its ways, capable of using it to shape and serve important personal and social goals, will be the ones who are 'empowered': able, that is, not merely to participate effectively in the world, but able also to act upon it, in the sense that they can strive for significant social change." (Frances Christie, 1989) The organizing committee is pleased to invite to this first regional event. This meeting has been organized as a response to the growing interest in SFL studies and as an attempt to encourage regional communication and cooperation among teachers and researchers working with the SF model in Latin-America. The site of the meeting will be Facultad de Filosofía y Letras, Universidad Nacional de Cuyo, Mendoza, Argentina. We invite you to visit our website in case you want to know more about us (http://ffyl.uncu.edu.ar <http://ffyl.uncu.edu.ar/>).
Subject areas:
SFL and the Teaching of Grammar
SFL and the Teaching of Phonology
SFL in [Foreign Language Teaching](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Language_education)
SFL in Native Language Teaching
SFL and [Academic Writing](http://FinanceReports.co/)
SFL and Science Teaching
SFL and Genre Theory
SFL and Discourse Analysis
SFL and Literacy
SFL in Translation

Abstract submission deadline: September 30th, 2003
Abstracts must include:
- author(s)' full name
- e-mail address(es)
- university/institution and affiliation
- area of study
- title of paper

The abstract should be on an A4 page in Arial 10p.type, with a 250 word maximum. It may be submitted by e-mail or regular mail (or both for safety reasons). If by surface mail, please send a copy on diskette and a printed one. If by e-mail, attach the abstract as rtf. All abstracts will be reviewed by more than two people and will be published online in the Conference webpage in due time. Some of the papers might be selected for publication in Nueva Revista de Lenguas Extranjeras, FFyL, [UNCuyo](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_University_of_Cuyo).

Presentations will consist of a twenty-minute talk, plus 5 minutes for questions and discussion. They should focus on experiences, new approaches, methods and perspectives based on the application of Systemic Functional Theory to Language Education. The official languages will be Spanish, Portuguese and English. We are pleased to announce that so far Prof. Leila Barbara (Sao Paulo, Brazil), Prof. Peter Fries ([Central Michigan University](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Michigan_University), USA) and Prof. Geoff Thompsom (University of Liverpool, UK) have promised to participate in the Conference as plenary speakers. Steps have been taken to organize a course, to be held prior to or following the Conference, with one of the plenary speakers invited. We will keep you informed of developments in future communications.

All other information including accommodation and registration will be sent in a further call for participation and posted on the conference website, which is, at present, under construction.

Please, contact the Organizing Committee Members for information at
sflmendoza04@logos.uncu.edu.ar
Samiah Hassan, Cristina Boccia, Ana Hansen, Laura Hlavacka, Liliana Poj

For information about Mendoza, try the following sites:
[http://www.mendoza.com.ar](http://www.mendoza.com.ar/)
[http://www.mendoza.gov.ar](http://www.mendoza.gov.ar/)
[http://www.potrerillos.com.ar](http://www.potrerillos.com.ar/)
[http://www.culturamendoza.gov.ar](http://www.culturamendoza.gov.ar/)

**3. AAAL Reminder**

Do not forget that 2004 AAAL Annual Conference will be held from May 1-4 in Portland, Oregon. Proposals submission closing date is: **October 6, 2003**

www.AAAL.org

**4. Systemicists at LACUS [Linguistic Association of Canada and the United States]**

Following the Michigan State NA-SFLA/LSA meeting the LACUS 30 was held in Victoria, British Columbia. The following friends gathered: Elissa Asp. [Michael Cummings](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0191930/), Jessica de Villiers, Gordon Fulton [who ran the meeting], Carolyn Hartnett, Helen Hu, Gbenga Chaulbieye [ISFLA's guest at Liverpool], Robin Melrose, Linda Rashidi, John Regan, T,Y, [Jacob] Surakat [also from Liverpool], Jonathan Webster, and Lynne Young. Next year's meeting will be at [the University](http://www.seasonaldesigns.com/) of Illinois at Chicago.

**5. Plans**

NA-SFLA will continue to meet at AAAL. We will also meet every other year at LSA Summer Institute. In addition, there is a demand at TESOL, a friendly audience at LACUS and some activity at CCCC.