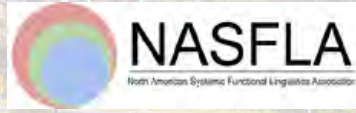


Meaning Potential

A publication of the North American Systemic Functional Linguistics Association



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@nasfla

**Do you have a *Meaning Potential* contribution?
Want to be a reviewer?**

Email nasflanewsletter@gmail.com

Welcome!

Dear NASFLA members,

Welcome to the Spring 2025 issue of *Meaning Potential*! In the spirit of NASFLA's guiding principles of 'connection' and 'continuity', we strive to foster and sustain community connections, ongoing dialogue, and collaboration among North American SFL scholars.

This issue highlights our community updates, various ways you might contribute to the continuity of the organization, and upcoming opportunities for connection at the annual AAAL 2025 conference and other great events and venues for SFL work.

Thank you for your invaluable support.

Sincerely,

Mina Hernandez Garcia & Sheila Ameri,
Meaning Potential editors

Message from your interim co-presidents

Dr. Kathryn Accurso, *University of British Columbia*
kathryn.accurso@ubc.ca

Dr. Beth Dillard, *Western Washington University*
dillare@wwu.edu

Dear NASFLA members,

We hope this message finds you well! As we move forward into 2025, we are excited to share some updates and highlights from our organization.

Leadership Updates: As you may remember from a November 2024 member email, NASFLA's elected President, Dr. Jason D. Mizell transitioned last summer to a position serving newcomer families within the K-12 educational system. We agreed to serve as interim co-presidents for the remainder of his term, which concludes this month. During this time, Dr. Mina Hernandez Garcia joined the leadership team to take over Kathryn's former role with the newsletter, and we are currently seeking someone to assist with NASFLA's website and social media accounts, previously managed by Beth. Please reach out if you are skilled in these areas and interested in joining the team! In general, the leadership team has expanded since 2023 to help distribute the work and build in more opportunities for passing down organizational knowledge and working with colleagues across roles and institutions.

Community Connection Updates: Together with Jason and the whole leadership team, we have had a productive year. For example, our *NASFLA Conversations* webinars have offered opportunities to connect as a North American community. In April 2024, Drs. Lourdes Cardozo-Gaibisso (Mississippi State University) and Luciana de Oliveira (Virginia Commonwealth University) led a meaningful conversation about efforts SFL scholars can take to decolonize practices within our field. This webinar was not recorded, but some ideas generated within the conversation included:

- paying attention to our citation practices, consciously including minoritized SFL scholars in North America regarding their areas of expertise and 'calling in' colleagues along the same lines;
- increasing collaboration across lines of difference and with other SFL scholars in the Americas;
- pursuing more critical lines of work;
- strengthening our mentoring channels;
- increasing access to participation in the organization; and
- fighting oppression across discursive levels (i.e., elevating others using our discursive power).

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Message from the co-presidents (cont'd)

In January 2025, Drs. María Estela Brisk (Boston College), Laura Schall-Leckrone (Lesley University), and Sabrina Sembiente (Florida Atlantic University) brought us a fascinating report on Dr. Brisk's recent project in Bangladesh where master's students of multiple nationalities participated in a course to learn SFL genre pedagogy. ChatGPT was used to support participants in writing argumentative essays to improve their written English and use SFL criteria to analyze and critique ChatGPT's suggestions. A recording of this conversation can be found on NASFLA's new Youtube channel (@NASFLAOfficial): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=El7mKpquhaY>

The next webinar will be in May 2025, featuring last year's Promising Scholar awardee, Dr. Nicole Siffrinn (Penn State).

Conference Updates: Also on the horizon is North America's turn to host the International Systemic Functional Congress (ISFC) in July 2026. This is an exciting opportunity to host and connect with the international SFL community. As part of our preparations, NASFLA has been working towards achieving official non-profit status. Drafting and passing organization by-laws was part of this effort. We are pleased to announce that the 2024 member vote on by-laws was unanimously in support, and the by-laws have passed.

NASFLA Vice President, Dr. Francis Troyan, will be conference chair, hosting at The Ohio State University. Please save the date for July 12–16(ish), 2026, in Columbus! At the annual business meeting on March 23, we will brainstorm ideas for the conference theme, gather your input on possible plenary speakers, and discuss what would make this an excellent conference for our members. If you are not able to attend the business meeting, but have ideas to share, or if you are interested in being involved with conference planning, please contact Dr. Troyan at troyan.14@osu.edu.

Potential for International Collaboration: We have recently connected with international colleagues, including Bev Derewianka, Claire Acevedo, and David Rose, to discuss forming an international Language in Education Network. This initiative aims to enhance SFL's presence in educational research and pedagogy globally. Stay tuned for updates and more opportunities to get involved.

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Message from the co-presidents (cont'd)

Supporting Early Career Scholars: Recently, we have had some fruitful discussions about supporting early career SFL scholars through the Promising Scholar Award. As a result, we have aligned our definition of “early career” and thus the award’s eligibility criteria with other organizations, such as AAAL and AERA. For the next two cycles (Promising Scholar 2025 and 2026), the award committee will consider individuals who completed their degree within the last seven years. We will revisit this criterion after two cycles to evaluate its effectiveness.

Election Year: Last but not least, it is an election year for NASFLA. If you are interested in serving in a leadership role or know someone who would be a great fit, we want to hear from you! Feel free to reach out via email or to nominate at the upcoming business meeting. Self-nominations are welcome. Each role is defined in our new by-laws, or you can contact the current role holder to learn more. Elections will be held at the annual business meeting at AAAL and online. A link will be sent out on March 23 during the business meeting for those not attending AAAL.

Thank you for your continued support and engagement. We look forward to another year of growth and collaboration.

With care,
Kathryn & Beth

NASFLA Leaders



Dr. Beth Dillard
INTERIM CO-PRESIDENTS
Western Washington University



Dr. Kathryn Accurso
UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
University of British Columbia



Dr. Francis Troyan
VICE PRESIDENT
The Ohio State University



Dr. Michael Maune
SECRETARY
Massachusetts Institute of Technology



Dr. Andrés Ramírez
TREASURER
Florida Atlantic University



Dr. Sabrina Sembiente
COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR
Florida Atlantic University



Dr. Mina Hernandez Garcia
NEWSLETTER
University of Michigan



Sheila Ameri
NEWSLETTER
The Ohio State University



Dr. Laura Schall-Leckrone
MEMBER AT LARGE
Lesley University



Dr. Holly Graham
MEMBER AT LARGE
Mount Holyoke College; Portland Public Schools



Danny Ferguson, Anna Zaitseva, & Sheila Ameri
GRADNASFLA REPS
The Ohio State University



Dr. Nihal Khote
WEBSITE
Western Washington University

NASFLA Open Business Meeting at AAAL

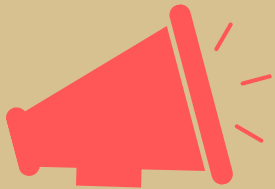
Sunday, March 23 12:30 PM – 1:45 PM
Sheraton Denver Downtown
Room: Tower Court D



**Note:* Minutes will be available to all members afterward on the NASFLA website

March 23 Agenda

1. Welcome
2. Executive Committee Reports
3. Elections Part 1: explaining roles and seeking nominations
3. Networking and breakout groups
4. Elections Part 2: voting begins
5. Announcements
6. Adjournment

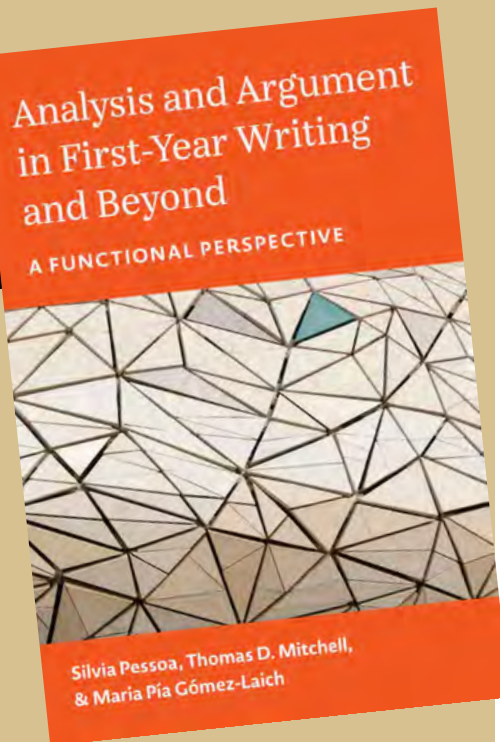


Up Next in NASFLA Conversations Our SFL webinar series

In 2022, the NASFLA Leadership launched a webinar series called *NASFLA Conversations*. The next talk in this series will be in May 2025 featuring Dr. Nicole Siffrinn, last year's winner of the Promising Scholar Award. Details and a registration link will be send out via email and on socials.

A graphic for the NASFLA Conversations webinar series. It features the NASFLA logo at the top left. The main text reads: "NASFLA Conversations", "**Stay tuned for more details**", "Coming in May 2025", and "Registration info will be shared via email, socials, and at nasfla.org". Below this, there is a bio for Dr. Nicole Siffrinn: "Nicole Siffrinn is an Assistant Teaching Professor of Education at the School of Behavioral Sciences and Education at Penn State Harrisburg and NASFLA's 2024 Promising Scholar. Her work in SFL focuses on teacher education and theoretical innovation to critically examine and reimagine more equitable futures with and for educators and youth. Her talk will share some of her recent work and considerations for SFL scholars and scholarship in the current context." At the bottom left, there is a logo for Penn State College of the Liberal Arts and the Department of Applied Linguistics. On the right side, there is a portrait of Dr. Nicole Siffrinn.

NEW SFL BOOK HIGHLIGHT



[Pessoa, S., Mitchell, T., & Gómez-Laich, M.P. \(2024\).](#) *Analysis and argument in first-year writing and beyond: A functional perspective.* U of Mich Press.

- Undergrads are expected to write arguments in many disciplines, and while most instructors know good writing when they see it, they are not always able to articulate the finer details of how language is used to compose the strong arguments they expect from their students. This book provides a common language to talk about and teach argument writing.
- Each chapter focuses on a single tool, explaining it with mentor texts, sample texts, and visualizations, and guided classroom activities teachers can adapt to fit their own contexts. With these tools, instructors and students will better understand how to:
 - distinguish between descriptive and argumentative writing;
 - write argumentative claims;
 - apply an analytical framework in a written text;
 - maintain a consistent position in an argumentative text while incorporating outside sources;
 - argue for one position in favor of viable alternatives.



M.A.K. HALLIDAY BOOK PRIZE

Award Announcement!

The M.A.K. Halliday Prize is an international book prize awarded biennially by ASFLA, our Australian counterpart organization, for the most significant **scholarly monograph** recently published in Systemic Functional Linguistics. It is named in memory of M.A.K. Halliday, who was the leading figure in the development of SFL theory.

This year's award committee will consider **books published in 2023 and 2024**. The principal criterion for success will be evidence of excellence and significance in furthering and developing the work of Systemic Functional Linguistics. The winner will be announced at ASFLA's conference in Dec 2025.

The last winner of this honor was [Modelling paralinguage from the perspective of Systemic Functional Semiotics: Theory and application](#) (Ngo, Hood, Martin, Painter, Smith, & Zappavigna, 2023), published by Bloomsbury.

The awards committee is forming now, so stay tuned for more details!

Meet an SFL Grad Student

Sida Sun, *University of Michigan*
sidasun@umich.edu



Sida Sun is a doctoral candidate in Educational Studies at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. She will defend her dissertation in March. Sida has been a member of NASFLA for several years and served as co-president of the SFL Club at the University of Michigan. She has presented her work at AAAL and other venues. Sida has participated in the *Teaching Reasoning and Inquiry in Social Studies* (TRIPSS) project at the University of Michigan as a graduate student researcher, collaborating with the team on professional development activities and in data analysis of student writing and classroom interaction. Her co-authored articles have appeared in *Teachers College Record*, the *Journal of Second Language Writing*, and *Linguistics and Education*.

As an international student from China, Sida is particularly interested in multilingual learners' experiences learning school subjects in U.S. classrooms. She also engages in critical analysis of historical discourse. In her *Linguistics and Education* article, she shows how an SFL-based analysis of moves in classroom discourse – following and expanding on Eggins and Slade (2006) – contributes to our understanding of the ways students and teachers co-develop knowledge and engage with others' points of view as they reason together.

In her dissertation, Sida explores students' use of historical reasoning through dialogue, analyzing the interactions of middle school teachers and students as they evaluate sources during social studies inquiry. She highlights the roles students' and teachers' everyday knowledge plays in sourcing, contextualizing, and corroborating evidence as they develop arguments. Using Appraisal tools from SFL, she identifies tensions that emerge in such discussions, such as students' propensity to negatively judge social actors and then deem a source unreliable because of those actors' reported actions or stances.

Her dissertation shows that teachers and students face the challenge of developing the disciplinary notion that a source can be reliable in such cases, as these sources can illuminate larger social systems underlying historical events. Her work contributes to our understanding of how students' disciplinary reasoning develops through interaction and co-construction of knowledge and the challenges of classroom discussion in the disciplinary context of inquiry in social studies. You can contact Sida about her work at sidasun@umich.edu.

SFL at



Saturday, March 22

- 8:40–9:40am • *A corpus-based analysis of evaluative language in undergraduate writing*; Maria Pía Gómez-Laich (Carnegie Mellon University Qatar) & Michael Maune (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) – Poster Presentation (Session 1) – Windows: Tower – Second Level
- 10:10–10:40am • *Interactions between grammatical mood and speech functions: Testing SFL hypotheses*; Michael Maune (Massachusetts Institute of Technology), Ryan T. Miller (Kent State University), & Joshua Iddings (Siena College) – Tower Court C: Tower – Second Level
- 10:10–11:10am • *Enhancing college text comprehension through brief metalinguistic training*; Rachel Lynne Casper, Chen Liu, Liantao Shan, & Zenaida Aguirre-Muñoz (University of California, Merced) – Poster Presentation (Session 2) – Windows: Tower – Second Level
- *Appraisal analysis of generic moves in introduction: Attitude and graduation*; Jun Zhao (Augusta University) – Poster Presentation (Session 2) – Windows: Tower – Second Level

Sunday, March 23

12:30–1:45pm • *NASFLA Open Business Meeting* – All are welcome – Tower Court D

Monday, March 24

- 8:00–8:30am • *Functional linguistics in life: Relational and critical sense making in language teacher education*; Maverick Y. Zhang (Hunter College, City University of New York) – Individual Paper – Columbine: Tower – Terrace Level
- 9:10–10:10am • *Linguistic and ideological contrasts between Socioemotional Learning (SEL) and Transformative SEL in early childhood state policies*; Catherine Restrepo (Florida Atlantic University), Sabrina Sembiante (Florida Atlantic University), & Alain Bengochea (University of Nevada, Las Vegas) – Roundtable Presentation (Session 2: Table 5) – Windows: Tower – Second Level
- 10:10–10:40am • *Language education through genAI: AI interpretations of linguistic diversity*; Zeynep Arslan (The Ohio State University) – Majestic Ballroom: Tower – Majestic Level
- 10:15–11:15am • *Systemic functional linguistics in Chilean high school EFL classrooms*; Evelyn Margarita Vera-Flández (University of California Santa Barbara) – Roundtable Presentation (Session 3: Table 7) – Windows: Tower – Second Level

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SFL at



Monday, March 24 (cont'd)

- 1:10–11:10am • *Relational accountability, critical literacy, and teacher action research: A social semiotic perspective*; organized by Kathryn Accurso (University of British Columbia) & Meg Gebhard (University of Massachusetts, Amherst); discussant Shelby Perez Pereira (Jeffco Public Schools, Denver) – 1-hour colloquium – Tower: Terrace Level
- **Presentations:**
 - *Designing meaningful writing instruction for emergent bilinguals in an era of accountability: Challenges and possibilities*; Mileidis Gort (University of Colorado Boulder) & Laura Hamman-Ortiz (University of Rhode Island)
 - *Repositioning race: The role of functional metalanguage in critical pedagogy*; Holly Graham (Mount Holyoke College), Kathryn Accurso (University of British Columbia), & Meg Gebhard (University of Massachusetts, Amherst)
- 1:50–2:20pm • *Culturally sustaining systemic functional linguistics: Dialogic practices for newly arrived high school multilingual learners*; Khanh Bui (Clarke County School District), Seon Ja Chang (University of Georgia), David Forker (Clarke County School District), & Ruth Harman (University of Georgia) – Individual Paper – Century
- *The word problem genre: An SFL analysis and description*; Beth Dillard & Jennifer Green (Western Washington University) – Individual Paper – Tower Court D: Tower – Second Level
- 1:50–2:50pm • *Cultivating linguistic and social bonds: Relational language learning in bilingual education*; Mariana De Luca (Lancaster University) – Roundtable Presentation (Session 4: Table 7) – Windows: Tower – Second Level
- 2:25–2:55pm • *A case study of systemic functional linguistics-based instruction on authorial stance for college L2 learners*; Lakmini Grant Siriwardana & Dong-shin Shin (University of Cincinnati) – Individual Paper – Century
- 2:55–3:55pm • *Intersemiotic compensation for evidentiality in the credibility-building discourse for Chinese state-owned enterprises on Twitter/X*; Chenghui Wu (School of Foreign Languages, Peking University) – Roundtable Presentation (Session 5: Table 6) – Windows: Tower – Second Level
- 5:10–5:40pm • *A systemic-functional analysis of the writing of college students with a heritage second languages*; Justin Jernigan (Georgia Gwinnett College) – Individual Paper – Tower Court D: Tower – Second Level

Tuesday, March 25

- 8:00–8:30am • *Culturally shaped storytelling styles: The role of appraisal*; Erin Elizabeth Flynn (University of Michigan) – Individual Paper – Tower Court A: Tower – Second Level
- 11:55–12:25pm • *“Blatantly racist” or “entirely reasonable”? A critical discourse approach towards two TikTok hearing reports*; Zihan Lin (University of Georgia) & Maverick Y. Zhang (Hunter College, City University of New York) – Individual Paper – Gold: Tower – Mezzanine Level

OTHER UPCOMING EVENTS & VENUES FOR SFL WORK

ISFC50:

The International Systemic Functional Congress and Institute: A Trinocular Retrospective

- Congress: July 7–11, 2025
- Pre-Congress Institute: July 5–6, 2025
- University of Glasgow, Scotland, UK
- Check out the [ISFC50 conference website](#) for info about registration, plenaries, etc.

50th International Systemic Functional Congress and Institute (ISFC 50): A Trinocular Retrospective

University of Glasgow, Scotland, UK

Congress: 7th – 11th July 2025

Pre-Congress Institute: 5th – 6th July 2025

CFP & Submission

Pre-Congress Institute

Plenaries

Registration

Programme

Accommodation & Transportation

Conference Dinner & Day Trip



Bloomsbury Studies in Systemic Functional Linguistics

J. R. Martin (Series Editor), John S. Knox (Series Editor), David Caldwell (Series Editor), Jing Hao (Series Editor), Mariana Achugar (Series Editor)

Book Series:

Bloomsbury Studies in Systemic Functional Linguistics

- View existing titles on the [series page](#)
- Click [here](#) for more information on submitting a proposal

The 3rd International Systemic Functional Linguistics Interest Group Conference (SFLIG 2025)

Dates: November 10-13, 2025

See SFLIG 2025 Announcement and Call for Papers on next page or [conference website](#) for details

SFLIG 2025

10-13 NOVEMBER

CALL FOR PAPERS

The 3rd
International Online
Systemic Functional
Linguistics Interest
Group Conference

PLENARY AND KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



Jonathan Webster



Christian Matthiessen



Sally Humphrey



Fei Victor Lim



Clarence Green



Thomas Amundrud



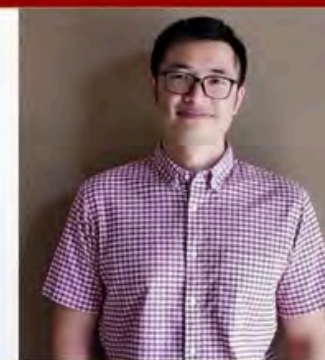
Kathryn Accurso



Vinh To



Eric Cheung



Dongbing Zhang

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: 30 APRIL 2025

<https://sflinterestgroup.com/announcement-and-call-for-papers/>