

March 2013

Volume 12

NASFLA Newsletter

North American Systemic Functional Linguistics Association

Professional Service Session Meeting at AAAL2013

Sheraton Dallas Hotel

Saturday, March 16

Remington Room – 8:00-10:00pm

1. Business meeting
2. Panel Discussion



Dear Members,

I would like to begin by thanking the past leadership of the North American Systemic Functional Linguistics Association (NASFLA) for forming an organization that provides a valuable forum for exploring the potential of systemic functional linguistics (SFL) in North American. As many of us get ready to attend the annual meetings of the American Association of Applied Linguistics (AAAL) or Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Language (TESOL) in Dallas, you will most likely notice an increase in the number of sessions that draw on SFL as a theoretical framework to inform approaches to: researching L1 and L2 language and literacy development; designing curriculum, instruction, and assessments in a variety of educational contexts; implementing policies related to language learning and teachers' professional development; and analyzing discourse from a critical perspective.

You will also see a change in the format of the business meeting taking place on Saturday, March 16, 2013 at 8:00 pm (see agenda). In addition to acknowledging the valuable contributions of Viviana Cortes, the outgoing newsletter editor, and Jackie Nenchin, the webmaster, we will hold an election for a new newsletter editor and vote on the creation of two new committees. The first committee, proposed by Marianna Achugar, centers on establishing funding for travel to support greater connections with the Latin American Systemic Functional Linguistics Association (LASFLA). The second committee, proposed by Ruth Harman, centers on establishing an award for an emerging new scholar.

In addition, we will be hosting a panel discussion among leading language scholars, including Gordon Wells, Jim Lantolf, and Heidi Byrnes. These panelists will engage in a dialogue regarding the complementary contributions of Halliday and Vygotsky to a language-based theory of learning. Gordon Wells will provide his thoughts on Halliday's 1993 article in *Linguistics and Education* titled "Towards a language-based theory of learning" and his commentary the following year in the same journal. Jim Lantolf will provide some remarks on conceptions of "learning" and "development" in sociocultural theory given his extensive work in this area. And Heidi Byrnes will provide insights on how she conceptualizes "learning" and "development" in her work, which draws on both Halliday and Vygotsky and has made such an important contribution to the study of L2 academic language development in classroom contexts. Last, I will moderate a wider discussion with those present. For those who will not be in attendance, Kathryn Accurso has agreed to videotape the session and work with Jackie Nenchin to upload a recording to the new NASFLA website (<http://nasfla.weebly.com/officers.html>). For those interested in reading Halliday's 1993 article and Well's commentary, you can find PDFs of both on the NASFLA website.

So please join me for a lively business meeting in Dallas.

Best,

Meg Gebhard

Highlights:

President's letter	1
Meeting Agenda	2
NASFLA recommended presentations	3-9

Minding our own language – Jackie Nenchin's article... 10-12

NASFLA

President:
Meg Gebhard,
University of
Massachusetts,
Amherst

Vice-President:
Mariana Achugar,
Carnegie Mellon
University

Secretary:
Ruth Harman,
University of Georgia

Newsletter Editor:
Viviana Cortes,
Georgia State
University

Webmaster:
Jackie Nenchin,
Molloy College

Business Meeting Agenda

8:00 Welcome and call to order
Meg Gebhard

8:05 Minutes approval (AAAL Boston, 2012)
Ruth Harman

8:10 New Business

- Recognition for Viviana Cortes, who is stepping down as the newsletter editor
 - o Slate of candidates for new editor
 - Rachel Pinnow and Dong shin Shin (co-editors)
 - Other nominees?
 - o Officers elected for two years. Elections for other positions will be held next year
- NASFLA website and recognition for Jackie Nenchin
 - o Need for bibliographies (see website)
- Proposal: Vote on the formation of two new committees
 - o NASFLA Emergent Scholar Award (Chair, Ruth Harman)
 - o Travel Award (Chair, Mariana Achugar)
- Call for papers for AAAL 2014 and other conferences
- Other announcements

8:30 **Panel discussion:** *Revisiting the complementary contributions of Halliday and Vygotsky to a "language-based theory of learning"*
Gordon Wells

8:45 Response
Jim Lantolf

9:00 Response
Heidi Byrnes

9:15 Open discussion

9:55 Motion to adjourn

AAAL Presentations recommended by NASFLA

Day	Sessions
March 16 th	<p>8:50am - 9:20am Sheraton Dallas Hotel, Majestic 9 (Hotel - 37th Fl) The Participants Were Randomly Assigned...: Lexical Bundles in Research Article Methodology Sections Presenter(s): Viviana Cortes (Georgia State University) In Session Submission: TXT Cortes In Session Submission Type: Paper Session Strand: Text Analysis (Written Discourse) Individual Submission Type: Individual Paper</p>
	<p>2:35pm - 3:05pm Sheraton Dallas Hotel, Majestic 4 (Hotel - 37th Fl) Teachers' Perspective on a Linguistically-Informed Approach to Content Area Reading Presenter(s): Chu-Chuan Chiu, University of Florida; Suzanne Coatoam, University of Florida; Julie Bader, University of Florida; Brian Trutschel, University of Florida; Zhihui Fang, University of Florida In Session Submission: RWL Chiu et al. In Session Submission Type: Paper Session Strand: Reading, Writing, and Literacy Individual Submission type: Individual Paper</p>
	<p>3:55pm - 5:00pm Sheraton Dallas Hotel, Press Club Room (Hotel - 2nd Fl) A Functional Linguistic Comparative Analysis of L2 Genre-based Writing Presenter(s): Hiram Maxim, Emory University In Session Submission: SLA Osborne/Maxim/Trentman In Session Submission Type: Roundtable Session Strand: Second Language Acquisition, Language Acquisition, and Attrition Individual Submission type: Roundtable Presentation</p>
	<p>3:55pm - 5:00pm Sheraton Dallas Hotel, Press Club Room (Hotel - 2nd Fl) Examining Linguistic Functions of "Knowingly" and "Intelligently" in Police Cautions Presenter(s): Margaret van Naerssen, Immaculata University In Session Submission: DIS Defibaugh/Kleinberger et al./Van Naerssen In Session Submission Type: Roundtable Session Strand: Analysis of Discourse and Interaction Individual Submission type: Roundtable Presentation</p>

Day	Sessions
March 16 th	<p>4:30pm - 5:00pm Sheraton Dallas Hotel, Majestic 4 (Hotel - 37th Fl) A Comparison of 2nd- and 4th-Grade ELLs' SFL-Supported Argumentative Writing, Presenter(s): Catherine O'Hallaron, University of Michigan/School of Education In Session Submission: RWL O'Hallaron In Session Submission Type: Paper Session Strand: Reading, Writing, and Literacy Individual Submission type: Individual Paper</p>

Day	Sessions
March 17 th	<p>8:15am - 8:45am Sheraton Dallas Hotel, Majestic 4 (Hotel - 37th Fl) Writing a Report: A Study of Preadolescents' Use of Informational Language Presenter(s): Zhihui Fang, University of Florida; Yang Qi, University of Florida; Julie Bader, University of Florida; Suzanne Coatoam, University of Florida In Session Submission: RWL Fang et al. In Session Submission Type: Paper Session Strand: Reading, Writing, and Literacy Individual Submission type: Individual Paper</p>
	<p>8:50am - 9:20am Sheraton Dallas Hotel, Majestic 9 (Hotel - 37th Fl) Disciplinary Undergraduate Student Writing Development in a Globalizing World: Findings from a 4-year Longitudinal Study Presenter(s): Silvia Pessoa, Carnegie Mellon University; Ryan Miller, Carnegie Mellon University In Session Submission: RWL Pessoa & Miller In Session Submission Type: Paper Session Strand: Reading, Writing, and Literacy Individual Submission type: Individual Paper</p>

NASFLA
Newsletter
PAGE 4

Day	Sessions
March 17 th	<p>9:45am - 11:15am Sheraton Dallas Hotel, Grand Hall CD (CC - 1st Fl) Systemic Functional Analysis of Language of Instruction of Elementary School Language Arts Textbooks Presenter(s): Irina Presnyakova, Simon Fraser University In Session Submission: Poster Sessions TXT In Session Submission Type: Poster Session Strand: Text Analysis (Written Discourse) Individual Submission type: Poster</p>
	<p>10:10am - 10:40am Sheraton Dallas Hotel, Majestic 7 (Hotel - 37th Fl) Examining Transformations in Adolescent Second Language Writers' Ideational Meanings: Implications for L2 Writing Pedagogy in a Globalizing World Presenter(s): Anthony Adawu, University of Maryland, College Park In Session Submission: PED Adawu In Session Submission Type: Paper Session Strand: Second and Foreign Language Pedagogy Individual Submission type: Individual Paper</p>
	<p>10:45am - 11:15am Sheraton Dallas Hotel, Majestic 11 (Hotel - 37th Fl) A Systemic-Functional Approach to Teaching and Learning Evaluative Language in the L2 Classroom Presenter(s): Mackenzie Warren, Georgetown University; Claudia Winkler, Georgetown University In Session Submission: PED Warren & Winkler In Session Submission Type: Paper Session Strand: Second and Foreign Language Pedagogy Individual Submission type: Individual Paper</p>
	<p>2:00pm - 2:30pm Sheraton Dallas Hotel / City View 1 (Hotel - 4th Fl) All the School's a Stage: Using Performance to Foster Critical Discourse Awareness Presenter(s): Ruth Harman, University of Georgia In Session Submission: DIS Harman In Session Submission Type: Paper Session Strand: Analysis of Discourse and Interaction Individual Submission Type: Individual Paper</p>

Day	Sessions
March 17th	<p>2:00pm - 2:30pm Sheraton Dallas Hotel / City View 1 (Hotel - 4th Fl) All the School's a Stage: Using Performance to Foster Critical Discourse Awareness Presenter(s): Ruth Harman, University of Georgia In Session Submission: DIS Harman In Session Submission Type: Paper Session Strand: Analysis of Discourse and Interaction Individual Submission Type: Individual Paper</p>
	<p>2:00pm - 5:00pm Sheraton Dallas Hotel, Dallas Ballroom D3 (CC - 1st Fl) A Meaning-based Approach to Complexity Presenter(s): Marianna Ryshina-Pankova, Georgetown University In Session Submission: SLA New Developments in the Study of L2 Complexity In Session Submission Type: Colloquium Strand: Second Language Acquisition, Language Acquisition, and Attrition Individual Submission type: Colloquium Paper</p>
	<p>2:00pm - 3:40pm Sheraton Dallas Hotel, Dallas Ballroom D2 (CC - 1st Fl) Essays in Elementary: An SFL-Based Curriculum for Supporting ELLs in Primary Grades to Write Analytical Responses to Literature Presenter(s): Jason Moore, University of Michigan; Mary Schleppegrell, University of Michigan In Session Submission: RWL The Disciplinary Challenges of English Language Arts: The Role of a Functional Grammar in Supporting Student Learning In Session Submission Type: Colloquium Strand: Reading, Writing, and Literacy Individual Submission type: Colloquium Paper</p>
	<p>2:00pm - 3:40pm Sheraton Dallas Hotel, Dallas Ballroom D2 (CC - 1st Fl) Disciplinarity in English Language Arts Presenter(s): Frances Christie, University of Sydney In Session Submission: RWL The Disciplinary Challenges of English Language Arts: The Role of a Functional Grammar in Supporting Student Learning In Session Submission Type: Colloquium Strand: Reading, Writing, and Literacy Individual Submission type: Colloquium Paper</p>

Day	Sessions
March 17th	<p>2:00pm - 3:40pm Sheraton Dallas Hotel, Dallas Ballroom D2 (CC - 1st FI) Dialect and Register in the Writing of Diverse Secondary ELA Students Presenter(s): David West Brown, National University of Singapore, University Town Writing Programme In Session Submission: RWL The Disciplinary Challenges of English Language Arts: The Role of a Functional Grammar in Supporting Student Learning In Session Submission Type: Colloquium Strand: Reading, Writing, and Literacy Individual Submission type: Colloquium Paper</p>
	<p>3:55pm - 5:35pm Sheraton Dallas Hotel, Dallas Ballroom D2 (CC - 1st FI) Collaborative Use of SFL Analysis in Subject English to Support Dynamic Interpretation of Canonical Texts Presenter(s): Amber Simmons, University of Georgia In Session Submission: EDU Using Systemic Functional Linguistics to Support Critical Literacy Development in K-12 Classrooms In Session Submission Type: Colloquium Strand: Educational Linguistics Individual Submission type: Colloquium Paper</p>
	<p>3:55pm - 5:35pm Sheraton Dallas Hotel, Dallas Ballroom D2 (CC - 1st FI) Developing critical language awareness: a history teacher's journey Presenter(s): Mariana Achugar, Carnegie Mellon University; Brian Carpenter, University of Pittsburgh In Session Submission: EDU Using Systemic Functional Linguistics to Support Critical Literacy Development in K-12 Classrooms In Session Submission Type: Colloquium Strand: Educational Linguistics Individual Submission type: Colloquium Paper</p>
	<p>3:55pm - 5:35pm Sheraton Dallas Hotel, Dallas Ballroom D2 (CC - 1st FI) Friend Talk, Teacher Talk, and Family Talk: First Grade Students and their Teacher Analyze Spoken Language Using Halliday's Interpersonal Metafunction Presenter(s): Jennifer Anne McCreight, The University of Georgia In Session Submission: EDU Using Systemic Functional Linguistics to Support Critical Literacy Development in K-12 Classrooms In Session Submission Type: Colloquium Strand: Educational Linguistics Individual Submission type: Colloquium Paper</p>

Day	Sessions
March 17th	<p>5:05pm - 5:35pm Sheraton Dallas Hotel, Majestic 9 (Hotel - 37th Fl) Rhetorical and Linguistic Features of Early Undergraduate Writing: A Cross-Institutional, Genre-Based Study Presenter(s): Laura Aull, Wake Forest University; Zak Lancaster, Wake Forest University In Session Submission: TXT Aull & Lancaster In Session Submission Type: Paper Session Strand: Text Analysis (Written Discourse) Individual Submission type: Individual Paper</p>

Day	Sessions
March 18 th	<p>8:50am - 9:20am Sheraton Dallas Hotel, Majestic 2 (Hotel - 37th Fl) Reflecting on Multilingualism as a Semiotic Resource: Classroom Practices of Multimodality Presenter(s): Diane Potts, Lancaster University In Session Submission: BIH Potts In Session Submission Type: Paper Session Strand: Bilingual, Immersion, Heritage, and Minority Education Individual Submission type: Individual Paper</p>
	<p>3:55pm - 4:25pm Sheraton Dallas Hotel, Majestic 9 (Hotel - 37th Fl) Multi-Dimensional Mapping of 'New' Genres of English Presenter(s): Jeff Connor-Linton, Georgetown University In Session Submission: TXT Connor-Linton In Session Submission Type: Paper Session Strand: Text Analysis (Written Discourse) Individual Submission type: Individual Paper</p>



Day	Sessions
<p>March 19th</p>	<p>9:45am - 11:15am Sheraton Dallas Hotel, Grand Hall CD (CC - 1st Fl) An Approach to the Study of Textbook Images and Transactional Processes Presenter(s): Pablo Esteban Requena, Universidad Nacional de Córdoba; Susana María Liruso, Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, Argentina In Session Submission: Poster Sessions DIS 2 In Session Submission Type: Poster Session Strand: Analysis of Discourse and Interaction Individual Submission type: Poster</p>
	<p>2:00pm - 3:40pm Sheraton Dallas Hotel, Dallas Ballroom D1 (CC-1st Fl) TESOL at AAAL Colloquium - Perspectives on Language for Academic Success Strand: AAAL Annual Conference Session Organizer: Ryuko Kubota (University of British Columbia) ; Margaret Hawkins (University of Wisconsin at Madison)</p> <p>Standards and Perspectives on Language for Academic Success: The Case of English Language Learners Presenter(s): Guadalupe Valdes (Stanford University)</p> <p>BICS and CALP in the Era of Common Core State Standards Presenter(s): Jim Cummins (University of Toronto)</p> <p>Academic Language: Supporting the Development of Language Resources for Success at School Presenter(s): Mary Schleppegrell (University of Michigan)</p> <p>Language, Literacy and Culture: Dialect Variation as Resource Presenter(s): Carol Lee (Northwestern University)</p>

“Minding Our Language” or Resources for Dealing with the Elephant in the Room

By Jackie Nenchin

Late in the week of the 2012 TESOL Convention, I rushed to Philadelphia to hear Dr. Heidi Byrnes, the George M. Roth Distinguished Professor of Georgetown University’s German Department and Associate Editor of *The Modern Language Journal*, deliver a plenary address entitled “The Bilingual Turn: Minding Our Language.” Heidi Byrnes is a leader in foreign language education, who has explored and implemented fresh perspectives on second language teaching, and an ardent proponent of Systemic Functional Linguistics and its applicability to language teaching and learning.

Dr. Byrnes introduced the topic of minding one’s language by providing some background. She pointed out the enormous demands of language teaching and how it requires us to “mind our language,” which she defined as (a) “knowledge about language suited to the bilingual turn,” (b) “meta-awareness about language for talk about language,” (c) “an understanding of how knowledge in the disciplines and professions is shaped *in* and *through* and *with* language,” and (d) “attending to multilingual meaning making.” She cited these requirements as countermeasures to the narrow views of language as “abstract” and language learning as “rule-governed.” By minding our language, we can better understand language and more competently facilitate our students’ learning.

After giving a brief overview of newer language theories, such as Larsen-Freeman’s use of chaos/complexity theory, Heidi Byrnes explained that language teachers should find a meaning-oriented theory because “such a theory would allow language professionals to enable learners to be increasingly *more able* language learners.” At this point in her address, she brought up the subject of knowledge about language (KAL), which she termed “the elephant in the room.” She argued that much research has been focused on teacher cognition (*What do teachers know? What do they believe?*), but little research has centered on what teachers *should* know about language. In particular, she asked, “What should teachers know about grammar?” and “How

does that knowledge relate to curriculum and pedagogy, and, in turn, to student learning?” In concord with Kress, who identified “the nature and role of language as a semiotic resource, a resource for creating meaning” in the world of multimodal meaning making, Byrnes suggested that the theory of language that is most suited to understanding language as a resource for creating meaning is

a functional theory of language: Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) is not just a theory of how people use language. It is a theory about the nature and evolution of language and a theory that regards lexicogrammar as meaningful It links context and wording.

She explained that adopting Halliday’s SFL as a theoretical framework has helped Georgetown University’s German Program attain its goals of advanced second language development and intercultural competence.

In addition to Georgetown’s German Department, some of the other groups in the U. S. currently working with SFL were described by Byrnes. At the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Meg Gebhard, is co-director of the ACCELA (Access through Critical Content and English Language Acquisition) Alliance, a university-school partnership exploring how coursework in SFL influences teachers’ conception of grammar to improve curriculum and instruction in urban schools. At the University of Michigan, Mary Schleppegrell and Annemarie Palinscar are involved in a project using functional grammar to train elementary school teachers in Dearborn Public Schools to make connections between form and meaning, thereby helping students improve their literacy. And a similar project is underway in Alexandria Public Schools. She referred to these programs as a way of concluding her plenary address and affirming that her work at Georgetown is not the only SFL “enterprise” in the U.S. and that the importance of Halliday’s theory of language and its integration into teacher training is gaining wider recognition here. (It is already in extensive use in Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong, China, and elsewhere.)

That the plenary address by Byrnes came on the heels of last year’s SFL-focused address by Jim Martin and Christian Matthiessen is perhaps a further indicator that SFL is being increasingly seen here as a resource for

dealing with that elephant in the room, KAL. As we in New York prepare to meet the challenges of the change to the Common Core State Standards, we notice that the CCSS refer again and again to giving attention to language -- the language used in fictional and nonfictional texts, the language used in content areas, the language used to express ideas and shape meaning – and we must be ready to address this shift in focus by better understanding how meaning is created by lexico-grammar and rhetorical structure. Hallidayan SFL is certainly one way to do this, and much evidence from Australia and the aforementioned researchers in the U.S. supports this perspective.

Epilogue

Many resources are available for the study of SFL. Some of them are listed below the brief example of SFL applied:

An Example from
Halliday and Matthiessen (2004):

English language learners often have difficulty with certain verbs that are usually not used in the progressive tenses, for example, *believe*, *like*, and *understand*.

In L2 grammar instruction based on SFL, these verbs are separated from typical action verbs because they express the inner world of consciousness. How and why these verbs are different can be explained, rather than memorized as rules.

Resources

- Butt, D., Fahey, R., Feez, S., Spinks, S., & Yallop, C. (2003). *Using Functional Grammar: An Explorer's Guide*, 2nd ed. Sydney: NCELTR/Macquarie University.
- Christie, F. (2012). *Language education throughout the school years: A functional perspective*. Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Halliday, M. A. K., & Hasan, R. (1976). *Cohesion in English*. London: Longman Group Ltd.
- Halliday, M. A. K., & Hasan, R. (1989). *Language, context, and text: Aspects of language in a social-semiotic perspective*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Halliday, M. A. K., & Matthiessen, C. M. I. M. (2004). *Introduction to functional grammar* (3rd ed.). London: Edward Arnold.
- Jones, R. H., & Lock, G. (2012). *Functional grammar in the ESL classroom: Noticing, exploring and practicing*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

