Message from the President

Brian Dare (on behalf of the ASFLA executive)

It is a great honour to be writing to you as the new ASFLA president. I am looking forward to taking up the role and I hope I can make a small contribution to the continuing work of the ASFLA committee.

My first duty is to thank Pauline Jones for her wonderful contribution as a member of the committee for the last nine years and more recently as the president. She has been a tireless and enthusiastic contributor throughout that time. We are all very grateful and appreciative, Pauline, for all your wonderful and often unheralded work over that period.

As always, there are any number of SFL related activities going on around the country and beyond that continue to promote the work, but just to mention a few very briefly. The recent 2015 ASFLA Conference *Linguistics, Literature and Verbal Art: Inheritances and Developments* was held in Brisbane. I did not attend but the reports back to me from people who did, have been very positive indeed. Many thanks to Garry Collins and Lindsay Williams for all their hard work as organisers. We thank Sally Humphrey for her energy and commitment in organising the *Symposium for school based social semiotic researchers* held in Germany in July this year. Also we outsiders to Sydney are very envious of the continuing *Friday afternoon seminars* organised in recent times by Jim Martin, and the social semiotics course for postgraduate students run by Len Unsworth, and we thank them for their ongoing contribution.

The committee will meet in the near future and one of our pressing items will be to decide how we can best honour Ruqaiya Hasan’s memory in some permanent way. Any thoughts from you would be most welcome. You may like to read the tribute to Ruqaiya Hasan kindly contributed by Geoff Williams on page 2 of the newsletter.

I look forward to working with you as part of the ASFLA community over the coming months. Please feel free to contact me or other members of the committee at anytime to alert us to issues and ideas that you think worthwhile pursuing under the auspices of ASFLA.

Brian Dare

bdare@lexised.com

In this issue

- Tribute to Ruqaiya Hasan
- Photos from the ASFLA conference
- Research project profile - Victor Chang Institute
- Literacy news from the Solomon Islands

Please let us know if you have any news that should appear on these pages or if you have any ideas about what you’d like to see:

asflanews@gmail.com

Trish Weekes, Editor
Emeritus Professor Ruqaiya Hasan, who contributed so wisely and richly to the development of SFL theory and research for 50 years, died in Sydney on 24 June 2015. She arrived in Australia in 1976 with her husband, Michael Halliday, and their young son, Neil, and shortly afterwards took up the position at Macquarie University in which she continued until her retirement.

Her contributions to linguistics ranged from her first interest in verbal art, through linguistic structure and texture, to the modelling of context, the ontogenetic development of consciousness through language, speakers’ social class positioning and semantic variation, to language education, especially literacy education. From her early life in India and Pakistan, where she studied and taught until leaving for Edinburgh to complete graduate study, she derived a deeply felt understanding of relations between language, forms of consciousness and culture. Her nascent impressions were later to be theorized in such remarkable essays as ‘Ways of saying, ways of meaning’ and ‘Globalization, literacy and ideology’. She remained deeply committed to language education in Pakistan, a commitment mainly expressed in her support of the work of her sister, Professor Zakia Sarwar, and the Society of Pakistan English Language Teachers.

She will be remembered for many attributes. Of these, the most visible was her fierce, sophisticated, critical independence. It was applied with equal force to all linguistic scholarship, that of theoretical foes, her friends and her own work. No current linguistic model of anything was sacrosanct. The sharpness of her vision, and occasionally of her speech in conference discussions, was sometimes interpreted as interpersonal distance and aloofness. In fact, she was an extraordinarily kind, generous, loyal and sensitive colleague. Most especially, she was an attentive listener to other people’s views, especially the views of students. It is a standing joke amongst them that their supervisory conversations sometimes went like this:

Student: I was thinking that [some new linguistic insight follows].

Ruqaiya: Do you really think that?

Student: No, no, not at all. I just realized that it was not such a good idea.

It was a matter of some pride to her that she never praised her PhD students because she saw them as collaborators in developing SFL and wanted them to be as restless to create better work as she was herself. But the absence of praise was complemented by extraordinary generosity with her time, much humour and an unqualified commitment to their success.

Towards the end of her life, in conversations in hospital, she was most at ease when talking about linguistic theory and research. Her strongest wishes for her own continuing scholarship were to further develop the semantic networks she had designed to study semantic variation, and to complete her Collected Works. The semantic networks were to be revised and tested during weekly meetings with a couple of colleagues, starting as soon as she was discharged. That new work has been lost. However, all seven volumes of her Collected Works will be completed. The first three are available, Volume 4 is being printed now, and the remaining three are being prepared by her editor, Jonathan Webster, and five of her former colleagues and students. These will be complemented by a further, eighth volume of papers presented about her work at a memorial symposium at Sun Yat Sen University, Guangzhou.

Writing this brief tribute I hear again her words as I left her hospital room late one evening, a broad smile on her face. “You know, I didn’t become interested in SFL because of Halliday. I became interested in SFL because I thought Halliday was right!” Just in case we hadn’t noticed.

Geoff Williams
Perpetual award
At the ASFLA AGM in Brisbane, it was suggested that a perpetual award be established to honour the scholarship and memory of Ruqaiya Hasan. There was broad support for the idea but there are a number of options to consider.

The ASFLA Committee will be establishing a working group to come up with some options that will be presented at the symposium in 2016. If you are interested in contributing, please email us: asflanews@gmail.com

Macquarie University Symposium
16-17 February 2016
Our colleagues at Macquarie University are planning a symposium in honour of Ruqaiya Hasan. The details will be posted on the sysfunc list and on the ASFLA website when they are available.

NEW: Essays in honour of Ruqaiya Hasan
Society in Language, Language in Society: Essays in Honour of Ruqaiya Hasan is the first collection dedicated to research directly influenced by the innovative and groundbreaking ideas of the eminent linguist Ruqaiya Hasan. The collection offers an insight into the breadth and depth of Hasan’s distinctive linguistic approaches and theoretical concerns. It includes original contributions by well-known scholars such as M.A.K. Halliday, Margaret Berry, David G. Butt, Donna R. Miller, Geoff Williams, Mary Schleppegrell, Annabelle Lukin, Alison Rotha Moore and Tom Bartlett, and covers a range of areas including verbal art, context of situation, semantic networks, cohesive harmony, text structure and literacy education. The volume also contains an interview with Ruqaiya Hasan by David Butt and Jennifer Yameng Liang, and a section in which the contributors describe their connection with Ruqaiya Hasan and her work.

www.palgrave.com

To read a eulogy for Ruqaiya Hasan, composed by Annabelle Lukin, please visit: http://www.annabellelukin.com/vale-ruqaiya-hasan.html

The ASFLA conference for 2015 was held from 28th September to the 1st of October at the beautiful University of Queensland St Lucia campus. The theme was Linguistics, Literature and Verbal Art: Inheritances and Developments.

The pre conference institutes were conducted on the 28th September by Lorraine McDonald and Shooshi Dreyfus. The first conference day, Tuesday 29th September, was the Teachers’ Day and attendees were treated to a range of wonderful sessions. Mary Macken-Horarik set the tone for the day with an inspiring and insightful plenary address. Following the plenary, there was a feast of concurrent sessions (18 in total). It was a very difficult task to choose which one to attend. I wanted to see them all! By all accounts, the sessions were inspiring and practical, and there was a session to suit every interest. Two final plenaries by Sally Humphrey and Sue Hood capped off a wonderful day. After all that talking and listening, we all needed a drink—see the photos on the next page for the happy snaps from the drinks and conference dinner.

Days 2 and 3 of the conference continued with high quality and fascinating presentations. Plenary addresses from Rosemary Huisman, David Kellogg, David Butt and Len Unsworth gave us plenty of food for thought and appealed to our senses with poetry, art, artefacts old and new, and many other visual and verbal delights. The concurrent sessions also offered an embarrassment of intellectual riches from Australia and around the world.

Conferences like this could not happen without the generous help of the convenors and their team of volunteers. Attendees rarely see the enormous amount of work involved in organising a conference (although those who have had their turn at organising do understand!) Everything ran very smoothly and our Brisbane hosts were generous and welcoming to us all. Garry Collins and Lindsay Williams, as conference convenors, did a wonderful job in managing and co-ordinating the event. The team of conference organisers did a sterling job and kept everything humming along smoothly. ASFLA thanks Beryl Exley, Kaylene Bishop, Kev Bishop, Trish Purcell, Alicia Exley, Linda Willis, Melanie Wild, Marianne Schubert and Jane Kelly. The English Teachers’ Association of Queensland generously facilitated the conference bookings through their website (thanks to Trish Purcell).

We are happily anticipating next year’s conference, to be held at the Australian Catholic University in North Sydney.

Trish Weekes, Editor
Happy snaps from ASFLA 2015.

Three of our wonderful ASFLA conference volunteers: Trish Purcell, Kev Bishop and Alicia Exley
After three years at the helm and three as a senior executive, the formidable Pauline (PJ) Jones has left ASFLA to join FISCO (the Federation of International Systemic-Functional Congress Organisers). In an unprecedented move, Jones plans to bring the 2017 International Congress to the beachside university town of Wollongong, famed for both educational linguistics and left hand breaks. “ASFLA will always have a big place in my heart but I’m now looking for a global challenge,” said Jones.

Jones steered ASFLA through the difficult years of the post-GFC flatline, divesting the association’s interests in tobacco, pork and child-labour-driven products and taking the group back to the basics: helping members to put on great conferences; supporting student delegates; timely and responsive funding for research and teaching initiatives in Australia; supporting SFL extension in new countries of fields of application; connecting people in the SFL community; and honouring the contributions of leading figures in SFL. Along with Treasurer Yaegan (The Gun) Doran, Jones has ensured the prudent use of life membership fees to further shore up the Association’s financial viability and longevity.

On hearing the news of Jones’s imminent departure, fellow executive members were tearful but grateful for the effort and energy they’d shared over the years. “Meetings with PJ and the team were like an island of positivity and inclusion in the sometimes negative and adversarial environment of the academic workday” said Alison Moore, VP of ASFLA 2012-present. “It was always good to talk to Pauline about research ideas and upcoming events. She brought her inimitable style, wit, and interpersonal acuity to the face of ASFLA”. Treasure Doran and executive member Shooshi Dreyfus agreed, adding that “before working with PJ, we hadn't realised that discussions about the intricate minutiae of finances and other administrative matters could be so fun!”

The executive are excited to be now working with new President, Brian Dare (see p.1), whose warmth, efficiency and ‘match fitness’ are huge assets as he leads ASFLA into the busy Christmas season.

ASFLA Membership

Did you come to the conference? You’re an ASFLA member!

If you attend or register for an ASFLA conference, you automatically become a member. You can register for membership at any time. You can upgrade your membership to LIFE membership. Currently the fees for life membership $250. Annual membership is $40. Student membership $25.. To upgrade your membership, go through the ASFLA website.

On behalf of the ASFLA executive, we wish you a very happy and rejuvenating festive season and lots of happiness and good health in 2016.
Changing language teaching in Solomon Islands

By Marie Quinn (from Honiara)

It’s not all embedded clauses and metafunctions in the world of language and literacy reform. In the current literacy initiatives being carried out in Solomon Islands education, looking at strata of language within a text is something that the new Literacy Programme Management Unit (LPMU) within the Ministry of Education hopes will help teachers to think about what they are teaching students.

In August 2014, I took up the new role at the Literacy Advisor with the Ministry here in Honiara, a response to the analysis of national testing at Grades 4 and 6 that showed worryingly poor results for students in Writing, particularly at Grade 4 level. (My own informal analysis about the improvement between Grade 4 and 6: those that work out how to write improve and those who don’t, drop out!) My first task was to survey the territory (analyse the testing results, observe what happens in classrooms, locate all the curriculum and support resources) and put together a strategy that might serve teachers and students better.

Solomon Islands is a relatively small country with a population of about 600 000 scattered across over 9 island provinces. Working with teachers to bring about change in language and literacy teaching is challenged by distance and accessibility: in one province, it is 14 hours in an open motorboat to reach the schools on the far coast. (I own my own life jacket…)

In terms of language, there are about 70 vernaculars, the *lingua franca*, Pijin, and English. In the heads of many educated Solomon Islanders, there exists some golden age, where everyone spoke perfect English, but the use of English seems to be declining across the nation, particularly in classrooms, where the common pattern is to use Pijin or vernacular for instruction and English for the text reading. Teachers are often not confident in speaking English themselves.

The main teaching practices that impede progress I see are choral reading and copying down writing. These practices mean that in the classroom there is little understanding of either the purpose of texts or the construction of texts, reflected in the national testing. There is a good set of reading resources produced by local curriculum writers in 1995, with stories contextualised to the Solomon Islands, and with a graduated level across Grades 1–6. However, the teachers’ guide rarely deals directly with the language in the text in a way that multilingual speakers would need in this context.

At the same time, teachers worry about literacy, but the latest craze is to turn to “phonics”, which is being promoted by various agencies and individuals. While this approach has some resonance in teaching the regularly-phonetic vernaculars and Pijin, it is not as useful for teaching English, a language that is not known by many students when they start school. In the LPMU, we are trying a different approach.

This year, our sole focus is on Grades 1–3 and we are targeting our workshops directly to these teachers who we gather in clusters of schools. Our 5 messages are:

- Reading is in the head, not on the lips
- Literacy is in the students’ hands
- Literacy is about constructing (not copying)
- Different texts need different strategies
- Literacy is every day

(continued on p8)
Changing language teaching in Solomon Islands
(continued)

We rename current practice: choral activity is called is called saying, not reading; copying and handwriting are not the same as writing; leaving a list of activities on the board for students to complete is called managing or administering, not teaching. In this way, we hope to show that reading and writing are something more than what is being done now.

We use a 4-part model to talk about language: message, structure, vocabulary, letter/sound patterns. While this is a little simplistic, it is providing a useful way to help teachers to “see” the language in the texts, for reading and writing. We ask teachers to analyse the readers they are using to see what to teach with the text. Finding the message, a shorthand for purpose (“What is the author showing us about the world? Why is it written?”) proves a challenge as most teachers tell me “I just do the activities in the teachers’ guide, I never think about what it’s telling us”. We then show the teachers how to weave this into their book talk where they introduce a new book, building a purpose for reading. We use the structures in the text to provide models for writing: not copying the text, but innovating the ideas. We encourage the teachers to see the opportunities in the text to teach new vocabulary and letter/sounds, rather than looking for decontextualized lists or phonic activities. In a context where there is little English in the community, the books prove the opportunity to build a field from which teachers can focus on the language. To do this, we encourage a movement from a known language into English: build the context in the shared language and then translate and extend into English.

It would be fanciful to think that is all creating an overnight change in behaviour around language teaching, but we are working hard through training to see that these ideas are slowly moving out to all teachers. As we move to focus on Grades 4 – 6 in 2016, the trick will be to recycle the core messages so that slowly, this focus on language becomes what teachers see as the way we do things around here!

Marie Quinn,
Literacy Adviser,
Literacy Programme Management Unit,
Ministry of Education &
Human Resources Development,
Solomon Islands Government

If you have any other news or photos, from Australia or internationally, please send them to use so we can celebrate our efforts in social semiotics.

asflanews@gmail.com
In 2013, ASFLA funded a small research grant for a genre and Theme/Rheme analysis of scientific writing. The aim of the project was to analyse a successful manuscript, i.e. one published in a high impact factor journal, and deliver a series of workshops aimed at supporting critical literacy for a diverse group of VCCRI scientists (biologists, chemists, biochemists, physicists, mathematicians and so forth).

Workshops were run over three consecutive weeks:

Week 1: Critical reading - Professor Roland Stocker, VCCRI

Week 2: Manuscript writing – Dr Maree Stenglin

Week 3: Paragraph organisation (Theme/Rheme) – Yaegan Doran

In addition to the three workshops, deliverables for the project included a 10-step guide for critical reading, a scaffold for writing scientific manuscripts and an editing checklist. At the end of the year, the Institute conducted a retrospective evaluation of all education seminars and the scientific literacy workshops were ranked most popular seminar series in 2012-3.

Consequently, the VCCRI provided $10,000 for further linguistic analysis – this time focusing on grant writing. Deconstruction of successful National Health & Medical Research Council (NHMRC) grants was conducted by Maree Stenglin and Chris Cleirigh late in 2013, and the results informed a grant-writing workshop presented by Maree Stenglin at VCCRI. Since then, these workshops have become an annual VCCRI event.

By popular demand, the critical reading and manuscript writing workshops have also been institutionalised. In 2015, the audience at Darlinghurst expanded beyond the VCCRI to include scientists from the Garvan and the Kinghorn Cancer Institutes as well. Moreover, some members of the Medical Faculty at the University of Sydney have adapted our critical reading and manuscript writing materials in their programs such as the Hoc Mai Immersion program.

In 2014 and 2015 VCCRI has also provided support for ongoing linguistic assistance with the writing of grant applications for the National Health & Medical Research Council and Maree Stenglin has been awarded an honorary appointment at VCCRI. On behalf of all the participants in this project, including the scientists in the Darlinghurst precinct, many thanks to ASFLA for their initial funding, which lay the foundations for this valuable and ongoing work.
Systemics Club is an Adelaide linguistics discussion group open to anyone who is interested in getting their heads around literature in systemics, semiotics, genre, appraisal, multimodality, academic language and learning, ESP, etc. We share readings, test ideas, and pick each other’s brains. Topics aren’t set in advance, but Wednesdays at 4 in Napier 823 tend to be more teaching/applied-focused and the space is ideal for talking through your own projects; Fridays at 5 are for big ideas and lively discussion (and maybe a beer or two). We will be arranging a number of seminars for 2016, and will extend invitations for speakers in the new year. If you live in Adelaide or are here for a visit, please drop in. Feel free to bring along or bring up anything that's interesting to you, because we will be interested too!

Contact Jess Scott: jessica.scott@adelaide.edu.au
NEW BOOKS

Exploring Literacies: Theory, Research and Practice

Helen de Silva Joyce and Susan Feez

Exploring Literacies: Theory, Research and Practice is a guide to research and debate in the field of literacies education. The book traces three possible pathways through the vast terrain of research and practice. Section 1 introduces five orientations to the teaching of literacy and explores the role of literacy in human societies over time, including the development and teaching of specialised fields of knowledge. Section 2 examines the teaching and learning of literacies across the human lifespan, including the foundations of literacy in early childhood, the link between literacy and learning of educational knowledge during the school years, and the literacy demands of adult life. Section 3 reviews a range of methods used to research literacy in social contexts in general and in education in particular. This section concludes with the voices of literacy researchers describing first-hand their literacy research experiences. With a detailed overview of the research field of literacy teaching, development and professional research, this book will be invaluable for teacher educators and students of Education, TESOL, Literacy or Applied Linguistics.

Teaching Grammatical Metaphor: Designing Pedagogical Interventions

Devo Devrim

This book recounts the ways in which grammatical metaphor (GM) has evolved in SFL theory, discusses the research studies that explored the development of GM in language development and language education contexts, and presents various ways of providing written feedback to English as an additional language (EAL) students drawing on the Sydney School’s genre pedagogy and Vygotsky’s notion of zone of proximal development (ZPD). As such, it is a valuable resource for linguists, educational linguists, lecturers, researchers and higher degree research students, and will be constructive for language programmers, unit/course designers, teacher educators, language teachers and pre-service teachers.

CALLING ALL AUTHORS!

If you have written a book of interest to the ASFLA community, please send us the details and we can let everyone know

asflanews@gmail.com

Trish Weekes, Editor
Congratulations to these clever Doctors on their SFL PhD completions

Dr Catherine Bates
Dr Sarah (Siti) Fitriani
Dr Jing Hao
Dr Ayumi Inako
Dr Anthony Korner
Dr Lucy Macnaught
Dr Erika Matruglio
Dr Harni Singh
Dr Vin Thi
Dr Damon Thomas
Dr Han Wen

Please let us know if we've missed yours!

EVENTS
FOR THE DIARY

International Conference on Language Typology

**12-16 December, 2015**
Martin Centre for Applicable Linguistics
Shanghai Jiao Tong University

Registration and more information:
E-mail: martincentre@163.com

Symposium in honour of Ruqaiya Hasan

**Tues 16 and Wed 17 February 2016**
Macquarie University, Sydney

More details to come on sysfunc and the ASFLA website.

ISFC 43 2016

**19-24 July 2016**: The 43rd International Systemic Functional Congress (ISFC)

**25-27 July 2016**: Post-ISFC Congress

Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia (UPI), Bandung, Indonesia.

Call for papers: Abstracts due 30th Nov, 2015

Registration and more information:
isfc2016.asfli@gmail.com (see p14 of newsletter)

ASFLA 2016

Australian Catholic University, North Sydney
More information: sally.humphrey@acu.edu.au

ISFC 2017

10-15 July 2017, University of Wollongong

And well done to the supervisors of these students! It takes a (SFL) village to raise a PhD!
International Conference on Functional Language Typology
Martin Centre for Applicable Linguistics
Shanghai Jiao Tong University

12–16 December 2015

It is now a little over a decade since the publication of Caffarel et al.'s *Language Typology: a functional perspective* — a book which drew together papers based on workshops and seminars focusing on the description of languages other than English from an SFL perspective. Since that time, SFL work on languages from different language families has expanded considerably. This year's forum is dedicated to encouraging these developments, with special reference to inspiring the role scholars in Chinese universities might play by working on Chinese, minority languages in China and regional languages.

The forum will consist of five days of intensive seminars and paper presentations, led by several ground-breaking functional linguists from around the world (Nick Enfield, Giacomo Figueredo, Randy LaPolla, J R Martin, Christian Matthiessen, Edward McDonald, Beatriz Quiroz, Miriam Taverniers, Kazuhiro Teruya and Wang Pin). Their provisional keynote address titles are listed below. As this selection of keynote speakers suggests, the forum organisers are keen to encourage dialogue across a range of functional perspectives, alongside SFL.

This year the forum will include parallel papers. Scholars working on languages other than English in any area of functional linguistics are welcome to submit a **100-150 word abstract to Wang Pin (martincentre@163.com)**. The deadline for submission is **July 1**; offers of acceptance will be sent by **July 31** (scholars requiring early acceptance should note that clearly in their application).

Further information on the conference, including registration and accommodation, will be available soon on the Martin Centre website at [http://sfl.sjtu.edu.cn/martincentre](http://sfl.sjtu.edu.cn/martincentre)

**Venue:** School of Foreign Languages, Shanghai Jiao Tong University  
**Location:** 800 Dongchuan Road, Minhang District, Shanghai, China  
**Contact:** Wang Pin, martincentre@163.com, (+86)15121004695
http://isfc2016.conference.upi.edu/

Dates

19-24 July 2016: The 43rd International Systemic Functional Congress (ISFC)

25-27 July 2016: Post-ISFC Congress

Call for papers: Abstracts due November 20th, 2015

Venue

ISFC 2016 will take place on the central campus of Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia (UPI), Bandung, Indonesia.

Theme and sub-theme

The underpinning theme of the congress is “Learning Language, Learning Through Language, Learning About Language: Glocalising Systemic Functional Linguistics.” The term Glocalising is adapted in this congress because the congress is concerned with adaptation of international works on SFL but we also consider the particularities of a local culture in which SFL is used. The sub-themes of the conference are:

1. SFL and Multimodality
2. Appraisal theory
3. SFL and Language Teaching across Disciplines
4. Content Language Learning
5. Research on SFL in multi-disciplines
6. SFL and Critical Thinking
7. Critical Discourse Analysis
8. SFL and Translation
9. SFL and Pedagogic Discourse
10. SFL and EFL Teaching

Contact

isfc2016.asfli@gmail.com