

How *does* language work?

Inspiring, informing and equipping teachers and their students with knowledge about how language works as a meaning making system.

Aston University, Birmingham

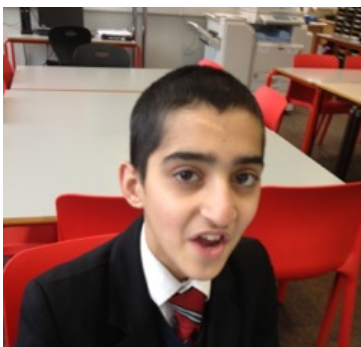
27th and 28th June 2013

The variation between the language of the home and community and the language of school is at the heart of a great deal of the underachievement of identifiable groups of learners in Britain. These learners may speak English either as a first or second language. They draw on the language of home and community to make meanings within school. School subjects draw on different kinds of language. These variations in language do not match.



- This conference is a groundbreaking two-day event and features a rare UK keynote from **Professor James Martin** of the University of Sydney, an architect of “genre based pedagogy” in the early 1980s.
- It is aimed at both teachers and educators, across phases, who are concerned with the role language plays in learning.

Everyday language ← **Mode Continuum** → Academic language



“He wanted to get divorced, get rich and get more power over people.”



Henry’s desire for divorce, money and power led to the establishment of the Church of England.

In 2012 Ofsted said:

“Language for learning is a central element in all teaching.”

and asked:

“What can different subjects specifically contribute to the development of writing skills?”

The two days will focus on moving learners from everyday language to the academic language needed to succeed in school subjects.

The conference aims to:

- Make the workings of the language system explicit in order to appreciate the role language plays in constructing knowledge across all learning areas.
- Build understandings about the patterned ways meanings are made within and across genres so that educators are able to develop students’ language resources to understand and produce those genres.
- Enable participants to understand and use the differences between spoken and written language, both as a teaching and a learning tool.

Dates: Thursday 27th June and/or Friday 28th June, 2013

Venue: Lakeside Conference Centre, Aston University, Birmingham, B4 7ET

Price: £250 for two days or £150 for one day (the price includes lunch and refreshments)



Michael Rosen, broadcaster, children’s novelist and former Children’s Laureate

“M.A.K.Halliday, is a grammarian with a fantastic record in turning the study of 'grammar' into something that treats language as if it is attached to real live human beings who are trying to say and write things that mean something! Unlike most grammar, which pretends as if you can treat language as a ‘system’ detached from meaning, intention and purpose, Halliday’s grammar tries to intertwine meaning with why and how grammar is the way, it is. If you like that sort of thing, his IFG is a great read. It even has gags. “

Programme

Day 1

8.30 – 9.30 Refreshments and registration at Lakeside

9.30-9.35 Brief welcome and introduction by **Professor Anne Burns** of Aston University

9.35-11.00 **Jim Martin**, Professor of Linguistics at the University of Sydney

The keynote will introduce the work on genre-based literacy pedagogy that has developed in the “Sydney School” over three decades, with the goal of overcoming the inequality of outcomes produced in school. It will focus on how the work has continued to grow organically. Jim will acknowledge the model of language in social context that underpins genre pedagogy and the important inspiration of MAK Halliday.

11.00 -11.30 Coffee and refreshments

11.30 – 12.30 **Brian Dare**, writer and presenter of highly-regarded language based CPD

Brian will explore, through drama with Birmingham literacy consultants and teachers, how the work migrated from Sydney to Adelaide and internationally - particularly the UK, despite being “mangled” (NATE) in National Literacy Strategies along the way - to take root in Birmingham.

12.30 - 1.30 Lunch

1.30 – 2.30 *Nominalisation? What’s that?*

Birmingham teachers who have been engaged with PD focused on “language for learning valued school knowledge”, will showcase their applications of genre based pedagogy and functional grammar in their diverse classrooms, and how their schools are strategically planning to take the work further.

2.30 -3.00 Tea

3.00 -4.15 From Formal to Functional

Geoff Thompson from the School of English at the University of Liverpool will outline varied knowledge of traditional and formal grammars in the context of the Coalition Government’s forthcoming KS2 Grammar Test, and New Labour’s pilot KS3 Grammar Test in 1997. He will then explore the view that, “Functional Grammar is richer semantically than either formal or traditional grammar, making analyses more insightful when it comes to interpreting texts and revealing more about a student’s writing ability than other grammars”.

4.30 Close

Day 2:

8.30 - 9.15 Refreshments and registration for single day attendees

9.15-12.35 Three master classes

Tom Bartlett, Lise Fontaine and **Gerard O’Grady** of the Centre for Language and Communication at Cardiff University will lead three master-classes in Functional Grammar.

9.15 – 10.15 **Clause**

Tom will examine the clause as a pattern of wording built around a verb and how they can be combined to expand meaning potential.

10.15 – 10.25 Coffee and refreshments

10.25 – 11.25 **The nominal group and grammatical metaphor**

Lise will investigate the importance of the nominal group – or noun phrase - nominalisation and grammatical metaphor in expanding meaning and building complexity and abstraction.

11.25 -11.35 Coffee and refreshments

11.35 – 12.35 **Theme**

Gerard will explore MAK Halliday’s notion of “theme” which refers to the way a text is organised by speaker or writer, representing the point of departure, or what the clause, paragraph or text will be about.

12.35 – 1.00 Lakeside Master class Plenary

1.00 -1.45 Lunch

1.45 – 3.00 **Sue Hood**, Associate Professor of Applied Linguistics at University of Sydney and **Jim Martin**

Sue and Jim will outline joint secondary school work with classroom teachers in biology and history teaching. The work moves from genre to field, from writing focus to classroom interaction focus, from field building to Basil Bernstein’s knowledge structures, taking in new developments in Appraisal Theory.

3.00- 3.15 Refreshments

3.15-4.30 **Brian Dare** in conversation with Birmingham teachers

Brian and teachers from across schools and subjects recount their contact with the Sydney and Adelaide schools through CPD like TESMC/LiLaC and HLW and how it has allowed them to reflect on the “role of language in earning educational knowledge”, with in-class consultancy support, to change teacher behaviour in sustainable ways.

4.45 **Helen Handford and Paddy Walsh’s goody-bags**