A Model for Teaching Literary Analysis Using Systemic Functional Grammar

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Abstract

This article introduces an approach that middle-school teachers can follow to help their students carry out linguistic-based literary analyses. As an example, it draws on Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) to show how J.K. Rowling used language to characterize Hermione as an intelligent female in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows.* Using a simplified SFG analysis, the authors show how teachers can help students find and use language data that can support their intuition about characters or can uncover other patterns in the text. This type of SFG analysis approach can be particularly useful for English language learners and struggling readers as it provides students with useful tools for text analysis.

Introduction

As students advance through the grade levels, they are expected to move from simply summarizing works of literature to studying texts critically. Critical analysis of text requires an application of sophisticated literary knowledge along with well-developed literacy skills. Learning to uncover what is important in a literary text and then to argue one's opinions using explicit evidence can be difficult tasks no matter what level of English proficiency a student is at. However, learning to do this type of text analysis is important, particularly as students prepare to move to high school and beyond. This move from *enjoying* to *studying* literature as well as the written genres students must learn about so they can reflect it can be daunting for many students. This move is even more complicated for English language learners (ELLs), who due to incomplete knowledge of the English language (Dutro, Levy, & Moore, 2012) as well as limited cultural knowledge (Carter, 2014), may struggle to draw appropriate conclusions about literature.

Teachers of middle-school students are charged with both helping students determine what is important in a text and developing their ability to argue and support ideas. Students must learn that "a text is a complex of patterns, and each pattern carries meaning" (Cummings & Simmons, 1983, p. 87). Cummings and Simmons argued that when introducing students to literature, teachers must foster students' "intuitive sense for what is important," while also teaching them to locate and explain the causes of their "intuition in the text" (p. xv). Teachers may pose questions to assist students with identifying important aspects of the literature being read. For example, a teacher might ask students questions to prompt them with identifying and articulating their intuitions. However, these types of questions may be too challenging for students who are in the early stages of learning to study literature; they may not know how to find evidence of these aspects once the questions are asked. For example, in J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, many students are likely to be able to pick up intuitively, even from a leisurely reading, that Hermione is a

knowledgeable and intelligent character. The most obvious clues are comments made by other characters about her, such as Ron and Harry's comments:

> *"You're a genius," Ron repeated, looking awed.*
>
> *"Yeah, you are, Hermione," agreed Harry fervently. "I don't know what we'd do without you." (p. 425)*

However, some students may struggle to find adequate evidence from Hermione's own behavior and language use. Thus, these students require a systematic approach to engage with literary analysis effectively (McGee, 2002).

Truong (2009) explored the usefulness of several approaches to literary analysis for ELL students and found that certain approaches to literature such as New Criticism and Structuralism are likely to be overwhelming for ELLs. Instead, Truong recommends Language-Based approaches, in which students' experiences with literature are enhanced through activities to prepare them for the language of literature, and Reader-Response approaches, in which readers are encouraged to draw from previous experiences and opinions in the interpretation of a text. While these methods may be less overwhelming for ELLs they avoid the analytical and research-based methods that students could benefit from as they move across the curriculum. Instead, Guo (2008) recommended that language teachers consider Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG).

Systemic Functional Grammar, first introduced by Halliday (1961; 1985), works to connect a text's grammar and meaning. SFG can be used as part of a research-based approach to literature by showing students how to systematically analyze literary texts. Students learn to use the language patterns in the text that were discovered through a SFG analysis as evidence of their intuitions. This approach may be particularly useful for ELLs, who have often been trained to look at language learning as the acquisition of grammar and vocabulary (Hinkel & Fotos, 2001). Moreover, teaching the idea that language is a meaning-making tool and helping students acquire the metalanguage to talk about how meaning is constructed can make students more sensitive to the power and subtleties of language (Guo, 2008; Unsworth, 1999).

Returning to the example of *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, this article will illustrate how an SFG analysis can lend evidence to a student's argument that Hermione is an intelligent female by showing that she uses more technical terms than Harry and uses modals that reflect her certainty about her information. Hermione also gives more information and requests less. Further, an SFG analysis can highlight unexpected findings, such as Hermione's use of language to display, reinforce, and foster relationships, evidenced by the use of tag questions, vocatives, and "we." Using SFG for a systematic analysis enables students to recognize that in addition to what other characters say or feel about her, Hermione's character is constructed to a great extent through her own language.

Previous Analyses Using SFG

Basic SFG analyses have been used to successfully analyze several literary texts. Cunanan (2011) used a simple SFG analysis on Woolf's *Old Mrs. Grey*, arguing that the analysis helped to clarify the

connection between Woolf's choice of words and the reader's intuitions and impressions. McDonald (2006) used an analysis in addition to lexical chains to show how the Australian author Libby Gleeson built the character of Susie in her novel *I am Susannah*. Gallardo (2006) explored gender roles in *Pygmalion* by examining various linguistic resources that the two main characters and the narrator used.

Studies on the use of SFG in the classroom have shown that it can be a useful approach with students of all ages. Williams (2000) described a study in which the teacher worked with a class of late elementary, early middle school children to analyze Anthony Browne's *Piggybook*, using an SFG approach which she had introduced to them and had them use regularly with literature. The students were able to identify through a basic analysis how the author of *Piggybook* built the characters through language, and how the use of specific patterns supported the overall intuition of the reader about those characters. The same teacher in Williams's report, Ruth French, later published an article on developing young students' critical literacy skills. French (2009) examined the grammar used in the picture book *Pumpkin Soup* by Helen Cooper. The article shows how the teacher worked with primary students to help them understand the patterns and choices in the wordings of the book, as well as how those patterns worked to shape the story.

Several of these resources have aimed to make SFG available to teachers as a literature analysis approach to try in their own classrooms. For example, McDonald's (2006) analysis of *I am Susannah* was presented in a teacher-friendly way that included resources to assist with implementation, such as a table for teachers to reference and sample guiding questions to use during an analysis with students. Similarly, Lukin (2008) offered several examples of ways that SFG could be used with students in the middle and secondary grades to analyze poems, such as by examining graphology, sound, experiential, and textual patterns.

However, previous literary analyses conducted within the SFG framework have often required an in-depth knowledge of the terminology and analytical framework. SFG has therefore posed difficulties to teachers and students who have had limited training in this approach (e.g., Butt, 1987; Kies, 1992). Although literature teachers are responsible for guiding students to connect the language of the text to their personal interpretation, not all teachers are confident about using a research-based approach to analysis (Lukin, 2008). Many teachers have reported needing significant training (i.e., weeks or months of training) with SFG to feel comfortable with the method due to the attention to detail often required (Achugar, Shleppegrell, & Orteíza, 2007).

In response to this dilemma, our work in Slater and McCrocklin (2016) sought to minimize the strain on teachers and make SFG analysis more approachable. We examined the effectiveness of a two-hour training session that provided a brief overview of SFG, teacher training in analysis, along with example analyses to show the potential of SFG. We found that teachers can become comfortable with many of the aspects of SFG relatively quickly and can perform analyses with sufficient confidence. After the two-hour workshop, teachers expressed interest in trying SFG analyses themselves with other literary texts. In this paper, we aim to introduce the basic concepts of SFG and make our systematic approach to analyzing long texts available to teachers. Further, we aim to show in this paper that even a simple, relatively shallow examination from the SFG perspective can be sufficient to bring out many of the features needed to explore students' intuitions and produce a response to literature that is supported through a systematic investigation of language use.

The Basics of SFG

SFG is a theory of language that emphasizes how people use language to construe their realities (the experiential or ideational), establish relationships (the interpersonal), and reflect the particular mode of communication being used (the textual). We will describe the relevant aspects of each of these metafunctions below.

The Ideational or Experiential Metafunction

Downing and Locke (1992) pointed out that the ideational metafunction "permits us to encode, both semantically and syntactically, our mental picture of the physical world and the worlds of our imagination" (p. 110). We can perform an analysis from this perspective by looking at processes (verb phrases), participants (noun phrases and adjectives), and circumstances (adverbials). In different genres, these pattern out in various ways (Derewianka, 1990). For example, typically a scientific report has verbs that relate one thing to another. In literature, the processes can vary depending on what the author is doing in a specific part of the text: Is the part describing or recounting? Describing will likely use *be* and *have*, whereas recounting will use actions. Differences may appear between different characters in the types of processes they accomplish. For example, characters can be active agents of change or they may merely sense the world around them. Participants (which could be the characters but may also include other elements present in the story) can also be analyzed in terms of types, including technical versus commonsense things, or concrete versus abstract things (for a simple overview of thing types, see Christie and Martin, 1997). Finally, we can examine patterns of circumstances (adverbials) in a text. For example, whereas recipes require circumstances of manner to ensure that the instructions are being carefully followed, a setting in a novel would make good use of place and time. Introducing these ideas can help students look for evidence in the text that supports their intuitions.

The Interpersonal Metafunction

Resources in the interpersonal metafunction work to negotiate social relationships which allow language users to interact, show power, and establish solidarity (Thompson, 2014). We establish relationships using several interpersonal resources. One is through the mood of the text. Are there questions being asked? Are there statements being made? Commands? Are there tag questions, to bring the interlocutor into the speaker's reality or to seek confirmation? Another resource is modality, which Thompson (2014) explains as follows:

> If the commodity being exchanged is information, we can refer to the utterance as a proposition. In such cases, the modality relates to how valid the information is being presented as in terms of **probability** (how likely it is to be true) or **usuality** (how frequently it is true)… If, on the other hand, the commodity is goods-&-services, we can call the utterance a proposal; and then the modality relates to how confident the speaker can appear to be in the eventual success of the exchange. In commands, this concerns the degree of **obligation** on the other person to carry out the command (the scale for the demanded goods-&-services includes:
>
> permissible/advisable/obligatory), while in offers it concerns the degree of **willingness** or inclination of the speaker to fulfil the offer (the speaker may signal: ability/willingness/determination). (p. 70-71).

Thus, by having students look through a text and identify instances where speakers are giving or receiving information or services, we can direct them towards ways of supporting their intuitions about whether a character is coming across as determined, unsure, powerful, or weak.
Other interpersonal resources include appraisal language and vocatives, or "device[s] for nominating or appealing to someone" (Collerson, 1994, p. 37). For example, what names are characters in a literary text calling each other? How often are they using them? Using somebody's name establishes familiarity; using pet names creates further intimacy. Evidence of this patterning helps provide evidence regarding relationships between characters in a novel.

The Textual Metafunction

Resources within the textual metafunction offer ways to examine *cohesion* in text (Collerson, 1994) In turn, these can be used to show the importance of repeated references to a single theme or item, which can then reflect back to the ideational metafunction. This type of analysis is done by creating lexical chains (i.e. semantically related words in a text), such as (a) repetitions of a word or phrase, (b) its pronouns, (c) the use of synonyms, hyponyms, meronyms, and (d) collocations throughout the text.

Putting these three metafunctions together, a functional model of language "is interested in what language choices are available within any particular situation, and in which choices are more likely to result in an **effective** text which achieves its purpose" (Derewianka, 1990, p. 17, emphasis in original). An analysis based on SFG can focus on one metafunction or it can draw from more than one. By examining a literary text from an SFG perspective, we can explore how an author has used language to construct a particular reality. Teaching students—not only our English language learners but all students—to be able to identify how language is used to construct particular meanings in text means helping them develop critical literacy skills. Students learn not only *what* meanings are conveyed but also *how* they are conveyed (Unsworth, 1999).

Use of SFG for a Character Analysis

To simplify the process of doing an SFG literary analysis, particularly for long texts, we present four major steps:

1. Choose a book and a feature for your students to analyze.
2. Collect a representative sample of text.
3. Have your students systematically analyze the sample of text using basic SFG.
4. Have your students discuss their findings, look for information that helps elaborate on their findings, and (potentially) write up their findings as an argument or research paper.

The following sections will provide further detail about each of the steps and how to enact each with a class. We use language data from *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* to illustrate the approach for each step, as well as the wide array of interesting findings such an analysis may reveal.

Step 1

Step 1 involves choosing a book and a feature to examine. A simple option is to choose characters who are opposite in a way that targets the questions you want answered, such as good versus evil, powerful versus weak, and teacher versus student. In our analysis, we examined two main characters who were opposite in gender. We chose *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* because of the popularity of the series, and we focused on gender because these books have been criticized for

female roles that have perpetuated gender stereotyping (Mayes-Elma, 2006). To carry out this analysis, we considered the following two questions about the text:
1. How does the language used by Harry and Hermione differ?
2. How do these differences help create a female gendered identity for Hermione?

Step 2

It can be overwhelming to analyze an entire book. Therefore, Step 2 requires students to select a representative sample of text. There are two primary ways to do this. The first is to focus on the narrator's comments about the characters. The second is to focus on the character's own speech. However, analyzing the entire text in a long novel is likely to be overwhelming. Instead, students can focus on one major interaction between characters in which both fully participate in the conversation, or students can collect small chunks of text spread out throughout the book, perhaps skipping several pages between chunks. In order to make the data collection systematic, students can develop guidelines for how many pages to skip between collections and how to decide what to take from a particular page.

In our illustration, we used the latter approach to gain a general sense of language used throughout. Quotes were selected by going through every fifth page of the book. If the character had a quote on that page that contained a full clause, it was added to the database. We examined 50 quotes from each character. Harry's quotes started on page 35 and ended on page 475. Hermione's quotes started on page 50 and ended on page 640. We listed these in preparation for our analysis (see sample in Appendix A).

Step 3

Step 3 focuses on using basic SFG to analyze the sampled text systematically. It is useful to mark or color code the text based on SFG categories and then to list those examples in charts, which can then be easily compared and discussed. For students struggling with some of the SFG concepts, it may be useful to introduce one aspect of the analysis at a time and guide students to find examples. For example, a teacher could facilitate a lesson to help students identify and label functions of modality. After students gain an understanding of and comfort with the topic they could work to work on identifying these in their own data set before moving on to the next concept.

IDEATIONAL ANALYSIS

As we were concerned with the nature of two characters, we focused our analysis on the ideational and interpersonal metafunctions. We began by doing a simplified analysis within the ideational framework to examine the way that Harry and Hermione expressed their experiences and views. The basic analysis focused on the processes, which we categorized into verbs of *being* (underlined), verbs of *doing* (bold), and verbs of *sensing* (italics) (see a sample analysis of five of Harry's lines in Table 1). Students could layer further analyses onto such a chart by also using symbols, highlighting, or circling other features. However, it is often helpful to create follow-up charts with findings to fully explore character differences (Tables 2 and 3 provide examples of subsequent charts made based on analysis).

Table 1
Example SFG Analysis of Sample of Harry's Quotes

P #	Harry's Quote
215	Parents shouldn't **leave** their kids unless-- unless they've **got** to
220	You've **done** really well Kreacher
230	I don't *think* we're going to be much better prepared than we are now even if we **skulk** around the Ministry entrance for another month
275	So, <u>have</u> you <u>got</u> it?
280	I didn't *mean* it **to happen**!

Our initial analysis revealed that while both Harry and Hermione talked about people doing things in much the same way, Hermione used marginally more *being* and *doing* verbs, and Harry used more *sensing* verbs. What becomes more noticeable was that Harry's use of *sensing* verbs occurred mostly when he had himself as the subject of the sentence. Moreover, Harry used these sensing verbs often in the negative, as in "I can't *believe*" or "I still don't really *understand*." Harry used *sensing* verbs with himself typically to agree, state opinions, or to confirm information, and at times to provide emphasis to the following clause. Hermione, on the other hand, used *sensing* verbs to confirm or state opinions, but also to show empathy with others, as in "I can *see* that's *upset* you, Harry."

By looking then at the participants (nouns) as subjects of the clauses, it became clear that Harry referred to himself ("I") much more than he referred to the group ("we") or others. In fact, Hermione used twice as many instances of "we" in our randomly selected data, as can be seen in the following examples:

Harry: "I couldn't…make one"

Hermione: "We wondered whether Harry could still have the trace on him"

Hermione: "All the same, we should get to bed."

We marked these findings as possible paths to further discuss how gender differences appear in language and how the author has constructed a particular identity for Hermione that is different than Harry's. Without a systematic examination of the language, the reader may only respond intuitively to these differences. Quantifying differences can help students provide evidence to support their intuitions.

We then searched for differences in the types of things that Hermione and Harry were talking about to classify them as technical or everyday commonsense nouns. Teachers could provide students with a blank chart for students to complete while they examine and categorize their selected quotes from the book (see Table 2).

Table 2
Example Abridged Data for Types of Things Talked About

	Hermione	Harry
Technical Terms	Tongue-tying curse Dissaperated Spattergoit Invisibility cloak Trace Hallows Fiendfyre	Horcruxes Death Eaters Invisibility cloak
Commonsense terms		Dragon-fire thing Stuff
Nominalizations	Precaution Obsession	

As shown in Table 2, both characters used technical terms (technical in the *Harry Potter* sense), but our analysis showed that Hermione used more of these than Harry did, as illustrated in the following examples (underscored):

Hermione: "That m-must have b-been the T-Tongue-Tying-Curse Mad-Eye set for Snape!"

Hermione: "We've been Dissaperating."

Hermione: "You're supposed to be in bed with spattergoit."

Furthermore, Hermione uses nominalized terms such as "precaution" and "obsession" as well as marginally longer participants (noun phrases), such as "the most wanted person in the country." Hermione also has longer participants in the position of actor (or subject), such as "the bit of soul inside it can flit in and out of someone if they get too close to the object." Our analysis determined that Harry's speech does not show these trends as noticeably. In fact, not only does Harry use fewer technical terms, he is shown to avoid them at times in favor of more commonsense language (italics).

Harry: "Hagrid, do the dragon-fire thing again…"

Harry: "Muriel said stuff about Dumbledore at the wedding."

Our simple analysis enabled us to see further differences that unfolded between Harry and Hermione. Hermione, who seemed to come across intuitively as an intelligent character (and is treated in the book this way by other characters), exhibited this explicitly through her use of more technically specific language and her use of longer and more nominalized participants.

INTERPERSONAL ANALYSIS

Following the basic analysis within the ideational framework, we transitioned to analyzing language data for interpersonal features. Our next analysis examined the mood system. We identified sentences as giving information (typically done using declarative sentences), requesting information (using questions), giving services (also declarative, but there is an offer being made), or requesting services (typically imperative). These results can be charted in a table such as the following.

Table 3:
Example Abridged Data for Mood System (Giving or Receiving Info or Services)

	Hermione	Harry
Giving information	Ooh you look much tastier than Crabbe and Goyle, Harry. While the magical container is still intact, the bit of soul inside it can flit in and out of someone if they get too close. Yes, I took out all of my Building Society savings before I came to the Burrow. It must have been Fiendfyre!	None of the order would have told Voldemort we were moving tonight. Well I probably look better than Olivander. If we knew where any of the Horcruxes were, I'd agree with you.
Requesting information	Ron, where are you? You aren't serious, Harry? Harry, are you saying what I think you're saying? Are you saying that there is a Horcrux in the Lestranges' vault?" But he didn't get the job, did he?"	So…er…where is Gregorovitch these days? What do you mean, locked in the cellar? So where are these jinxes they put up against Snape? So have you got it? What did you do that for? How did he get hurt? I know…but how did you escape the Inferi?
Giving services	I'll pack these for you.	
Requesting services	Harry, come back in the house. Shut up, Ron Harry, stop.	Hagrid, do the dragon-fire thing again. Don't look at me like that.

Our full results showed that Hermione gave information more often than Harry did and demonstrated a small edge in the number of times she requested services in the form of commands. She requested information (as true questions) less frequently than Harry did. In fact, while Harry more often requested information that would help him on his quest to defeat Lord Voldemort, Hermione asked more questions to confirm her own understanding of the situation. This is shown in the examples below:

Harry: "So…er…where is Gregorovitch these days?"

Harry: "What is wrong?"

Hermione: "Harry, are you saying what I think you're saying? Are you saying that there is a Horcrux in the Lestranges' vault?"

Hermione: "But he didn't get the job, did he?"

Notice Hermione's use of a tag question in the last example. It is interesting to note that in our data sample, Hermione used tag questions three times more often than Harry did.

Throughout our data sample, both Harry and Hermione used modal verbs such as *can, would,* and *should,* which can be listed and quantified by the students in table format. Harry was shown to use a wider range of modals that primarily suggested probability and willingness, including *might have,* and modal adjuncts such as *definitely, probably, surely, likely,* and *really*. Hermione used no modal adjuncts in our data selection, but she used modal verbs such as *can, should, could, would*, and *must have* to show probability, willingness, and obligation. Through the use of modals, Hermione was shown to be much more sure of herself and the information she gave.

Harry: "I can't believe"

Harry: "I couldn't...make one"

Harry: "Well, I probably look better than Olivander"

Hermione: "---and he must have realized they wouldn't let you have it if they put it in his will."

The final part of our analysis concerned one of the most striking features of Harry and Hermione's speech: vocatives. While both Harry and Hermione used vocatives, Hermione used over four times as many as Harry, suggesting perhaps a strong connection with other characters. In fact, over a third of Hermione's utterances included vocatives, and mostly other characters' names. Some examples include:

Hermione: "Ooh you look much tastier than Crabbe and Goyle, Harry."

Hermione: "Harry, do you want your toothbrush?"

Hermione: "Shut up, Ron"

Hermione: "But it keeps appearing, Harry!"

These can be quantified by the students and compared with other findings in the class. These data can then lead to a discussion of Hermione's use of language and how it helped create her character's identity.

Step 4

Step 4 brings the students' results into a discussion in preparation for writing. These are guided by the following questions: What patterns did we find? What might our findings mean? What claims are being made? What conclusions can be reached? As students share their individual findings with the class, they should also engage in a discussion that uncovers patterns among their findings. As agreement emerges in the case studies that groups of students are uncovering, the overall argument that such findings exist and are not the result of one individual's sampling is strengthened. Further, once students engage in a whole-class discussion in which primary findings are addressed, the class may realize that further information should be sought out before writing begins. This recursive pattern, in which the students move back and forth between the evidence they have found and possible explanations for that evidence, is an important part of a literary analysis and in fact critical for any well-supported, data-based argument.

From our simple analysis, we made two claims about Hermione's gendered identity that can be supported by the data we presented in our description of Step 3. First, Hermione is shown to be more knowledgeable than Harry. This is supported by the fact that Hermione uses more technical terms, gives more information and requests less, and uses modals that reflect her certainty about her information. While many students are likely to be able to pick up intuitively that Hermione is a knowledgeable and intelligent character, now they can point to several pieces of data to support their claim. What is useful about using SFG is that students, by approaching the analysis systemically, are drawn to noticing that her character is constructed through her language and not just from what other characters say or feel about her.

A second conclusion from our simple analysis is that Hermione is more concerned with showing familiarity and friendliness, a finding that may be less noticeable when doing a leisurely read. This was supported through Hermione's use of tag questions, vocatives, and "we." According to Collerson (1994), tag questions are used to seek confirmation from others and to help a dialogue run more smoothly. He stated that:

> [Tags are] very common in friendly, informal conversation amongst people who are close to each other. In these circumstances, people often seek confirmation rather than information because they can to some degree anticipate what will pass between them—it's an indication of how closely in touch with each other they are. (p. 31).

The use of tag questions was different between Harry and Hermione. This finding can be used to encourage reading about and discussing tag questions and their use, and our new understandings of these can be used to support our intuition about Hermione's character.

Similarly, by discovering what has been written about vocatives, we can argue that Hermione's use of these may also be an attempt to show the friendly, inclusive aspect of her character. Although some of her vocative use may be targeting a person in the conversation for the next turn or even serve as direction for the reader as to who will be speaking next, it can be argued that the sheer number of vocatives in Hermione's speech may suggest that something else is happening. As Eggins and Slade (1997) pointed out, "the use of redundant vocatives would tend to indicate an attempt by the addresser to establish a closer relationship with the addressee…the form of the vocative will indicate the affective and status dimensions of the relationship" (p. 145). Finally, Hermione's use of "we" may be seen as an attempt to show her view of herself, Harry, and Ron as a group and friends.

Taking the use of tag questions, vocatives, and "we" together, we could argue that Hermione is more focused than Harry on establishing and maintaining relationships.

Notice that our discussion of results models the recursive, back-and-forth movement between the students' explanations/arguments and the linguistic data they have extracted from the text. Once the discussion has been carried out, students can then work on writing up their literary research projects. The write-up may take the form of an argumentative essay, but teachers could also use an SFG project to encourage students to explore other genres of academic writing. Given that the analysis project included formulation of a research question, systematic collection of data, and interpretation of results that are statistical/numerical in nature, the project write-up could take the form of a research report utilizing tables and graphs.

Conclusion

As suggested by the example character analysis above, SFG has the potential for assisting students with literary text analysis. Studying the language of the literary text is in fact studying the text: "Texts, after all, are linguistic objects, and a literature text is no exception" (Hasan, 1985, p. 91). The use of SFG even at a simple level can make the task of literary analysis less overwhelming; it can reduce the burden on students and help them provide evidence for intuitions that the teacher has guided them to. We provided a single example to highlight SFG's potential for character analysis; however, the potential for SFG in literary analysis is endless. For example, SFG could be used to examine power relations with *The Hunger Games* (e.g., exploring which characters use *doing* verbs in clauses with agents and objects versus which characters do not include objects in their spoken discourse), investigate good versus evil using *Eragon* (e.g., which characters are associated with positive versus negative entities), or study the teacher/student relationship presented in *The Giver*. It can be challenging for all teachers to connect the enjoyment of literature, whether classic or contemporary, to the need to teach genres (e.g., argumentation) , while also developing students' critical literacy skills. It can be even more challenging to develop and hone these skills among students who are, as Halliday (2004) states, learning language, learning through language, and learning about language simultaneously, as ELL students must do. Modeling how to use simple SFG analysis techniques has the potential to develop students' understanding of how writers use language to achieve specific purposes, which in turn can raise students' understanding of how language works to make meaning to a more centralized position within an ELL curriculum. Learning activities that involve SFG literary analyses also provides students with useful writing skills that hone their ability to argue and support their intuitions both in literatures classes and across curricular areas.

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APPENDIX

ABRIDGED DATA/QUOTES FOR HARRY AND HERMIONE (25 EACH)

Q#	P#	Harry
1.	60	Hagrid, do the dragon-fire thing again, let's get out of here!
2.	70	None of the order would have told Voldemort we were moving tonight
3.	80	No, I mean… if somebody made a mistake and let something slip, I know they didn't mean to do it.
4.	85	Well, I probably look better than Olivander…
5.	90	But surely Snape will have told the Death Eaters the address by now?
6.	100	If we knew where any of the Horcruxes were, I'd agree with you.
7.	105	I wonder how Dumbledore destroyed the ring?
8.	120	Vaguely, didn't you smash down the front door, give Dudly a pig's tail, and tell me I was a wizard?
9.	150	So…er…where is Gregorovitch these days?
10.	155	What d'you mean, locked in the cellar?
11.	185	It's not just that
12.	195	I know—but how did you escape the Inferi
13.	205	No, only after we ran into a couple of death eaters in a café in Tottenham Court
14.	215	Don't look at me like that!
15.	220	You've done really well Kreacher.
16.	230	I am.
17.	270	How did he get hurt?
18.	275	So, have you got it?
19.	285	I couldn't…make one.
20.	305	And Dumbledore didn't give it to me because he still needed it, he wanted to use it on the locket --
21.	320	What? What did you do that for?
22.	330	What's wrong?
23.	405	I'm sorry
24.	425	Yeah, you are, Hermione.
25.	455	You're going to kill me?

Q#	P#	Hermione
1.	50	Ooh, you look much tastier than Crabbe and Goyle, Harry.
2.	105	While the magical container is still intact, the bit of soul inside it can flit in and out of someone if they get too close to the object.
3.	115	I'll pack these for you.
4.	135	No, I'm not!
5.	160	Ron! Ron, where are you?
6.	165	Yes, I took out all of my Building Society savings before I came to the Burrow.
7.	170	That m-must have b-been the T-Tongue-Tying Curse Mad-Eye set for Snape!
8.	175	Harry, do you want your toothbrush?
9.	185	Of course, I can see why that's upset you, Harry--
10.	195	Well, then, you did what you were told, didn't you?
11.	205	We wondered whether Harry could still have the Trace on him?
12.	210	Thank you, Ron, but I couldn't let you.
13.	230	You aren't serious, Harry?
14.	235	Harry, you keep talking about what your wand did, but you made it happen!
15.	275	Well, we were running for our lives from the Death Eaters, weren't we?
16.	285	Shut up, Ron.
17.	290	But he didn't get the job, did he?
18.	305	--and he must have realized they wouldn't let you have it if they put in in his will.
19.	330	Harry, stop.
20.	385	No, actually, we've been dissaparating under the invisibility cloak as an extra precaution.
21.	425	You're supposed to be in bed with spattergoit, Ron.
22.	435	Obsession? We're not the ones with an obsession, Harry!
23.	490	Harry, are you saying what I think you're saying?
24.	555	Let's just leave!
25.	635	It must have been Fiendfyre!