

Biography : Dr Arthur Stuart Firkins

I am a teacher, writer and philosopher, who has had an enduring interest in semantics, semiotics and systems of meaning generally. I have academic expertise in sociolinguistics, the philosophy of language, Systemic Functional Linguistics, professional discourse, literacy, English language education, Bilingualism, language acquisition, linguistic anthropology, stylistics, dyslexia, language policy, curriculum development and second language acquisition. I have significant experience in teacher training, language policy development, programme monitoring and evaluation and curriculum development. I also have a passionate interest in Indigenous Education and remain a strong advocate for the development of education for First Nations People across the world as well as in teacher training.

Moreover, my practical skills are embedded in a long career in the Australian civil service. Firstly, as a manager and policy officer for the New South Wales Government in the area of social policy, as a manager for the Northern Territory Government as a programme manager for NGOs in Australia and abroad. I have worked as a teacher for the NSW Education Department, in the areas of literacy development and special education, primary education and secondary English education.

I have recently focused my career on International teaching, initially as a Native English teacher for the Government of Hong Kong and as a Language Specialist for the South East Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) based in Singapore with the Regional Language Centre (RELC). The position focused on English Language capacity development for the eleven member countries, including English for Military Purposes, English for diplomatic purposes, teacher training for primary and secondary English teachers and curriculum development. I have also worked in the Middle East as a consultant in the area of English for Military purposes, English for academic purposes for Universities as well as private sector institutions. More recently I have been engaged in teacher mentoring programmes, English Language Curriculum development and teacher training, in early childhood education, English Education specifically working in the capacity of an Education development consultant.

My research focuses applying and extending semantic analysis to meaning systems across speech communities. I have been interested in the area of "Risk" as a meaning system and how risk is framed by specific communities. In 2016 I co-edited a book titled COMMUNICATING RISK with Christopher N Candlin and Jonathan Crichton, Published by Palgrave MacMillian. I intend to extend my research on the semantics of risk in the future as well as my investigation into other meaning systems. I remain a member of academic research centres at Macquarie University, Sydney as well as other centre and I am interested in collaboration with Universities, education institutions and universities that share my research interests. In October 2016 I was pleased to become an academic member of the Athens Institute for Education and Research. I am very pleased to collaborate with other academic members and interested organizations and institutions on interdisciplinary research projects.