



**Dr Francisco O. D. Veloso**

Federal University of Acre (UFAC), Brazil

## **Seminar**

# **Accountability without transparency: an applicable systemic functional linguistics approach to legitimation in university management reports**

Annual management reports produced by public universities occupy a distinctive position in professional communication: formally mandated accountability documents addressed simultaneously to oversight bodies, internal communities, and the public at large. Yet the language through which accountability is enacted in these genres has received comparatively little systematic attention, particularly outside Anglophone contexts. This talk examines how legitimation is discursively constructed in the executive messages of annual management reports produced by a Brazilian federal public university between 2018 and 2024. Drawing on Bhatia's (1993, 2004) genre analysis, Van Leeuwen's (2008) legitimation framework, and Systemic Functional Linguistics as an analytical toolkit (Halliday & Matthiessen 2014), the study shows how nominalisation functions as the primary grammatical resource through which legitimation strategies are realised — backgrounding agency while foregrounding abstract institutional activity. The study is framed within an applicable linguistics perspective (Matthiessen 2012), treating linguistic analysis as a resource for understanding the communicative practices of public institutions.

**Date: 10 June, 2026 (Wednesday)**

**Time: 4 pm HKT**

## ***Speaker***

Dr. Francisco O. D. Veloso (PhD) currently works at the Federal University of Acre (UFAC), Brazil. His research is grounded in Systemic Functional Linguistics, from which he investigates public discourse and multimodal semiotic systems, drawing on SFL's trinocular perspective to examine meaning across strata and metafunctions. Current interests include professional and organisational communication, language in contexts of violence and harassment, and the theorisation of ordered semiotic systems. He has published on multimodal meaning-making, genre studies, and legitimation strategies in institutional discourse. A long-standing GRF/RGC funded project on comicbook page composition has informed his broader methodological work on visual semiotic systems as a resource for Digital Humanities approaches to multimodal texts. He has held academic positions at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, the University of Bologna, and the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia, and has been a visiting researcher at the University of Bremen and the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso, Chile.



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