Graduate Student SIG Newsletter 6/25

📅 SIG Events Recap

Dear **CALICO Graduate Student Special Interest Group (SIG) members**,
What an incredible year it has been! As we wrap up the **2024–2025 academic year**, we are thrilled to share highlights from the events we have hosted, the conversations we have started, and the community we have continued to build together. Thank you for being a part of it all.

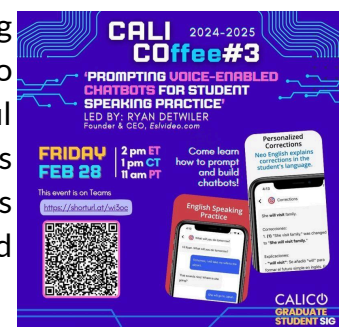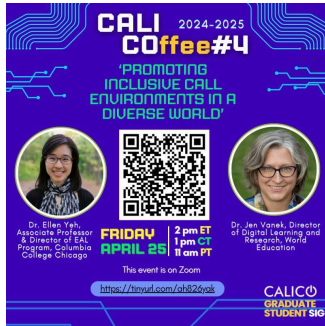## ☕ CALICOffees: Connecting, Learning, and Growing

This year, we hosted **four CALICOffees**, each one a space for connection, conversation, and collaboration. We kicked things off in the fall with our **first CALICOffee**, a relaxed meet-up to welcome new and returning members. It was a wonderful way to reconnect after the summer, share ideas, and set the tone for the year ahead.

Our **second CALICOffee** brought together scholars and students for an insightful session on *AI, Critical Pedagogy, and L2 Learning*. With thought-provoking perspectives from Dr**. Bill Cope** and Dr. **Mary Kalantzis** (University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign), the discussion explored the intersections of emerging technologies, critical thinking, and socially interactive uses of AI.
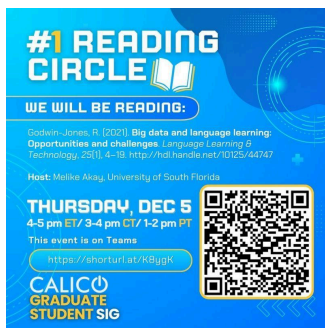

The **third CALICOffee** shifted to a more hands-on format. During this event, we learned how chatbots and AI-powered tools work to support students' L2 speaking skills and provide meaningful feedback. **Ryan Detwiler** (CEO & Founder of eslvideo.com) guided us through some useful tools and strategies for implementing chatbots to help students practise speaking and learn from AI-supported interactions.
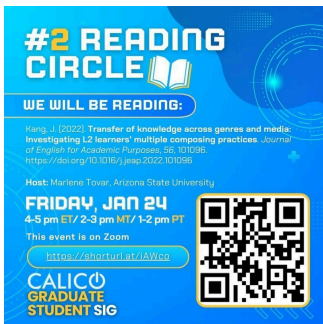
To close the CALICOffee series, our **fourth CALICOffee** featured a powerful panel discussion on *Promoting Inclusive CALL in a Diverse World*. We were honored to host Dr. **Jen Vanek** (Director of Digital Learning and Research at World Education Inc.) and Dr. **Ellen Yeh** (Associate Professor and Director of the EAL program at Columbia College Chicago), who shared their insights into building equitable digital learning spaces and supporting all learners through inclusive practices.

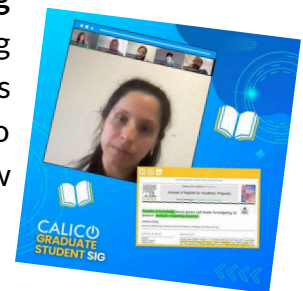## 📚 Reading Circles: Learning Together

In addition to CALICOffees, we launched **two student-led reading circles** this year. These were close-knit gatherings that allowed us to engage more deeply with current scholarship in CALL.

Our first reading circle was led by **Melike Akay** (University of South Florida), who guided us through a discussion of an article by Robert Godwin-Jones (2021) on **big data and its implications for language learning**. The article sparked rich conversations about ethics, accessibility, and the future of data-driven pedagogy.

The second reading circle, led by **Marlene Tovar** (Arizona State University), dealt with L2 learners' **composing practices**, and we discussed an article by Kang (2022) on **adaptive transfer of knowledge** across genres and media. The article prompted us to reflect on our writing, teaching practices, and how we support multilingual learners across modalities.

📚 CALICO 2025 in San Diego: In-Person Moments

It was wonderful to see many of you in person at CALICO 2025 in San Diego! The Grad SIG organized three events that brought our community together in meaningful ways.
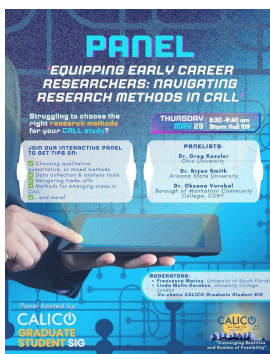
We started with our **Annual SIG meeting** on Wednesday, May 28, a brief but interactive space where we addressed SIG matters, discussed past events, upcoming plans, and heard from fellow members. During the meeting, we were thrilled to announce the results of our recent elections and introduce the incoming leadership team! You will get to know them better in the following pages of this newsletter.

Later that evening, we gathered for our **Graduate Student Social**—a chance to unwind, connect, and enjoy some well-earned downtime together at the *Eureka!* restaurant.

The next morning, we hosted our **SIG panel** titled '**Equipping Early Career Researchers: Navigating Research Methods in CALL**.' With expert insights from Dr. **Greg Kessler** (Ohio University) and Dr. **Oksana Vorobel** (Borough of Manhattan Community College, CUNY), the panel offered both practical guidance and honest reflections to aid early-career researchers in designing their studies. It was one of our most well-attended events, and the conversation continues to resonate with many of us.

We thank you all for making this year such a success. Whether you joined us for one event or all of them, your presence matters. We can't wait to see what's ahead, and we look forward to growing with you in the year to come.

Warm wishes,
Linda & Francesca
CALICO Graduate Student SIG co-chairs

🤝 **Past & New Leaders**

AY 2024-2025 Co-Chairs

Francesca Marino (phdfrancesca@gmail.com)
University of South Florida, US

Ciao, everyone! I'm Francesca, and it's been such an honor co-chairing the Graduate Student SIG with Linda this year. What a great experience! I believe this group provides an amazing opportunity to connect with others, build networks, learn from one another, and grow together. I recently earned my PhD in Linguistics and Applied Language Studies (LALS) from the University of South Florida (USF), where I successfully defended my dissertation on the influence of digital multimodal composing on second language (L2) skills and students' investment in L2 learning. My research interests focus on multimodality and digital media, exploring these topics from pedagogical, genre, and discursive perspectives. These approaches reflect my creative, non-linear way of thinking about research, shaped by the multifaceted academic journey I have taken.

Linda Molin-Karakoç (linda.molin-karakoc.17@ucl.ac.uk)
University College London, UK

Greetings, CALICO colleagues! I'm Linda, and it has been a privilege to co-chair the Graduate Student SIG alongside Francesca this year. One of the most rewarding aspects of this role has been fostering collaboration and dialogue between emerging and established researchers across the CALL community. Alongside our SIG work, Francesca and I also co-led a study on emoji use in L2 classrooms—a project we hope to expand through future empirical research. I'm currently preparing to defend my PhD at University College London (UCL), focusing on the co-design of mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) activities for newly arrived refugee adolescents. Grounded in sociocultural-ecological theory and design-based research, my work examines how co-created MALL tasks can support L2 development, collaboration, and personalized language learning, particularly for students with interrupted formal education. My broader research interests include AI-enhanced pedagogy, digital literacies, and inclusive CALL. I look forward to continuing to build meaningful research connections within the SIG and across the CALICO network.

AY 2025-2026 SIG Leaders

We are excited to welcome the **new leadership team,** who will guide us through the upcoming year with fresh ideas and continued commitment to our community.

Alexander Tang (aftang@hawaii.edu)
University of Hawaii at Manoa, US

Aloha! I'm Alex Tang, a third-year PhD student at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa and the managing editor of Language Learning & Technology. I view technology as a powerful tool for additional language learning and recently co-published an article on Less-Commonly Taught Languages (LCTLs) in a special issue, sparked by a Twitter connection and shared interest in AI. I value collaboration and believe graduate students thrive through co-writing and co-publishing. I'm running for a leadership role in the CALICO Graduate Student SIG to support peers in navigating academic publishing and fostering innovative, collaborative research in our field.

Melike Akay (akaym129@usf.edu)
University of South Florida, US

I am a multilingual applied linguist and Ph.D. candidate in the U.S., shaped by a transnational academic journey rooted in Türkiye, with degrees in Foreign Language Education. My research traces how learners traverse digital landscapes to craft their L2 voice through oral interaction. From leading linguistics initiatives to orchestrating a nationwide IT awards ceremony (back home), I've long believed in the power of collective vision. I'm running to help co-create a CALICO Grad SIG that's not just a hub for scholarship, but a space where curiosity ignites, ideas flourish, and graduate voices resonate.

Zeynep Sinan (zsinan2@illinois.edu)
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

I'm currently an MA student in TESOL at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign as a Fulbright Scholar. I am also a graduate teaching assistant in the same department, teaching English as a Second Language courses to international college students at UIUC. My research interests are centered around Computer-Assisted Language Learning, Teacher Education, and Second Language Acquisition. Being a part of the leadership team in CALICO Graduate Student SIG would allow me to build rapport with fellow graduate students, colleagues, and scholars in the field whose research focuses on CALL. Primarily, this role would hone my leadership, organization, and collaboration skills.

Graduate student member spotlight

Let's give a big congratulations to our SIG member, **Prerna Choubey** (University of North Texas), for her outstanding contributions at CALICO 2025!

- Prerna co-presented 'Fostering Language Learning, Well-being, and STEM Education through High-Immersion Virtual Reality' with Dr. Regina Kaplan-Rakowski and Dr. Sabina Nowak from Carnegie Mellon University.

- She also shared a poster presentation on Personalized Adaptive Language Learning in AI-Powered VR. Additionally, she participated in a panel presentation with the Immersive Realities SIG, titled "Interweaving Immersive Realities and Intercultural Competence in Language Learning."

- Last but not least, Prerna currently serves as Chair of the Immersive Realities SIG. 👏 We're proud to have you as part of the Grad Student SIG, Prerna!

If you want to be featured in our next newsletter, please contact the incoming SIG leaders, Alexander, Melike, and Zeynep!
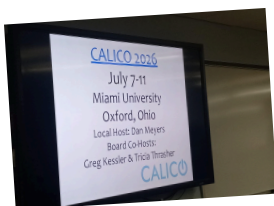

Latest news from the organization

This year's **CALICO Conference** took place at **San Diego State University**, San Diego (CA). It was truly energizing to gather in person with so many fellow graduate students, researchers, and educators passionate about

CALL. We're already looking ahead to next year's conference, which will be hosted at **Miami University**, Oxford (OH), in **July 2026**. We hope to see many of you there and encourage you to start thinking about ways to get involved!

In the meantime, be sure to check out new publications from the CALICO Journal. https://calico.org/calico-journal/

Follow us on social media

- **Slack**: https://graduate-sig-calico.slack.com/ssb/redirect#
- **LinkedIn**: https://www.linkedin.com/groups/13711650/
- **Facebook**: https://www.facebook.com/groups/CALICOgrad

Join CALICO!

CALICO is a great organization for people interested in and researching language learning and technology! Benefits for students include:

- Discounted membership ($30) and conference registration fees
- Access to CALICO Journal content
- Eligibility to apply for CALICO awards
- Opportunities to join different Special Interest Groups (e.g., Gaming, VR, SLAT)
- Volunteering opportunities at the conference to save on registration fees
- Mentorship opportunities, different events, and an outstanding, supportive academic community
- And more!

Read more about the Grad SIG on our webpage.

To become a member of CALICO or renew your membership, click here!

Resources for graduate students

Grants and Awards for Graduate Students

- CALICO Outstanding Graduate Student Award
- Mango Languages Dissertation Award
- Duolingo Dissertation and Independent Research Grants
- Language Learning Doctoral Dissertation Research Grants
- Lumina Foundation for Education
- American Association of University Women
- ETS Small Grants for Doctoral Research in Second or Foreign Language Assessment
- ETS TOEFL Young Students Series Research Program: Research Grants for Graduate Students
- NFMLTA/MLJ grants
- NCOLCTL grants/awards
- TIRF-Duolingo Doctoral Dissertation Grant

CALL Conference calls to look out for

- CALICO 2026
- EuroCALL 2026
- IALLT 2026
- AZ-CALL 2026
- International CALL 2026
- GloCALL 2026

Journals with a Focus on CALL

- [CALICO](#)
- [Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL)](#)
- [Language Learning &Technology (LLT)](#)
- [ReCALL](#)
- [System](#)
- [FLTMAG](#)
- [CALL-EJ](#)
- [The JALT CALL journal](#)
- [Digital Applied Linguistics](#)
- [Digital Studies in Language and Literature](#)
- [Technology in Language Teaching and Learning](#)
- [International Journal of Computer-Assisted Language Learning and Teaching (IJCALLT)](#)

If you know of grants/awards, conferences, or journals that should be included in our list, please contact the incoming SIG leaders.