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A Systemic Functional Grammar of English: A Simple Introduction. David Banks. Routledge, New York (2019). 136 pp. ISBN: 978-1-138-60594-7

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David Banks' *A Systemic Functional Grammar of English: A Simple Introduction* has been written for learners of English as a foreign language and those interested in learning about English linguistics. The book comprises nine chapters and aims to serve as an easy-to-read introduction for Halliday's (2004) Systemic Functional Linguistics. This work is a fundamental introduction to this linguistic theory and is targeted at PhD students, researchers and linguists interested in a functional systemic perspective to studying language. As the book includes practical activities and exercises with an answer key, it has the potential to be used as a textbook in educational contexts with small groups of learners. The book also includes a glossary which also includes some terms not used in this book but which can be helpful especially for students and researchers who are not familiar with Systemic Functional Grammar. It, furthermore, has an index which alphabetically lists the terms and topics mentioned in the book.

Functional Systemic Grammar is characterized by the assumption that the phonological, grammatical and semantic structures of the language are determined by the functions they perform in society. The social function of language is of particular importance for this linguistic theory, so that its analysis of the text is always contextual because there is a relationship between the text and the social context. This analysis helps to understand the relationships between language and society and this book presents the essential aspects of the Functional Systemic Grammar of English by attaching special importance to the textual function because Functional Systemic Grammar aims to study in detail the meaning of each text in its context through revealing how the text expresses that meaning. The writer of this book opts for Halliday's functionalism because, like him, he understands language as a social semiotic, that is, he interprets the language within a sociocultural context.

The first chapter, "Some introductory remarks to get us started", focuses on the notion of language itself where Banks claims that language is not something or an entity but simply what happens when people communicate. According to the writer, language is not used to

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communicate, but it is the communication itself. The chapter provides a definition for Systemic Functional Linguistics, which is both functional in language and society, and is systemic since it is concerned with language as a network of choices.

The second chapter of the book, "Grammatical parts and how they work together", gives a detailed description of the Systemic Functional Linguistics based grammar. The chapter sheds more light on Systemic Functional Grammar by defining the concepts of 'system' and 'function' and their relationship with grammatical parts. The 'system' is a set of two or more options and an important concept within the system is that of choice or opposition. Each choice within the system specifies a context and a set of options within which only one is chosen. The functional aspect of the language is complemented by lexicogrammatical choices that serve functions within social and cultural contexts; so for a grammarian, the text is a rich phenomenon, with different facets that expresses its meaning in different ways (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004)

The third chapter of the book, "Representing the world", is mainly a discussion of representational function of ideational metafunction of language, which concerns the relationship between the speaker and his/her message. The founder of Systemic Functional Linguistics, Halliday (1994), argues that language can be used to perform the three functions of ideational, interpersonal, and textual. The interpersonal metafunction is about the social world we live in and it is related to the relationship between speaker and hearer. The textual metafunction is concerned with the information in a text and its messages. The ideational metafunction forms a relationship with the context of culture. However, the writer focuses on representational dimension of the ideational function in this chapter, which relates to representation our experiences in text or dialogue.

When it comes to chapter four, "The speaker's relationships", the author turns to interpersonal metafunction -- the use of language in expressing social and personal relations (Halliday, 1985) - and specifically elaborates on 'mood' and 'modality' while trying to explain the interpersonal metafunction of Systemic Functional Linguistics. According to the writer, there are two types of relationships: the first of which is the speaker's relationship with his/her addressees (mood) and the second one is the relation between the content of his/her message and interlocutors (modality).

The fifth chapter, "Getting the message in order", deals with the ways the message is structured. The author discusses that there can be two ways whereby this structuring can be accomplished: through thematic structure and information structure. The thematic structure, as Halliday (2004) states, is the one that gives the clause its character as a message. The chapter gives information about two structural units which are the Theme and the Rheme. The Theme is defined as the point of departure of the message of the clause and the Rheme as the part of the clause which develops the Theme (Halliday, 1994). The chapter defines these two sources first and then offers helpful examples and sample analyses to supporting the definitions.

The sixth chapter, "Extending the interpersonal metafunction", discusses aspects of appraisal which analyses the speaker's presence in a text in terms of attitude, engagement and graduation. The writer divides attitude into affect, judgement and appreciation, providing a framework to analyse the meanings in a text that might convey positive or negative assessment (Iedema, Feez, & White, 1993; Martin & White, 2005). These terms are regarded as an extension of Systemic Functional Linguistics to analyse the traces of the subjective presence of the speaker in his/her text.

Chapter seven, "Modelling the text", provides information about grammatical metaphor, which involves the substitution of one grammatical class or structure for another. Most examples in

English spoken by adults contain some instances of grammatical metaphor: clauses in which one type of process is represented in the grammar of another (Halliday, 2004). The chapter shows that grammatical metaphor is an essential resource of language and a resource that we use constantly.

Chapter eight, “The text in context”, generally deals with the notion of register -- the time and place when and where a text was produced. The chapter points out three important semiotic functions of register, which are ‘field’ (as an indicator of ideational metafunction) , ‘tenor’ (a sign of interpersonal metafunction) and ‘mode’ (as representing textual metafunction). This section of the book offers brief information about these terms and backs it up with some activities and exercises so that the readers could have the opportunity to identify the terms in a text.

The last chapter of the book, “Final thoughts”, is devoted to the author’s concluding remarks where he states that the book is short but an important source for students who are new to Systemic Functional Grammar of English and hopes that it will be helpful for linguists who are more familiar with other approaches. Even though the book, as the writer himself expresses, is a short one, it gives a significant account of various possibilities to analyse the language based on Systemic Functional Grammar.

To put it more succinctly, the book explains some internal characteristics of the language by taking into account its functional diversity. The book provides a very brief but adequate theoretical and analytical framework to explore and explain how any text is constructed and expresses its meaning. This theoretical framework covers both the abstract (ideology) and the more concrete levels that intervene in the text (words, structures, etc.). Reading this book would be useful both for linguists interested in functional systemic perspective and for those who are affiliated with other theoretical frameworks and would like to know more about the function of language. The book includes a good number of exercises and sample analyses of some examples, which is thought to be really helpful for readers in helping them understand the nature of language and how the grammatical elements work together to convey meaning. In addition, given the multiplicity of analyses on aspects related to Systemic Functional Grammar and having a very plain language, the book will be valuable to and can be a supplementary book for linguists so as to use in ELT and Linguistics departments.

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