

Essential Information on Functional Grammar

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Abstract

Functional grammar classifies grammar structures to functional expressions where a language is expounded as an arrangement of meanings. The linguistic opinions can be identified into two spacious ideas known as formal and functional. Halliday's theory of functional grammar is a functional one, and it is a comprehensive and linguistic one. Halliday is influenced by the Prague School of linguistics and its approaches on functionality, and he is also influenced by the Firthian expressions of functions. Functional grammar supplies a requisite foundation for the language system since the system reflects the functions that need to improve. In functional grammar, Halliday signifies one attempt to have the linguistic structure and an event by an indication to the idea that language performs a specific part in the human being's life that is required to provide a specific universal set of demands. Halliday's functional view of language is a view about meaning, not about words and constructions. The functional view is helpful to create some general factors relating to the usage of language, and this can be the most common explanation of the functional approach.

Keywords: Halliday, Firth, Functional grammar, London School, Prague School, linguistic structure.

المخلص

يُصنّف النحو الوظيفي التراكيب النحوية إلى تعبيرات وظيفية، حيث تُفسّر اللغة كمجموعة من المعاني. ويمكن تقسيم الآراء اللغوية إلى فكرتين واسعتين: الشكلية والوظيفية. تُعدّ نظرية هاليداي في النحو الوظيفي نظرية وظيفية، وهي نظرية شاملة ولغوية. وقد تأثر هاليداي بمدرسة براغ في اللغويات ومنهجياتها في الوظيفية، كما تأثر بتعبيرات فيرث عن الوظائف. يُوفّر النحو الوظيفي أساساً أساسياً لنظام اللغة، إذ يعكس النظام الوظائف التي يجب تحسينها. في النحو الوظيفي، يُشير هاليداي إلى محاولة الحصول على بنية لغوية وحدث ما، مُشيراً إلى فكرة أن اللغة تؤدي دوراً مُحدداً في حياة الإنسان، وهو مطلوب لتوفير مجموعة مُحددة من المتطلبات العالمية. إن رؤية هاليداي الوظيفية للغة هي رؤية تتعلق بالمعنى، لا بالكلمات والتراكيب. يُساعد المنظور الوظيفي في تحديد بعض العوامل العامة المتعلقة باستخدام اللغة، ويُمكن أن يُمثل هذا التفسير الأكثر شيوعاً للنهج الوظيفي.

الكلمات المفتاحية: هاليداي، فيرث، القواعد الوظيفية، مدرسة لندن، مدرسة براغ، البنية اللغوية.

1. Introduction

J.R. Firth considers that the linguistic theory is different from linguistic applications with different levels of analysis. Firth's opinion is significant, and his suggestions are mainly relevant to the London School of linguistic and Firthian prosodic analysis and systemic-functional grammar, which is pertinent to Halliday's effort. Halliday is also known as the neo-Firthian.

Functional grammar is one of the systems used to study and analyse grammatical structures, focusing on the structure of language and the functions. Language is used differently according to the comprehensive culture, the specific society, the situation, the topic, the relationship between the participants and so on. Functional grammar tries to explain how language

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is structured and how language functions in communication. Consequently, a functional system to grammar does not abstract away from discourse, text and the nature of social action but focuses on these and how these are realized. (Dik, 1997).

During previous decades, the study of functional grammar has become widespread and advanced to become a universal and highly effective approach to the study of language. Linguists point to functional grammar as a single entity, but there are, in fact, many various patterns of functional grammar. Such aspects are composed of particular theoretical structures, individual researchers and the various cultural traditions; any classification of grammatical systems should be seen as contingent, i.e., suitable to change according to modern empirical material or theoretical reflection. In this way, a functional element determines the kind of meaning relation, and the valid articulation of particular meta-functions within a clause network will vary as a function, even if overlapping contextual variables. (Giomi, 2021).

2. Functional Grammar Domain

This research is concerned with functional grammar in general. Before delving into the specifics of this kind of approach to language, it is significant to consider what functional grammar means. And how is it suitable within the broader field of linguistic studies?

Functional grammar is a spacious and flexible style to the analysis of language, and its main essence is the concentration on how linguistic structures are applied to produce meanings in the context. In this regard, the scholar studies meaning-making and communication or the patterning of language in social contexts, for instance, the area of study seeks to provide

characterizations and clarifications of the way humans employ language in all of its forms and functions, from everyday conversation to the most complicated written texts and from theoretical researches to literary works and computer-mediated communication.

As an analytic approach, functional grammar is very comprehensive and can be used by scholars to study a different group of linguistic phenomena at a range of levels. It is an umbrella expression for a variety of wordings of functional grammar used by different teachers and scholars, and individual writers often assert various sides of work. Despite this, there are some major principles and approaches across the field that can be highlighted. While many of the features of the system are shared with other kinds of grammatical investigations, the insights, paradigms and terminologies discussed consider the interests and goals of functional grammar, which provides a useful usage of how the approach explores grammar in action. Terminological options in this field can be challenging, however, because in an area that is very concerned with the meanings that can be made in language, a word may have a slightly different angle or meaning depending on the function, domain, or variety being explored. (Kilpatrick & Wolbers, 2020).

3. Historical Development

The historical development of functional grammar provides an idealistic foundation upon which its position in recent theoretical linguistics can exist. The system network theory is an expression of the 1960s intellectual climate. Its descriptive-functional account of language is in direct response to an explicit tradition of prescriptive-grammatical thought, which has been the basic threat to a scientific treatment of language structure and use. Beyond the

immediate data at hand, systemic functional cosmology is ideally rendered within the context in which learning and explication belong. (Biber et al., 2021).

4. Fundamental Terms in Functional Grammar

In functional grammar, there are various terms used to analyse the sentence, and these terms are classified into four significant groups:

- 1- Noun Group
- 2- Verb Group
- 3- Adverbial Group
- 4- Prepositional Group, and
- 5- Adjectival Group

For Example:

- The pretty girl buys this car from Japan.

The pretty girl	buys this car	from Japan
Nominal Group	Verbal Group	Prepositional Group

- This doctor is smarter than the others.

This doctor	is	Smarter than others
Nominal Group	Verbal Group	Adjectival Group

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- John looks like a genius boy.

John	looks	a genius	boy
Nominal Group	Verbal Group	Adjectival Group	Nominal Group

- The old man slept under the trees.

The old man	slept	under the trees
Nominal Group	Verbal Group	Prepositional Group

Functional grammar has special terms to present its communicative aims. The notions of functional grammar are extremely different from the notions of other grammar types, i.e., traditional or formal grammar. Functional grammar contains some fundamental terms in analysing the grammatical structures and sentences, such as:

1- Function and System

Functional grammar searches how the language structures perform with reference to the functional connections, Functional grammar refers to the process which investigates the grammatical classes according to their explicit roles and the system connections. In any spoken or written structure, the listeners or readers can recognize the type of the structure, if it is statement, question, explanation, greeting, request or suggestion.

In a question structure, listeners or readers can differentiate and select the type of the of the question, i.e., Wh- question, question with (How), question with (Do/Does) or with (Will/Would). **(Feng, 2013).**

2- The Levels and Arrangement of the Linguistic Units

Functional grammar has a pertinent relation with the grammatical classes and with the explicit functions. These functions are regarded to take place and role at various levels of language structure and they can be classified according to the constituent parts and these parts begin to present major units, this suggests other small rules for the structure, the major units can be created with small units and the smaller units are gathered to mention the major units. **(Feng, 2013).**

E.g., The joyful ladies are running quickly in the race.

In the above sentence, there are two morphemes: (joy) and (ful) which compose the word (joyful), and other two morphemes: (lady) and (s) which compose the word (ladies), and two more morphemes: (run) and (ing) to compose the word (running), and last two morphemes: (quick) and (ly) to compose the word (quickly). The three words: (The), (Joyful) and (ladies) compose the structure (Word Group) and it is called (The Nominal Group), and the words (are running) compose the structure (Word Group) which is called (Verbal Group), and the word (quickly) is a (Word Group), and it is called as (The Adverbial Group, and the words (in the race) is a (Word Group) which is called (The Prepositional Group).

The joyful ladies	are running	quickly	in the race.
Word Group	Word Group	Word Group	Word Group
The nominal group	The verbal group	The Adverbial group	The prepositional group

- The tall players are coming on time to the stadium.

The tall players	are coming	on time	to the stadium
Word Group	Word Group	Word Group	Word Group
The nominal group	The verbal group	The Adverbial group	The prepositional group

3- Clause and Sentence

Halliday (1994) regards the clause as a complete unit, and it is shaped from three structures (the subject, the actor and the theme), and every structure explains the distinguished sense. Halliday classifies these three structures as:

- 1- The Message
- 2- The Exchange
- 3- The Representation

Hence, the term (Clause) is completely different from the term (Sentence).

For example:

- He will go to school by bus.

He will go to school	by bus
Clause	
One Sentence	

- She finished her work and went to the party.

She finished her work	and went to the party
Clause	Clause
Two sentences	

- Are you watching TV?

Are you watching TV?
Clause
One sentence

- Boys attend matches, girls play tennis and old men prefer books.

Boys attend matches	girls play tennis	and old men prefer books
Clause	Clause	Clause
Three Sentences		

4- Theme and Rheme

Theme is classified as the part of which occurs at the beginning of the clause, and it can be recognized what is set in initial place of the clause and theme explains the notion mentioned by the element at the beginning point of the clause. Rheme shows the rest notion of the clause, in different cases, rheme is associated with new ideas and theme is associated with given ideas. Rheme is a basic element for any grammatical structure. (Halliday, 1994).

Theme is relevant to the textual function of language and it focuses on the structure of the individual clauses, and each clause is set a message associated with the grammatical structure. Schleppegrell (2004) mentions that (Theme) is a substantial structure in the functional grammar, and it shows how the clause in the English language is arranged to convey a message.

For Example:

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- The manager travels to Rome every year.

The manager	Travels to Rome every year
Theme	Rheme

- Absolutely, he is a genius student.

Absolutely, he	is a genius student
Theme	Rheme

- Where are you working before?

Where	Are you working before?
Theme	Rheme

- Do you want some coffee?

Do you	want some coffee?
Theme	Rheme

5- Method

Martin et al. (1997) suggest that the term (Mood) dominates the fundamental structural characteristics of the sentence, the (Mood) shows that the sentence is declarative, interrogative or imperative structures.

In this regard, the (Mood) is a piece of grammar which is relevant to the roles that the persons select in the language usage,

For example:

- He brings an expensive present. (Declarative)
- What does he bring? (Interrogative- Wh- Question)
- Does he bring an expensive present? (Interrogative- Yes/No)
- Let this matter now. (Imperative)

6- Transitivity

According to **Feng (2013)** (Transitivity) is a system used to identify the clause completely, not only the verb and its object, but also concerns with the verb group structure, and it marks how the elements are classified. The notion of (Transitivity) in functional grammar contains six kinds, which are:

A- Material Process

E.g., She **danced** the tango yesterday.

E.g., My friend **brought** new books.

B- Mental Process

E.g., They **loved** romantic novels.

For example, He **preferred** costly software.

C- Relational Process

E.g., You **were** gorgeous.

E.g., He **was** active.

D- Behavioural Process

E.g., They **screamed**.

E.g., She **cheered**.

E- Verbal Process

E.g., I **declared** that.

For example, He **agreed** about the game.

F- Existential Process

E.g., It **was** a strange journey.

E.g., It **remained** risky.

Functional grammar is based on two fundamental concepts: form and function. The term 'function' in a linguistic sense is a value or set of values that something has due to its role in the context of discourse and its purpose in communication. Function is not an idea that has been recognized in terms of structuralist principles; the idea of function is clarified within the idea of form, i.e., form is selected by what the speaker or writer desires to do regarding the communicative goals coded in the language. The expression 'form' points to the underlying formal structure of linguistic expressions. It indicates any part of the pattern of sounds and letters of a language and the ways those patterns combine to express meaning. The link form to meaning is given by the meanings addressed in systemic functional linguistics' interest in the way a language is structured and in what it means about how the speakers interact with their world in using it. (Martínez-Ferreiro et al., 2020).

Various definitions and methods of conceptualizing or verbalizing the concepts occur, but there is broad agreement that the idiom 'transitivity' is used to talk about the ways the speaker interacts with the system being represented, using clause as the primary example of the relationship between form and function. In the systemic functional theoretical framework, the patterns of sounds in a language and how they combine into groups and form larger groupings are all considered patterns of signs used by speakers as they move from, e.g., 'expressing an idea' to drafting and revising a text to 'make it polished,' to 'engaging in role-play' and performing as a particular social role in behavior found in many other discursive practices. Functional analysis in systemic functional linguistics, called the 'grammatical part' of the analysis, studies the patterns that recur in larger and smaller groupings of signs and focuses on explaining how form choice, as reflecting speaker meaning, is made in these different situations. (Muhassin, 2023).

Function is comprehended to be the purpose of the use of form, so 'function' is therefore the expression of the social action the speaker is using the pattern to take, i.e., the discursive function, in a specific context. In a paragraph, the written registry of language choices can mention the social function the writer is realizing with his choices in the paragraph, and so on for different sections of text. Context and situation are used in a general way to determine the understanding that what happens in the context of situation impacts language in many ways. The expression of 'function' is more accurate and indicates that the situational circumstances (including the intentions and purposes of the participants) affect the effects that the text has on the reader or hearer. This argument has implications for both the practice of linguists and

language educators, as well as for language teachers and others who work in related fields. (Shah et al., 2023).

5. Systemic Functional Grammar

Systemic functional grammar (SFG) is suggested by Halliday, and this type of grammar has its origins in the ideas of the great linguists J.R. Firth, Hjelmslev and Malinowski. Halliday explains it distinctly, and Halliday's suggestion is to propose a valuable consideration for the linguistic usage. Language is developed to accomplish human necessities, and the style in which it is arranged is a functional style with reference to the necessities. Functional grammar is basically simple grammar where everything can be clarified. (Halliday, 1994).

Functional grammar has as its theoretical underpinning the theory of language known as Systemic Functional Linguistics. Systemic functional linguistics comes under the general rubric of functionalism and is a branch of linguistic theory developed in the 1950s and 1960s. Systemic functional linguistics emphasizes both the socio-cultural and cognitive aspects of language, with special emphasis on the way language functions in social life, particularly its communicative aspects. The basic assumption of systemic functional linguistics is that language is organized at all levels as a network of choices, with one choice opening up new choices and so on. These choices are shaped and made by users and are interpreted in context – in the context of social and cultural resources and in the context of their immediate surroundings. (Martin et al., 2021).

The practical application of systemic functional theory involves, first of all, the question of what constitutes the world. Expression tells all about

this world and how the participants are positioned and the process projected. But we need first to find what the text as a whole is about. There are several things you can do to try to find clues to meanings using systemic functional theory within the text. Each one of the methodologies we mentioned in this section will give slightly different types of information, but they all move from clause to clause and sentence to sentence, from the parts to the whole, and rely crucially on analyzing the features of the textual meta-function. The main aims of the work done within these methodologies are to uncover the meaning we take for granted when we are constructing it in our everyday interactions. The main analysis tools in all of these methodologies are also different and will give us a different picture of how language performs in a variety of ways. (Liu et al.2021)

Systemic functional linguistics contends that the linguistic origins of a language are designed to achieve the social purposes for our relation to the world and others. In contrast to the traditional linguistic theories, which treat language as static and decontextualized, systemic functional linguistics carries one central consideration: that linguistic forms can be divided into three meta-functions. There are three basic functions or uses of language, or rather, three ways in which this meaning potential is utilized in the process of making meanings: ideational, interpersonal, and textual. The ideational meta-function is concerned with how people use language to encode their experience of reality; it is the representational function of language. In other words, when we use language to say something to somebody, we are doing so in terms of how things are inside and outside ourselves. The textual meta-function is concerned with the functions of language that organize and construct discourse. These are concerned with how we use language to label, arrange,

and manipulate reality; that is, how we use language to create text, to create dialogue, in the sense of orderly sequences of topically related ideas and events. (Wang, 2022).

The fundamental application of systemic functional grammar is to reinforce communicative competence. Any teaching program or curriculum based on systemic functional principles is systemic and functional. Therefore, the program will give the learners a good understanding of how the English language works because it breaks down English into its major contextual functions or constituent parts. Some people who develop a systemic functional integration program do so as a result of very personal views of language and pedagogical underpinning. In many cases, the approach is eclectic, depending on a range of theories and methodologies from the description of grammar through linguistics and semantics. However, there is also a principled basis for the approach. Text can be described as a network of systems. It has rich and sophisticated grammar. The theory itself is also principled, and there is ample evidence of it being exploited as a rationale in a variety of educational settings. The theory also integrates text and context. A linguist who uses systemic functional grammar is simultaneously and functionally describing how participants are employed within a discourse and how they function within society, hence, the writer has an understanding point of the reader and the context. (Chen, 2022).

6. Analyzing Texts

One of the considerable purposes of functional grammar is to shed light on the linguistic resources for analyzing the grammar of texts. In other words, this subsection concentrates on the helping techniques, specifically, analytical

techniques. Texts will be analyzed because not all of their elements are usually explicit. As a result, readers and analysts have to realize how they can bring out various characteristics of texts, they have to distinguish functions that are understood by means of the forms. There are different methods of analyzing texts, including text structure, clause relations, semantics and ideas and lexis. Since the same stretch of language can be spelled out by different forms, no approach to text analysis can spell out the only evident interpretation of texts, different analyses can be created. The interaction between grammar and meaning will be set in the interpretations of different genres. **(Herman et al., 2023).**

The good researcher in functional grammar should be able to distinguish lists, narrative and descriptive passages, procedural expositions, instructive texts, imaginative literature and argument. One feature of the texts is that different audiences are related to different purposes, writers relate to their readers primarily as valuers, and commitments are based on an appreciation of the readers' requirements, wishes, interests, and so on, as well as the immediate, local and broader context of situation in which the text is heard, seen, read, interpreted and appreciated as highly relevant and important.

7. The Usages of Functional Grammar

Functional grammar has a wide range of applications in multiple areas. In language education, the functional approach provides insights into language as a resource to derive meanings, helping learners understand the significance of exploring communicative objectives in texts and understanding

interpersonal and contextual meanings relevant to various registers and genres in various contexts. This offers that functional grammar should be seen as complementing genre-based approaches to language curriculum. Teachers are encouraged to use systemic functional grammar (and functional grammar more generally) in the development of lesson plans and curricula. Drawn from the work of systemic functional semioticians, functional grammar is particularly interested in the study of language in use for practical purposes and in social contexts. Moreover, the functional perspective could generate further developments in language education that look beyond grammatical form, and in doing so, have greater potential to increase student learning outcomes.

Discourse analysts often use functional grammar in their research to better understand the effects of language use on social interaction. For example, conversation analysts have sought to reveal the meanings made through such grammatical forms in the context of sequences of talk. While cognitive linguistics has broken away from systemic functional linguistics in many ways, and has detached itself from the word-class system of language analysis espoused by systemic functional grammar, it relies on systemic functional linguistics-style lexico-grammatical analysis in many of its research reports and publications. Functional grammar finds consensus along a spectrum of sub-disciplines. Thus, insights drawn from the methodological framework of systemic functional linguistics are directly relevant and applicable to these related fields of work. Case studies and reports from fields such as linguistics, communication studies, and applied linguistics often draw on the analytical methods of functional grammar to add depth to the research. **(Jones, 2024).**

8. Modern Surveys on Functional Grammar

One of the most significant sides of the modern developments appears in the fact that, where a core section of those who deal with syntax and semantics, most go on to interact openly with more discourse-oriented and sociolinguistically oriented work. Such studies have led to refined methods of analysis with more detailed insights being offered into interface phenomena alongside issues of more general theoretical concerns, i.e., modality and epistemicity. Linguists think that investigating some of the findings of these studies will not only support persons to recognize potential directions in our understanding of functional grammar according to these analyses, but also propose some imaginable probabilities for a more dynamic relationships between the extension of grammatical theory and analytical instruments and the investigation of information from several societies. At the same time, it should help to make clearer the possible areas for collaboration with researchers from different perspectives. Lecturers, researchers, and students in linguistics can benefit from these studies, and they can look into various sides of language usage and development, providing a great deal of input material for seminars, discussions, presentations, and student theses. **(Biber et.al., 2021).**

Modern surveys on functional grammar shed light on different fields of linguistics, for example, syntax, semantics, discourse and sociolinguistic subjects. One visible direction elucidates the influence of modern technological developments; because of technological developments, meaning-building can be identified in detail. Visual analysis has resulted in greatly refined findings, meeting a wide range of language traditions and user requirements. Modern researches also make noticeable efforts in terms of

issues that include language and social sciences. The last twenty years witnessed several publications and researches discussing the individual characteristics of the real-time creation of text and conversation pertinent to the larger systems of meaning in their cultural contexts. It regards a more extensive focus for contextualization and cultural distinctions and similarities. The evident result is the development of more different means of analysis and the beginning of the process of refining the associated theories to accommodate them and the diverse populations and kinds of material they are being used to analyze. (Martin et al., 2023).

9. Present-day Directions in Functional Grammar

Present-day directions in functional grammar studies have offered that the Anglophone world is increasingly concerned with combining functional grammar with empirical approaches that came from disciplines such as cognitive linguistics and sociolinguistics. New ways of keying in meaning contain the most recent insights in communication, particularly digital communication. Applications in education all underline the necessary interaction layer between production and reception and discover the full sentence as the normal environment for the application of functional grammar reasoning. This sentence level is not limited to writing practices but is extended to have other modalities, from images and icons to sound and speech to the geometry of layout. Connection with digital communication skills plays a role in the arguments for embedding functional grammar in every language at every educational level, from kindergarten to higher education. New systems of education have been sketched that propose multimodality for a tighter integration in a unified theory of meaning.

There appears to be a consensus that functional grammar needs to proceed towards embracing the new holistic realization of meaning in which context, modalities, and language are fundamentally connected, and appears that there is a consistent direction in the Anglophone world that emphasizes more and more the interaction layer between language use in all its modalities, the meaning it carries, and the context or frame it gets. The future of functional grammar research increasingly contains new recognition of language and skill, and futuristic applications may challenge theoretical possibilities. Most linguists point out that new terms need to return to the origins of language, meaning, context and its human grounding. (**Lachlan Mackenzie, 2020 and Jaszczolt, 2021**).

10- Conclusions

Functional grammar is mentioned exceedingly and presented in the research of linguistics many years ago and it remains a new subject for learners and researchers. Functional grammar is suggested by M.A.K. Halliday in 1960s, and it is established from the systemic linguistics and it confirms on the style of spoken and written structures of language which take place in various social environments.

Generally speaking, functional grammar is valuable and useful in presenting how structures elaborate with the elements of sentences, and how language differentiates to be appropriate with the needs of the human beings. Functional grammar is a descriptive process and it interests in the structures of groups that act to generate meanings.

Halliday rejects the idiom (Functional Grammar) to refer and relation with the idiom (Formal Grammar), because formal grammar is varied from functional grammar. According to Halliday, functional grammar starts from a hypothesis that language includes functions in its structures; these functions are used to provide the human beings necessities.

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