系统功能语法：
理论之再探——轴关系

SYSTEMIC FUNCTIONAL GRAMMAR:
A NEXT STEP INTO THE THEORY
——Axial Relations

By
J R Martin

原著／马丁 ［澳大利亚］

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Xitong Gongneng Yufa
Lilun Zhi Zaitan Zhouguanxi

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Preface

This book is based on a series of seminars I developed over the past few years which were designed to teach research students how to work hands-on with system networks. The seminars were conducted weekly, over a 13 week semester in Sydney, or intensively during a single week elsewhere (in Santiago, Bello Horizonte, Sao Paulo, Florianopolis, Nanchang, Nanjing, Beijing, Odense and Lisbon). Inspired by published and unpublished work by my teacher H A Gleason, Jr., the course was organised as an extended problem-solving exercise — during which students were confronted with data sets of increasing complexity, with each step designed to present a new challenge as far as network writing was concerned. I am deeply indebted to the students and colleagues who participated in those courses around the world and contributed so much to the development of the strategies used in this book. My thanks as well to Bandar Almutairi, Yaegan Doran, Talia Gill and Hao Jing for their help with proof-reading.

Turning an interactive face-to-face course into a monograph has been a challenging task. Obviously in a monograph I cannot withhold possible solutions to problems until students have wrestled with the network for a while on their own or in small groups — anyone can peak ahead to my suggestions for the systems involved. I've tried to balance this by making suggestions here and there for extension activities, for which I haven't offered solutions of my own. Perhaps one day colleagues can devise an on-line version of this curriculum, with an interactive pedagogy more comparable to the one I use in face-to-face teaching and learning.

By 2012 it was clear to me that the natural place to publish a book of this kind was in China — taking into account the great interest in systemic functional linguistics (hereafter SFL) there and the relative affordability of books published there for students and colleagues around the world. And the natural publisher was obviously the Higher Education Press (hereafter HEP), who had previously published Matthiessen & Halliday's *Systemic Functional Grammar — a first step into the theory*. I conceived this book as 'a next step', and HEP happily accepted the proposal at a meeting organised by Peng Xuanwei at Beijing Normal University in September 2012. Matthiessen & Halliday's book was a

bilingual edition, and the publisher and I agreed this was also appropriate here. Fortunately, two colleagues who have worked with me in Sydney, Wang Pin of Tongji University and Zhu Yongsheng of Hangzhou Normal University and Fudan University, kindly agreed to undertake the translation. They have also added examples from Japanese, Korean and Tibetan to the Chinese version, by way of complementing my Tagalog examples — so the book has a regional orientation, even if most of the examples are from English and Chinese.

The aim of the book is to help scholars move from a position as consumers of SFL theory and descriptions to producers of theory and descriptions. This is an urgent task as increasing numbers of students and colleagues become interested in SFL – as part of their training in linguistics and semiotics, or because of a research interest in genre, appraisal or multimodality, or because of an applied concern with computational linguistics, educational linguistics, forensic linguistics, clinical linguistics or translation studies. Control of the design and argumentation involved in formalising paradigmatic relations in system networks and realisation statements is also crucial as scholars bring SFL to bear on languages and language families that have not been approached from this functional perspective before.

Pedagogic resources of this kind are of course undergoing continuous development. I've in fact adjusted several data sets and networks during the course of writing this book. Accordingly I welcome feedback from anyone using these materials; and please do feel free to expand them in various directions as you need on your own. I suppose it is too much to imagine a version of this book for each of the major language families of the world. But I can dream, can't I? My very best wishes to those of you making dreams real in one context of theory, description and application or another of your own.

J R Martin
Sydney, March 2013

前　言

　　本书是在我过去几年间开设的一系列讨论课的基础上整理而成的，该课程旨在教会学生如何亲自动手绘制系统网络。在悉尼，这门讨论课每周一次，一学期共计十三周。在其他地方（圣地亚哥、贝洛奥里藏特、圣保罗、弗洛里亚诺波利斯、南昌、南京、北京、欧登塞、里斯本）开设的是为期一周的强化课程。在我的老师H A Gleason, Jr.已出版和未出版的论著的启发下，本课程以不断解决问题的形式进行组织。在课堂上，学生要分析一系列语料，语料的复杂性不断增加，每个步骤都会提出网络绘画方面的新挑战。在此我谨向世界各地参加过本课程并为本书所采用的分析方法出谋献策的学生和同仁深表谢意。同时感谢Bandar Almutairi、Yaegan Doran、Talia Gill及郝婧参与书稿的校正工作。

　　将可以互动的面对面讲授的课程变为一部专著是一项具有挑战性的任务。显然，在专著中，我无法等到学生独自或通过小组讨论的方式与系统网络摸爬滚打一段时间之后再给出可能的解决方案。读者可以直接翻阅我提出的绘画网络的建议部分。为部分解决这一问题，我尝试在某些章节中仅为扩展活动提供建议，而不提供我自己的方案。也许有朝一日会有同仁设计出本教程的网络版，采用与当面授课和学习更为接近的互动教学方式。

　　在2012年我就有了一个明确的想法——这种专著最合适的出版地是中国。考虑到许多中国人对系统功能语言学有浓厚的兴趣，中国出版的图书价格也更容易为世界各地的学生和同行所接受。高等教育出版社自然是出版本书最合适的机构，该社之前已出版过Matthiessen & Halliday的《系统功能语法：理论之初探》。我将本书构思为"理论之再探"。2012年9月，在北京师范大学由彭宣维教授组织的一次会议上，高等教育出版社欣然接受了本书的出版工作。Matthiessen & Halliday的著作是中英双语的，出版社和本人都认为本书也应以双语出版。所幸曾在悉尼跟我学习的两位同行——同济大学的王品和杭州师范大学/复旦大学的朱永生表示愿意承担本书的翻译工作。他们在中文版里增加了日语、朝鲜语和藏语的例子，作为我所例举的他加禄语的补充，以使本书更加适应目标读者的区域特点，即使本书的大多数例子都来自英语和汉语。

　　本书的目的是为了帮助学者们从系统功能语言学理论和描述的消费者转变为理论和描述的生产者。随着越来越多的学生和同仁对系统功能语言学产生兴趣，这项工作变得尤为紧迫。系统功能语言学可能是他们接受语

言学和符号学训练的一部分，也可能来自对语类、评价理论或多模态的研究兴趣，或者出于计算语言学、教育语言学、法律语言学、临床语言学或翻译研究等方面的应用需要。在系统网络和体现表述中对纵聚合关系进行形式化会涉及到设计和论证。当学者们应用系统功能语言学来描述以前从未以这种功能视角研究过的语言和语系时，对这些设计和论证加以控制是至关重要的。

　　本书使用的这种教学资源自然也在不断发展。事实上，我在撰写本书的过程中也调整了几组语料和网络。因此，我欢迎本书的读者提供反馈意见，也请随时根据自己的需要来扩充书中的材料。我想，若要这本书在世界每个主要语系中都有一个版本，实在太超乎想象了。但我可以有梦想，是吧？衷心祝愿各位读者在理论、描述、应用或其他某个领域实现自己的梦想。

<div style="text-align:right">

J R Martin

2013年3月于悉尼

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Introduction

At the beginning of the twentieth century, in his "Course in General Linguistics", Saussure made two things very clear: one, that a language was a system of relations, and two, that these relations were along two dimensions, or "axes", the syntagmatic axis and the paradigmatic axis. Syntagmatic relations were relations "in presence", between a term and others that co-occur with it in temporal sequence. Paradigmatic relations (which Saussure called "associative", in line with associationist psychology) were relations "in absence", between a term and others that could occur as alternatives to it.

Most linguists of the last century devoted attention almost exclusively, at least in grammar, to relations on the syntagmatic axis. They described paradigms of words and word groups, but they didn't extend the same principle up to the rank of phrase or clause; and they made little attempt to explore paradigmatic relations in theoretical terms.

An exception to this was J.R. Firth, who wrote in 1957: "The first principle of phonological and grammatical analysis is to distinguish between *structure* and *system*" [Firth's italics] (Firth 1957: 17). Structure was the organising concept for syntagmatic relations, while system was the organising concept for paradigmatic relations. Firth himself worked mainly in phonology, where the paradigms emerge more crisply than they do in grammar; but the principle applied equally across both these two strata of linguistic form.

When I was faced with the task of writing a grammar of Early Mandarin, having studied linguistics first with Wang Li and then with Firth, I tried to adopt a biaxial perspective, giving equal weight to both systems and structures. It seemed to me that paradigmatic relations were no less critical to the construction of meaning than those of the more overt, syntagmatic kind. But as I probed further into the workings of Chinese, both grammar and phonology, and then as I began to engage more deeply with English, I began to see a language as a complex of choices, both on the plane of expression and on the plane of content.

You make meaning by choosing — by the selection of one option rather than another, among the set of options that are available in a given environment. But what is the environment of a choice? The system was conceived of by Firth as the paradigm of options that were available at a given location in the

structure; for example, at the Onset of a syllable, the system of consonants /b d g p t k/; or, in grammar, at Deictic in a nominal group, the system of determiners *this that the my your his her* etc. This "gives value" (as Firth put it) to each of the elements that made up the structural configuration. The canonical description of any item of linguistic form (wording or sound) was its representation in structural terms, such as Onset + Rhyme, or Deictic + Numerative + Epithet + Classifier + Thing. This could always be made more delicate (voiced Onset, possessive Deictic and so on); but this was simply a case of specifying the set of possible options in greater detail – sharpening the focus so as to narrow down the available paradigm. It seemed more sensible to do this paradigmatically: that is, by elaborating the representation in systemic form.

This would present the alternatives as what they were: different sets of possibilities, rather than as variants in structure. It would allow a system to spawn a set of more delicate sub-systems, including those which crosscut one another (as did number, case and gender in the traditional paradigms of the Greek and Latin adjective). In other words, systems could be combined so as to form a "system network". This would show, from any system taken as a point of origin, all its more delicate sub-systems; and it would also show other, more complex forms of interdependence, such as where one system was dependent not just on one more general system but on a combination of two or more others.

In a syntagmatic model, each item is described in terms of its own structure; it is then shown, as a separate step, how it is related to certain other items. This may be done, for example, by "transformation rules". In a paradigmatic model, by contrast, the same operation is at once both describing and interrelating. The description of an item consists precisely in showing its relationship to all other possible items. This then reveals the degree of interrelatedness — the distance by which one option is separated from another. Ultimately, of course, every choice is related to every other choice, at least all those at the same stratum as itself. The system network makes it possible to recognise what features are shared at any degree of delicacy.

When you want to give a comprehensive account of a language, you need to be able to point up relations on the paradigmatic axis — how some choices are affected or conditioned by other choices — irrespective of how they happen to be realised in structure. The relations between structure and system can vary widely — among different languages, of course, but also within one language: witness the wide variety of different structures that realise modality in English. It is usually not the structural patterns that determine which choices affect one another; it is the relative location in the overall system network.

Part of the problem that faces you if you cast your description of grammar in syntagmatic terms is the way the conception of structure itself has evolved. Structure has almost always been conceived of as constituent structure, the configuration of parts into larger wholes. And this, in turn, is because the conception of grammar itself has been rather restricted. Grammar is the construction of meaning into patterns of linguistic form; but not all kinds of meaning deploy the same contrivances of structure. So long as you think of meaning as just one particular kind of meaning, the "ideational" (meaning as the construction of human experience, turning it into a plausible picture of reality), you can use constituency as the model, because ideational meanings do tend to be construed as wholes made out of organic assemblages of parts, like a clause made up of an Actor, a Process and a Goal. But other kinds of meaning, the "interpersonal"and the "textual", tend to favour other varieties of structure, looking more like fields or waves than like clusters of particles. Which means that, although you can reduce them all to variant forms of constituency, when you want to see how they interact with each other, it helps if you move to a more abstract form of representation where what counts is what the choices are, not the way in which they are organised as structures. This freedom from the constraints of structure is a feature of the system network.

The different kinds of meaning just alluded to are referred to as "metafunctions", because they correspond to the basic functions that language has evolved to perform in human life: construing our experience ("ideational"), enacting our social and individual personae ("interpersonal"), and composing these into coherent patterns of discourse ("textual"). When we represent these as system networks, we become aware of a language's total "meaning potential". As you would expect, it turns out that there is much more mutual prehension among the choices within each metafunction than there is between those of one metafunction and those of another. Your construction of experience is likely to make sense as a whole, and your interactions with other people (including your projection of yourself) will probably show a reasonable degree of consistency; but, in principle, you can combine any ideational content with any interpersonal force, and assign the resulting complex to any status of discourse.

Many of my colleagues, and I myself, have taught our students, over the years, the principles and practice of using system networks — including, when possible, how to build them up and test them for themselves. But we have never had a "textbook", a systematic introduction designed to do just that. Jim Martin has now produced such a resource. He guides the learner along, step by step, using the notation I first devised in the 1960s (starting by turning the

representation of structure on to its side and adding the arrowhead to suggest procedure); beginning with the simplest format, that of a single two-term system treated in isolation, and progressing steadily all the way up to complex networks such as one that brings together the systems of polarity, mood and modality. Each step is explained, in terms of its context in the overall grammatical theory, and illustrated with examples showing the realisation in structure of relevant systemic features; and suggestions are offered for topics that the student might follow up and questions that could helpfully be explored.

The book has been produced in collaboration with two Chinese linguists, Zhu Yongsheng and Wang Pin. They have translated Martin's text into Chinese; and they have introduced and analysed numerous Chinese examples. Zhu and Wang's contributions are particularly welcome, because there are many scholars and students in China engaging with systemic functional linguistics and they are not all specialists in English — many are in fact primarily focussed on the linguistic study of Chinese. Chinese and English are still, at least for the present, the two principal domains of systemic functional research in China; but the theory provides an insightful entry into comparative and typological work, and an additional benefit of Martin's work is that both he and his Chinese collaborators have included examples from other East Asian Languages.

SFL is an appliable kind of linguistics, and most of those who take it up will be using it for some particular purpose, one that may well require them to interpret and analyse discourse. But every application calls for some understanding of the underlying theory, and analysing a text, at any stratum or in any metafunction, brings problems that demand an informed and thoughtful approach. Some, no doubt a minority, of those who study systemic functional linguistics will want to go further in enquiring into the workings of language, and will feel challenged, not discouraged, by a language's almost infinite complexity. I feel confident that this book will entice at least some of its readers to probe more deeply into the nature and the significance of a general linguistic theory, especially now that we are all having to adapt ourselves to living in the "age of information". Some of our colleagues in physics and biology are now telling us that what we need most is a general theory of meaning. Linguists should be the first to listen and respond to such a demand.

M A K Halliday
Sydney, April 2013

郑重声明

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SYSTEMIC FUNCTIONAL GRAMMAR: A NEXT STEP INTO THE THEORY — AXIAL RELATIONS

J R Martin

1. Axis

1.1 Overview

This book has been designed to build on Matthiessen & Halliday's (2009) *Systemic Functional Grammar: a first step into the theory,* by focusing on the foundational dimension of axis — i.e. system-structure relations as they are formalised in systemic functional linguistics (hereafter SFL). As 'a next step into the theory' it provides a detailed exploration of axial relations, concentrating on system — both in terms of how systems are represented in system networks and how systems are motivated by and realised through structural configurations. Its goal is to provide readers with a basic understanding of system/structure relations that they can use to appreciate and critique existing descriptions of linguistic and semiotic systems, and to undertake new or alternative descriptions of their own.

In this chapter we review the key theoretical principles which SFL has inherited and developed over the past 60 years. In doing so we will highlight foundational work by Saussure, Hjelmslev and Firth on the nature of the sign, the relational nature of language and system/structure relations. Our reading of these scholars will be partial, in both senses of the English word. It will not in other words be a comprehensive introduction to their work; and it will not be a mainstream reading. Rather we will draw on their work in specific ways in order to establish the relational thinking about language that lies at the heart of this volume.

1.2 Theoretical foundations

To begin we return to the work of Saussure, whose *Course in General Linguistics*