

Volume Five

第 5 卷

# 功能语言学 年度评论

Annual Review  
of Functional Linguistics

主 编 黄国文  
常晨光

等教育出版社

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Gongneng Yuyanxue Niandu Pinglun

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# Contents

## **Editors' Introduction:**

### **ISFC40, The Halliday Library and Functional Linguistics**

Huang Guowen & Chang Chenguang ..... 1

## **Modality and the Law**

Rosemary Huisman ..... 7

## **Learning to Teach Grammars: A Multimodal Ensemble Performance**

Pauline Jones ..... 22

## **Expressions of Modality in the Clause Complex of Chinese: "Marked" Markers of the Logico-semantic Relation of Expansion**

Yang Shu ..... 39

## **Multimodal Construction of Attitudinal Meanings in Pedagogic Context: Language-image Complementarity and Co-instantiation**

Chen Yumin ..... 54

## **Systemic Functional Research in China (2012): An Annotated Bibliography**

Chang Chenguang & Lü Dairong ..... 72

## **Systemic Functional Research in China (2013): An Annotated Bibliography**

Qiu Qing & Yan Xiaoqing ..... 102

《功能语言学年度评论》稿约 ..... 128

**Abstracts of Papers** ..... 130

# Editors' Introduction: ISFC40, The Halliday Library and Functional Linguistics

Huang Guowen & Chang Chenguang  
Sun Yat-sen University, China

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## 1. Introduction

The title of this introduction is made up of three phrases. "ISFC40" is an abbreviation of the 40th International Systemic Functional Congress, "The Halliday Library" refers to The M.A.K. Halliday Library founded at Sun Yat-sen University, and "Functional Linguistics" refers to the journal *Functional Linguistics*, edited by both of us and published by Springer.

These key phrases are related to what we have done over the past year or so, and reflect the on-going focus on Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) at Sun Yat-sen University. That is, for the past fifteen years, Sun Yat-sen University has been at the forefront of academic research which utilizes the Systemic Functional model of language.

This is the 5th volume of the *Annual Review of Functional Linguistics (ARFL)*. In the following sections, we will briefly describe the papers in the present volume, "ISFC40, The Halliday Library and Functional Linguistics".

## 2. Papers in this volume

There are four papers in this volume. The first two papers are written by two Australian SFL scholars, who are well-known in the international SFL community, and the other two papers by two young Chinese SFL scholars, both of whom have obtained two PhD degrees: from Sun Yat-sen University and respectively from the City University of Hong Kong (Yang) and the University of Sydney (Chen).

The first paper is entitled "Modality and the law", by Rosemary Huisman. As the author says in the paper, her research interest in this topic developed from the study of language in a particular case in the High Court of Australia. Her focus in this study is on the potential of legal discourse in regard to the legal register of judgment. This study is an example of "language as social semiotic" (Halliday 1978) on the one hand and

SFL as an “applicable linguistics” (Halliday 2008) and as “a problem-oriented theory” (Halliday 2009) on the other. With regard to Huisman’s arguments made in the paper, the following is worth mentioning: “For the study of legal discourse, the register realization of tenor is particularly significant, to the extent that the field, or subject-matter of the legal context, is primarily one of interpersonal meanings of social relations.”

The second paper by Pauline Jones is entitled “Learning to teach grammatics: A multimodal ensemble performance”. It is concerned with “curriculum reform with respect to the explicit teaching about language and some of the challenges inherent in the processes of implementing a grammatics” in the Australian context. The author argues for “the importance of teacher’s pedagogic knowledge in the successful implementation of a grammatics curriculum”. This is a topic that requires further research, since, as the author suggests, “we do not fully understand the nature of such knowledge, how it interfaces with other forms of knowledge (about language and about curriculum) in the production of teaching ‘expertise’ and how such expertise is enacted for different age groups of learners”. This study is an excellent example of the application of SFL theory in an educational context.

Yang’s paper “Expressions of modality in the clause complex of Chinese: ‘Marked’ markers of the logico-semantic relation of expansion” studies modal expressions in Chinese within the framework of SFL. The aim of her paper is to examine the role and function that expressions of modality in Chinese play in the logical metafunction. The paper illustrates the system of the clause complex in modern Chinese, concentrating especially on its subsystem of expansion, and the logico-semantic relations that expressions of modality indicate in the clause complex of Chinese.

The final paper is by Chen Yumin, entitled “Multimodal construction of attitudinal meanings in pedagogic context: Language-image complementarity and co-instantiation”. The aim of the paper is “to examine the ways in which linguistic and visual semiotic resources are deployed to construe attitudinal meanings in multimodal pedagogic materials for teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) in China”. Her focus is on “the evaluative orientation construed in the multimodal EFL textbook discourse”, particularly the verbiage-image relations. Both Chen’s and Yang’s studies are good examples of SFL studies in the Chinese context, in which there are still relative few explorations which specifically focus on the Chinese language and on the teaching and learning of EFL in China.

The annotated bibliographies of Systemic Functional research in China are compiled on the suggestion of Professor M.A.K. Halliday, who suggested compiling such a list several years ago. As Halliday reminds us, as most of the publications on SFL in China are written in Chinese, Chinese SFL scholars have the role of passing the information of SFL studies in China to non-Chinese scholars: “In China you read



all the materials published (at least those that are in English, not necessarily in other languages); but outside China people are not trained to read the materials in Chinese. So we need a digest of publications which tells, in English, what work has been published in Chinese in SFL during the year" (Halliday 2010: 8). In the interview with Professor Hu Zhuanglin and Professor Zhu Yongsheng during the 36th International Systemic Functional Congress (July 14—18, 2009, Tsinghua University, Beijing), Professor Halliday (see Halliday 2010: 8) expresses his point again, this time in public (as was reported in the "Editors' Introduction" in the Second Volume). It is in response to Professor Halliday's strong suggestion that we have included the section "Systemic Functional Linguistics Studies in China: An Annotated Bibliography" since the very first volume of *ARFL*.

### 3. ISFC40

As was reported in the Editors' Introductions to Volumes Three & Four, Sun Yat-sen University had the privilege of hosting the 40th International Systemic Functional Congress (ISFC40) at our Guangzhou campus during July 2013. As the conveners we are very grateful to those in the international SFL community for their generous support.

The congress theme, "Broadening the Path: Complementarities in Language and Linguistics", reflected our belief that those who work within the general framework of SFL should give greater emphasis to the value of the complementarities in current work within SFL. This means that while we continue to focus on our specialized areas of interest, we should also take an active interest in the full range of current studies within SFL, and work towards integrating developments in these diversified fields in a more unified model of language. This theme is clearly reflected in the many papers presented at the congress.

The organizer of ISFC40 was the School of Foreign Languages, Sun Yat-sen University (Huang Guowen, Chang Chenguang and Wendy Bowcher) and there were three co-organizers: University of Science and Technology Beijing (School of Foreign Languages, He Wei), City University of Hong Kong (The Halliday Centre for Intelligent Applications of Language Studies, Jonathan J. Webster), and the Hong Kong Polytechnic University (The Department of English, M.I.M.C. Matthiessen). And there were three associated partners: The Functional Linguistics Institute, Sun Yat-sen University, Centre for Australian Studies, Sun Yat-sen University, and China Association of Functional Linguistics.

ISFC40 attracted over 300 participants from 22 countries and regions, and a total of 192 papers were presented at the Congress. Professor M.A.K. Halliday and Professor Hu Zhuanglin were the special invited guests, and the plenary speakers were: Wendy

Bowcher (Sun Yat-sen University, China), Cecilia Colombi (University of California, Davis, USA), Robin Fawcett (Cardiff University, UK), Ruqaiya Hasan (Macquarie University, Australia), He Wei (University of Science and Technology Beijing, China), Randy LaPolla (Nanyang Technological University, Singapore), Christian Matthiessen (The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, China), Erich Steiner (University of the Saarland, Germany), Geoff Thompson (The University of Liverpool, UK), Jonathan Webster (City University of Hong Kong, China), and Yang Xueyan (Beijing Foreign Studies University, China).

ISFC40 was the third ISFC held in China, after ISFC25 held in Peking University in 1995 and ISFC36 hosted by Tsinghua University in 2009.

#### 4. The M.A.K. Halliday Library

As Fawcett (2013) points out, the development of SFL has benefited from the social structures that have been developed to maintain and nourish the theory. China has contributed to the building of the “infrastructure” to support SFL research and teaching. Apart from national associations, university courses, and teaching and research posts, functional linguistics research centres that have been set up in China now include The Halliday Centre for Intelligent Applications of Language Studies at City University of Hong Kong, The Functional Linguistics Institute at Sun Yat-sen University, The Centre for Functional Linguistics at Beijing Normal University, The Centre for Functional Linguistics at the University of Science and Technology Beijing, and The Martin Centre for Applicable Linguistics at Shanghai Jiao Tong University.

With strong administrative and financial support from Sun Yat-sen University, an SFL resources centre, named “The M.A.K. Halliday Library”, was founded and launched during the ISFC40 in July 2013. The library is on its way to becoming one of the largest SFL resources centres for SFL researchers in China and the rest of the world in due course.

Professor M.A.K. Halliday has kindly donated some of his books and manuscripts to the library and other SFL scholars have done the same. We invite scholars to donate books to The M.A.K. Halliday Library, to help us better serve the SFL community.

#### 5. Functional Linguistics and the monograph series

As a resources centre, The M.A.K. Halliday Library also generously sponsors the publication of a new journal, *Functional Linguistics*. This is an international peer-reviewed open access journal published under the SpringerOpen brand. The journal publishes scholarly articles and reviews in the broad area of functional studies, with a special focus on SFL. The journal aims to provide a platform for the exploration of

language and linguistic issues from a functional and meaning-oriented perspective. Areas covered in this journal include: language and context, functional grammar, semantic variation, discourse analysis, multimodality, register and genre analysis, educational linguistics, and so on.

The journal adopts a rigorous peer review process to ensure independent assessment of the papers. The editorial board of *Functional Linguistics* is composed, in addition to the editors-in-chief (Huang Guowen and Chang Chenguang), of many internationally renowned linguists who help guarantee the high quality of the papers published. They include: Wendy Bowcher (Sun Yat-sen University, China), David Butt (Macquarie University, Australia), Frances Christie (Melbourne University, Australia), Caroline Coffin (Open University, UK), Cecilia Colombi (University of California, Davis, USA), Robin Fawcett (Cardiff University, UK), Ruqaiya Hasan (Macquarie University, Australia), He Wei (University of Science and Technology Beijing, China), J. R. Martin (University of Sydney, Australia), Christian Matthiessen (Hong Kong Polytechnic University, China), Kay O'Halloran (National University of Singapore), Erich Steiner (University of Saarland, Germany), Geoff Thompson (University of Liverpool, UK), Eija Ventola (Aalto University, Finland), Jonathan Webster (City University of Hong Kong, China), Geoff Williams (University of British Columbia, Canada), Xin Zhiying (Xiamen University, China), and Yu Hui (Beijing Normal University, China).

At the opening of ISFC40, Professor Halliday gave a keynote speech entitled "That 'certain cut': Towards a characterology of Mandarin Chinese", and this has now been published in the first volume of the journal *Functional Linguistics*. All the papers published in the journal are freely accessible online immediately upon publication at <http://www.functionallinguistics.com/>, without subscription charges or registration barriers.

Apart from the journal *Functional Linguistics*, The M.A.K. Halliday Library is planning on the publication of a monograph series, "The M.A.K. Halliday Library Functional Linguistics Series", to be published with Springer (edited by Chang Chenguang and Huang Guowen). This series will focus on studies concerning the theory and application of SFL. Monographs to be included in this series will cover studies on language and context, functional grammar, semantic variation, discourse analysis, multimodality, register and genre analysis, educational linguistics, etc. Manuscripts will be selected, based on quality and significance, in consultation with an editorial board which consists of leading linguists in the SFL field.

The M.A.K. Halliday Library Functional Linguistics Series is an open series. Upcoming titles for the Series include the following: (1) *Aspects of Language and Learning* (M.A.K. Halliday), (2) *Understanding Verbal Art: A Functional Linguistic Approach* (Jonathan J. Webster), (3) *Grammar West to East: European and Chinese*

*Traditions and the Making of Modern Linguistics* (Edward McDonald), (4) *Writing and Wording in Eurasian Cultures: Linguistic, Historical, and Ideological Perspectives* (Edward McDonald), (5) *Language, Linguistics and Ideology: The Systemic Functional Perspective* (Annabelle Lukin), (6) *Systemic Functional Linguistics: Texts, Tools, and Tradition* (David Butt). Those who intend to contribute to the series are welcome to get in touch with the series editors.

## 7. Concluding Remarks

The editing and publication of the present journal — *ARFL*, the journal of *Functional Linguistics*, and “The M.A.K. Halliday Library Functional Linguistics Series”, together with other SFL activities that we have undertaken, shows that we, as SFL scholars in China, are keen to take an active part in the international SFL activities by making our own contributions. We hope that scholars of functional linguistics in general and those of SFL in particular will continue to help us in one way or another in our efforts in researching language and promoting studies from functional perspectives. Together, we can do well, and as time goes on we can do better.

For Chinese scholars of language and linguistics, to “go international” is not an easy job, but as long as we try, we will certainly shorten the distance between us and the rest of the world.

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# Modality and the Law

Rosemary Huisman  
The University of Sydney, Australia

## 1. Introduction

My interest in this topic developed from the study of language in a particular case in the High Court of Australia (in Australia, the High Court is the highest judicial authority).<sup>[1]</sup> The case was decided by the full court of seven judges, with a narrow majority of four, and three dissenting. Such a close dissension made it an interesting case for comparing the judicial repertoire of the individual judges, as instantiated in the different legal reasonings of the published judgments, and, with Tony Blackshield, I have written on that elsewhere (Huisman & Blackshield 2014). However the study also suggested more general observations, and here I focus on the potential of legal discourse in regard to the legal register of judgment.<sup>[2]</sup>

## 2. Modality and the SFL dimensions of stratification and instantiation<sup>[3]</sup>

In my initial study of *Al-Kateb* (the usual abbreviated reference for the High Court case) I noted the high occurrence of modal verbs. Study of other cases supported this observation. On the SFL dimension of stratification (represented vertically in the table below), modal verbs are one way of realizing the meanings of modality, and modality is a system of interpersonal meaning, realizing one of the three parameters of social context, that of tenor.

Table 1

General potential
context of culture: tenor
semantic system of interpersonal meaning: modality
lexicogrammar: modal verbs

On the SFL dimension of instantiation (represented horizontally in the table below), the legal context is an intermediate institutional context, between the most general context of culture and the most specific instance of a particular legal situation.

Table 2

General potential	Intermediate potential	Intermediate potential	Instance
context of culture	context of legal culture	context of legal situation type	context of specific legal situation

Bringing these two dimensions of instantiation and stratification together (as in the table below), we see that the tenor of the legal context is realized in a legal register which is characterized by a high use of choices of modality.

Table 3

General potential	Intermediate potential	Instance
context of culture	tenor of legal situation type e.g. tenor of High Court judgment	context of situation e.g. tenor of a specific judgment
semantics	register of legal discourse: use of modality	meaningful text: choices of modal meaning
lexicogrammar	register wording: modal wording	wording of specific text: choices of modal wording

3. The modality of propositions and proposals

In SFL, the exchange patterns of interpersonal meaning can be those of the speech function of proposition, that is statements and questions, or the speech function of proposal, that is commands and offers. Modality refers to the intermediate meanings between positive and negative polarity: the systems of probability and usuality to the intermediate meanings for propositions, the system of obligation to the intermediate meanings for commands, the system of inclination to the intermediate meanings for offers. This study found that, in its use of the meanings of probability and usuality, the register of legal discourse is not differentiated from their use in other registers. However, the register of legal discourse does make particular use of the modalities of obligation and inclination. (Halliday & Matthiessen refer to those modalities of proposals as “modulation”.) This use, as discussed in Section 7 of this paper, enables the realization of complex legal contexts but, more basically, a general feature of modal realization enables the essential legal purpose of argument. The congruent lexicogrammatical realization of propositions is the indicative Mood, specifically declarative Mood for statements, interrogative Mood for questions. The imperative Mood is the congruent realization for commands (offers are variously realized). However, all modalized

speech functions are realized as if they were propositions. For example, with the modal meaning of obligation for the speech function of command, the clause *The appeal should be dismissed* is realized in the declarative mood of the statement. Propositions can be argued over, and the modalized proposal is now in a form which enables legal argument (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004: 110; 148).

#### 4. Modal meanings and their grammatical realization

As Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) point out, while “semantic units are mapped onto grammatical ones” this mapping can be complicated:

...semantic units are mapped onto grammatical ones... while this is the foundation on which the relationship between semantics and lexicogrammar is based, there are two other principles at work, relating to (i) **transgrammatical semantic domains** and (ii) **metaphor**. (p 592)

By these principles, modal meanings are a pervasive semantic domain. First, the principle of transgrammatical semantic domains:

On the one hand there are semantic domains that range over more than a single grammatical unit. Thus the semantic domain of modality is construed in more than one place in the grammar; for example, it is construed by clauses such as *I suppose* and *it is possible*, by verbal groups with finite modal operators such as *may* and by adverbial groups with modal adverbs such as *perhaps*. ... [So] the semantic system of modality is more extensive than the modal features of any one given grammatical unit would suggest; it is realized not by a single grammatical unit but by a range of units. (p 592 & see §10.2)

These different realizations are not “interchangeable/synonyms”; rather “they have distinct values within the overall semantic system of modality” (p 592). These values include contrasts of low / median / high; explicit / implicit; subjective / objective (as in Fig. 4-25 System network of MODALITY, p 150). Given its social claim to institutional authority, legal discourse unsurprisingly favours explicit and objective values (for example, *it is certain that*). Choices of high, median and low values in legal discourse are discussed in Section 6 of this paper.

The second principle complicating the relation of semantics and lexicogrammar is that of metaphor, what has been called “realignments in the realizational relationship between semantic units and grammatical ones”, such as the realignment of a logical sequence as an experiential figure (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004: 592-3).

<i>status</i> : relator	circumstance process	quality entity
<i>rank</i> : clause nexus	clause	nominal group

Figure 1

Figure 1 is derived from Halliday's account (2004b: 42-3) of the "general drift" of grammatical metaphor from the more congruent realization. "The general drift is ... a drift towards the concrete, whereby each element is reconstrued in the guise of one that lies further towards the pole of stability and persistence through time." Thus Figure 1 describes a drift in ideational status from relator to circumstance to process to quality to entity, this semantic drift corresponding to a drift in lexicogrammatical rank from clause nexus to clause to nominal group. (For example, clause nexus: "The case failed *because* the witness was unconvincing"; nominal group: "The *reason* that the case failed was that the witness was unconvincing.") Martin also uses the term "inter-stratal tension" for this linguistic phenomenon, focusing on the tension between the two levels of stratification (discourse semantics and lexicogrammar) when the realization is less congruent (Martin 2012: 75-94). (On different grounds, Fawcett, 2012, has argued for "grammar" being a "misleading" concept in the term grammatical metaphor.)

Whatever the present status in SFL theory, the linguistic practices being described significantly expand the meaning potential of the language. For Halliday (2004b), *construe* means to transform experience into meaning: the individual child moves through different ways of meaning — stages of generalization, abstractness and metaphor — which enable the child to construe and reconstrue experience. Metaphor then characterizes the complex reconstrual of experience in the technical language of adult disciplines. Halliday shows in detail its utility in the historical development of scientific discourse, particularly in the use of nominalization; Martin (2003) illustrates the usefulness of causal relations realized in the clause (rather than the clause nexus) to the discipline of history. Both studies illustrate the drift in ideational status described in Figure 1. However for legal discourse, characterized by a concern with the interpersonal meaning of modality, a comparable "general drift" in rank is from lexicogrammatical auxiliary verb to nominal group, semantically from speech function modality to quality to entity, for example *may* to *possible* to *possibility*, or *must* to *obligatory* to *obligation*. (This drift follows the ideational realignment of semantics and grammar; at the same time the possibility of interpersonal realignment is a rich resource for modal realizations.<sup>[4]</sup>) Thus, in accordance with both the principle of transgrammatical semantic domains and the principle of metaphor, the legal texts studied included many different lexicogrammatical realizations of modal meaning besides that of modal verbs. Law, like science, deploys grammatical metaphor, Martin's inter-stratal tension, to expand its meaning potential. It also deploys what could be called "functional tension",



as the semantic juncture realized in, for example, the word “obligation” is also one between two different metafunctions: the interpersonal meaning of modality is realized nominally, that is in the lexicogrammatical realization congruently associated with ideational meaning. Interpersonal meaning realizes tenor, ideational meaning realizes field: in terms of the parameters of context, a significant field of legal context is the subject-matter of tenor.

## 5. Fundamental concepts of legal relations

Institutional discourses typically give their important concepts nominal labels. SFL studies the choices of modal meaning in texts, but uses the nominalizations “obligation”, “inclination”, “probability”, “usuality”, to label the systems of modality from which those choices are made. However in legal philosophy, or jurisprudence, study begins with such concepts: thus one scholar begins his first chapter: “to be able to carry on legal and, for that matter, any kind of argumentation we need to have access, from the start to a set of adequate — that is, fruitful, well-defined and simple — fundamental concepts.” (Spark 1994: 1)

A particularly influential attempt to clarify “fundamental concepts” was that by the early 20th century American jurist, Wesley Hohfeld (1913). Hohfeld criticised the confusing and ambiguous use in legal argument of terms such as right and privilege, and suggested eight basic concepts to describe legal relations, arranged in two groups of four:<sup>[5]</sup>

<i>Matrix 1</i>		<i>Matrix 2</i>	
RIGHT	PRIVILEGE	POWER	IMMUNITY
NO-RIGHT	DUTY	DISABILITY	LIABILITY

The relations in each matrix of four are correlative or contrary. Correlative relations, diagonally related above, are both present in the one legal situation, for example, RIGHT & DUTY. “RIGHT” is sometimes replaced by “CLAIM”, thus you lent me \$10 so you have a RIGHT to claim that \$10 from me. Correlatively, I have a DUTY to pay you back \$10.

Contrary relations, vertically placed above, are those where if one is present in the legal situation, the other is absent, for example PRIVILEGE (sometimes called PERMISSION) and DUTY. In Hohfeld’s words: “the *dominant* technical meaning of legal [privilege] is the negation of *legal duty*, for example ‘privileges against self-[in] crimination’ in the law of evidence.” (p 39)

In jurisprudence, concepts in the RIGHT/DUTY matrix are typically foregrounded.