

seen more as the transmission of content as one progresses through the secondary and tertiary sectors. Unlike in cognitive science and the study of education, the practical traditions of post-secondary education do not sufficiently recognize that discourse processes seem to go hand in hand with cognitive processes. As long as this is so, learning will continue to be more difficult than it need be for all learners, but especially for second language learners.

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Linguistics in a Systemic Perspective edited by James D. Benson, Michael J. Cummings, and William S. Greaves. Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1988. x + 441 pp. Amsterdam Studies in the Theory and History of Linguistic Science, Series IV, Current Issues in Linguistic Theory. General Editor: E.F. Konrad Koerner.

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This collection of thirteen articles illustrates how a diverse range of linguistic interests and concerns (intonation, grammar and lexis, semantics, lexicography, discourse and semiotics, anthropology and artificial intelligence) are handled within the theoretical approach known as systemic functional linguistics, largely based on the work of M.A.K. Halliday. Readers unfamiliar with systemic linguistics but with a fair knowledge of transformational generative theory will find here quite a different view of language. It is beyond both the scope of this review and the ability of this reviewer to conduct an in-depth comparison between systemic linguistics, on the one hand, and transformational generative theory, which has largely been concerned with sentences rather than with texts and text/context relations, on the other. However, an attempt will be made to highlight some of the ways in

which systemic linguistics differs from the more formal transformational generative linguistics, so as to contextualize the volume under review.

Halliday's work is considered to be the most important modern development within the so-called "London School" of linguistics, founded by J.R. Firth. Himself influenced by Bronislaw Malinowski in the 1930s, Firth believed that meaning--the function of a linguistic item in its context of use--was paramount. In this Firth shared a similar interest with Bloomfield, a leading American structuralist: both viewed linguistic meaning in terms of the situations in which language is produced. They differed, however, in the consequences each drew from this view. For Bloomfield, the study of meaning thus had to be rejected as "unscientific," while for Firth, meaning became the cornerstone of linguistic theory.

Just as Firth's sociological orientation, derived from Malinowski, contrasts with Bloomfield's behaviorist, psychological bias, so does Halliday's work contrast with Chomsky's along a similar dimension. Halliday's primary interest has been in language as a central attribute of 'social man.' He views language in a functional sense, such that language is intimately part of the ways human beings negotiate and create meanings, build their perceptions of experience, and hence actually construct social reality. Central to this view of language is the notion of *options*, i.e., the choices which a speaker can exercise in the linguistic system to create different kinds of meanings. For instance, what transformational generative grammar would call the stylistically motivated optional fronting of the Complement, Halliday's grammar would explore as a choice between an unmarked and marked theme in the clause system, for which, once the choice is made, realization rules obligatorily translate that choice into the appropriate surface structure. For Halliday, therefore, choosing between a marked and an unmarked theme is just as important and meaningful as choosing between, for example, a declarative and an imperative clause.

Most reactions, whether positive or negative, to systemic linguistics have, unfortunately, come from systemicists themselves. By and large, non-systemic linguists have little to say about this approach. This state of affairs may have evolved from within, for many systemic linguists have preferred to pursue their own path and remain aloof from debates between the more philosophically inclined and the more anthropologically oriented schools of linguistics. The wide range of interests represented in the volume under review

suggests that the time may have come for systemicists to take note of the strengths of other traditions and bridge the gaps between them and systemic theory as well as within systemic theory itself.

One major criticism of the Hallidayan systemic approach is the lack of relevant data in its theorization (Berry, 1982; Butler, 1985). Most of the chapters in this volume, however, are data-based studies. To mention a few, Martin, in a comparison of English and Tagalog, re-examines Whorf's notion of the cryptotype and elegantly shows how each set of general categories in Tagalog grammar functions as a metaphor for one of the Tagalog cultural themes of family, face, and fate. This fascinating study seeks to understand grammatical patterns in terms of the underlying principles of human communicative interaction. In another study, Gregory draws data from recipes and political pamphlets to explain how knowledge is encoded and decoded in different social contexts. His finding that the process type is predominantly Material in the clauses of recipe texts but overwhelmingly Mental in political texts shows how a text both affects and is affected by an ongoing situation.¹ Threadgold's article directly addresses Halliday's (1978) notion of language as a social semiotic by analyzing how the meaning of Milton's Satan was recoded by the English romantics in terms of intertextuality and heteroglossia. Threadgold demonstrates how any text is guided by the "intertextual" domains which it presupposes. In a similar yet different vein, Steiner examines two different semiotic systems, language and music, and investigates the kinds of meanings which are realized and the ways in which the two systems interact to create the texture (linguistic and musical) of a performed ballad.

Systemic linguistics has been largely known for its contribution to the description of written discourse, while its role in the analysis of spoken discourse is rarely acknowledged. Yet, in the very beginning of this book, El-Menoufy counters this reputation with his study of intonation and meaning in speech, based on an analysis of four hours of spontaneous conversation among speakers of southern British English. Indeed, within the systemic model (Halliday, 1970; Greaves, 1989), the meanings of intonation contrasts have always appeared in the semantic feature description of an utterance together with the meanings of non-intonational (i.e., grammatical and lexical) contrasts, while the phonological patterns themselves appear as the formal elements that realize these meanings. This system makes it possible to integrate contrasts such as tone contrasts, as they are realized directly in the phonology. The

advantage of the systemic model becomes particularly clear in comparison with the attempts made by some transformational grammarians to integrate intonational contrasts in their linguistic description (e.g., Stockwell, 1972). Also dealing with spoken discourse is Sinclair, who uses the Birmingham Collection of English Texts in his study of the correlation between the sense of words and their transitivity type. Connected with the notion of lexical cohesion (Halliday & Hasan, 1976; Hasan, 1984), which led to an increased interest in how the configurations of words and phrases reflect cohesive options as well as how conceptual content forms a coherent continuity of meanings, Sinclair's study explores the relation between lexis and grammar, a relation which he calls "the main lexical preoccupation of systemics" (p. 73).

The most critical challenge for systemicists has come, perhaps, from the methodological rigor which is characteristic of the formalist approaches to language. Halliday (1978) has said that it is important to "interpret language not as a set of rules but as a resource" (Halliday, 1978, pp. 191-2). His idea appears to be that rules and other formal procedures, such as hypothesis testing, are inappropriate for describing how language is used. Yet, in this collection, several authors demonstrate that there is no clash between a more precise and rigorous research methodology and the desire to account for language use.

A good example is Butler's empirical study of the relationship between politeness and the semantics of modalized directives in English. Butler first formulates hypotheses regarding the relationship between semantic features and the acceptability, speech act classification, and politeness of various modalized forms. Then he devises an informant testing procedure to obtain evidence that supports or disconfirms the hypotheses. Based on his results, he then formulates the relationship between acceptability and speech act classification, the effects of semantic force on politeness, and the effect of modals on politeness. In the conclusion, he compares his own study with those of others. A similar demand to be open to falsification and modification of research claims is taken seriously into consideration in Davies' analysis of how surface grammar realizes different metafunctional meanings, Fawcett's evaluation of alternative networks for personal pronouns by distinguishing the level of form from the level of semantics, and Matthiessen's illustration of how the semantic and lexico-grammatical levels are related in a computerized text-generation system.

This review would not be complete without mentioning the article written by Halliday himself, "On the Ineffability of Grammatical Categories," in which he calls attention to the limitations on the ability of language to interpret itself. Based upon observations and claims of both European linguists (such as the Prague School and the British linguists) and North American anthropological linguists (such as Whorf and Boas), as well as evidence from English and non-Western languages (such as Hopi and Chinese), child language, and text generation in the framework of artificial intelligence, Halliday argues that the grammatical category is ineffable. One of his examples is the category of "plural": the term "plural" is the name of a relationship between that category and the speaker's experience of the world, but at the same time it is also used as the name of the grammatical category which realizes this relationship (e.g., a noun can be said to be "plural" in number). The fact that "I like cats" is preferred to "I like more than one cat" shows that the meaning of the -s on "cats" is impossible to gloss except by means of itself. Hence the ineffability of the category "plural." This notion leads Halliday to invert Chomsky's famous dictum and describe language as "an infinite system that generates only a finite body of text" (p. 40). This philosophical article certainly challenges some of the underlying notions of linguistics. However, given the editors' objective to "show systemicists at work" rather than to "offer a review of the 'state of the art'" (p. ix), it is somewhat difficult to see how this article fits in with the rest of the collection.

Still, while this collection of articles is wide-ranging in focus, the content is rich, and the level of inquiry is deep. The volume clearly shows us the remarkable applicability of systemic linguistics to many issues of language use. This is not to say, however, that the articles are thus satisfactorily transparent and persuasive. One general question the book may raise for readers is whether semantics should be seen as the encoding of behavioral options in defined social contexts and settings or whether it should be viewed as having no connection to social behavior. This question is particularly relevant to the articles by Butler, Davies, Fawcett, and Matthiessen, but it is also relevant since any theory of meaning is a theory of communication. Indeed, because the concept of meaning poses a theoretical problem for linguistics, it also provides a potential source of criticism for any abstract model of language. For, in general, linguistic theory explains verbal communication in terms of an abstract system linking expression

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Design for Cross-Cultural Learning by Mildred Sikkema and Agnes Niyekawa. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press, 1987. 97 pp.

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As international travel and migration become more common and cultures that used to be geographically separated come into contact, intercultural education is receiving increased recognition, both in the academic world and in popular books such as Hall's (1976) *Beyond Culture*. Indeed, intercultural education teachers and teacher trainers have at their disposal several excellent curriculum guides and training manuals (e.g., Landis & Brislin, 1983; Seelye, 1984).

What distinguishes Mildred Sikkema and Agnes Niyekawa's *Design for Cross-Cultural Learning* from similar guides and manuals is its focus on the design of cross-cultural learning programs that "prepare students to function effectively in any culture or subculture and . . . help them grow toward becoming . . . more flexible and creative" (p. 7). A student in such a cross-cultural learning program is expected by the authors to become "not . . . a specialist in relation to a given culture but . . . a cross-culturally