

REVIEWS

time to come, as well as serving as an invaluable reference tool for researchers in the field and a model for rigorous empirical research.

REFERENCES

- Arends, Jacques. 1989. *Syntactic developments in Sranan: Creolization as a gradual process*. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Nijmegen.
- Bickerton, Derek. 1981. *Roots of language*. Ann Arbor MI: Karoma.
- Chaudenson, Robert. 1992. *Des îles, des hommes, des langues*. Paris: L'Harmattan.
- Coelho, Adolpho. 1881. *Os dialectos românicos ou neo-latinos na Africa, Asia e America*. Lisbon: Casa da Sociedade de Geographia.
- Ferguson, Charles A. 1975. Toward a characterization of English Foreigner Talk. *Anthropological Linguistics* 17.1, 1–4.
- Gass, Susan M. & Larry Selinker. 2008. *Second language acquisition: An introductory course*, 3rd edn. New York: Routledge.
- Hall, R. A. 1961. How pidgin English has evolved. *New Scientist* 9, 413–415.
- Lefebvre, Claire. 1998. *Creole genesis and the acquisition of grammar: The case of Haitian creole*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mufwene, Salikoko S. 2001. *The ecology of language evolution*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Plag, Ingo. 2008. Creoles as interlanguages: Inflectional morphology. *Journal of Pidgin and Creole Languages* 23.1, 114–135.
- Reinecke, John E. 1938. Trade jargons and creole dialects as marginal languages. *Social Forces* 17.1, 107–118.
- Schuchardt, Hugo. 1888. Beitrage zur Kenntnis des kreolischen Romanisch I. Allgemeineres uber das Negerportugiesische. *Zeitschrift fur Romanische Philologie* 12, 242–254.
- Whinnom, Keith. 1956. *Spanish contact vernaculars in the Philippine Islands*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.

Author's address: Department of English, University of Yaoundé I, PO Box 755, Yaoundé, Cameroon
miriamayafor@yahoo.co.uk

(Received 15 February 2016)

J. Linguistics 52 (2016). doi:10.1017/S0022226716000086
© Cambridge University Press 2016 First published online 09 March 2016

Jonathan J. Webster (ed.), *The Bloomsbury companion to M. A. K. Halliday* (Bloomsbury Companions). London: Bloomsbury, 2015. Pp. xiv + 512.

Reviewed by WENCHAO ZHAO, Henan University of Science and Technology/Shanghai Jiao Tong University

The volume under review is a celebration of the originator of Systemic Functional Linguistics (hereafter SFL), M. A. K. Halliday. It collects nineteen papers contributed by a group of internationally leading scholars who engage in SFL-oriented researches on language, including, apart from Halliday, Hasan, Matthiessen, Martin, O'Halloran, Butt, Bateman, and Webster, to name just a few. Given the content of the contributions, the volume can be described as a complement to the previously published *The Essential Halliday* (Halliday 2009),

Continuum Companion to Systemic Functional Linguistics (Halliday & Webster 2009), *Halliday in the 21st Century* (Halliday 2013a), and *Interviews with M. A. K. Halliday: Language Turned Back on Himself* (Martin 2013), and thereby constituting another engaging addition to the repository that demonstrates the evolution, theorization and application of SFL.

Structurally, the nineteen contributions are organized into four parts. Part 1, consisting of Chapter 1, presents a brief chronologically arranged biographical account of Halliday's life, focusing on the trajectory of his scholastic growth and pursuits. Part 2, containing Chapters 2–6, discusses some crucial epistemological influences on Halliday's linguistic thinking and theorizing. Part 3, which contains Chapters 7–14, provides insightful exposition of Halliday's linguistic theory and works to date. Part 4 unfolds with Chapters 15–19, which discuss the future development of Hallidayan linguistics.

Indubitably, none of the four parts is dispensable to the volume. However, it is likely that the new publication is designed to hold readers' attention mainly through the discussions and conclusions offered in the chapters of Parts 2–4. These chapters, despite their grouping in the volume, can be reclassified into five groups according to their topics and purposes. The following five significant features guarantee the value of the volume.

First, the volume provides new insights into the epistemological influences on the evolution of SFL, which is well documented by Chapters 3, 4, and 5. Chapter 3 uncovers the aspects in which Halliday's thinking about language might have been inspired by his two former Chinese teachers' linguistic ideas. In consequence, it becomes explicit for the first time that SFL is permeated with Chinese holistic epistemology, which is manifested through its panchronic methodology and its dialectic and interactional ideas. Chapter 4 reevaluates the functionally-oriented Firthian linguistics, emphasizing Firth's influence on Halliday in respect of his socially realistic approach to language and linguistic description. In my opinion, this reevaluation helps raise readers' awareness of SFL's commitment to the primacy of the social function of language and the revelation of 'the socially (or contextually) determined characteristics of language' (84), although it remains a moot point to claim that SFL is neo-Firthian linguistics. Chapter 5 is Halliday's own writing on the influence of Marxism on his thinking about the nature and functions of language. He suggests that the Marxism in SFL is mainly reflected in its theory-specific notion of functionality and its 'applicable' feature in the sense of 'something that is capable of – having evolved in the context of – being applied' (Halliday 2013b: 144).

Second, the volume offers intensive discussion of the evolution of SFL as a social semiotic. This is most prominently conveyed by Chapter 6, as signaled by its title, 'Systemic Functional Linguistics: Halliday and the evolution of a social semiotic'. The chapter reveals how the social semiotic gradually evolves, by chance and choice, out of Halliday's endeavors associated with language and linguistics. It indicates that the evolution starts with Halliday's merging of systems and functions and profits from Bernstein's (e.g. 1971) code theory accounting

for cultural variation. To foreground 'the momentum that could only lead to the evolution of the kind of social semiotic that SFL represents' (131), the chapter also dwells on the four metafunctions in SFL, bringing into prominence their three attributes (i.e. their intrinsicality, non-hierarchic status, and equal essentiality) and their impact on the theorization of the process of language, the positioning of semantics in relation to context and lexicogrammar, and 'the positioning of linguistics as a discipline reconciling nature and culture' (125). Chapter 2 also addresses the evolution of Halliday's social semiotic. Notably, the chapter specifies that the theory is built on the two notions of system networks and paradigmatic choices, and on the integration of social theory and natural science. With a view to clarifying why the theory can be taken as a natural science of meaning, the chapter expounds on Halliday's approach to the interface between matter and meaning, highlighting his emphasis that language be considered a semogenic process rather than a semiotic structure.

Third, the volume contains in-depth and insightful explanations of the major architecture of Halliday's linguistic theory. Standing out from this perspective are Chapters 7, 8, and 10. Chapter 7 dwells on the 'axial rethink' in the development of SFL. As explained in the chapter, the axial rethink, which results from the conception of language as a meaning-making resource, prioritizes the paradigmatic over the syntagmatic organization of language, as well as upholding an axial hierarchy that stratifies lexicogrammar into a system level interfacing upwards with semantics and a structure level interfacing downwards with phonology. The axial rethink is argued to be paramount to Halliday's theorization on language for the reason that it 'opened up a number of important new theoretical possibilities' (155). Specifically, these are the possibilities of discovering the inherent metafunctional clustering of systems, exploring language in terms of system thinking, describing systemic intonational contrasts, interpreting language as a probabilistic system, modeling lexicogrammar in terms of systems ordered in delicacy, undertaking a fractal representation of all strata subsystems of language, and observing the systemic changes in the meaning potential from the semogenetic perspectives of logogenesis, ontogenesis and phylogenesis. The chapter also emphasizes that Halliday's ideas about linguistics are somewhat similar to his ideas about language, which explains why SFL can be deemed as a multifunctional resource for making meaning about semiotic systems and is thereby capable of being modeled as a stratified metalanguage of paradigmatic organization. As for Chapters 8 and 10, these can be taken as elaborating part of the exposition in the preceding chapter. Chapter 8 further discusses Halliday's conception of language as a probabilistic system. It notes that the conception comes from the recognition of the instantiation relation between linguistic system and specific texts and Halliday's development of paradigmatic 'grammatics', which identifies the locus of possibility as system rather than structure. After an examination of the typology and profiles of the systemic probabilities, the chapter also points out that these are always being shaped by collective rather than individual behavior. Chapter 10 further discusses the axial foundation of

Halliday's grammatics from a pedagogic perspective. The essential claim is that grammatics privileges choice-focused paradigmatic grammatical analysis over chain-focused syntagmatic grammatical analysis because the former produces a synoptic snapshot of the organization of grammar as a whole rather than the structures of single grammatical units. The chapter contributes to understanding of Halliday's theory by offering two further illuminations. One is about the relations of delicacy and relative interdependency among the systems in system networks, and the other is about how the dimensions of metafunction, rank, and strata in SFL are grounded in the paradigmatically privileged axial relations.

Fourth, the volume presents enlightening surveys of Halliday's studies in some specific research areas. The first area bears on Halliday's development of a language-based theory of learning. It covers Halliday's studies of child language development and language education, as presented in Chapter 9 and Chapter 13, respectively. With an overview of Halliday's characterization of the language development phases in early childhood, the former chapter highlights that his systemic functional research paradigm 'emphasizes the centrality of language and social interaction and places the child at the center of her or his learning processes' (256). With a clarification of his conception of learning and meaning potential, the latter chapter examines Halliday's contributions to language education. In so doing, the chapter brings into focus Halliday's ideas about the semogenic potential of explicit grammatical knowledge and his views on literacy development, the relation between spoken and written language, and the importance of grammatical metaphor in language education, among others. The second research area is spelled out in Chapter 11, which surveys Halliday's holistic systemic study of intonation in spoken English. The survey touches upon the definition of intonation, its variable effects on meaning, and the distinction between Halliday's approach and other approaches. The most crucial revelation is that Halliday prefers intonation choices to be taken as part of grammatical phenomena and intonational systems to be described as the realization of semantics in different metafunctions and at different ranks. The third research area is identified in Chapters 12 and 14. They relate to Halliday's investigations into various types of texts, including literary texts as well as everyday conversational texts. Chapter 12 emphasizes that Halliday advocates grounding text interpretation in the grammatical categories derived from the description of the language as a whole. This helps us understand Halliday's commitment to interpreting texts of various kinds on the basis of the same linguistic theory and analytical method, which in turn accounts for his practice in which, as demonstrated in Chapter 14, he prefers all texts to be treated as literature and their analyses be grounded in the same grammatics. These revelations are certain to improve our understanding and appreciation of Halliday's view of grammar as aesthetic resource and his stylistic notions of prominence, deautomatization, and situational and cultural contexts.

Fifth, the volume collects inspiring discussions on the directions of SFL's future development. These discussions are found in the last five chapters, among which Chapters 15 and 16 serve well to illustrate how SFL can be extended to

multimodal studies to construe the meaning-making of non-linguistic semiotic resources like painting, music and building designs. The two chapters will alert readers not only to the significance of multimodal semiosis in understanding and interpreting discourse, culture, and social practice, but also to the necessity of more empirical analyses and theoretical thinking for the development of multimodal semiotics. Chapter 17 displays how translation studies have been modeled against the ideas of ranks, levels, metafunctions and the stratification-instantiation matrix in SFL, specifying meanwhile where the breeding of a theory of good translation may be further motivated by Halliday's views on language and textuality. With an account of the explorations of language comparison and typology under the influence of Halliday's ideas about language description, Chapter 18 suggests that systemic functional typology would be an exciting direction of development from Halliday if it is approached with emphasis laid on ample text-based evidence and system-oriented probabilistic generalizations. Chapter 19 addresses the development of computational linguistics, covering areas of machine translation, natural language parsing, text generation, computational linguistic representation and corpus linguistics.

In conclusion, though the above-mentioned chapters are subsumed under different headings, their integration in the volume can be claimed as forming a substantial synergy in representing Halliday's conception of language as 'a multidimensional, multifunctional, paradigmatic, socially anchored probabilistic phenomenon' (466), and Halliday's SFL as an open, exotropic, social semiotic seeking to be and evolving towards an 'applied' theory. Close reading of the volume will contribute both to the development of readers' understanding of Hallidayan linguistics in general as well as to the application of that understanding to the study of specific issues and domains concerned with language use and semogenesis. In sum, the volume will be welcomed as indispensable reading by those who 'recognize that the future of linguistics as a discipline which is dedicated to the study of language lies in the exploration of the functional origins of language as a social semiotic' (viii).

REFERENCES

- Bernstein, Basil. 1971. *Class, codes and control*, vol. 1: *Theoretical studies towards the sociology of language*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Halliday, M. A. K. 2009. *The essential Halliday*, edited by Jonathan J. Webster. London: Continuum.
- Halliday, M. A. K. 2013a. *Halliday in the 21st century* (Collected Works of M. A. K. Halliday, vol. 11), edited by Jonathan J. Webster. London: Bloomsbury.
- Halliday, M. A. K. 2013b. Pinpointing the choice: Meaning and the search for equivalents in a translated text. In Halliday (2013a), 143–151.
- Halliday, M. A. K. & Jonathan J. Webster (eds.). 2009. *Continuum companion to Systemic Functional Linguistics*. London: Continuum.
- Martin, J. R. (ed.). 2013. *Interviews with M. A. K. Halliday: Language turned back on himself*. London: Bloomsbury.

JOURNAL OF LINGUISTICS

*Author's address: School of Foreign Languages, Henan University of Science and Technology,
No. 263 Kaiyuan Avenue, 471023, Luoyang, China
w_yxy2009@163.com*

(Received 15 February 2016)