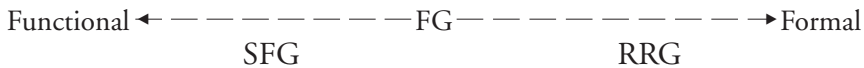


INTRODUCTION¹

In 1978, Simon C. Dik propounded a model of linguistic analysis that would become known as *Functional Grammar*. Since then, Functional Grammar (henceforth FG) has occupied a prominent role within the proliferation of functionally-oriented models during the seventies. However, “despite its appurtenance to the functional paradigm, the design of Dik’s model has been able to compete not only with other functionalist theories but also with models ascribed to the main formalist framework, namely, Chomskyan grammar” (Cortés Rodríguez). This is mainly due to the fact that FG combines a functional view of the nature of language with formal rigor. As Mackenzie describes and illustrates, “this has placed FG very much halfway between radically functional and radically formal positions. On a scale leading from functional to formal, Halliday’s Systemic Functional Grammar would be to the ‘left’ of FG, and Van Valin’s Role and Reference Grammar a little to the ‘right’.”



Therefore, FG offers an elegant paradigm in the sense that, “on the one hand, linguistic descriptions are functionally-grounded and, on the other, these are rigorously explained in terms of rules, functions and principles” (Mairal Usón).

Another important contribution of FG is that it has proven to be a solid theory with regards to the explanation of linguistic phenomena. Of the three *Standards of Adequacy*,² pragmatic, psychological and typological adequacy, postulated within the theory, the latter is the one that has been paid special attention. As Siewierska (1991: 16) points out:

I am indebted to Francisco Cortés and Kees Hengeveld for comments on an earlier version of this text.

¹ With the intention of providing a critical assessment of FG, I asked some colleagues working within this theoretical framework their personal opinion about (i) FG’s main contributions; (ii) main problems in current FG; and (iii) challenges for FG. Thus, this introduction gathers together their and my own insights about the past, the present and the future of FG. I am most grateful to Chris Butler, Francisco Cortés Rodríguez, Kees Hengeveld, J. Lachlan Mackenzie and Ricardo Mairal Usón for sharing their thoughts with me.

² Cf. Butler (1999) for a detailed evaluation of FG standards of adequacy.

Typology is one of the strong points of FG. The goal of typological adequacy has been pursued persistently from the very beginnings of the theory. In fact all the developments within the grammar owe much to cross-language studies.

Thus, as regards typological adequacy, the most important issue is that the typological method has contributed to the development of the theory, that is, “typology is not seen as a purely descriptive subdiscipline of its own, but is theory-driven and theory-driving” (Hengeveld).

Apart from these contributions concerning the methodological principles of FG, many aspects of the descriptive apparatus of this theory have been highly influential to the field of linguistics. FG's conception of the lexicon undoubtedly provided the necessary input for the *Functional Lexematic Model* (hereafter FLM) to be developed. As Butler states, the FLM, conceived as an enriched version of the FG lexicon, “has produced illuminating accounts of lexis and its relationship with grammar.” Nevertheless, it can be contended that the major contribution of FG has been the theory of layering. The hierarchical structure of the clause, integrating three types of functions (semantic, syntactic and pragmatic), has endowed FG with an elegant descriptive apparatus suitable for accounting for the syntactic-semantic organization of natural languages. The layered model of the clause not only has led to rich insights regarding the scope of operators, adverbials, the study of subordinate clauses, but it has also been useful in providing the inspiration for the development of the layered structure of the term (NP) that has been adopted by other theoretical models (i.e. Role and Reference Grammar).

After this brief comment on the main contributions of FG to the field of linguistics, we will turn now to consider the main problems and, consequently, the main challenges for current FG theory. In this sense, the papers in this monograph contribute to the development of the theory in different ways.

The layering theory continues to be an important topic of research, since it is always interesting to test its validity for the analysis of different linguistic phenomena. In his paper, van der Auwera reconsiders the domain of modality in the light of the FG layered model of the clause. The main conclusion he arrives at is that epistemic modality is always subjective and, therefore, is always propositional.

Similarly, Co Vet reconsiders the current treatment of temporal and aspectual operators, since it doesn't account for the behavior of these operators in the Romance languages. After analyzing tense and aspect in French he puts forward a revision of the utterance structure in order to account for the scope relations existing between these operators.

As a consequence of the main concern for research on aspects related to the layered model of the clause both from a typological and from language-specific approaches, the other two components of the theory, the fund and the expression rules, have received less attention, especially the latter one. Several papers in this volume address in fact some of the weaknesses latent in the underdeveloped status of these components.

Thus, Dik Bakker analyses the problems deriving from the application of the standard, underdeveloped, model of expression rules, showing that such a model



proves to be of little usefulness since the rules described both undergenerate and overgenerate linguistic expressions. He presents a new model, characterized by being dynamic, that solves the problems of under-/over- generation caused by the static model and, therefore, constitutes an important tool in testing the layout of underlying representations.

Mackenzie's paper reconsiders the current FG tripartite classification of lexical categories (verb, noun, adjective). After rejecting the existence of a class of manner adverbs in English, this author analyzes other classes of adverbs, arriving at the conclusion that English has, in fact, adverbs. Likewise, he admits the possibility of considering adpositions another type of predicate. Nevertheless, instead of positing two new categories of predicate, he puts forward a single category, *Ad*, that includes both adverbs and prepositions characterized by sharing 'spatial' as their core meaning, with extensions to other domains such as the temporal domain.

Mairal Usón and Van Valin offer a comparative analysis of both FG and RRG lexical representations. They contend that FG lexical entries could be greatly reduced by incorporating more abstract mechanisms, which would imply the adoption of a new system of lexical representation based on a metalanguage, the use of macroroles, lexical templates and the development of a set of lexical rules which, on the one hand, govern the syntactic-semantic configurations within a lexical class, and, on the other, establish the systematic relations between the lexical template and the different syntactic configurations relevant to each predicate. The resulting linking algorithm should be bidirectional in the sense that it can go from semantics-to-syntax and from syntax-to-semantics.

This conception of the lexicon is also shared by Cortés Rodríguez and Pérez Quintero, who consider that FG lexical representations could be enriched by adopting RRG logical structures. Although implying an evident departure from one of the key axioms of Stepwise Lexical Decomposition, these authors argue that the use of a metalanguage should be part of a definitional system which conflates both the semantic and the syntactic information into one unified format. They apply this conception of the lexicon to the analysis of OE verbs of 'healing', devising a lexical template for the subdomain and explaining the linking algorithm between their semantics and their syntactic behavior.

As was mentioned before, one important and challenging feature of FG is its aim to satisfy several standards of adequacy. This ever-present task makes it natural that in a volume like this one, where challenges are a major topic, contributions concentrate on this issue:

Chris Butler provides evidence, derived from the analysis of an extensive corpus of the English language, that predicate frames, as conceived in FG, posit serious problems in accounting for the richness that characterizes natural language users' lexical potential. He emphasizes the importance of analyzing authentic language data in order to remain faithful to the criteria of pragmatic and psychological adequacy.

The standards of adequacy is also the main topic of Hengeveld and Pérez Quintero's paper. Upholding the existence of a distinction between explanatory (pragmatic and psychological) standards of adequacy and descriptive ones, these

authors postulate that typological adequacy should be integrated, together with a wide gamut of linguistic facts, into the standard of descriptive adequacy. Through the analysis of the expression of a group of adverbial clauses, it is shown that the description of different types of linguistic facts (cross-linguistic and intra-linguistic variation) should be compatible, that is, should be explained in terms of the same restrictions.

Pragmatic adequacy is the main concern in Pérez Hernández and Ruiz de Mendoza's article. Although various attempts have been made recently in order to describe a discourse model in which one could integrate FG clause analysis, a main challenge for FG is still "to develop into a well-defined grammar of discourse, an aim which FG has set itself from the very beginning" (Hengeveld). These authors deal with this issue and present an elaborate model that implies the development of FG into a discourse grammar, thus accounting for pragmatic aspects of natural languages, that is, for the use of language in real situations. These authors adopt the modular approach to the study of discourse, distinguishing different modules or components of analysis. Nevertheless, the major difference with previous modular approaches is that they connect FG with cognitive models, in order to attain psychological adequacy as well.

Of no less importance for the development of a theory is the testing of hypothetical constructs and their further refinement. In FG, given its typologically-driven character, the improvements of the model often are done by studying and interpreting data from several languages. An excellent example is Anna Siewierska's typological study of cross-referencing forms, that reveals that the analysis provided within FG, that assigns cross-referencing forms argument status, is not tenable since it involves a series of problems. Instead this author suggests an agreement analysis, recognizing three types of agreement (grammatical, ambiguous and anaphoric), that provides a solution for the problems posed by the argument analysis.

Refinement comes, in other occasions, through the incorporation of proposals from other models; this is one of the main features of Martín Arista's paper, where the author provides an analysis of the functional (semantic and syntactic) motivation of adjustment of derived constructions. He claims that derived constructions are motivated by semantic prototypicality and syntactic markedness. Furthermore, he puts forward the incorporation of cognitive notions, such as metaphor and metonymy, into functional syntax, thus, initiating and leaving open a new possibility for further research.

We cannot conclude this critical assessment of FG without mentioning an important achievement that, without concerning directly scientific progress, cannot be dissociated from it, namely, the open-mindedness, tolerance and enthusiasm that functional grammarians have always been able to transmit and that my students of FG perceive just by reading some of Dik's papers. Using Mackenzie's words, "let us take that energy and apply it constructively to the further development and application of the theory."

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