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ADOPTING FUNCTIONAL GRAMMAR IN MODERN EFL CLASSROOM: A TEXTUAL  
ANALYSIS STUDY CASE

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ABSTRACT

Ever since, grammar has been a real obstacle for the majority of English Language learners at all levels. Traditional grammar taught in schools has restricted students to follow rules rather than giving them free space to produce meaning. Since students' first nightmare in learning English is grammar, the spotlight should be on how they can be encouraged to learn grammar, acquire it, and use it confidently. Functional grammar has provided an opportunity to get into this kind of teaching. The purpose of languages is to produce messages to serve means of communication. Sociolinguistics is becoming one of the main issues of acquiring languages. Meaning-making is what functional grammar aims to. One major problem EFL students in higher education face problems with is meaning-making in writing. Adopting functional grammar in EFL classrooms gets students involved in using grammar from a different perspective. It encourages them to use grammar to communicate in the best possible way in different situations fulfilling their daily lives needs; that is, providing them real time grammar use.

**Keywords:** Traditional grammar, Functional grammar, EFL, Meaning-making, Communication, Textual analysis

1. INTRODUCTION

The first thing that an EFL student would complain of is grammar. When a learner in any field has more like a chronic problem with a specific point, there must be a missing gap that must be filled one way or another. Actually, when you force someone to do something in a specific way, you may not get the results you expected. If your student is taught to do something in some way without knowing why he or she is doing so, then, no pleasing results will show up. This is the main reason why EFL students face difficulties with grammar acquisition and application. Foreign Language Acquisition (FLA) has been a key interest for linguists. Researchers reviewed how students can acquire a language both theoretically and practically (Spada and Lightbown, 2010).

In schools, attention is given to *traditional grammar*. Students are restricted to follow rules rather than applying them in real life situations. They focus on minorities and forget the overall view which is more important. Students should feel free expressing themselves; thereby, achieving the communicative purpose of languages. Jim R. Martin (2004: 73) states in his article: 'In functional linguistics we want a grammar that deals with meaning, because we want it to help us understand how speakers use their language and how the use

they've made of it has shaped its organizations over many many millennia'. To get into a conclusion, the results earlier emphasise the importance of using *functional grammar* to be able to communicate better.

Since ages, English grammar has been one of the major concerns of linguists. Linguists, like Noam Chomsky, Dell Hymes and Roman Jakobson, have developed several functional models of grammar since the second half of the twentieth century (Xia, 2014). The most influencing one on the modern English linguistics is the theory of *Systemic Functional Grammar* or *Systemic Functional Linguistics* (SFL) raised by Michael Halliday. Halliday has demonstrated how forms of the language contribute to the functions they convey among different contexts or situations and vice versa. His approach did not deal with idealized pieces of texts as Chomsky did but with authentic language data (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014).

Imagine people communicate using random words and expressions. This would be nearly impossible to do so. One fundamental part of the communication system is to have some sort of linguistic organisation to convey one's intended meaning in the best possible way. By tackling this point, we are considering one of the three register variables of Michael Halliday's *Systemic Functional Linguistics* (SFL) approach - *field, mode and tenor* - which fulfil three language metafunctions: *ideational metafunction, textual metafunction and interpersonal metafunction* as discussed later on in this paper (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014).

In higher education, educators expect assignments to be written in essay formats. Due to globalisation and having English as the lingua franca, higher education students mainly study their programmes and produce their texts in English. Many EFL students face problems in writing genuinely; and in how to make meaning in written texts. Writing mainly deals with the variable of texts' organisation which is the *mode* fulfilling the *textual metafunction*. By examining authentic texts, as the study case discussed further in this paper, we can observe how text organisation affects its overall meaning. Again, by adopting *functional grammar*, meaning-making becomes more applicable. People can achieve text organisation by using a number of lexicogrammatical resources and considering these resources within the framework of the SFL model helps us identify the effectiveness of the communication flow.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. WHAT IS FUNCTIONAL GRAMMAR?

When theories were rising about how a language is affected by sociocultural contexts, *functional grammar* has first appeared. The most influential figure in *functional grammar* is Michael Halliday who raised up the theory of *Systemic Functional Linguistics* (SFL). Language is not only about following a system but also about how it works within different contexts of situation. *Functional grammar* sees how small units of language function altogether to construe the contextual meaning of clauses as a whole. Every unit is respected to give a certain function. As well, the context also affects how the language is shaped and construed. Both language and context have a two-way effect (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014). By combining linguistic units, one can construe his experience(s) according to the intended context. Through the cooperation between words and grammar, one can convey his thoughts he wants as well. In other words, one has lots of lexicogrammatical choices that he can pick out of them according to his situation. These variations of language use in SFL are a part of the notion of *register*. The *register* is shaped by the context of situation of the written or spoken text including the participants and role relationships for example. As a result, we have a number of *register variables* (Schleppegrell, 2012).

According to Halliday's model, language has three main functions known as the *metafunctions* of languages (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2009);

- *ideational metafunction*;
- *interpersonal metafunction*;
- and *textual metafunction*.

The *ideational metafunction* refers to how language is used to construe our experience of the natural world including our mental world. That is by identifying *participants* of a *process* in certain *circumstance(s)*. It tackles the register variable of *field*.

The *interpersonal metafunction* refers to how we interact with others and create relationships with them “enacting social roles in general, and speech roles in particular.” (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2009: p. 12). The grammaticalisation of speech functions in the means of analysing the interpersonal metafunction deals with the register variable: *mood*.

The *textual metafunction* refers to organising what we want to say or write in a way that fits the overall context of situation. In other words, it deals with texts’ production. It combines between the purposes of the *ideational* and *interpersonal metafunctions* to produce texts that unfold different contexts. The main system dealt with in textual metafunction is the thematic organisation of texts. The register variable that deals with textual analysis is referred to as *tenor*.

## 2.2. COMPARISON BETWEEN TRADITIONAL AND FUNCTIONAL GRAMMAR

To get to a comparison between traditional grammar and functional grammar, based on Halliday’s model (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2009), we can refer to four key differences in the following points as demonstrated in table 1:

Table 1: Key differences between traditional grammar and functional grammar

Key differences	Traditional Grammar	Functional Grammar
<b>1. Classification of words (the form of words)</b>	Ten parts of speech - Noun, verb, adjective, adverb, pronoun, numbers, article, preposition, conjunction, and interjection.	Four main groups - Noun group, verb group, prepositional group, and adverb group.
<b>2. Clause and sentence structure (the function of words and clauses)</b>	SVOCA: -Subject, verb, object, complement and adverbial	According to the desired metafunction’s analysis. Ideational analysis: -participant(s), process and circumstance(s) Interpersonal analysis: -Speech functions (statements, questions, and commands) Textual analysis: -Lexical and grammatical cohesion -Theme/rheme
<b>3. Purpose of acquisition</b>	Following a set of rules	Open to the overall meaning
<b>4. Application</b>	-Notion of right or wrong -Language correction in writing and speech	Language use in real life situations and sociocultural contexts

### 2.2.1 Classification of Words – the Form of Words

Traditional grammar classifies words into ten parts of speech: Noun, verb, adjective, adverb, pronoun, numbers, article, preposition, conjunction, and interjection.

Functional grammar also has these classifications but within four big groups: Noun group (NG), verb group (VG), prepositional group (PreG), and adverb group (AG). Each group is identified by the head word that is either a noun, a verb, a preposition or an adverb (shown in bold in the following example). Within each group, we have modifiers for the head word.

Let's take this example

- The students are studying English at the library.

Traditional classification:

Det	N	V	V	N	Pre	Det	N
The	students	are	studying	English	at	the	library.

Functional classification:

NG	VG	NG	PreG
The <b>students</b>	are <b>studying</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>at</b> the library.

## 2.2.2 Clause and Sentence Structure – the Function of Words and Clauses

Traditional grammar analyses a clause into: Subject, verb, object, complement and adverbial. They are usually referred to as SVOCA (combining the initials) and they are not necessarily in order.

Let's take the same example

- The students are studying English at the library.

Traditional analysis:

S	V	O	A
The students	are studying	English	at the library.

On the other hand, functional grammar divides a clause into functional labels according to the metafunction we want to analyse to convey the meaning intended as discussed in the following (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2009):

### Ideational Analysis

In the ideational analysis, a clause is divided into *participant(s)*, *process* and *circumstance(s)*. Each clause has one process but can have one or more participant and/or circumstance. The *participant* is who or what is involved in the action of the clause. This action taking place in the clause is called the *process*. The *circumstance* is the added information to the action; it usually answers these questions: how, where, when, why, etc.

Back to the same example

- The students are studying English at the library.

Participant 1	Process	Participant 2	Circumstance
The students	are studying	English	at the library.

### Interpersonal Analysis

Clauses are classified according to their speech functions (as in table 1) in interpersonal analysis. The major speech functions are *statements*, *questions*, and *commands*.

Table 2: Speech functions

Statement	Water boils at 100 degrees.
Question	What is your name?
Command	Do your duty.

### Textual Analysis

In the textual analysis, clauses are analysed according to their lexical and grammatical cohesion at the overall level with the context, and to theme/rheme at one clause level. Lexical cohesion can be achieved by lexical repetition, synonyms, antonyms, etc. creating lexical chains. Grammatical cohesion can be achieved by text connectors and reference words (e.g. pronouns). The theme is the point of departure of a clause whereas the rheme develops it. The study case discussed in this paper will provide further clarification of the textual analysis.

#### 2.2.3 Purpose of Acquisition

Traditional grammar focuses on the organisation of words following a set of rules within the limit of a sentence itself. However, functional grammar sees how language is set up and how it construes the overall meaning to serve particular purposes of communication (Richards and Schmidt, 2013).

#### 2.2.4 Application

Traditional grammar is more perspective as it gives notions of right and wrong and aims to use language correctly in writing and speech (Richards and Schmidt, 2013). On the other hand, functional grammar gives opportunity to use language in real life situations and sociocultural contexts.

### 2.3. OUTCOMES OF ADOPTING FUNCTIONAL GRAMMAR

Functional grammar's main concern is to understand how language serves to produce meanings in different contexts. Since students are taught grammar as a set of rules, they would have been taught many of them without really knowing when or how to use them in communication. With applying functional grammar, we have a combination between how language is formed (traditional grammar) and how language is used (function) as shown in figure 1.

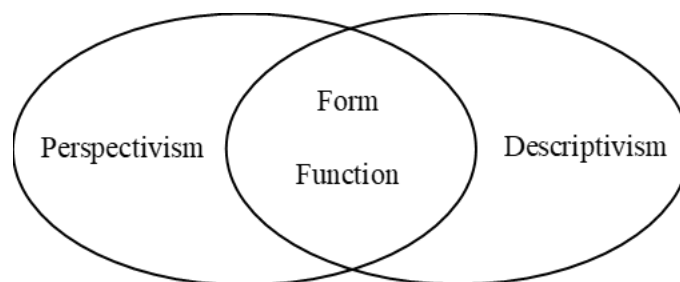


Figure 1: Adopting functional grammar

This gives us another consideration of Michael Halliday's model; *Systemic functional linguistics* (SFL). Language is not only about systems and rules but also how they function and give meaning. One thing that students may be confused of is the distinction between informal/spoken English and formal/written English. A great solution would be adopting literary texts while learning grammar to see how language is used in them (Atmaca and Günday, 2016). This method is called decontextualisation and it allows them to use grammar in context (Gian, 2018).

We as teachers should emphasise that grammar aims to meaning-making and that grammar is a subsystem of language. Grammar is not only about the notion of right and wrong, but also appropriateness is of big importance. As students, you should think outside the box and use what you learn effectively in your life. Consequently, grammar will not be an obstacle anymore!

#### 2.4. STUDY CASE OF AN ESSAY WRITTEN BY AN EFL STUDENT

The basic purpose of language acquisition in schools is achieved through communication and transmitting messages in different forms. With the emergence of English as a lingua franca for scholarships, students are expected to produce texts in English. This field of study is referred to as *English for Academic*

*Purposes* (EAP) (Hyland, 2012). In the following section, a textual analysis of an essay written by an EFL student studying at the Arab Open University – Kuwait is conducted.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

The text selected for textual analysis is an academic essay hand-written by a non-native speaker of English student who is doing a course of the English Language Unit (ELU) at the Arab Open University – Kuwait. It was written under time pressure - approximately in 60 minutes - so that we can find a number of grammatical, spelling and punctuation errors. To interpret its textual weaknesses, I conducted a detailed textual analysis. In figure 2, an overall plan of the textual analysis is demonstrated. After then, a reproduction of the text is done to see how applying functional grammar makes a difference in the production of texts in EFL classrooms.

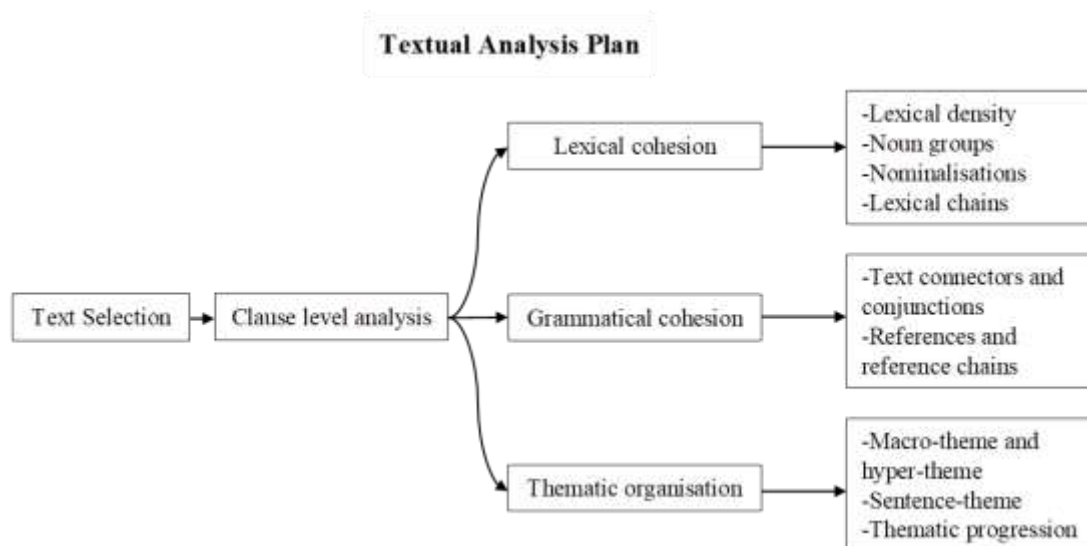


Figure 2: Textual analysis progress

The first step is to get the text intended for analysis. Then as fresh start, an analysis of its clauses is processed. To achieve a rich the textual analysis, three main areas are analysed; lexical cohesion, grammatical cohesion and thematic organisation.

The lexical cohesion is analysed by identifying the lexical density; noun groups; nominalisations; and lexical chains.

- *Lexical density* refers to the percentage of the used lexical words according to the overall text. It can be calculated by dividing the number of lexical words by the total words of the text selected (Gregori-Signes and Clavel-Arroitia, 2015).

$$\text{Lexical density} = \frac{\text{number of lexical words}}{\text{number of total words}} \times 100$$

- *Noun groups* consist of a head noun modified by determiners, numeratives, describers, classifiers and post-modifiers (e.g. embedded clauses) (Blake, 2002).
- *Nominalisation* refers to the process of turning words like verbs into nouns for particular purposes (Alexiadou, 2001). Such purposes include creating abstract properties or concepts; creating cause-and-effect relationships; or being the base of a complex noun group.
- *Lexical chains* contribute in keeping the meaning of the text flowing smoothly as well as keeping the text well-structured to convey the desired meaning. The main way to create a lexical chain is simply by repeating a word literally or giving synonyms, antonyms, relexicalisations, co-references, or taxonomies

(hyponyms or meronyms) (Wang, 2005). That is, lexical chains are a string of connected words in meaning.

As for the grammatical cohesion, text connectors, conjunctions, references and reference chains are identified and analysed. Items that are being referred back to are called presenting references while the referring items are called presuming references. References provide repetition of meaning achieving a coherent text.

Regarding the thematic organisation, it is analysed on two levels. Macro-theme and hyper-theme level; and sentence-theme level (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2009). Moreover, according to the SFL approach, there are three patterns of thematic progression within texts; zig-zag pattern, fan pattern and reiteration pattern.

### 3.1 SELECTED TEXT

#### Learning Vocabulary

learning vocabulary is important. you mast know 2000 vocabulary to learn a langue. I belive that working hard, repetition and sairch helping you to learn vocabulary.

First, working hard in you life to be what you want. If you want to learn you should work hard. Do mistakes for 1000 time try and try do not give up not hard but you should work learning need that. To learn new vocabulary you must practes new word veryday repte and repte. Work in yourself hardly. second, reptiton help you to make your memory more stronger. If you repte anything normale it will stack in your mind. For example, take a 24 vocabulary for this week try to learn it, writ it first and rept it evryday 3 time in the weekend they stack in your mide and start a new week with new word. Reptition is a good way to learn new word. Finally, searching on the enternet help you to learn new vocablary. If you sairch a read you will learn more. For example, open the enternet writ abot the vocablry you to learn and read do it for many time at a week. sairch for new vocabulary it not hard thing. Jast read and lesnt, if you do this two time at the week help you more in learning.

In short, best thing is learning new vocabulary. you should work hard repetition and sairch for learn vocabulary. everyone should working hard to learn new vocabulary.

[246 words]

Figure 3: An essay written by EFL student

### 3.2 CLAUSE ANALYSIS

Table 3: Clause analysis of the selected text

Clause No.	
[1]	learning vocabulary is important.
[2]	you mast know 2000 vocabulary to learn a langue.
[3]	I belive
[4]	that working hard, repetition and sairch helping you to learn vocabulary.
[5]	First, working hard in you life to be what you want.
[6]	If you want to learn
[7]	you should work hard.
[8]	Do mistakes for 1000 time
[9]	try
[10]	and try
[11]	do not give up
[12]	not hard but you should work
[13]	learning need that.
[14]	To learn new vocabulary, you must practes new word veryday

[15]	repte
[16]	and repte
[17]	Work in yourself hardly.
[18]	second, reptiton help you to make your memory more stronger.
[19]	If you repte anything normale
[20]	it will stack in your mind.
[21]	For example, take a 24 vocabulary for this week
[22]	try to learn it,
[23]	writ it first
[24]	and rept it evryday 3 time in the weekend
[25]	they stack in your mide
[26]	and start a new week with new word.
[27]	Reptition is a good way to learn new word.
[28]	Finally, searching on the enternet help you to learn new vocablry.
[29]	If you sairch a read
[30]	you will learn more.
[31]	For example, open the enternet
[32]	writ abot the vocablry [[you to learn]]
[33]	and read
[34]	do it for many time at a week.
[35]	sairch for new vocabulary
[36]	it not hard thing.
[37]	Jast read
[38]	and lesnt,
[39]	if you do this two time at the week
[40]	< > help you more in learning.
[41]	In short, best thing is learning new vocabulary.
[42]	you should work hard
[43]	repetition
[44]	and sairch for learn vocabulary.
[45]	veryone should working hard to learn new vocabulary.

### 3.3 LEXICAL COHESION ANALYSIS

#### 3.3.1 Calculating Lexical Density

$$\text{Lexical density} = \frac{135 \text{ lexical words}}{246 \text{ total words}} \times 100 = 54.88\%$$

#### 3.3.2 Analysis of a Selection of Noun Groups

Table 4: A selection of noun groups in an essay written by EFL student

Clause No.	
[6]	If <b>you</b> want to learn
[18]	second, <b>reptiton</b> help you to make your memory more stronger.
[21]	For example, take <b>a 24 vocabulary</b> for this week
[28]	Finally, <b>searching on the enternet</b> help you to learn new vocabulary.
[32]	writ abot <b>the vocablry</b> [[you to learn]]
[35]	sairch for <b>new vocabulary</b>
[41]	In short, <b>best thing</b> is learning new vocabulary.



Table 5: Analysis of the selected noun groups

Clause No.	Determiner	Numerative	Describer	Classifier	Head noun	Post-modifier
[6]					you	
[18]					repetition	
[21]	a	24			vocabulary	
[28]					searching	on the internet
[32]	the				vocabulary	you to learn
[35]			new		vocabulary	
[41]			best		thing	

### 3.3.3 Use of Nominalisation

Table 6: Nominalisations in the selected text

Clause No.	
[1]	<b>learning</b> vocabulary is important
[4]	that <b>working</b> hard, <b>repetition</b> and <b>searching</b> helping you to learn vocabulary.
[5]	First, <b>working</b> hard in your <b>life</b> to be what you want.
[8]	Do <b>mistakes</b> for 1000 times
[13]	<b>learning</b> need that.
[18]	second, <b>repetition</b> help you to make your <b>memory</b> more stronger.
[27]	<b>Repetition</b> is a good way to learn new word.
[28]	Finally, <b>searching</b> on the internet help you to learn new vocabulary.
[40]	< > help you more in <b>learning</b> .
[41]	In short, best thing is learning new vocabulary.
[43]	repetition

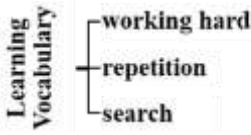
Nominalisations used in a particular way

- to create abstract properties or concepts: *I believe that working hard, **repetition** and searching helping you to learn vocabulary.*
- to create cause-and-effect relationships: *second, **repetition** help you to make your memory more stronger. / you should work hard **repetition** and searching for learn vocabulary.*
- as the base of a complex noun group: *Finally, **searching** on the internet help you to learn new vocabulary*

### 3.3.4 Identifying Lexical Chains

Table 7: Lexical chains found in the selected text

<b>Repetitions</b>	<p><u>The repetition here shows the process of learning vocabulary</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>learn</b> (x15)</li> <li>• <b>vocabulary</b> (x11)</li> </ul> <p>[6] If you want to <b>learn</b> [7] you should work hard. [14] To <b>learn</b> new <b>vocabulary</b> you must practice new word everyday repeat and repeat ... [27] Repetition is a good way to <b>learn</b> new word. [28] Finally, searching on the internet help you to <b>learn</b> new <b>vocabulary</b>. [29] If you search a read [30] you will learn more. [31] For example, open the internet [32] write about the <b>vocabulary</b> you to <b>learn</b> [33] and read [34] do it for many times at a week. [35] search for new <b>vocabulary</b> [36] it is not hard thing. [37] Just read [38] and listen, [39] if you do this two times at the week [40] help you more in <b>learning</b>.</p>
<b>Synonyms</b>	[14] To learn new <b>vocabulary</b> you must practice new <b>word</b> everyday
<b>Taxonomies</b>	Hyponymy, class-subclass relationship:

		
<b>Co-references</b>	[21] For example, take a <b>24 vocabulary</b> for this week [22] try to learn <b>it</b> , [23] writ <b>it</b> first [24] and rept <b>it</b> evryday 3 time in the weekend [25] <b>they</b> stack in your mide	<u>Presenting reference:</u> 24 vocabulary <u>Presuming co-references:</u> it – it – it – they

### 3.4 GRAMMATICAL COHESION ANALYSIS

#### 3.4.1 Text Connectors and Conjunctions

Table 8: Text Connectors and conjunctions found in the selected text

Text Connectors		Conjunctions	
Connector	Type	Coordinators	Subordinators
First	temporal	and (x7)	if (x4)
Second	temporal	but	
For example (x2)	additive		
Finally	temporal		
In short	temporal		

#### 3.4.2 References and Reference Chains

Table 9: References found in the selected text

Clauses	Reference chain	
	Presenting reference	Presuming reference
[12] not hard but you should <b>work</b> [13] learning need <b>that</b>	work	that
[19] If you repte <b>anything</b> normale [20] <b>it</b> will stack in your mind	anything	it
[21] For example, take a <b>24 vocabulary</b> for this week [22] try to learn <b>it</b> , [23] writ <b>it</b> first [24] and rept <b>it</b> evryday 3 time in the weekend [25] <b>they</b> stack in your mide	24 vocabulary	it – it – it – they
[32] writ abot the <b>vocablry</b> you to learn ... [34] do <b>it</b> for many time at a week	vocablry	it
[35] <b>sairch</b> for new vocabulary [36] <b>it</b> not hard thing.	sairch	it
[39] if you do <b>this</b> two time at the week		this

### 3.5 THEMATIC ORGANISATION

#### 3.5.1 Macro-theme and Hyper-theme

Table 10: Macro-theme and hyper-theme in the selected text

<b>Macro-theme</b>	learning vocabulary is important. you mast know 2000 vocabulary to learn a langue. I belive that working hard, repetition and sairch helping you to learn vocabulary.	
<b>Hyper-theme</b>	<b>Body paragraph</b>	First, working hard in you life to be what you want.

### 3.5.2 Sentence-theme

Table 11: A selection of sentence-themes in the selected text

Clause no.	Sentence-theme			Rheme	(Un)marked
	Textual	Interpersonal	Ideational		
[1]			learning vocabulary	is important.	unmarked
[4]	that		working hard, repetition and sairch	helping you to learn vocabulary.	unmarked
[5]	First		working hard in you life	to be what you want.	unmarked
[6]	If		you	want to learn	unmarked
[14]			To learn new vocabulary,	you must practes new word veryday	marked
[18]	second		reptition	help you to make your memory more stronger.	unmarked
[21]	For example		take	a 24 vocabulary for this week	unmarked
[26]	and		start	a new week with new word.	unmarked
[27]			Reptition	is a good way to learn new word.	unmarked
[28]	Finally		searching on the enternet	help you to learn new vocabulary.	unmarked
[41]	In short		best thing	is learning new vocabulary.	unmarked
[45]			veryone	should working hard to learn new vocabulary.	unmarked

### 3.5.3 Thematic Progression

The thematic progression found in the essay is fan pattern as demonstrated in figure 3.

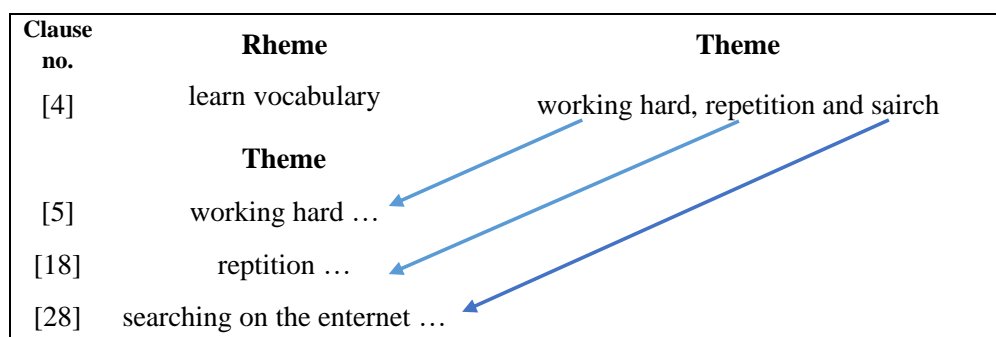


Figure 4: Thematic progression found in the selected text

### 3.5 REPRODUCTION OF THE SELECTED TEXT

#### Learning Vocabulary

There is no doubt in how essential vocabulary studying is. The importance of acquiring a great deal of vocabulary lies in giving ease access to new languages. Learning vocabulary can be achieved by hard work, consistent repetition and extensive research.

The first thing to mention is by hard work, you can accomplish your goal of learning vocabulary successfully. Vocabulary acquirement demands much effort. You have to practise vocabulary usage continuously. Overcoming your weakness points strengthens your input abilities. You may struggle at first but end up with learning new lexis effectively.

The second technique is consistent repetition. Regularly repeating things helps keeping them in one's memory. For example, each week choose a number of words you want to keep in mind. Try understanding and spelling them for a number of times until the weekend. The week after, re-do this with a new set of vocabulary. Consequently, new words will remain in your mind's memory.

Extensive research also helps in getting insights to new vocabulary items. Searching for vocabulary on the internet offers new ways of learning lexis. You may learn lexical items by reading their contexts in corpus. Doing research continuously is not a difficult thing to do. Thereby, your knowledge of new words will widen.

In short, learning vocabulary is really important. To do so, you should work intensively, repeat what you learn consistently and conduct researches about different vocabulary items. With hard work, anyone can acquire vocabulary.

[239 words]

Figure 5: Reproduction of the selected text

#### 3.5.1 Calculating Lexical Density of the Re-written Essay

$$\text{Lexical density} = \frac{150 \text{ lexical words}}{239 \text{ total words}} \times 100 = 62.76\%$$

#### 3.5.2 Thematic Progression in the Re-written Essay

The thematic progression adopted in the essay is a combination between zigzag and reiteration pattern as demonstrated in figure 6.

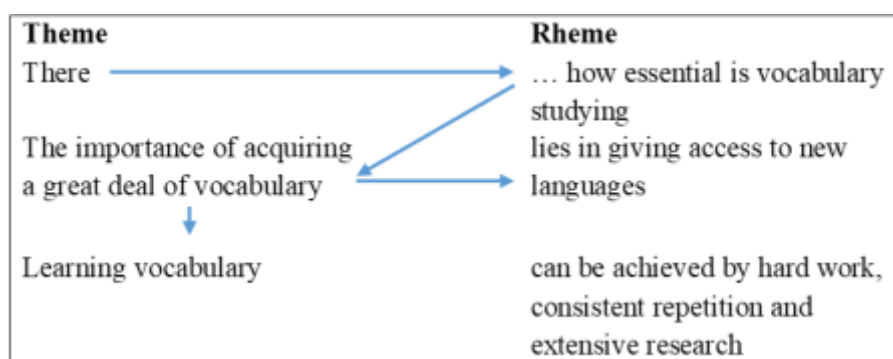


Figure 6: Thematic progression adopted in the re-written essay

### 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As the student is a non-native speaker of English and the essay is written under time-pressure, it is judged as poorly written. However, its format as an essay is fine, with an introduction and conclusion, and it is coherent. Regarding its cohesion, a detailed analysis of the lexicogrammatical resources used is required.

Lexical cohesion is represented by the lexical density of the essay and lexical chains. In an academic essay, lexical density is expected to be higher. However, it is moderate with a percentage of 54.88%. There are

many simple noun groups only consisting of head nouns e.g. *reptition* and pronouns e.g. *you* and a small number of modifiers e.g. *a 24 vocabulary*, *the vocablry [[you to learn]]*. The use of nominalisations like *learning*, *repetition* and *memory* is unspecialised nor academically effective. A variety of reiteration methods are used to build lexical chains. The dominant one is repetition. The process of learning vocabulary is structured by repeating the words *learning* and *vocabulary* identically limiting the place for synonyms and antonyms. There are co-references that help the reader to follow up the main participant in *take a 24 vocabulary ... learn it, writ it ... rept it ... they stack in your mide*. Learning vocabulary process is organised through class-subclass relations as well. *Learning vocabulary* is the superordinate; *working hard*, *repetition* and *search* are co-hyponyms. Using common-sense lexis indicates the student's limited technical and specialised terms.

Grammatical cohesion is presented through grammatical devices. The use of text connectors as *First*, *Second*, *Finally* and *in short* is somehow successful whereas there is an identical repetition in the conjunction *if*. The reference chains in this essay connect ideas and entities e.g. *you should work learning need that*. References help building the ideational meaning of the text. They directly refer to the major participants e.g. *work*, *vocabulary* and *sairch*. However, *this* is used ambiguously in *if you do this two time at the week*. The student must have inferred the connection whether *this* refers to *sairch*, *read* or *lesnt*. Ellipsis also serves as a grammatical device but it is not used correctly in *if you do this two time at the week < > help you more in learning*.

Considering the thematic organisation, the macro-theme provides us with the main steps of learning vocabulary discussed in the body paragraph. The hyper-theme of the body does not introduce the three tips but the first one only and this needs to be improved. Sentence-themes vary in their functions. For example, some indicate the important part of the message as in *First, working hard; second, repetition; and Finally, searching on the enternet*. Other themes stand as the point of departure for the clause as in the temporal textual themes: *First, second* and *Finally*. Their initial positions provide us with a chronological order. However, logically, these tips are not fixed within a certain order. Sentence themes are not lengthy. Many sentence-themes are ideational in the form of pronouns in imperatives. There are no interpersonal themes as it is not an interactive text. The majority are unmarked themes but there is an ambiguous clause *not hard but you should work*. Although it is not grammatically acceptable, we may consider *not hard* a marked theme. One type of thematic progression is used: the fan pattern in connecting the thesis statement to the main ways of learning vocabulary making the text flow smoothly as in figure 4.

The text selected is an essay explaining how to learn vocabulary written for academic purpose. The intended audience are other peer readers and students. It is a non-interactive text and no turn-taking is detected in the text so there are no questions nor exclamations which means no interpersonal themes are involved; there are only statements that are delivered to the reader with no expected responses. The language used is formal as it is written by an expert (the student who knows how to learn vocabulary) to non-expert (who do not know how to learn vocabulary). Thus, there is a social distance between the writer and the reader.

By adopting SFL approach and fixing certain points in the essay, we can get a new enhanced reproduction. Lexical density is improved to reach 62.76% by lengthening noun groups and using more nominalisations. A noun group as *The importance of acquiring a great deal of vocabulary* will definitely be more academically effective than a simple noun group. Also, the use of nominalisations should be more technical e.g. *Vocabulary acquirement*. Reiteration methods are varied and too much repetition is avoided using synonyms e.g. *vocabulary*, *lexis*, *words / learn(ing)*, *acquire(ment)*, *knowledge*; antonyms e.g. *ease*, *difficult*; and the class-subclass relation is enhanced using more specialised lexis: *hard work*, *consistent repetition* and *extensive research*. Thus, lexical chains are now developed some way.

Grammatical devices also needed to be improved. Initial positions of *First* and *Second* are changed to medial positions: *The first thing*, *The second technique*; because it is more appropriate in academic prose according to corpus. *Finally* is changed to a conjunction *also* to avoid providing a chronological order as the

tips are not fixed. The repetition of the conditional *if* is replaced with casual text connectors: *Consequently* and *Thereby*. There is no much change in references. Most of them are pronouns referring backwards to the main participants e.g. *Regularly repeating things helps keeping them in one's memory*; and indirect references are avoided. The use of ellipsis is now more appropriate e.g. *You may struggle at first but < > end up with ....* Also, substitution serves as an advanced grammatical device e.g. *To do so referring to learning vocabulary* to avoid its repetition. Grammatical cohesion is vital because with its absence it would be difficult to follow up the writer's ideas and intended meaning as it is a non-interactive text.

Thematic organisation mainly changed in its terms use. The macro-theme is developed using noun groups and nominalisations. The body of the essay is divided into three paragraphs with three separated hyper-themes that package the tips of vocabulary learning. Sentence themes are now in the form of complex noun groups with small number of simple ones. No interpersonal themes are needed due to being a non-interactive text. More marked themes are used to offer different dimensions e.g. *The week after* and *With hard work*. Another type of thematic progression is used in the introduction: a combination between zigzag and reiteration pattern illustrated in the figure 6 so we have complex textual meaning that achieve the needs of an academic essay (Hayland, 2012).

## 5. CONCLUSION

To get to a conclusion, *functional grammar* helps us to go beyond the words we read and the words we hear to get a deeper and richer understanding of the meanings conveyed and to look at how language works in real situations. The functional grammar model discussed in this paper is Halliday's *Systemic Functional Linguistics* (SFL). This model has tackled meaning-making from three perspectives: *ideational metafunction*, *interpersonal metafunction* and *textual metafunction*. Halliday's approach demonstrated language as a system of lexicogrammatical choices that are linked to particular contexts. Higher education EFL students can use many of the lexicogrammatical resources to make their texts hang together and maintain their consistency. In other words, by having both the form and function of the lexicogrammatical resources, meaning-making becomes easier.

*Functional grammar* differs from *traditional grammar* in four main aspects; classification of words (the form of words); clause and sentence structure (the function of words and clauses); purpose of acquisition; and application. Highlighting the differences between them gives students the scope of how to adapt *functional grammar* in their studies. As demonstrated in the study case in this paper, applying *functional grammar* in writing essays makes a significant difference. Students, then, need to be encouraged to preview applying grammar from another perspective. They need enough lexicogrammatical resources to construe their desired meaning. As discussed earlier, higher education EFL students mainly face problems with writing. Adopting the textual metafunction tackled in the SFL approach allows students to produce more coherent and more cohesive texts as desired by the academics.

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