

INTRODUCTION

Systemic functional linguistics (SFL) has become a solid and productive theory of language increasingly applied in different fields of sciences to explain language phenomena in use, that is, language doing some work in social contexts. The pioneering work of Michael Halliday and subsequently of researchers who share his theoretical views has produced a vast array of linguistic and social studies which have crossed the boundaries of continents from Australia to Asia and Africa as well as to North and South America.

In Brazil, SFL is gradually becoming an important field of interest in language studies specially at the post-graduate level, at different universities including, for instance, research carried out at Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina (Federal University of Santa Catarina, in Florianópolis) and Pontificia Universidade Católica de São Paulo (Catholic University of São Paulo).

Our initial contact with SFL occurred in the early 90's at Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina (UFSC), through classes, seminars and workshops led mainly by staff from the University of Birmingham, England, especially Professor Malcolm Coulthard. The Brazilian staff then included Professors Rosa Konder and Carmen Rosa Caldas-Coulthard. Nowadays SFL is a thriving area of research within Discourse Analysis and Translation studies at the Programa de Pós-Graduação em Inglês e Literatura Correspondente - PPGI¹ at UFSC.

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Examples of research interests based on SFL at PPGI include the following Master theses and PhD dissertations, to name just a few:

Master theses:

News discourse and modality: The interpersonal representation of male violence in a case study of the British press, by Murilo M. Mendonça, 1998; *A visual and lexicogrammatical analysis of advertisements in Nova and Cosmopolitan*, by Elisa L. Grimm, 1999; and *Mortals, hear the Sacred Cry: National anthems as a promotional discourse of patriotism*, by Anderson de Souza, 2003.

PhD dissertations:

An investigation of textual and contextual parameters in editorials of women's magazines, by V. Heberle, 1997; *Retextualizing Dubliners: A systemic-functional approach to translation quality assessment*, by Maria Lúcia B. Vasconcellos, 1997; *Reflection as social practice: An in-depth linguistic study of teacher discourse in a dialogue journal*, by Carla L. Reichmann, 2001; *A linguistic investigation into the representation of the Landless Movement (MST) in the press*, by Félix A. R. da Silva, 2002.

In our own research group *NUPDiscurso* (Núcleo de Pesquisa Texto, Discurso e Prática Social) at UFSC, theoretical and methodological foundations anchored in SFL are being used in on-going research, which includes, for example, studies on teacher education, popular culture, internet genres, and academic discourse².

In the present issue of *Ilha do Desterro* different theoretical aspects of SFL are explored by invited scholars working in different parts of the world: Frances Christie, Jim Martin and David Butt (Australia); Meriel Bloor (United Kingdom); Andrew Goatly (Hong Kong); Carlos Gouveia (Portugal); Leila Barbara and two PhD students at PGI, Luciani Malatér and Pedro Praxedes (Brazil). The topics examined in the issue

range from developments of SFL theory in education, features of prosody in interpersonal meaning, text variation across disciplines in academic writing, SFL in corpus linguistics and literary meaning, theme and (un)markedness in Portuguese, EFL teacher reflectivity, and Portuguese/English interlanguage. The issue ends with an interview with Associate Professor David G. Butt, from Macquarie University, Sydney, a leading research center in SFL. We hope the papers and the interview in this issue may give further evidence of SFL's inspiring ways of investigating language use in a variety of contexts.

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Sydney, December 2003.

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Notes

- 1 Post-Graduate Program in English Language and Literature.
- 2 Another research group at UFSC, called NUT (Núcleo de Tradução/Translation Studies), also draws on SFL in their work.
- 3 CNPq (Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico) awarded a grant to Viviane M. Heberle (PDE 200941/03-8) to develop research at the University of Sydney; and CAPES (Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Ensino Superior) awarded a grant to José Luiz Meurer (BEX 2496/02-2) to develop research at Macquarie University, Sydney.