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A Functional Analysis of a Fable for the EFL Classroom

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There are strong claims for the practical applicability of Systemic Functional Grammar to the learning of a second language, and its advantages for second language learners in providing linguistic foundations more adaptable to their authentic communication needs. However, research devoted to its pedagogical application to the EFL contexts has been relatively scarce, resulting in insufficient suggestions as to how to integrate the functional grammar approach to the foreign language classroom. This study proposes an integrated instruction approach where students notice and explore functional differences created by a set of alternative grammatical forms, through working with authentic English texts. As a step forward to this, a functional analysis of two authentic versions of an Aesop's fable, '*The Sun and the North Wind*' is carried out in terms of their realization of the ideational metafunction. The functional analysis of these two different versions of the same story reveals that the grammatical choices made in the two texts noticeably influences the way the story is construed and interpreted by the reader. An illustrative lesson plan also shows how explicit guidance on grammatical functions may be integrated into traditional formal grammar teaching through an activating-noticing-exploring-formulating cycle of tasks.

[systemic functional grammar/narrative genre/text analysis]

I. INTRODUCTION

Since the communicative language teaching came as the mantra of modern foreign languages teaching, the case for functional approach to language analysis and instruction has never been weak. Indeed, the very socio-cultural dimension in language use to which proponents of the communicative language teaching duly pay attention (Canale & Swain, 1980; Hymes, 1977; Leung, 2005) is what the functional grammar fully embraces within its main parameters of language analysis—the textual, interpersonal, and situational

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contexts, and the way in which the grammar works in interaction with these contexts to create and exchange meanings. In particular, Systemic Functional Grammar (hence, SFG), an approach to linguistic analysis developed by M.A.K. Halliday and his colleagues (Halliday & Hasan, 1990; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004) provides a useful theoretical basis for explaining how different grammatical patterns in English are used as a means for its speakers to interact with each other within various contexts of communication, and it has been proven to be an all-embracing model of the English language in its socio-cultural context (Jones & Lock, 2011; Thompson, 2005).

The socio-cultural emphasis and interpretative advantages of SFG over traditional formal grammar can be fairly clearly recognized, as we observe its wide application to such areas as English for academic purposes (Gebhard, 2013; Nesi & Gardner, 2012), translation studies (Bell, 1991; Munday, 2001), or genre and discourse studies (Gibbons, 2006; Kennedy, 1982; Paltridge, 2001). However, Systemic Functional pedagogy has been most often used in L1 and ESL contexts, particularly in secondary and tertiary school settings, with the primary focus on the academic, or critical, literacy development for native English speaker pupils or international students from less dominant linguistic backgrounds (Gebhard, 2013). With only a few notable exceptions (Fotos, 1994; Jones & Lock, 2011; Saraceni, 2007; Thornbury, 1999), discussions explicitly devoted to EFL educational contexts have been relatively scarce, resulting in less specific suggestions as to how to integrate insights drawn upon from SFG to the actual foreign language classroom.

Studies targeted for Korean learners of English can be found mostly in the domains of linguistic analysis (S.-H. Choi, 2009; M.-H. Lee, 2012; S.-J. Yang, 2008), translation studies (C.-S. Lee, 2007, 2009; Y.-S. Song, 2011), and genre-based instruction (B.-A. Ko, 2010). Or, there are general introductions to SFL with reference to Korean English education (M.-K. Kang, 2007; Kim et al., 2009), which give an overview of SFG but with somewhat limited instructional suggestions. M.-K. Kang (2007) argues for Systemic Functional approach to grammar teaching as an effective alternative to traditional grammar teaching practice, except providing little practical suggestions on how to integrate it into the current English teaching in schools. S.-J. Yang (2008) takes a police interrogation transcript and explores patterns of interaction between the police and the suspect in terms of its register. However, issues raised from the analysis are not further developed into the implications for the teaching. By way of an analysis of cases in which grammatical metaphor most prominently conventionalized in the English language does not transferred into Korean translation, C.-S. Lee (2009) effectively discusses the needs for explicit teaching of the Hallidayan concepts of grammatical metaphor, such as nominalization and congruency, into tertiary-level Korean-English translation courses. A study carried out by M.-H. Lee (2012) provides an interesting insight into the patterns of thematic and informational structures found in the texts used in Korean College Scholastic Aptitude Test,

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and shows SFG provides an effective tool for training students for the high-stake academic test. As to primary-level English learners, B.-A. Ko (2010) carried out a longitudinal case study of two young sojourners in Australia, in which she observed and analyzed how their narrative writings had developed over the period of over five years, and demonstrates that the explicit genre-based instructional approach implemented in Australian schools and at home does help the children effectively acquire the genre awareness and linguistic competence. All these studies have considerable teaching implications, except there are little discussions regarding possible models of classroom intervention.

In recognition of such disparities between research in SFG and studies for its pedagogical application, this study proposes an integrated instruction approach in which the functional analysis of texts may be implemented in an intermediate-level secondary English reading and writing classroom. An exemplary lesson plan is provided based on the functional analysis of two authentic versions of Aesop's familiar fable, *The Sun and the North Wind*, involving students' exploration of the texts in terms of experiential meaning differences realized through different grammatical alternatives made in the two texts.

In the following sections, the rationale for using the narrative genre is presented after a broad introduction to the main perspectives of Systemic Functional Grammar. Then the collection of the two authentic variations of the fable is described along with the grammatical concepts used for text analysis. The results of the analysis are then discussed and evaluated in terms of their implications for the grammar teaching for EFL learners, with an illustrative lesson plan based on the main text analysis. The article concludes with suggestions on how the integrated instructional approach can be implemented for a wider range of EFL grammar teaching.

II. FUNCTIONAL PERSPECTIVES OF LANGUAGE

1. Pedagogic perspectives of Systemic Functional Linguistics

One of the most salient features of Systemic Functional Linguistics (hence SFL) theory is its view of language as a system network of choices, and its recognition that the choice is influenced by contextual factors such as the relationship between interlocuters and the mode of communication (Herriman, 2013). Thompson (2005) takes a very simple example to illustrate this point: speakers have a range of greetings available in English, being from "how do you do?" to "hiya," and it is the relationship between the speaker and the addressee that influences one choice over another. Or, to put it reversely, by choosing "hiya" instead of "how do you do," they construe a more informal atmosphere—with the understanding of the implication that "it has been chosen" rather than other possible

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greetings (pp. 117-118). One point of note here is that the term 'choice' is neutral with regard to whether the language user is conscious of choosing or not. Suppose, for instance, that you want to have a cup of coffee; and the English language provides a spectrum of linguistic choice—*I want a cup of coffee*; *What I want now is a cup of coffee*; *I would like to have a cup of coffee*; *Fancy for a cuppa*; or simply *May I…*? etc., and it is the context in which the speaker is situated that influences the choice of a particular alternative. We cannot simply decide, without considering the situational, interpersonal, or textual contexts, one choice is more feasible or appropriate over the others. At the same time, we cannot say, either, that the choice is deliberately and consciously made by the speaker. The utterance, "What I want now is a cup of coffee," perhaps evokes a textual context where the speaker replies to a question, "What do you want now?" in that *what I want* instead of *I* or *A cup of coffee* is chosen as the subject. In this instance, the previous question, "What do you want now?" may have prompted this specific grammatical choice.

The second most distinctive feature of SFL is its division of language into three metafuncions, each corresponding to different sets of choices in grammar. SFG views the language use in terms of three overarching functions realized through language—(1) ideational, (2) interpersonal, and (3) textual metafunctions, which coexist in one sequential unfolding of wording, but are conveyed through different parts of the clause, and realized by different aspects of the grammar (Bloor & Bloor, 2004; Martin, Matthiessen & Painter, 1997; Thomson, 2005). Language is used to organize, understand, and express our perceptions of the world and of our own experiences. This is referred to as the ideational metafunction of language. Simultaneously, language is used to enable us to participate in communicative acts with other people—to commit, to influence, or to express and understand feelings, attitude, and judgments, etc. This is known as the interpersonal metafunction of language. Meanwhile, we do not speak or write in isolated sentences when we communicate. What we express is situated within the stretches of language in a cohesive way and it is used in relation to other linguistic events so that the content and the communicative acts are recognizably fitted to its context, which is referred to as the textual metafunction (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). In other words, SFG views that any instance of communication acts involves these three aspects—with the ideational metafunction being the *field* of a text (i.e. what is talked about), the interpersonal metafunction the *tenor* (i.e. the people involved in the interaction), and the textual metafunction the *mode* (i.e. whether it is spoken or written, for example), thus claiming that these three aspects of language should be within the legitimate realm of language analysis if the whole picture of the grammar of a language is to be captured.

This may explain why functional approach to grammar analysis provides an effective alternative to traditional formal grammar. By being mostly concerned with the structural analysis of linguistic components, separated from the meaning and context of language use,

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traditional formal grammar tends to reinforce the false notion that language consists of two discrete entities—the structure and the vocabulary, whereby syntax is regarded as neutral, kept distinct from meaning, with only vocabulary filling the meaning slot. Viewing grammar as mainly about structure void of meaning and context, traditional formal approach to grammar analysis further reveals its limitations in presenting grammar beyond sentence level (Jones & Lock, 2011).

On the contrary, it is meaning that has the central focus in SFG. To put it very simply, SFG views meaning and use as central features of language, thus analyzes the works of grammar from this point of view. Grammar is not a formal structure which is divorced from meaning, but it is semantic and functional; and vocabulary interacts with grammatical choices. If grammatical choices are meaningful choices, it is rarely possible to explain why a particular grammatical feature is used in a particular clause, without referring to its textual and situational context. Systemic Functional Grammar thus presents grammar beyond the sentence level, showing how the grammar works within texts and contexts. The greatest advantage of the functional grammar lies, as Halliday (2002) succinctly stresses, in its capacity to "free the grammar from the restrictions imposed by structure" (p. 12).

2. Rationale for using fables

For this study, the narrative genre was chosen for the following reasons. Firstly, if we take a broader definition of narrative—from the classic literature to TV soap operas, or from the gossip about the people we know to our usual recounts of past experiences, we can find stories all around every day. According to Wajnryb (2003), we come across more than thirty narrative events a day. As one of the most distinctive discourse conventions of a society, narratives provide an important and useful aspect of language to be included in language curriculum. Revised Korean national curriculum of the English language goes in line; it includes a range of target communication functions which involve narratives to more or less extent (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 2011, pp. 8-15). Some of the main target competence stated in the national curriculum such as summarizing main ideas, inferring, projecting possible outcomes, and understanding feelings or attitudes of main characters, can be very effectively acquired through exploring narrative texts. Another outstanding reason for using narratives for language teaching may be that it motivates students. People generally have a fair amount of exposure to narrative text types, both in their mother-tongue and second language; thus the genre familiarity established throughout their previous literacy development may be a good motivating factor to induce further second language learning.

Along with other traditional folk tales under the narrative genre such as myths, legends, or fairy tales, fables provide a rich, culturally diverse resource for language learners'

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reading and writing. Fables exist in most cultures, and they contain important morals about life which can be easily appreciated by readers across cultures. However, we can find the greatest advantages of using fables in its very clear generic structures and typical language features, which are highly accessible to foreign language learners. Paltridge (1996) calls for the distinction between genre and text type in analyzing English texts. Even though these two notions are somewhat conflated in usual English classroom, the distinction is very often necessary and useful. A formal letter of complaint, for instance, is different from a research abstract in generic terms, but they can share the similar problem-solving text type. In this sense, genre analysis which mainly deals with generic structure (i.e. whether this is a song, a lecture, a complaint letter, or a journal article?) may not equally be applied to the teaching of textual structure (i.e. whether this is a problem-solution, general-specific, or cause-effect text type?). In view of this, a fable distinguishes itself from other narrative sub-genres because it involves typically the simplest kind of generic structure which is in clear and straightforward correspondence with its text structure. As a fable sets out to teach the reader a lesson about life by means of a short story, the events told are used as a metaphor, with any non-essential narrative details kept to the minimum (Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2011). Also, the narrative development of a fable involves most typically a very few personified characters, clear coherence devices for chronological description of events, and concise vocabulary.

A fable's simple and clear story development enables learners to more easily understand the typical features of narrative text structure. Furthermore, I deliberately brought about a piece of familiar fable, *The Sun and the North Wind*, because both the simple discourse structure and well shared information about the content can alleviate learners' concern for topics, thus have them pay more attention to other textual features such as cohesion, vocabulary, grammar for describing sequence of events, and so on. Raising awareness about narrative text types was found to have considerable benefits to learners developing first and second language literacy (Dymock, 2007; B.-A. Ko, 2010). In view of this, it may be of great advantage, too, to instruct EFL learners to understand how narratives are built by having them work with fables.

III. DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

1. Collection of texts

The collection of two written versions of *The Sun and the North Wind* was carried out in an attempt to provide intermediate-level English learners with an authentic language resource for functional analysis. Two native English speakers who have decades of

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teaching experience in Korea and other countries were asked to write their own version of *The Sun and the North Wind*.[1)] They were informed of the main purpose for using their written samples only very briefly, that is, to provide students with some authentic variations of a particular fable, without further indication as to its instructional use for grammatical analysis, lest they should make any unsolicited linguistic adjustment. Before writing, the story structure of the fable was distributed to the writers. By being provided with this explicit storyline, they could focus more on *how to* rather than *what to* write. Furthermore, the shared narrative structure between the two versions will later better enable students to compare the stylistic dissimilarities shown in the two texts. Figure 1 represents the story structure given to the writers.

FIGURE 1

Narrative structure of *The Sun and the North Wind*

Setting	Unknown past
Characters	The North Wind, the Sun, and a traveler
Main event	The Wind and the Sun made a bet on who is stronger.
Goal	How to make the traveler take off his coat?
Plot	**Episode 1** Attempt: The Wind initiated. Outcome: He failed. **Episode 2** Attempt: The Wind continued. Outcome: He failed again. **Episode 3** Attempt: The Wind gave up. Now it's the Sun's turn. Outcome: The Sun succeeded in making the traveler take off his coat.
Resolution	The Sun made the weather hotter and hotter.
Final state	The traveler took off his clothes and jumped into a stream nearby. The Sun won the bet.
Moral	Gentle persuasion is often more effective than brute force.

[1] I would like to express my sincerest thanks to Glenn Allies and Thomas Lampi for their valuable contribution to this study.

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In accordance with the above narrative structure, the writers produced the following texts:

Version 1

Once upon a time, when all things could speak, the sun and the wind had an argument. The wind maintained that it had more strength than the sun. They saw a man wearing a coat. The wind suggested that the first one to get the man to take off his coat would be the winner and therefore the strongest. The wind tried first while the sun hid behind a cloud. The wind blew but nothing happened, the man carried on walking. With all its might, the wind blew even harder; but throughout all the strong wind the only result was that the man wrapped his coat even tighter. Then it was the sun's turn. Realizing that the wind failed at the task, the sun smiled. As his smile grew bigger he emitted more heat, getting warmer and warmer. The heat emitted by the sun caused the man to sweat. Soon he was drenched. The man had no other option but to take off his coat. And so it was decided that the sun was the winner. *Gentle persuasion is better than brute force.*

Version 2

One day not too long ago the Sun and the North Wind were having an argument about who was the strongest. The North Wind saw a traveler walking along the road and said, "I can make that traveler take off his coat." "I don't think you can," said the Sun. "Just watch me," said the North Wind confidently. So the Sun sat back in the sky behind a nice fluffy white cloud, and the North wind began to huff and puff, then he began blowing at the traveler. The North wind circled and howled all around him. But the traveler would not take off his coat. The North Wind became stronger, causing the trees on the side of the road to bend over, the grass to hug the earth, even the birds left the sky because he was so strong. He blew high and low; he blew above the man, then he blew below, trying to get inside the coat. But the traveler…just wrapped the coat tighter around him. The harder the wind blew the more the man hugged the coat around him. Finally, the North Wind, out of breath, stopped. He realized that the traveler was not going to take his coat off. The Sun laughed at the North Wind, "That was quite a show. You really showed that human who was boss. Now it is my turn, except, he will not only take his coat off, he will take off all of his clothes and jump into the river beside the road." "Hah!" said the North Wind. "If I couldn't make him take off his coat, you certainly can't make him take off all of his clothes and jump into the river." "Just watch me," replied the Sun. So the North wind sat back and gave the Sun some room. The Sun took out his sunglasses, put a big smile on his face and shined down

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> on the traveler. The sun just kept shining brighter and hotter…brighter… and… hotter… and… hotter. Soon the traveler began to get very warm, then he became too hot for his coat so he took it off. And the Sun…he just kept on shining and getting hotter. The traveler was getting very hot now, and there was no place to hide from the sun; no trees no buildings, nothing. And the Sun kept smiling and getting hotter. Soon the traveler couldn't take the heat any longer. He stopped by the side of the road and started to remove his clothes. Once they were all off, he jumped into the river to cool off. The North Wind couldn't believe his eyes. Turning to the Sun, the North Wind said in a quiet voice, "I guess you are stronger than me." Then the North Wind turned around and headed to the North Pole. *Gentle persuasion is often more effective than brute force.*

The Flesch-Kincaid Reading Ease formula yielded 87.20 for Version 1 and 85.25 for Version 2, confirming that they are very easy to read. The Flesch-Kincaid Grade levels of the two versions were also found to be suitable for average Korean secondary-school English learners, showing Grade 4.13th and 4.5th, respectively[2)]. Considering the findings that the average Flesch-Kincaid Grade level of reading texts in English learning materials for Japanese college students is around 8.0th (Browne, 1996), the texts of 4th to 4.5th Grade-level difficulty may be easily understood to junior Korean English learners.

It is quite apparent that these two texts are very distinct from one another. The Version 1 is rather short while the Version 2 is fully detailed. The former reads as a simple recount of an imaginary event with a minimum of describing words and circumstantial elaboration, whereas the latter reads more like a genuine story with a vivid illustration about the circumstances. However, without a more systematic method of analysis, the stylistic differences seen in the two texts may be only vaguely understood. Therefore, what is to be considered at this point is how certain features of grammar produce particular effects on the description of the events and how readers may evaluate these differences in terms of semantically motivated grammatical functions realized in the two versions.

As mentioned in the previous section, Halliday sees language in terms of three chief functions which act together to produce a particular text: ideational, interpersonal, and textual metafunctions. Among them, ideational metafunction involves looking for Processes—namely, events taking place (i.e. go, think, make, sleep) or relationship among things (i.e. is, seems, has, etc.) in a text—and whatever goes with them (i.e. *who* did what *to whom under which circumstances*) (Martin, Matthiessen & Painter, 1997, p. 5). In

[2] There are discussions on whether it is appropriate to apply the standard readability formulas outside the native English contexts in which they were originally developed. Greenfield (2004), however, provides a very strong case for using these formulas to predict the difficulty of texts for EFL learners.

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ideational analysis, the function labels such as Actor, Process, Goal, and so on, are semantically orientated, whereby it is possible to use grammar to *interpret* a text in terms of its content. In other words, ideational metafunction is the one which corresponds most closely to the general notion of 'content' (Thomson, 2005, p. 119). Therefore, by analyzing a text in terms of its ideational metafunction, we can see how the experience or perception of the world is represented or construed. Thus it is this ideational analysis of clause constituents that is implemented in the comparison between the two versions of *The Sun and the North Wind.* In the following section, a brief overview of the notions and concepts used for the ideational analysis is presented. The following overview is largely based on Butt, Fahey, Feez, Spinks, and Yallop (2000), Bloor and Bloor (2004), as well as Herriman (2013).

2. Concepts for ideational analysis of text

The grammar of a clause as experience is organized into Participants, Processes, and Circumstances. The way we realize our experience or ideas is not objectively determined by an external reality; it is rather a particular domain of our experience that is chosen and realized through language, in terms of the kind of process taking place, participants (i.e. who and what), and circumstances associated with these processes, such as conditions of time, place, manner, etc. Comprising the very core of a clause, processes can be categorized into six types: material, mental, relational, verbal, behavioral, and existential; and each process type has its own set of participant roles. When looking at processes, we should remember that a process in a clause may consist of not only a single verb but also a group of words—a verbal complex. Thus, all of the following verbal groups in bold with the class *begin* as head are within the scope of processes:

The lesson **has begun**.
The lesson **will begin**.
The lesson **ought to begin**.
The lesson **might be about to begin**.

1) Material Process

Material Processes are those which relate to outer experience and usually describe an event or action, such as *work*, *give*, *go*, *make*, etc. They construe doing, and answer questions such as "What did X do?" or "What happened?" They always have an Actor, who is the doer of the process, and they may also occur with other participants such as Goal, which is the person or thing affected by the process, or the Beneficiary, the one who

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receives the outcome of the process. The following sentences all construe material processes with associating participants and circumstances.

(1) The chair collapsed. (Actor + Pr: material/ergative)
(2) The water damaged the carpet. (Actor + Pr: material + Goal)
(3) The president arrived by train. (Actor + Pr: material + Circumstance)
(4) The dog bit him on the ankle. (Actor + Pr: material + Goal + Circumstance)
(5) My mother made me a fruit cake. (Actor + Pr: material + Beneficiary + Goal)

The participant roles do not necessarily coincide with traditional grammatical terms such as *subject* or *object*. Thus, 'John' in (6) and (7) share the same role as Actor, but only in (6) it is the grammatical subject.

(6) John was chasing the cat.
(7) The cat was being chased by John.

2) Mental Process

Mental Processes are those which relate to inner experience—the things going on inside ourselves in the world of consciousness—and usually describe emotions, thought, or perceptions, such as *believe*, *see*, *hear*, *know*, *think*, *like*, *hate*, and so on. They entail two kinds of participants: Senser and Phenomenon. The Senser is realized by a human or conscious being; and a Phenomenon is the thing which is felt, thought, wanted, or perceived, realized by a nominal group or embedded clause. The processes in the following examples are categorized as Mental Process.

(8) I like your manner. (Senser + Pr: mental + Phenomenon)
(9) She knows the answer. (Senser + Pr: mental + Phenomenon)
(10) He hears the ice-cream truck coming. (Senser + Pr: mental + Phenomenon: embedded clause)
(11) 'Why am I exhausted?' she wondered. (Phenomenon: projected clause + Pr: mental + Senser)

3) Relational Process

Relational processes are processes of being and having, such as *be*, *seem*, *look*, *have*, etc. They describe, or identify, participants. There are two main types of relation process: Relational Attributive and Relational Identifying. Relational Attributive relates a

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participant to its general characteristics or description. Relational Identifying relates a participant to its identity, role, or meaning. Participants involved in relation processes are referred to as Carrier, Attribute; or Identified, Identifier. The following illustrates typical relational processes.

(12) The desk is very heavy. (Carrier + Pr: relational + Attribute)
(13) The desk seems a fine piece of furniture. (Carrier + Pr: relational + Attribute)
(14) I had a little money. (Carrier + Pr: relational + Attribute)
(15) It smells nice. (Carrier + Pr: relational + Attribute)
(16) Your office is the room on the left. (Identified + Pr: relational + Identifier)
(17) A red light means 'stop.' (Identified + Pr: relational + Identifier)

4) Verbal Process

Verbal processes construe saying. The participant roles include Sayer (doer of the process), Receiver (addressee of the speech), Target (the participant which is the object of the talk), and Verbiage (what is said in one nominal group or embedded clause). Verbal processes are realized by such words as *say*, *reply*, *tell*, *ask*, *praise*, *criticize*, *order*, etc. Verbal processes most often project what is said in a separate clause, as a direct quoted speech or as an indirect reported speech.

(18) She said her piece. (Sayer + Pr: verbal + Verbiage)
(19) He said what he had to say. (Sayet + Pr: verbal + Verbiage)
(20) She told the secret to her best friend. (Sayer + Pr: verbal + Verbiage + Receiver)
(21) The press criticized the government policy. (Sayer + Pr: verbal + Target)
(22) She said, "I am tired." (Sayer + Pr: verbal + Projected clause: quoted)
(23) She said that she was tired. (Sayer + Pr: verbal + Projected clause: reported)

5) Behavioral and Existential Processes

The remaining two Processes include Behavioral and Existential. Usually called as "the doing version of mental, or even verbal process," (Butt et al., 2000, p. 54) Behavioral processes construe physiological or psychological behaviors. The main participant, the Behaver, is generally a conscious being. While *see* in "I see the sun on the horizon." is categorized as a mental process, the doing version of seeing, such as *watch*, can be a behavioral process, as in "They watched the sunset." Verbs such as *stutter*, *mumble*, *babble*, *scream*, etc. instead of *say* or *tell* are also categorized as behavioral processes. Finally, Existential processes are processes of existing, such as *be*, *exist*, *remain*, *follow*, *occur*, and

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so on. There is only one participant known as the Existent. They construe being as simple existence, and they are typically preceded by *there*, as in "There are several difficulties."

6) Circumstances

Circumstances are clause constituents which provide more details regarding the time (when), space (where), cause (why), and manner (how), etc., but which do not fall into Participant or Process categories. They are often realized in adverbial or prepositional groups. Any piece of circumstantial information about the process within its own clause is called a Circumstance. There are largely nine types of circumstance (Butt et al., 2000, p. 65):

(24) Circumstance of Extent: for two hours, five time a week…
(25) Location: in the yard, after dinner…
(26) Contingency: in case of rain, in spite of rain, in the absence of fine weather..
(27) Cause: because of the rain, for a rest…
(28) Accompaniment: with a friend, as well as Henry, instead of Micheal…
(29) Matter: about suffering…
(30) Role: as a clown; as a mother of two children…
(31) Manner: by car, with a stick, quietly, like a trooper…
(32) Angle (i.e. according to whom): to Mary, according to Luke…

We have seen so far the types of clauses as expressions of the experiential function of language, primarily on the basis of the process types. In the following section, the comparative analysis is presented of the two versions which are identical in terms of topic and narrative structure but very different when it comes to their choice of process types and accompanying participant roles, which makes a clear contrast in terms of their realization of the ideational metafunction. The comparisons are made firstly in terms of the Participant roles assigned to the two main characters, the Sun and the North Wind, and the Processes engaging them. Then, the analysis moves on to the most salient dissimilarities in the two texts—the verbal processes.

3. Analysis of processes involving the Sun and the North Wind

When we look at Version 1, there are eight verbal groups referring to the Sun as the main participant and nine verbal groups which involve the Wind as the participant. The processes which engaged the Sun or/and the North Wind as participants are summarized in Table 1.

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TABLE 1

Types of processes engaging the Sun and the North Wind in Version 1

Participant	The Sun	The North Wind
Process	…had an argument…	… had an argument…
	…saw a man…	… maintained that …
	…hid behind a cloud…	… had more strength than the sun…
	Realizing that…	… saw a man …
	…smiled…	…suggested that the first one to get…
	…emitted more heat….	…tried first…
	…getting warmer and warmer…	…blew but…
	…was the winner…	…blew even harder…
		…failed at the task…

As can be seen in Table 1, of nine verb groups referring to the Wind, five are verbs describing a materials process with the Wind being as an Actor (e.g. …*had an argument,* …*tried,* …*blew,* …*failed*)… or verbal (e.g. …*maintained that…*, …*suggested that…*).. On the contrary, only three out of eight verb groups assigned to the Sun are material processes. In Version 1, the processes engaging the Sun as participant are mainly mental (e.g. *saw a man, Realizing that…*), or relational (e.g. *getting warmer and warmer, …was the winner*).

The characteristics of participant roles assigned to the Sun and the Wind in the first version make a stark contrast to those realized in Version 2. In the latter, there are eleven verbs referring to the Sun as participant. Of these eleven, eight are verbs describing a material process. For example, in *took off his sunglasses* or in *put a big smile on his face*, the verbal groups *took off* and *put* are categorized as transitive material processes, whereas, the verbal groups in *sat back in the sky* and *kept on shining* are intransitive material process. Regarding the remaining three verbal groups, there are two verbal (i.e. *said* and *replied*) and one behavioral process (i.e. The Sun *laughed* at the Wind, "That was […]"). The North Wind also participate frequently as Actor (15 out of 23 processes), but it is also described as Senser (three occurrences) and Carrier (one occurrence) as well as Sayer (four occurrences). Another point of interest is that, while the Sun's action of emitting the heat is described as a behavioral process in Version 1 (i.e. "the sun *smiled*."), the same action is described as a material process (i.e. [the Sun] *shined down* on the traveler…) in the second version. Table 2 on the following page summarizes the processes which engage the Sun and the North Wind as the main participants in the second version.

The comparison of the two texts in terms of their process types in particular clearly shows that the grammatical system of verbs can have great influence on how the writer portrays the event and the personalities of the main characters. The writer of Version 2 gives the Sun the equal 'active' status as the Wind by assigning to the former the roles of Actor and Sayer as frequently as the latter. On the contrary, the writer of Version 1 assigns

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to the Sun relatively passive roles as Senser or Carrier, thus portraying the Sun's characteristics as somewhat static than the Wind.

TABLE 2

Types of processes engaging the Sun and the North Wind in Version 2

Pr. type	The Sun	Pr. type	The North Wind
Material	…were having an argument…	Material	…were having an argument…
Verbal	"I don't …," said…	Mental	…saw a traveler walking…
Material	…sat back in the sky…	Verbal	…said, "I can make that traveler…"
Behavioral	…laughed at the Wind,	Verbal	"Just watch me," said…confidently
Verbal	"Just watch me," replied ..	Material	…began to huff and puff…
Material	…took off his sunglasses…	Material	…began blowing at the traveler…
Material	…put a big smile…	Material	…circled and howled…
Mateiral	…shine down on traveler…	Relational	…became stronger, causing…
Material	…kept shining brighter…	Material	…blew high and low…
Material	…kept on shining and getting	Material	…blew above the man…
Material	…kept smiling and getting..	Material	…blew below…
		Material	…trying to get inside the coat…
		Material	…harder the wind blew…
		Material	…stopped…
		Mental	…realized…
		Verbal	"Hah!" said the North Wind…
		Material	…sat back…
		Material	…gave the Sun some room…
		Mental	…couldn't believe his eyes…
		Material	Turning to the Sun…
		Verbal	…said in a quiet voice…
		Material	…turned around…and headed to…

4. Verbal processes

We are now looking more closely at the Verbal processes and the participants as Sayer realized in the two texts. In terms of its frequency, Version 2 contains far more verbal processes than Version 1 (seven compared with two). Also, in Version 1, only the Wind has the participant status as Sayer (as in *The wind maintained that…*; *The wind suggested that…*) with the Sun being excluded from that role. On the other hand, in Version 2, the Wind and the Sun share almost the equal status as Sayer; three out of seven quoted speeches are those from the Sun. This also makes us feel that the Sun in Version 2 is more eagerly engaged throughout the event, the participant who is genuinely interested in the bet.

Not merely the frequency, but the distribution of the verbal processes can be a point of discussion. As can be seen in the story structure introduced earlier, the plot develops as follows:

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Argument → Bet → Wind began → Wind failed → Sun's turn → Sun won

In Version 2, the clauses with verbal process are evenly distributed throughout the all episode units; whereas, in Version 1, the clauses with verbal processes are concentrated only in the beginning part of the whole event. Figure 2 visualizes the difference more clearly.

FIGURE 2

Distribution of Verbal Processes in Version 1 and Version 2

Story structure	Version 1	Version 2
Argument	The Wind maintained that it had more strength…	
Bet	The Wind suggested that the first one to get the man…	The North Wind […] said, "I can make that traveler take off…" "I don't think you can", said the Sun
Ep. 1 Wind begins		"Just watch me," said the North…
Ep. 2 Wind continues		The Sun laughed… "that was quite a show. […] he will take off all of his clothes and jump into the river.." "Hah!" said the North Wind. "If I couldn't make him… you certainly can't…"
Ep. 3 Sun's turn		"Just watch me," replied the Sun.
Resolution & Final State		The North Wind said in a quiet voice, "I guess you are stronger than me."

From Figure 2, it is clearly shown that the projected clauses spread over the main events in Version 2 are interacting with the story structure to create a specific narrative effect. Coming in between the main sequences of events, the Verbal processes "slow down the

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actions" (Butt et al., 2000, p. 80) and illustrate the mains characters by projecting what they are saying. Especially, the two projected quoted clauses in between Episode 2 and Episode 3 in Version 2 create very effectively a kind of tension in the narration, holding temporarily the flow of events, and signaling there follows a critical moment which leads to the final state of the story. It is also noteworthy that the projected clauses in the verbal processes in Version 1 involve only indirect, reported speeches; while, in Version 2, all the quotes are delivered through direct speech structures.

As a verbal process mostly projects what is said in a separate ranked clause, whether it is an independent quoted clause or dependent reported one, we may turn to what is said in these projected clauses: the process types in the projected clauses in the two versions. First, in Version 1, both of the projected clauses use the relational process with the Wind (i.e. *"it had more strength"*) and the deictic pronoun (i.e. *"the first one to get the man … would be the winner"*) as Carrier, respectively. When we look at the verbal processes and their projected clauses in Version 2, there are seven projected clauses in total, all of which involve direct quoted speeches. Table 3 shows the quotes by the Sun and the Wind.

TABLE 3

Projected clauses quoted from the Sun and the Wind in Version 2

The Sun	The North Wind
● "I don't think you can," ● "That was quite a show. You really showed that human who was boss. Now it is my turn, except, he will not only take his coat off, he will take off all of his clothes and jump into the river beside the road." ● "Just watch me,"	● "I can make that traveler take off his coat," ● "Just watch me," ● "Hah! If I couldn't make him take off his coat, you certainly can't make him take off all of his clothes and jump into the river." ● "I guess you are stronger than me."

Interestingly, when the Sun and the Wind argue, the Sun identifies itself as Senser (e.g. *"I don't think …"*) whereas the Wind engages itself as Actor (e.g. *"I can make that traveler take off his coat." "If I couldn't make him take off his coat, you certainly can't …"*). Even when placing the bet, the Sun prefers involving other participants as Actor (e.g. *"You* [the Wind] *really showed that …; … he* [the traveler] *will not only take his coat off, he will take off all of his clothes…"*).

It might be argued from this that the writer of Version 2 chose to represent the 'gentleness' of the Sun (as implied in the moral part—*Gentle persuasion is often more effective than brute force*) by means of directly quoting the Sayer's own speeches in which the Sun does not overtly places itself as Actor; yet, at the same time, by engaging the Sun an active role as Sayer, he successfully avoids the risk of limiting the Sun only to 'taciturn' participant roles as Senser or Carrier. While the Sun in Version 1 is construed as a rather

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passive and distant observer of what is going on with the Wind, the Sun in Version 2 is shown to fully participate in the bet, actively verbally interacting with the Wind, without losing its gentle characteristic throughout.

So far, the ideational analysis of the two versions of 'The Sun and the North Wind' explicitly shows how particular choice of specific grammar patterns, such as transitivity functions and quoted- and reported-clause structure, may create different experiential representations. It thus hopefully shows that SFG can serve as an objective theoretical basis from which we can isolate specific grammar patterns from a text and interpret its contextual meaning differences.

IV. DESIGN OF LESSON

This section presents a lesson example in which findings previously discussed are consolidated into the grammar teaching for the EFL classroom through narrative reading and writing. This instructional model was largely inspired by Jones and Lock (2011), who provided an overall framework for integrating SFG into the ESL classroom through six general language tasks: comparing, sequencing, gap filling, restructuring, elaborating, and transforming. Among these procedures, this lesson plan involves mainly the comparing and transforming task types, within a cycle of activating-noticing-exploring-formulating activities.

It is targeted for intermediate-level secondary students of English who have already acquired the formal features of English verbs and direct-/indirect-speeches. The expected learning outcomes may be stated as follows:

(1) Students will build up more explicit schema about typical structure and linguistic features of the narrative genre.

(2) Students will better assimilate what they have learned from formal grammar exercises through exposure to authentic texts which contain target grammatical features.

(3) Students will better notice the grammatical differences between the two comparative texts and recognize that there are different purposes and meanings in different grammatical structures.

(4) Students will be able to produce texts similar to the models they have compared.

In this lesson, students first activate their schema about the narrative genre by reading several fable stories and completing the story grammar. Then they compare the two authentic versions of 'the Sun and the North Wind' and consider mainly the different patterns of reporting and quoting speeches and other processes involving the main

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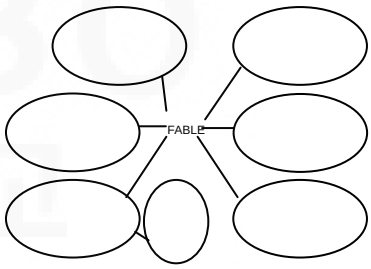
characters. At this stage for example, students may have a chance to substitute all the direct speeches found in Version 2 with indirect ones, and see how different the stylistic effect has been created. They then discuss the meaning differences realized by different grammar patterns and how to exploit it for communication. This is followed by a creative-writing activity in which they practice strategic use of different types of process by producing their own versions of the fable. Table 4 provides a summary of the procedures of the lesson:

TABLE 4

Integrated lesson plan for the teaching of speech forms in narrative genres

Stage / Tasks	Description	Procedure
Activating 1: listening	Students listen to or watch a short video of a famous fable and briefly discuss what it is about.	Teacher can ask students such questions as: 1) What do you call this type of story? 2) Do you know the author of the story? 3) How many characters does it have? 4) Are there any humans in the story? 5) This story seems to teach us a lesson. What do you think the moral of the story?
Activating 2: schema building	In light of what they have discussed they complete a diagram consisting of common features of fables. The following questions may be used as prompts: 'What is a fable?' 'Can you tell the class a fable story you like?' 'Who do you think is the most famous fable writer?' 'Do you know any fables which have almost the same story but are in different settings?' and so on.	The diagram may look like this: 
Activating 3: story structure of fables	By completing the story grammar, students are better aware of the genre and text structure of narratives.	Distribute a worksheet which contains a couple of fable stories and the template of story structure (see Figure 1). Ask students to carefully read the stories and complete the story grammar of the fables.

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Noticing 1: text reading	Students read the two versions of *The Sun and the North Wind*, and discuss how they like it, which one do they prefer, and why, etc.	Have the students to briefly recite the main story of the fable. Then, they are distributed with the two authentic versions and read. The following questions may be asked: 1) Compare the two versions. Can you find any interesting differences in their ways of delivering meanings or sequencing the events? 2) Which parts do you like best?
Noticing 2: identifying grammar differences	Students work with the texts, looking more closely at the grammatical differences between the two texts.	To induce explicit comparison, teacher may give the following prompts: 1) Identify the quoted and reported clauses in each of the two versions. How many of them are quoted and reported speeches? 2) How many quoted speeches are assigned to the Sun, and to the North Wind? 3) What are the Sun's actions and what are those of the Wind?
Exploring 1: discussion	Students relate these grammatical differences to the writer's purposes. They discuss how these grammatical differences make meaning differences.	1) Teacher has students transfer all the direct speeches in Version 2 into indirect ones, or conversely, all the indirect speeches in Version 1 into direct quotations. The following questions may prompt the discussion: 1) Why do you think the writer of the second version chose to use one indirect (embedded) clause at the beginning of the story? 2) How do they different what the Sun said, and the North Wind said? From which words can you notice that the Sun is gentler than the North Wind?
Exploring 2: formulation of functional grammar rules	In light of what have been discussed at the previous stages, students formulate a list of guidelines to help a story writer to determine grammatical strategies to create intended effects.	Students can find out the following functions of grammar: 1) Indirect speeches pack concisely what is going on. 2) It can be used when the writer wants to speed up the flow of events, or when (s)he introduces the situation of the event. 3) Direct speeches, on the other hand, slow down the flow of events. 4) It reveals some interesting characteristics of the characters vividly. 5) It is effectively used at the climax or the most interesting event in the story.

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Formulating: writing own version of *the Sun and the North Wind*	Students apply what they have discussed into writing. They set out to write their own version of *the Sun and the North Wind*, and compare with each other.	This can be carried out individually, in pairs or as a group activity. In order to stimulate authentic needs for writing from the students, we may have them give the story a twist—an ironic, cruel, brilliant, absurd, surprising, shocking—and discuss what linguistic strategies they can use to create intended effects. For lower-level students, the following guiding tips may be given in order to facilitate the task: 1) Think about how fables often begin and end in English. 2) What type of personality would you like to endow each character with? How can you describe it? 3) Will you use dialogues more or would you prefer reporting style? 4) Can you think of other possible morals from this fable? Language resource and examples which typically occur in story telling may also be given.

With the progressive introduction of these procedures, the lesson provides an integrated instruction model: through the guided step-by-step exercises, students first familiarize themselves with the notion of the ideational grammar, which, in turn, gives the framework for systematic analysis of authentic texts of a particular genre. This explicit knowledge is then applied to authentic writing tasks in which they practice strategic use of different grammatical choices to make intended meanings.

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study investigated the pedagogical applicability of SFG by the functional analysis of the two comparative texts which are identical in genre and story structure but very different in terms of their grammatical choices. It also proposed an instructional example in which SFG is fitted into formal grammar teaching. By doing so, this study points out some implications for English curriculum development.

Although it attempts to present as concrete and detailed as possible an example of incorporating SFG into the actual EFL classroom, this study focused on rather a limited aspect of functional grammar, mainly the ideational metafunction of Verbal processes.

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Jones and Lock (2011) provide very useful ideas for the classroom application of the other important aspects of ideational metafunction, such as the transitivity/ergative functions as well as potential functional meanings of Mental and Relational process types. Although rather small scale in its scope, Saraceni's (2007) study also illustrates a case of ESL/EFL class where students explore the semantic value of transitivity functions (i.e. intentionality) by noticing the saliency of active and passive voices shown in two comparative texts.

As mentioned above, this study mainly adopted the text analysis approach from the SFG perspective. This consequently may lead to a very important question, untouched in the present study, as to whether or how differently the SFG approach to grammar teaching affects learners' second language development and learning, compared to traditional formal grammar teaching. There still remain a number of vigorously debated issues surrounding grammar teaching, and it should be admitted that empirical evidence as to the effect of functional grammar teaching on the improvement of communicative skills is still scarce (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). There may be several reasons for this scarcity of empirical evidence. For instance, the kind of grammatical awareness increased by the SFG approach may not be readily measurable through existing testing instruments of grammatical competence which are more compatible with formal aspects of grammar knowledge (Nassaji & Fotos, 2004). Grammatical awareness beyond the formal competence, such as a renewed perception of grammar as the system of meaning creation and exchange, enhanced attitudes towards the benefit of grammar learning, or increased motivation to explore it for real life communication, may also need to be considered.

Now we may find an ample amount of theoretical support which justifies the integration of meaning-focused grammar teaching to the structural grammar syllabus (R. Ellis, 2006; Nassaji & Fotos, 2004). In his review of current debates on the teaching of grammar for second/foreign language learners, R. Ellis (2004) unequivocally confirms that "any grammar [teaching] that fails to describe the form-meaning connections of the target language must necessarily be inadequate" (p. 87). The centrality of communicative language teaching in the development of curriculum and in the teaching practice is apparent, and various attempts to induce learning through the use of corpora (S.-H. Jung & N.-S. Kim, 2013; Kim 2010) or authentic texts outside the classroom are continuously made. Even on such trends, however, there seems to remain, particularly in terms of grammar teaching, an old distinction between form and meaning.

In the EFL context, traditional formal grammar teaching must have its own advantages. A set of grammar rules, for instance, for transforming 'direct speech' to 'indirect speech,' such as the change of verb tenses or pronouns, can be very useful for practice. However, such approach often ignores the communication purposes and functions of reporting and quoting speeches, especially the differences in semantic value created by these two different grammatical options. In a story, a writer may use quoted speeches over reported

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ones in order to illustrate a character's interesting personality in a more vivid manner; he or she may use them in order to sustain the flow of events or slow it down; or else they rather use a reported speech when they consider what is actually said to be not of great importance. At sentence level, however, these semantic value differences cannot be easily captured; we must look at the situational and textual context to understand the differences between these two grammatical options. All these clearly indicate the need for incorporating the SFG approach into the current teaching of grammar. In this light, the current classroom grammar teaching which usually involves practice of formal patterns tagged with set labels of "communication functions", may be well complemented by the pedagogical perspective of SFC, which posits that language teaching should give students opportunities to explicitly understand "the workings of grammar" across different genres and text types, and critically evaluate "the linguistic choices" sensitive to the contexts in which they are interacting (Gebhard, 2013, p. 5505). Such functional command of language in its real sense may not be acquired simply through ample exposure to target language or context-stricken grammar exercises. By explicitly exploring the grammar as the system of choices, learners would have greater sense of control, and be better equipped with practical knowledge for dealing with real contexts of communication.

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Examples in: English

Applicable Languages: English

Applicable Levels: Secondary

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