Original Research

The functional approach, semiotics and professional discourse

by Marina Peluso

Marina Peluso University of Bologna, Italy marina.peluso@gmail.com

Michael Halliday, the founder of Systemic Functional Linguistics, was the key figure in linguistics to focus on the meaning of language as communication rather than just its structural form. He saw language as meaning and as a semiotic representation of values, attitudes and behaviours and in doing so introduced a vital area of academic study of languages. This paper explores the origins of Systemic Functional Linguistics and semiology, as well as the relationship between them, especially in applied professional discourse, both spoken and written. It analyses the use of Systemic Functional Linguistics in three case studies based on communication, semantics and non-verbal communication, and examines the implications for foreign language learning and teaching. The objective of the paper is to analyse Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) and to show how it is exploited in newer communication approaches of Semiotics and UXD in intercultural business communication in English. The methodology is based on secondary research and focuses on three case studies, each presenting a new dimension of professional communication discourse. The first is the introduction of Globish, a simplified business vocabulary and grammar based on the requirements of international business negotiation. The second is the use of semiotics – signs that convey meaning and register. The third is the use of non-verbal communication based on the experiments of Albert Mehrabian. The results show that in a globalising economy Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics is an essential tool in managing international intercultural communication and professional discourse, but that ways of using discourse to convey meaning need to be considered.

KEYWORDS: *Systemic Functional Linguistics, semiotics, communication, transitivity, Globish*

1. INTRODUCTION

Over the centuries and particularly in the 20th century, observers of languages have analysed what language is, where it comes from and how it is used. In the comparative historical linguistic tradition observers noted the similarities between languages and particularly their relationship to key religious texts (Campbell, 2003). However, in the 20th century De Saussure (2011) shifted the emphasis on historical languages to focus on the structures and systems of living languages. As the 20th century progressed, two leading theories

dominated linguistic studies. First was Chomsky's (2011) analysis of the structure of language, which stressed the importance of grammar and posited that grammar is an innate system. That was followed by Halliday (1975) who focused on language as communication and developed what is known as the functional approach or, more formally, Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL).

Since the late 20th century we have seen the explosion of information technology through the use of information and communications technologies. We have also seen the huge development of international trade and the development of cross border supply chains involving the business communication between non-native speakers of English around the world and between native and non-native speakers. In addition to the use of language in professional communication (mainly English as a lingua franca), we experience more and more the interaction of different cultures with different interpretations of how language is used (register) and the meaning of cultural symbols all affecting professional discourse. This has affected how we understand the development of professional discourse and the use of language (Mukhortov & Poletaeva, 2020; Aleksandrova & Strelets, 2021).

The objective of this paper is first to analyse the functional approach (SFL) and to apply it to the newer communication approaches of semiotics, as well as to UXD (User Experience Design). To do so it uses secondary source research to analyse three case studies in professional communication as a way of negotiating meaning. The three case studies are: the introduction of 'Globish' in 1999 by Jean-Paul Nerriere as a simplified use of language vocabulary and grammar to ease business negotiations between non-native and native users; the importance of semiotics in brand management and international advertising, and the use of UXD to develop and adapt products and presentation in response to international user needs and cultural sensitivities; and, finally, the importance of non-linguistic expression through body language as a way of negotiating meaning, especially in professional discourse between different cultures.

These are some of the most important developments in the focus on how we communicate meaning in professional discourse, but they are not the only ones. As business theory and practice develops, new communication ideas and principles are being discussed, particularly the importance of authenticity and transparency in leadership and its influence on professional discourse and the use of language. The results will demonstrate that the theory of SFL and its focus on the communication of meaning will develop in its range of applications, especially in professional discourse, opening up new areas of language and cultural research.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND
2.1. Language is a communicative function
Meaning is the effect of communication and the manipulation of signs. In doing so we try to find the right signs, words and gestures to make sure we are understood and also to achieve certain social purposes. In SFL the primary function of language is to communicate a message. Structure and form exist to help this happen. Without function, the structure of a language has no point. However, you need to understand structure in order to understand how a particular function is achieved. Function and structure are two sides of the same coin.

Halliday (2013) emphasised that any theory of language must incorporate the functional use of language. He went on to say that language must be seen as a social semiotic system whose meaning and form are driven by the communication aims of the speaker and the context in which the message is delivered. He saw language as a social semiotic system, in other words a system whose structure was driven by the communicative goals of the user. Therefore, it must include the functions of language as it is used (Fontaine, 2012).

Halliday and Matthiesen (2004) analysed the functions of Systemic Functional Linguistics to include expression, content and context. Expression involves analysing phonetics and phonology. Content involves analysing lexico-grammar and semantics, and context involves analysing meaning

making, the speaker's communicative goals (Halliday & Matthiesen, 2004). For Halliday (1978), the context was key. Text analysis should begin with context – the study of register and genre. He identified three variables: field (the topic), tenor (the communication participants' relationship) and mode (the communication channel used) (Halliday & Matthiesen, 2004).

Halliday and Matthiesen (2004) identified the meta-functions of any communication in three components: ideational, interpersonal and textual. Ideational is about the ability to organise experience into categories (experiential) and express the experience in a logical format. This is what they described as transitivity, made up of three main elements: processes, participants and circumstances and ideational metaphors. The interpersonal meta-function covers social roles and attitudes and divides into the study of mood, modality, speech acts and interpersonal metaphors. Finally, the textual function covers discourse, involving the study of rhyme, rheme and cohesive devices at lexical and grammatical levels (Halliday & Matthiesen, 2004).

SFL is at the basis of what is known as critical discourse analysis, the analysis of a text from the point of view of how meaning is conveyed and how it is interpreted. It studies the choices users have made from a range of alternative ways of getting their message across. This becomes an effective way of studying not just conversations but political commentary, media, advertising and, effectively, all forms of communication whether through speech, music, text or images.

2.2. Semiotics and the functional communication of meaning

Semiotics is defined as the science of signs and symbols and dates from the 17th century in the UK. However, our modern understanding of semiotics comes from the research of De Saussure (2011) in a series of lectures. Halliday (1975) was noteworthy for following De Saussure's theory. He conceived of language as a resource for construing meaning and described language as a social semiotic. So, for Halliday (2013) every language act was an act of meaning and that meaning meant acting semiotically. Therefore, every use of language reflects a social reality and in international business it needs to express a professional social reality which is recognised and hopefully accepted by the interlocutors.

Any message, visual, speech or textual, presents a range of semiotic options to the user. One of the most obvious visual images is traffic signals. In all countries, a red traffic signal means *stop* and a green traffic signal means *go*. However, in the UK an additional semiotic option exists – *yellow*, which occurs between the red and green lights. This means drivers can proceed with caution. Halliday identified three semantic options categories for the use of language which he called *transitivity*. The first is material (doing), talking or writing about actions. The second is mental (sensing) and the third is relational (relating). Systemic Functional Linguistics goes on to describe three main functions of language as meaning. Experiential meaning is how people talk about their experiences. Interpersonal meaning describes the processes of asking questions, giving information and instructions and also describes how users express their own judgements and opinions. Finally, textual meaning indicates the context in which the language is presented, in our case a professional context. All these are expressed in a clause. The principle is that to understand the semiotic meaning of what is said or written the clause needs to be analysed for its semantic connotations.

Let us take a simple phrase, often used in English in the greeting in a business email or letter, *If I may* as in *Dear Marina, if I may*. This is considered a polite way of bridging the gap between formality and informality when writing to someone you don't know. Normally, I might expect *Dear Dr Peluso* but in using the phrase *If I may* the writer is assuming a degree of commonality, maybe of profession or discipline or maybe of public status. In the same way, if called on a help line by phone, the caller may ask you, *May I call you, Marina?*, in order to establish a more personal relationship before continuing the conversation. If we examine the clauses *If I may* and *May I call you…?* semioti-

cally, it is obviously relational and interpersonal, in Halliday's (2013) terms. It is interesting as Tomalin and Nicks (2014) explain, how in international professional communication people often get it so wrong by sounding too informal too soon or sounding more formal than they need to be. As Kress (1976) points out, any situation where a verbal or written exchange takes place needs to be understood as a semiotic structure. The words used have a social meaning and express a social value or values.

2.3. Semiotics and language use

In his lectures which treated language as a system of signs, De Saussure (2011) distinguished between the signifier, the actual symbol, and the signified, the concept or meaning behind the signifier. He went on to distinguish between parole (the words you use in speech or writing) and langue (the conventions that make the words used understandable and acceptable). It is the langue that semioticians and Systemic Functional Linguistics experts are most interested in especially in professional discourse.

Let us take a common example from French. If I make an offer or a request in French from somebody I know well, the answer may well be, *Si tu veux* (*If you want*). In French it is simply a phrase of acceptance but in English it often has a semiotic connotation which is completely different and can be explained as *If you want, but I don't*. In other words, positive acceptance in French may be construed as negative or reluctant acceptance in English. This is a common problem experienced by English speaking expats living in France. The implications for foreign language teachers are obvious. We need to pay attention not only to the literal translation but also to the semiotic context. In this case, *Si tu veux* may be more efficiently translated as *Yes, certainly*.

2.4. Semiotics and symbols

As well as language we use symbols, such as signs, slogans, logos and advertisements all of which play a significant role in international business communication, raising awareness of corpo-

rate brands and products. These are useful topics of study as are non-verbal communication in the use of verbal gestures such as the thumbs up sign or the A-OK symbol of forefinger and thumb joined to make a circle. In North America and Western Europe, the A-OK gesture means *good* whereas in Brazil it means the opposite, *nul*. The thumbs-up gesture traditionally means *good* whereas thumbs down means *bad* or even death. This paper goes more deeply into the significance of body language in relation to speech in the discussion of Mehrabian's (1972) research.

A leading figure into research into semiotic symbols was Barthes (2009), whose book of essays, entitled *Mythologies*, is still a basic research tool. Barthes (2009) argued that any communication presents a myth – an unconscious belief or a professional or personal representation of reality. We unconsciously accept or reject the myth we perceive behind any communication and that is why language teachers need to help students analyse professional discourse and learn to distinguish between the seen, what is said, written or shown and the unseen, the myth that lies behind it and which will determine professional acceptability or unacceptability.

2.5. Language and narrative

According to Barthes (2009) and others, the key was the narrative. In the use of language in a professional environment, what narrative will convey competence, courtesy and assurance and what narrative will suggest the opposite? A language speaker may be perfectly confident and competent in delivering the narrative required in their own mother tongue but be totally incompetent in doing so in a foreign language. Even though they are reasonably good at the structure of the language they are using (the parole or language form) but need experience in finding the right words or phrases to express the appropriate narrative (the langue).

As Thussu (2006) writes, foreign language users should never assume that the terminology, sounds and graphics used in their culture will be accepted by speakers of a foreign language. They should check all names and references for use in other ter-

ritories or languages. They should remember that phrases that have positive connotations in their own language may have negative connotations in the foreign language they are using. In short, it's not the seen but the unseen that matters, not the literal meaning but the myth behind the meeting.

According to Thussu (2006), there are number of strategies that learners of professional English and its meaning can adopt to improve their communication in a foreign language. The essential is to control the narrative. Know the core values you want to express, write them down and check them. Show you are in control. Use words like 'investigating' or 'dealing with'. Demonstrate that you are being proactive. Say clearly what you are doing and intend to do. Also, demonstrate that you are in contact with the issues and people you need to deal with. For language teachers, the work is to find issues their students have to deal with and help them learn what professional native speakers actually say and write in such situations. This is the use of systemic structural linguistics and semiology to help learners achieve greater fluency and mastery of professional communication.

3. METHODOLOGY

This paper explores the use of language in context in two case studies. First, the use of the English language in professional contexts based on the business cultural framework of RADAR Communication compiled by Tomalin and Nicks (2014). Second, the use of the English language in professional contexts based on the international business English language of GLOBISH developed by Jean-Paul Nerrière, former vice-president of IBM. The study also explores the functional and semiotic significance of non-verbal communication through the work of Mehrabian (1972) in the United States. Examples of SFL in English will be analysed in the context of acceptable international professional communication.

4. CASE STUDY: RADAR COMMUNICATION

RADAR Communication is a concept developed by Tomalin and Nicks (2014) using communication contexts developed by intercultural theorists such as Hofstede (2011), Trompenaars (1996), Hampden-Turner (1990) and Lewis (2021) to identify six key communication paradigms (Table 1).

Table 1

The RADAR Communication Framework (Tomalin & Nicks, 2014)

TYPE OF COMMMUNICATION	ME	THEM	HOW ADAPT?
Direct/Indirect I say what I mean I change what I say to avoid confrontation or disagreement			
Precision/ Suggestions I go into detail I avoid detail – I leave room for creativity of interpretation			
What/Why – Why/What I say what I want then why I have to give background context first			
Formal/ Informal I am formal and respectful I am informal, relaxed and casual			
Neutral/emotional I keep my emotions under control It's important to let people know how I feel			
Interrupt/wait I speak fast, I interrupt I speak slow, I never interrupt			

'RADAR is itself used as an acronym, its five letters standing for Recognise a problem, Analyse it, Decide what solution to adopt, Act and finally Reflect on the results. The six categories juxtapose two types of communication and invite users to identify their key styles and write it in the box marked 'Me''

RADAR is itself used as an acronym, its five letters standing for *Recognise* a problem, *Analyse* it, *Decide* what solution to adopt, *Act* and finally *Reflect* on the results. The six categories juxtapose two types of communication and invite users to identify their key styles and write it in the box marked 'Me'. What they write indicates the communication style they largely identify with and where they feel most comfortable.

Let's take an example. Some people pride themselves on their directness, their willingness to say what they think. Others prefer indirectness, wishing to avoid a possible disagreement or confrontation. The issue is that when direct users and indirect communicators interchange their respective styles, it can cause attitude problems. For example, a direct communicator may come across as dominant, aggressive or just plain rude. On the other hand, an indirect communicator may come across as indecisive, uncertain or at worst, hiding the truth; in other words, a liar.

The key issue is how to resolve potential tension and disagreement and this is where the use of language appropriate to the situation comes in. The secret may to be prepared to say where you are coming from, what style you prefer to adopt. In this case, the direct speaker may say, *I'm a very direct person. I say what I think but it's nothing personal*. The phrase *It's nothing personal* is important because it neutralises what might otherwise be seen as a personal attack.

In the same way, the difference between attention to detail and to generalities, often described as 'the big picture' can often cause disagreements.

'Detail' people may come across as dominant and aggressive and 'picky' (over-focused on tiny points of detail). 'Big picture' people can often come across as unfocused and even as hiding or distorting the truth. Once again, the strategy to say where you are coming from is positive. If you say *I am a detail person*, your interlocutor is less likely to take offence if you start asking detailed questions to clarify a communication. It then enables you to ask more detailed questions to get the answer you want.

What Tomalin & Nicks (2014) describe as 'What/Why' and 'Why/What' is one of the biggest problems of international communication, especially in official meetings. A 'What/Why' communicator expects to say what they want and if necessary explain why they want it. A 'Why/What' communicator needs to explain the background context, often at some length, before they say what they want. This can be very frustrating for the 'What/Why' communicator and can affect the relationship between communicators. Using functional English to settle the fears of the 'What/Why; communicator, the 'Why/What' communicator can respond to questions by saying something like*, I'll answer your question but I need to give you a bit of background first*. The *bit of background*, even if it's quite a lot, helps satisfy the 'What/Why' communicator that his or her interlocutor appreciates their approach. The word *bit* also helps the communication. A *bit of background* suggests the explanation will be short. Another really important word to use is *just*, which suggests speed and brevity in English. A very good example is interruption in meetings. If a speaker can say something like *Can I just interrupt?* or *Can I just come in here?* the use of the word *just* has the function of suggesting the interruption will be brief, increasing the speaker's chance to make themselves heard.

Emotion is a very important part of communication and is contrasted with neutrality as a means of expression. In many parts of the world, expressing your emotions is seen as an important part of communication. However, the expression of emotion is limited in many countries to particular contexts

or not accepted at all in business environments. In East Asia, for example, losing your temper in a business meeting can lead to serious loss of face (personal dignity). In Japanese the term *Hena Gaijin* translates as *crazy foreigner* and suggests that the person who uses emotional language in business meetings is unreliable and is not to be trusted (Tomalin & Nicks, 2014).

The fifth paradigm, formality and informality, is much better known as it indicates the way we should address people in a business or official environment. In a society where formal address is expected, informality may be regarded as rude and disrespectful. In a business environment where informality is expected, formality may be regarded as keeping your distance and showing inability to adapt.

Therefore, the ability to check and conform to business requirements is important. The functional usage of *How would you like me to address you?* or *What should I call you?* can be important in such exchanges.

An important functional phrase is *If I may* as in *Dear John, If I may* in starting an email to a professional colleague you don't know personally. It is an effective approach, inviting a degree of informality without being impolite.

Finally, Interrupt vs Wait. Described effectively by Lewis (2010) as ping pong (interrupting) and bowling (waiting), waiting can be seen as boring and perhaps as hiding information while ping pong can be seen as impatient. Latin countries can speak quite fast and don't mind too much being interrupted. In many East Asian communities, on the other hand, it is important to wait till your interlocutor has finished speaking, pause and then respond. That use of silence between utterances may even be used as a negotiating tool as your silence is interrupted by your interlocutor, impatient to break the silence, who may offer concessions in the process.

What RADAR Communication demonstrates is that the systemic functional language we use is influenced by intercultural as well as personal considerations which can affect our ability to build successful international relationships.

5. CASE STUDY: GLOBISH
5.1. Globish: a communication tool for intercultural communication

Another but more structurally based application of Systemic Functional Linguistics is Globish. One of the phenomena of the information century has been the dominance of the English language as a lingua franca. But what variety of English? We know that there are hundreds of varieties of English spoken in communities around the world but one form has been the common language used by members of different communities communicating across borders – Globish. 'Globish' was the term coined by a French executive, Jean-Paul Nerrière in 1995. A Vice-President of IBM based in New York, he listened to English speaking nationals of South East Asia communicating with Korean and Japanese counterparts and noticed how non-native English speakers found it easier to communicate with each other than with native speakers. As McGovern (2019) describes it, the reason why many non-native speaker users of English often prefer to negotiate with other non-native speaker users of English is that they find them easier to understand. L1 (English as a first language) speakers were unwilling to make concessions to L2 (non-native) speakers, spoke too fast and used idioms that made them difficult to understand.

Nerrière (2004), as a French speaker of English, came up with the idea of a 'decaffeinated English' or 'English-lite', a slightly simpler form of English which gave non-native speakers an advantage over their native speaker UK or US competitors. He christened this 'new' language 'Globish' and the term caught on (McCrum, 2010).

Nerrière (2005) began by compiling a subset of standard English grammar list and a basic vocabulary of 1500 words with which he said anyone could conduct a business discussion in basic English. The lexicon, with the stress in each word identified in bold type is accessible online. He popularised his work in two French-language handbooks, *Decouvrez le Globish* (Nerrière et al., 2005) and *Parlez Globish* (Nerrière, 2004). He argued that with this simplified grammar and vocabulary non-native speakers could exchange practi-

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cally, if not perfectly, any information needed and also build common ground between speakers. What Globish aimed to do was to focus on clarity and expression (McGovern, 2019).

5.2. Globish as a global communication tool

Globish, however, was not just a term for a functional business vocabulary but has become a form of global communication, especially in the 'information age' of the Internet and Information and Communication Technologies. The most popular language of the Internet is Mandarin Chinese, due to the number of speakers and access to technology, but by far the most used language internationally is English. Globish therefore has two meanings: the restricted language first proposed by Nerrière (2004) for business intercommunication in English, and, far more important, the use of different non-native speaker varieties of English for effective business communication worldwide both face-to-face and via the Internet and social media.

What is evident is that the number of native speakers of English is tiny compared to non-native speakers. In his investigation of English usage around the world, Graddol (2007) produced a pie chart comparing the international use of English around the world. In his findings, 74% of English users were non-native speakers using a simplified version of English used by non-native speakers, consisting of the most common words and phrases only. According to Graddol's (2007) findings, only 4% of speakers communicated in English at native speaker level.

It's important to remember that Nerrière (2005) never saw Globish as a language, like, for example Esperanto. He saw it as a tool, a means of communication. McCrum (2010) described its infrastructure as economic, based on trade, advertising and the global market. Davidson (2011) gave examples of Nerrière's simplified English (e.g. *chat – speak casually to each other; kitchen – the room in which you cook your food)*. However, as Davidson (2011) goes on to say, words which already have international currency, such as *pizza*, remain as they are.

Globish also has a broader 'global' meaning. McCrum (2006, p. 5) talks of a Globish revolution, an environment where some form of English has become a universal global currency, *'the intellectual dialect of the third millennium'*, as he describes it. Lyons (2021) estimated that of an estimated world population of about 7.8 billion, 364 million were native speakers, but 1.35 billion spoke it as a foreign language. Chinese is the most common first language, followed by Spanish and then English in third place but English is the most widely studied foreign language in the world. On the Internet itself, McCrum (2006) estimates that 80% of the world's home pages are in English compared with 4.5% in German and 3.1% in Japanese. This means that social media, international manufacturing and distribution, mass consumerism and tourism and professions like law all use a form of English, to some degree different to that used by native speakers.

5.3. Communicating through speech acts

If we look at professional behaviour, there are also differences in the way we talk to each other and even write emails. Reflecting international good practice, Tomalin and Nicks (2014) suggest the following principles for speakers to help understanding.

1. Articulate. If you open your mouth more when you speak, you automatically slow down and become clearer.

2. Leave a beat when you speak. If you are conveying information, a very short pause before an important piece of information will help the listener attune their ears and absorb the message.

3. No jokes. This is widely recognised as an issue in international communication. Hearers may simply not understand or they may take offence or even take the joke as a serious statement of fact or

intention. Cultural factors are important here as jokes may be considered a way of breaking the ice in business meetings in some countries but totally out of place in others. The British, in particular, are noted for their taste in sarcastic jokes and their tendency to want to lighten the atmosphere by telling jokes at the start of a meeting or a lecture. The phrase *I am reminded of the time when…* is often the functional phrase used to warn you a joke is coming in a speech.

4. Explain idioms and acronyms. Native speakers, in particular, naturally use idioms without thinking, and it is important to check what you say, and if you catch an idiom it's important to restate it in easily understandable language. One example is *Back to square one*. The phrase itself comes from the time when, in the press, football fields were represented as a diagramme divided into squares. Square One was the centre of the field where the players kicked off at the start of a match or after a goal had been scored. The diagramme has disappeared into history but the phrase remains in common use. *Back to square one* simply means *Let's start again*. Similarly, if you use acronyms or initials in speech or writing, say what the letters mean the first time you use them. It really avoids confusion and aids comprehension.

5. KISS. KISS means 'keep it short and simple' and applied to speech it means trying to keep your sentences short. The recommended length is between 15 and 25 words. It's important to go over what you have written if you are writing for international reception. Can you simplify and shorten what you write to make your message clearer? The same goes for emails, though WhatsApp, Instagram and Twitter may work differently.

KISS also applies to emails. 1. A 15 to 25-word sentence is much more effective. 2. One thought per sentence is a good way of thinking about the construction of an email communication as once again it helps clarify the message. 3. Leave a line between paragraphs. This makes the progress of the email clearer but it also allows one other thing. Many respondents respond to emails point by point underneath what you have written and using a different colour, type face, for example, green.

4. Signing on and signing off. Tomalin and Nicks (2014) make a distinction between what they call the *New Brutal* and the *Old Courteous*. The *New Brutal* is simply starting an email with a name and signing off with a name and no greeting; for example, *Marina* rather than *Kind Regards, Marina*. The *Old Courteous* would expect people to use a greeting as well as a sign-off phrase, such as *Hello, Marina* and *Best, Marina*. *Hello* and *Best*, meaning *Best wishes*, are increasingly common functional ways of starting an email and signing off.

5.4. The importance of non-verbal interaction in intercultural communication

These points offer practical advice on how to use SFL as a way of improving your way of conveying meaning through the use of language and also through the use of design and organisational features which enhance the comprehensibility and readability of the message. In other words, SFL is only part of the way we convey meaning. We also use design, layout and communication techniques. Albert Mehrabian, Professor of Psychology at the University of California, went further. In a famous experiment with students, Mehrabian (1981) demonstrated that the language we use is only a minor feature of communication. His experiments demonstrated that 55% is attributable to body language (facial expressions, gestures, posture, and appearance). 38% was tone of voice and only 7% to the actual words used. This came to be known as the 55-38-7 rule, meaning that the words we use only contribute a limited amount to total meaning and can easily be culturally misunderstood.

What is significant about this is that listeners in face-to-face and even online visual interactions will pay as much if not more attention to non-verbal signs to interpret meaning as to verbal language. The non-verbal communication signs, which may include stress, intonation and gestures, facial expressions and posture, demonstrate dominance. Dominance is when speakers' body language and tone of voice agrees with what they want to express. It is important that the verbal and non-verbal aspects of communication should be

congruent. In other words, the non-verbal communication, if congruent with the verbal communication, will make it more dominant and more convincing.

6. CONCLUSION

The aim of this paper has been to explore the role and relationship of Systemic Functional Linguistics and semiology in language and communication. It has emphasised the role of Systemic Functional Linguistics in linguistic, functional and intercultural communication using English as a global language. It has analysed how the English language itself has internationalised in a world of global business and international communication through the Internet and is differentiated from the functional language used by native speakers. It has examined the significance of language in intercultural exchanges and also the development of new functional linguistic tools through the development of 'Globish'. Finally, it has briefly explored the role of non-verbal communication as a vital component of successful communication, face-to-face and online.

Systemic Functional Linguistics has become the key to managing the international use of language in a global business community in which non-native speakers dominate. However, it also demonstrates that it is not only the use of verbal communication that conveys meaning and that we must consider cultural differences and also different body language to correctly interpret and evaluate the meaning of the communication. In this respect, although the use of grammatically correct foreign languages is to be respected, equal attention needs to be given to the role of other signs systems interacting in the communication process. This involves teachers helping learners to analyse the real meaning of what they wish to express and write in a foreign language and to build linguistic and cultural sensitivity to what they say and write as well as improving the grammatical, semantic and, where appropriate, pronunciation skills in their foreign language ability. This is especially important for learners of English as a global business language and will become even more important as international markets develop and we find ourselves more and more in a multilingual world.

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MARINA PELUSO

University of Bologna, Italy | 18 Meadow Court, Hackness Road, M21H99 Manchester

marina.peluso@gmail.com