Advances in Functional Discourse Grammar: Introduction

Dall’Aglio Hattnerh, M.M.; Hengeveld, K.

Published in:
Alfa: revista de lingüística

Citation for published version (APA):

General rights
It is not permitted to download or to forward/distribute the text or part of it without the consent of the author(s) and/or copyright holder(s), other than for strictly personal, individual use, unless the work is under an open content license (like Creative Commons).

Disclaimer/Complaints regulations
If you believe that digital publication of certain material infringes any of your rights or (privacy) interests, please let the Library know, stating your reasons. In case of a legitimate complaint, the Library will make the material inaccessible and/or remove it from the website. Please Ask the Library: https://uba.uva.nl/en/contact, or a letter to: Library of the University of Amsterdam, Secretariat, Singel 425, 1012 WP Amsterdam, The Netherlands. You will be contacted as soon as possible.

UvA-DARE is a service provided by the library of the University of Amsterdam (http://dare.uva.nl)
ADVANCES IN FUNCTIONAL DISCOURSE GRAMMAR:
INTRODUCTION

Marize Mattos Dall’Aglio Hattnher¹
Kees Hengeveld²

Functional Discourse Grammar (FDG, HENGEVELD; MACKENZIE, 2006, in
which the following outline is based; HENGEVELD; MACKENZIE, 2008,
Forthcoming) is a new version of Functional Grammar (DIK, 1997). It is
characterized by the following properties:

(i) FDG constitutes the grammatical component of an overall model of the
natural language user. This overall model furthermore contains a conceptual,
contextual, and an output component;

(ii) FDG takes the discourse act as its basic unit of analysis. It is thus a discourse
rather than a sentence grammar and is capable of handling discourse acts
both larger and smaller than a sentence;

(iii) FDG distinguishes an interpersonal, a representational, a structural, and a
phonological level of linguistic organization;

(iv) FDG orders these levels in a top-down fashion. It starts with the
representation of the linguistic manifestations of the speaker’s intentions
at the interpersonal level, and gradually works down to the phonological
level;

(v) Internally, FDG structures each of these levels hierarchically.

The general architecture of FDG is shown in Figure 1. In this figure, within the
grammatical component, the boxes represent sets of primitives relevant for the
respective level of analysis, the circles represent operations combining these
primitives, and the rectangular forms represent the results of those operations.

¹ UNESP – Instituto de Biociências, Letras e Ciências Exatas – Departamento de Estudos Linguísticos e Literários –
15054-000 – São José do Rio Preto – SP – Brazil. E.mail address: marize@ibilce.unesp.br

² UvA – Universiteit van Amsterdam – Department of Theoretical Linguistics – Spuistraat 210 – 1012 VT –
Amsterdam – The Netherlands. E.mail address: p.chengeveld@uva.nl
Figure 1 – General layout of FDG
By organizing the grammar in this way, FDG takes the functional approach
to language to its logical extreme: within the top-down organization of the
grammar, pragmatics governs semantics, pragmatics and semantics govern
morphosyntax, and pragmatics, semantics and morphosyntax govern phonology.
The organization furthermore enables FDG to be a discourse grammar rather
than a sentence grammar, since the relevant units of communicative behaviour
form its point of departure, whether they are expressed as sentences or not.

A further advantage of this architecture is that it allows FDG to take the
typological approach to language to its logical extreme: since the model carefully
distinguishes, for every discourse act, its interpersonal, representational,
morphosyntactic, and phonological characteristics, languages can be compared
for each of these aspects separately. A few examples may help to illustrate this
point. At the interpersonal level, the question of which basic communicative
intentions receive special treatment in the language is of interest (pragmatic
typology). At the representational level the ways in which languages represent
event types is of interest (semantic typology). At the morphosyntactic level
topics like the organization of paragraphs in languages ask for attention in a
discourse oriented approach (syntactic typology). Finally, at the phonological
level the organization of prosodic systems poses new challenges when
considered from the perspective of the discourse act rather than the sentence
(phonological typology).

The contributions in this volume study a variety of aspects of the FDG model
outlined above, and are grouped in relation to the various components and levels
that are distinguished in the model as represented in Figure 1.

The first paper, by John Connolly, concerns the organization of the
CONTEXTUAL COMPONENT. The next one, by Evelien Keizer studies the dividing
line between lexical and grammatical elements, an issue that is relevant to
various aspects of the GRAMMATICAL COMPONENT. The other papers address
questions that pertain to one of the levels of organization within this component,
and are ordered following the top-down organization of the model.

Four papers concern the INTERPERSONAL LEVEL: Ahmed Moutaouakil studies
the ways in which interpersonal units can be coordinated; Kees Hengeveld et
al. present a typological view on the distribution of basic illocutions; and the
papers by Niels Smit and Elena Martín Caro address the issue of information
structure in FDG.

The REPRESENTATIONAL LEVEL is targeted in the next four papers: Miriam van
Staden and Niels Smit propose a revised formalism for the representational level;
Daniel García Velasco studies the place of the lexicon in FDG; Sandra Gasparini
Bastos et al. go into the distribution of modal categories; and Roberto Gomes
Camacho analyzes nominalizations and their underlying semantic representation.

Finally, three articles address issues related to the MORPHOSYNTACTIC LEVEL: Christopher Butler discusses the general organization of this level and compares it with the approach defended in Role and Reference Grammar. Dik Bakker and Anna Siewierska analyze the place of grammatical relations in FDG; and Erotilde Goreti Pezatti discusses adjunct order in Brazilian Portugues within an FDG approach.

References

