

KEY LANGUAGE FUNCTIONS

PERSONAL

Clarifying or arranging one's ideas:

- expressing one's thoughts or feelings: love, joy, pleasure, happiness, surprise, likes, satisfaction, dislikes, disappointment, distress, pain, anger, anguish, fear, anxiety, sorrow, frustration, annoyance at missed opportunities, moral, intellectual and social concerns; and the everyday feelings of hunger, thirst, fatigue, sleepiness, cold, or warmth

INTERPERSONAL

Enabling us to establish and maintain desirable social and working relationships:

- greetings and leave takings
- introducing people to others
- identifying oneself to others
- expressing joy at another's success
- expressing concern for other people's welfare
- extending and accepting invitations
- refusing invitations politely or making alternative arrangements
- making appointments for meetings
- breaking appointments politely and arranging another mutually convenient time
- apologizing
- excusing oneself and accepting excuses for not meeting commitments
- indicating agreement or disagreement
- interrupting another speaker politely
- changing an embarrassing subject
- receiving visitors and paying visits to others
- offering food or drinks and accepting or declining politely
- sharing wishes, hopes, desires, problems
- making promises and committing oneself to some action
- complimenting someone
- making excuses
- expressing and acknowledging gratitude

DIRECTIVE

Attempting to influence the actions of others; accepting or refusing direction:

- making suggestions in which the speaker is included
- making requests; making suggestions
- refusing to accept a suggestion or a request but offering an alternative
- persuading someone to change his point of view
- requesting and granting permission
- asking for help and responding to a plea for help
- forbidding someone to do something; issuing a command
- giving and responding to instructions
- warning someone
- discouraging someone from pursuing a course of action
- establishing guidelines and deadlines for the completion of actions
- asking for directions or instructions

REFERENTIAL

Talking or reporting about things, actions, events, or people in the environment in the past or in the future:

talking about language (what is termed the metalinguistic function: = talking or reporting about things, actions, events, or people in the environment in the past or in the future):

- identifying items or people in the classroom, the school the home, the community
- asking for a description of someone or something
- defining something or a language item or asking for a definition

- paraphrasing, summarizing, or translating (L1 to L2 or vice versa)
- explaining or asking for explanations of how something works
- comparing or contrasting things
- discussing possibilities, probabilities, or capabilities of doing something
- requesting or reporting facts about events or actions
- evaluating the results of an action or event

IMAGINATIVE

Discussions involving elements of creativity and artistic expression:

- discussing a poem, a story, a piece of music, a play, a painting, a film, a TV program, etc.
- expanding ideas suggested by other or by a piece of literature or reading material
- creating rhymes, poetry, stories or plays
- recombining familiar dialogs or passages creatively
- suggesting original beginnings or endings to dialogs or stories
- solving problems or mysteries

Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983: 65-66)

Other lists of functions (and corresponding exponents) can be found in publications accessible on the European Association for Language Testing and Assessment website:

- A2 level > http://www.ealta.eu.org/documents/resources/Waystage_CUP.pdf
- B1 level > http://www.ealta.eu.org/documents/resources/Threshold-Level_CUP.pdf
- B2 level > http://www.ealta.eu.org/documents/resources/Vantage_CUP.pdf

REFERENCES

Finocchiaro, M. and Brumfit C. (1983). *The Functional-Notional Approach - From Theory to Practice*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.