

Functions and Topics - Communicative Competence

It is ideal to build your language learning around the communicative functions of language, and then to practice the grammar forms you actually use for those functions. A **“function”** is the use of language for a specific need, such as shopping for vegetables, riding in a taxi, making an appointment, etc. A **“topic”** is a common subject such as body parts, numbers, weather, etc. Topics are a good way for your mind to organize vocabulary that you need in order to talk about common subjects when they come up during a conversation. A *Topical Notebook* can be a good way to keep this vocabulary organized.

Here are some ideas of functions and topics appropriate to Stage 1 and early Stage 2. You may want to check off the various items as you learn them; many will be worked on again in later stages in greater depth. Continue making your own lists of necessary and helpful functions and topics; your *Needs Notebook* can be a good source for this. *Culture Topics* in Stages 2 and 3 is an extension of this principle.

Functions - Stage 1 and early Stage 2

	Simple greetings and leave-takings
	State basic needs and wants; ask for things you need or want
	Simple questions about people or things
	Simple statements about people or things
	Numbers; counting and prices
	Address people appropriately
	Request and give personal details; i.e., simple biographical information
	Order a meal
	Give and respond to simple requests
	Ask for and respond to simple street directions
	Tell what is happening
	Talk about your daily routine
	Say what will happen shortly
	Say what belongs to whom
	Tell to whom things belong
	Tell simple time and date; use and comprehend days of week, months, ways of expressing dates, simple time expressions such as today, yesterday, tomorrow, morning, noon, etc.

	Make an appointment
	Give your address and phone number, when appropriate
	Make a simple self-introduction
	Make travel plans
	Ride a dolmu , bus, Ankaray, taxi; buy tickets
	Shop at a pazar
	Decipher simple public signs and notices, such as restrooms; give and understand basic oral warnings, such <i>as, Dikkat!</i>
	Answer the phone
	Read and follow a simple recipe
	Identify and describe objects; identify and label your environment (What's that? It's a _____)
	Describe simple actions
	Control a conversation with simple phrases (speak slowly, repeat, etc.)
	Interrupt someone to ask for assistance
	Get someone's attention, including use of appropriate gestures
	Request and comprehend simple information
	Use ritual apologies
	Reject unwanted attention firmly and simply
	Express thanks
	Agree

Describing:

Describing objects

identify (name)
 quality
 quantity
 location
 ownership
 possession

Describing actions

action
 objects of action
 indirect objects of action
 means of action
 beneficiary of action
 time
 place
 manner

Topics - Stage 1 and early Stage 2

	Numbers
	Most common polite words, expressions
	Colors
	Common conversation-management phrases
	Common transportation
	Telling time
	Days of week, months, seasons, times of day
	Common weather expressions
	Common household items
	Most common signs (street signs and others)
	Simple listing/describing of family members
	Money
	Basic clothing
	Basic foods and basic menu
	Common store and shop names, and kinds of shops
	Basic parts of body
	Descriptive words and phrases (adjectives)
	Shopping
	Countries, nationalities, languages
	Question words
	Location words
	Pharmacy
	Descriptive words
	Names and gender of names
	Neighborhood names, landmarks, major streets