Speaking Tips

What is Functional Language?

Functional language is the language you need to use in specific situations. For example, when you say, **Hello! How are you?** you are greeting. In other words, the function here is Greeting and the language you need for that is **Hello! How are you?**

Here is another example, **Hi, I am Michael**. The function here is Introducing yourself and the language you need for that is **Hi, I am Michael**.

Some other examples of functions and the language (fixed expressions or exponents) that could be used are:

• Asking for advice	• What should I do?
• Giving advice	• I think you should…
• Explaining (rules)	• You are not allowed to…
• Apologising	• I'm deeply sorry about…
• Agreeing / Disagreeing	• I am not sure that's correct!

Remember:

- There are several fixed expressions or exponents that can be used with different functions.
- The more functional language you know, the better your interacting skills will get.
- Formality is important; some expressions can be used with friends but not with teachers or parents.
- Learning Vocabulary helps you say more, learning Grammar helps you say things correctly and learning Functional language helps you adapt your English to the situation you are in – real-life communication.

A simple way to describe **functions** is:

What you can actually do with the language!

Look at the functions on the following pages and start using the phrases. They are just some of the most common ones, but they will definitely help you improve your speaking.

Try to find more examples and add them to the list!!!

Expressing you didn't understand something
- Sorry, I didn't catch that!
- Could you please repeat that?
- Would you mind saying that again?
- Pardon, what was that?
- Do you mean that…?
- Are you saying that…?
- _____.

Expressing that you have made a mistake
- Sorry about that!
- Sorry, I mean…
- What I meant to say was…
- _____.

Comparing and contrasting
- They both show / have / look…
- In each one, we can see…
- This one is not as … as the other one.
- This image / picture reminds me of… while this one reminds me of…
- In this picture / place we can see… while in this one, we can see…
- _____.

Expressing your opinion
- Personally, I think that's a terrible thing to do right now!
- This picture / song makes me feel…
- This place / picture / song makes me think…
- She comes across as a great singer.
- It looks like a…
- To be honest, I don't think it is…
- In my opinion, …
- As far as I am concerned, it actually shows…
- I feel that it could be right / wrong, but…
- _____.

Speculating
- I'm not sure whether…
- I imagine it costs…
- She looks as if she is …
- Judging from her look, she might…
- It seems to me that…
- _____.

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Starting a conversation
- How do you like that?
- Let's talk about this one!
- Shall we start with this one?
- _____.

Asking for opinion
- What do you think?
- How about you?
- Do you think so too?
- What are your views on that?
- Do you agree?
- What do you think of Rock music?
- What's your opinion on that?
- _____.

Agreeing
- That's what I think too!
- I agree with you!
- I can see your point there!
- I get what you mean!
- Yeah, you got a point there!
- That's exactly what I was thinking!
- I think the same!
- _____.

Disagreeing
- I have to disagree on that!
- I can't see it that way, sorry!
- I am not sure I can agree with you!
- I don't really agree, but what about…
- Absolutely not!
- I can't accept that!
- _____.

Interrupting
- Do you mind if…?
- Sorry, but I have to say something here!
- Sorry, mind if I jump in?
- _____.

Making final decisions
- Which one shall we choose?
- Are you ok if we get this one?
- It looks like we're picking this one!
- It seems as though we've agreed on it!
- _____.

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Expressing the need to think before speaking
- Let me see / think!
- How can I say it?!
- I've never thought about it!
- That's a great / tough question!
- _____.

Showing interest
- Oh, that's interesting!
- Oh, really!?
- _____.

Asking for suggestions
- What shall we do tonight?
- Which Cd do you think I should play first?
- _____.

Making suggestions
- How about going to the theatre?
- Why don't we stay home tonight?
- _____.

Discussing alternatives
- Which do you think is best?
- It's difficult to decide but…
- _____.

Expressing differences
- I'd rather go to a concert.
- I'd like to eat Mexican food.
- _____.

Describing
- He is 45 years old.
- She is in her 20s.
- He is wearing a leather jacket.
- She is wearing casual clothes.
- She is sitting on the couch.
- He is standing by the door.
- He is probably a restaurant manager.
- This person on the right seems to be lost.
- She seems a bit frightened.
- You can tell she is having such a great time due to the fact that…
- In the middle of the classroom there is…
- In the background there is a big…
- _____.

Paraphrasing
- It's something you use for…
- It's a kind of bag that…
- _____.

Guessing
- She might be at…
- Maybe he is not busy today.
- It might be…
- It could also be…
- It's probably …
- _____.

Talking about likes and dislikes
- I like / love / enjoy …
- I find going to concerts very exciting.
- I don't like / hate fighting because…
- I find going for walks very boring.
- _____.

Giving advice
- If I were you, my suggestion is / I would…
- _____.

Making requests
- Can I have another…?
- May I ask for…?
- I'd like to have a word with the manager!
- _____.

Apologising
- It was my fault, please let me…
- Sorry, my bad!
- I'm deeply sorry about…
- _____.

Asking for advice
- What should I do?
- _____.

Explaining rules
- You are not allowed to…
- You can't…
- You can only…
- It's not possible to…
- _____.

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Giving bad news
- I'm sorry to tell that…
- I regret to tell you that…
- _____.

Making offers
- Shall I help you carry those bags?
- Can I give you a hand?
- _____.

Giving instructions
- Open your books.
- Insert a coin.
- Purchase your VIP tickets online.
- _____.

Expressing wishes
- I wish I had a car.
- If I could choose, I'd travel to England.
- I'd like to have a large soda.
- _____.

Persuade
- I think our products will truly suit you fine.
- Come on! Let's go have some fun!
- If you give me the chance, I can explain why it all went wrong.
- _____.

Expressing frustration
- I can't stand it when…
- It annoys me when…
- It gets on my nerves when…
- It's hard for me to…
- _____.

Summarising
- Basically, …
- In a nutshell, …
- Taking all that into account, …
- All in all, …
- _____.

Concluding

- Our final decision is…
- In the end, we all agreed that…
- Let's try to reach an agreement!
- _____.

Warning

- If you take my advice, you won't…
- Whatever you do, don't…
- One thing I wouldn't do is…
- Beware of…
- _____.

Asking for details

- I wonder if you could explain this in detail!
- Could I ask you further questions about it?
- Can I ask you a little bit more about it?
- I'm interested in knowing more about it!
- How exactly does it work?
- Could you fill me a bit on how / what…?
- _____.

Making plans

- I'm going to…
- I'm hoping to…
- I'm planning to…
- I'm thinking of…
- _____.

Giving / Asking for directions

- Excuse me, where is the…?
- How do I get to …?
- Go straight this way and then…
- Go past…
- Walk along the road until…
- The… is on the right!
- Take the roundabout and then…
- _____.