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The Communicative Functions of Language: An Exploration of Roman Jakobson's Theory in TESOL

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Abstract

Language is an essential instrument of human expression and communication. In the field of TESOL, much attention is given to the *what* (vocabulary as building blocks) and the *how* (grammar as a blueprint for construction) but we seldom explicitly address *why* language matters in terms of the greater purpose it serves. Roman Jakobson's model of the communicative functions of language is a compelling framework through which the overarching aims of language can be examined for richer ESL/EFL instruction and more effective, comprehensive use on the part of English language learners. This paper is an exposition and exploration of the model in parts and in tandem, as well as a guide to applying its referential, conative, emotive, phatic, poetic and metalinguistic functions in TESOL contexts.

Keywords: Communicative Functions, TESOL, Activities

Educational Resource Information Center (ERIC) Descriptors

Communication (Thought Transfer)

Cultural Influences

English (Second Language)

Language Fluency

Language Rhythm

Language Usage

Linguistic Competence

Second Language Instruction

Second Language Learning

Sociocultural Patterns

Verbal Communication

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Introduction

Language is a vital tool that allows us to connect and command, to warn and welcome, and to anchor abstract thought in concrete words in our pursuit of higher knowledge. It is also an artistic medium through which we express our humanity. Linguists have long sought to classify its myriad uses in a way that would create order from chaos and allow for more manageable study, but there is a tendency in TESOL to work in small pieces whose purpose is often provided in terms of context in which it will be useful, rather than in terms of the overarching function it serves. If we recognize consciousness-as-noticing, consciousness-as-understanding, and consciousness-as-control as critical stages in language development, we must engage in a cycle of noticing, internalizing and applying the full scope of the communicative functions of language. (Ellis, 2016).

Upon examination of the 9 internationally bestselling ESL/EFL textbooks (Appendix A), it became apparent that the implicit attention to each of the functions in commonly used materials is highly disproportionate, and only one of these sources addresses the phatic function, explored in detail in its own section, explicitly. The Scope and Sequence sections of each of these publications show a strong preference for the referential function of language which, though prominent in conversation, does not represent the full extent of human communication. Though all of these materials claim to promote “fluency,” many textbook authors and professionals in the field conflate technical proficiency in the four domains of reading, writing, speaking, and listening with the true versatility of communication that mastery of all six functions would allow. How can a student be considered fluent if he is unable to express himself (emotive function) or clarify meaning (metalinguistic function)? Or if she does not know how to manage a connection with her interlocutor (phatic function)? Raising an awareness of Jakobson’s six communicative functions will help students develop a greater breadth of linguistic competency.

The referential function makes up approximately 75% of the average bestselling textbook's content, and the remainder, except in the case of those with a specific focus like *Understanding and Using English Grammar* whose content is largely metalinguistic, is composed of intermittent smatterings of the emotive, conative, and poetic functions in the form of dialogues and rhymes with no attention drawn to the fact that these sections do, in fact, enable the speaker to perform entirely different language tasks. Though the content/context-related referential function is prevalent in daily conversation, it is a disservice to language learners to ignore the other five language functions defined in Jakobson's publications. Addressing all six functions will provide students with a broader understanding of the varied purposes language serves. The phatic function, which deals with the connection between speakers, is only addressed in one series, and even in this exceptional case, it is not mentioned by name. These TESOL resources, though valuable, do not provide comprehensive support for all six functions of language, so it is the responsibility of educators to make the tacit explicit by drawing attention to the lesser noticed functions in context, thus empowering students to apply them to their own communicative ends. In *Understanding by Design*, it is suggested that "our frameworks should provide a set of itineraries deliberately designed to meet cultural goals rather than a purposeless tour of all the major sites in a foreign country. In short, the best designs work backward from learnings sought" (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005, p.113). This paper will discuss the role of each function and share considerations that could affect English language learners as they begin to notice, understand, and control these elements of communication.

Development of Jakobson's Model

The model that served as the foundation for Roman Jakobson's expansion and development of the communicative functions of language was originally developed by Karl Bühler. His system, known as the Organon Model, represented the three primary components of language. Bühler "developed his conception of the triadic instrumental character of language on the basis of the three fundaments of the speech situation, namely addresser, addressee, and things as the objects of discourse (Holenstein, 1974). Figure A is his original depiction of these three fundaments, while his later work, shown in Figure B, considers not only the focus of conversation but also the function which each performs: expressing the addresser's emotion, the appeal towards the addressee, or reference to or representation of an object or the state of affairs.

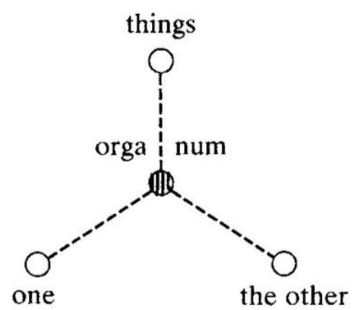


Fig. A

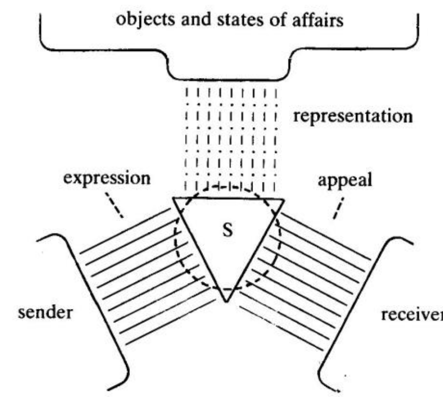
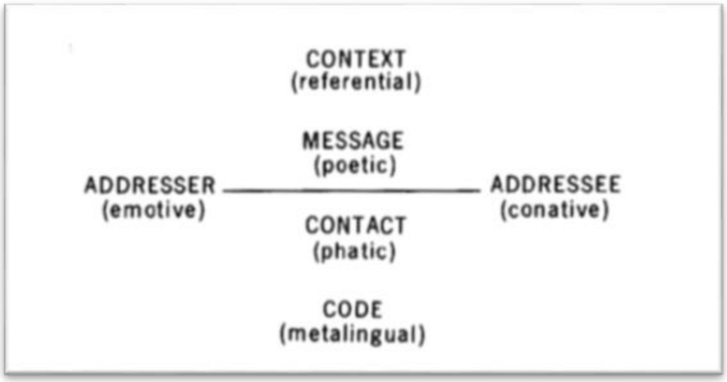


Fig. B

(Persyn-Vialard, 2011). (Şerban, 2012).

Roman Jakobson proposed three additional functions, making a total of six fundamental factors, each assuming an orientation within the verbal message:

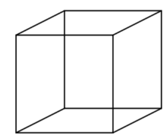


The table below is a compilation that contains a brief overview of each function's classification, orientation, role, and an example to illustrate its use:

Classification	Strongest Factor	Function	Examples
Referential	Context	descriptions, contextual information	Our business hours are 9am-5pm, Monday through Friday.
Emotive	Addresser	interjections/expressions of emotional state	Oh, man… Awesome! Whew!
Conative	Addressee	concerned with commanding; vocative or imperative addressing of the receiver	Go on, open it! Shoo. Get out of here. Check this out.
Phatic	Contact	concerns channel of communication; performs social task as opposed to conveying information; to establish, prolong, or discontinue conversation	Hey! Mmmhmmm….How about that? Really? No way.
Metalinguistic	Code	requires language analysis; using language to discuss language	Noun, adjective, code-switching Water is a non-count noun, right?
Poetic/Aesthetic	Message	involves choosing words carefully; the art of words, often self-reflective	But, soft! What light through yonder window breaks?

These classifications are by no means intended to be considered as mutually exclusive; rather, each utterance can be classified into the function whose primary purpose it serves, but many speech events will serve a complex purpose. As such, it is sometimes up to the discretion of the speaker, listener, or analyst to determine the intent behind what is being expressed, which can pose challenges in communication, particularly for speakers with lower levels of proficiency.

In "The Speech Event and the Functions of Language," Jakobson (1995) explains that "although we distinguish six basic aspects of language, we could…hardly find verbal messages that would fulfill only one function. The diversity lies not in a monopoly of some one of these several functions, but in a different hierarchical order of functions" (p.73). The Necker cube, whose lower-most left or uppermost right corner may be perceived as being closest to the observer, is illustrative of the subjectivity with which utterances may be perceived and their functions classified, but at least one of the six functions in Jakobson's model will always be present and essential to effective communication. The sections that follow will describe the functions included in Jakobson's model and discuss considerations for each in the field of TESOL.



The Referential Function

The Referential Function is the one most commonly addressed in ESL/EFL settings because it concerns descriptions or contextual information. According to Holenstein (1974) it "dominates ordinary discourse [because we] designate objects and bestow them with meaning" (p.156). The most common topics addressed in beginning ESL/EFL course materials concern the surrounding environment (e.g., classroom objects and procedures, asking for or giving directions) or describing actions in physical or chronological context (e.g. daily routine, telling time.) As students proceed through intermediate and advanced levels of study, their breadth of vocabulary expands and they are able to express more complex ideas with accuracy, but the function underlying each of these utterances is referential because of the orientation towards context.

At Xi'an JiaoTong University in China, sophomores participate in an intensive summer English program to help prepare them for the vigorous field-specific coursework that will be conducted in English during the last two years of their program. In a class for aspiring Mechanical Engineers students, focused development of the referential function is necessary for students to be able to talk about manufacturing materials, so an appropriate classroom activity might be to have students chose from an array of objects made from different materials and work in groups to present the origin, uses, properties, strengths and weaknesses of these materials to their peers. However, in order to participate in meaningful conversation, students must be able to move beyond making simple observations or recounting factual information. When scaffolding courses, units, and lessons, it is useful to consider both the knowledge dimension and the cognitive process dimension in order to develop meaningful objectives. The knowledge dimension moves from the concrete to the abstract (factual, conceptual, procedural, and metacognitive) and the cognitive process dimension moves from lower order thinking skills such as recognizing and recalling information to higher order thinking skills such as evaluating and creating. (Anderson and Krathwohl, 2001, p. 44). In a context like the one mentioned above, the referential intersection of these dimensions might involve students describing the procedure by which glass is manufactured with an explanation of why each step is necessary, as well as the development of arguments for or against its suitability for a particular product or design.

Once the learning objectives have been established, the use of a variety of visual, audio, text, speech, or movement channels can improve the retention of new information. This multimodality not only provides a point of entry for each type of learner, but also strengthens the neurological network that will allow each student to retrieve that information at a later date. To illustrate this idea, consider a lesson for English language learners on tropical fruits that contribute to their local economy. The likelihood of retention with only one mode of input is low, but even supplementing a simple verbal or written translation with a drawing or photograph provides another point of association, and every additional connection increases the probability that the student will be able to recall the material in question at a later date. Being able to hold, smell, and taste a real pineapple, learning how they are cultivated by visiting a plantation, or making fresh pineapple juice in the classroom all stimulate different areas of the cerebral cortex, and direct and indirect pathways are established between the olfactory, visual and tactile areas, creating a large network of associations from which new language is less likely to escape. (Katz & Rubin, 1999.)

A key component of the scenario above is that the content of the lesson is relevant to the context in which the students operate because of the connection with local produce. Creating a porous classroom and grounding language in daily life contributes to the ongoing construction of associative networks, gives a sense of genuine purpose to the endeavor of language learning, and prepares students to apply what they have learned in the real world. Even though it may not be possible to leave the physical institution where classes are being conducted, it is always necessary to consider and engage with authentic context while developing referential abilities because cognition and its supporting environment are at least sometimes functionally integrated (Van Lier, 2000). Ecosocial creations such as maps, the internet, clocks, etc., that support and organize cognition,, afford sociocognitive activities that would otherwise be difficult or impossible; by bringing the tools we use in daily life into the classroom, we connect our students' L2 learning to their L1 reality through use of familiar objects, and second, we provide dynamic and stimulating medium through which multifaceted learning is more likely to take place (Atkinson, 2011). If learners are in an ESL context, tasks such as bringing in fliers from local restaurants can be assigned in order to collect language from their community environment. If they are in an EFL context, the teacher can draw on the students' collective knowledge in other ways, for example by asking them to reconstruct the community within the classroom labelling important buildings, and giving one another directions from place to place, or role playing a guided tour of the businesses, services, and attractions offered within the area.

Finally, the consideration of context must be extended beyond the two- or even three-dimensional topic at hand. From a sociocognitive perspective, second language acquisition is viewed as a natural, adaptive process of ecological alignment that works best when learners are placed within situated activity systems (Atkinson, 2011). Beyond the physical or active elements that are present in a given context, there are also embodied actions that can help learners both to enhance their expression and interpretation of referential utterances. The principle of embodied cognition is that bodily states, orientation, and movement play an integral role in our cognitive processes (Bergen, 2012). It goes beyond a simple finger point to accompany the referential "your keys are over there"; recent research has shown that cerebral neurons fire both when observing others performing a specific action and when performing those same actions oneself. This suggests that others' actions are understood by having an embodied feel for what they are doing because neural circuits for performing and receiving real-world action overlap. If learners attend only to the superficial text of an exchange, they may miss critical contextual clues that could deepen their understanding of the situation at hand, so classroom practice ought to include activities that educate a perceptual awareness of intonation, gaze, gestures, head movement, bodily orientation, and additional semiotic resources that will supplement students' ability to communicate effectively. (Atkinson, 2011).

Jakobson (1995) called the referential function "the leading task of numerous messages" and said that "the accessory participation of all other functions in such messages must be taken into account by the observant linguist" (p.73). Supplementing existing resources with the aforementioned teaching considerations will allow students to fully engage with their context and to perform the most common communicative function of language with greater proficiency.

Summary of Suggestions for Teaching the Referential Function
✓ Consider cognitive and knowledge dimensions ✓ Employ multimodality ✓ Draw and build on students' contextual knowledge ✓ Support embodied cognition and sociocognitive awareness

The Emotive Function

The Emotive Function is concerned primarily with the Addresser, centering on the personal attitude, status, and emotional state of the speaker (Holenstein, 1974). In emotive utterances, the addresser seeks to create the impression of a certain emotion, either real or feigned. There has been some historic contention as to the validity of emotional states as part of linguistic study because, according to Martin Joose, "the emotive elements of speech cannot be described with a finite number of categories [and so remain] vague, protean, fluctuating phenomena which refuse to tolerate our science" (Jakobson, 1995, p.73). However, this function is clearly evinced in the form of interjections and other utterances that are oriented towards the speaker's state of being. The absence of this communicative function not only deprives the English language learner of the ability to engage emotionally with an interlocutor, but also may reduce the possibility of retention, expression, or development of a fully formed L2 identity, further hindering his or her ability to communicate effectively (Pavlenko, 2007).

The most common manifestation of the emotive function is the interjection. Simple expressions such as 'oh!', 'eww' or 'geez!' are effective and authentic ways to express surprise, disgust, and exasperation without explicit statement or protracted description. Another way that emotive orientation presents is in the emphatic prolongation of vowels. The statement "there was a big spider in the kitchen" might be simple referential, but if the speaker were to say "there was a biiiiiiiiiig spider in the kitchen!" it would more likely be intended and received as emotive because the prolonged vowel is evidence of the speaker's emotional reaction. Even with utterances which might otherwise be classified as belonging to other functions, the infusion of an emotive tone or tint can shift the orientation towards the speaker and imbue the message with new meaning. For example:

> "A former actor of Stanislavsky's Moscow Theater told me how at his audition he was asked by the famous director to make 40 different messages from the phrase *segodna večerom* (this evening), by diversifying its expressive tint. He made a list of some forty emotional situations, then emitted the given phrase in accordance with each of these situations, which his audience had to recognize only from the changes in the sound shape of the same two words" (Jakobson, 1995, p.74).

The actor was later asked to write approximately fifty situations and recorded fifty corresponding messages, most of which were correctly decoded by Moscovite listeners (Jakobson, 1995). To raise awareness of the emotive function and develop mastery in this area, one can provide students with a series of emotions with which to infuse their speech or complement their referential material. This has the triple benefit of keeping the phrases fresh, allowing students to connect emotionally with the content, and enabling them to produce more genuine utterances.

Beyond interpreting and expressing the synchronic emotional state, the emotive function also allows the speaker to develop diachronic internal resources. In *The Bilingual Mind and What it Tells Us About Language and Thought*, Aneta Pavlenko (2014) describes the emergentist approach to emotion as a linguistic category, which "views emotions as emergent phenomena that a) arise in the process of subjective appraisal of incoming stimuli in terms of individual needs and goals, b) integrate positive appraisals, physiological states, behavioral consequences, and discursive resources and c) lead to culturally appropriate responses and courses of action" (p.252). This ongoing process of adapting and responding aligns with the conception of cognition as an integrated process. In order for students to become successful social agents, they must be attuned not only to what others are saying, but to the emotional and physical aspects of each interaction as well. By adapting to others' tone, body language, and perceived intentions, individuals have a higher likelihood of participating in effective turn taking, understanding, and appropriate response, thereby increasing the overall quality of communication (Atkinson, 2011).

Though a certain degree of universality might be assumed with regards human sentiment and expression, there is also a great deal that is bound up in culture and language, and therefore must be acknowledged during the process of second language acquisition. From an emergentist perspective,

> "L2 learning requires restructuring at all levels of emotion representing and processing. At the linguistic level, learners may have to modify vocal, lexical, and morphosyntactic patterns of emotional expression and identification…they also need to internalize patterns of emotional expression that do not have L1 equivalents. At the cognitive level, they may have to modify mental representations of emotion categories and patterns of cognitive appraisal….[and] at the discursive and social level, L2 learners have to internalize new norms of emotion regulation and display" (Pavlenko, 2014, p.253).

Making students aware of these linguistic, cognitive, discursive, and social elements can help them add a depth of authenticity and "self" to their interactions in the target language. For those who struggle with L2 identity negotiation, particularly those who find themselves displaced in an ESL context, making the aforementioned facets of the emotive function visible may be as valuable a tool for socioemotional well-being as it is for effective communication.

The results of a study conducted at Brown University suggest that mindfulness training may improve well-being via changes in emotional information processing and, in turn, recall.

Participants who meditated showed greater increase in positive word recall than the control group (Roberts-Wolfe et al., 2012). To extrapolate these findings to the ESL/EFL classroom, helping students to practice emotional expression in a focused, low-stress, and low-risk environment is likely to improve students' ability to recall the language necessary to employ and understand the emotive function in real life contexts. Lozanov's Suggestopedia is one approach to instruction that employs teaching practices designed to promote positive social and psychological relations, but the principle of whole-person learning can be integrated into any teaching philosophy (Lozanov, 1979). The emotive function allows the speaker to enrich communication with nuances of tone, infuse speech with feeling and genuine self-expression, and to understand and empathize with others.

Summary of Suggestions for Teaching the Emotive Function
✓ Create a word bank of emotive interjections and practice in context ✓ Highlight intonation as an indicator of the presence of the emotive function, ✓ Practice embodied cognition and paralanguage to support self-expression in ways that are both authentic to the ELL and culturally appropriate

The Conative Function

The conative function "is a function of language that is focused on, and concerned with influencing the behavior of the addressee, and thus concerned with persuasion." It is generally assessed in terms of the effects of the message on the behavior of the addressee "Let's get out of here!" is the most commonly used line of dialogue in movie history, most likely due to its versatility; because it implies the expectation of action/compliance on the part of the addressee, or listener, this is a prime example of the conative function at work in frequently used language.

The Conative Function finds its purest grammatical manifestation in the vocative (noun) and in the imperative (verb), but high context and low context cultures, as well as situations of varying degrees of formality or familiarity, also yield conative utterances whose grammatical structure might lead the unsuspecting to misinterpret the message. When introducing students to this function, it may be useful to share some of the most common forms of imperatives:

Imperative Form	Structure	Example
Basic Form	Bare infinitive, no visible subject	Be quiet!
Basic Form (Negative)	Uses do not or don't before the verb	Don't touch that!
Emphatic	Expresses sense of urgency, begins with do	*Do* call us the minute you hear anything!
With Tags	Have tags with the modal will or would	Close the door, would you?
Vocative	Begin or end with an address form, which is separated from the rest by a comma	Anne, you go first. Look what I found, dear.
Idiomatic "I need you"	I need you + infinitive complement	I need you to fill out this form.
Let's	Begin with let's or let us, propose action to be taken by the speaker and the person addressed or they function as a command or instruction for the listener.	Let's eat breakfast. Let's see what you have there.

(Cowan, 2011, p115).

These forms can be used to issue commands, orders, demands, requests, advice, recommendations, warnings, instructions and expository directives, invitation, permission, acceptance, or wishes. Without knowledge of the conative function, students will not be able to produce an effective utterance to any of the aforementioned effects, but while being able to identify and produce these forms in a controlled environment is one way to improve their proficiency, cultural effects must also be taken into consideration.

An example of the Conative Function at play in the ESL/EFL classroom can be found in Lisa Delplit's novel *Other People's Children: Cultural Conflict in the Classroom*, in which she discusses differences in teacher discourse styles and how they can lead to communication problems and unmet/unclear expectations. She attributes these differences in discourse styles to differences in class and ethnicity, stating that "many African-American teachers are likely to give directives to a group of unruly students in a direct and explicit fashion, for example… 'Sit down, be quiet, and finish your work…'" whereas "many middle-class European-American teachers are likely to say something like 'would you like to sit down now and finish your paper?' making use of an indirect command and downplaying the display of power (Delpit, 1995). Students who are accustomed to explicit directives will obey the first set while ignoring the second implied directive. Language learners who are unaccustomed to the latter, less explicit style of instruction might perceive those utterances to be referential, really inquiring as to the student's preference, rather than conative as the teacher/speaker intends.

Malcolm Gladwell's *Outliers* recounts another culturally relevant issue within the conative function regarding Korean Airlines. With the ten-year span of 1988 to 1998, Korean Air's loss rate was more than 17 times greater than that of otherwise similar carriers. When the National Transportation Safety Board investigated, they determined that the accidents could largely be attributed to failures of communication, partially explained by the Korean custom of deference and respect towards one's superiors. Even if a co-pilot believed the captain was making an egregious mistake, he would be unlikely to give a direct command, and would, rather, use a series of increasingly strong hints. Here are some examples of different levels of mitigation:

1. <u>Command:</u> "I think we need to turn 30 degrees to the right." That's the most direct and explicit way of making a point imaginable. It's zero mitigation.
2. <u>Crew Obligation Statement</u>: "I think we need to deviate right about now." Notice the use of "we" and the fact that the request is now much less specific. That's a little softer.
3. <u>Crew Suggestion:</u> "Let's go around this weather." Implicit in this statement is that we're in this together.

4. <u>Query:</u> "Which direction would you like to deviate?" That's even softer than a crew suggestion because the speaker is implying that he's not in charge.
5. <u>Preference:</u> "I think it would be wise to turn left or right."
6. <u>Hint:</u> "That return at twenty-five miles looks mean." This is the most mitigated statement of all. (Gladwell, 2008, p. 195).

When considering what this means for English language learners, it becomes clear that when producing language whose primary function is to affect the addressee, there are different levels of directness or mitigation that can impact the formality, courtesy, degree of familiarity, and both speaker and listener's comfort, not to mention the efficacy of the message itself in terms of inspiring the desired effect. When teaching students to both produce and recognize the conative function at work, attention must be given not only to direct commands, but to those utterances whose intent may be conative, but whose structure, without the guidance of a more knowledgeable other, might lead to misperception of its purpose or function.

Part of the role of the educator as relates to the conative function is to help students avoid viewing a situation from a reductionist perspective. Though each student is a micro-universe bringing his or her own linguistic history, socialization, life circumstances, and proficiency to the table, it is not uncommon to attempt to boil language down to the smallest manageable piece without considering its inherent sophistication or nuance in order to advance the conversation or hide confusion (thereby "saving face."). Teaching common conative structures and raising awareness of the dimensions that can affect their use will help students to employ and interpret conative utterances appropriately.

Summary of Suggestions for Teaching the Conative Function
✓ Familiarize students with structures and types of imperatives ✓ Practice using the conative function in different registers, power dynamics, etc. ✓ Raise awareness of unseen dimensions to avoid reductionist interpretations

The Phatic Function

The phatic function deals with the connection between speakers. Its primary purpose is to attract/establish, prolong, check, confirm, or discontinue this connection, and may be composed of either culturally or non-culturally bound set phrases like *well, I won't keep you*; *wow!*; and *really*? or utterances which might be classified as "small talk." Although phatic sequences are sometimes disregarded or considered to be of inferior value due to the low transmission of operable information, their presence or absence can have a profound impact upon the nature of the relationship between speakers. The inclusion of phatic utterances, particularly at the beginning of a conversation, "contribute to the creation or maintenance of a feeling of solidarity and well-being between interlocutors, as well as to the establishment of ties of union between them" (Cruz, 2013, p.2).

In addition to strengthening the relationship between speakers, the use of the phatic function also increases the listener's perception of the speaker's proficiency. A study conducted in 1998 at a Japanese university demonstrated that intermediate/advanced students had passively amassed a substantial base of phatic function phrases from English language media, particularly television programs and films. The facilitators asked the students to create a list of every phatic phrase or sound they could think of, and then use these phrases in an activity whose roles included a speaker, an attender, and an observer. The speaker's primary responsibility was to tell an interesting story while the attender provided short responses to encourage the storyteller and show genuine engagement. The observer's role was to record observations about the efficacy of the attender. As this group of students became more intentional in their application of the phatic function, instructors from other courses noted an unusual increase in their students' proficiency.

With all other elements of communication being equal, the presence of the phatic function elevated these students to a new level of proficiency (E.Todeva, personal communication, March 10, 2017).

In addition to intermittent noises or phrases that show ongoing investment (or conversely, a desire to absent oneself from the conversation), the phatic function appears in small talk. Teachers may remind learners that the purpose of small talk, though it may contain elements of the referential, is actually phatic in function because its purpose relates to the connection between speakers rather than the transmission of information. In selecting a topic of conversation in this category, students ought to avoid anything which is technical or specific, and introduce “weather, the interlocutor’s health, or any matter with which they are equally familiar and about which they can have a similar opinion.” (Ventola, 1979, p.268). The appropriateness of any given topic will depend on the cultural background(s) of all parties involved in the conversation.

Another dimension to consider when choosing the orientation of an utterance (neutral, self or other) is the power differential between speakers. If equals offer one another neutral phatic utterances related to an obvious shared experience (“nice day,”) they are establishing a certain degree of solidarity. However, in a relationship where the power is not equal, such as between an employee and his or her superior, it is more common for the lower-status speaker to use self-oriented phrases while the higher-status speaker tends to use other-oriented phrases. In many cultural contexts, a low-status speaker’s use of an other-oriented phrase might be considered impertinent or an invasion of the superior’s space, but the reverse is generally permitted without offense. The degree to which this is true varies by culture and individual, but to help students avoid undesired sociopragmatic failures, it is advisable to discuss which orientations are most appropriate in a variety of power dynamics and ask them to differentiate.

Whether students are learning English for business or pleasure, they will need to become familiar with language and social conventions that allow them to keep a conversation going, stay engaged with their interlocutors, and socialize successfully. They may also need to be able to execute professional tasks such as giving a presentation or running a meeting in a way that takes connection with the listeners or participants into account. Party-goers who never inquire about the other guests (regardless of their genuine interest in the answer) or sales-representatives whose pitches are exclusively product-related fact are not likely to be as well received as those who employ the phatic function as part of their overall communication. An effective way to illustrate the difference is to show students a video of the same situation with and without use of phatic tokens and ask them how they might describe the speakers and listeners in each case. (Is the speaker friendly? Interesting? Do you think the listener is engaged? How can you tell?) Once students have seen the consequences of the exclusion/inclusion of this function, the teacher can supplement their background knowledge for specific, relevant situations and ask students to apply their observations and strategies in a role play or conversation.

Though not considered part of the speech event for purposes of Jakobson's model, non-verbal communication also plays an important role when considering the connection between speakers. Consider, for example, the impact that a smile, nod, wave of greeting or dismissal, tilt of the head, rolled eyes, or sympathetic hand on a forearm can have on the relationship between speakers. The greeting, "Hey!" with eye contact and a casual wave is much more natural and welcoming than the same utterance without the supporting actions, but since not all such non-verbals are universal, it is advisable to call students' attention to culturally-bound extralinguistic elements such as kinesics (body movement), oculesics (eye movement), haptics (touching), and proxemics (use of physical space) to supplement phatic utterances. (Moran, 2001). Even in written correspondence, where these extralinguistic characteristics are generally absent, certain conventions of salutation and closing are used to soften the transition into and out of the message and engage or bid farewell to the reader.

There is very little research on use of the phatic function between non-native speakers or in English as a lingua franca contexts, and most TESOL materials do not address this function. Teachers can redress the dearth by asking students to reflect on what is natural for them in their own conversations and where these practices align and diverge from those which are common in English; by drawing attention to the presence of the phatic function in existing dialogues, presentations, etc., thereby making the tacit explicit and highlighting the necessity of its inclusion; and by dedicating time to the focused development of this function.

Summary of Suggestions for Teaching the Phatic Function
✓ Activate students' background knowledge of appropriate phrases/topics ✓ Consider power differential between speakers/participants ✓ Design activities that focus on improving ability to attract/establish, prolong, check, confirm, or discontinue connection ✓ Illustrate and emphasize the impact of phatic function on perceived proficiency ✓ Practice application of phatic function in relevant contexts ✓ Supplement phatic utterances with appropriate extralinguistic elements

The Metalinguistic Function

The Metalinguistic Function is concerned with utterances that deal with language itself (of a linguistic nature), or what is sometimes called "code." It can be used to talk about semantic or grammatical structures, to provide students with tools to monitor their own learning, and to clarify misunderstandings. It's also an essential part of early language, not only in second language acquisition, but also for children who are learning to speak their first language. When small children begin to connect objects or abstract notions with certain combinations of sound and stress, they occasionally need to confirm what they are hearing through this Metalinguistic function, or code. In many ESL/EFL textbooks, dialogues flow seamlessly with no interventions or need for repair in understanding, but in real language acquisition, it is likely that an ELL will need tools and survival strategies whose specific function is to help them confirm the code. Providing students with situationally bound preferred formulae or standard lexical phrases like "Sorry, I didn't catch that," or "Could you spell that for me, please?" for moments when clarification is needed will allow them to navigate challenging or unclear communication. (Frendo, 2005). In a study whose subjects were primarily Korean speaking English language learners, a model was used to analyze communication strategies to repair non-understanding between participants that included four component steps: trigger, indicator, response and reaction.

Triggers are the first utterances or parts of utterances that show non-understanding, and they can be divided into three categories. The first category, intelligibility, refers generally to non-understanding of a single word; the second category, comprehension, is compromised when an entire sentence or utterance cannot be understood; and the third category, interpretability, is the understanding of the interlocutors underlying intent or purpose in saying what they say. The third trigger might present itself if one party fails to understand why they are being asked a specific question or why a certain topic is being discussed at all. Being able to express or recognize non-understanding, usually vis-à-vis indicators, is part of the metalinguistic function.

These *Indicators* exist on a continuum from the explicit, such as "Excuse me, what do you mean by…?" or minimal queries like "huh?" to the implicit, usually represented by non-verbal symptoms such as silence, shoulder shrugs, head tilting, or looks of confusion. Here it is worth noting that minimal queries, or those which do not locate or specify the source of trouble or non-understanding, often logically do not receive support that is as specific as that which is provided in response to a specific indicator (Watterson, 2008). An implication is that if educators raise their students' awareness of effective feedback and situationally bound preferred formulae for seeking more specific clarification, the relevance and helpfulness of interlocutor response is likely to increase.

Response refers to an utterance by the original speaker that acknowledges the non-understanding in some way and attempts to repair it. From the study in question, "in almost half of the cases of non-understanding related to intelligibility, response by the speaker involved explaining the item with synonyms, definitions, paraphrase, or examples" (Watterson, 1998, p.392). For this reason, expanding students' vocabulary and ability to react to or provide responses of this kind will increase the likelihood of successful communication with other speakers. Other responses, particularly those to targets in the comprehension or intelligibility categories, involve directing the listener to aspects of the preceding conversation that might help them use the context to make sense of the problematic utterance (Watterson, 1998). Here, too, practice referring back to previous statements can help students to repair non-understanding, whether they have produced the target or the response. *Reactions,* when present, are optional utterances by the original party to indicate that the issue has been resolved.

In these clarifications, Jakobson distinguishes four possible relationships: messages referring to messages, generally in the form of direct quotes or reported speech ("I didn't hear him, what did he say?" "He said turn left!"); codes referring to codes (New York City is the place that bears that name); a message referring to a code ("A foal is a young horse" or "Foal is a four letter noun."); or a code referring to a message via shifters, whose reference changes with every situation and examples of which include personal, possessive, and demonstrative pronouns (Holenstein, 1974). One shifter in English that causes confusion is the pronoun "we" because it is not always clear if the listener is included or to whom the speaker is referring. There is also some ambiguity in "you" because it can indicate either a singular or plural other and, like we, fails to establish clear parameters about who is included, hence the occasional need for clarification. Preparing students to seek or produce each of these clarifications can help them address doubts and repair miscommunication more effectively. It may also help them understand what degree of ambiguity is to be expected when using shifters of this type, which is of particular importance to students from cultures of high uncertainty avoidance.

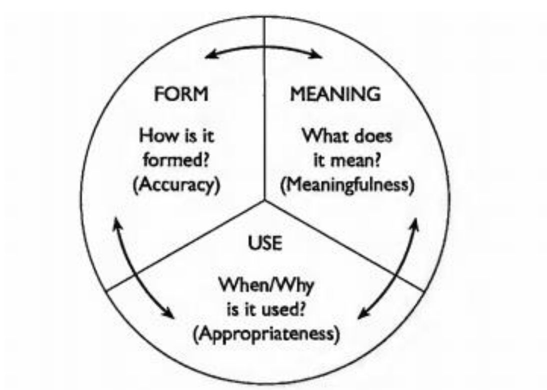
Depending upon the learner's home culture, he or she may feel uncomfortable interrupting proceedings or publicly acknowledging a lapse in understanding, particularly in a formal business setting (Morrison, 2016). Teaching strategies such as restatement, clarification, hedging, and others could help students to mitigate this discomfort. Sharing language for strategies such as asking a colleague, "could you put that in writing and email it to me at your convenience?" might be a way to ensure that no important details are lost without requiring the language learner to explicitly state that he or she has not understood part of the proceedings (Frendo, 2005). Though it can be useful for students to learn metaphors and idiomatic turns of phrase for the sake of their own understanding, it is advisable that they avoid the acronyms and idioms that are ubiquitous in native speakers' everyday language when working in English as a Lingua Franca settings.

Beyond clarifying or repairing potential miscommunication, metalanguage is also a tool for students to discuss and analyze their own language acquisition. Creating a space for this self-reflection and modeling metalanguage for students can give them more agency in their process of language learning. The following vocabulary analysis grid is one example of a framework that can be provided to students as a guide for documenting and assessing their own learning:

Step 1: Keep a log of new words or words that must be re-learned or reconnected.
Step 2: Answer the reflective questions (below) about each word. Monitor any progress. a. In which context did you learn this word? b. How did you know that it was a new word for you? Did you know anything about the word? c. Why did you choose to learn that word? d. What did you do to learn it? Which were the strategies you used to learn it? e. How do you know you learned it? f. Which linguistic levels (Phonetic, morphological, syntactic, semantic and pragmatic) of this word did you acquire?
Step 3: Read the answers and identify strategies used with each word.
Step 4: Add any personal feature to this strategy, for example keep track of how many times the word was used in a certain period of time (Flores, 2008, p.3).

Consistently engaging in practices like this one can be empowering for students who want to augment their lexicon or develop another facet of their L2 in an intentional way (Todeva & Cenoz, 2009).

In addition to the lexical building blocks, another common feature of the ESL/EFL lesson is grammar. When grammar is taught explicitly, it is a discussion of the structure of language, thereby focused on the "code," which constitutes a straightforward example of the metalinguistic function. To further students' understanding of the various structures that will allow them to express themselves more precisely, Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman (2015, p.12) present the following cycle as an effective model to consider during instruction:



These three sections are interrelated and the questions they pose can be addressed separately, but mastery of a word, phrase, or concept requires an understanding of all three, each of which may be taught inductively, deductively or in combination, though a variety of modes and methods is mostly likely to keep learners engaged. A precept of the Silent Way approach to language instruction is that learners to do not learn because they are taught, but because they mobilize themselves to learn, and Todeva (2016) includes the following in a list of conditions which make learning optimal: "[Students] can understand the workings of the target language in a deeper, more global way, experiencing important pattern recognition and thus achieving significant cognitive shortcuts" and "learners have ownership of language and learner agency and discovery are seen as key" (p.1). In order to meet these conditions, it is necessary to use and to train students in the use of the metalinguistic function by modeling language analysis, focused reflection, and clarification/repair strategies, and by providing opportunities and scaffolded structure for students to discover and explore the form, meaning and use of a variety of language elements. Enabling students to learn based on their own observations is of particular importance because, while there are certain established meanings and conventional ways of forming and expressing ideas, language evolves and students need to be able to learn independently and adapt to change in order to be effective communicators. Furthermore, "grammar is part of a broader range of resources, and its integrity and efficacy are bound up with its place in the organization of human conduct, and social interaction in particular" (Atkinson, 2011). Because language is not a finite, closed system, it can be more effective to teach students how the system works than to try to define its boundaries.

Summary of Suggestions for Teaching the Metalinguistic Function
✓ Teach students to produce and respond to indicators of non-understanding ✓ Provide a variety of frames to ask for/offer clarification ✓ Share specific tools for students to monitor their own learning ✓ Model and create space for targeted reflection on language learning ✓ Address and engage in the cycle of form, meaning, and use

The Poetic Function

The Poetic Function, also known as the Aesthetic Function, deals with that language whose primary focus is the beauty of the language itself. The richness of sound and texture, and the balance that makes it a work of auditory art or poetic utterance. "The other functions need not be absent in poetic texts. They merely play a subordinate role, just as in other linguistic genres, the poetic function is not absent, but only appears in a subordinate role (in political slogans, advertising, commemorative speeches, etc.)" (Holenstein, 1974, p.164). Because the human mind seeks patterns, rhyming poetry has been used throughout history as a tool for teaching and preserving important messages. From the essential to the mundane, historic examples of texts characterized by the poetic function include ancient Chinese law, nursery rhymes such as *Hickory Dickory Dock*, mnemonic devices such as the rhyme beginning with *Thirty days hath September* as reference for practical information, and modern advertising slogans and jingles "The quicker-picker upper."

Though this function is not restricted to what is ordinarily classified as poetry or prose, many of its examples do contain elements that cause them to "become conscious in [their] 'self-valuation' which promotes and cultivates the latent structures that pass unnoticed in the set of ordinary discourse towards the referent." (Holenstein, 1974, p.163). Some elements beyond rhyme which can be easily identified are imagery, diction, rhythm, meter, and repetition; these elements can be studied in the context of existing works of art such as William Wordsworth's *I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud* or Edgar Allen Poe's *The Raven*, and then students can create their own works of form poetry using the same features. The element of diction, or word choice, can transform a referential utterance into one that is poetic. Mark Twain wrote, "the difference between the *almost right* word and the *right* word is really a large matter. 'Tis the difference between the lightning bug and the lightning." Even when considering less drastic differences, understanding nuances of meaning can be as important as knowing the primary meaning of the word. Though learning the difference may be a metalinguistic endeavor, judicious use is poetic.

Another manifestation of the poetic function is formulaic language, which can include chunks, collocations, situationally-bound preferred formulae, and frames. Formulaic language falls within the domain of the poetic function because, for one reason or another, certain configurations have become preferred modes of expression solely on the basis of their sound or balance. For example, though the meaning is identical, it sounds much more natural to say "sorry to keep you waiting," as opposed to "sorry I made you wait." Depending upon the genre in question, studies present figures ranging from between 37.5% and 80% of the English language as being collocations, and formulaic sequences have been targeted in second language teaching because they seem to hold the key to native-like 'idiomaticity' (Swan, 2006). Providing students with formulaic language not only improves their execution of language within the poetic function, but because these frames and phrases are stored and can be cognitively retrieved as units rather than as individual pieces, it also increases their automaticity and makes processing time and effort that would otherwise have been expended on assembling a similar unit available for other tasks (Swan, 2006).

Conversely, "formulaic language is useful when talking about the familiar and the recurrent…but it is inadequate for dealing with novel ideas and situations, where the more open-ended aspects of language are paramount." (Swan, 2006, p.4). Though providing students with the formulaic language that will make their language sound "native-like" may increase the degree to which they are perceived as "fluent," we also need to recognize the monolingual bias of such views (Pavlenko, 2014) and acknowledge the unique voice that multilinguals can bring, empowering them to be creative and express themselves in a way that is both poetic and authentic. (Todeva, 2009) This ongoing process of creating novel constructions ultimately contributes to the beauty and evolution of language, whose use "[cannot] be accommodated within the terms of a fixed language system. Speakers are continuously modifying the system, combining familiar elements in novel ways and testing existing resources in new environments" (Taylor, 2012).

Summary of Suggestions for Teaching the Poetic Function
✓ Use song lyrics, poems or mnemonic devices to illustrate characteristics that draw focus to the message ✓ Demonstrate nuance of meaning that elevates language to an art ✓ Practice formulaic language whose patterns are poetic in function ✓ Value diversity and creative assembly as the result of multilingual sophistication

Conclusion

Each of the previous sections focused on only one function at a time, but as mentioned at the outset, it is rare to encounter a speech event in which multiple functions are not present. How, then, can we acknowledge the presence - and cultivate the production of - all six of these functions within the complex system that is the language classroom? According to *Complex Systems and Applied Linguistics*, "complex systems are dynamic: the elements and agents change over time, but crucially so also do the ways in which they influence each other, the relations among them." (Cameron L. & Larsen-Freeman, D., 2007; p3.) The advantage of the model of communicative functions of language explored in this paper is that it is not a fixed, unyielding mold, but a lens through which communication can be viewed and skills can be developed in response to the complex reality of any given TESOL context.

Some of the factors that can influence the degree to which students process and produce each of the functions can be found in Geert Hofstede's model of national culture, the framework that was used to analyze and ameliorate the Korean Airlines mentioned in the Conative section. That framework takes into consideration these six additional dimensions:

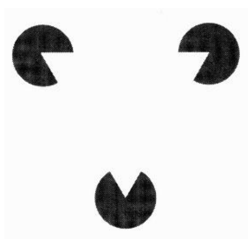
- *Power Distance Index,* or the degree to which the less powerful members of a society accept and expect that power is distributed unequally. A pilot from a country with a low PDI would be more likely to express their opinions candidly or even issue a direct conative statement ("Turn left! Now!") to a superior than a similarly ranked and skilled pilot of high PDI origin.
- *Individualism vs. Collectivism*, or the preference for a loosely vs. tightly knit social framework.
- *Masculinity vs. Femininity,* or *Tough vs. Tender*, or the societal preference for values considered to be historically masculine (achievement, heroism, assertiveness, competition-oriented) or feminine (cooperation, modesty, caring for the weak, quality of life, consensus-oriented).
- *Uncertainty avoidance,* or the degree to which the members of a society feel uncomfortable with uncertainty and ambiguity. This can affect the clarity with which any referential or conative utterance is produced or received. E.T. Hall proposed the notion of low context and high context communication as being on either end of a continuum, where low-context messages are explicit, direct, and conveyed primarily through spoken language while high context messages are implicit, indirect, and - as the name might suggest - primarily conveyed through the context or social situation. (Moran, 2001).
- *Long term orientation vs. Short Term Normative Orientation,* or whether a society places greater value on tradition or pragmatic change.

- *Indulgence vs. Restraint*, or the degree to which a society promotes/accepts/rejects that which is related to enjoying life. A society on the "restraint" end of this spectrum is regulated by strict social norms. (Hofstede, 2001).

Language is an art, therefore no matter how carefully we quantify and classify its elements, it will always be experienced uniquely according to the individual- according to his or her context, experience, mood, and the dimensions detailed above. It is a matter of interpretation or a co-construction of work. For this reason, the Japanese have a custom of leaving certain spaces blank in their writing, with the absent word to be supplied by the reader. Hence, a __________ field might be a lush, green meadow to one reader, and an empty soccer pitch in the mind's eye of another. According to Aebersold and Field (1997), there are five sources that can heavily influence the way a reader (and, by extension, a listener) interprets the material. They are: family, community, school, sociocultural environment, and individual differences. As such, "more information is contributed by the reader than by the print on the page." (Clarke and Silberstein, 1977.) The diversity of experience that language learners bring to the classroom by virtue of their multicultural background might mean that every student is interpreting the same material in a unique way; creating space and structure to acknowledge and celebrate that difference can enrich the material for the whole class and help students to feel valued.

In 1961, Anaïs Nin wrote that *we don't see things as they are; we see them as we are*. Even within the same reader, academic socialization or individual ontogenesis may also affect the intake as each person evolves over his or her lifetime. One reader reported profoundly different import upon reading *Ana Karenina* at the ages of 20, 50, and 70 not because the text had changed, but because she was reading from different places in the timeline of her life. This change in perception can take place within an individual or as part of a conversation or social interaction; any given phrase might be interpreted in a hundred different ways depending on our context, mood, culture, personal history, or any factor that has an influence on who we are at the time in question.

Ultimately, "the whole is other than the sum of its parts," which is to say that, in the case of communication, it is not a matter of adding all of the parts and finding the sum; rather, the whole is an entirely different entity. As in the case of the gestalt images below, the mind will supply that which it perceives to be missing in order to form a more complete picture or understanding.



Successful communication is a process of accommodation and a kind of "semiotic bricolage," or the comprehensive interpretation and assembly of all available resources (Lévi-Strauss, 1966). The elements that affect the production and internalization of language are considerable, but dedicated attention to Jakobson's six communicative functions of language will allow English language learners to develop a fuller range of communicative ability.

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Appendix A

1.Interchange: http://interchange4.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/resources/LevelIntro/Interchange4thEd_LevelIntro_Scope_and_Sequence.pdf

2.Touchstone: file:///C:/Users/USUARIO/Downloads/TSScopesequence_1sted-L1.pdf

3. Passages: http://www.cambridge.org/files/5114/1403/8515/Passages3e-SB1-Scope-and-Sequence.pdf

4. Voyager: http://www.newreaderspress.com/voyager#productDetail_overview

5. Endeavor: http://frontiercollegebooks.ca/P-9781564208538/Endeavor-Student-Book-3-----(2853)

6. Connect: http://www.esl.net/connect.html

7. Understanding and Using English Grammar http://www.esl.net/azar_grammar.html

8. Side by Side: http://molinskyandbliss.longmanhomeusa.com/assets/scope_and_sequence/sbsplus3ss.pdf

9. Let's Go: http://www.backbonecommunications.com/wp-content/uploads/Lets%20Go%20Scope%20&%20Sequence.pdf