FORMS of a language deal with the internal grammatical structure of words. The relationship between लड़का – लड़के, लड़के को - लड़कयां, लड़की को – लड़की को are forms of Hindi grammar, and similarly forms like a brother/an uncle are forms governed by rules of English language. Such forms are within the domain of structural grammar or simply grammar in the conventional sense of the term.

TASK In language learning and teaching corresponds to a real life task or activity in which the learner uses the target language for completing a communicative goal. A task has its primary focus on meaning and has a clearly defined outcome.

Examples: Going for shopping with a friend; taking a dictation; ordering food in a restaurant; participating in a party.

One task often includes multiple functions (see the definition and examples of function below).

FUNCTION refers to the purpose for which language is used and this is within the domain of sociolinguistic grammar of a language. This is a more recent aspect of language that that has been added to the notion of grammar. It helps us understand the appropriate usages in a language and in teaching & learning languages from a functional point of view.

There are two types of functions – linguistic and social. Please pick and choose that you think are right for your students. Some of my suggestions are marked with an asterisk.

Linguistic Functions
1. Asking & answering questions*
2. Describing
3. Narrating
4. Comparing

Social Functions
1. Greetings
2. Thanking someone
3. Accepting thanks
4. Giving compliments
5. Accepting compliments
6. Introducing self
7. Introducing others
8. Welcoming someone
9. Expressing happiness/sadness
10. Asking for and giving directions
11. Asking for a price
12. Telling price
13. Asking/telling what time is it
14. Asking/telling about weather
15. Expressing wants & desires
16. Showing courtesy
17. Inviting someone
18. Accepting or declining an invitation
19. Making a suggestion
20. Bargaining for a lower price
21. Providing information about oneself/about something
22. Critiquing some situation
23. Criticizing someone
24. Paying condolences