FUNCTIONAL GRAMMAR
A basic explanation for teaching Japanese…how is it useful?

1. This strategy fits in nicely when trying to explain the use of particles and how they help to create meaning in a sentence to students.
2. The comparison of English and Japanese sentence order becomes much clearer using this strategy.

This visual is introduces students to the concept:

These elements make up ALL sentences:

- PARTICIPANT- Who or What is involved?
- CIRCUMSTANCE- When, Where, How, With whom?
- PROCESS- What is happening?

In basic Japanese sentences, the particles generally fall into either PARTICIPANT or CIRCUMSTANCE groups.

**PARTICIPANT** – Answers the question “WHO or WHAT is involved?”
Particles = は(subject marker-who or what is doing the action?)
を(object marker-who or what is having the action done to them?)

**CIRCUMSTANCE**- Answers the questions “WHEN? WHERE? HOW? (with whom? By what method etc)
Particles= と (with a living thing)
で (means of transport)  (place of action)  (means of action)
に (direction towards)  (place of existence)  (days of the week )
( time words with numbers in them)
から (from a time)  (from a place)
まで (to a time)  (to a place)

**PROCESS**- Answers the question “What is happening?”
At a very basic level in Japanese, these words end in –ます
This clearly shows the difference in sentence order, in terms of a process.

Focus on sentence placement of PARTICIPANT, and the fact that it makes it so.

All of these times are CIRCUMSTANCES. TEACHING POINT: sentence order of general to specific in TERMS OF TIMES.

Shows that this is a PARTICIPANT, but is not necessary in a Japanese sentence. TEACHING POINT: it could be ANYONE as the participant depending on prior sentences.