

2012

Conversational English. Session 3: Facts and Figures



Course written by Ruth Wickham, Brighton
Education Training Fellow, IPGKDRI

Participant's Notes



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Session 3: “Facts and Figures”

This session is intended to be a fun activity where you can practise talking about general knowledge and facts and figures using English only. There will be some continuing practice of pronunciation, and questions and answers. The game of “Bingo!” is included to add interest and engagement.

Objectives

You will:

- Practise pronouncing and stating large numbers correctly.
- Practise speaking about countries of the world and related facts.
- Improve listening and speaking accuracy through playing “Bingo!”

Materials:

You need:

- Participant’s notes for this session.
- Writing materials.
- Facilitator will provide “Bingo!” cards and markers.

You need to be able to sit at a desk or table to write notes, place their “Bingo!” markers on the card on a level surface, and also to work in a group or team with others.



Notes about Numbers

Even people who have gained some proficiency in a second language will habitually use their own language to count. So initially we are going to have some practice in using numbers in English.

Take note of the following points:

1. In speaking and listening English numbers there is often some difficulty in distinguishing between (for example) “fifteen” and “fifty”. Speakers of Bahasa Malaysia particularly tend to swallow (or just not pronounce) the final ‘n’ of ‘fifteen’ and the other cue – the stress on the final syllable – is also problematic for speakers of Bahasa Malaysia. The difference should be clearly heard:

THIR-ty	thir-TEEN
FOR-ty	four-TEEN
FIF-ty	fif-TEEN
SIX-ty	six-TEEN
SEV-en-ty	sev-en-TEEN
EIGHT-ty	eigh-TEEN
NINE-ty	nine-TEEN

2. When saying a longer number, such as the year-date, the Malaysian tendency is to simply read it as a series of digits.

For example: 2010 is commonly read as ‘two zero one zero’.

- The names of the years in the last (20th) century are said as “nineteen ___”.

For example: 1957 is “nineteen fifty-seven”
1901 is “nineteen oh-one”

- The names of the dates in this (21st) century after 2010 can be read in some cases either as “twenty ___” or as “two thousand and ___”, but before that are generally read as “two thousand and ___”

For example: 2001 is “two thousand and one”
2011 is “two thousand and eleven” OR “twenty eleven”



3. With numbers over a hundred, there should be the word '**and**' after the word **hundred** (or after the thousand if there are no hundreds).

For example: 239 is said as 'two **hundred and** thirty nine'.

3 045 is said as 'three thousand, **and** forty-five'.

(Note: this is not always so in American English ... but this is Malaysia where British English is practised!)

4. 'Round' numbers in thousands are often read as hundreds.

For example: 1100 can be read as 'one thousand, one hundred', or 'eleven hundred'

3500 can be read as 'three thousand, five hundred', or 'thirty-five hundred'.

If the number is not 'round', then it is more likely to be said as thousands, hundreds etc.

For example: 3246 would be read as 'three thousand, two hundred and forty-six'.

5. The number '1' is commonly pronounced as 'a' when it is the first digit.

For example: The number 150 is commonly pronounced as 'a hundred and fifty' rather than 'one hundred and fifty'.