

Phone conversation: Booking a Hotel

Hotel Clerk: Hello. Sunnyside Inn. May I help you?

Man: Yes, I'd like to reserve a room for two on the 21st of March.

Hotel Clerk: Okay. Let me check our computer here for a moment. The 21st of May, right?

Man: No. March, not May.

Hotel Clerk: Oh, sorry. Let me see here. Hmmm.

Man: Are you all booked that night?

Hotel Clerk: Well, we have one **suite** available, complete with a **kitchenette** and a sauna bath. And the view of the city is great, too.

Man: How much is that?

Hotel Clerk: It's only \$200 dollars, plus a 10% room tax.

Man: Oh, that's a little too expensive for me. Do you have a cheaper room available either on the 20th or the 22nd?

Hotel Clerk: Well, would you like a smoking or a non-smoking room?

Man: Non-smoking, please.

Hotel Clerk: Okay, we do have a few rooms available on the 20th; we're full on the 22nd, unless you want a smoking room.

Man: Well, how much is the non-smoking room on the 20th?

Hotel Clerk: \$80 dollars, plus the 10% room tax.

Man: Okay, that'll be fine.

Hotel Clerk: All right. Could I have your name, please?

Man: Yes. Bob Maexner.

Hotel Clerk: How do you spell your last name, Mr. Maexner?

Man: M-A-E-X-N-E-R.

Hotel Clerk: Okay, Mr. Maexner, we look forward to seeing you on March 20th.

Man: Okay. Goodbye.

Phone conversation: Ordering a Pizza

Employee: Hello. Can I take your order?

Customer: Yes. I'd like a large **pepperoni** pizza with mushrooms and green peppers.

Employee: Would you like anything else?

Customer: Well, wait. Uh, can I make that a half-and-half pizza?

Employee: Sure. What would you like on each half?

Customer: Uh, what toppings do you have?

Employee: Well, we have Italian sausage, ham, mushrooms, onions, pineapple, black olives, green peppers, bacon, tomatoes, shrimp, clams, and squid.

Customer: Shrimp, clams, and squid!? What kind of pizza is that?

Employee: Uh, the manager spent some time overseas [*Oh.*], and thinks his new seafood pizza will **be a hit** with customers, but to be honest, the "Swimmer's Special," as he calls it, is an **acquired taste**.

Customer: Uh, I'll pass on the "Sink or Swim" special, but I'll have pepperoni and mushrooms on one half and green peppers and Italian sausage on the other. Oh, and could I get extra cheese on that pizza?

Employee: Alright. Would you **care for** any bread sticks or **beverage** with your order? [*Well . . . I don't know.*] Actually, we have a Friday night special going on right now [*Oh!*], and if you order any large pizza and drink, we'll **throw in** a free order of bread sticks, plus a three dollar **coupon** for use with your next pizza order.

Customer: Huh, sure, why not. And what drink comes with the pizza?

Employee: Either apple or orange juice.

Customer: I'll take orange juice.

Employee: Okay. Your total comes to fifteen nineteen, which includes tax. [*Okay.*] And could I have your name?

Customer: Uh, yeah, Jay Han.

Employee: Huh? Did you say "Jay Hand"?

Customer: No, it's "Han." Actually, it's a Korean name, but many people have difficulty **making it out**. Hey, maybe I SHOULD change my name to "Hand."

Employee: Ah, names are important; don't change it. [*Okay.*] Oh, and your address and telephone number?

Customer: It's 1340 South 16 East, and the phone number is 340-1870 (three-four-zero-eighteen, seventy).

Employee: Okay. Let me repeat your order. A large half-and-half pizza. [*Okay.*] One half with pepperoni [*Yeah.*] and mushrooms and the other with Italian sausage and green peppers. [*Yeah.*] Orange juice and your free order of bread sticks. Jan "Han," not "Hand," [*Yeah, that's right.*] at 1340 South 16 East, 340-1817. Is that correct?

Customer: Everything except for the phone number. It's 1870, not 1817.

Employee: Alright. Thanks for your order. It should arrive at your doorstep in 30 minutes or less, or you'll receive a free small pizza with your next order.

Customer: Great. Thanks.

Key Vocabulary

pepperoni (*noun*): a pork and beef sausage, sliced thinly for pizza
- My students ordered a pepperoni pizza for lunch.

be a hit (*verb*): be popular
- Ordering pizza for the party was a hit.

care for (*verb*): have a preference or liking for something
- Would you care for anything else today?

acquired taste (*expression*): a taste that takes time to get used to
- Some people say that learning to like sushi is an acquired taste.

beverage (*noun*): drink
- What kinds of beverages do you want to serve at the party?

throw in (*verb*): add
- That pizza shop always throws in a free drink with every order.

coupon (*noun*): a certificate used to receive money off on purchases
- Let's use the pizza coupon that came in the mail.

make something out (*idiom*): understand or figure out
- I couldn't make out what the customer ordered because of the poor telephone connection.

Phone Conversations

Speaking on the phone in English can be very challenging, but don't worry – you can do it! 😊

Techniques to Improve your Phone Conversations in English

- **Think** about the conversation beforehand.
- **Write** down the questions that you will ask (and perhaps the answers you expect)
- **Learn** vocabulary that you might want to use or that you might hear. If you don't know the word in English look up the definition before the phone call.
- **Ask** the other person to repeat themselves if you don't understand what they said.
- **Don't panic.** If you feel confused just stay calm and try to ask/understand again. Don't give up!
- **Practice, practice, practice!**

Useful Sentences

- Starting a Conversation:

Is this ... ABC Hotel / The University of Canterbury?

Is this the correct number for ... making a booking / study abroad inquiries?

I am calling to inquire about ... booking a room in July / international student fees.

I was wondering if you could... check availability for me on July 5th / answer a few questions for me about (X)

I would like to get some information about... your hotel's facilities / studying abroad at your university.

I have a few questions about...the location of your hotel / study abroad application deadlines.

- Ending a Conversation:

Great, thanks a lot for your help.

Excellent, thanks very much.

Thank you for answering all my questions.

Thank you, I will call back if I decide to make a booking.

Thank you, I will check out your university website if I have more questions.

Let's Practice

-Imagine you are going to call a hotel/university, and then brainstorm about:

- (1) How you will begin the conversation
- (2) Five questions to ask
- (3) Five vocabulary words you might need to know
- (4) How you will end the conversation

Preparing for an English Phone Conversation

Beginning the Call

Questions to ask

Key Vocabulary

Ending the Call

Notes

A Real English Phone Conversation!

Part 1: Preparation

- Find the phone number for a hotel or university that you would like to call in an English speaking country.
- Write 1-2 sentences that you will use to start the conversation.
- Write 5 questions that you would like to ask in your phone call.
- Write a list of 10 vocabulary words that you think would be useful for your phone call.
- Write 1-2 sentences that you will use to end the conversation.

Part 2: Phone call

- You will use Skype to call the hotel or university of your choice.
- I have paid and set up Skype for you (username and password will be given in class)
- Make your phone call any time before next class (November 18th)
- Do your best and don't worry too much. ☺

Part 3: Reflection

-After your phone conversation write a half page reflection (200-300 words). Please answer these questions in your reflection:

- How did you feel before, during, and after the call?
- Were your questions understood?
- Did you understand the answers?
- How could you improve your ability to make phone calls in English?

-You will not have to hand this paper in to me or share it with anyone else, but I would like you to write out your reflection so that we can chat about it next class.

Preparing for an English Phone Conversation

Beginning the Call

Questions to ask

Key Vocabulary

Ending the Call

Notes

Penghu Casino Discussion

Referendum: when people vote in order to make a decision about a particular subject, rather than voting for a person

Archipelago: a group of small islands

Resident: someone who lives or stays in a particular place

Notion: an idea, belief, or opinion

Spur (tourism): to make something happen faster or sooner

(Anti-gambling) Alliance: an arrangement in which a group agrees to work together to try to change or achieve something

Legalize (casinos): to make something legal so that people are allowed to do it

Selfish: caring only about yourself and not about other people

(Financial) Consortium: a group of companies or organizations who are working together to do something

Ecologically sustainable development: using, conserving and enhancing the community's resources so that ecological processes are maintained

Vote down: to decide against or defeat in a vote

(Pro-gambling) interests: a group of people or companies that support something

Regroup: to form a group again in order to be more effective, or to make people do something

Strong push: to make a great effort to do something

Picturesque: something that is pretty and interesting

Controversial: causing a lot of disagreement, because many people have strong opinions about the subject being discussed

Magistrate: someone who works as a judge in a local court of law

(Pro-gambling) motion: a proposal that is made formally at a meeting, and then is usually decided on by voting

Narrow margin: the difference in the number of votes that exists between the winners and the losers of a competition or election

Stance: an opinion that is stated publicly

Petition: a written request signed by a lot of people, asking someone in authority to do something or change something

Definitions above were sourced & modified from Longman Dictionary (<http://www.ldoceonline.com/>)

Discussion Questions

1. What are some benefits of developing casinos in Penghu?
2. What are some drawbacks (= bad things) of developing casinos in Penghu?
3. If you were to have voted in the referendum, what side would you have voted for? Why?
4. What are other ways that Penghu residents could improve their standard of living (i.e. make more money)?
5. Do you think the casinos in Macau (澳門) have been beneficial to the local residents?
6. Why do you think the vote margin was narrow in 2009 (56% against), and then changed to a wide margin in 2016 (80% against)?
7. Do you think politicians should publically state their opinions regarding votes outside of their jurisdiction (area)?
8. Can you think of other examples of development projects that are controversial in Taiwan?

Write 2 of your own questions about this topic:

9.

10.