

# Dialogue 1: Getting to know your classmates

*This conversation is between two students in a classroom at NDHU.*

**A:** Excuse me, is this seat taken?

**B:** No, it's not. Have a seat.

**A:** Thanks. This is 'English Communications 3', right?

**B:** Yes, it is. Are you new to NDHU?

**A:** Is it that obvious?

**B:** A little.

**A:** Yeah, this is my first day at NDHU. How about you? What year are you in?

**B:** I'm in my fourth year...just one more semester to go!

**A:** Wow that's exciting!

**B:** It is, but it's a little scary too because soon I will have to find a job. So...where are you from?

**A:** I'm from Taipei. How about you?

**B:** I'm from Taipei too! What are you majoring in?

**A:** Ummm...well, I haven't really decided yet. I've registered as an English major, but I think I might change my major to Biology.

**B:** Don't worry you have lots of time to decide.

**A:** Thanks. What's your major?

**B:** I am majoring in Engineering.

**A:** That sounds interesting. Hmmm...maybe I should major in engineering?

**B:** Sounds like you have a lot of interests! Good luck choosing a major.

**A:** Thanks. Oh, here comes the instructor.

*(the instructor enters the classroom)*

**B:** Hey, if you ever need any help just send me an email or Facebook me. Here's my contact info.

*(B hands A a piece of paper with contact information)*

**A:** Great, thanks a lot!

## Sentence Explanations

### 1) Is this seat taken?

This is a more causal/natural way of asking 'Is anyone sitting in this seat?'

Example: On the train someone might ask you "Excuse me, is this seat taken?" and you could say "Yes, that seat is taken. My friend is sitting there, but she has just gone to the bathroom"

### 2) Is it that obvious!

This is said when you realize that something (perhaps something that you had been trying to hide) is actually really easily known by others.

Example: After seeing you talk to a classmate your friend says to you "Wow...you have a crush on your classmate don't you?" and you could say "Oh no, is it that obvious! Do you think he knows that I like him?"

### 3) Just one more semester to go!

In this sentence 'to go' means left or remaining.

Example: Imagine it is final exam week, you might say "Only two more exams to go, and then it is summertime!"

## Common Mistakes

✘ Where do you come from?

😊 Where are you from?

The first sentence is OK grammatically, but it sounds very awkward and it is not how a native speaker would ask this question.

✘ What grade are you in?

😊 What year are you in?

'Grade' is only used when you are talking about elementary school or high school. 'Year' is used when you are talking about university.

✘ What's your department?

😊 What's your major?

In Chinese you say 'department' when you are talking about the topic you are studying, but in English we don't; we say 'major'.