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BSc Degree

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English II (Advanced English)**Dr Shreesh Chaudhary****Retired Professor****Humanities and Social Sciences****Indian Institute of Technology, Madras****Presenting Numbers: Street Vendors in Chennai during Covid-19**

Hello and welcome again to this the next session of the speaking module of this course, in English. We began talking about presenting numbers presenting statistical data, graph charts, etc., some time ago, and we are going to continue doing so, even in this session. Every time we present statistical data, you know there are 2 or 3 things that we will do good to remember.

Number 1, how numbers are pronounced. Each number is also a word or a group of words. Say, for example, one two, but when you say twenty three when you say thirty six when you say sixty seven, then you know, there are two words, and they are a group of syllables six-ty-se-ven, there are four syllables. So, you know, their relative prominence, their pronunciation stress on them, their spelling, all of these questions arise and we saw some time ago in another session that in written language, one three and three zero are clearly different, very markedly different.

But unfortunately, in English, not so in spoken language. In spoken language, these two words are different only in the last syllable thirty has two syllables, and thirteen also has 2 syllables, but the differences in spite of the similarity of sounds, the difference is that thirty, thirty has stress on the initial syllable. So, this is thirty followed by forty followed by fifty followed by sixty. But, when you have one three, that is thirteen you know, it is the long vowel in een, thirteen, your teeth should show, your lips should spread thirteen and we have main stress this time on the second syllable.

So, whereas three zero is thirty, but one three is thirteen. If we do not keep them apart, if we do not pronounce them differently, then sometimes, unfortunately, though not always, human beings are clever, intelligent animals, intelligent creatures, they understand one another in spite of distortions, in spite of mispronunciations, in spite of a variety of other problems, but sometimes it can lead to very serious irreversible accidents, damages, losses, consequences

just as we saw in an earlier session, the example of two aircrafts colliding mid-air against each other because one pilot misunderstood, one particular number for another number.

So, it is of utmost importance that our pronunciation of numbers of the letters of alphabet must be absolutely clearly apart. Are you talking about UK or USA? That is letters of the alphabet. Many of us pronounce them as USA UK they are not UK and USA. They are USA, that is the United States of America and the mother countries is the United Kingdom, UK. In both cases, the stress is on the final letter, the final letter of abbreviation for UK, not UK, USA, not USA, we have to remember and keep these words or group of words very clearly apart, distinguished from each other.

So, clear pronunciation is as important as clear spelling; imagine you write 13 for 13 the number you write the same spelling of 30, you write the same spelling as 13. So, when we do not pronounce them, clearly, we make a similar mistake and we deliberately cause confusion for the listeners and then our presentation is likely to remain, I am not saying will remain you know, human beings understand one another in spite of distortions, but we are likely to remain in confusing, we are likely to be misunderstood.

So, get their pronunciation as correctly as you get the pronunciation of as you get their spelling correctly. As you get their spelling correctly. So, we should also learn their pronunciation correctly and there is not much to learn, 1 to 20 and then you know, 21 23 until you go 100 and then maybe another half a dozen words 1000, millions, billions dozen score and that is all, you are done, you are finished. No problem, you will never be misunderstood. So, with very little effort, with very little investment, you have very high returns; you must be careful enough to pronounce these numbers correctly.

There is another problem in numbers, as we saw earlier when we make a statistical presentation, it is not just the absolute numbers, we do not say in my village there are eight schools, in the neighbouring village there are seven schools, in the village of, in another village, there are only three schools, we do not say that we present them in a perspective, we present them as related to one another, that is why we use words like in my village there are eight schools, but in the one after mine or in the one next to mine, there are 11 schools. But unfortunately, in yet another village as we go on, there are only three schools.

So, we are presenting a picture that though you might find 11 plus 8 plus 3, 22 schools in this region, they are not evenly spread, some sections of the population have better access to more schools, and some other sections of the population do not have such easy access to so many

schools. That continues to be actually a problem in the sector of primary education in many developing countries including India. But you know, this picture cannot come unless we speak about the numbers in relation to one another. That is relative presentation, so you will look at place, we will look at time, we will look at factors—Bihar, primary education 1993, Tamil Nadu secondary education 1995.

So, as parameters change, the relative picture or relative pictures also change, and this change is best indicated by words by appropriate words, words that are designed for them, and we should learn how to use these words in writing, in speaking just as we do in writing. Let us look at an example.

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- Presenting numbers has many aspects.
- One can look at their relative values and get an overall picture of what has happened, and present numbers accordingly.
- One can also present their relative values, using words and expressions like “whereas...”, “on one hand...”, “on the other...”, “out of...”, “as great/high/big, or “as small/low ... as”, etc.



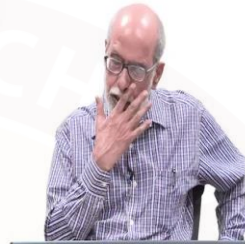
As I said, one can look at their relative values and get an overall picture. So, you know what are the kinds of expressions and phrases you use. So, one can also present their relative values using words and expressions like whereas, on one hand, on the other, out of so many as great or as high or as big as or as small, as low as little as that next.

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ACTIVITY 1



- See the following report of 21 June 2020 from the City Corporation of Chennai. Now present a two minute radio report.
- In your report you can highlight numbers, various categories, problems of surveying responses in an unorganized sector, etc.



What we will do is rather than go only theoretically about it, we will look at some statistical data, and we have found some data in this report from a report from, in a report by the city corporation of the city of Chennai, by the Corporation of the city of Chennai, concerning street vendors. So, look at the data and in your report, you can highlight numbers of course and then also various categories and problems of surveying responses in an organised sector, such as that of the street vendors, look at the data.

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| Category | Numbers |
|--|---------|
| No. of Vendors who Left the Business | 7,965 |
| No. of Vendors Unreachable | 4,796 |
| No. of Street Vendors Tracked | 23,154 |
| No. of Vending Zones | 900 |
| No. of Vendors who Left the City | 2,509 |
| No. of Vendors who Died | 68 |
| No. of Messages Sent | 15,265 |
| No. of Undelivered Messages | 5,629 |
| No. of Vendors who Left Royapuram/ George Town Zone , the largest | 3,139 |
| No. of Vendors who Left Kodambakkam Zone | 1,300 |



These are the data, and you know what words we will put them together. So, for example, you should know the pronunciation of keywords, like number, main stress on the initial

syllable, vendors initial syllable, business initial syllable. But unreadable, which syllable, unreachable which syllable? Second syllable from the beginning.

So, like that, messages initial syllable, but undelivered which syllable undelivered, third syllable from the beginning. So, in this manner, we should check the pronunciation of words. Similarly, numbers, we know 7 9 6 5, but together you know, they will go as seven thousand nine hundred and sixty-five and signals and tells the listener that now you are coming to the last number.

Say, for example, look at another twenty-three thousand one hundred and fifty-four. But when you have only one number, 68, how many vendors died during this period in the first 90 days of lockdown? We say oh 68. So, one number only you do not have to say and before it, but because there are three syllables six-ty-eight, one of them has got to be prominent, which syllable we know the rule, it is six, had it been sixteen then we would go to the second syllable.

So, we have to remember some of these things. So, for example, how many messages were sent to track down the vendors fifteen thousand two hundred and sixty-five. How many messages remained undelivered, which suggests that their phones could have been either switched off or could have had low power or worse perhaps, worse perhaps, could have had low connectivity, but we cannot say did not have connectivity because we do not know, these data do not say whether these phones were connected or they were not connected, whether those numbers were valid or they were not valid, we do not know.

But we know that out of so many messages sent, out of, again a relative word, out of so many messages sent some other messages, some messages, a good part of them remained undelivered. So, this kind of picture will not come emerge. Your listeners will not get this picture clearly, unless you also make a presentation in relativity terms numbers in comparison with one another numbers related to one another and then there are axis parameters, which year? Which place?

Lot of vendors left in the entire city of Chennai, there are 900 vending zones. So, did all vendors leave from only one vending zone? What is the meaning of the word vending? They are selling by hawking, Ice cream, Ice cream, some vendor comes in the morning, in the evening, not in the morning, ice cream vendors come only perhaps in the afternoon or in the evening.

So, you know the city of Chennai has divided the entire city into vending zones, and each vendor has a licence to stay in their zone and have almost a monopoly and sell there where. So, did vendor from only one zone disappear, no they disappeared from all zones from some zones, more vendors disappeared, then from some others with zones. So, for example, Georgetown, Kodambakkam, Royapuram, these zones lost many more than other zones in the city. So, this kind of picture, relative picture will not come to you clearly, unless you use terms and words of this kind as well. Terms of numbers related to one another, next.

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ANSWER 1



- Workers and retail traders in the unorganised sector seem to have been worst affected by Covid-19. In a report released on 21 June, over three months after complete lockdown in India, the situation of street vendors was pretty grim in Chennai. **Nearly** twenty five thousand were contacted so that they could be given some cash assistance.
- But **a little over** five thousand in **different** vending zones could not be reached. No one knew how they were managing.
- Only **a little under** twelve thousand, that is **almost half** of all vendors tracked down, responded to a short message seeking the details of their bank accounts.



| | |
|--|--------|
| Nos. who Responded / Gave Bank A/C Details | 11,648 |
| Vendors who Sent A/C Details by email | 21 |
| Vendors who Sent A/C Details by WhatsApp | 3,468 |
| Vendors who Gave A/C Details at the City Corporation's Website | 58 |
| Vendors who had no bank a/c for receiving cash assistance | 592 |



Look at the data. Go on, come back. You can now; it may not you see; ordinarily you do not need to write your presentation before you start speaking. Just keep these things in mind.

These slides will anyway be there before you. So, you can do one of the two things, either switch the recording device on your phone or anything else or your computer on and talk to the computer, talk to your cell phone and record this presentation and please remember do not speak for longer than 2 minutes. But speak in those 2 minutes such that you get a lot of significant absolute numbers, and you also get an overall picture, the numbers in relation to one another. Once you have done that, you can rewind, listen, compare your work with the answer; please come.

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ANSWER 1



- Workers and retail traders in the unorganised sector seem to have been worst affected by Covid-19. In a report released on 21 June, over three months after complete lockdown in India, the situation of street vendors was pretty grim in Chennai. **Nearly** twenty five thousand were contacted so that they could be given some cash assistance.
- But **a little over** five thousand in **different** vending zones could not be reached. No one knew how they were managing.
- Only **a little under** twelve thousand, that is **almost half** of all vendors tracked down, responded to a short message seeking the details of their bank accounts.



With the answer we have given. If you are happy with it with your work, go on. If you are not so happy with your work, do it again. That is the best way to learn a skill and making presentations. Please believe me is a skill, but it is an important skill, so important that not only the job you aspire for, but many other jobs and subsequent rises in life will depend upon how clearly how relevantly how concisely in how little a period of time you are able to see how much and this is both an art and a science, it is a craft it will come to us only through practice only through hard work.

I also wish to show you, draw your attention to, this in some incidental examples that ever in this answer that has been prepared by our team. You will see that you know frequently relevant words comparing making comparisons among numbers appear, words like nearly words like a little over or different or a little under or almost half, next.

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- **Almost a quarter** of all vendors were **no longer** in the city, or in the business.
- **Out of** the nine hundred vending zones in Chennai, Royapuram/Georgetown Zone **together with** Kodambakkam, in Central Chennai, had lost **largest** number of street vendors, almost five thousand, or nearly **one quarter of all** vendors contacted.
- The report also said that sixty eight vendors died within the period of lockdown. It is, however, unclear if they died of Covid, or unemployment, or anything else.
- **Under** six thousand messages, a **fewer** than half, remained undelivered.



All those highlighted words, phrases and expressions are nothing, if not connecting numbers, and there are various parameters to one another. So, that when you look at these numbers, they do not appear to you in a meaningless collection of digits, when your listener looks at them, your listeners would think that here is an overall picture of the fate, of the present situation of street vendors in the city of Chennai and that depends largely upon the preparation, the training, the auto-learning that happens in you and the enthusiasm with which you make this presentation.

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ACTIVITY 2



- Watch the following video showing a traditional wedding in Nigeria, and write a two minute report on what makes a wedding here different from the ones you know.

Video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=th7yTXQpqy0>

Please watch the section 00:00 – 4.00

Source: Refinery29 (Youtube)

Video description: The video showcases how a traditional video in Nigeria takes place.

We are using four minutes of this video for academic purposes.




So, before you move on to the next unit, try and do some work on your own some additional work, we call it walking an extra mile, here is the video you know about 7 minutes, and it gives you a traditional African wedding, maybe from Nigeria, but it could as well be from another country.

So, we are taking Africa as a cultural area, not just as geography as a cultural area, not just as a geographical area. So, as in any other wedding, anywhere else in any other culture you will notice that here also there is decoration of the venue. Here also guests come in particular kinds of costumes, there are particular kinds of rituals involving language and body, and then, of course, there is music dance song and feast.

Last but not least, there is feast, but different cultures have them in different ways. Vegetarian feasts are one kind, non-vegetarian feasts are as another coin, a wedding guest in Japan has one kind of dress, but a wedding guest in India or China has another kind of dress. So, please go on.

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- You can focus on costumes, decorations, ambience, rituals, feast, music and entertainment, guests and venue.
 - Your report may have words indicating sequence, words like “first, next, then, before, after, following, preceding, etc.
 - It may also have words for rituals, such as bowing, holding or joining hands, sitting, rising, bowing, bending, squatting, prostrating, singing, chanting, offering, receiving, etc. Check their meanings and pronunciation, and use them in appropriate places. Make sure you speak like a radio reporter but see like a television camera, all that is in your view.



In your report or you may please focus on costumes, decorations, ambience rituals, feast, music, entertainment, guests and venue and anything else. I mean, you do not have to be deliberate, but you will notice when you begin talking about, after watching this video 2 or 3 times, when you talk about it, without looking at the video, you will see you are using words like or you may have used words like I am not saying all of them, but it is quite likely that some of them may be used, which are those words, those words are first, next, then, before,

after following proceeding, because rituals happened in the sequence, guests sit in a geographical space, next to before or after one another.

The bride and the groom also sit either next to our beside before, or maybe the bride sits down in the group stands up. So, there are all kinds of physical positions, geographical space, time, rituals and in your presentation make, make a reference to all of these things. There may be body postures you may have to refer to. How many words do you remember for body postures? Many, anyone who knows a little of any language knows many of these words like ball, like hold, like sit, rise, bend, squat, prostrate, sing, chant, offer, receive all words involving two people, all involving a person and the deity.

In your presentation, make sure you use these words as well. So, without them, you cannot present a coherent picture, next. So, as I have been, as I have been told, and as I have tried to pass on to you, constant pursuit is the only road to excellence. I wish it had a shortcut. There isn't any, the choice is us and all we can do is wish good luck to one another. Good luck, and thank you.