

**Female Voice:** You are now listening to the IELTS podcast. Learn from tutors and ex-examiners who are masters of IELTS preparation. Your host, Ben Worthington.

**Ben:** Band 6.5 IELTS writing task essay. In this tutorial, we're going to take a detailed look at an essay that a student wrote and we're going to dissect it sentence by sentence and analyze it using the IELTS criteria for IELTS writing task.

This essay was sent in by a student to our Essay Correction Service. I think it was either the Essay Correction Service or the online course and we gave our feedback and this isn't what the student gets. What the student gets is probably more useful for the student because it's like a video.

We're going to dissect it in a different way and this review is by the ex-IELTS examiner who works with us. So, let's have a look. The question, "Today most people get married and give birth in their 30s rather than when they are younger. Is it a positive or negative development in your opinion? To what extent do you support this development?"

As I've said before, we're not going to jump into what to do next; brainstorming and planning and stuff like that. We're simply looking at the essay. So, let's have a look at the introduction first. "The issue of early weddings followed by pregnancy before 30s has grown in importance over the past few years."

That doesn't sound very natural. Before one reaches their 30s or before a couple reaches their 30s? It just doesn't sound too good and the examiner put, "You have the right idea with paraphrasing, but it's vital to ensure that your language use remains natural." This sounds a bit odd and it's true.

So, the second part, "...has grown in importance over the past few years..." is correct, also the task response. We're heading in the right direction, just the wording. How can we say this perfectly? Let's just see. "...get married and give birth..." For me, get married and give birth, it is tricky.

We've got the right ideas the examiner says with the paraphrasing, but I would say start a family because start a family, we're paraphrasing the question and we're avoiding the-- because here we're switching between the wedding, which is for the couple and the pregnancy which is for the women.

Likewise with the question but we can both-- the main subject in the question is the couples, okay, because, "...rather than when they are younger..." "People give birth" is obviously women, but here it's not entirely clear.

So anyway, "...The issue of early weddings followed by starting a family..." or maybe "...The issue of the timing of weddings and starting a family has grown in importance over the past few years..." It's more concise, more direct.

Let's carry on. "...This is a common dream between many women..." "A common dream between many women." That almost-- unless we're talking about lesbian families because we've got "between many women", we could say, "...This is a common dream for many families perhaps, but nowadays, this dream is facing drastic changes due to many factors: globalization, economic crisis, and increasing population numbers..."

Once again, maybe we're going off topic here especially in the introduction. We don't need to mention why we've got this problem. So, this is a good reminder for task response. Always refer back to the question while you are producing your work. Also, I think this could be rephrased, but I won't go into it. Yes, like the examiner says, this doesn't make sense.

Let's see. "...contributing towards this probably..." Yes, it's "contribute towards something", to something. Let's see. "...Now, I strongly believe that couples need to be aware and..." convinced I think was the word "...of their situation before deciding to have children before they reach their 30s or before their 30s..."

So, quite a few corrections here and this is why we really don't send back this type of review of the student's essay because we're not really putting in the correct version. We're just marking out the errors. So, let's have a look.

Grammatical range before decided, after a preposition a verb is pretty much always in the gerund form, so it's an easy rule to adopt and also we want to get crystal clear the difference between convicts and convinced. Convicts are in a jail because they did something wrong and convinced means you are convinced about something. Anyway, let's go.

Body paragraph number one, "...Although an early marriage and pregnancy is a desire for many couples, there are some factors that need to be considered..." So, well done for using the conjunction here. We started with a conjunction "although" and also related to cohesion and coherence we've got firstly and secondly; the signposting language so to speak.

So, "...Although an early marriage and pregnancy is a desire for many couples, there are some factors that need to be considered. Firstly, due to the world economic crisis which made the number of available jobs decrease considerably..." As you can probably hear, this all needs to be paraphrased.

Also it says, "...and also the real state industry..." which is a very-- not a very serious error, but it isn't good. It's the real estate agency. The real state industry doesn't exist. It's real estate. Next one-- Let's just read this sentence again.

"Firstly, due to the world economic crisis which made the number of available jobs decrease considerably..." Now, we could probably just rephrase this. "Due to the disappearance of jobs because of economic crisis or-- I don't know. "Due to the rising of unemployment" would be probably the most succinct way because that's what we're saying. There's not that many jobs and the rising unemployment demonstrates that.

So, let's see. "...and also the real estate industry increase in prices exponentially..." But the real estate industry isn't increasing the prices. The prices are just going up because of the market. So, we have to rephrase that as well. The student goes on to say, "...directly affecting the means of people..."

Okay, this is a serious issue because as you can hear, I've heard to reread it three or four times and if this is the case with your essays, then you've probably got some issues with cohesion and coherence. "...and their dreams of constitutes a family and by the first residence..."

So, let's see. LR5: take care of natural collocation. "...dreams of having..." Okay, yes. "...and their dreams of having a family..." Yes, very well spotted there. So you can see I have to read it and read it and read it again. It's not flowing.

Next point, "...Secondly, the cost of living is reaching numbers that average salaries cannot afford..." Now, this was a shorter sentence. It was grammatically perfect. It was easy to read. I'm not saying always use shorter or medium length sentences. What I want to say is that if you're going to use very long sentences like that one we just heard, be sure, be certain that you've got the grammar under control because if not, it can really fall to pieces and quickly.

So, once again the student has gone off topic as you probably realized. "...Secondly, the cost of living is reaching numbers that average salaries cannot afford..." Let's go back to the question.

"Today, most people get married and give birth in their 30s rather than when they are younger. Is it a positive or negative development? To what extent do you support this development?" That sentence, "...the cost of living is reaching numbers that average salaries cannot afford..." it seems like we're over thinking this.

Next sentence, "...For example, a study from Boston University..." Tier 4: good to use an example to support the point you are making. Fantastic. Who teaches students to give examples like that?

Anyway, "...For example, a study from Boston University showed that nearly one-third of the newlyweds in which couples were below their 30s do not intend to have children..." Right, accurate use of a relative cause there. The student pulled this sentence off, pulled it off perfectly, well done, and the use of a relative clause. Grammatical range and accuracy: points in the bag so to speak.

"...The central reason behind this is..." CC4 let's see. Good to link your ideas together smoothly. Now, this is another phrase that I recommended my students to use in the C2 template which is in the online course and I've also made a few videos about this in the-- on YouTube and also some other tutorials about this on my site at [ieltspodcast.com](http://ieltspodcast.com).

So, let's carry on. "...The central reason behind this is the uncertainty of being able to provide a decent life for their children..." Wonderful! Wonderful! Let's see. Very accurate-- and this is another medium-length sentence. The student has pulled it off wonderfully and if we look at the final point, a natural use vocabulary: provided a decent life for their children. Well done for this paragraph. We did kind of jumble it or bumble it whichever way you want to look at it in the middle, but kind of pulled it back. Strong recovery.

So, let's carry on. Body paragraph two, "...However, this scenario is a tendency for..." This drives me absolutely crazy, okay, when a student-- because the student here spelled for 'four'. Now, if I were a student and I was sending in my work to an IELTS Essay Correction Service, then I would put it through the spell checker first and let the computer see if it can correct some work for me.

Then the examiner or the essay corrector is going to have more time to spend giving you tips and giving you advice. That's what they do. In our service we do. You're going to get more advice because we won't be spending time doing silly little corrections like these.

So, anyway, "...However, this scenario is a tendency for our reality these days..." That's tough, that's really tough to understand. The examiner said, "This sounds unnatural. Problems with collocation." Also, starting the paragraph in this case-- in this paragraph, starting with "however" hasn't really worked because it's not really kind of a contrasting view with the previous paragraph.

So, "...I firmly believe that this situation is a negative development..." Good. Good. We're keeping an eye on task response. The examiner noted, "It's good to respond directly to the question." In the band 9 that I did a while ago, the band 9 review, the writing was so good that

we could infer, we could understand the opinion of the writer without having to directly call to questions-- directly call questions like we have done here.

That's a clear example between band 9 and band 6.5, 7 in this one. "...Many families have been constituted late or even not started..." Good sentence. "...For example, women having their babies after 35 years old is a risk not only for the mother's health, but also for the baby..." That's what I would have written but the student wrote. "...is a risk not only for the mother's health as well for the baby..."

So, the ambition is there, which is good, but we did kind of botch it up so to speak. We did kind of write that erroneously. So, let's see what the examiner wrote. GR5 It is an accurate sentence. However, it would have sounded better as I just said, "but also for that of the baby." The student tried, didn't pull it off perfectly and there's still room for improvement.

Right then, here the text-- the student says, "...the child can be born with malformation..." There's probably a more natural way to say that, but at least we are getting back to the question. The examiner wrote, "Now you're starting to answer the question better."

Let's go back to the question just to remind ourselves is it a positive or negative development women giving birth later in their life. Positive or negative. This student believes that this-- it's more dangerous, the risk of a medical accident—not medical. The risks involved are higher. That's the way I would have written it. Malformation is not a bad way. It's not the most natural way to say it.

"...can be born with malformation and very weak with a risk to develop disease due to their fragile immune system..." Once again, it's not very-- we can just-- there we go, there we go. Just had to check that. So, "...develops diseases due to their fragile immune-- and very weak with the risk to develop diseases due to their fragile immune system." Now, that sentence was excellent. Yes, it was pretty good.

"...On the same way the mother..." That's pretty bad. "...that can face serious health problems and also a big risk of losing the child." We're going to move on to the conclusion, but very

quickly what I want to say is if you've got words like "big", we can upgrade those for "significant", "a significant risk of losing the child."

And also, we can rephrase this sentence so it just reads a lot better. So, we can say, "In the same way, the mother can also face serious health problems and there is a significant risk of losing the child." Now if I was going to also going to improve this, maybe add kind of like a summary sentence to the whole paragraph.

Let's move on to the conclusion. "...To conclude, a mature decision must be made for the couple..." Good work here. Good work. Yes, it should be "by the couple." If it's by the couple, the other one's making it. If the decision is going to be made "for the couple" then somebody else is going to be making it, so probably not the best way.

Now, the student started with "to conclude" which is good. Clear use of paragraphing and they've introduced the paragraph, the concluding paragraph, the introduction there they've introduced it well using that sentence. Not like me. I just butchered that.

Anyway, "...not only the desire for an early marriage with many sons..." and daughters, hopefully. Many children; that's gender neutral. "...but more important than that if they would be able to provide the basics for the children like health and-- healthy environment, education, and support."

Once again, the examiner puts that this has to be directly related to the question. Also, we should have mentioned that this needs to be sorted out grammatically as well and unsurprisingly, it's another long sentence. Like we said, it's all-- and in the next sentence as well we're going off topic.

So, let's just try and rephrase this. "...Not only the desire of an early marriage with many sons..." We need to make it more accurate, "...many children, but more important than that if they would be able to provide..."

Yes, I'm not even going to rephrase it because it will take too much time. This is why I prefer students to go for medium and shorter sentences and every-- use the longer sentences, but as I said before, only when you are certain they are grammatically perfect.

"...In my opinion, a balance between the desire to reality must be taken into consideration..." not "taken in consideration." "...taken into consideration before taking a decision..." Like I said before, a preposition followed by a verb is usually in the gerund. So, the student just by knowing that rule would have saved himself some points.

"...After that, within the couple limits..." As the examiner pointed out, "after that, within the couple's limits" certain genitive, decide-- what was that? It still sounds a bit odd and I would agree there. "...After that within the couple's limits decide a proper age to get married and have their children..." Yes, he did not really finish that strongly, unfortunately.

So, as you can see, as you've probably heard, this essay got about a 6.5 or a 7. I would probably say on a 6.5 because there are some parts that are quite difficult to understand and also kind of affects the task response as well. Because the grammar's poor, it's not easy to understand the writing and therefore it's difficult to understand whether task response is being completely achieved.

So, if you want to get some feedback for your own work, have a look at [ieltpodcast.com/essaycorrectionservice](http://ieltpodcast.com/essaycorrectionservice) or you can have a look at the online course which has a lot of essay corrections included in the course because just by looking at the video, just by looking at this, you're not going to improve that much. You're going to improve your knowledge, but the real improvement comes from taking action, from writing and from getting feedback.

So, just to give you an overview of what happens with the course, you watch the tutorials then you'll email your essay in for some expert essay correction. We make a very good video, we give you the correct phrases, we give you a lot of support and then we email it back to you really quick.



Then you watch the next module, then you implement the next easy piece of advice to implement into your work, send more essays then you get more feedback. We keep going round like this. This is why it's a fast way to improve your work. Now, if you do want to improve quicker, have a look at the online course.

The next step to take is if you know somebody who will benefit from having the essay or looking at an essay review like this, send them this tutorial, please. Also, the next step is if you want to carry on improving, then go to [ieltspodcast.com](http://ieltspodcast.com) and sign up for the newsletter. Leave your email and we'll send you a big jumbo e-book full of resources to help you get started.

My name is Ben Worthington. Thank you very much for watching and listening to this tutorial and all the best with your IELTS preparation. Thank you.

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