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Ben: IELTS speaking band 7: lexical resource. In this tutorial, we're going to look at complex or less common and idiomatic vocabulary and we'll also look at paraphrasing all with the aim of achieving a band 7 or more in the IELTS exam-- in the speaking exam specifically.

This tutorial will help you get to grips with less common idiomatic vocabulary, collocations, and choosing the correct style in order to get a higher band score. We're going to look at paraphrasing and this will help you avoid repeating-- help you to avoid repeating yourself and it will make you sound more accurate. We're also going to look at inappropriate vocabulary and how to correct it.

Now, if we look at the band descriptors, the official IELTS band descriptors, for band 7 in lexical resource we have the criteria that says uses vocabulary resource-- sorry, use vocabulary resource flexibly to discuss a variety of topics. Also, use some less common and idiomatic vocabulary and shows some awareness of style and collocation with some inappropriate choices and uses paraphrases effectively.



In this tutorial, we're going to cover all of those three points directly taken from the IELTS official criteria. The best way I thought of doing this is listening to a sample part 2 answer and a cue card answer and what we're going to do afterwards is break it down and analyze it and then listen to a proper one that's been corrected and has been improved.

I would strongly recommend you listen to this and try and pay attention to maybe some of the factors that could have cost the student points. This is really useful because if you can identify the weak spots or the areas of this part 2 cue card explanation that are costing the students points-- that are costing the student points, then you'll probably be able to eliminate it from your own speaking part 2. If you can't identify anything that's wrong with the speech, then don't worry because we are going to analyze it and break it down.

So, here is the question: Describe a kind of weather you like. You should say what kind of weather it is, what you usually do during this weather, how this weather affects your mood, why you like this type of weather.

Recording: Well, I relish low-temperature weather because it is a rare event in my city where I live you know since our city is near the equator. So, it's really hot and humid during the year. Therefore, I always look forward to December when the weather is cooler, a little bit cold or windy. It's my time. During this weather, I usually desire lying on the bench in my garden watching the sky and sipping my hot coffee with joy and pleasure. As I can do what I can't in the



dry season, I'm always like in cloud nine whenever the cold comes. I enjoy doing all the stuff under this kind of weather especially with my mother such as planting trees, looking at the clouds passing above me, and going out without wearing a jacket. I think I never get bored about the cold due to the fact that it's very comfortable to work and study. Besides, when this type of weather turns up it means that an interesting series of holidays will come soon like Christmas and New Year, which are the time for family.

Ben: Now, this is a good answer because it does fit some of the descriptors for band 7. Now, let's have a look why and which parts of the band descriptors and by the way, if you identified her accent then send us an email and there is a price for you if you get it correct, okay? Let's go.

So, the examiner does-- sorry. The examinee uses the vocabulary resource flexibly, okay? So, she discusses a variety of topics. We can see quite a good range and she's used the range with confidence and she's covered quite a lot of factors like the place, the weather, the feelings, her attitudes and she's done that reasonable effectively and confidently. So, under the criteria use vocabulary resource flexibly, she definitely fills that part.

Also, the examinee, the candidate uses some less common vocabulary such as equator, humid, passing above, planting, and even some idiomatic vocabulary such as on cloud nine, look forward to. An important thing here is that these phrases were used appropriately and



naturally. The candidate also is showing awareness of style and collocation, but sometimes there's some inappropriate choices.

We're now going to look at three different styles. We're going to look at what collocations are and we're going to explore what it means to make inappropriate choices with regards to vocabulary use. So, when we talk about style with speaking or with text there are usually three different categories. There's informal, neutral and formal.

Now, depending on our audience, we're going to use one of those three. So, if we're speaking with friends and family, work colleagues we're probably going to speak in a more informal style. When we encounter people for the first time or if it's a mixed audience, we'll probably speak in a more neutral style.

Then if we're speaking with a superior, it could be a teacher, a professor, a person we deeply respect, or maybe we are speaking sort of in a very formal academic context then we're going to speak obviously, in a more formal style. So, the person or the audience is going to greatly influence the vocabulary that we use and we should adopt this vocabulary.

Now, going back to the answer that we just listened to, the sample answer kind of maintains an informal style. We can check this informality-- we can identify this informality because it's got these phrases like you know and I'm always like on cloud nine, vocabulary like stuff or get bored, turns up and we can see that-- especially like.



Now, I know from correcting a lot of students' essays that using like is informal especially for the written and also in the speaking as well. Also, though in the speaking in this sample, we can hear neutral words and phrases. We've got look forward to, a little bit cold, enjoy, comfortable, sipping my coffee.

Now, the mixture is appropriate as neutral vocabulary can be mixed with informal and formal ones, but we definitely don't mix informal with formal. This is what we can see here because in some parts of the sample, we've got the informal phrases as I just mentioned, informal vocabulary, but we've also, unfortunately, got a few formal words sprinkled in there as well.

We have therefore, desire, and due to the fact that. To make it all sort of like-- to combine to one style-- remember neutral we can use for both informal and formal, but to make it into one unified style and I'd probably go for the more informal one, we're going to have to replace some of these formal phrases.

Moving on to collocations, we can probably hear that the student has used some good collocations, but also used some collocations inappropriately. A collocation, as you probably know, is when we find a group of words with a higher frequency of being used together. Collocations are really useful and I encourage their use in the Speaking Confidence course.

Also, I've encouraged their use in other podcasts and given you examples. What they do is they help you sound like a native speaker because you can learn the collocation, all three or four



words together and then when you use those four words together, maybe you've got like 30% of the sentence down. You've got 30% of the sentence perfected and the listener is almost expecting the next word in the collocation.

So, if I say a wonderful, I'm almost expecting occasion and this helps with the flow and reduces listener strain as well if you are using plenty of these collocations. Now, in the example, in the sample answer, there's quite a few of these that are used appropriately. We have a rare event, sipping my coffee, the dry season.

Unfortunately, there's a few that are inappropriate or they're not really correct. For example, relish low temperature or under this kind of weather. We don't usually say that or interesting series of holidays. No. These are almost collocations. For example, an interesting series of events, that's a collocation, but an interesting series of holidays I can understand you, but it's not natural. We will correct these inappropriate collocations in the perfect example that I'm going to give you in a few minutes.

By the way, I just remembered. If you download the official IELTS podcast app and you can probably go there-- you can probably find it by going to the Play Store or going to the App Store, depending on what phone you've got and just search for Ben Worthington IELTS podcast or audio-- IELTS audio tutorials if you're on the iPhone and you can find the official podcast app, our official app and we're now sending the transcripts. Whenever we release a new podcast, it



comes with the transcript and these are really useful just to help you really digest what is being said.

Anyway, sorry for going a bit off topic there. Now, going back to the sample answer we are analyzing, we can see that the candidate has used some paraphrasing effectively, but there has been a few mistakes. When we are paraphrasing, we're basically saying the same thing as we may have said before, but without repeating the same words or the same wording repetitively.

Now, if you find yourself in your practice exams or even in your-- if you find yourself in your practice exams repeating phrases and wording numerous times, then it's going to lower your exam mark, okay?

And especially if you're talking with somebody who does this and uses the phrase over and over again, it gets insanely irritating. For me personally, it does as well. Anyway, this is why sometimes when you're talking with Americans, American females they're like "Oh that was so awesome! That was so amazing!" For me, it gets really annoying and I imagine for the examiner it does as well. Anyway, let's move on.

So, the best way to solve this issue is just to record yourself, listen, and analyze it and maybe even get feedback on your recording and just ask the tutors is there any way I could improve this.



Now, what the candidate did with regard to paraphrasing, what they did well was that they used low temperature, they said cold weather, they said cooler, they said cold and these are all different ways of saying roughly the same thing. I'll just repeat that: low temperature, cold weather, cooler, and cold. This shows the examiner your lexical resource; the full breadth of your lexical resource. Also, instead of saying watching the sky, we can say looking at the clouds passing above me. This really shows the examiner you've got that extensive lexical resource.

Now, in the first example, we have the word city numerous times and that could easily be replaced with where I live. This way, it doesn't sound as repetitive and it sounds a little bit more natural as well. Now, let's listen to the corrected improved version and hopefully, you can tell the difference.

Recording: Well, I enjoy low-temperature weather because it is a rare event where I live, you know, since our city is near the equator. So, it's really hot and humid during the year. This is why I always look forward to December when the weather is cooler and a little bit cold or windy. It's my time. During this weather, I usually prefer lying on the bench in my garden watching the sky and sipping my hot coffee with joy and pleasure. As I can do what I typically wouldn't be able to in the dry season, I'm always like on cloud nine whenever this cold comes. I enjoy doing all the things in this kind of weather especially with my mother such as planting trees, looking at the clouds passing above me, and going out without wearing a jacket. I think I never get bored with the cold because it's very comfortable to work and study. Besides, when



this type of weather turns up it means that long-awaited holidays will come soon like Christmas and New Year, which are the time for family.

Ben: And here is the original just one more time, so you can compare them closer to each other.

Recording: Well, I relish low-temperature weather because it is a rare event in my city where I live, you know, since our city is near the equator. So, it's really hot and humid during the year. Therefore, I always look forward to December when the weather is cooler and a little bit cold or windy. It's my time. During this weather, I usually desire lying on the bench in my garden watching the sky and sipping my hot coffee with joy and pleasure. As I can do what I can't in the dry season, I'm always like in cloud nine whenever this cold comes. I enjoy doing all the stuff under this kind of weather especially with my mother such as planting trees, looking at the clouds passing above me, and going out without wearing a jacket. I think I never get bored about the cold due to the fact that it's very comfortable to work and study. Besides, when this type of weather turns up it means that an interesting series of holidays will come soon like Christmas and New Year, which are the time for family.

Ben: Let's just briefly look at the improved version. We've changed I relish with I enjoy low-temperature weather; more natural. Also, we changed the first instance of city where we said, it is a rare event in my city. We can change that for it is a rare event where I live. The other



change: we substituted therefore with this is why. This is why I always look forward to December. The next one, I usually desire lying on the bench in my garden. We can easily change that to I usually prefer lying on the bench in my garden.

The next one, as I can do what I can't in the dry season. So, here we just upgraded it to as I can do what I typically wouldn't be able to in the dry season. It just makes it more accurate because we're talking about a hypothetical situation. What I wouldn't be able to do in the dry season. I'm always like on cloud nine whenever this cold comes. Good.

Now, the next one, I enjoy doing all the stuff under this kind of weather, okay? So, this is the wrong phrase. We rephrased it to say I enjoy doing all the things in this kind of weather, okay? Personally though, as you probably know I'm not a big fan of words like things. I would have substituted it for maybe activities or even gone into a little bit more detail and said all the activities such as badminton, skiing or whatever.

Right then, the other correction: I think I never get bored about the cold. I hear a lot of students saying 'get bored about', but it's 'get bored with'. So, that was more with the accuracy of the correct phrase. So, I never get bored with the cold due to the fact it's very comfortable... No. I never get bored with the cold because it's very comfortable to work and study, okay?

Now, final ones: Besides, when this type of weather turns up it means that the long-awaited holidays will come soon. All right? That's the corrected version. The incorrect one was it means



that an interesting series of holidays will come soon. So, yes, it's obviously better. It means that a long-- it means that long-awaited holidays will come soon.

Okay, thank you very much for listening. That's the end of this tutorial. Now, if you're still struggling with your IELTS preparation or you just want to pass fast or you just want to pass first time, then have a look at the online course.

We're getting some great results with that and we recently onboarded our newest essay corrector, a second one, Catherine. She's turning out some really good corrections. I'm very happy with that. Yes, we had to hire her because the demand and the essays students were sending in was just getting way too much for the other essay corrector and myself. So, we had a second one and it's going really well.

So anyway, what I wanted to say is that if you are struggling send us in your essay. We'll be happy to look at it and some special offers available for essay correction once you sign up for receiving more IELTS materials. If you know a friend who is struggling with the IELTS preparation, then send them this podcast.

Just one last reminder: if you want to get all the transcripts for the podcasts, then have a look at the IELTS podcast app that we have. It's our own app and you'll be able to find it. It's the one with the orange logo. Search for Ben Worthington IELTS or IELTS podcast app and you'll be able



to find us there. Now we are sending the full transcripts with each podcast episode and the transcripts are all usually available on ieltspodcast.com as well.

So, remember to keep studying. Try to go for consistency. Try to develop a habit, maybe 30 minutes every day, an hour every day, two hours if you can and keep going and you will eventually pass the exam. It's just a matter of time and putting in the effort. My name is Ben Worthington. Thanks again for listening and all the best with your IELTS preparation.

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