



Ben: ...the British Council lots of money.

[Music]

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.

[Music]

INTRODUCTION

Ben: Hello there, IELTS students. In this tutorial, we are going to be focusing on the essential grammar you need for your IELTS writing exam. We're going to look at band 7 grammar and we are going to look at bands 8 and 9 if we've got time. We may need to split these up into 2 podcasts and on the call-- because I imagine after so many episodes with me I thought maybe my listeners are getting a bit fed up and we've got a grammar expert as well. So, I thought, yes. We can also--

You know what, I just totally botched that up, so I'm going to do that again.



Cate: Yes, do it again. It's okay. I know what it feels like [unintelligible 00:01:03.20] recordings like with corrections like you start something then say oh, God! That sucks [unintelligible 00:01:11.09].

Ben: Yes, yes. I started going down this [unintelligible 00:01:15.09] street and then I was like maybe I should get out of this street and then I carried on and this oh, God I'm just going to blow up the street and start going down another one. All right; three, two, one.

IELTS Grammar: The essentials for 2020 for your writing exam. Hello there, students. My name is Ben Worthington and in this tutorial, we're going to be looking at the essential grammar you need for your writing exam. We're going to be looking at band 7, 8, and 9. We might split this up into two episodes depending how we progress.

To help us with this tutorial, we've got Cate. Some of you might recognize Cate. Sometimes she does the essay corrections and she's got a lot of experience and her grammatical knowledge of English language is-- I'm not ashamed to say it-- is vastly superior to mine. So, welcome to the tutorial, Cate. How are you doing?



Cate: Hi, Ben. I'm great. How are you? Thank you for inviting me to comment on this grammar tutorial and believe me, my grammar knowledge is not superior to yours.

Ben: Well, thank you very much for that, Cate. Let's jump through this and as I said, Cate sometimes helps out with the essay corrections, so you might recognize her voice. Also, if you are struggling with your IELTS writing and maybe you want some feedback on some grammar structures that we mention in this tutorial, then feel free to go to IELTS podcast and look for the essay correction page. What happens is you buy the correction, you email us your essay, and we'll get it back to you usually within 24 hours with all the feedback you need and examples of the correct way of writing it, the errors that you've made, improvements that you've made and also what you've done well.

WHAT THIS TUTORIAL WILL HELP WITH

So, let's jump into it. In this tutorial-- well, this tutorial will help you because we're going to find out what structures you should be using, what you might need to revise while preparing for your exam, and we're going to look at the grammar points so that you'll be able to understand



how to use them correctly and what you'll need if you're aiming for a band 7, a band 8 or a band 9.

Now, as you probably know, in the IELTS exam, we've got to-- it's not only a case of using the right tenses, the right sentence structures or all the right adverbs. We've also got to consider the range and variety and complexity of these grammar points. In the official criteria, it does say grammatical range and accuracy. Now then, for a band 7 or 8 both, what do we need here, Cate?

CRITERIA FOR BAND 7

Cate: So, actually, the list for band 7 is definitely not limited to just the four grammar points that we'll list in this tutorial, but-- for instance, if you have a very good command-- again, very accurate command of all the passive forms, of conditionals-- all the conditionals and including mixed conditionals of wishes and regrets and of certain modals-- more complex modals-- I mean more sophisticated cases of modal use, not just the plain obligation advice modals, then



it's very likely that your grammar range and accuracy is going to be at the level of band 7, but again, it doesn't mean that you need only these four grammar points.

The list goes much further and it includes **sentence complexity**. If you use passive forms perfectly, but your sentences are simple and short then I'm not sure you're going to get band 7. So again, this list can and will be I guess band right will be expanded. So, perhaps you will go on with the series, but I think that could be a great idea especially in terms of sentence structure, but yes, these are some of the forms that you might want to start using.

PASSIVE FORMS, CONDITIONALS AND MODALS OF SPECULATION

Ben: Excellent. Okay. So, for the listener, first what we're going to do-- well, first, we're going to look at passive forms then we're going to look at the conditionals and then we're going to look at wish and would rather and then the modals of speculation and deduction as Cate just mentioned. We're not only going to just briefly mention the structure or how you would use them but we're going to give you examples.



Sometimes the example is going to be in a more like spoken sense so you can grasp it and then we'll give you a sentence that you could easily use in your IELTS essay writing. So, let's jump into it. So, we're going to start off with past simple passive. When do we use this, Cate?

USING THE SIMPLE PASSIVE

Cate: Well, one of the easiest situations when you would want to use past simple passive is when you don't know who did something. So, as the agent of the action is not known and that's not really important, you focus on what was done; on the actual action. So, for example-- would you like me to give the example right away?

Ben: Yes, yes, please.

Cate: So, for example, what I thought of-- again, if you're writing about inventions let's say, you're bringing an example. The bendable straw was made in the 1930s somewhere in the United States. Again, you don't know-- you don't remember who made it. Actually, it does have an inventor, but you don't remember. So, there's nothing wrong in saying it was made. As simple as that.



Ben: Yes, and just to add to this, a useful tip-- it's not always applicable, but in these sentences, it's advisable to put the most important part of the sentence towards the beginning of the sentence. So, we wouldn't say in the United States around the 1930s, the bendable straw was made. That's grammatically okay. It's average, but the most important part of this sentence that we want to communicate is that the bendable straw was made in the 1930s or that this is where it originated, what time period it originated from, and the place, but what we want is the most important part of the sentence is usually at the beginning.

So, I'm going to be just-- I'll continue asking questions now, Cate. Some of these will be devil's advocate questions as you know where I know the reason, but I just want to hear it. So, Cate, can you tell us when passive forms are used and when we can possibly use them in our essay?

Cate: Well, when you are interested in the facts, events or processes more than in the person who's doing them, then you definitely need that. Also, you will certainly use the passive forms in formal writing when you have to be impersonal and detached and professional. For example, in formal letters or definitely in academic essays, right? So, when you analyze something you're not going to use I too much. You're going to analyze the facts or the examples, the supporting



ideas and you're going to use passive because you will want to operate with facts and events, not with your personal perspective of them.

Ben: Excellent point there and for the students and for the teachers listening as well, a good exercise for students to do is to get a list of phrases that are in the active voice and then transform them into the passive voice and this is one of the structures that is definitely worthwhile learning this structure and learning this skill of the transformation inside out, back to front because, as Cate just mentioned, not only is it useful in General Academic Task 1 it's also useful, valuable, and pretty much required for Academic Task 2 especially if we're going for band 7 or 8 both.

Just as a side note, once we've learned it and we know it and we can do it with confidence, we don't want to put it in for every single sentence because obviously, in the marking criteria it says grammatical range. So, this means using a variety of different structures. Let's move on to the next point. When else can we use the passive forms?

Cate: When we report information and when again, the agent is not certainly known to have done something. For example, the politicians are said to use underhand tactics. Well, you can say they are said to use, they are thought to use, they are believed to use. You see there's this



element of uncertainty and you're putting information that you do not possess for sure. You have extracted it from a source which is not firsthand.

So, you will try to create this--

Ben: Like an element of uncertainty.

Cate: Yes, an element of uncertainty and an element of making sure that it's not your personal words like they are believed to be. It's not me saying that. They are believed to be.

Ben: Exactly, yes. Good point and this is also a useful skill to adopt or use a technique which is connected to hedging; when we are hedging with our academic essays. I'm not going to go into hedging at the moment. We've got a full chapter of that in the online course at the end. At the end of the online course is a whole chapter dedicated to hedging and it really is essential for strong academic writing.

USING CONDITIONALS



So, this brings me on to the second point; using second, third, and mixed conditionals. Could you give us a brief overview of the second conditional maybe?

Cate: The second conditional is used for unlikely or imaginary states or events in the present or future. That means that-- I like to summarize the second conditional is that there is still a 20% chance of this happening. It's not zero because it's not in the past, right?

Ben: Right, right.

Cate: It's still in the future or in the present. So, for example, they would leave their jobs tomorrow and travel the world if they had the money. What if they win at the lottery? So, they would have money, right? So, it's not in the past. You don't regret this because it's never going to happen because it happened two weeks ago. No, maybe there's a slight chance. So, you really have to make sure that you use the right form so you don't forget that you use a form that looks like past simple-- Well, in theory, it's not past simple. That's a long story subjective.

So, then you say if they had the money, right-- something that looks like past simple-- they would leave their jobs and then you use would and the bare infinitive. So, the verb without the to particle. So, they would be; very simple. I also like putting it like this: after if you have one



word and in the main clause you have two words. So, had and would leave; as simple as that because for the third conditional, it's slightly different. So, you can never mix them up.

Ben: Excellent points there. Good point and also, as you may have heard, it can obviously be reversed. You can say if they had the money, they would leave their jobs tomorrow and travel the world.

Cate: But then allow me to add something very important. If you start your sentence with the if clause you will have to put a comma after it--

Ben: Good point.

Cate: --but if you start your sentence with the main clause-- they would leave their jobs tomorrow and so on and so forth, there is no need for comma whatsoever.

Ben: Excellent point there. Excellent point and I love the point you made of there's a 20% chance of this happening.

Cate: You can say 10 if you want to.



Ben: No, I thought you chose 20 because it's second it's two.

Cate: Nice point; I didn't think of it.

Ben: All right. So, with the third conditional and with this it's not a 30% chance of it happening.

Cate: Yes [unintelligible 00:15:33.15] chance and I like calling this conditional too little too late.

Ben: Oh, beautiful. I like that.

Cate: Why? Because you regret and that's the reproach and regret conditional. You can't change anything anymore. It's in the past. So, yes, there's no use crying over the spilled milk but, yes, 0% chance. If they had studied other cultures at school, they might have been more confident about traveling. By the way, look how we have might here and not would. A lot of people think that conditionals are only structures containing the modal would, which is not correct.

The conditionals-- the second and the third-- they can use could, should, or might or would and they're still conditionals and that's very important to know because many test-takers think that



they have to learn another grammar point. No, you're still there; you're still in conditionals. It's just the context changes slightly.

MASTER THE STRUCTURES

Ben: Good point there. Good point, Cate. Also, just to add while we're talking about the structures; learn these structures inside out. Master them. When I was learning Spanish, what I did is I just learned the structure and then I just interchanged the verbs in the past form or interchanged in this case maybe the modal-- There are no modal verbs in Spanish, but I interchanged the different verbs or the different vocabulary, different points in there, but I kept the structure always the same. This made it much, much easier when it came to learning them. I just had to learn one single structure and then just interchanged it.

Also, learn it to mastery because you don't want to be taking a-- you don't want to be risking it on your exam. You want to know it inside out and you want to be getting it 100% correct all the time because once you've got that sentence mastered-- say if there are 20 sentences in your



essay, you can master one of the sentences. That's like 0.5% chance or 5% chance I think-- I don't know-- there's a certain percentage there that you've got it perfect which is what we should be aiming for.

Now then, mixed conditional; can you tell us about these mixed conditionals?

USING MIXED CONDITIONALS

Ben: Mixed conditionals are everyone's nightmare. I think they're native speakers' nightmare as well. I don't know. Well, why are they called mixed? Because they combine different causes and results. For example, a sentence like if pollution had been brought under control earlier, activists such as Greta Thunberg would not have appeared combines a very unusual-- I'm sure I think we have a mistake here-- would not appear probably you mean.

They combine different situations. For example, look a third conditional situation is connected to a second conditional result, right? Why is this connected? It's because an imaginary present result is connected to an imaginary past event or situation. It's only imaginary. Yes, mixed conditionals are very much in the imaginary. Well, conditionals are all not very real. So, if we



look at something that in theory had never happened, this wouldn't be here now, right? So, yes something like that.

Ben: Got you, got you. Like if my parents had never met, I would not be here right now.

Cate: Yes. So, the thing is that this is a very unreal situation. It is as unreal as the third conditional. This is never going to happen. My parents had already met. I am here. So, I'm just exploring the imaginary situations, but you're stressing the fact that this present wouldn't be here.

Ben: Got you, got you. Okay--

Cate: And Ben, I would like to add the thing is that mixed conditionals are-- they are here for band 7 grammar, but actually if you handle them correctly, they are also a very good ticket much higher to band 8 or 9 and various sources say different things because accurate use of conditional structures-- it's not just the four conditionals; zero to three and the mixed ones. It's a lot more. So, good command of conditionals is still a very good pathway to higher bands so to say.



Ben: Excellent, okay. Thank you for clarifying that there and just as a side note, the example we've got-- if pollution had been brought under control-- we'll have to edit that out, won't we?

Cate: Yes, we will have to fix it because I've just realized that the tenses there are a bit off.

Ben: Got you, got you. Okay, no worries. I'll go back and I'll edit it. Okay. Now, next mixed conditional: second conditional course. Actually, you know what, let's just move on to wish, would rather. Is that alright?

Cate: Yes, I think that will be more useful, yes.

Ben: Okay, okay. The next point we're going to talk about is which, would, and would-- sorry; wish and would rather. So, can you give us the theory for this one, please, Cate?

Cate: Okay. So, when-- again, we are in the realm of imaginary situations, right? When we wish for something to happen or when we regret about something, we formulate statements which are technically unreal. That's why all this grammar is so complicated. That's why conditions are complicated and wishes and regrets and the would rather structures are also a bit sophisticated, but not impossible.



So, we can regret about things in the present, about things in the past or we can regret-- not regret. We can wish. Sorry, we can regret too and we can wish for something to change in the future, right? The tenses we use will greatly change. For example, if you speak about the past and you regret doing or not doing something, you should use the wish or if only structure and the past perfect.

For example, parents wish they had not been so strict with their children when they were very young. They wish they had not been, but similar to the third conditional, can they change that? No. You can wish you hadn't been so strict, but you can't change that anymore because your children are grownups already, but remember you speak about the past, you use the past perfect. That's a very easy hint, right? You regret about the past, you use the past.

Ben: Excellent and just for the students; if you get a question about pollution, maybe you could say something like many governments wish they had not been so lenient with pollution regulations. I think a good exercise is just to possibly look at IELTS Task 2 questions and then formulate certain sentences that you could use possibly using this structure, possibly using conditional structures, but get into the habit of using these-- of linking certain structures to certain questions and just playing with it.



Also, when you're doing this, make sure you get feedback otherwise you could be going down the wrong road and start making mistakes with these and that could possibly transfer those mistakes to your exam. So, just be careful there.

Now, can you give another example of when we could use these structures, please, Cate?

Cate: Yes. If you wish or regret about things that haven't come true and they might change in the future, we should use the wish or if only structure with past simple. Yes, I said that if you regret or wish about the past, you should use the past. Yes, but you should use the past perfect; past perfect that's the answer. If you orient your wishes or regrets towards the present and they might still change, they might come true, your tense is past simple. What does it look like?

For example, numerous IT students wish they were working for companies instead of constantly preparing for exams. They wish they were working and this past simple or continuous depending on the focus though. Past continuous stresses the immediacy of the action that the students want. This is how I like to explain it, yes, but remember if you refer to things that might change, it's past simple or continuous.



Ben: Excellent. So, just to clarify if we write numerous IT students wish they were working for companies, that signals that it's more immediate--

Cate: Yes.

Ben: --whereas if we had written numerous IT students wish they worked for companies instead of constantly preparing for exams then it's more distant. Is that right?

Cate: Yes, yes. Technically, they're pretty close, but past continuous is much more immediate.

Ben: So, if I was saying numerous IT students wish they were working for companies, it means that the students I see over there right now in front of me, they wish they were working for companies instead of studying.

Cate: Their wish is stronger. Their wish is more immediate.

Ben: Yes, but they're like-- they're in front of me. They're in front of me and I can see them and they are now wishing that they were working for companies whereas if I said numerous IT students wish they worked for companies that would be a little bit more general, wouldn't it?



Cate: Yes, that's a generalization, yes. It's like a general statement. Let's say when you describe a situation at the beginning of an essay in the introduction; that's a generalization.

Ben: I think we could say wish they were working. We could make it as a generalization as well just like we've done, but it can also be used for like an immediate situation whereas the other one is strictly a generalization. Would that be right, yeah?

Cate: Yes.

Ben: Okay. Next one-- I like this. We're talking about irritating habits.

Cate: Oh, yes.

Ben: I like this, sorry.

Cate: No, no, no. Well, that's so relevant especially in everyday conversations and in informal letters. Again, we're thinking IELTS writing, right? So, a lot of these things are very, very applicable in many types of texts you have to write in the exam, right? The informal letter is definitely one of them because I don't think you would be speaking about irritating habits in the formal letter or in the essay. I can produce an example right away.



So, wish + would something like the electorate of Burundi wish their elected officials would make wiser decisions. So, they really wish something would change in the future, right? Yes, that's about something irritating, but that's also about the future and there's a chance of this to happen, right? So, maybe the officials will change their minds. We never know, but it's in the future. It's not in the past.

Ben: Got you. When I read it irritating habits this is the story of my life because at the moment I'm in a co-working office and for some reason, in this co-working office everybody has the notification sounds switched on. So, it's every two minutes you can hear a ping or a phone call and I will be working and I'm looking around at any sound and I got the attention span of a nut sometimes, but I would immediately stop what I'm doing, look at whoever's phone's going off and then yes, but just to use the structure: if only they would switch off the phones-- but it's a lot of irritating habits especially when they keep the phone ringing and not answering it as they're having a conversation and I'm just wishing. Just answer the phone but anyway, we're getting off-topic there.

Next one: would rather + past perfect.



Cate: Would rather is a fancy way of saying I wanted that. I like explaining it like that because a lot of students look at the sentence she'd rather we had gone to an Italian restaurant and they're puzzled. Like why she'd rather? She'd rather wanted we had gone. Imagine there's a wanted there. It's not there. Would rather is a wish structure because actually-- historically, will and would used to mean want.

Yes. In older English, I will this meant I want this. So, would meant the past. That way, it all makes sense. When you realize where it comes from, it starts making sense.

Ben: Right.

Cate: She would, she wanted we had gone-- I mean she wanted that we had gone, but we didn't, right? This is about something that you wish had been different in the past, but it wasn't because-- well, sorry about that. The decision was taken back then. So, again, wishes in the past very similar to wish past perfect; basically the same.

Ben: Got you, got you. So, she'd rather we had gone to an Italian restaurant.

Cate: Yes.



Ben: Got you. She would rather we had gone. Yes, that makes sense. Excellent and then the next one would rather + infinitive.

Cate: Yes. Again, let's not forget that would actually means wanted and again, if we say the government would rather not give out too many benefits to young people means that the government does not want to give out too many benefits to young people and this is about wishes in the present and future. This means that the government is not inclined to give out these benefits even in the future to the youngsters. So, yes.

Ben: Got you. This would be very useful as well for an argumentative essay because what we're really doing is expressing preference and preference is obviously useful for taking sides. On the one hand, the government would rather not give out too many benefits to young people. On the other hand, they are certain the electorate would welcome such changes maybe. Excellent. Okay. So, yes, that's a very useful structure. Now, moving on to the next set of structures that we can use, we've got modals for speculation and deduction.

Cate: Yes. Very often, English learners perceive modals as very straightforward. Something like must is for strong obligation and let's say should is for advice, but it's not always so. Sometimes modals start meaning completely something else and if I told let's say an inexperienced English



learner that must can actually show certainty and deduction-- well, deduction means being sure about something and making a conclusion based on your certainty, they wouldn't believe me, but it is so actually.

So, for example-- and I'm going to jump straight away into must here because I started saying that. For example, we can even say-- and it's not here, but I'm going to say it-- you must be very tired, Ben, right? Right?

Ben: Got you, yes, yes.

Cate: Because I can see that you're not really cheerful, right? I can see that. I can see that reality. I make an immediate deduction-- positive deduction that's called and that's when we use must. Oh, you must be very tired. You can also-- and that's for the present. You can also use that for something in the past. For example, it must have been bitterly disappointing for those citizens who had hoped for political change. Again, absolutely the same certainty, but look at that; you use it with a perfect infinitive must have been and you speak about the past.

Ben: And just-- sorry.



Cate: No, no, no, no. Go ahead.

Ben: I was just going to say that I just jumped onto Cambridge dictionary which is extremely useful. I strongly recommend this resource for all the listeners. As Cate was saying, if we use it to express an obligation, that's an A2 level and if we use it to express something very likely or it's probable as Cate just said you must be very tired, then it's B2 level.

Cate: Yes, which is roughly band 7.

Ben: Yes, yes. So, definitely-- and this is true with quite a few words that if you use them in one case, it could be A1 level or A2 level and if you use them in other cases, then it's a higher level. So, it's one of these small nuances that in order to get a good grade you need to be very comfortable with-- being aware that certain words have dual uses basically or dual purposes is probably a better way to say it. So, yes, thank you for mentioning that, Cate.

USE GERUNDS AND INFINITIVES

Cate: Yes and I'm going to jump ahead a bit and that's absolutely the same case with when we're going to-- probably in a future podcast, but we're going to get to gerunds and infinitives.



Basically, gerunds and infinitives are-- the use of basic gerunds and infinitives whether you write verbs is the B1 level, right, which is IELTS band 6, but-- 6 or 5.5 which is not very difficult, but when you start being able-- when you start mastering using gerunds and infinitives with verbs-- with the same verb that changes meanings depending on whether you use a gerund or infinitive after it. That is [unintelligible 00:36:51.00] band 8 or 9 that's C2 level.

Ben: Excellent, excellent.

Cate: And that can be different. I mean that's a different level of mastery of gerunds and infinitives.

Ben: Very eloquently put there, Cate. I like that phrase; that's a different level of mastery. Beautiful. So, just to summarize-- we are going to go into it in more detail. When we've got a gerund-- what was it--gerund + infinitive.

Cate: A gerund + infinitive. I can jump into a tiny example of that because I love this topic. I loved teaching it. For example, if you say he came running into the room, right? Come; like what does come take? Come takes both an infinitive and the gerund, but if you say they came to accept her opinions, it's not the same come, right? The context changes.



If we say he came running into the room, we refer to the fact that he was running, right? He entered the room running, but when we say they came to accept her opinions, it's not about come anymore. It's about the polysemy; the many meanings of the word come that is followed by a certain structure and in that case, when we say they came to accept her opinion, that's a gradual change in situation.

Ben: Right, right. I see. I see whereas if we've got the came running-- pluricity did you say?

Cate: Polysemy.

Ben: Polysemy.

Cate: Like from the word polysemantic; a polysemantic word is a word with many meanings and most simple words in any language have more than one meaning.

Ben: Excellent point there.

Cate: And the meaning is strongly influenced by these structures that we use it with.

Ben: Got you. Okay, let's jump into that--



Cate: I'm getting into linguistics; sorry.

CAN'T, CANNOT, COULD NOT

Ben: No worries, no worries. Let's jump into that probably in the next episode when we're going to dive into it in much more detail. So, the next point is can't cannot, couldn't could not.

Cate: Could not, exactly. I really like this use of the verbs can and could because we also indicate certainty with a negative, right? We indicate certainty when we refer to impossible ideas. For example, banning fossil fuels completely cannot be one of the possible solutions for improving energy efficiency. This means no way. That's not a solution. Don't even think about that. That's impossible, but when you say cannot be that's an elegant way of saying that's impossible because saying impossible is at best B1 level; at best lexically from the point of view of vocabulary, but here you express this impossibility by means of grammar and this is what they call grammatical range.



Ben: Beautiful, beautiful. So, I'll just say that sentence again. Banning fossil fuels completely cannot be one of the possible solutions for improving energy efficiency. Excellent and in my notes, I added cannot conceivably--

Cate: Oh, yes, even better.

Ben: Yes, just to emphasize that it is unthinkable. It's unthinkable. Let's move on to the next one maybe. Could have, might have, may have.

Cate: Yes. Curiously, it's very easy to remember that if a modal is followed by a have infinitive, which is a perfect infinitive you're always speaking about the past. That's so easy. Must have been, could have been, might have been; it's all about the past. It's never about the present let alone the future.

So, if you say the dinosaurs may have survived without the meteor impact that means that you're not really sure about something in the past; may have, but maybe not, right? So, you're hypothesizing, you're speculating about the past. This sentence could easily have could have or might have because in this case, they're interchangeable; not always, of course.



Ben: So, we could say the IELTS exam may have been designed to make the British Council lots of money.

Cate: Yes, well you never know. May have may not have.

Ben: The exam may have been designed to frustrate a lot of students, for example. Probably a better example.

Cate: No, Ben. The IELTS exam may have been designed to stress test the exam takers.

Ben: Yes, beautiful, beautiful. I like that one. All right. Next one: must have.

Cate: I have already explained this one remember [unintelligible 00:41:59.09].

Ben: Oh, yes. You did. You did. You did.

Cate: In the positive present and in the past, so I guess that's it for the speculation and the positive deduction here.



LOOK OUT FOR PART2 OF THIS TUTORIAL

Ben: Excellent. Okay. So, what we're going to do now, listeners, is we're going to cut this episode up into two parts. The second one will be out in a couple of days and in the second one, we're going to be looking at alternative complex conditional structures. I won't go into details, but we're going to be looking at roughly what equates to band 8 and band 9 and it's going to be very similar to what we've just been doing. It's going to be Cate and myself going through giving explanations, giving examples, and advising how we can use these structures in our essay.

So, thank you very much for listening. If you need more help, then don't hesitate to send us an email and we can get back to you straight away and also remember we've got the online course, which is helping lots of students pass the exam. We've also got the email newsletter with lots of advice there and special offers especially regarding sending in your essay and getting some feedback so you can improve faster.

So, thank you very much for listening. Cate, do you have anything to say before we finish?



Cate: No, I just think I would like to recommend our listeners, the future test takers to make a plan for grammar study. Don't make a point of studying grammar too much, but don't ignore it. Just organize your grammar study very well and practice and of course, do a lot of transformations of all sorts and remember practice saying things differently.

It's like paraphrasing with words, but now, paraphrase with grammar. Find two ways of saying the same statement about impossible things using cannot be and something else, right? So, practice saying the same thing differently using different grammatical points. So, that would be my advice.

Ben: Excellent there and I just want to build on what Cate has mentioned. I think it's an excellent point that fair enough, you've got your study planner and you're going to write IELTS grammar Thursday afternoon, for example. That is better than nothing. However, if you can't put in your schedule IELTS grammar conditional structures, then when you sit down to study this you can get into it much quicker than if you would have just written IELTS grammar because IELTS grammar is too vast a subject for you to prepare.

So, not only make a plan of the subjects, get really detailed in there. In my schedules, I like to put URLs so I'll just click it and it'll go to a resource and I can just get straight into it and also just



one other last tip; the transformations. What Cate mentioned is incredibly powerful as well. Transformations and the translations. So, you've got maybe a list of conditional phrases in English, translate them to your language and then translate them back into English. Doing that back and forth was insanely practical for myself when I was learning another language.

There was another point there which was... yes, that's it. When you've finished your studying, write a debrief. Write the instructions of what you're going to do in the following session and just write a summary. So, in this session, I covered IELTS grammar conditional structures. For the next session, I will be studying third conditional because I'm still not 100% confident and if there is time, I'm going to be studying gerunds and infinitives, for example.

This also speeds up the amount of time to get into the productive zone. So, you sit down, you read your debrief, and you can be having a productive study session within two minutes as opposed to starting from zero. Like sitting down, IELTS grammar; okay, where do I go from here? Doing those debriefs you just speed up the amount of time it takes to get productive. So, yes, my final points.

So, thank you very much for listening. Keep on studying, have a great week, and all the best.



[Music]

Female Voice: Thanks for listening to ieltspodcast.com.

