



Daphne: I can correct you like a teacher will correct you.

Ben: Like the Queen.

Daphne: Well, there you go.

[Music]

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INTRODUCTION



Ben: Hello there, IELTS students. In this tutorial, we are going to be with Daphne. You probably know Daphne and we're going to be talking about the new speaking feedback service and we're going to be giving you lots of advice on how you can improve your cue card answers and we're going to be actually listening to some students' answers that they've sent in to us and we'll be analyzing them, breaking them down, and showing you what they did well, what they could have improved and there's quite a funny one actually from a guy called Ahmed, but we'll get to that in a minute.

First, welcome to the podcast, Daphne. How are we doing?

Daphne: Hi, Ben. Hi, everyone. I'm great, thank you. Doing really, really well and I've been keeping busy, not only correcting essays because you're doing so well all of you on writing more



and more essays despite the fact that your exams have been postponed or cancelled but also working on the Speaking Part 2s.

It's really nice for me to hear some of you because I may have corrected your essays and now I get to hear your voice and it's really been great fun.

Ben: It's like putting a voice to the text I guess instead of-- the normal phrase is putting a face to the voice, but this time we're putting a voice to the text, right?

Daphne: Exactly and when you're marking an essay, you do get the feel of someone's character, but actually when you start hearing them talking, it's completely different. It's really, really nice. So, thank you, everyone.



Ben: Awesome. It's interesting what you said that there's been kind of like two responses I think for students. Some have kind of like thrown in the towel and said okay, I'm not going to take the online course because my test has been canceled whereas other students have actually started doing more work and getting more essay correction packs. Is that right?

Daphne: Absolutely, yes. It's really interesting and actually congratulations to all the people who've kept going because it is so hard to stay motivated. We're all suffering in this really strange world, but to try and find time to keep studying, to keep motivated, and to keep practicing is brilliant and maybe I can just reassure all of you that we are here and we are working for you and we really want to help you because when the centers do reopen, you need to be ready.



You're great on your writing. If we can get you really confident and ready on your speaking as well, then that is another benefit.

Ben: Good point there, Daphne and kind of a good segue into what I was going to ask you. The other day when we were talking, we brainstormed this feedback service. Do you remember why we suggested it now? It's kind of related to lockdown, wasn't it?

Daphne: Yes, I think it's this whole idea of making sure that you're ready for every part of your exam and maybe if you normally go to work and you can speak a bit of English at work and then now you can't because you're at home, you don't want to lose that skill in speaking and communicating and it's very easy to forget in a way, isn't it?

So, to be able to work on your speaking now with us it's just a really good opportunity and speaking is difficult. There's a lot of things that are going on in your brain at the same time as



you're speaking and this whole idea of speaking being real-time. I'm responding to what Ben is saying and I'm thinking quickly what am I going to say? There's an awful lot going on in our heads while we're trying to speak and sound fluent and obviously, be accurate as well. So, speaking is not to be underestimated.

Ben: Good point there. This reminds me actually when I used to teach English in Spain and I used to have a couple of students one or two hours a week and really to improve their speaking I don't think it was enough. One hour, two hours at best, they're going to maintain the standard they've already got. So, it was kind of limited and plus I didn't have the luxury of replaying what they said. It was all spontaneous.

So, I could pick up on some of the corrections and I could pick up on some of the corrections that were needed, but I couldn't capture all of them because speaking is a spontaneous activity



whereas with this service, it really is kind of molded to the IELTS exam in that we can listen to the recording and break it down and then give feedback and then basically ensure the students improve faster.

Daphne: Exactly. So, what happens, Ben, is that-- or just for everybody if you're not quite sure on what we're talking about. So, we're inviting you to send us your recording of a Part 2 Speaking so the cue card question and Ben is giving you an example or a question and what we want you to do is record your answer. So, you have two minutes to record your answer and send it back to us and then we will listen to it as many times as we can, as many times as we need to to give you the detailed feedback that you deserve.

It's been really interesting because as I've listened to your recordings, I'm breaking it down into pronunciation; so how clear is it? Is it easy for me to understand you? Are there any particular



sound issues? Into fluency and coherence; are you able to keep going for that two minutes or are you kind of stuck or repeating yourself and then obviously the range of the vocab, so lexical resource and grammatical range.

So, the categories that the examiner will be looking at, but as you say, Ben, yes, to be able to listen to it quite a few times gives me the chance to really find out if there's any specific issues and obviously to feedback on those issues to help you improve.

Ben: Exactly, yes, exactly and I think this is especially useful at the moment-- I mean not just in general, but at the moment in lockdown because speaking is one of the productive skills just like writing and it's borderline impossible to improve without getting this feedback. With the listening, with the reading, you've got the answers at the back of the book and you can check



how well you're going, but with speaking and writing, you really need that feedback in order to improve faster.

Also, I'll just mention this is probably the beginning of the new Speaking Confidence Course that we'll be launching and part of the Speaking Confidence Course is going to be a structured program of giving feedback of like saying try this exercise and send it in to us and we'll give you feedback on it; pretty much like we do with the writing course.

The reason why we do this in the writing course is because it's basically the fastest way to improve and that's why we can offer a guarantee of jump to a band 7 or it's free and we're aiming to do exactly the same with the Speaking Confidence Course.



So, just one last thing, Daphne. I know this is a bit off piste actually and sorry. I know you've done quite a lot of reviews. What would you say is the most common issue? Sorry to put you on the spot.

Daphne: Yes. Thanks, Ben. Now, I'm going to do this real-time unplanned spontaneous answer. This is exactly what it feels like in the exam everybody and I also have forgotten the question. Can you repeat the question, please Ben?

Ben: Got you, got you. What was the most common error that you encountered while you were giving this feedback?

Daphne: Yes, good trial. I'm with you now. It's okay, everybody, by the way to say excuse me, could you just repeat the question? This happens in life. So, I think the most common mistake is



probably not staying on track. The cue card is confusing. It's helpful in a way because it gives you lots of things to talk about.

It gives you lots of questions, but in a way because it gives you lots of questions, it's very easy to forget some of them if that makes sense. You start off talking about something and you're doing well and you're feeling confident and you're using great language and you're relaxing a bit and then you suddenly think hang on a minute, I've completely forgotten that last part of the question and you really need to--

This is where planning comes into it, Ben, and I know you're very keen on your mind maps for planning which is brilliant, but the minute you have to plan, you must use that carefully because otherwise you do risk going off-track.



Ben: Good point there. Good point. Excellent and this is actually I think if I remember correctly what our second student did. We're going to play you now three recordings and I think our second one was guilty of this small mistake. So, first one is from our student called Ahmed. Is that right?

Daphne: Ahmed is the one that you were talking about that's very amusing, Ben.

Ben: Got you, okay.

Daphne: Do you want to start with that one?

Ben: Yes. We'll listen to it all and then you can give us your feedback. Is that all right?

Daphne: Lovely. Yes, fantastic.



Ben: Okay.

Ahmed: The country I would like to visit next year is Jordan. It's such a good place to spend my vacation mainly because of two reasons. Firstly, Petra historical city is one of the most unique places around the world which is known for its care of the homes in buried rocks. I have watched a documentary about the place there that made me very eager to visit it and to take some selfies.

Secondly, people in Jordan are very kind, polite, humble, and friendly as my Jordanian friend told me. Moreover, Jordan is one of the safest countries in the Middle East and it is very easy to get the visa since they have started a new tourism visa that could be provided in a few minutes at the airport.

I am planning to visit both Petra, the ancient city, and the fast-growing city of Amman where to meet Iyad my old friend who lived there. I have a detailed shopping list to buy from Amman's



traditional markets; to buy a handmade rug and to buy also some antique kitchen tools as a gift to my wife.

Ben: Okay. Super, super. As we were saying earlier-- all right. I'll let you take over. Give us your feedback.

Daphne: Okay. I'm going to tell you why Ben is laughing. I love listening to this. I thought it was fantastic, but one of the things the student said at the end there was about buying kitchen tools for his wife as a present and I'm sure he meant buying something antique and old and original and beautiful, but I did think if I was given something a spoon or something like that as a present, I don't think I'd be very happy.



Ben: I was just saying before that my girlfriend's mum for one Christmas the family bought her a fridge which I thought was very romantic and very appreciative.

Daphne: That is not a Christmas present, no.

Ben: It's like buying your girlfriend an ironing board, but anyway-- we're getting off topic. Let's talk about-- can you break down Ahmed's cue card response, please?

Daphne: Yes. So, I thought this was a super response. I really, really like this. I thought it was very well organized. Let's go just into the beginning there when he said I'm very eager to go. I thought that was great vocabulary. Immediately, the examiner is sitting up thinking wow! That's good. That's strong. ...to take some selfies... which made me smile, but what he was doing there is developing because he's saying he's very eager to go there because I want to visit this I think



the caved home, some homes in this caved area and to take some selfies. This is a very natural way of speaking, but he's getting a lot of information in there.

He then talks about the kind of people that are in Jordan and I thought the vocabulary that came out there-- he talks about kind, humble, friendly. I thought that was an excellent way to describe people. So, much better than saying they're nice. I thought that was really, really nicely done. And then he talks about Petra being one of the safest places. So, by throwing in that superlative-- one of the safest places-- it's showing a lot of confidence and skill just on the grammar there.

Ben: Yes. I totally agree with you there and what stood out for me was the vocabulary that's all related to travel; about tourist visa and describing the people as well and going into details about the people and stuff. That was quite impressive I thought.



Daphne: Yes, and also what the student managed to do there was to throw in some really good tense work because this particular question doesn't give you much room for tenses. It's about what the country is and what would you do, but he said I have watched documentaries about it. That's a well done present perfect. Perfect. I have watched documentaries about it and I am planning... So, correctly there he's using the present continuous for a future plan rather than I will plan which would not strictly be correct. So, yes. It was technically very good as well, Ben.

Ben: Excellent. Excellent. All right. So, let's move on to the second one. I think this one was Vijay and we're starting this one around 30 seconds in. Is that right?

Daphne: Yes, that's it. Yes. He's talking about going to America.

Ben: Perfect.



Vijay: So, I'm planning to do plenty of shopping over there as well. The main reason that I am planning to visit the United States upon my return not only because that I love travelling, but also it relieve stress from every day routine work. For example, last summer, I went to [unintelligible 00:16:23.18]. It was an excellent trip. I enjoyed very much with the family on the beach. We played and danced and [unintelligible 00:16:33.05] very much.

After that, we felt very relaxed and when I was approaching my employment responsibilities I felt very fresh and relaxed. So, all these trips helped me to refresh myself. In the past, I planned to visit United States of America, but it did not turn out as the way I planned because of the visa issues, but currently, I already received the visa for studies and I'm planning to visit the United States next year.



In the future, I'd like to visit Paris. The main reason is my wife that she likes to visit Paris and she was asking me to take her over there from several years. So, our next target is to visit Paris after completing the United States of America trip. Thank you.

Ben: Okay. He didn't sound very happy, did he?

Daphne: I think there's so much concentration going on there. The background noise of I think birds and a couple of children. Again, seriously well done for actually doing it because with birds and children, it's not easy, is it?

Ben: Excellent point there, yes.

Daphne: But I thought there was some lovely, lovely things in there. When you listen to all of it, it's a good answer. There's so much information in there. The comment I had though for this



student was that I felt he went off task and the question very much says what the country is-- so where do you want to go-- when would you like to go? So, he just says next summer, but he doesn't really develop that. He could develop that and say I want to go next summer because I know that summer is the most beautiful time to visit New York because the parks are lovely and green; something like that and he didn't really talk about what he would do there.

So, in the way that the first student talks about what he would do in these places, Vijay just didn't-- where he goes off is that he starts talking about what he did last summer. So, he talks about last summer we went to the beach and we played and he felt very relaxed and the benefit of the holiday helped him at work, but be careful. Although that's very interesting, that is not what the cue card is asking you. So, that is when it's important to make sure you're staying on task with your notes.



He then a bit later talks about in the future where he'd like to go and that is definitely not on the question. It does not talk about where you want to go in the future in terms of a different holiday. I love the idea that his wife wants to go to Paris, but he's already said USA. So, stick with one thing. Stick with the USA, develop your answer.

So, the feedback that I gave him really was some pointers on how to organize some little phrases to use. So, I gave him fragments like the best example I can think of is or for me this means that visiting USA could enable me to understand more about the American culture or the final point I'd like to make is. So, by putting in some structural language, I think that would have really helped him with the coherence and staying on track.



Ben: Beautiful. So, you gave the students-- just to go a little bit off topic now. When the students send in their recording, Daphne will reply with a PDF outlining what you did well, what you could do better and a recording as well. Is that right, Daphne?

Daphne: Yes. So, in the email response that I do-- at the moment, it's into the email, not actually PDF but it doesn't matter. That could be PDF. So, I record my comments like Ben and I are doing now. So, I will pick out the amazing bits. I will highlight things that I think should be done differently or could be done differently and make some suggestions; practical suggestions that you could literally put into your next cue card practice.

And I will also-- that will be a Vocaroo recording and then also in the email I'll write that down for you. So, if I'm suggesting things to say and you will get that typed so that you can see it which obviously helps you.



Ben: I love the idea of giving the feedback in spoken form as well because the student will be able to hear if they pronounced something incorrectly because they'll get the correct pronunciation and also the suggestions are coming direct from a native English speaker with, obviously, a British accent, but you're going to get the correct pronunciation of the correction which I think is invaluable when you're preparing for the speaking.

Daphne: I think you're absolutely right, Ben, and I think this is the real most exciting thing about what we're doing; to give live feedback on speaking is unusual and yes, I'm English. I'm from the South of England, so I have a very British accent, but this is real. So, I can correct you like a teacher would correct you.

Ben: Like the Queen.



Daphne: Well, there you go. Thank you, Ben.

Ben: Okay, let's move on. We're going to listen now to Susanna. Is that right?

Daphne: Yes. This is lovely. Now, Susanna I think has followed one of the suggestions that Ben gives which is to write out your answer first. Obviously, you can't do this in the exam, but when you're preparing, it's a really good idea. So, type out your answer, put it into Google Docs. There you can get the spelling checked as well. So, she's prepared it. So, you'll hear it's very clear. She speaks really slowly, but she's answered every single point. She's really thought about what she wants to say.

Ben: Excellent. Okay.



Susanna: I'll talk about the country that I would love to visit. This country is France and I would love to go there in spring time especially between April and June just because of the really good weather conditions because the weather is not so cold, not so warm during this time. Just a perfect time to chill out over there.

As we know, France is really well know country with its history. That's why I would love to visit a couple of historical places such as Louvre Museum and Eiffel Tower. Additionally, I would love to visit a couple of famous art galleries to discover how famous artists had painted their masterpieces. I think it's a really good opportunity while in France.

On the other hand, I'm just addict to French cuisine and I would love to taste some oysters while drinking my wine because like everybody know France is also rather well known country with its wineries and if I had a chance, I would really love to visit a couple of wineries during this



time. Maybe I would purchase a couple of Bordeaux to bring back home and I would love to share this tasty French wine with my family members. France is just a country that I would love to visit and I hope-- I wish I had a chance to go there in the future.

Ben: Wow! She did do well. You were right. This is a really impressive one.

Daphne: It's great. It sounds like a fantastic holiday and I think I'd like to go with her actually. Visiting museums and eating oysters and drinking French wine sounds like a pretty smart holiday.

Ben: Yes. I remember you told me you spent New Year's once drinking wine and eating oysters.

Daphne: I did. That was very special, but it wasn't anywhere smart. It was literally the oysters had just come out of the sea. It was at lunch time. It was delicious. You can hear this is very well organized, very clear, her pronunciation is great, and I love her sort of idiomatic language. She



talks about chilling out. She's got very good language actually. She talks about addicted to. She's using nice collocations there. Well, she's sort of quite chatty, but still in a nice sort of professional informal-- well, no not informal, but kind of neutral way.

As we know, France is famous for [unintelligible 00:26:33.02]. She talks about specific art galleries she's going to. She talks about the French painter. She's organizing her talk using additionally. She's very clear on the structure which I thought was great.

She uses on the other hands. Now, I didn't think that was correct actually. I think there she should have said also or just furthermore; something like that because on the other hand you would use for contrasting and she's not contrasting, but essentially I thought that was very, very good and she had a couple of grammatical things. I think she said if I had a chance I would or I think she said I hope I wish I had. Just near the end, she was getting a little bit of a muddle on the



grammar. What she really meant was I hope I will have the chance to go there in the future, but essentially there's a lot of information in that talk from museums to wine to food. It was a very complete answer.

Ben: Yes. I love that. I love the detail and it was not just I want to go to this place. I want to go to this place and do X, Y, Z and then I want to go to this place and do X, Y, Z because I'm addicted to French cuisine, etc. So, I thought-- yes, I would totally agree with you there, Daphne. There's a lot of detail.

Excellent. All right. So, if you feel that you would benefit from getting this speaking feedback service or if you want to just improve, not only your speaking abilities but probably your pronunciation or if you want to get accustomed to answering a cue card or if you want to



discover where you may be losing points, then this is a new service we are launching. You can go to www.ieltspodcast.com/speakingfeedback.

At the moment, as I said, this is a standalone service, but we will be integrating it into the new Speaking Confidence Course in a couple of months and at the moment, there's a special pricing there just as we iron out the creases, so to speak, but we're up and running with this and we're getting lots of students sending in their recordings and we're more than happy just to give you the feedback you need to improve and help you improve faster.

So, I think that's about it from us today. Do you have anything that you would like to add, Daphne, before we finish?

Daphne: No. I'd just like to say thanks, Ben, and I really hope everybody you can keep on sending in your speakings. Get involved in this. It's a great opportunity. It takes you two minutes



to record. It takes you a little bit of time before that to think about it, but it really, really, as Ben says, will help you improve and thank you for sharing your lovely ideas with us. It's great.

Ben: Yes. Take care, everybody, and keep practicing and just try to make the most of this lockdown. I just wanted to mention one last thing that now with this lockdown and quarantine and whatever, it's quite easy to slip into the worst version of yourself and really what you need to be doing is probably upping your standards and upping your routines and upping-- basically paying more attention to your routines, your study habits because it really is an opportunity for you to improve and to keep studying and to finally pass the IELTS exam which you will do if you make the most of your time. So, thank you very much and good luck.

All right. Beautiful.



[Music]

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