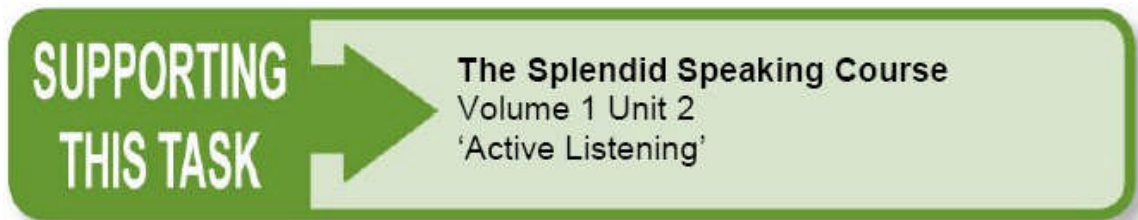

Splendid Speaking Podcasts

Topic: Working Together to Reach Agreement

(Interview 8: December Archives)

This show can be listened to at the following address:

<http://splendid-speaking.com/blog/?p=22>



Comprehension Questions

Interview 1

Listen to the first interview. According to Lachesara and Ekaterina's discussion, match the correct profession (A-E) to the statement (1-5).

- A) Soldiers
- B) Teachers
- C) Scientists
- D) Politicians
- E) Football players

- 1) They help us feel safe.
- 2) They are good for the economy of a country.
- 3) They help a person become a citizen of a country.
- 4) They hold our futures in their hands.
- 5) They are connected with the development of a country.

Interview 2

Now listen to the second interview. Answer the following questions.

- 1) Which profession does Lachesara and Ekaterina think has the greater impact on society: Engineers or Politicians?
- 2) Which is the first profession Ekaterina and Lachesara decide is the most important?
- 3) According to Ekaterina, why are teachers more important than politicians?

Transcript

Introduction

If you need to improve or practise the skills involved in speaking in English in order to reach some form of agreement or decision, then this podcast will be of interest to you.

The podcast this week features an interview with Ekaterina and Lachesara from Bulgaria. Just a reminder to new visitors to Splendid Speaking that these interviews are carried out using Skype and both Ekaterina and Lachesara joined me in Skype from Bulgaria.

In this task they both had to talk to each other about why certain people are important to society, and then decide which two people make the most valuable contributions to society as a whole. A link to photographs showing these people on the Cambridge ESOL website is available from Splendid Speaking.

http://cambridgeesol.org/teach/cae/speaking/data/sample_part3.pdf

This task requires the speakers to show they can discuss, evaluate, express and justify opinions. As this is a collaborative task they also need to show they can invite their partner to give opinions and ideas, listen and respond to their partner's views, and finally move the discussion towards a conclusion.

There are two interviews for you to listen to this week as Ekaterina and Lachesara had two attempts at the question. Before listening, look at the photos yourself and decide how you would approach this question. Then, as you listen to the two interviews, decide how well Ekaterina and Lachesara invited each other to contribute to the discussion, Also make a note of how well they responded to questions by saying more than, for example, 'Yes, I agree', but offered examples of why they agree or disagree.

Let's listen to Ekaterina and Lachesara.

Ekaterina: OK ... so one of the first ... things that ... catch my attention was the ... the teacher and ... I really ... I ... in my opinion teachers are really important for our society because they ... they give the basics for ... for everybody to ... you know to ... to build up their personality and to become ... citizens ... you know.

Lachesara: Aha ... yeah, I see your point. They have a great role in our lives and... definitely are important part ... OK?

Ekaterina: They can really influence our personality and ... consequently the society.

Lachesara: Aha ... yes ... and ... what about ... and what about scientists? Do you think they are as important as ... teachers?

Ekaterina: Well, yeah ... they really have a ... a huge ... asset to our society ... they are really a huge asset to our society mainly because they may find new cures for ... new medicines for ... curing diseases you know ... do you agree?

Lachesara: Absolutely ... they hold in some way our future in ... in their hands.

Ekaterina: Yeah ... yeah ... you're really right. And ... it is in some way similar ... the situation is ... some way ... it's somewhat similar with the doctors ... they again are helping us to .. when we .. when we have health problems and ... they are also ... we can't go without them.

Lachesara: Yeah, absolutely right. And what about football players? What do you think? In some way they make countries popular and ... you know ... a lot of countries are famous for their professional ... football teams.

Ekaterina: Yeah, that's ... that's of course ... that's right. And ... also football ... it's a really great passion and ... it is entertaining for ... most of ... most of the people and ...

Lachesara: Yeah it's widely spread.

Ekaterina: Yeah and I also believe that it is good for the economic of the ... of the country you know maybe there are matches ...

Lachesara: Aha ... OK.

Ekaterina: Maybe they are not so closely connected with ... the development of the society as for example the politicians.

Lachesara: Oh yes, they have ... they are very crucial part of the society ... yes you're right especially for ... especially when they ... they are ... just because they govern ... the ... the ... they govern countries and ... they decide what to do and how to do ... how to cope with different problems and stuff like that.

Ekaterina: They're our representatives and our guides in some way.

Lachesara: OK ... and how about soldiers?

Ekaterina: Well actually I am totally against the war ... but ... but ... they are ... they are ... it is ... the good ... the good army is really ... important for country for mainly for the people to feel safe in this country. How do you find it?

Lachesara: Well,... I don't know it's difficult to say but definitely I think a country ... it's very important a country to have a good army.

Now let's listen to the second interview.

Interview 2

Lachesara: So ... to my ... the person who catch ... catches my ... my attention is ... is scientists. And I think he has very ... a great role in finding medicine and just the future of a country and ... the future of the people.

Ekaterina: Yes ... all the human beings and... I definitely agree with you ... the science is really important nowadays ... scientists and ... in some way similar to their job is the job of the ... of the doctors. We all know that when we ... when we got ... when we got sick we can't ... not everybody can heal themselves and ...

Lachesara: Yeah ... absolutely yes.

Ekaterina: But everybody's grateful to their doctor that they have helped him.

Lachesara: Yeah they have ... a profound impact on our lives Yeah ... definitely.

Ekaterina: And they are so important.

Lachesara: And what about teachers?

Ekaterina: Well, of course they are ... the first people that and primarily these who have the ... most influence on the young people so ... and you know and so on the society.

Lachesara: Yeah, they ... they help us shape ... shape our ... personalities and have good behaviour.

Ekaterina: And in some way they ... they create the society you know ... they educate the young children and so and the engineers are also ... really ... useful for .. for ... for society for civilization .. you know they ... they build our buildings and we feel more comfortable in more beautiful buildings ...

Lachesara: But don't you think that politicians have a greater impact on ... on ... on our ...society and just ... the way they ... take their responsibilities and cope with ... our problems?

Ekaterina: Yeah, I ... I do agree with you there ... they have a crucial role in the ... in the destiny of a ... of a nation ... and ... but it's difficult to say which one of them is most ... has more important ... but ... what about the ... so do you have any idea which one would be maybe the ... the ... one of the most important people for society?

Lachesara: Well ... yes in my opinion doctors are the people who should be honoured but ... and I don't know ... what do you think?

Ekaterina: Well ... I tend to go along with you but I'm still wondering between doctors and scientists ... but OK I agree with you on this.

Lachesara: And so we need one more.

Ekaterina: Well I think about teachers or politicians ... and ... what's your idea about this?

Lachesara: Well ... I think I'll go for a teacher ... I don't know ... I ... I just like them ... I don't know why.

Ekaterina: So ... yeah ... having in mind that the teachers are those who educate the politicians.

Lachesara: Yeah ... ah yes ... that's a great ... point.

Ekaterina: Yeah ... they're at the core of everything.

Lachesara: Aha ... yeah.

Peter: OK ... so can I have your two ... the two people you've chosen then.

Lachesara: Well yes, they are the teacher and the doctor.

Ekaterina: Yeah.

Excellent ... OK ... I'm very pleased you chose the teacher.

Feedback

First of all 'Thankyou' to Ekaterina and Lachesara for agreeing to be recorded. Why not comment on their talk at the Splendid Speaking website.

Time for some feedback.

In their first attempt Ekaterina and Lachesara interacted with each other well and shared opinions. However, they failed to address the question of which two people are the most important. In speaking examinations completion of the task may not always be essential but students do need to show they are working towards a negotiated completion of the task. Ekaterina and Lachesara dealt with this issue far better in their second attempt at the interview.

In both interviews there were many examples of Ekaterina and Lachesara asking for each others opinion. Here are just a few:

“...Aha yes ... and ... what about ... and what about scientists? Do you think they are as important as teachers?”

“...so do you have any idea which one would be maybe the .. the ... one of the most important people for society?”

They also used a variety of expressions to show agreement. What's more, they both gave examples to back up their opinions. Again, here are just a couple of examples:

“...Absolutely ... they hold in some way our future in ... in their hands...”

“... Yeah, that's ... that's of course ... that's right. And ... also football ... it's a really great passion and ...”

Finally, in the second interview, the Ekaterina and Lachesara made much more of an effort to work together to come to a decision, negotiating their way to a conclusion as these extracts show.

“...so do you have any idea which one would be maybe the .. the ... one of the most important people for society?”

“... Well ... yes in my opinion doctors are the people who should be honoured but ... and I don't know ... what do you think...”

“... Well ... I tend to go along with you but I'm still wondering between doctors and scientists ... but OK I agree with you on this...”

“...And so we need one more...”

“... Well I think about teachers or politicians ...”

“... yeah ... having in mind that the teachers are those who educate the politicians ...”

“... Yeah ah yes ... that's a great ... point...”

Now, with time running out, here are a just a few sample corrections. Both Ekaterina and Lachesara had very good use of English. Lachesara tended to ask more questions and Ekaterina consequently had more time at the microphone which is no doubt why we have more mistakes from her.

“...so one of the first ... things that catch my attention was the ... the teacher ...”
Not ‘catch my attention’ but of course ‘caught my attention’

“...and I also believe that it is good for the economic of the ... of the country ...”
Not good for the economic of the country bur good for the economy of the country

“... they decide what to do and how to do ...”
Not how to do ... but how to do it I think I did go on to correct herself in the following sentence.

“...for the people to feel safe in this country. How do you find it?”
Not ‘How do you find it?’ but probably ‘what do think’ or ‘what’s your opinion’

OK, that’s the end of this week’s podcast. It’s ‘bye’ from me Pete Travis. Don’t forget, come back soon for another episode from Splendid Speaking. Bye!

Answers to Comprehension Questions

Interview 1

- 1) They help us feel safe. Ans: A
- 2) They are good for the economy of a country. Ans. E

- 3) They help a person become a citizen of a country. Ans. B
- 4) They hold our futures in their hands. Ans. C
- 5) They are connected with the development of a country. Ans. D

Interview 2

- 1) Politicians.
- 2) Doctors.
- 3) Teachers educate the politicians.

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