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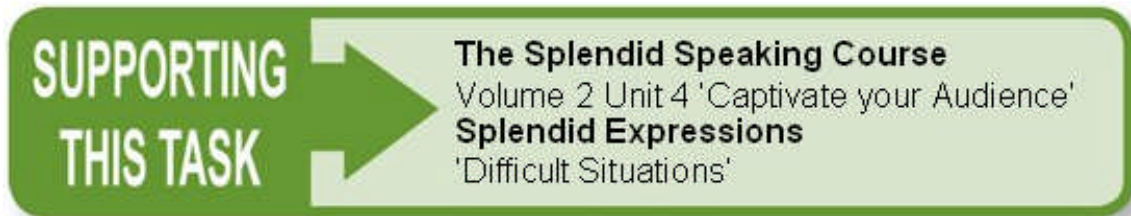
# Splendid Speaking Podcasts



Topic: Making your Talks Topical  
(Interview 25: May Archives)

This show can be listened to at the following address:

<http://splendid-speaking.com/blog/?p=42>



## Comprehension Questions

As you listen, decide if the following questions are true or false according to what Otavio says.

- 1) Otavio believes all the countries involved in the Kyoto Protocol will sign the agreement.
- 2) Industries are the problem as they cannot be controlled.
- 3) Many countries have already agreed to set levels of emissions.
- 4) Selective rubbish collection hasn't really been encouraged in Brazil.
- 5) Recycling is makes it cheaper to eliminate waste.

## Transcript

### Introduction

Welcome to the Splendid Speaking podcast. My name's Pete Travis and this week we're listening to Otavio from Brazil. A reminder that transcripts for all podcasts including this one are available to subscribers of our mailing list. You can sign up to the newsletter from [www.splendid-speaking.com](http://www.splendid-speaking.com).

How important to you is the need to respect our environment? What personal decisions and actions do you take to protect it? Are we more or less responsible than big business?

Well, this week, Otavio was asked to give a two-minute presentation on this subject. Otavio was sent the following question shortly before the interview:

Talk about how important you feel it is that people respect their environment. If you wish you can include:

- Personal decisions we can make
- The responsibilities of the business community
- Our children's inheritance

A topic such as this has enormous contemporary relevance and it's always a good idea to acknowledge this during your talk. In fact it's a perfect way to begin your presentation as it allows you to grab the listener's attention by pointing out the importance of the subject matter. Listen to Otavio and decide how well he manages to do this. In addition, decide how well he covers the topic in the two minutes allowed and to what extent his use of signposting expressions helps you follow his talk. If you have access to the transcript, listen a second time and answer the comprehension questions. Finally, make a note of his use of English, which we'll look at in the feedback session.

Let's listen to Otavio.

Well ... first of all I'd like to say that environment is a quite contemporary ... issue to talk about and it's been ... debated all over the world especially with the Kyoto Protocol and that many countries have signed others haven't yet but I think they ... they will. But in my opinion ... the respect towards environment ... come from ... each of us. So first of all we have to ... to think ... of our actions our ... attitudes towards ... the environment because each action we do can harm our environment. People think ... that ... a lot of the impact that we have on the environment is caused by industries ... because of the greenhouse gases they ... they produce while ... during the production during the manufacturing of their products but these can be tackled because ... lots of industries and lots of countries have ... decided to ... to settle some ... levels ... control ... levels to control so this is a way that can be very friendly towards our environment. But ... as I was saying ... these attitudes have to come from each of us because by doing simple actions we could ... we can really ... protect our environment ... for example we can separate our rubbish ... yeah? ... we can be the ... we can have the selective rubbish collection that here in Brazil many cities have been

doing already and we can recycle our ... rubbish too ... that is ... is been quite ... it's ... it's been done here in Brazil too because we ... using selective rubbish collection selecting into glass plastic and metal especially aluminum ... we can ... use this to recycle and turn into new pieces of furniture or even metal pieces ... and these can be very effective especially by lowering the ... the ... the expense in the elimination of rubbish. So ... just to conclude I'd like to say that especially this is an action that should be done by each of us.

### **Feedback**

Let's start by thanking Otavio for taking part in this Skype interview and for agreeing to be recorded. Remember that you can always comment on his talk by going to the Splendid Speaking website.

Now for some feedback. Otavio answered the question appropriately and dealt with the topic with interesting personal views. He made a good start by explaining the contemporary relevance of the subject:

*“Well ... first of all I'd like to say that environment is a quite contemporary ... issue to talk about and it's been ... debated all over the world especially with the Kyoto Protocol and that many countries have signed others haven't yet but I think they ... they will...”*

The talk was well organised and Otavio managed to deal with such a wide-ranging subject as this within the time limit. Following the introduction he signaled the approach he was going to take to the topic:

*“...But in my opinion ... the respect towards environment ... come from ... each of us...”*

He then allowed himself just enough time to explain how international agreements are controlling the actions of industry before returning to his view of the importance of personal responsibility and the actions we can take to protect the environment.

*“...But ... as I was saying ... these attitudes have to come from each of us because...”*

Otavio used signposts in this way throughout his talk with expressions like:

- First of all
- But in my opinion
- As I was saying
- For example
- So just to conclude

There were also some good collocational expressions such as:

- ‘contemporary issue’
- ‘impact on the environment’
- ‘greenhouse gases can be tackled’
- ‘elimination of rubbish’

In terms of Otavio’s general use of English we spoke after the interview about how at certain points in the presentation his fluency suffered as he tried to think of particular words or expressions. We decided that being recorded online in an activity like this can be quite nerve-wracking and affect fluency levels. Nevertheless, fluency skills can still be developed by practicing these long turns as often as possible. Otavio’s pronunciation was generally very clear and his American pronunciation of ‘Aluminium’ as ‘aluminum’ should not be regarded as an error. In general his English was accurate. However, can you spot anything in these extracts which could be seen as errors in an exam?

*“Well first of all I’d like to say that environment is a quite contemporary ... issue...”*

*“...But in my opinion ... the respect towards environment ... come from ... each of us...”*

*“...each action we do can harm our environment ...”*

*“...lots of countries have ... decided to ... to settle some ... levels ... control ... levels to control so this is a way that can be very friendly towards our environment...”*

*“...we can ... use this to recycle and turn into new pieces of furniture or even metal pieces...”*

Did you spot the errors?

*“Well first of all I’d like to say that environment is a quite contemporary ... issue...”*

The definite article is required here as we say ‘the environment’.

*“...But in my opinion ... the respect towards environment ... come from ... each of us...”*

This should of course be ‘comes from’.

*“...each action we do can harm our environment ...”*

It should be ‘each action we take’ rather than ‘do’.

*“...lots of countries have ... decided to ... to settle some ... levels ... control ... levels to control so this is a way that can be very friendly towards our environment...”*

Expressions Otavio could have used here were 'set levels' or 'control levels'. Also, the pronunciation of 'this' was a bit too close to 'these' here.

*"... we can ... use this to recycle and turn into new pieces of furniture or even metal pieces..."*

'metal pieces' sounds unnatural. 'Metal objects' could be used to describe general items.

OK. That's the end of this podcast. Once again, many thanks to Otavio. Until next week it's 'Bye' from me Pete Travis. And remember that you can download the transcript to this and all previous podcasts by signing up to the Splendid Speaking newsletter, a link to which you'll find at [www.splendid-speaking.com](http://www.splendid-speaking.com)

## **Answers to Comprehension Questions**

1) Otavio believes all the countries involved in the Kyoto Protocol will sign the agreement.

Ans: True

2) Industries are the problem as they cannot be controlled.

Ans: False

3) Many countries have already agreed to set levels of emissions.

Ans: True

4) Selective rubbish collection hasn't really been encouraged in Brazil.

Ans: False

5) Recycling is makes it cheaper to eliminate waste.

Ans: True

# The Splendid Speaking Self Study Course

Strategies for helping you grab the listener's attention are covered in Volume 2 of the 'Splendid Speaking Self-Study Course'.

## **Volume 1: Introductions and Small Talk**

In this volume you'll learn how to:

- Make an impact with a 15-second introduction (Unit 1) - a useful skill in a job interview or networking situations.
- Make small talk using the S.O.F.A. strategy (Unit 2)- a surefire way to make social situations much easier.
- Listen effectively and show interest in what others have to say (Unit 2), so you can build an immediate rapport with other people.
- Relate a S.T.A.R. story (Unit 3) that illustrates a personal achievement - ideal in an interview for a job or training course.

Plus 2 other key speaking strategies on body language and giving examples.

## **Volume 2: Powerful Presentations**

In this volume you'll learn how to:

- Captivate your audience by choosing one of five memorable ways to start a presentation, and then signpost it clearly so your audience don't get lost (Unit 4).
- Introduce photographs and information graphics (graphs, charts, tables, etc) to illustrate your talk (Unit 5).
- Avoid worrying when you're asked to "say a few words". You'll soon be giving a T.O.P. spontaneous talk, and using pauses for effect (Unit 6).

In addition to these 12 key strategies you can test yourself with our interactive quizzes on useful collocational phrases to do with work, business, education and relationships, for example.

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