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# Splendid Speaking Podcasts



Topic: Signposting Your Talk

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This show can be listened to at the following address:

<http://splendid-speaking.com/blog/?p=45>

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## Comprehension Questions

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

- 1) There are more negative than positive points related to the emergence of supermarket shopping.
- 2) There isn't enough parking space for supermarket shoppers.
- 3) Supermarket shopping is more stressful.
- 4) Sylvia prefers shopping in smaller shops.
- 5) Produce is fresher in smaller shops.

## Transcript

### Introduction

Welcome to the Splendid Speaking podcast. My name's Pete Travis and this week we're listening to Silvia from Romania, who's preparing for CAE. 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).

Do you live in an area which has large supermarkets close by? What are the advantages of having these facilities available? Do they create problems or opportunities for local businesses or for the community? In this Skype interview Silvia was asked to talk for two minutes on this subject. Shortly before the interview I sent her the following task:

"What changes have resulted following the growth in huge supermarkets?"

She was told she could include any of the following ideas in her presentation if she wished:

- The experience for the customer
- The effect on smaller shops in the area
- Benefits or drawbacks for the community

As you listen, decide how well Silvia deals with the question and also how successfully she signposts her talk with words and expressions which help the listener follow the direction of her presentation. If you have access to the transcript, listen a second time and answer the comprehension questions. Finally, make a note of her use of English, which we'll look at in the feedback session. Let's listen to Silvia.

OK ... so I think that the growth in huge supermarkets has ... both positive and negative aspects and I think the positive aspects include ... the opportunity to ... spend ... less time shopping ... also another benefits derived from ... the huge supermarkets is that ... are that ... you are able to ... meet a variety of ... of products ... but ... as opposed to these positive aspects I think the ... the negative ones are a lot more ... just thinking about the parking places ... the roads and the streets getting congested by the cars ... congested with the cars and with lots of peoples ... people and ... I think ... that is ... this is ... a bad ... a bad consequence for the environment and for ... for the people themselves. Also ... the effect on smaller shops in ... the area ... cannot be neglected because ... the small shops have become ... less ... less consulted by the population and everybody goes to huge supermarkets and ... also ... the community has serious drawbacks in my opinion ... because ... I think the ... little .. the small shops in general ... have ... produced ... certain ... certain benefits for the ... for the community and for the people ... when going to a supermarket I think you ... you become more stressed you ... are kind of 'Oh let me alone' and 'I have finished this shopping' and go home while going to a little shop and taking ... and buying your products from there you feel like more relaxed and ... kind of this. But ... on the balance I think that I wouldn't ... I wouldn't go to a small shop even if ... it provides me that ... relaxed atmosphere and all those benefits ... I would still go to a huge supermarket because I know that there are ... fresh products and ... there is ... a certain ... a certain grade of modernity and ... I think that scientific progress has brought along a wide range

of ... of inventions which are seen only in the huge supermarkets and ... and not in the small ... small ones.

### Feedback

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

This was an edited version of the original presentation, which lasted some four minutes and we spoke after the interview about the need in an exam to deal with the task within the time limit. Nevertheless, Silvia answered the question directly and offered some thoughtful views on the consequences of the growth of supermarkets, including convenience, the effect on the environment and on smaller shops in the community. The register of Silvia's talk is quite formal, which is perfectly acceptable, and this was evident in her both choice of signposting words and expressions and use of English generally. For example, looking at signposting first, she starts by indicating that she'll be dealing with both sides of the question and tells us which view she'll be looking at first:

*“OK ... so I think that the growth in huge supermarkets has ... both positive and negative aspects and I think the positive aspects include ...”*

Silvia signposts when she's about to tell us of benefits of small shops with the following:

*“...I think the ... little ...the small shops in general ... have ... produced ... certain ... certain benefits for the ... for the community and for the people...”*

She needs to ensure she uses expressions accurately, however. For example here, when she points out a change in focus:

*“...But ... as opposed to these positive aspects...”*

It would be better here to say something like 'in contrast to these positive aspects'. 'As opposed to' is often used to contrast with something that comes earlier in a sentence. For example: 'Supermarkets are making huge profits, as opposed to the smaller shops, which are suffering economically'.

Similarly in this extract:

*“...But ... on the balance I think that I wouldn't ... I wouldn't go to a small shop...”*

Here no definite article is used and should be expressed as 'on balance'.

In general, Silvia speaks quite fluently. Hesitations are inevitable in long turns like this and Silvia can try speaking at length prior to her exam to limit the frequency of these

hesitations. She articulates her words very clearly and there were only three pronunciation issues of note. ‘Supermarket’ was sometimes mispronounced and ‘effect’ and ‘products’ both had the stress on the wrong syllables.

In terms of her use of English, Silvia was often aware of some of the errors she made and self-corrected herself well as in these two examples:

*...also another benefits derived from ... the huge supermarkets is that ... are that...*

*...the roads and the streets getting congested by the cars ... congested with the cars and with lots of peoples ... people...*

In keeping with the formal register of this talk Silvia very admirably used advanced words and expressions such as:

- derived from
- provides me that ... relaxed atmosphere

However, how many errors can you find in the following extracts?

*“...you are able to ... meet a variety of ... of products...”*

*“...But ... as opposed to these positive aspects I think the ... the negative ones are a lot more...”*

*“...the small shops have become ... less ... less consulted by the population...”*

*“...there is ... a certain ... a certain grade of modernity...”*

*“...I think that that scientific progress has ...”*

Did you spot the errors?

*“...you are able to ... meet a variety of ... of products...”*

It would be better to say ‘find products’ or ‘come across products’.

*“...But ... as opposed to these positive aspects I think the ... the negative ones are a lot more...”*

This would be more natural as ‘there are many more negative issues’.

*“...the small shops have become ... less ... less consulted by the population...”*

We usually use the word 'consult' in the context of asking for professional help. In this sentence a formal word could be 'frequented', so 'the small shops are less frequented' or simply 'the small shops are used less'.

*"...there is ... a certain ... a certain grade of modernity..."*

A better word here than 'grade' would be 'level' so we'd say 'a certain level of modernity'.

*"...I think that that scientific progress has ..."*

This of course should be 'scientific progress'.

OK. That's the end of this podcast. Once again, many thanks to Silvia. 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) There are more negative than positive points related to the emergence of supermarket shopping.

Ans: True

2) There isn't enough parking space for supermarket shoppers.

Ans: False

3) Supermarket shopping is more stressful.

Ans: True

4) Silvia prefers shopping in smaller shops.

Ans: False

5) Produce is fresher in smaller shops.

Ans: False

# The Splendid Speaking Self Study Course

Strategies for helping you use signposting words and expressions 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).

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