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# BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

## The English We Speak

### Humblebrag



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*This is not a word-for-word transcript*

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**Rob**

Morning Feifei! Nice bike.

**Feifei**

Thanks Rob, you know I always cycle to work. And what a beautiful sports car!

**Rob**

Oh this old thing? Hey, Feifei, mind if we take a quick selfie?

**Feifei**

What, me in my sweaty cycling gear and you leaning on your fancy...?

**Rob**

Smile! [takes a picture] Right! Let me just post that... out there "I really respect my super healthy colleague Feifei cycling to work every day. It saves money and is so good for the environment! Much better than lazy little me driving this old car."

**Feifei**

Hang on, let me see. You know, Rob, I'm not sure how I feel about this post. I mean, it's a bit of a humblebrag.

**Rob**

A humblebrag?

**Feifei**

Sorry – I'll just say it straight. You make it look like you're praising my cycling, but in fact you're just drawing attention to your expensive car.

**Rob**

Hmm.

**Feifei**

You look like you're being *humble*, but in fact you're *bragging* – showing off - about your car. It's a humblebrag. False modesty.

**Rob**

OK, I get it. You're right. I suppose that is what I was doing.

**Feifei**

You're not the only one. It's everywhere on social media and in the workplace these days. Check out these humblebrags:

**Examples**

I never thought I was very good at exams, so it's a bit confusing that I got top of the class in all subjects again this year.

I somehow made it to the singing competition final this year. Think the judges need their ears testing!

**Feifei**

And if you want to take your humblebragging to the next level, try hiding your brag inside a complaint.

**Examples**

I'm exhausted because I've just received two promotions in three months. I need a holiday!

Help! I can't believe the cakes in first class aren't sugar-free. I'll be gaining so much weight.

**Rob**

Some pretty impressive humblebrags there! But what exactly is the problem with it?

**Feifei**

Well, researchers in Harvard and the University of North Carolina have found that if you humblebrag, people like you less. They say you're better off just bragging.

**Rob**

Just plain bragging?

**Feifei**

Apparently so. Humblebragging makes you look less sincere.

**Rob**

Well, that makes sense. Best to say what I think. Let me change the caption... Right. "I'm not going to lie, I absolutely love my new sports car. Feifei's bike isn't bad either."

**Feifei**

That'll do! Let me just comment... "Get some exercise!"

**Rob**

Very funny. Bye bye!

**Feifei**

Bye!