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How to Learn English Conversation Skills

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 With the advance of globalization, it is becoming easier and easier to study and work abroad every year. Even if you do not go abroad, you probably have more and more opportunities to meet tourists from overseas in Japan. Accordingly, the need for English speakers in Japan and abroad is increasing. School curriculums are changing along with this trend. However, the Japanese are in a difficult situation, ranking third from the bottom among 31 Asian countries and regions in terms of English proficiency. This is the ranking based on the average TOEFL iBT score by country. This shows that Japan has lower English proficiency than China and Korea. Furthermore, among Japanese who can do listening and reading, there are a certain number who cannot do speaking. So what should you study to improve your speaking ability?

 The first is to read aloud. It is very effective training for improving speaking ability. Unlike silent reading, in which the mouth does not move, reading aloud allows for input and output at the same time. You can practice more effectively by looking up unfamiliar words and expressions and understanding what the sentences say.

 The second is repeating. Repeating is training in which, after listening to an English sound, you imitate exactly what you hear and repeat the process over and over again. This training will train your English brain by memorizing English sentences without translating them into Japanese. However, you will not learn much just by doing it once, so it is important to repeat the same thing until you can do it smoothly.

 The third is shadowing. Shadowing is the practice of speaking English with a 0.5-second delay in speech. It is known as training for interpreters, but many instructors recommend this practice as effective for learning English as well. By understanding the content as you speak, you can understand English as it is spoken, in other words, you can train your English brain. By keeping up with the speed of speech, you can also improve your speaking fluency. As with reading aloud and repeating, shadowing also improves pronunciation because you are speaking exactly as you hear the voice and intonation. This will help you develop a habit of concentrating on the sound, and will also help you build an ear that is more inclined to English, which in turn will help you improve your listening ability.

The fourth is to talk to yourself in English. Talking to yourself has the advantages of allowing you to talk about whatever you want, not being embarrassed if you make a mistake, and developing your ability to produce English sentences without relying on visual information in the form of letters. Self-discussion is also effective. The advantage of playing the role of the other person is that you can practice saying questions that would be difficult to say alone.

It is important to improve your speaking ability through this kind of practice to improve your English skills. It is very possible to improve your English speaking ability through self-study. If you want to improve your speaking skills, please give it a try