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Do we need to speak English?

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I want to talk about whether or not it is necessary to speak English. First, let me explain what you can do if you can speak English. Being able to speak English gives you many opportunities. For example, it removes language barriers when you travel or immigrate to countries where English is spoken. This makes it much easier to go abroad.

English is also helpful when it comes to education. If you do well in English on entrance exams, you will have more choices for schools. Many universities and high schools see English as an important subject. In addition, English is very useful when you are looking for a job. Many companies value workers who can speak English because English is a global language. If your goal is to travel, study, or work in other countries, it is easy to understand why learning English is important.

But what about people who live in Japan and do not plan to use English abroad? Should they still study English? I think the answer is yes. There are two main reasons why learning English is useful, even for people who stay in Japan.

First, Japan has many foreigners. If you can speak English, you can communicate with more people even within Japan. For example, there are about 2.63 million foreigners living in Japan. In cities, you see foreigners almost every day. Even if you don’t meet them face-to-face, you might talk with them on social media, like in a LINE group. Have you ever joined a LINE group and noticed that there is a foreigner in it? Of course, not all foreigners in Japan speak English fluently. Many of them can speak Japanese better than English. However, English is a language that people all over the world have studied, so it is often the best way to communicate. When you need help or want to connect with someone from another country, English is usually the most reliable option.

Second, learning English gives you access to much more information. For example, about half of the information on the internet is in English. On the other hand, only about 5% of online information is in Japanese. This means that if you can understand English, you can access 10 times more information than if you only understand Japanese. English is especially important for people in certain fields, like IT or science. For example, when programmers run into problems, they often search for answers online. Most of the solutions are written in English. If you cannot read English, it will be very difficult to fix the problem. Similarly, if you want to read academic papers or books, many of the high-level materials are written in English. Without English, it can be hard to get the best knowledge in your field.

Even if you never leave Japan, learning English is very useful. It helps you communicate with more people and gives you access to a lot more information. For these reasons, I think English is a very important skill in today’s world.

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