

How to Change English Education

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I have often thought about why Japanese are known for being bad English speakers for long time. I think I found the problem in English education in Japan during my stay in Australia. I went to an Australian high school during summer vacation. That was really fun. I wanted to do 3 things, make friends, talk to blond girls, and improve my speaking ability. Making friends was easy, because everyone was friendly. Talking to blond girls was more difficult, because I went to a boy's school. So I almost gave it up at first, but I did get to take a picture with a girl. She was not a blond girl. But that is one of my favorite memories. Conversation was difficult too, even though my English grades are good in Japan, I could only understand about 30% of the conversation. I felt really disappointed. After few days, I was doing my English homework that I had brought from Japan. Then my friend who was born and raised in Australia saw it and said "Do you learn such hard English? Maybe you can't use this in conversation now, right?" Then I realized. "I have learned so much grammar, but not much practical conversation." The big problem is "English that we have learned for years in Japan is not useful in general conversation."

That's why Japanese can't speak English. Many Japanese are good at writing English, but not good at speaking. We nearly forget what English is for. For us, English is not for communication, it's just for passing the test.

I think the cause of this is the way English is taught at school. In English class, we learn writing first, and then we learn speaking. But when we were children, when we learned Japanese, we learned speaking first, and then we learned writing. When we learn speaking, we get a sense of the language unconsciously. Once we have that sense, we can learn the language easily.

Do I complain too much? I'm sorry. From now on, I will tell you my plan. I think students have to get a sense of English. And teachers should teach classes that help us get that sense. We should understand English with our

emotions, not through countless grammar rules.

Here are three essential points for helping students communicate better in English. First, we should do more role playing, and think about what we need to say and how we would feel in actual situations. Then we would remember more useful phrases. Second, we need to learn good pronunciation. If we know how to pronounce English, we will be good at listening too. Then we can understand what native speakers say. Last, I think we need to work with our teachers to have more fun, like doing discussions. If our teacher gives us a topic, we have to express our opinions. We have to choose which words and phrases we need to make sentences, and then pronounce it. Old-fashioned English classes should have been ended ages ago. Students will find English more fun and enjoyable by doing more practical activities instead of learning hard English that we won't use in daily life. Thank you for listening.