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Episode #148

Conditionals in English (rep)

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Hi, everybody! I am Georgiana, your English teacher and founder of SpeakEnglishPodcast.com. My mission is to help you speak English fluently.

Today, I'll talk about how we use conditionals in English.

After that, we'll practice them with a Point Of View Story.

Ok, let's get started!

I'm going to review the different conditionals in English. I don't recommend you to memorize them, but to understand them. You need plenty of contexts, and the best way to practice the conditionals is by using the Point of View story technique.

Conditionals in English aren't complicated. I'm going to give you some examples:

Zero conditional

Here, we talk about things which are always true. For example:

If you heat water, it boils.

If you heat ice, it melts.

If it rains, the grass gets wet.

First Conditional

We use the first conditional when we talk about a probable result. For example:

If you study more, you'll pass the exam.

If I have time, I'll help you.

Second Conditional

We use the second conditional in case we want to express less probability.

I know you're busy, but if you went to the cinema, you'd enjoy the new Star Trek movie.

If you studied more, you'd pass the exam.

As you can see, this is more hypothetical. "If you went to the cinema", means you won't probably go, but if

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you went, then you'd like the movie. In the second example happens the same: If you studied more...it seems that you aren't currently studying enough.

Third Conditional

This third conditional is in the past. We talk about an alternative result about something that happened in the past. For example:

If you had studied more, you would've passed the exam.

If I had had more time, I would've helped you.

If I had visited you, I could've helped you.

In the third conditional, everything happens in the past, and we just express a different result if things weren't different in the past.

Let's quickly review the first, second, and third conditional with a common example:

If I have enough money, I'll buy a ticket to travel to New York.

If I had enough money, I would buy a ticket to travel to New York.

If I had had enough money, I would've bought a ticket to travel to New York.

Can you see how the tenses change?

POV-Story

(Improve your grammar)

Ok, let's move on to the next section. Let's practice the conditionals with the Point of View Technique. The main benefit of this technique is that it'll help you to learn grammar intuitively, without boring exercises or memorizing rules.

This is how it works: I'll tell you a short story more than one time. Every time, I'll change a grammar point. For example, I can change the tense or the

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person. This way, you'll intuitively recognize the changes.

Ok, let's start:

Emily wants to travel to another country. She thought about several options, but if she goes to Russia, she will see her friend Lily.

When she arrives at the airport in Moscow, it's freezing. If Emily doesn't want to get cold, she'll have to wear a jacket, so she buys a new one. Her friend Lily suggests that if she visits the Red Square, she'll like it very much, so they go there, and later they eat at a fine restaurant.

Emily complains that if Lily doesn't translate the menu, she won't be able to order anything. Lily helps her friend with that.

The next day, Lily suggests going to the river. Emily thinks that if they go there, she won't take a bath. It's too cold.

Finally, Emily returns to her country. She decides that if she ever goes back to Russia, she'll bring her warmest jacket with her.

Ok, let's change the Point of View. Please pay attention to the changes!

Emily wants to travel to another country. She thought about several options, but if she went to Russia, she would see her friend Lily.

When she arrives at the airport in Moscow, it's a bit cold. Emily isn't too cold, but if she wanted to be perfectly warm, she would have to wear a jacket. She buys a new one. Her friend Lily suggests that if she visited the Red square, she would like it very much. They go there, and later they eat at a fine restaurant.

Emily complains that if Lily didn't translate the menu, she wouldn't be able to order anything. Lily helps her friend with that.

The next day, Lily suggests going to the river. Although the temperature isn't cold, Emily thinks that if they finally went to the river, she wouldn't take a bath.

Finally, Emily returns to her country. She decides that if she went to Russia again, she would bring a jacket with her.

Ok, let's change the Point of View again.

Emily just traveled to France. She thought that if she had gone to Russia instead, she would have spent more time with Lily.

Russia is usually cold, so if Emily had visited this country, she would've had to wear a warm jacket.

Lily told Emily that she would've liked it very much if she had gone to Red Square. Besides, if they had eaten at a restaurant, Lily would've translated the menu to her friend.

In Russia, they would've visited the river. If they had gone to the river, Emily wouldn't have taken a bath.

Emily thought that if she had visited Russia, she would've brought a warm jacket with her.

Ok, this is the end of this short lesson. Don't worry if you find the third conditional a bit difficult. It is not something that is commonly used. The zero, the first and the second conditional are more common.

You see, just by changing a point of view of the story, you can learn grammar intuitively. Today, we have practiced all the conditionals of English. My recommendation: Listen to the Point of View many times. It'll help a lot.

This is one of the techniques that I use in my courses.
I recommend you to take a look at:

SpeakEnglishPodcast.com/courses

Ok! It's the end of this episode. Remember to listen to
it several times. It will help you with your English.

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