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Making Conversations 交谈

Helen: Hello. Welcome to Ask About Britain from BBC Learning English. I'm Helen.

Li: And I'm Li. 欢迎收听英国问答节目。

Helen: Our question today is a common one that many of our listeners have asked us about.

Li: 是的，这是个常见问题。我以前在大学教书的时候，同学们经常会问我，怎么和外国人沟通，可以聊些什么话题，尤其是第一次碰面的时候。

Helen: How do we make conversations with people that we've just met?

Li: 我想要了解英国人的交流方式，那么最好还是问问英国人吧，听听他们有什么建议。

Helen: First, TV presenter Keith Chegwin believes that a winning smile is the key to making new friends.

Insert

I always think it's very important to smile. I know it's a tough thing to smile, but I think if you do smile, you make yourself more approachable and you can talk to other people.

Li: 电视节目主持人 Keith Chegwin 觉得和人第一次碰面时，面带笑容是关键 to smile.

Helen: But it's not easy sometimes, it can be a tough thing to smile.

Li: A tough thing 不是件容易的事，保持笑容并不是我们想象中的那么容易。

Helen: But the reward is worth it. If you smile, you make yourself more approachable.

Li: 容易让别人觉得你有亲和力， approachable

Helen: People then feel that you're friendly and easy-going.

Li: 容易相处，性格随和 easy-going.

Insert

Epecially in my job, being on television, I'm quite lucky, 'cause people do recognise me. But if I don't, I always start with a smile, and that always starts the conversation, people always go "you look happy" and you're away.

Helen: Keith has one advantage over many of us.

Li: That's right. 因为 Keith 老上电视，所以大家对他很熟悉。

Helen: But he still tries to smile first. He feels that a smile always starts the conversation.

Li: 不过他觉得对人笑一笑，可以立刻拉近距离，人们会问他 **you look happy**, 那么接下来的交谈就很容易了。

Helen: Sounds simple, doesn't it. Now what about the subject of conversations? What shall we talk about to a stranger?

Li: Erm... 和刚认识的人可以聊些什么样的话题呢？一般中性的话题比较合适。让我们听听公关经理 Terry Jones 的建议吧。

Insert

I think though the one national obsession in the UK is the weather. British people love nothing more than to talk about or sometimes moan about the weather - either that it's too hot or it's too cold. So I think that's a great subject with which to start a conversation.

Helen: The sun, the wind, the rain, the temperature, the snow, there are endless things we can talk about when it comes to weather.

Li: 英国人对天气永不厌倦，所以聊天气是个不错的开头。

Helen: We love moaning about it.

Li: To moan about something 就是对某某事抱怨，发牢骚。几乎所有的人对天气都有看法，想发发牢骚。

Helen: Any other topics that we can talk about? Keith has a few more suggestions.

Insert

Talk about driving, 'cause people in this country, that's all they ever talk about. Also I'll tell you another good topic to talk about: reality TV. If you talk about reality TV, you've got a friend for life.

Li: Keith 建议驾驶 **driving** 可以算是个好话题。

Helen: There're lots of bad drivers on the road, so I can definitely see talking about driving will get the conversation going.

Li: Keith 还提到电视真人秀。

Helen: Reality TV shows. I don't watch them, but I do have an opinion on them.

Li: Keith 还开玩笑说如果你和人聊电视真人秀，说不定你会交到一个终身要好的朋友 a friend for life.

Helen: Well, I wouldn't count on that. I think this is a more dangerous topic as people could easily argue over this.

Li: 说到这儿，有什么话题我们需要避免呢？ Here is Terry again.

Insert

Discussion about money and religion are the two things which I would probably, most likely avoid.

Helen: Money and religious beliefs are very personal things in people's minds, that's why we should avoid them.

Li: 金钱和宗教信仰最好别提，这都是很私人的话题。如果你问了，别人一般都不会正面回答，而且更可能将来回避你。

Helen: Keith has two more topics to add to the list of no-nos.

Insert

Bad conversation in this country: religion, politics and football. Avoid football at all cost.

Li: 还要避免谈到政治和足球。 That's new to me, Helen. 我印象中英国人很喜欢足球，为什么谈足球反倒不好呢？

Helen: Well, football fans are fiercely loyal to their own team, and you can't be sure who they support when you first meet someone. Say you are a Manchester United fan, and you tell people how much you love your team, and then the person you're talking to is an Arsenal fan. That wouldn't go down very well, would it?

Li: No, it wouldn't. 原来大家支持的球队不一样，那么如果不清楚对方支持的是谁，万一说错了，那么容易产生冲突。

Helen: So it's best to avoid it at first. Once you get to know them, then you can talk about the teams they support.

Li: 看来足球是个好话题，不过一定要先搞清楚对方支持的球队再聊。

Helen: Well, that brings us to the end of our programme today.

Li: 好了，希望今天大家对和英国人交谈时可以讨论的话题有了一定的了解。如果有机会，大家也别忘了常来我们的网站看看，我们的网址是 www.bbcchina.com.cn.

Helen: You can also send us your question in an email to chinaelt@bbc.co.uk. See you next time.

Li: 多谢收听，我们下次节目再见。