

2022 年度春 Basic English 2-II/I (反転)
教材サンプル

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The language of love is difficult and complicated, no matter where you're from. With more than one million international students enrolled in colleges and universities across the United States, sparks are bound to fly.

A pair of students, one of whom is an international student, was interviewed and asked to describe how they manage their romantic relationship.

Khea Chang's family emigrated from Taiwan to Vancouver, Canada, making her a first-generation Canadian studying international relations at Boston University. Justin Devuono is from an Italian American family and is studying computer science at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

When they met at a friend's party, Justin's first impression was that Khea was cute. They slowly got to know each other but were just friends at first. However, Justin describes himself as "a guy who always keeps his eyes open for new opportunities," so when he realized he had a chance to start a romantic relationship with Khea, he went for it.

Yet despite the fact that they were both born and raised in a Western culture, the differences between their families were significant and hard to conquer. "It takes a lot of communication and understanding," Khea said, recalling her first visit to Justin's family.

"Being from an Asian family, when you bring your significant other to meet them, they're always very reserved," Khea said. "But when I met Justin's family, they immediately took me in and warmed to me very quickly. This was something I was not used to and, frankly, that I was shocked by. The very first time they met me, they didn't hesitate to invite me to stay with them for Christmas."

For his part, Justin said he felt the most difficult part of maintaining their relationship was to communicate and form a meaningful relationship with Khea's family because they don't speak English. "The language barrier between me and her parents makes it hard to develop a personal connection," Justin said.

Cultural differences matter a lot in their relationship. Different family backgrounds make their communication harder because the values they hold and the ways they think differ significantly. Khea said that she had a hard time explaining her Chinese culture and roots to Justin.

"It's easy to get into fights with him simply because we have very different ways of doing things," she said. "For example, it was hard for him to understand the symbolism behind many Chinese customs. And for me, although my family is from Taiwan, I grew up in Canada, so even I can't thoroughly understand or explain some parts of the symbolism. I just use it because my family uses it." (437 words)