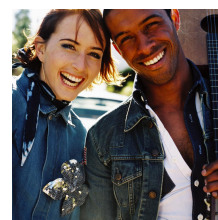


EPISODE 108
LEVEL B2

READING COMPREHENSION



RELATIONSHIPS

The latest **census** (a count for official purposes, especially one to count the number of people living in a country and to collect information about them) in the UK has confirmed that inter-racial marriages are increasingly common, leading many journalists to claim that we are a totally tolerant society. However, the truth is the **vast** (extremely big) majority of us tend to eventually marry a partner not only of the same race, but also of the same religion, class, age and background. While mixed marriages of various descriptions may be on the increase, **prejudice** (an unfair and unreasonable opinion or feeling, especially when formed without enough thought or knowledge) and social and family pressures are still very much alive, and love cannot always **overcome** (find a solution to them) them. Many couple have experienced some unpleasant feelings – like being **ostracized** (to avoid someone intentionally or to prevent them from taking part in the activities of a group) and verbally **abused** (to use something for the wrong purpose in a way that is harmful or morally wrong) . In case of coming from different backgrounds, it may also be very difficult, because of the lack of support from the families. Neither sets of parents have really **come to terms with** (to gradually accept a sad situation, often the death of someone you love)mixed relationships and that may be very painful.

More contexts for the new words:

VAST = very big

- A vast audience watched the broadcast.
- The amount of detail the book contains is vast.

- The people who have taken our advice have saved themselves vast amounts/sums of money.
- The vast majority of pupils attend state-funded schools



EXERCISE 1

Decide if the sentences below are true or false. Correct the false ones.

1. There is normally no family pressure to marry a partner from a different background.
2. The inter-racial marriages are less common now.
3. There is a lot of support from the parents.
4. Love can always overcome difficulties.

ENGLISH IN USE



Let us think today about the usage of verbs and pronouns after words like 'everyone/everybody'.

'Everyone is for mixed marriages'

The first thing you notice is the chunk 'everyone is', which is all fine, because EVERYBODY/EVERYONE is always accompanied by a SINGULAR VERB.

'Does everyone come to terms with their parents?'

'Everybody needs love and family support.'

We use a singular verb with 'everyone', but it is also clear that 'everyone' refers to more than one person. 'So, if you want to refer to 'everyone' later in a sentence or in a new sentence, it is more natural to use 'they' (which is impersonal and not related to sex). In this way you avoid using 'he/she', 'him/her,' etc.

A) Did everyone overcome racial problems?

B) Yes, they did.

'Everyone was happy and they got on really well.'

The same rules apply to 'nobody/no one'.

IDIOM CLOSE-UP



YOUR FLESH AND BLOOD = a person or people you are related to

BE MISERABLE AS SIN = used to say that sb is very unhappy

PHRASAL VERBS CLOSE-UP



TURN ON SB = attack sb unexpectedly

BACK SB UP = support sb



EXERCISE 2

Match the sentence halves.

- | | |
|--|---------------------|
| 1. What is it about your own flesh and blood?
aggressive. | a. Yes, he is very |
| 2. He always turns on me when we argue. | b. I am very upset. |
| 3. When we are apart, we are as miserable as sin. | c. I have a sister. |

NEWS



MIXED MARRIAGES

“It always makes sense to find out as much as possible about your partner’s family but it makes special sense to do so in mixed marriages – especially concerning the culture and its traditional family structures. “In Canada, the **extended family** isn’t all that significant,” Liz – who’s married to an Indian guy – explains. “I mean, I see some of my family members maybe once a year, if that. Here in Jaipur, family is more important. My husband’s parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins and their in-laws are a fairly **tight-knit** bunch. Sometimes, I find this rather exhausting.” However, Liz was able to see the positive side of her mixed marriage as well. She became close friends with Rajesh’s cousin Sumita (30), who helps her **navigate** a foreign culture and has become far more than a replacement for the friends Liz left behind in Ontario. Partners in mixed marriages may be supportive of each other’s religious beliefs but still often run into unexpected issues. Differences in the way people in these marriages celebrate certain holidays or have **dietary** restrictions are to be expected. However, other problems may arise, which have a much bigger impact on the partners in mixed marriages. Hans (42) always had a hard time understanding people with strong religious views. However, his personal situation became even more complex when he met his future wife. “We often clash over specific issues, like food. It drives me crazy that she doesn’t even let *me* cook pork. I think our arguments have gotten worse since the birth of our daughter. We weren’t sure how to **raise** our kid. Whose traditions do we pass on?”

GLOSSARY

- **extended family** = distant family
- **tight-knit** = very close
- **to navigate** = to direct the way or to find a direction
- **dietary** = relating to our diet
- **to raise** = to bring up

KEY TO EXERCISES

Ex. 1

1. False
2. False
3. False
4. False

Ex. 2

1c

2a

3b