

Dialogue 2: Language Challenges

This conversation is occurring between two roommates at their dormitory at NDHU.

A: Hey, how's it going?

B: Not good. My English homework is driving me nuts!

A: Really? That's too bad. I used to hate doing English homework, but now I kind of like it. What do you have to do for your homework?

B: I don't know! I can't understand anything the teacher says because he speaks way too fast! Everything he says just goes in one ear and out the other. I am so frustrated I can't stand English!

A: I know English can be frustrating, but just remember that learning a language is like riding a **rollercoaster**.



B: Huh? What do you mean?

A: Learning a language is like riding a rollercoaster because there are always so many 'ups' and 'downs'. Sometimes you will feel confident and other times you will feel frustrated; it's natural so don't worry.

B: I just don't see the point of learning English. I am only taking this class because I need it to graduate.

A: I know English might not seem interesting now, but you'll probably use it in the future. For example, you'll likely need to use English to travel abroad, to communicate with people from other countries at work, or simply to understand English music and movies.

B: I know, I know. English just makes me feel so bored though.

A: That's the problem! You have to make it interesting.

B: How do I do that?

A: Ummm...you like watching NBA games right?

B: Yeah...so?

A: Why don't you try watching the games online from an English channel and try to understand what they are saying.

B: OK...that sounds sort of interesting. What else?

A: Well, I really like chatting with my friends, so my friends and I started doing a daily 5 minute English challenge.

B: A what?

A: We decided that each day we would take 5 minutes and speak to each other only in English. It was really hard at first, but then it got easier and I noticed a huge improvement in my confidence – just from 5 minutes a day!

B: Wow that actually sounds pretty fun. Much better than my homework...I am only on the first page of the textbook and I can't understand anything!

A: Let me see...ummm I think I know what your problem is.

B: Really, what? Tell me because I need all the help I can get.

A: Well, I don't know if I can help you. I don't understand your homework at all.

B: That's impossible you are so good at English!

A: Yes, my English is good, but my Spanish is terrible. You bought the wrong textbook! This is 'Introduction to Spanish'

B: Oh no!

A: I think you need to take a break and relax.

B: Sounds good. Let's go watch a movie.

A: An English movie?

B: OK...then maybe after we can try your 5 minute English challenge.

Sentence Explanations

1) Something/Someone is driving someone nuts!

This means that something is making you feel crazy and stressed out.

Example: "My roommate is driving me nuts! She never cleans up her mess and she always forgets to lock the front door when she leaves the house."

2) Something goes in one ear and out the other

This is an idiom which means that you don't really hear or understand what someone else is saying.

Example: "When my mom talks to me while I am texting everything she says goes in one ear and out the other".

3) I can't stand something/someone!

This means that you really don't like something/someone; you cannot tolerate it/them.

Example: "I can't stand stinky tofu. I think it is the worst smelling food in the world!"

4) The point

In certain situations *point* means 'purpose', or 'reason'.

Example: "What's the point of going to Taipei to watch the basketball game when we can watch it for free on TV?"

Common Mistakes

✘ That sounds funny

😊 **That sounds fun.**

That '**sounds funny**' means that something sounds strange (example: The car sounds funny. I think something is broken). That '**sounds fun**' means that something sounds enjoyable (example: Do you want to go hiking? Sure, that sounds fun).

✘ I feel boring.

😊 **I feel bored.**

Something is '**boring**' and it makes you feel '**bored**'. For example "That movie was so boring, I felt so bored while watching it."

✘ I need to release my pressure

😊 **I need to relax.**

When people say 'release my pressure' in English it sounds like they have to go to the bathroom. Just say 'relax'.

Sentence Practice

A. Use the sentence pattern below to make your own sentences. Write a sentence about the topic in (brackets)

I can't stand it when _____ because _____.

1. (university)

2. (family)

3. (friends)

4. (roommate)

B. Complete the sentences with your own ideas.

1. I think _____ is really exciting because _____.

2. I think _____ is really interesting because _____.

3. I feel really bored when _____.

4. I get so frustrated when _____.