

Simplified Speech #132 – Kassy’s getting married!

Episode description

Kassy has joined the Culips wedding club! Many of the Culips hosts and listeners have gotten married these past few years, and Kassy is engaged to become the next! Listen to this Simplified Speech episode where Kassy talks about the events leading up to her engagement to her boyfriend.

Simplified Speech is a series where you can follow Culips hosts speaking in an easy-to-understand way. Also, we have a transcript and study guide designed to help you follow along with each episode.

Fun fact

Andrew, and soon Kassy, is in an international marriage in South Korea. There has been a rise in international marriages in South Korea in the past few years, but it looks like the COVID-19 pandemic has changed some things. In 2019, international weddings accounted for 9.8% of all weddings in South Korea. However, that number plummeted to 7.1% in 2020, the first year of the pandemic.

Expressions included in the study guide

- In [one’s] world
- Ta-da
- The whole shebang
- To play ball
- Out of [one’s] element
- To lose its lustre



Transcript

Note: The words and expressions that appear in **bold text** within the transcript are discussed in more detail in the Detailed Explanations section that follows the transcript. The transcript has been edited for clarity.

Andrew: Hello there, everyone. My name's Andrew.

Kassy: And I'm Kassy.

Andrew: And this is the Culips English Podcast.

Hello there, friends. Welcome back to Culips. You are listening to Simplified Speech, which is the Culips series that features clear, natural and easy-to-understand English conversations about interesting topics. And today I'm joined by Kassy, my cohost. Hello there, Kassy.

Kassy: Hey there, Andrew. And hey, listeners.

Andrew: Kassy, we've got a super exciting episode planned for everyone today. And the episode topic is actually related to you, Kassy. You've got a big announcement that I asked you to make on the show here. Without making our listeners wait too long, could you let them know what the big news is **in your world**?

Kassy: Yeah. So after, how long has it been? Five years of dating, my boyfriend and I have officially gotten engaged.

Andrew: Yay, congratulations!

Kassy: Yeah, I feel like I'm joining the Culips club, you know?

Andrew: Yeah, tell me about it. First, Suzanne got engaged. And then I got engaged and got married. And now it's your turn, Kassy. So you've joined the Culips wedding club, I guess. So this episode is going to be all about your engagement story, because your engagement story was very romantic, Kassy. And we'll talk a little bit about what kind of wedding you're planning to have and how wedding planning is going, all of those things. But before we start our conversation, I think we should let everyone know about the study guide for this episode so they can follow along as they listen today.

Kassy: That's right. The study guide for this episode includes the transcript, detailed vocabulary explanations, a quiz, and much more. You can download it in a PDF file and print it off or you can view a mobile-friendly version that looks great on smartphones. To access it, you just need to visit Culips.com and become a Culips member.

Andrew: We also wanted to give a shout-out to one of our listeners named GL, who is from India.

Kassy: Yes, GL left us a five-star rating on Apple Podcasts. And in their review they wrote, "Dear Culips team, I have been listening to your podcast for quite a long time. I had tried many other podcasts, however, particularly Culips has managed to hook me for a long time. I'm an intermediate speaker from India, currently living in Japan and I'm eager to know how to improve my intonation while speaking. Though I try to incorporate different tones in my voice, I want to do it naturally like a native speaker. Cheers."

Andrew: Wow, thanks so much for that review, GL. We are glad that we hooked you in and you've been listening to us for a long time. Kassy, GL has quite an international life, it sounds like, from India, but living in Japan. That's really cool, kind of, I guess like how we're from North America but living in Korea, kind of a similar situation there.

Now, GL, you asked this question about improving your intonation and, Kassy, I think an excellent way to improve your accent, improve your pronunciation, improve your intonation is through shadowing. Once you get to an intermediate level, an upper intermediate level, an advanced level in English and you're conversational, at this point I think shadowing is a fantastic way to improve your English pronunciation. So, GL, just to quickly answer your question, if you haven't tried shadowing yet, I would strongly recommend it. And we actually have a series here at Culips for all Culips members called the Fluency Files that we make specifically for shadowing practice. It's a fantastic series for doing shadowing. Each episode is short, like 3 to 5 minutes long, there are no announcements, there is no music, it's just perfect for shadowing. So you could try shadowing with the Fluency Files and I'm almost sure that if you do that consistently you will be able to improve your intonation and English pronunciation.

OK, Kassy, I'm going to shut up, this episode is about you, not about shadowing or Culips. So let's get to your engagement story. I am dying to hear it and I know our listeners are as well. So, Kassy, you mentioned that you and your boyfriend were dating for about 5 years before the engagement. So how did he pop the question? Or did you pop the question? What happened? Tell us all about it.

Kassy: OK. Well, I guess you know, in Korean culture, usually most couples don't really pop the question. They don't propose, they kind of have a conversation, make a decision, and then tell their parents and their family members. And that's pretty much it. But in the US, you know, usually it's more romantic than that. Usually, one person in the couple does something extravagant and makes a plan and surprises their partner with a proposal.

Andrew: Exactly. And we should clarify, Kassy, that your fiancé is Korean. So this is a kind of interesting situation. You're living in Korea, but you're American. He's Korean. And so, you know, are you gonna do things American style or Korean style? It's kind of unclear how these things will play out.

Kassy: Yeah, exactly. And we definitely talked about getting married before, but I said that I would love it if he surprised me in some way. I'm a little bit of a romantic at heart. But I didn't care when or how, and I didn't care if it was super fancy or anything. It could have been in our apartment. But last year, right around the time that you were about to get married, my best friend in Korea was also getting married. And she's American and married to a Korean. And she stayed at my house a week before she got married. And when she was there, she kind of convinced my boyfriend to, like, why don't you propose at my wedding?

Andrew: What, really?

Kassy: Yes.

Andrew: You know, usually when somebody gets married, they don't want anyone to steal their thunder. And, in fact, we have some sort of unwritten rules around weddings in North America, like you shouldn't wear a dress that is more beautiful than the bride's dress, because you don't want to make the bride feel bad. Or you shouldn't make a big announcement like, maybe **ta-da**, I'm pregnant, everybody! Like you shouldn't make an announcement like that at a wedding because it will steal some of the attention from the bride and from the married couple onto you. And I would imagine that this kind of event would be the same thing. Like you shouldn't probably get engaged at somebody else's wedding, because then everybody's going to go up to you and be like, hey, Kassy, congratulations on the engagement. But that's hilarious, because the bride herself encouraged your boyfriend to pop the question at the wedding.

Kassy: Yes, I was shocked, too. Of course, I didn't know. So when it actually happened, I was like, oh my gosh, is this OK? And I turned around to look at my friend. And she was like smiling and laughing. And I was like, OK, she must have known this beforehand.

Andrew: So, Kassy, just to clarify then. So your friend encouraged your boyfriend to ask you to get married at her wedding. And then your boyfriend did that. He asked you to get married at the wedding?

Kassy: Yeah, so in a week's time, him and his father and brother went to look for a ring. And they picked one. And then the day of the wedding, we were getting our makeup and hair done here in the city where I live. But her wedding was in a nearby city where her husband's family is from. So my boyfriend was going to drive us from the makeup place to the wedding hall. And I was starving by this point. And I have no clue how stressed he's feeling, so I'm like, "Hey, could you pick me up a sandwich on the way here?" He freaks out. He's like, "No, there's no time for sandwiches, I have to do blah, blah, blah, blah, blah." I thought he was overreacting, of course. I was like it's just a simple sandwich. Little did I know he was, you know, preparing his haircut, his fancy suit, his ring. **The whole shebang.**

Andrew: Right, right. Wow. So he's super stressed out and trying to do the perfect proposal. And then you're just sitting there, kind of hangry and wondering why he's not **playing ball** and doing what you asked of him?

Kassy: Yes, but we didn't bicker or anything. I was just, like, OK, OK, it's fine. So anyway, he picks us up, and we drive with my friend to the wedding hall. And then she goes off to put her big, beautiful dress on, and we go to sit down. We watched the ceremony, it was amazing. And at the end of a Korean wedding, everyone in the bride and groom's family goes up and takes a picture together. And then all of the friends of the bride and groom go up and take a picture together.

Andrew: Right. The classic end of wedding photo shoot.

Kassy: Yes. So we all went up there. And my friend told me before the wedding happened that she wanted me to catch the bouquet. So unlike in America, where you just throw the bouquet and someone catches it randomly, usually in Korea, you choose someone to throw it to specifically.

Andrew: Yeah, I actually was a bouquet catcher for my friend's wedding in 2020. That was really fun.

Kassy: Yeah, so I was excited for that, too. So I got into position to catch this bouquet. And I was like, oh my gosh, don't drop it. And so she throws it and I catch it. And then she points her finger behind me. And I'm like, what? And I turn around, and there is my boyfriend on his knee with a ring saying, "Will you marry me?"

Andrew: Oh my gosh.

Kassy: I was so shocked.

Andrew: Yeah, you probably weren't expecting that at all in that kind of situation.

Kassy: Not at all.

Andrew: And I know because I caught the bouquet too recently, that in that moment, just like you said, you're only focused on not looking like an idiot in front of all the other wedding guests, right? It's like catch it, catch it, catch it. That's all you're thinking about. So it must have been such a shock to turn around and see your boyfriend with the ring.

Kassy: Yeah, exactly. And then also it was at my friend's wedding. And like you said, like, is it OK? Is this stealing her thunder? All of these thoughts are going through my brain. But I'm also, like, how exciting. So yes, I said, yes, of course. And now we went back and took our pictures. But it turns out, I didn't really steal much of the thunder because most of the people there I didn't know. Most of the people there were my friend and her husband's friends and family. However, a few of their friends have asked about us since their wedding happened. They've said, like, oh, have they picked a date? How is that couple doing? Which is pretty funny.

Andrew: Yeah, that is funny. So, Kassy, speaking of a date, have you picked a date?

Kassy: I have. It's actually coming up very quickly.

Andrew: OK, so it's coming up quickly, like how quick here? Is it happening next year, maybe in 2022?

Kassy: Yeah, we're planning to have it in, at the end of March in 2022.

Andrew: End of March in 2022. OK, so not that far away at all. So I imagine you're quite busy already with wedding planning, then. How's that going?

Kassy: Yeah, we just picked a venue. And I haven't picked a dress or makeup style or anything like that yet, but we're going to take pictures soon. Honestly, I am a bit of a romantic, but I'm not a big wedding person. I'm mostly doing this wedding for my future husband's family, because it's a big thing in Korean culture. I would probably be just fine eloping, but I'm happy to have this experience and share the memories with everyone. But I'm, I'm really not into picking a fancy dress and makeup. It's pretty **out of my element** and I'm a little nervous about it, but I'll survive.

Andrew: Yeah, you'll be fine. And I'm sure once you start doing the planning and, you know, trying on dresses and stuff, I'm sure it will be pretty fun, especially if you get to do it with some of your friends.

I think my wife was kind of the same way as you, like she wasn't a huge wedding person. You know, like we decided to have a wedding but both of us we're, like, you know, we don't care too much about the wedding. We're not like the kind of people who have dreamed of having a beautiful wedding our whole lives. We're not those kind of people. But once we got into it, then it started becoming a lot of fun, actually. So I'm sure for you, as well, Kassy, that it will be and I hope it is.

I have one question here for you before we wrap up this episode, and you know, we're still kind of going through, unfortunately I hate to say it, but we still are going through the pandemic, the COVID pandemic. And because of COVID, my family from Canada couldn't come to my wedding, unfortunately. So we had to do a livestream of the wedding on the internet for my friends and family back home. What about your friends and family back in the States? Do you think some people will come? Or are you going to do a livestream for them? Or maybe another celebration back in America later? What's your plan for dealing with that?

Kassy: As of now my plan is to just have a livestream. I don't think anyone will come just because of, you know, COVID restrictions and quarantine measures and, you know, just trying not to spread anything. But we are planning, as of now, to go back to the US one more time next summer. And even if we don't have a full ceremony, we'll have the reception, the party together with friends and family in the States.

Andrew: Sounds like a good plan.

Kassy: Andrew, I know you had your wedding last year, are you too also planning to have some sort of party when you eventually make it back to Canada?

Andrew: Maybe? I'm not sure when we can go back to Canada. I think the earliest we could go back to Canada would be summer of 2022. And at that point, you know, it would be almost a year since we've been married, over a year since we've been married, actually. So it's kind of **lost its lustre** almost, you know. Like, we've kind of accepted that we're married already. I mean, we might have like a small, special barbecue for some of my immediate family or something and, I don't know, pop a bottle of wine and just have a nice night with my family. But I don't think I'm going to, like, have a big party and invite all my friends in Canada or something. It just seems like we've kind of moved on from that. But, yeah, maybe we'll have like a small celebration or something. I'm sure my parents would like that.

Kassy: Yes, that's a big reason why I'll be doing it, too.

Andrew: Yeah, for the folks, right? Weirdly, I think that weddings are almost more for the parents than they are for us.

Kassy: And I mean, when you think about it, that's a big milestone in not just your life, but your child's life. You wanna see that.

Andrew: Yeah, at my wedding, I looked at my in-laws, and they were both so happy and crying and just incredibly overwhelmed with emotion at the wedding, you know, and I realized at that point, it must be such an amazing feeling to have a baby and raise that baby through their whole life and then see them get married and move on to that stage, that next stage in their life. It must be an incredibly emotional thing. So, yeah, I think that's one of the main reasons why it's such an important event for the parents and for grandparents, as well as for the couple themselves.

Kassy: Absolutely.

Andrew: Well, Kassy, once again, on behalf of the Culips team, and all the Culips listeners, I'm sure, as well, congratulations to you and your fiancé on your engagement. Such good news.

Kassy: Thank you. Thank you.

Andrew: All right, listeners. Well, we'll leave it at here for today. Thank you for tuning in. We hope that you enjoyed this episode, and we hope that you found it useful for building your English language skills.

Don't forget, the study guide for this episode is available for all Culips members on our website, Culips.com. And if you like Culips, if you enjoy listening to us and find us helpful for growing your English speaking and listening skills and building a better vocabulary, well, then we would certainly appreciate it if you could support us. And there are several ways that you could do that. For example, you could follow us on social media, you could tell your friends who are studying English to check us out, and you could leave us a five-star rating and review on Apple Podcasts or your favourite podcast platform.

Our email address is contact@Culips.com. And if you have any questions or comments for us, maybe you want to pass on your congratulations to Kassy, well, you can do it by sending us an email. Our address is contact@Culips.com, once again.

We'll be back soon with another brand-new episode. Until then, take care everyone and goodbye.

Kassy: See ya.

Detailed Explanations

In [one's] world Phrase

At the beginning of this episode, Andrew asks Kassy to let our listeners know about the big news **in her world**. In this sense, **in [one's] world** means in one's own life. Of course, we all live in the same world, but Andrew wants to know about Kassy's part of the world, meaning her personal life.

You can also use **in [one's] world** to mean in someone's opinion. For example, if you have a very different opinion from others, they might say, "Maybe that's true **in your world**." They mean that your experience of the world and life is different from theirs. Unless you're joking, this is often used in a negative way.

Here are a couple more examples with **in [one's] world**:

Dan: Wow, I'm so glad things have been going well with you lately.

Shelley: Thanks. I'm pretty happy. So what about you? What's going on **in your world** these days?

Dan: Actually, everything is good with me as well. My job is good, my family is healthy, and I recently got a promotion.

Shelley: That's amazing! Good stuff.

Sara: Did you see that new K-pop boy band?

Marie: Do you mean the group that premiered last night? Yeah. I wasn't impressed.

Sara: What do you mean? They were amazing! And they're definitely the most attractive band out there right now.

Marie: Attractive? Maybe **in your world**, but they're just OK. I can show you some old bands that are way cooler and way sexier.

Ta-da Interjection

In this episode, Andrew talks about wedding etiquette in North America and how it's not always a good idea to make a big personal announcement at someone else's wedding. For example, if you make an announcement and say "**Ta-da!**" afterwards, it might look bad.

Ta-da is a stereotypical word shouted by magicians after they reveal the ending of their tricks. It is said to increase the surprise's impact by making a big sound, even though it doesn't actually mean anything.

You can shout **ta-da** when you reveal something or surprise someone. For example, you can shout **ta-da** when you put a surprise birthday cake on the table. You can shout **ta-da** when you have done something amazing, so amazing that it looks like a magic trick.

Here are a couple more examples with **ta-da**:

Benji: What's the matter?

Heather: Do you know the notebook where I keep all my recipes? I have years and years of handwritten, irreplaceable recipes in that book, and I can't find it.

Benji: **Ta-da!**

Heather: Wow! You found my book? Where was it?

Benji: It was under the couch. I found it this morning while I was cleaning the living room.

Paddy: Is that your new car?

Jessica: Yes, it is. Pretty nice, right?

Paddy: It's amazing. So cool. When did you buy it?

Jessica: I didn't, actually. Do you remember how it was my birthday last month and my husband forgot to get me something? Well, the next day when I drove home, **ta-da!** I found this car in the driveway waiting for me. He bought it for me, but it arrived a day late!

The whole shebang

Phrase, informal

Kassy talks about all the things her fiancé's did before proposing to her. She says that he had to get a haircut and prepare his fancy suit, the ring, and **the whole shebang**. **The whole shebang** is an informal term meaning everything. If you prepared a party from beginning to end in perfect detail, you've done **the whole shebang**.

The whole shebang is a fun expression to use when you have really done a lot. For your wedding anniversary, did you only get a card? No! You bought a card, went out for dinner, and had your family record well-wishes on video. That's **the whole shebang**.

Here are a couple more examples with **the whole shebang**:

Warren: What are you working on?

Shawna: I'm trying to make dinner reservations for this restaurant.

Warren: Wow! That's an extremely expensive and super fancy restaurant. What's the special occasion?

Shawna: It's my mom's 60th birthday. She's been telling me for 5 years now that she'll be very upset if I don't do something special for her 60th. So I have to do **the whole shebang** for her.

Warren: That's good. I know her, she'll love this place. How many people are you going to invite?

Shawna: The entire family, of course!

Phil: Those are pretty nice speakers. How much are they?

Fiona: Those are \$200.

Phil: And the sound system?

Fiona: The sound system alone is \$400. But you can have **the whole shebang** for \$500.

To play ball

Phrasal verb

When Kassy asked her boyfriend for something during her friend's wedding preparations and he acted strangely, she wondered why he wasn't **playing ball**. In this sense, **to play ball** means to go along with what other people expect. Kassy was expecting her boyfriend to simply get her a sandwich, but he was busy with other plans. Her boyfriend wasn't **playing ball**.

To play ball comes from traditional ball games, such as baseball, soccer, and football. Think about a situation where everyone else is playing baseball, but you're on the field doing ballet. It doesn't go well together. You're not **playing ball**.

Here are a couple more examples with **to play ball**:

Helen: I think we should sell the California branch of the company.

Jacob: No, that's not a good idea.

Helen: OK. What about the Texas one?

Jacob: I don't like the Texas idea, either.

Helen: Come on! You're not **playing ball** here. The boss said that our mission is to sell one of our branches in the southwest of the United States. We need to pick one of them. Help me out here.

Jacob: OK, OK. Let's go with California.

Myeongji: Are you flying to Boston for the sales meeting on Monday?

Nathan: Yes, I am.

Myeongji: Just remember, they're good customers of ours and very friendly. Whatever they do, you need **to play ball**. If they want you to go out fishing, you better go fishing with them. If they want to go out for sushi, you better go eat sushi with them. Do you understand?

Nathan: For sure. I've been there before, I know how the game is played.

Out of [one's] element

Phrase

In this episode, Kassy talks about being **out of her element** in having to plan an elaborate wedding, take pictures, and pick out a wedding dress. To be **out of [one's] element** is to be out of one's comfort zone, mostly because you do not have the skill or the will to participate in that area. Kassy doesn't really want to do all of those wedding preparations, so she is **out of her element**.

Here are a couple more examples with **out of [one's] element**:

Howard: Who's going to be conducting the sales meeting this weekend?

Diane: It's Donny's account, so the boss is putting him in charge.

Howard: Do you think that's a good idea?

Diane: I'm not sure. What do you think?

Howard: I think he's **out of his element** in that situation. Donny doesn't have enough experience with investors of that level.

Diane: You may be right. I'll mention it to the boss and see what she thinks.

Manuel: Did you have a good time at the beach?

Freddy: So-so.

Manuel: Why do you say that? Everyone else seemed to have a good time.

Freddy: I know, but we spent most of the day in the water.

Manuel: That's sounds like fun to me.

Freddy: I'm not all that comfortable in the sea. I'm pretty much **out of my element** with all those waves and that salty water. So I was mostly alone all day, sitting on a towel on the sand.

Manuel: That's too bad. I should have gone with you to keep you company.

To lose its lustre

Idiom

Andrew is doubtful he'll have another wedding ceremony once he can travel to Canada. He says it's because he will have been married for over a year and he feels the idea will have **lost its lustre**. Lustre is the shiny coating you see on fine porcelain vases or other ceramic sculptures. The idea is that lustre is shiny, fresh, and new. If you do not polish the porcelain, it will look old and **lose its lustre**.

You can use **to lose its lustre** whenever you feel something is no longer new in your mind and spirit. For example, even though you still love your car after having it for a few years, it is no longer new and might have **lost its lustre**.

Here are a couple more examples with **to lose its lustre**:

Brooke: I heard there's a new president in your country. Didn't he win with a big majority?

Quinn: Yes, he did. But that was a year ago. The honeymoon period is over, and his presidency is starting to **lose its lustre**.

Brooke: What do you mean?

Quinn: Well, it's one thing to look good when you're campaigning and making promises. But it's completely different once you're in power. People are starting to look past his shiny smile and nice suits.

Sydney: It's nice to see you again.

Joe: You too. Thanks for inviting me to your house again. I absolutely love your kitchen.

Sydney: Thanks. I like it too. However, it's **lost a bit of its lustre** over the years.

Joe: Don't say that. It looks as good as new.

Sydney: Maybe to you, but I can see all the little stains and cracks accumulated over the years.

Joe: Then don't tell me where they are. I just want to enjoy your kitchen!

Quiz

1. When did Kassy's boyfriend propose to her?

- a) on the airplane
- b) at a family reunion in the United States
- c) at a friend's wedding
- d) at a party

2. What does it mean to play ball?

- a) you're studying baseball
- b) you've made plans to play a ball sport
- c) you're good at badminton
- d) you're going along with what others are doing

3. True or false? Ta-da is best shouted when you're revealing a happy surprise.

- a) true
- b) false

4. Why would you be out of your element?

- a) you're pretty good at something
- b) you don't have an element in your oven
- c) you're not skilled enough for a certain situation
- d) you're happy with the situation

5. Which of the following is the better definition for when something loses its lustre?

- a) it no longer feels fresh and new
- b) it no longer gives you pleasure

Writing and Discussion Questions

1. What is the most romantic marriage proposal story you have ever heard?
2. When do you think you are out of your element?
3. Are you the type of person who will play ball, or do you challenge people if you don't agree with their expectations?
4. What is something you have had for a while that has lost its lustre, but you still love it a lot?
5. Talk about something good that's going on in your world these days.

Quiz Answers

1. c 2. d 3. a 4. c 5. a

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