**ESL Podcast 1072 – Working Part-Time Jobs**

Luisa begins a dialog by saying to Max “Are you still here?” this is one of those a questions you ask when you surprise about something, obviously Louisa can see that Max’s still wherever they are, she says “I though you got off at 3:00”. To get off of work means to finish your work schedule, to be able to leave the place where you work, if someone says what time do you get off? They mean what time do you get off of work when you stop working, what time do you stop working. Max says “I picked up a second shift”. A shift s-h-i-f-t refers to the period of time when people work, usually this term is used for job when people work at that particular location more than 8 hours or that they are people are working at that location for more than 8 hours, it might be for example a place where there are someone working 24 hours a day well one person is not going to work 24 hours straight so they break up the day into shifts so if you work the day shift, you’re working probably from 8 in the morning to around 4-5 in the afternoon, if you work in the night shift, you’ll be working perhaps from 4-5 in the afternoon to mid-night, if you work in what we call the graveyard shift, you’re working probably from 11 o’clock at night or mid-night to 7 or 8 in the morning, those are shifts then, the division of the work day in a place that ususally open for more than 8 hours. Max says “I picked up a second shift”, to pick up here means to get, to obtain, he was working one shift and now he picks up a second shift, which means of course he’s working more than 8 hours a day. Why has Max done it? Well he says “I could use the money”, when someone says I could use the money he means that he would be able to benefit from getting more money, he has some need of extra money. Luisa says “But I thought you had another part-time job in the evenings”, a part-time job is a job usually that is less than 48 hours per week, in the United States 48 hours per week is considered full-time, if it’s less than 48 hours we might call it part-time, Luisa thought that Max had another part-time job. Max says “ I normally do, but the restaurant where I work has been cutting back my hours” when we talk about someone cutting back on something we mean that he’s using less of it or he’s reducing the number of something, the two-word phrasal verb to cut back then means to reduce the number of something, in this case we’re talking about the restaurant where Max works cutting back his hours, his hours refer to the number of hour that he can work. Max says “I’m trying to pick up as many extra shifts here as I can”. Luisa then asks “And don’t you work at the amusement park on the weekend?”, an amusement a-m-u-s-e-m-e-n-t park is a large park usually that has lots of what we would call rides in them, places where people especially children can play games and get into the machines that go really fast for example, Disney Land is an example of amusement park here in the South California. Luisa asks if Mas is still working in the amusement park on the weekend. He says “I do half the year meaning I do work there part of the year, but it’s winter and the park only keeps a skeleton crew on during these months” Max is saying that the amusement park where he normally works in the summer time only has a skeleton crew during the winter time. The phrase skeleton s-k-e-l-e-t-o-n crew c-r-e-w refers to a very small number of workers, the minimum number of workers you can have at that place, if a business doesn’t have very many customers it might have very few employees and we might call that a skeleton crew, if during busy time the company has more employees this is the case with the amusement park can have a skeleton crew, the word crew just refers to a group of people, the word skeleton is normally used to describe the bones of your body or bones of animal. Max says “In the meantime meaning during this winter season, I’m working for a temp agency, which gives me short-term assignments”, a temp t-e-m-p agency is a company that finds people temporary jobs, the word temp is short for temporary meaning short-term, not permanent, not for a long time, there are of course many companies that find workers, find people to work for companies that just need workers for short of period of time. Max says the temp agency gives him short-term assignments, short-term refers to a short amount of time, perhaps a week, perhaps even a day, I used to work for temp agencies when I was in college, I would call off every morning and to see if there is any work for me and they would send me to jobs that would last maybe one day, maybe two or three days some time it’s long as a month, temp agencies are very popular now especially when the economy is not doing so well, companies don’t want to hire employees full-time. Luisa says “I don’t know how you juggle all these jobs”. The verb to juggle j-u-g-g-l-e usually refers to throwing objects up in the air and keeping them up in the air, we refer to someone who does it as a juggler but here the verb means to handle many different things at the same time, to be able to do many different things at the same time. Max says “I have no choice, I have no other option. I have piece together an income if I want to pay rent.” To piece p-i-e-c-e together something means to put together, to assemble. And income i-n-c-o-m-e refers to the money you get for working. Max is saying that he has to work a little bit at this job and a little at that job in order to make enough money to pay for his rent. Luisa says “Have you ever thought about going back to school to qualify for other work, something full-time”. To qualify q-u-a-l-i-f-y for something means to have the skills and/ or education in order to be able to do something so for example if you want to be a doctor you have to study for many years in order to qualify for that kind of job at least I hope you study many years if you’re a doctor if not please don’t be my doctor. Luisa’s asking if Max has thought about going back to school to qualify for sometime kind of job that would be full-time, that would be 48 hours a week. Max says “Sure, all the time, meaning I have thought of if a lot”, he says “I’d like a better job, one with benefits and a reliable salary”, benefits b-e-n-e-f-i-t-s refers to things such as health insurance and vacation time and sick pay, money you get when you can’t work because you’re sick, these are common benefits that you get when you have a full-time job, salary s-a-l-a-r-y refers to money that you get to work at a certain place usually by the month or by the year, when we’re talking about salary, we’re talking about money you get regardless of how many hours you work, there’s two kind of ways of getting paid one is by the hour when you get paid a certain amount of money for every hour you work, another way of getting paid is by salary, when you’re getting paid on a salary we would say you are getting a certain amount of money as are expected to do your job even if you take more than the normal 48 hours a week. Luisa says “What’s stopping you? What’s preventing you from going back to school. Max says “I have to pay for something called “food” Max is making a joke here he’s saying that he can’t afford to go back to school, he doesn’t have enough money to go back to school because in addition to paying his rent , he also has to eat and to eat he has to buy food. He finishes by saying “I haven’t met my fairy godmother yet”. A fairy f-a-i-r-y godmother g-o-d-m-o-t-h-e-r is a character from children’s stories, stories that we tell children, usually involving a woman who has some sort of magical powers, the fairy godmother is a common character in certain fairy tales that are told to children, these are made up stories about magical events, here Max’s using the expression to mean that he hasn’t found someone who’s just going to give him money to pay for his expenses and to go to school.