Welcome to English as a second language podcast number 1072: working part-time jobs. This is English as a second language podcast episode 1072. I’m your host, Dr Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the center for educational development in beautiful Los Angeles California. Visit our website at eslpod.com. When you do you can join esl podcasts as an member and download our learning guide. This episode is a dialog between Luisa and Max about working a job less than 40 hours a week. That is a part-time job. Let’s get started.

Are you still here? I thought you got off at 3 o’clock.

I picked up a second shift. I could use the money.

But I thought you have another part-time job in the evenings.

I normally do but the restaurant where I work has been cutting back my hours. So I’m trying to pick up as many extra shifts here as I can.

And don’t you work at the amusement park on the weekend?

I do. Half the year. But it’s winter and the park only keeps a skeleton crew on during these months. In the mean time I’m working for a temp agency which gives me short-term assignments.

I don’t know how you juggle all these jobs.

I have no choice. I have to piece together and income if I want to pay rent.

Have you ever thought about going back to school to qualify for other work something full-time.

Sure, all the time. I’d like a better job one with benefits and a reliable salary.

What’s stopping you?

I have to pay for something called food. And I haven’t met my fairy godmother yet.

Luisa begins the dialog by saying to Max are you still here. This is one of those questions you ask when you’re surprised about something obviously Luisa can see that Max’s still wherever they are. She says I thought you got off at 3 o’clock. 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 a period of time when people work. Usually this term is used for jobs when people work at that particular location more than 8 hours or that there are people working at that location for more than 8 hours. It might be for example a place where there’s 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 till 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 midnight. If you work in what we call graveyard shift you work in probably from 11 o’clock at night or midnight to 7 or 8 in the morning. Those are shift then to vision of the work day in a place that usually is opened for more than 8 hours.

Max said he picked up a second shift. To pick up here means to get to obtain. He was working one shift and now he picked up a second shift which means of course he’s working more than 8 hours a day. Why has Max done this? 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 have another part-time job in the evenings. A part-time job is the job usually that is less than 40 hours per week. In the United States 40 hours per week is considered full time. If it’s less than 40 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 is using less of it or he is reducing the number of something. The two word phrase of 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 refers to the number of hours that he can work.

Max says he’s trying to pick up as many extra shifts here as I can. Luisa then asked 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 the place where people especially children can play games and get into these machines that go really fast for example Disneyland is an example of an amusement park here in Aneheim California.

Luisa asked if Max is still working at the amusement on the weekend. He said I do half the year meaning I do work there part of the year but it’s winter and the park only keep a skeleton crew on during these months. Max is saying that the amusement park world normally works in the summertime only has a skeleton crew during the wintertime. 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 a place. If a business doesn’t have very customers that might have very few employees and we might call that a skeleton crew if during busy times the company has more employees. This is the case when 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 the bones of an animal.

Max says in the mean time 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 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 agency when I was in college. I would call up every morning and see if they have any works for me. And they would send me to job that would last maybe 1 day maybe 2 or 3 days sometimes as 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 fulltime.

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 throw objects up in the air and keep 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 to piece together in income if I want to pay rent. To piece p-i-e-c-e together something means to put together to assemble. An 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 bit 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 fulltime. To qualify q-u-a-l-i-f-y for something means to have the skill 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 are a doctor. If not please don’t be my doctor.

Luisa is asking if Max has thought about going back to school to qualify for some kind of job that would be fulltime. That would be 40 hours a week. Max said sure all the time meaning I have thought of it 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 talk about the salary we talking about the money you get regardless of how many hours you work. There are two kinds 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 and I expected to do your job even if it takes more than the normal 40 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 is 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 of paying his rents 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 involve the 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 of stories about magical events. Here Max is 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.

Now listen to the dialog this time at a normal speed.

Are you still here? I thought you got off at 3 o’clock.

I picked up a second shift. I could use the money.

But I thought you have another part-time job in the evenings.

I normally do but the restaurant where I work has been cutting back my hours. So I’m trying to pick up as many extra shifts here as I can.

And don’t you work at the amusement park on the weekend?

I do. Half the year. But it’s winter and the park only keeps a skeleton crew on during these months. In the mean time I’m working for a temp agency which gives me short-term assignments.

I don’t know how you juggle all these jobs.

I have no choice. I have to piece together and income if I want to pay rent.

Have you ever thought about going back to school to qualify for other work something fulltime.

Sure, all the time. I’d like a better job one with benefits and a reliable salary.

What’s stopping you?

I have to pay for something called food. And I haven’t met my fairy godmother yet.

Our script writer is very qualified for the job that she does here at esl poscasts which is of course writing script. Thank you Dr Lucy Tse. From Los Angeles California I’m Jeff McQuillan. Thank you for listening. Come back and listen to it again right here on esl podcast. English as a second language podcast is written and produced by Dr Lucy Tse hosted by Dr Jeff McQuillan copyrighted 2015 by the center for educational development.