



WE 022: False friends

Hi everybody. It's me again, as promised, I'm not going to leave you, I don't want to leave you empty-handed and so I'm coming back with this new episode. As promised last time, we were not going to have any more breaks like that, these longish breaks. And that's why there is this new meeting with you and I'm super happy about it. I hope you will also enjoy it, as always, because there's going to be a new story and there's going to be a new subject.

The subject of today's episode is false friends. We can look at this from various perspectives and various angles, of course. We can talk it as these people that we know and we can think about it from this perspective of relations that we, relations that we make and relationships that we enter. But we can also think about it from the perspective of the language, the very language. And anybody who is interested in English a little bit and anybody who has studied the language a bit, they would know what false friends are because they would associate it with linguistics. They would associate it with expressions, with words in English.

But before I tell you, before I tell those of you who don't know this expression, what that means, I would like to talk about the word *friend*. So I would like to think about it from this perspective of these people that we know because this is something that I get asked about very often. Like, people just ask me how they should call these people that they know. The word *friend* is very productive, very popular and everybody knows the word, but sometimes we've got this feeling that we cannot use this expression when we want to describe all the people that we know. Because not everybody that we know, not all the people that we know are our friends. That's very, very natural. Unfortunately, I would say that this word *friend* is a used word in English, like a cliché, worn-out phrase because the dictionaries and the suggestions are that we should, actually, call anybody our friend. But if you want to denote somebody that you have known for a long time, like you have been in this relationship with this person, in this friendly relationship with this person, for a long time, we can call this person like a close friend, like an old friend, a true friend. And these people who we just know like that, you know.



So we've got these numbers, like telephone numbers or e-mails. We saw them a couple of times, we meet them sometimes, but they are not like these true friends or close friends, we can just call them friends or we can just call them acquaintances; that's another word. I would rather say that in everyday English, this street English, so to say, people would rather call these people friends than acquaintances. But you have to know that there is this expression of an acquaintance simply. And here also comes this word of a colleague, yeah. That's a false friend, so this is the beginning of this other subject for today or the main subject. Because the expression like a colleague when we hear the word colleague, we instantly think that we are just talking about somebody that we know. But you have to remember that a colleague is this person that you work with, yeah. So this is this relationship that you get from work.

And coming back now to false friends, as I introduced this subject, there are false friends in real life. So, we've got these people that seem to be our friends, we trust them, but then they just disappoint us and it turns out that they aren't our true friends, that they have never been our true friends because there is this phrase *a friend in need is a friend indeed*. There is the similar expression, the similar word of wisdom in Polish and there is the similar expression in English, so please remember that a friend in need is a friend indeed. And so, I'm sure we all have such true, great friends but not many of them. And sometimes people just seem to be our friends and in fact they are false friends.

And this is exactly what happens in the language. So there are these expressions that seem, right, they pretend to be something, but in fact they are not. And today I have prepared a list of different expressions like that. I have divided them into a couple of fields. So we are going to talk about these false friends that you can find in the matter of money or work, when you talk about money or work, school, study, school and studying, food, restaurants, clothes and the wardrobe, the things that we wear, emotions, then some expressions connected with doctors, with going to the doctor, with our health. And another list is just this random list; random, but this list is something that I have written down after a



couple of my lessons, after a couple of meetings. Because, I hope you know it, that all the things that you can listen to here, all the things that are here, they are based on this first-hand experience, first-hand knowledge. So if there is something that just has struck me, for instance, because I have experienced it in class or it gets repeated, so I get the same question over and over again, I realized that this is a real problem. And when listening to these episodes, I hope you can relate to these problems. So when listening, I hope you've got this feeling *oh, wow, yeah, that's true, that's exactly what happened to myself*. So, I'm sure that this list of false friends is something that you will relate to because it has happened to you on many occasions.

Ok, so let us start with this group of words like money and work, connected with your professional life, so to say. And when we think about money, we think about sums of money, yeah. So there is this word billion, but very often people use it the wrong context. Because when they hear the word billion, they would think that this is actually trillion. So here is a trick. Please remember that these names in English they are, they have this different expression. So, there is this billion and there is trillion and their expressions are, or meanings are different.

The money, when we talk about the money, and we've got money in our minds, there is pension, yeah. And people very often they come to me and they talk about their professional lives, they talk about life situations at work and they use the word pension. And then I always ask them this question, like *Are you retired?*, or something. Because a pension is something a retired person would get, right, not us, meaning not people who are professionally active. So people who are professionally active and the money that they get every single month it is a salary. Please remember, a pension is something that your grandmothers, grandfathers would get when they are retired. But a salary is something that you get every month. And of course, there is another way of paying to workers and there are these wages. Wages are very popular in Britain and this is the money that you get every week, yeah. So wages are something that you have to multiply, so you would get it four times a month. And a salary is something that you get every month.



When talking about this professional situation or the work situations, we can think about this experience people bring into the company. I used this expression, like an *asset* a couple of times, yes. So those people who bring in a lot of experience, they are this asset to the, or assets, to the company. But there's this word like *expertise* and expertise means this combination of knowledge and experience. And it has nothing to do with this expert's report. Don't, please don't confuse these two words. So there is this expert, expert's report, so if you require some special knowledge from somebody or a special report rather because it has to be in writing. But when you talk about this combination of knowledge and experience, the best situation, really, so you are, when you are this experienced worker, you bring in this expertise into the company.

And the last expression from this group of words, like this money - work group of words, it is the word *rapport*. So mind you, there is this rapport and there is a *report*, yeah. We know a report; report is a report, we use it on our everyday basis. But a rapport is this relationship, is this understanding, is this mutual feeling that we have. It is spelt in a bit different way because there is this r-a-p-p-o-r-t and it has nothing to do with a report.

Now, guys, I'll take you to school, back to school, so to say. And I'll introduce a couple of words very often mistaken in this context. So, the first one is a *lecture*, yeah. All the people who go to school, who study, they come to me and they say *Wha, I have to read* this kind of book and then they use this word. Mind you, be aware of it, no that's not true because a book that you have to read because you go to school, because you are a school student, it is called a set book or a book from the reading list.

Many people dislike these set books because they say they are not interesting, they are forced to do them, and many people just come to me and say *What? Like no, I don't want to read that set book because it is boring and I would rather read something that I pick myself, not something that someone tells me to.* I understand. But what can we do? This is how the system works, this is how it functions. So we have to, all of us had to, well, for myself I would say I had to, but



for you, sometimes, you can say that we have to read these set books. There is nothing we can do about it. But if you use the word *lecture*, you would mean a completely different thing. So a lecture is something you would rather experience, you would rather see at university, right. So you will take part in lectures at university. So there are these great meetings for many students and there is usually this professor who talks to the people. And this person who talks to the people is called a lecturer, on the other hand.

When talking about books and when talking about reading, there is the word *novel*, yeah. And again, many people come here and they say *Well, there is this novel, you know, but it's not a problem because it is short*. That is not true. When you talk about this short book, so that is not a lot of reading, it is called a short story. Mind you, but a novel, on the other hand, is a completely different thing. Because a novel is actually a book that is long. It is long, it contains a lot of information, there is this plot, a lot is going on. Don't confuse, there is a novel and a short story.

And the last thing that comes in here, is the word *pupil*. Pupil is this person who goes to school, usually to the school that is this primary school. The children who meet their teachers every day and they belong to one class and they go to school. But there is also this expression that denotes someone that the teacher likes very much. But it is not a pupil. A pupil is just any person, any member of the class. But a person that this teacher likes very much is this teacher's pet. And here, I'd like to introduce another expression, like this apple polisher. Apple polisher is this super teacher's pet, but usually it is not the person that the teacher picks, but this is this person who wants to be picked by the teacher. And this expression of an *apple polisher* comes from the past, it comes from these pupils who wanted to be chosen by the teacher, who wanted to become teacher's pets. And they would go to the teacher and they would bring them, give them this apple, you know. And they would polish this apple because they wanted to be the best, they wanted to be chosen. So, an apple polisher and teacher's pets are different people. It means a different thing than this pupil.



I hope you are following me. So, we have covered the professional situations, we have covered this school and studying situation and now we are going to restaurants. *Chef*, yeah, I'm sure when I say it, everybody smiles because everybody knows that there are these programmes where you can, TV shows, TV programmes, where you can learn how to cook. And the title of it, they are called like this *MasterChef*. Everybody knows it, a *MasterChef*. And I ask them like *Do you watch MasterChef? Yes, of course I watch MasterChef*. But then, when they talk about their own private lives, so their own situations, they do not know how to call this person that is above them at work. And very often I hear the word *chef*. And then I ask like *Do you work in a restaurant, like are you a cook or something? No, I work in an office*. Ok, so if you work in an office, the person who is above you, who is your supervisor, who is this leader in the company, is a *boss*, right. *Chef* is just a cook, a person who works in a restaurant. This is this main cook. And not a cooker on the other hand, mind you. Because a cooker is a thing, a cooker is this, is a thing on which you prepare food. A cook is this *chef*. And a boss is somebody who is your leader in your company, in your organisation.

And when this chef from the kitchen, from the restaurant, prepares some food, they prepare a salad for you, right. So a salad is composed of different ingredients like this, like the tomatoes and cucumbers and lettuce. And very often there is this lettuce, as I said, because lettuce is the vegetable and a salad is this complete meal.

Now, the clothes, as I introduced. So there are these clothes for you. The clothes are very important because you have to also know how to dress properly for a restaurant, for instance. But in order to know how to do it, you have to follow the latest trends, yes, you have to buy different stuff and you need a place where you can just keep your clothes. And this place is called a closet. Mind you, the word doesn't sound very nice, I would say. Like for the Polish speakers because we instantly would, like associate this word with some other place in the house. And this other place in the house that I'm denoting right now is a toilet or a...this bathroom. But a closet is this place where you keep your clothes. And, on the other



hand, it can also be called a wardrobe. And just to introduce another expression in here, that is very productive, it happens very often. So very often people do not choose closets or they do not choose wardrobes for their clothes, they would rather have this special place or a special room for the clothes. And this time, this special place is called a walk-in wardrobe, yeah. Because this is the wardrobe that you can enter. For sure, you can call it a walk-in, yeah. So a closet, a wardrobe, a walk-in - a place for clothes. And toilet or bathroom - a place where you go to deal with your private matters, so to say.

When talking about clothes, there is this expression *dress*. And I smile every single time, I see the word *dress*, because I love dresses, I love picking them, choosing different dresses for different occasions. But I wouldn't wear a dress, when I go running. And many people think that this is the same. No. When you go running, you would rather use a tracksuit. Remember, tracksuit is for sport and dress is something that you would, that you would use, that you would wear for your office situation, for any event, for any occasion when you want to look elegant, for instance, or when it's summer. I love these summer dresses, they are very, very beautiful.

And when talking about this sport, and when talking about this tracksuit that you put on because you go running, you would need a sweatshirt or a hoody, just to accompany that, but definitely not a blouse. A blouse is this elegant shirt, is this elegant thing that a woman wears, specifically. And this is something that you would wear to the office, again. So you would wear a dress to the office, you would wear a blouse to the office. And a sweatshirt and a hoody and a tracksuit - this is something that is reserved for sports.

The last expression associated with clothing here, is the word *fabric*. Fabric is this thing from which you can produce different clothes. But definitely this is not a place where you go to work. Because when you want to go to a place and work there, you would go to a factory. So a factory is this great place where they produce different articles, they produce different goods. And fabric is something



from which you make your clothes. Don't mix the two, please. It happens very often, happens to many people. So there is fabric and there is a factory.

Another group of words prepared for you today, is this group of words that I call emotions. And a word that is very much connected with emotions, the strongest emotions, is this word *affair*. Sometimes you can call it this love affair. And a love affair happens when there are these two people who have these special emotions towards each other. But this affair, yes, is definitely not a scandal. So, very often, when you follow these like Hollywood, Highwood news, yes, the celebrity news, you would look for scandals, so something that happened. Jesus Christ, that's a new thing, something has changed, someone has divorced somebody, some star just got married and stuff. But an affair is a different thing, like an affair and love affair.

And then the feeling, yes, the feeling, apart from love and friendship, that is there, there is this feeling of being or this character trait of being sympathetic. And if you are sympathetic, it does not mean that you are nice, yes. Because if you are nice, it means that you smile a lot, that you have a lot of friends, people like you, you are very well liked by other people. But if you are sympathetic, it means that you feel sorry for something that happens to somebody else, that you, kind of, can produce these feelings that they have, that you respect them, that you appreciate what has happened to them. So this is sympathetic and not nice. Nice is a very productive word in English, like people are nice when they look attractive, people are nice when they behave in this funny, proper way and we like them very, very much.

The last group, again, I hope you are following me. So there's been a couple of groups here. And the last group, I call it for our purposes, I called it this health issue or doctor's issue. So, the two words like *physician* and *physicist*, yeah, and I wonder if you have this problem with your health and if you're looking for a doctor, where would you go; would you go to a physician or a physicist. Well, I would go to a physician. Because a physician is a doctor. And if I want to talk about physics, I would go to a physicist. Ok, so a physician is a doctor, a physicist is somebody who



is trained in physics, somebody who has this knowledge about physics, somebody who can share this knowledge with you.

And when, finally, you get to this physician, mind you, or a doctor and when there is this little problem that you have, like this health issue, this is the question that you can get when you enter this room of the physician, like *How are you, is anything bothering you, is there any trouble?* And if you just describe this problem to this physician, you will get a prescription, yeah. So you get a prescription from a doctor. So they prescribe you some drugs. They write the things that you have to take on a regular basis, in order to get back to health, in order to recover. But if you get a receipt, yes, this is a thing that you can get in a shop. And very often you have to keep it if you want to complain about something, right, if you want to get your money back, if you want a refund. So you keep the receipt, but at the doctor's, right, you get a prescription.

And now, guys, this random collection of the words. And as I said, random not random because this is the collection of the expressions that I hear in class very, very often. And these words are as follows. Actually, and there you go, you see I have used it on my own. So as a matter of fact, I should have started with the word *actual* or *actually*; I hear it like almost every single time. *Actual* does not mean something that is happening now because if you want to denote something that is happening now, like the affairs that are happening now, you would call it *current*. Remember, *current* is something that is happening now and *actual* or *actually* it means *as a matter of fact*. So, *actually he is a new worker in our company*, right. And not *currently* because *currently* would mean that I've been doing something not for a long time, yes. So this is this novelty, this is something new, this is something that is happening now.

There's one other word that I prepared, starting with the letter *a* and this other word is *antics*. And when I say the word *antics*, people say *Oh, yeah, yeah, this is the thing that comes from the past*. Not really because the things that come from the past they are called antiques. So there is this difference in pronunciation. I hope you can hear it, so antiques versus antics. And also there is this difference in



the spelling. So antics, they are these funny actions, funny situations, making funny faces, having the time of your lives. And antiques are, they are the things that come from antiquity, right, from the very, very old past, so to say.

And there we go, there are three expressions left; there is the word *caravan*, there is the expression *fatal* and there is the word *hazard*. Let's start from the bottom, so let's start with the word *hazard*. Hazard is danger, guys, it has nothing to do with going to a casino, it has nothing to do with placing your bets, no. Hazard is danger. And when you think about these actions that you perform when you go to a casino, it means that you are gambling; that you are a gambler.

Fatal. *Fatal* has nothing to do with this hellish actions, but *fatal* means simply that if there is this fatal disease, it means that it will end up in death simply. So fatal causes death. And the very last one is a *caravan*. Caravan that is a mobile home, not this dreadful car used for transporting dead bodies or dead people because this dreadful car that is used for transporting such, such bodies is called a hearse. Well, not the best expression really to finish with. So, I will not leave you like that with this feeling of that unfriendly emotion. And when talking about friends, I have, I have also prepared this little anecdote with which we can finish today. And this little anecdote is, again, connected with one of the meetings I had.

As I said, people are amazing; that's my phrase, I repeat it very often and all the people that I meet they are truly, truly amazing with great lives, great careers, great hobbies. And in one of the meetings, I have experienced this very funny situation because I was teaching, at that time I was teaching this resident of Britain. There are people who live in Britain and it is this perfect opportunity for them because they are based in Britain and we are based here, but thanks to the online connection, they can actually participate in the class. And there was this person whom I really, really liked very much and I guess we get on with each other very well. And in one of the classes, as we met and as we introduced ourselves, we said *hello*; there was this expression because usually this is what I do - I ask for this chit-chat like in this warm-up part, I'd like to know the things that have been going



recently in somebody's life. And I asked this bland question like *How are you doing? How are things with you? How is life treating you?* And what I got is like *Well, I'm very sad because we lost*, and I said like *Gee, who lost?* And then I get this answer like *The United lost. And I said What? What do you mean, like the Manchester United? Yeah, the Manchester United.* And here I've got this great grin, and I've got this great smile because it is so very British and this is so natural for the British to say it, to anybody living in Britain, any Pole living in Britain would just naturally, just adopt this kind of feeling, this kind of talking about football. Because, obviously, when you say *we lost*, we mean like this Manchester United lost, you are talking about this game of football.

But in here, I hope, apart from this funny situation, I hope you can see that when you study a language, you need to produce this friendly feeling towards it. But this friendly feeling towards it also means that you need to get to know this culture, so you have to become friends with the culture of the other country. I always repeat it there is a different language, this is a different language, there is a different system, there is this different way of thinking and there are different people thinking in different ways. But of course, we can become friends. Just to sum up what we've been talking about today. But please remember that there are false friends. I hope now you remember what kind of words to use and what kind words to avoid in some contexts. And if you do that, I'm sure you will become these friends, like true friends with English forever. Bye, bye.