

Lucy: Very interesting what you think about my mom who's your sister, Uncle Jack. But tell me why is there so much paper lying around here? You can *hardly* see the office *furniture*.

Jack: Well, that's because I'm very often *in a hurry*. So I just *pop in, grab* something else that I need, throw everything on the desk and then I'm gone again.

Lucy: Yes, this is exactly what it looks like. Just throwing things somewhere and *piling* them up endlessly. Why don't you *try to explain* to me how you would like your office to be *run*?

Jack: First of all the papers need to be *filed* into the *hanging files* in the *filing cabinet over here*. Some of them also go into the *files* on the desk next to the *in-tray* and *out-tray*. And there are also things like my big *notebook*, my *diary*, the *desktop organizer*, *stapler*, *tape dispenser*, *hole punch*, *rubber stamp with ink pad*, lots of *paper clips*, *rubber bands* etc. etc.

Lucy: But couldn't these small things go into the *drawers* of your *drawer unit* instead of lying around everywhere?

Jack: Of course, they could, *my dear*. But *so far*, they somehow haven't *found their way* in there.

Lucy: Oh and I see, you also have a *pretty* big computer with a big *monitor* and *keyboard*.

Jack: All this is very old, but I've never found the time to get some up-to-date equipment and I'm not an expert on these things *anyway*.

Lucy: *Lucky you*, I *happen* to be an expert on all this because I learned it in school. We had a special subject called IT and it was one of my favourites. I'm sort of a *digital native*, anyway.

Jack: Well, then girl one of the first tasks for you will be to *install* a new computer here after we've bought it. Oh, let's see what we've got here, my telephone. It's a *cordless phone*, which sometimes makes it very *hard to find*. It also has an *answering machine* where I can *retrieve the messages* that my customers *leave* for me. The only problem is that I can't use the phone if I don't *recharge* it in its *docking station*.

Lucy: Yes, that's the *curse* of modern technology. There are still some things that we have to do, that technology cannot do by itself like finding its way to the docking station. But I *assume*, Uncle Jack, that you have your mobile phone with you all the time.

Jack: Well, that's another point. I *dropped* mine *the other day* and really never found the time to buy a new one.

Lucy: Then, Uncle Jack, I can only hope that you're a *wealthy* man. *It sounds like* a lot of new technology has to be bought for this office. What about a *printer* and...

Jack: Oh, my printer is relatively up-to-date. It has a *copier*, *scanner* and a *fax machine*, too.

Lucy: *Glad* to hear that. So, *not all is lost yet*. And what have we got over there in these big *shelves*?

Jack: These are all my *invoices* from the last years. I have to keep them for *tax purposes*. And this is also where I keep lots of *manuals* for equipment *just in case* I need to *look up* something for myself (*chuckles*) or *safety regulations* and all those things which are important in my job. And look over here, I have a wonderfully comfortable *swivel chair* that you can sit in when you run this office from now on.

Lucy: Oh yes, that's nice. It makes me look very important and *powerful*. What is in the drawers of the desk, *by the way*?

Jack: That's where I keep my *office supplies* like *stationery* with my company's *letterhead* for writing invoices, *envelopes*, *note pads*, *ink cartridges* for the printer, a *clipboard* etc. etc. I'm sure you will *find your way through* all this and I *wonder what* other nice things might *turn up* in all this mess.

Lucy: Well, let's see what *treasures* I can find for the two of us (laughs and *hugs* her uncle). It seems like I will be *rather busy* tomorrow on my first working day.

(To be continued)

(Glühbirne)

Beware of false friends!

A false friend is a word that is often *confused with* a word in another language with a different *meaning* because the two words look or sound *similar*.

The English word »**actually**« is such a typical false friend. Its meaning in German is »*eigentlich, tatsächlich*« and **not** »*aktuell*«.

- »*I actually wanted to talk to the boss. = Eigentlich wollte ich mit dem Chef sprechen.*«
- »*Aktuell*« in English would be »*current, up-to-date, topical, latest*«. The latest news from the U.S., the up-to-date version of a mobile phone app.

The same applies to the verb »**to wonder**«. In German it means »*sich fragen ob/wie/was*« and **not** »*sich wundern*«.

- »*I wonder what the weather will be like tomorrow. = Ich frage mich, wie das Wetter morgen wird.*«
- »*Sich wundern/ jemanden wundern*« in English would be »*to be surprised/to surprise s.o.*«
- »*I'm surprised to see you here. Does that surprise you? = Ich wundere mich, dich hier zu sehen. Wundert dich das?*«

Another false friend is the word »**meaning**« which is translated into German by »*Bedeutung*« and **not** »*Meinung*«.

- »*Each word has a different meaning. = Jedes Wort hat eine andere Bedeutung.*«
- The English for »*Meinung*« is »*opinion*«.
- »*In my opinion there should only be electric cars nowadays. = Meiner Meinung nach sollte es heutzutage nur noch Elektrofahrzeuge geben.*«

»**Yet**« is another one. It means »*schon*« in German and **not** »*jetzt*«. »*Not yet*« is translated by »*noch nicht*«.

- »*Have you spoken to your colleague yet? No, I haven't seen him yet. = Hast du schon mit deinem Kollegen gesprochen? Nein, ich habe ihn noch nicht gesehen.*«
- We use »*now*« for the German »*jetzt*«.
- »*I'm going home now. = Ich gehe jetzt nach Hause.*«

There are many more of these false friends in English. But we will have a look at them another time.

So much for today. You've learned a lot about office equipment and supplies as well as about false friends which we should not only *avoid* in real life but also when speaking another language. In the next issue we will see what Lucy and Jack bring home from their *shopping spree* in the *electronics store*. Stay tuned!