Answers Unit 8

1. For a compact survey of the field see Nicci MacLeod (2013), "Forensic Linguistics: Overview." In Carol Chapelle, ed. *Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781405198431.wbeal0427

   For applications – including plagiarism detection in academia – and specific illustrations see Victoria Guillén-Nieto and Dieter Stein, eds. (2022), *Language as Evidence: Doing Forensic Linguistics*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

   Websites:
   www.iafl.org (International Association of Forensic Linguists)
   http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/247839.stm (report of a murder case where forensic linguistics played a major role)

2. Final devoicing:
   unionss - unions
   gif - give
   boolss - pools

   /w/ - /v/: *voarking* - working

   Substitution of dental fricative by alveolar stop: *odder* - other

   Neutralisation of voicing contrasts in consonants in initial and medial position:
   gabidalists - capitalists
   sobbress - suppress
   drosts - trusts
   boolss - pools
   gompines - combines
   dake - take

   Different vowel quality:
   sobbress - suppress
   voarking - working

   Unclear:
   righdt - right

   Some of the features described above are typical of a German accent in English, e.g. final devoicing, the substitution of /w/ by /v/, and the substitution of a dental fricative by an alveolar stop. Neutralisation of voicing contrasts in initial and medial position is found only among a minority of German speakers of English, who have this feature in their dialects. Spellings such as *righdt* illustrate the common literary phenomenon of *eye-dialect*, the use of nonstandard orthography to evoke the idea of a nonstandard speaker, regardless of whether the representation is phonetically realistic. *Right* is not difficult to pronounce

for German learners, and hence there is no phonetic motivation for spelling it in this way.

3. The discussion in the text focused on the basic lexical and grammatical errors. In addition to these, there are a number of issues involving collocations and distinction of meanings in polysemous words:

   settle the deep cracks > wrong collocation: perhaps intended to give the idea of *die tiefen Risse beseitigen?* The word *crack* is one of the possible translations for German *Riss*, but not in this sense: *overcome the deep rifts*? *overcome deep divisions*? *bridge the wide(ning) gap*?

   promote for sth. > *promote sth.*, perhaps from German *werben für*

   occasions > *opportunities*: The student has to translate *Gelegenheit*, a highly polysemous German word. *Occasion* is a suitable English translation for some of its meanings, but not for the one relevant here, which is better rendered by *opportunity* or *chance*.

   The text written by the good students is typical in that the error made is in the field of punctuation: *30 seconds' time*, with apostrophe, just like *a full day's work, two days' work*. It has always puzzled the author of the present book how many students write very well, but still struggle with the few rather simple comma rules of English (for example with relative clauses). Take the sixty minutes necessary to study them in some grammar or dictionary and then get your act together!

4. In the text we discussed *possibility* in relation to a common grammatical error, over-use of the infinitive. Here the errors are lexical-semantic. German *Möglichkeit* has a wider meaning than English *possibility*. In addition to general and theoretical logical possibility, it can also be used to refer to the chances and opportunities that arise on specific occasions. *Opportunities* is the appropriate translation for *Möglichkeit* in both examples at hand.

5. *Undertaker/undertaking* and *Unternehmer/Unternehmen* are false friends – similar in form, but showing little overlap in meaning. Whereas a German *Unternehmer* can be active in any field, English *undertakers* only arrange funerals ("Bestatter"). In English, an *undertaking* is an important job you commit to or a formal promise you make, but not a business, enterprise or corporation, such as *Deutsche Bahn*.

6. Native speaker (BrE) pronunciation: /ðə vɜ:bəl wɪt ɪn gəʊldsmɪθs vɪkə əv weɪkfi:ld wɜ:ks verɪ wel]

   German accent: interference: [sə vɜrbəl vɪt ɪn gɔltsmis vɪkə əf ve:kfi:lt

vørks verɪ vel]

German accent: hypercorrection: [ðə wɜ:bəl wɪt ɪn gəʊldsmɪθs wɪkə əv weɪkfi:ld wɜ:ks werɪ wel]

7. *has participated*: interference from German; use of present perfect ("Perfekt") to denote definite past time; *already* as a direct translation of the German particle *schon* – sounds less than natural as English *already* does not cover the focus-particle use of German *schon* ("even back in his school days..."), but merely the temporal-adverbial ones.

   has taken … a year ago: interference from German use of present perfect to denote definite past time, although the English sentence sets a time frame which clearly situates the action in the completed past.

   reach a goal all the way: While *reach a goal* is not absent from larger corpora of English, the statistics nevertheless suggest *achieve her goal* as the better alternative. Instead of *all the way*, an adverb such as *fully*, *comprehensively* or *completely* would do a better job here.

   Unlike German, where we do not need an indefinite article when we assign people to professional roles or similar categories (cf. *meine Mutter arbeitet als Lehrerin*), the indefinite article is obligatory in such cases in English, hence *Ms N. was **a** participant in one of my language courses*.

8. Try the search terms "recommendation letter," "letter of recommendation," or "reference letter" for your internet searches.

9. *Safety* and *security* are near synonyms, interchangeable in many but not all contexts. If you consult a few dozen corpus examples, you will get the general tendency. If you're **safe**, you're free from any kind of harm; if you're **secure**, you're protected against deliberate attempts to harm you. Security officers will watch out for dangerous people, safety officers for all kinds of risks. The phrase *safety and security* thus conveys the idea that you will be protected from any kind of unintentional or deliberate harm. Applying Friederich's recommendation, we might translate the phrase as *umfassende Sicherheit*. To give the full idea, we would have to resort to something longer, such as *Sicherheit vor jeder Art von Risiko und Gefahr, insbesondere auch absichtlich verursachter*.

10. Version A stays close to the original not only in its meaning, but also in details of sentence structure. This makes for less fluent reading. Version B displays a much more natural style, without losing any significant meaning – the better compromise between faithfulness and readability.