

## **English textbooks for vocational schools**

### **Situation at vocational schools:**

This topic is quite an important issue for English teachers at vocational schools. All the published textbooks are made for primary schools or secondary schools and are not suitable for vocational branches e.g. cooks, waiters, bakers, sweet-makers, shop assistants etc.

The curriculum does not allow using textbooks for primary schools, although they would correspond to the studying potential of vocational students. Some of the students at these branches are not very bright and they struggle with their mother tongue. Therefore, to learn English is for some of them very difficult.

The textbooks published for secondary schools are rather difficult and not very easy to use for them. These books are made for children with higher IQ, they are expected to have interest in the language, and they want to study and obtain the knowledge of English.

### **The textbooks used at schools:**

The textbooks that are now used at vocational schools are not suitable for the branches. The teachers need to teach the students general English and some professional English according to the type of vocational branch the students study. All the students need the same basic rules for general English.

For general purposes are used books as Time To Talk by Sarah Peters and Tomáš Gráf published by Polyglot and Step By Step written by British-Czech team of authors published by Fraus. These books have grammar explained in Czech, which is very useful in teaching vocational branches.

Step By Step is not suitable at all. After the explained grammar, follows only one exercise to practise it. That is very deficient for the whole class. There is also lack of listening exercises and texts for reading.

Time To Talk offers enough exercises to practise the grammar. There are also enough texts to read and exercises to practise listening and speaking. Nevertheless, the textbook is published for secondary and language schools and therefore there is a lot of grammar that is not needed at vocational branches. It is too detailed.

For the cooks, sweet-makers, and waiters is used textbook Ready to order published by Longman. This textbook is suitable for their level of English. It presents skills work focusing on typical situations in a hotel or a restaurant. This knowledge should be sufficient for students of these vocational branches. The disadvantage is the vocabulary. There is no vocabulary list so the teacher has to prepare it for the students and it is time-consuming. Another disadvantage is the price of the textbook and of the workbook. Some of the students have social problems and 600,- crowns are a lot of money for them to pay for textbooks.

### **The textbooks planned for next year:**

As the textbook Ready To Order seems to match the requirements it will be also used in teaching in next years. There has to be solved the textbook of general English for all the vocational branches. At the meeting of language-teachers were discussed books as Angličtina pro samouky or Angličtina pro jazykové školy. These books are not made for vocational students but they are the least unsuitable for these students. As these types of books do not

contain anything about the vocational branch, the teachers have to prepare additional materials for each branch.

When students finish their vocational study, they should have knowledge of English according to their branch. The teachers also have to make conditions suitable to the students and the lessons. Students should enjoy studying English and should be aware about the importance of English language in their branch. They should have mainly instrumental motivation so they will know that they can gain a well-paid job if they will have a decent knowledge of English.

**Conclusion:**

I hope that there will be a suitable textbook written for vocational students so studying English would be easier for vocational branch and for the teachers as well. It is very time-consuming to search all the necessary materials and prepare the most important vocabulary for the students of each vocational branch.