

August 2008

Tapescript – Karin

My name is Karin Skagerberg. I'm from Sweden. I work in Stockholm which is the capital of Sweden but I am originally from the south of Sweden. I work in a bookstore and I am in charge of the ELT books: the English Language Teaching section. I actually just ended up working there because I had been working in the bookstore for a really long time. So, I kind of just worked myself, my way up and I ended up in the language department because I am interested in languages and I got the opportunity to work in a really big bookstore. They have lots of different departments. So, the bookstore I work in is actually the biggest in Scandinavia so we have a big department of language-teaching books and just for people who are interested in linguistics in general.

It consists of choosing which books to buy to sell on in the store; ordering books mostly; meeting with reps from different publishers and also helping customers is of course a big part of the job since I am always in the store. It's not an office job. I am in the bookstore all day.

First of all we have to buy in the books that are parts of courses – coursebooks. Since it is language-teaching books, we actually have to buy coursebooks first of all but then I actually have free hands a little bit to choose something that I think is interesting or something that I think will sell.

Lots of teachers but lots of students that come for additional books to their courses and people that are just interested in the English language. In Sweden we have good language teaching in English so people are generally, you know, quite a high level of English so they want to always develop their skills. I think we're basically brought up on English from the beginning because all our television, all our movies – we don't dub movies, we get subs on everything – all the TV and lots of the magazines and newspapers – we get everything in English. Mostly American English but British as well.

I think amongst older people it is a fear because it's being going in that direction. We use lots of English words when we talk. It might be a fear but, I, for me it's not. I think it's OK and... People are so used to being bilingual so, there, it's not like Swedish is going to disappear just because we speak lots of English.



Something that's got something to do with books. I am really interested in publishing and languages and books. So we'll see. I don't know.

When I was a child I wanted to be an actress, I think, or a dancer but I have always been surrounded by books. My mom is a librarian so she's read to me since I was little child. It's always been there.

I actually won a competition called *The Business Experience* competition and I wrote a marketing plan and lots of stuff about myself and I just sent it in and I won work experience. So, I'm going to be here for three weeks. I'm so much more excited now than when I, I was excited when I got here but now it's just, I really just want to get working and start working in this business. It's so interesting. I'm beginning to see all of the different departments: the marketing team; the sales team. Everything is just so exciting. Something with languages and books so I guess English-language teaching would be perfect. That's one of the main things, when I am working in the bookstore, I sometimes feel that there isn't enough time for the actual books. So, I would be perfectly comfortable with working behind the scenes so to speak.

Most of the things actually seem very very similar. People have kind of that relaxed attitude towards each other that we have working in Sweden as well. I think in Sweden people tend to go to work a bit earlier and sometimes go home earlier as well. I think most people get to work at around eightish. That's why I work in shop. I don't have to start until ten. All the time, I think people will say this about English people but, you're so polite. I never thought of Swedish people as rude but now when I go back I'm going to be angry if somebody pushes me and don't say 'sorry' or 'excuse me' because people do that here and it's so nice. Yes, people are super kind and they help you when you can't find your way and they ask you if you're alright and that's so great. And people say thank you to the bus driver. That's amazing! We don't do that at home.

Hopefully I will have finished my studies that I'm about to start now. I'm going to start studying Spanish. So I will have finished my language studies and hopefully some sort of a degree in literature or journalism. Working for a nice company. Maybe in publishing, I don't know and hopefully I will have travelled a bit more because I would like to travel more.