

Across the borders – Over the boundaries: 25th Jubilee IATEFL Poland Conference in Szczecin

About 800 teachers teaching all ages from babies to seniors, from all types of schools, state and private met at 25th anniversary IATEFL Poland conference in the most northern Polish city Szczecin. If you find it uneasy to locate the city with 400 000 inhabitants on the map, look for Štětín in Czech.

Participants were offered over 150 inspiring talks, workshops and live lessons run by both local and international speakers. Joining in as the ATECR representative enabled me to spend a sunny weekend 16-18 September 2016 together with national and international participants discussing educational issues, sharing and networking.

Winners of Speech Competition were awarded during the conference opening ceremony; in presence of representatives of municipality and other VIP, including IATEFL president Marjorie Rosenberg. Maybe this is a tip for other conference organisers to put together young people with experienced educators.

All major regional and international publishers were present and ready to answer questions and explain anything about their materials they are creating to support ELT.

A wide range of presentations covered a variety of topics and approaches from basic and traditional ones for new teachers to advanced and modern, including odpověď scanned by a special mobile application.

I found very interesting several non-traditional conference presentations where real students were present. We observed classwork with learners of all ages: from pre-school kids to school leaving prep-classes students. They modelled real – class situations were popular among the participants. .



The presentation of our ATECR project SELTIC, the Science and English Language Integrated in the Classroom, was well attended. The international participants enjoyed hands-on activities, including surprising tasting of ice-cream which they made themselves with no fridge. The methodical support in foreign language for subject teachers and the methodological support in subject issues for language teachers are available together with handouts for students at three levels – VYL/YL, teenagers, young adults – at <http://seltic.pbworks.com>. There was also a lively discussion on best ways of employing this approach with their students.

Polish organisers encourage cooperation and thus made a list of participants and their emails available in the conference brochure. They also tend to organise the conferences in smaller and distant locations to bring ELT updates and support really all teachers.

Participation at this conference on behalf of ATECR, both as its representative and a presenter, enabled an invaluable opportunity to foster current cooperation between our associations, to start new contacts and to gain inspiration for our future activities which are contributing to high-quality English language education in his country and abroad. I would like to express my gratitude for ATECR support of my attendance.

If you are interested in learning more about this event and IATEFL Poland, go to <http://iatefl.org.pl/en>

Jana Jílková
ATECR regional coordinator

