THE WINDS OF CHANGE

The 18th International ELT Conference, 20.-22.10.2017, Istanbul, Turkey

The 18th Conference of ELT was held in Istanbul, a city which lies between two continents. There are between 12 and 19 million people living in Istanbul, which is making it one of the largest cities in Europe and the Word[[1]](#footnote-1).

INGED is an international organization which forwards more effective and better quality teaching and learning of English in Turkey, trying to connect Turkish teachers and educational specialists with teachers and researchers round the globe. The aim of the conference was integration of current knowledge and trends in the foreign language.

The conference was hosted by Istanbul Aydin University, a state-recognized foundation university established in 2003. It became a university in 2007. Since then it has grown rapidly. Nowadays it has roughly 39 000 students from 102 countries. And the biggest TECHNO CENTER of Turkey as a single complex[[2]](#footnote-2).

In three full days there were plenary sessions, panel discussions, workshops and papers on various topics. Large sessions were held in a conference hall, smaller events in 3 rooms. Most speakers came from various cities in Turkey and Istanbul itself (Prof.Dr.Birsen Tütünis, Prof.Dr.Aydan Ersöz and others), some were from other parts of Europe like Great Britain, Hungary and Poland (Prof.Dr. Peter Medgyes, Prof.Dr. Miroslaw Pawlak, Prof.Dr. Richard Smith).

Many topics were really exciting and engaging but my personally most favourite was the Saturday morning´s plenary session called *The Native/Non-native Conundrum* (hlavolam).[[3]](#footnote-3) In his fascinating lecture professor Medgyes was talking about the differences between native and non-native teachers of English. He pointed out benefits of both and stressed that a non-native teacher can provide a better leader model (*If he can do it, I can manage too*) and supply more information about the language which is not his native language. The main features of a good teacher will be his sufficient qualification and experience. If it is the case it does not really matter whether he is a native or not. We- non-natives- are according to the professor- 97 percent of all English language teachers worldwide.

The future lies in providing sufficient teachers, provide them with aimed training both in school and out of school. Further constantly improve their language knowledge with special stress on primary teachers, CLIL method and ITC. Professor Medgyes was speaking out of my mind and his speech was not only educational but also highly entertaining which is rare goods.

As Malala Yousafzai said *Let us remember: One book, one pen, one child, and one teacher can change the world*[[4]](#footnote-4). I believe that so many enthusiastic language teachers from all over the globe, native and non-native speakers can manage for sure.

To conclude, I am very grateful to ATECR for sending me to such an interesting event and I also want to express my gratitude to Büsra Delen who took good care of me at all times. The lovely weather and the seafood restaurant in the pleasant company just contributed to making my short stay in Istanbul unforgettable once for all.

Mgr. Barbora Haupenthal

1. https://wikitravel.org/en/Istanbul [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. http://www.aydin.edu.tr [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. https://cs.wiktionary.org/wiki/conundrum [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/m/malalayous569368.html [↑](#footnote-ref-4)