

I am Sara Awad (Egypt), winner of IATEFL Africa Scholarship 2010. I am a university teacher, teacher trainer, curriculum designer, and linguistics researcher. Teaching English as a foreign / second language is the core of my job. My students are adults learning general English, ESP, and international oral and written business communication. I always participate (either as a presenter or an audience member) in the TEFL and TESOL events held annually in Egypt. IATEFL 2010 was my first conference abroad. Attending the 44th IATEFL conference was a marvelous experience. Thanks to Africa Scholarship, I did gain much experience in several areas ranging from how to organize a conference to how to be one of the best English teachers.

The conference was extremely well-organized. The ushers, information desk and registration desk staffs were all welcoming, helpful and highly trained. The conference sessions were deeply informative and thought provoking. They managed to tackle a wide selection of topics belonging to almost all areas of language and language teaching. They updated audience on new concepts and methodologies, discussed popular ones, reflected on common problems of language teaching and their potential solutions, provided valuable teaching tips, and gave way to views exchange.

The book exhibition was gorgeous. I enjoyed it so much. It included stands of the most famous book publishing houses and representatives of UK English teaching colleges, schools and centers. It provided a wide variety of language and language teaching books, e-demos of book methodologies and activities, discounted items and great offers. It also celebrated new editions and anniversaries of dictionaries and books.

The conference job market provided several brilliant career opportunities and created a lot of motivation, especially for the young teachers. Interviews for vacant posts were conducted instantly, which indicated seriousness. The conference evening events created great opportunities for networking. Teachers from different cultures and of different ages were given a chance to talk, exchange information and develop personal and professional networking. Though they differed in nature, the evening events shared a linguistic undertone, which addressed the linguistic interest shared by all the participants.

As scholarship winners, we were particularly welcomed. A tea party celebrating our winning and giving us a chance to meet was held, and a word of congratulation was given by Mr. Herbert Pucha, the conference president. Our photo posters were displayed on the wall of IATEFL scholarships stand at the book exhibition. Moreover, each of us was given a poster of the photos of all the IATEFL 2010 scholarship winners.

I dare say that at IATEFL 2010, I got both my mind and my heart refreshed. There, my experience was broadened, and my teaching views were well-heard. I had a chance to meet great figures in the field whose names I had only read on books or heard of. I got to know a great number of experienced teachers, and at the personal level, I developed many warm friendships. I sincerely thank the scholarship granters, sponsors and working team to whom I will be forever grateful.