

Reports on Past SIG Events

Last updated: 9 October, 2002

Index

- ◆ [Brief Report on Evaluations](#)
- ◆ [Key](#)
- ◆ [Publicity for the event](#)
- ◆ [Information after Booking](#)
- ◆ [Cost](#)
- ◆ [Catering](#)
- ◆ [Venue](#)
- ◆ [Facilities](#)
- ◆ [Speakers](#)
- ◆ [Other](#)
- ◆ [Suggestions](#)
- ◆ [Future topics](#)
- ◆ [Lessons to be learned](#)



IT for All in ELT

A Computer SIG event, held on October 18th, 1997, in Walthamstow, UK

A Waltham Forest College and IATEFL Joint Venture

Reported by tilly@southdene.freemove.co.uk, IATEFL Computer SIG Events Co-ordinator

Brief Report on Evaluations

Although applications had been slow, attendance on the day was outstanding, in fact we had more than the number catered for which meant that those arriving and paying on the day had to find their own lunch (the cost of lunch was knocked off the charge).

Altogether there were 51 people present: 6 main speakers, 1 assistant speaker, 4 organisers (2 from IATEFL and 2 from WFC), and 40 participants. Participants came from all over the country (Harrow, Hove, Bournemouth, Manchester, Oxford, Canterbury, St.Albans, Hatfield and of course London) and two had travelled from Germany.

29 evaluation sheets were returned and most of them were filled out in detail with comments and suggestions for future events.



Key

Remarks were graded on a 3 point scale (1 = good, 2 = average, 3 = bad) and so the number in brackets after the topic is the average evaluation.



Publicity for the event (1.5)

17/29 were very happy with the publicity.

Negative comments were:

- 'Not much info about what exactly there would be'
- 'Arrived rather late'
- 'I heard about it very late. When did the mail shot go out?'
- 'Unaware of any'
- 'Poor'

Positive comments were:

- 'E-mail list useful'
- 'Well, I'm here so it must have worked! A notice appeared in my staffroom at work, school = IATEFL member'.



Information after Booking (1.88)

10/29 were very happy with the information they received after booking. However this was the area with most negative comments, 7 expressing dissatisfaction. The reasons were mainly to do with late arrival of information and a feeling that more detailed descriptions of sessions and format of the day were needed. However since most bookings were made in the last two weeks before the event it would not seem to be the organisers' fault if follow-up information came only just before the day.

Some hands-on sessions required a limitation on numbers (Tony Williams, Diane Slaouti, Chris Warren) which came as an unpleasant surprise to late arrivals, especially as these were all beginners' sessions. Again, it had been hard to predict the pressure on places when 2 weeks earlier we thought we would be lucky to get more than a handful per session.

Negative comments were:

- 'A little late, unfortunately'
- 'None, however I did enrol only 3 days before'
- 'Not enough re. fact that some talks would have limitations on numbers'
- 'I would have appreciated the information sooner to enable me to make plans earlier'
- 'Map could be clearer. I took wrong road. My fault no doubt.'
- 'Minimal'
- 'Received 2 days before conference'
- 'No info about what sessions were to be about'
- 'Would appreciate clear picture of what Beginner / Advanced is taken to mean'
- 'Found it hard to get through to IATEFL office'
- 'Came rather late'

- 'None'
- 'Wrongly informed about paying on the day'
- 'Late booking/ no info'
- 'Maps took a bit of getting'
- 'Not that much'
- 'Map not enclosed'

Positive comments were:

- 'No problems'
- 'Fine'
- 'I got the programme at work soon after applying'
- 'Very good'
- 'Very efficiently handled'



Cost (1.05)

21/29 expressed satisfaction with the cost, the only negative comment attached to this box was 'It was a pity about the technical faults in the afternoon' which would seem slightly peevish. None actually said they would pay more but it seems that it represented very good value for the participants and in future we may be able to charge more (and possibly remunerate speakers, since the success of the day falls largely on their shoulders).

Positive comments were:

- 'Very reasonable'
- 'Fair'
- 'Fine - school paid'
- 'Fine - good value'
- 'About right'
- 'Reasonable'



Catering (1.36)

20/29 were very happy with the catering (3 lots of coffee, tea and biscuits and a buffet lunch).

There were only a few negative comments:

- 'Not enough cold water'
- 'Dreadful, have you never heard of vegetarians?'
- 'Standard buffet - satisfactory but not inspired'
- 'Good, though would appreciate something hot'
- 'Okay, more veggie choice please'
- 'Not enough drink'

Among the positive comments were:

- 'Fine, lunch= good and coffee when needed'

- 'Excellent'
- 'Very good, decaf coffee next time, please'
- 'Fine, nice buffet'



Venue (1.04)

27/29 were very happy with the venue - this was obviously a unanimously popular choice of venue.

The only negative comment was:

- 'Could have been more accessible'

Positive comments included:

- 'Fine. Easy to find'
- 'Very good. But some of the rooms were far too overheated'
- 'O.K. Good directions'
- 'Excellent'
- 'Very pleasant'
- 'Very good for me as I live in Tottenham'
- 'Fine (rather impersonal, but who cares?!)'
- 'Very comfortable'



Facilities (1.3)

20/29 were very happy with the facilities.

Negative comments were:

- 'Good, but some problems with broken headset.'
- 'Too many hardware / software problems'
- 'No Internet, but these things happen'

Among the positive comments:

- 'Very good - if only they had left trouble-shooters for you'
- 'A few problems - out of their control but well-handled'
- 'IT room seemed well-equipped'
- 'Excellent'
- 'Very good'
- 'Excellent - plenty of computers'



Speakers (1.12)

24/29 were very happy with the speakers, many giving detailed praise for the high standard of training given on the day.

Only one participant was negative in this area and the problems

were all out of the control of the speakers involved (there was flooding at Euston station which meant that Faramarz Amiri and Diane Slaouti were delayed, the server providing Netscape for Chris Warren's 'Internet for Beginners' crashed just beforehand):

'Session 1 - speaker couldn't get there, Session 2 - not my choice and of no interest to me, Session 3 The Internet - 'servers down'. Did nothing. Nobody's fault but I had paid for myself and travelled for 1 1/2 hours to get here so disappointing. Restaged session 1 - interesting but not 'hands on'

Here are all the enthusiastic positive comments:

- 'Good especially the IT in the classroom. Problems of the day were largely out of the hands of the IATEFL organisers.'
- 'Very informative'
- 'Excellent. Speakers were very enthusiastic, and therefore motivating. I have had an interesting and enjoyable day'
- 'Diane Slaouti and Joanna Teague - excellent, inspiring and interesting session, regrettably short due to technical probs earlier on. Chris Warren - good speaker, not his fault, but very disappointing due to failure of server - once internet was up couldn't take advantage due to displaced session with Faramarz Amiri from morning which I wished to attend. Faramarz Amiri - very interesting, a bit technical but useful for the FUTURE.'
- 'Diane - very interesting but a bit too fast, Chris Warren - did well under harsh conditions, interesting, Faramarz - Excellent'
- 'Diane Slaouti:- absolutely excellent - session too short! Peter Bendon - no doubt well-informed technologically but not enough of value to say to EFL teachers. Faramarz Amiri:- good and informative - would have been better if hands-on.'
- 'Excellent - especially Chris Warren who coped very well.'
- 'Good - special praise to Chris Warren, Diane Slaouti'
- 'Very good - shame about the video link up with R2D2 but that's life'
- 'Informative, interesting'
- 'Excellent'
- 'Very competent and interesting'
- 'All good'
- 'Diane Slaouti was excellent managing a large class with potentially chaotic possibilities in a skillful way. The reduced time due to delay by Faramarz Amiri (a guest speaker arriving late) was utilised well, but it was a pity Diane didn't have enough time to develop the obviously excellent ideas she has'
- 'All three that I heard were very good i.e. CALL - Tony Williams, Class - Diane Slaouti, Net - Chris Warren'
- 'Good'
- 'Diane - excellent if rushed, Chris - excellent in adversity,

needed to say what he said, perhaps needed more time'

- 'Very good'
- 'Video conferencing seems to have little practical value to a teacher (at present). "Classroom Applications of IT" seems to have been fundamental to the whole day, but access was limited'
- 'Diane Slaouti - Particularly useful in terms of classroom applications, Video Conferencing - Would've been nice to find out how to go about using this in class / between schools etc.. + more solid advice on setting up, Authoring - Fascinating, but didn't realise it wouldn't be hands-on'
- 'Good'
- 'Very good. I learned a lot'
- 'All were good. I particularly learned from Diane Slaouti's session'



Other

Participants were given a chance to comment on any other aspect of the day which they felt needed to be mentioned. These comments were:

- 'Longman's exhibition a little disorganised. Where was the advertised 'discussion' - didn't seem to take place'
- 'Organisers - Very friendly and helpful. Well done. Technical hitches must've made the day a nightmare. What a pity the day was dogged by technical failure as I'm leaving feeling somewhat disappointed. Had hoped giving up 50% of my weekend would really be worth it. Sadly it wasn't. A few useful ideas but..'
- 'Imaginative use of current / stable technology more useful than 'cutting edge' demos of stuff that is unavailable / unreliable'
- 'It would be a good idea to make sure there are technicians on site to help with technical breakdowns.'
- 'I knew which sessions I wanted in advance - disappointed at limit on numbers'
- 'Sessions started late / time wasted as result of technical problems'
- 'I'm relatively inexperienced in IT / EFL and today has been very helpful. Thanks'
- 'Found using the Internet really exciting as hadn't really used it before. All in all I'm very satisfied'



Suggestions

Finally on the evaluation form participants were invited to give suggestions for improvements of the event and for future event topics. These were mainly to do with better organisation of options since it was obviously a sore point that some sessions filled up

before some participants could arrive to register. Some system of pre-registration for sessions may be the answer. Comments on this theme and general organisational suggestions were:

- 'Perhaps today's events could have been rescheduled in reaction to the problems that have occurred, eg. video conferencing in the morning + Internet in the morning when there is less pressure on the computer servers'
- 'Please define more clearly what "beginners" or "advanced" level is'
- 'Applicants book optional sessions with application form to avoid disappointment for those who travelled further and arrived later'
- 'Please keep on offering classes for beginners as well as experienced operators'
- 'Programme in advance + it would have been helpful to book session place before arrival as it was a case of first come first served'
- 'It would have been better for sessions with limited numbers to be told and be able to register beforehand'
- 'Why was there no attempt to find out beforehand which sessions people were interested in?'
- 'Couldn't get in to all that I wanted and feel advance warning should be given - maybe sending reply card with programme so we can select early + let us know if our options are full? (before committing ourselves)'
- 'Certain sessions were already full when I arrived - perhaps you could run two sessions of the more popular ones (one in morning, one in afternoon). Too much teacher talk. I only had 30 minutes hands-on experience during the whole day.'
- 'I know there is a danger of overload - only a shame we couldn't get a taste of everything. The timetable could possibly give shorter breaks to get through as much as we can in the time available. I'm writing this before the hands-on session so perhaps that will be sufficient.'



Future topics

Future topics suggested were:

- 'More stuff that is immediately useable. Practical ideas for technophobes.'
- 'A weekday event would be nice'
- 'Computers in Self Access Centres'
- 'Classroom Management'
- 'Further workshops along a similar line would be good'
- 'More classroom applications of IT. Diane Slaouti's session was very interesting but rushed'
- 'More of Diane Slaouti's Classroom Applications of IT over a longer session period, "Classroom Control and Management'
- 'The idea of a workshop on Computers in Self Access

Centres might lend itself to a joint event with Learner Independence SIG. I envisage sessions on the Self Access software available, how to write to CD ROM, managing a local network etc...t would seem from the feedback that if Diane Slaouti wanted to she could run a whole day workshop on Classroom Applications of IT!!



Lessons to be learned

Overall there was a lot more positive feeling than disappointment although the day inevitably left some people dissatisfied. Lessons to be learned are:

- 1) Define terms (beginner / advanced) more clearly and describe sessions in more detail before the day.
- 2) Ask for pre-booking of sessions.
- 3) Have a technician available.
- 4) Give more time to hands-on sessions.
- 5) Schedule and stage a discussion and feedback session.
- 6) Contact publishers in good time and set aside a space for their displays.
- 7) Concentrate on practical teaching ideas and widely available technology.
- 8) Ensure a 'beginners' track' to every (?) CALL event.



MENU

[Home page](#) | [CALL Review](#) | [Committee members](#) | [Discussion forum](#) | [Future events](#) | [Past events](#)
[Contact us](#) | [Search this site](#) | [Guest book](#) | [Web links](#) | [IATEFL home page](#)
[Top of page](#)

IATEFL Computer SIG Home Page:
<http://www.paddocks64.freemove.co.uk/CompSIG2/callsig.htm>
Computer SIG Co-ordinator: tilly@southdene.freemove.co.uk
Computer SIG webmaster: gjtaylor@btinternet.com

IATEFL, 3 Kingsdown Chambers, Kingsdown Park, Whitstable, Kent
CT5 2FL, UK.
Phone: +44(0)1227 276528. Fax: +44(0)1227 274415
IATEFL Home Page: <http://www.iatefl.org>
Email: generalenquiries@iatefl.org