Please sent by Friday 26th May

To Catherine Addis/ EFL Gazette/ ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ / London W8 ▮

Dear Catherine,

I enclose the article we talked about on the phone about ~~bringing~~ *tracking* back CAL material for the classroom without computers. You wanted this for the March issue, I think you ~~said~~ *mentioned.*

~~EF. Gaz~~

You ~~mentioned~~ *said* that you pay £50 per thousand words—could payment be made to Pilgrims, not to me personally?

Yours sincerely,

Mario Rinvolucri

Never used by

┌─────────────────────────┐
│ **CALL without computers** │
└─────────────────────────┘

by Mario Rinvolucri, Pilgrims, ~~Canterbury~~. *UK*

Many ~~of us will be teaching~~ *teachers work* in situations where they cannot get their hands on computers and some ~~of you~~ *people* maybe don't feel like venturing into CAL-land even if the machines are available.

Neither of these are reasons for ignoring the new methodological ideas generated in the minds of CALL folk, many of which you can easily use without machines and machine skills. One of the classical CALL exercises is"complete cloze" in which the student sees ~~a blank~~ *blank, underlined* screen with ~~spaces for the~~ words of a sentence. The student type in what they think the first word is. If they are right the computer flashes ~~up~~ the word up and also gives them any other occurence of the same word in the text. They are soon working with a gapped text and can start using language knowledge and grammatical and syntactic inference. This brilliant computer exercise is easily transferred from the screen to the blackboard, with the teacher taking on the machine's 'slave' role. The teacher's only problem is maintaining neutrality and unobtrusiveness, Machines are good at that.

In their ~~recent~~ book, CALL* David Hardisty and Scott Windeatt have come up with an ~~excellent~~ *good* variation of the total cloze that turns it into a rich translation exercise. Here's how to do it without computers:

1. Give students two or three language *L1* ~~sentences~~ sentences to translate into L 2. Ask them to work in pairs and produce at least two different translations for each sentence. Get them to compare their ~~sentences~~ *translations in small groups.*

* OUP. 1988

2. Put up numbered blanks on the board that correspond to the words in your transltion

1   2   3   4   5

Your translation may have ~~changed~~ changed the word order of the original text. In this case write two or three ~~such~~ transposed words into their correct blanks on the board.

3. The class hypothesise their way towards your translation.

4. Lead a general discussion on alternatives to your translation.

The redundant computer

Maybe two thirds of the excellent ideas in the Hardisty and Windeatt book can be happily implemented without hard or software. The ideas they present that do require machines are those that involve word-processing and concordancing from a database. The rest of the book is a goldmine of useful, ordinary classroom exercises.

A few examples:

Exam Preparation

You get the students reading some compositions that have been ~~graded~~ marked in a test. They do not see the ~~grade~~ marks. You ask them to give each paper a grade and then to run ' an examiners' meeting' on their grading to try and standardise it. They compare their grading to that of the official testers. A real confidence-building exercise in the run-up to an exam. It may persuade some candidates that the examiners are human , too.

Cross class interviews

An elementary class prepare questions they will put to individual students in an advanced class to later write a profile of them.

They interview the advanced students.

They go away and write individual profiles of the advanced students and a profile of the group.

In a later lesson the advanced students are shown the profiles and asked to edit and expand them.

In a third class the elementary students read and comment on the expanded profiles.

I really don't see what this appealling exercise gains by the

writing stage happening in small groups round a screen. Could it
be that if you have the machines you have to do something with them?

A testing chain

Suppose you want the students to work on irregular verbs have them
sit in threes with equal physical access to the blackboard:

! Black board
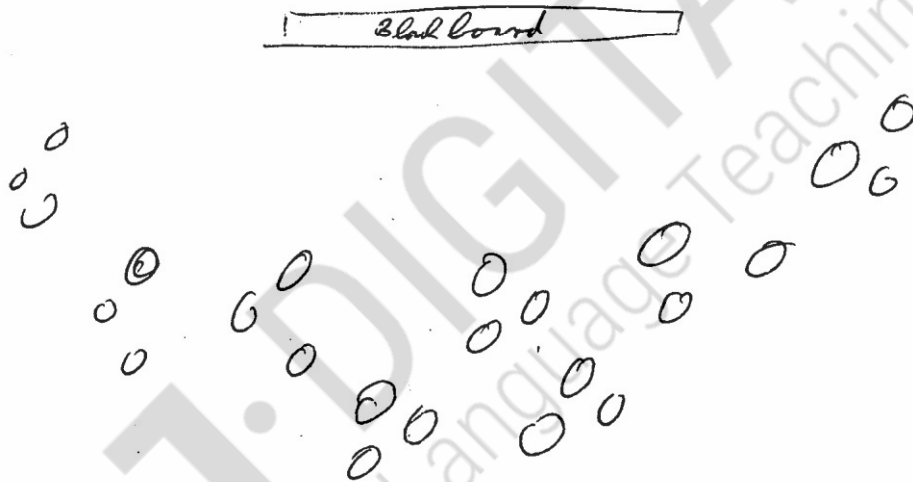
On the board you write:"Today I go/ yesterday I.......
The first member of a threesome to respond correctly, silently on
the board wins their group a point. Each three can only have
one of their number rush to the board and write.
        The next stimulus is provided by the winning threesome.
And so on.

        If you do this exercice computerishly as suggested by
Hardisty and Windeatt, here's what you need (I quote):

Hardware

    One computer per group, linked together in a Network

Software

    An electronic conferencing program , which simultaneously
    enables: computers on a Network to send messages to other
    computers.

Why use expensive machines when the exercise is arguably more fun
when done dashing to the blackboard? I would certainly opt for
the blackboard version with a sleepy afternoon class of
youngsters.

        CALL is a goldmine of good classroom exercises and you
should not be put off by the title . We should be throughly grateful
those
that machines stimulated the authors' creativity.

Maybe there are two conclusions to draw from Windeatt and Hardisty's methodologically rich text. The first is that the many hours TEFLers have spend bent over little green screens have produced a smallish number of exercises that are really computer specific, in which the computer allows the human brain to do things it otherwise could not do. The second is that Oxford University Press are funny folk to bring out an excellent methodology book and yet to restrict its sales by slapping a restrictive title on it: CALL. The poor can read this book as usefully as the machine ~~rich~~.

↳ aristocracy.