

**Mario Rinvolucris**

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**To:** "R.██████████" <r.██████████@██████████.com.br>  
**Sent:** 26 February 2003 10:07  
**Subject:** E Talk  
**To A** ██████████

Dear A.██████████

I agree with you that at intermediate and advanced level the "community language" of the class should be exclusively English.

However, I believe you can usefully use MT within the frame of highly disciplined exercises that have a specific linguistic purpose.

Let me offer you one of these from Sheelagh Deller and my book **Using the Mother Tongue**, Delta, 2002. Here's a summary of the exercise.

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 You ask sts to bring 3 or 4 photos of themselves to the next class.  
 In the next class they each write between half a page and a page about the photo they choose in Portuguese.

They then move around the room in search of a translator.

The students pair off and Person A translates Person B's text into English and vice-versa.

You move round and help where needed.

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 The language aim of this exercise is to get the students to fully express themselves ( via Portuguese) and then to discover the English needed to re-express their ideas.  
 If they wrote initially in English they would have to write within the constraints imposed by their lesser knowledge of English.

This is a beautiful exercise interpersonally as author and translator are available to each other.

Translation exercises really allow the language intelligence to come fully into play.

Andre, if you have an advanced class, try this one:

Dictate these sentences in English and tell the sts to write them down in Portuguese.

1. *She missed him.*
2. *She's got to like him.*
3. *She looked at him with nothing on.*
4. *It was sited/cited/sighted in Goiania.*
5. *The prince only liked two or three of his subjects*
6. *The poor woman was stoned.*
7. *To be fair, Tom divided the cookies equally*
8. *Do I understand you right/write?*
9. *You have to go right over the bridge.*

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10. *What an idiot I am to teach!*

Ask the students to compare their translations. Loud discussions will break out all over the room as it dawns on the students that all the sentences are ambiguous. All have two meanings some have three (like 1, 4, and 10).

This exercise goes down fantastically with "noisy" Brazilian students. I've tried it!

Have fun.

Mario