

Dear Colleagues,

Today is March 3rd and I am planning your course, which includes two days on communication through writing. Since this is the case I feel I have a right to write to you and find out a bit about what you are up to in your writing classes already, both with students and with trainees.

There might be a case for one of the April, Canterbury group to reply to this letter on behalf of the rest, but I would dearly like to get individual replies, as this will allow me to meet each of you through one of your written voices.

A bit about me: I have two Italian grandparents, one Cumbrian one and one from Aachen/ Aix-la-chapelle.

I started as a journalist in my early 20's (Reuters) and this changed my attitude to writing (at Oxford I was poetry editor for a student mag) I learnt that copy is for changing and that group writing is what you read in the papers- one text may have been edited by three or four hands, eg: the original correspondent, an agency sub-editor, the newspaper's news editor, a lawyer, another sub etc.... We did a lot of process writing in Fleet Street in the 60's, though we did not call it that.

Letters across class are an area I have spent much of the last four years exploring (see LETTERS. OUP, 1996). This letter to you, before the course, comes from that set of thoughts. How many teachers round the EU, who get the students communicating in English orally, then ask them to do addressee-less written work?

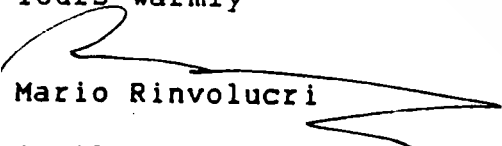
So please tell me what happens in your Denmark? I really need to know at both strategic and tactical level. What happens in parallel in mother tongue?

(I need to get away from my stereotype of Scandinavians fluent at mouth English but thin on the page.)

How much use do you make of E mail in your writing classes?

I am looking forward to a trickle/ bevy of letters with Danish stamps on them.

Yours warmly


Mario Rinvoluceri

(Pilgrims anchor person for the April Group)