

Callboard

ISSUE NUMBER ONE

JULY 1982

EDITORIAL

Welcome to the first issue of CALLBOARD. Those of you who willingly paid your £1 contribution towards the costs of producing and posting this newsletter will no doubt be relieved that you are at last getting something for your money - sparse though this first edition may be.

First, a reminder of the aims of CALLBOARD:

CALLBOARD is devoted to the dissemination of information about ideas and activities in the field of Computer-Assisted Language Learning. If you have something to say about your own area of work, have discovered or published a relevant article or book, invented a useful subroutine or merely heard a vague rumour about some new piece of software or hardware, then don't keep it to yourself - write and let us know. Your editors are:

Graham Davies & David Steel
School of Language Studies
Ealing College of Higher Education
St Mary's Road
London W5 5RF.

The copy date for CALLBOARD No. 2 is October 31st, 1982.

ACTIVITIES

Ealing College of Higher Education

In the course of the academic year 1981-82, thanks largely to a generous grant from the BP Educational Support Fund and increased research time, David Steel and Graham Davies intensified their efforts in the development of the following CALL programs at Ealing College of HE:

- German: approximately 100 vocabulary and grammar reinforcement/testing routines geared to the ab initio course 'Grundkurs Deutsch', R. Schaeppers et al., Munich 1980.
- EFL: approximately 60 multiple-choice testing routines designed to give students practice in tackling the Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency in English.

All the above programs run on the Tandberg EC10 microcomputer. Ab initio students of German now use the microcomputer on a regular weekly basis and EFL students are showing an increasing interest in CALL.

In 1982-83 all students on the course in Applied Language Studies will follow lectures in computer applications to language and complete an introductory course in programming in BASIC on the Prime 550.

University of Hull

Roel Vismann, Institute of Modern Dutch Studies, writes that a computer package has been developed for the teaching of ab initio Dutch. It is designed for the Tandberg EC10 and is due to be marketed sometime by Tandberg at a price of approx. £400.

University of Leeds

Peter Roach, Dept. of Linguistics & Phonetics, writes that a Leeds University CALL group has just been formed. The organisers are Peter Roach and Brian Page. Those interested should contact them at the University.

Peter Roach also suggests that CALLBOARD should be prepared to publicise material produced by students, especially those on postgraduate courses. He would like to recommend a dissertation by Alastair Davies (MA in Linguistics and English Language Teaching), which contains a general review of the usefulness (or otherwise) of CALL and then presents a program for practising English question formation which is written in BASIC and runs quite nicely on a Prime 750.

STORYBOARD

John Higgins, British Council, has developed an interesting package known as STORYBOARD. The idea is for the learner to rebuild a screenful of text from scratch - a sort of absolute Cloze test, with every word missing. Runs on the SHARP. PET version already developed by Graham Davies.

Modern Languages Conference 7.7.82

A one-day conference was held at the Advisory Unit for Computer-Based Education, Herts., for teachers based in the county. A small group of Herts teachers have been meeting with a view to producing some CALL software.
Organiser: Kathy Stones, Advisory Teacher for Modern Languages, Education Department, County Hall, Herts SG13 8DF.

FOREIGN CHARACTER SETS

This was an issue which provoked some discussion at the CET/CILT workshop at St. Martin's College in April. The following information may be of use to readers:
Creating lower case or foreign character sets on the APPLE II (a machine which has acquired a certain notoriety in this area) is made easier by using either of the following pieces of software:

DOS 3.3 TOOLKIT: an Apple product, which comes complete with some foreign character sets and enables the user to create his/her own special sets.

HIGHER TEXT: by Synergistic. A similar product, which takes the drudgery out of the creation of special fonts.

Both these pieces of software enable character sets to be soft-loaded. Commodore PET users will find FONT (obtainable from Super-soft) an excellent, easy-to-use program. FONT enables the standard PET character set to be modified and the relevant data to be dumped on tape or disk. For a reasonable charge, Super-soft will use this data to blow a new character generator EPROM which can be substituted for the standard ROM in a couple of minutes. If you require an EPROM containing the character sets for German and French, or have other special requirements, contact Wida software (address below).

Avon Computer Rentals, 8 Eastbury Close, Thornbury, Bristol BS12 1DE, market Alpha Plus, a character generator for CBM PET microcomputers which inserts easily into the character generator ROM socket. Character sets exist for German, Russian, Hebrew, Kana as well as the Greek characters so beloved of scientists and mathematicians. No price details available to editors.

Prof. Wolfram Burghardt of the University of Western Ontario, Canada, hopes to have a new character generator EPROM for the PET ready by Autumn 1982. The new EPROM will contain the complete character sets for Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, French, German and Russian and enable the user to switch from one to the other by means of a POKE command. Write to us at CALLBOARD for further details.

VIC users will by now have heard of the VIC's 'user-definable graphics' facility. They may have also discovered that most of the published information on this topic is incomprehensible and it is much more difficult to make use of this facility than the manufacturers indicate. If you need a set of foreign characters for your VIC then contact Graham Davies at Ealing College of HE, who has developed sets for French, German, Russian and Spanish. These are softloaded from tape at the start of a CALL session and they remain in memory until the machine is switched off. Russian teachers will be pleased to learn that Cyrillic and Roman characters can be displayed simultaneously on the VIC's screen (and in glorious colour!). There is a possibility that these sets may be marketed by Commodore in conjunction with a range of new CALL programs.

Anyone lucky enough to have received their BBC microcomputer should read the article on p. 34 of the June 1982 issue of "Educational Computing". This describes the technique of creating special characters and is a useful introduction to the concept of the 8 x 8 dot matrix. Tony Williams of Wida Software (address below) has already created a number of special character sets for the BBC micro.

Clive Sinclair's new SPECTRUM promises the facility for user-defined characters. It would be interesting to hear from anyone who has had any success in using it.

The new IBM microcomputer presents us with less of a problem - it comes complete with a range of special characters and diacritics. Could it be that the hardware manufacturers are really catching on?

HELP! Does anyone know how to create foreign characters on the Tandy range of micros? Let us know if you do.

CALL SOFTWARE PACKAGES

These are still few and far between. The following CALL packages have come to our notice:

CLEF

Computer-Assisted Learning Exercises for French. Being developed at the University of Western Ontario, Canada, under the supervision of Prof. Glyn Holmes. The package aims to provide a set of course-independent learning and revision programs for ab initio and intermediate students of French. A well-conceived package with excellent presentation strategies and error

diagnostic routines. At present available only for the CompuColor and InterColor microcomputers but there are plans to redevelop the whole package for a more popular microcomputer, possibly the CBM PET.

APFELDEUTSCH

First appeared 1981. Now completely revised and comes complete with softloaded German character set (upper and lower case). The package aims to provide a range of CALL backup drills linked with the audio-lingual course for beginners in German, "Grundkurs Deutsch", R. Schoepers et al., Verlag fuer Deutsch, Munich 1980. Available from Wida Software (address below). The package consists of a textbook, workbook, 6 audio tapes and 7 computer disks. At present available only for the APPLE II. Wida also market a set of approximately 30 independent CALL programs for students of German. These run on the CBM PET and cover areas such as irregular verbs, adjective endings, pronouns, time and word order. Many of the "Apfeldeutsch" and PET programs contain interesting animated sequences.

ATARI CALL Packages

Most people with a television set will have seen the advertisement for the ATARI French package. The ATARI packages, which cover French, German, Spanish and Italian, make copious use of graphics, sound and colour. The sound element includes natural human voices and synthetic music. Great emphasis is placed on presentation but some of the input routines are rather primitive. The emphasis is mainly on elementary conversational skills. Published by Longman/EMI.

WORDPACK

A set of games programs for students of English. Written by Chris Jones for the 16K RAM expanded ZX81. Includes a crossword puzzle (with the option of amending the words), language snap and a fruit machine game which uses words instead of symbols. Available from Wida Software (address below).

Does anyone know of any other CALL packages?

AUTHORING SYSTEMS

Authoring systems speed up the process of courseware creation. They have their drawbacks and limitations but are a boon for the uninitiated computer user.

Language teachers may have already heard of the following authoring systems, all of which have been designed by linguists, but the information is worth repeating for those of you who are newcomers to CALL:

IES/I by Rex Last, University of Dundee. Written originally for the Iandberg EC10 running under CPM, this is an ideal package for the first-time user. It makes use of a series of panels of information into which the user simply types the relevant introductory notes, questions, answers and comments. It includes the options of conditional reinforcement, branching, shape presentation and instoring searches and does not require the user to learn any special language or code. It is written in plain English, is fully self-prompting and makes the setting up of question-answer routines, gap-filling exercises and Cloze tests an easy task.

TEACHER'S TOOLKIT by Wida Software. Written by Graham Davies, Ealing College of HE. Less ambitious and less powerful than IES/I but equally easy to use. Available for the APPLE II, PET

and (shortly) TANDY TRS 80 Model III microcomputers. Enables the user to set up any sort of question-answer routine with help notes and conditional reinforcement comments. Includes options of shape presentation, alternative answers and automatic elimination of spaces/default to lower case.

WATCAN by Carl Hennig, University of Waterloo, Canada. An elaborate and powerful package which actually generates BASIC code. Runs under CPM. It is not yet known on which microcomputers the package can run but it has been observed in use on a SUPERBRAIN by Graham Davies. See p. 6 of the April 1982 edition of "Educational Computing".

COMET (provisional title) by Wolfram Burghardt, University of Western Ontario, Canada. Currently available for Italian, French, German and other versions in preparation. Includes very powerful help and error diagnostic features. Excellent screen presentation and allows student to summon instant translations of instructions given in foreign language. Available for CBM PET. Further details forthcoming in Autumn 1982 - contact Graham Davies, Ealing College of HE.

HARDWARE

=====

The Centre for Language and Communication Studies, Trinity College, Dublin, has embarked upon a project to develop an interactive learning facility using an Intel 8086 microprocessor and a video cassette recorder. Initially the system will be used for CALL but will also be capable of a much wider range of CAL applications. Further information from:

D.G. Little, B. Litt., M.A.,
Centre for Language and Communication Studies,
Arts Building,
Trinity College, Dublin 2.

Editors' Footnote: the June 1982 issue of BYTE magazine contains a very comprehensive review of interactive videodisc systems and names of institutions and commercial enterprises active in this field. A conference 'Computers and Video Convergence' will be held at the Crest Hotel, Heathrow Airport, 25th-27th October 1982. Details from:

Videocommunication Systems Division,
Office of the Future Ltd.,
108 Kew Road,
Richmond,
Surrey TW9 2PQ.

SUBROUTINES

The following subroutine eliminates spaces from a user's input (A\$) and defaults to lower case (it only works on the CBM PET):


```

05 INPUT A$
10 FOR X = 1 TO LEN(A$)
20 A$ = LEFT$(A$,X-1) + CHR$(ASC(MID$(A$,X,1)) AND 127) + MID$(A$,X+1)
30 NEXT X
40 X = 1
50 IF MID$(A$,X,1) = " " THEN A$ = LEFT$(A$,X-1) + MID$(A$,X+1): GOTO 50
60 IF X < LEN(A$) THEN X = X + 1: GOTO 50
70 PRINT A$

```

Has anyone done the same on other machines?

Peter Roach has sent the following subroutines for character-by-character input checking:

(ZX81 - 16K)

```

1 DIM X$(3,1)
5 PRINT "TYPE THE NAME SAM"
10 LET N$="SAM"
20 FOR C=1 TO LEN(N$)
25 LET X$(C)=N$(C)
30 NEXT C
40 FOR C=1 TO LEN(N$)
45 LET Q$=INKEY$
50 IF Q$="" THEN GOTO 45
55 IF Q$<>X$(C) THEN GOTO 105
65 PRINT AT 4,C+10;Q$
75 PAUSE 20
80 NEXT C
85 STOP
105 PRINT AT 10,4;"WRONG TRY AGAIN";
110 DELAY 60
115 PRINT AT 10,1;"
120 GOTO 45

```

(CBM PET)

```

1 PRINT "cls": REM CLEAR SCREEN
5 PRINT "TYPE THE NAME 'SAM'"
10 LET N$="SAM"
20 FOR C=1 TO LEN(N$)
30 X$(C)=MID$(N$,C,1)
40 FOR C=1 TO LEN(N$)
45 GETQ$:IFQ$=""THEN GOTO 45
55 IF Q$<>X$(C) THEN GOTO 70
60 PRINTQ$;:GOTO75
70 GOTO 105
75 NEXT C
80 END
105 PRINT
110 FOR D=1 TO 10:PRINT "csr down";:NEXT D
115 PRINT$;
120 LET T1$="000000"
125 IF T1<60THEN GOTO 125
130 FOR D=1 TO LEN(E$)
135 PRINT"backspace/space/backspace";:NEXT D
140 FOR D=1 TO 11:PRINT"csr up";:NEXT D
145 PRINT TAB(C-1);
150 GOTO 45

```

PUBLICATIONS

The June 1982 edition of "Practical Computing" contains an article by Chris Harrison on Cloze testing, together with a listing of a program for the Video Genie.

Footnote: Graham Davies has developed a Cloze-testing, gap-filling exercises template program for the PET and VIC. The latter runs in conjunction with softloaded French, German, Spanish or Russian character sets.

CILT Information Guide: forthcoming in Autumn 1982. Graham Davies is currently writing this guide on CALL. John Higgins, British Council, is contributing on EFL developments. If anyone has any interesting ideas they would wish to see mentioned, please contact Graham Davies at Ealing College of HE.

ADDRESSES

Wida Software
The Red House
2 Nicholas Gardens
London W5

Supersoft
First Floor
10-14 Canning Road
Wealdstone
Harrow, Middlesex HA3 7SD