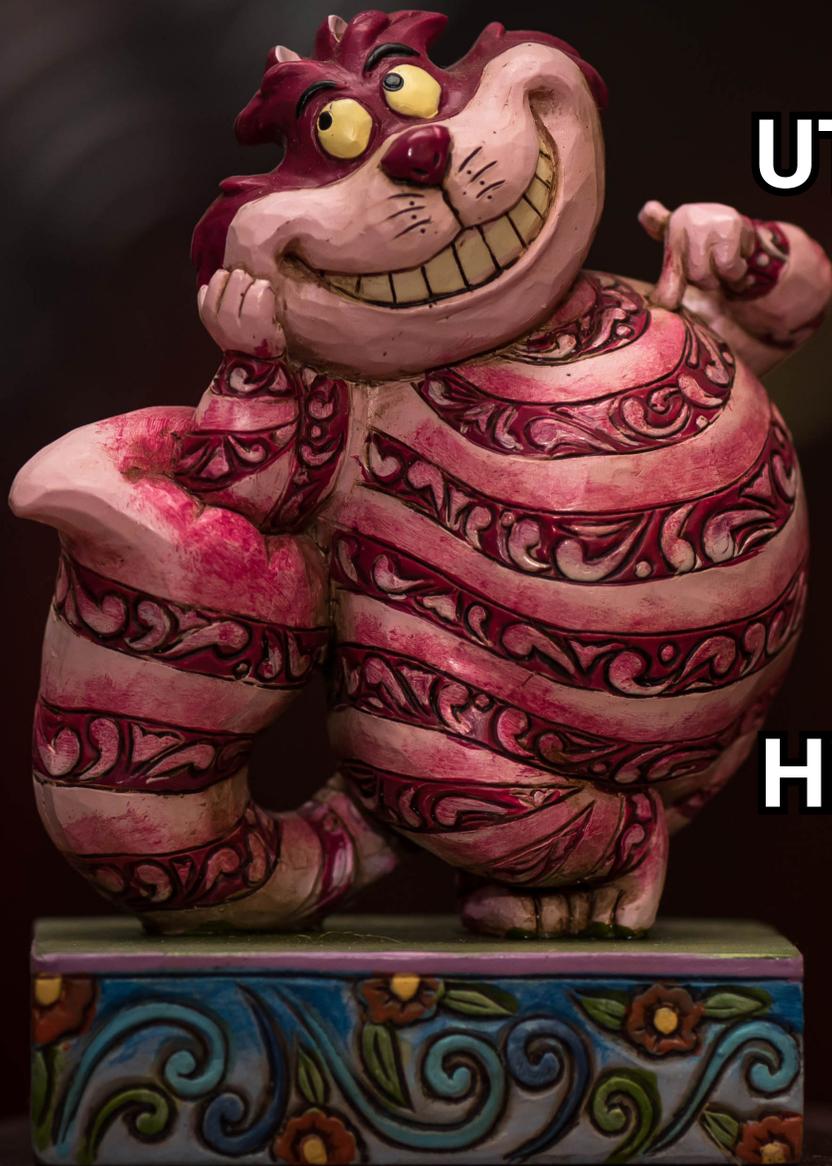


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# Knowledge Is Created, Not Communicated



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<https://www.facebook.com/TheILEPost?fref=ts>

# COVER PAGE



Happy February to all our readers. This month, we dedicate our cover page to Wonderland, a magical place created by Lewis Carroll. This story lets the narrator make conclusions about the implications of childhood into adulthood. If you have an awesome picture you think could be the cover of one of The ILE Post editions, send it to [eherrera@utn.ac.cr](mailto:eherrera@utn.ac.cr). So far several readers have sent amazing pictures that we will be sharing with you soon.

If you want to know what is happening in ILE, follow us in FACEBOOK. Photo credit: <https://pxhere.com/es/photo/852028>

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# EDITORIAL

## Costa Rican Elections

by Jose Soto (ILE Director)



The still active political campaign became overtly awkward. This month I would like to refer to this uncomfortable stand we are at now deterring the international opinion about the elections of 2018, but mostly us. Needless to say, this is extremely abnormal in our democratic system.

The following is a transcript from the NYTimes.com by Elizabeth Malkin describing the situation as an outsider.

A debate over same-sex marriage propelled an evangelical Christian singer from a long-shot candidate to the top vote-getter in the first round of Costa Rica's presidential election Sunday.

Fabricio Alvarado, a former television journalist who became an influential Pentecostal singer, will face Carlos Alvarado Quesada, a former labor minister, in the April 1 runoff. The two men are not related.

Mr. Alvarado had won almost 25 percent of the vote to nearly 22 percent for Mr. Alvarado Quesada, with about 90 percent of the polling places counted, the nation's electoral board said.

What had been a conventional campaign in Latin America's most enduring democracy — with debates over corruption, crime and the economy — was suddenly upended four weeks ago when an international court decision required Costa Rica to legalize same-sex marriage.

Fabricio Alvarado, 43, who was first elected to the Legislative Assembly in 2014, made his opposition to the ruling the centerpiece of his campaign and suddenly emerged from the crowded field of 13 candidates to take the lead in opinion polls.

The January advisory opinion by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights determined that international law required governments to recognize the rights of same-sex couples, including the right to marry.

Mr. Alvarado called the decision a violation of Costa Rica's sovereignty, and he threatened to pull the country out of the court if he is elected.

"People said, 'This is the person that I want to defend us in the face of international impositions,'" he told a Costa Rican radio station after he took the lead in opinion polls.

The government of the departing president, Luis Guillermo Solís, sought the opinion on gay marriage from the court in 2016, but the ruling also applies to some 20 countries that acknowledge the court's jurisdiction. Several countries in the region, including Argentina, Brazil, Colombia and Uruguay, have legalized same-sex marriage, as have parts of Mexico. But many more have not. (...)

The international commentary focusses attention to only one single issue, legalizing gay marriage. It is clear that we do have more important issues to be concerned with. This has awakened very passionate opposing views among Costa Ricans. Unfortunately, the world is watching us quarrel over things that should not matter. I am worried, but are you?



## UTN Committed To Water

On January 28<sup>th</sup>, UTN held the first Administrative Associations for Aqueducts and Sewers (ASADAS) Constitutive Assembly known as CONAFLU. Representatives of OSA Community Aqueduct Union (UNCAOSA), South ASADAS Federation (FEDASUR), Coto Brus ASADAS Association, Grecia Community Aqueduct Union (UNAGUAS), and Nicoya Península ASADAS Union (UNAPEN) elected Olga Zárate Esquivel as president of the first board of directors of this entity.

CONAFLU's main objective is having an impact on the discussion, analysis and definition of public policies and regulations on community management of water, sanitation and integrated management of water resources. In addition, this entity is a legitimate entity and represents all of Costa Rican water unions, associations, and federations in national and international meeting.

An ASADA is an association managed by the community responsible for the water supply in a community. The problem of water supply has increased in the last years, and that is why Costa Rica needs to take care of this vital resource.

The water strategy of the Government is delineated in a more detailed fashion in executive decree No. 30480-MINAE of June 2002, in which the guiding principles of the national water policy are defined. The



decree acknowledges that access to water constitutes an inalienable human right, and states that the management and use of water resources should be based on the principles of equity and inter-generational solidarity.

CONAFLU is part of the efforts UTN has undergone since 2013 when the university implemented the Watershed Management, Integrated Water Resource Management Program. The program aims to build awareness concerning issues impacting local watersheds and to facilitate the participation of public and private sector entities in sustainable and holistic projects aimed at improving the status of rivers and watersheds.

## UTN And IICA Signed An Agreement



UTN and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) signed a framework cooperation agreement aiming at setting up the basis for an active and reciprocal collaboration that allows promotion and implementation of activities of common interest such as: academic exchange, technical advisory, business support, vocational training and education, exchange of information, internships, and

program development and integration.

IICA Representative for Costa Rica Miguel Angel Arvelo pointed out the importance of these kinds of agreements, especially with a university in which there are many important and innovative projects in areas of farming, livestock, and forestry and environment.

Since it was founded in 1942, IICA has succeeded in identifying challenges and opportunities and, most importantly, evolving into an international technical cooperation organization that permanently responds to the new demands of the agricultural sector. Its main objectives include: to improve the productivity and competitiveness of the agricultural sector; to strengthen agriculture's contribution to the development of rural areas and the well-being of the rural population; to improve agriculture's capacity to mitigate and adapt to climate change and make better use of natural resources; to improve agriculture's contribution to food security.

## Year Opening Ceremony

On February 5<sup>th</sup>, UTN held the 2018 school year opening ceremony. The ceremony took place in Alajuela Central Campus, and it was followed by streaming in the other five campus sites. This year UTN has a population of 13,448 students (3,680 incoming students and 9,768 regular ones). Last year, 16,786 people filled up UTN application process and only 22% were admitted.

UTN Student Well-Being Department Chancellor Marisol Rojas welcomed students and pointed out that as members of the XXI society of knowledge, learning depends on, more than anything else, having the right attitude; it is about being inquisitive, curious, interrogative, and self-reflexive. Students need to learn how to become wise learners. What is a wise learner? A wise learner should be knowledgeable, curious and passionate about learning. A wise learner should be able to solve problems, think critically and respect others' opinions.

Teaching and Academic Development Chancellor Katalina Perera thanked new students for choosing UTN as their option of study. It is a privilege for UTN to have you here. The learning environment at UTN tries to expand opportunities for hands-on and meaning-



ful and experiential learning. We have the good fortune to come together in a different learning community. UTN is a place where people think and act, imagine and realize.

During the ceremony, there was an institutional acknowledgement to students who gained academic excellence during 2017 school year. Ruben Dario award was given to software engineering student Mario Andrés Acuña Paniagua from San Carlos campus got a 9,91 grade average score in his grades.

## Third Forage Harvester Congress (CONAFO)

On February 21<sup>st</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, and 23<sup>rd</sup>, UTN together with the National Program of Livestock promoted by the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG) organized the third Forage Harvester Congress (CONAFO).

Forages are plants or parts of plants eaten by livestock (cows, horses, sheep, goats, llamas), and wildlife (deer, elk, moose, rabbits). These grasses and legumes come in the forms of pasture, hay, and silage. Forages are especially important for ruminant animals like cows. They are the major source of the fiber which cows need to stay healthy. Forages, es-



pecially legumes, provide lots of protein, too.

Thanks to Foundation for the Research and Promotion of Technology Transfer of Costa Rica (FITACORI), National Training Institute (INA), and National Program of Livestock, it was possible to bring several international experts in topics such as: rational grazing, precision feeding, adequate soil use, modern forages and conservation technologies, among others.

On the first two days, participants attended workshops and conferences while in the third day, they had spaces to exchange of information on successful experiences.

During the event, MAG committed to the livestock sector to look for eco-competitiveness measures that can help producers to have more and better access to technology, training, and financial mechanisms. We hope to identify better practices to optimize the use of livestock in different regions, using local resources, breeds and feedstuffs — and produce tangible evidence to convince breeders and producers, said MAG Deputy Minister Ivannia Quesada Villalobos.

## Scientists Say Earliest Britons Had Dark Skin

The oldest human remains found in the UK belonged to a man with dark skin and blue eyes, a study by scientists in the UK has found.

Researchers at University College London and the British Natural History Museum reconstructed how the man, who lived 10,000 years ago, would have looked using the latest DNA analysis techniques and 3D-scanning of his skull.

Known as "Cheddar Man" after the southern English village where he was found in 1903, the man had "dark to black skin" and dark curly hair, according to the researchers.

DNA was recovered from the man's skull and information about his physical characteristics was obtained by mapping the genetic data collected.

Genetic information is usually difficult to obtain in remains as



Cheddar Man's characteristics were reconstructed using DNA analysis and 3D-scanning [University old as

Cheddar Man but had been preserved in his case thanks to the cool conditions inside the limestone cave where he was found.

"I first studied 'Cheddar Man' more than 40 years ago, but could never have believed that we would one day have his whole genome – the oldest British one to date," said Professor

Chris Stringer of the Natural History Museum.

"To go beyond what the bones tell us and get a scientifically-based picture of what he actually looked like is a remarkable - and from the results quite surprising - achievement."

The scientists involved in the study explained that Cheddar Man's ancestors were part of a population that travelled out of the Middle East and then on to Europe.

At least 10 percent of British ancestry can be linked to that population, they said.

A documentary on the findings will air on the UK's Channel 4 TV station on February 18<sup>th</sup>.

Previous studies have indicated that genes responsible for lighter features common in people of European descent developed at some over 8,000 years ago.



Information and image taken from: <http://mwcnews.net/news/europe/70370-britons-had-dark-skin.html>

## Snow Over The Sahara Desert



Last Sunday, January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2018, snow fell in maybe the most unlikely place on Earth. An Algerian town in the Sahara Desert called Ain Sefra got a couple of inches of snow. It clung to the dunes for about an hour and a half before melting.

The town isn't exactly a snow magnet at 1,000 meters (i.e., 3,280 feet) above the sea level. The average low in January is 12.4 degrees Celsius based on records from the German weather service. It's not even a precipitation magnet. Ain Sefra picks up a total of 6.65 inches of precipitation per year on average, putting it well under the threshold of ten inches a year scientists use to classify a place as a desert.

A blast of cold air related to a low-pressure system spiraling over the western Mediterranean brought snowfall to the town and surrounded dunes and mountains. A similar pattern brought snow in the region last year, as well. Before that, the only other recorded snowfall there occurred in February 1979, although the highest reaches of Algeria receive snow every few years.



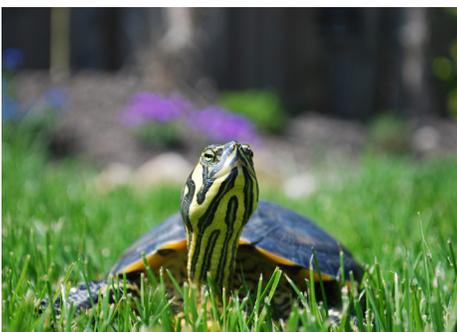
Information and image from: <http://www.thinkinghumanity.com/2018/01/awesome-photos-snow-in-the-sahara-desert-for-the-3rd-time-in-40-years.html>  
Image taken from: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/tonynetone/27802964769/in/photostream/>

## Over 100 New Species Discovered In Southeast Asia



A **crocodile lizard** that is the inspiration behind an up-and-coming comic strip, a **snail-eating turtle** discovered in a bustling food market in Thailand, and a **horseshoe bat** that could fit right into a Star Wars movie...these are just three of the 115 new species discovered by scientists in the Greater Mekong region in 2016.

These, together with more than a hundred others such as a beautifully colored frog found in the limestone karst mountains of Vietnam and two mole species from Cambodia, bring the total number of new species of plants, birds, mammals, reptiles, fish and amphibians discovered in the region, between 1997 and



2016, to an astonishing 2,524.

**"More than two new species a week** and 2,500 in the past 20 years speaks to how incredibly important the Greater Mekong is to global biodiversity," said Stuart Chapman who heads WWF's work in the Greater Mekong. "While the threats to the region are many, these discoveries give us hope that species from the tiger to the turtle will survive."



The discovery of the new species of 11 amphibians, two fish, 11 reptiles, 88 plants and three mammals in Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam comes at a critical time. The Greater Mekong region is under intense pressure from unsustainable development of mines, roads and dams, threatening the survival of the natural landscapes that make it so unique.

In addition, poaching and the multi-billion dollar illegal wildlife trade are also decimating wildlife populations in the region, especially in the Golden Triangle,

where Laos, Thailand and Myanmar meet. The scale of wildlife crime is such that sadly, species could be lost before they are even discovered.

### **Stopping illegal wildlife trade essential**

"The species in the Greater Mekong are like works of art, and deserve protection from unscrupulous collectors who are willing to pay thousands of dollars or more for the rarest, most unique and most endangered species," added Chapman.

**WWF has launched an ambitious project to disrupt illegal wildlife trade through the closure of the biggest markets in the Greater Mekong region.** Working with partners and across borders, WWF aims to help significantly reduce illegal trade in key threatened species such as elephants, tigers and rhinos by promoting species protection legislation, supporting effective transboundary cooperation and improving law enforcement effectiveness at key border crossings.



information and image taken from: [http://wwf.panda.org/wwf\\_news/?319151/Over-100-new-species-discovered-in-Southeast-Asias-Greater-Mekong-region](http://wwf.panda.org/wwf_news/?319151/Over-100-new-species-discovered-in-Southeast-Asias-Greater-Mekong-region)  
image taken from: <https://pixabay.com>

## 20 Years Of Teaching

By Gabriela Calvo (ILE Professor)



It seems as if it had been yesterday when I started working as a teacher of English in the former Colegio Universitario de Alajuela CUNA;

it has been 20 years since then. Now, let us go back to 1998 for a minute, shall we? I remember very well the moment I received a phone call from Mrs. Lorein Powell, to whom someone had recommended my name in order to teach English lessons in the Electronics major. At that time, I was working for FUNDATECUNA teaching conversational English courses for children and adults.

I met Mrs. Powell a few days later after her call for an interview, and to my surprise and extremely good luck, I was hired. For a year after that, besides teaching ESP (English for Specific Purposes) for the Electronics major, I also taught in the Accounting and Finance and in the Computer Science majors. At the same time, I continued teaching conversational courses.

Later on, in 1999, I had the great opportunity to be called by Mrs. Powell again; this time she asked me if I was interested in teaching for a new major, the original English as a Second Language Major (ILE for its acronym in Spanish, previously known as DICSEL). My answer was "Yes, of course." Consequently, since that time, I have been part of the ILE family.

**What have these years meant**

**for me as a professor at UTN?**

It has always been very clear to me that being a teacher does not mean just a way of earning a salary; being a teacher is an attitude, a way of life. There is a marked difference between working as a teacher and being one.

Being a teacher is not only about transmitting knowledge to a group of young people or adults; it carries an enormous responsibility. As teachers, we have the opportunity to transcend - positively or negatively - through our students; therefore, we must ensure that this experience is 100% positive.

Being a teacher has meant great sacrifices throughout these 20 years as well. Yes, those sacrifices you might have heard teachers complaining about before. However, in my personal case, those sacrifices have been repaid immeasurably. Small tokens of appreciation on behalf of my students are a constant reminder that there are more positive than negative aspects in this profession of mine. Receiving a "Thank you, teacher, I really enjoyed today's class", or questions like "Teacher, I would like to take another subject with you; what are you teaching next period?" are just a few examples of what I mean.

Additionally, being a teacher during these years has meant constant updating, especially in new technologies and methodologies. This has been extremely important to transform the way I used to teach. Fortunately, many years ago,

the professor who only taught master classes was left behind. Nowadays my students are co-authors and co-participants of their own learning process.

These 20 years of service have also meant working side by side with great professionals and friends. I do not dare mention them for fear of omitting a name, but I thank them all for sharing their knowledge and experience selflessly. Nonetheless, there are three names I must mention, and to whom I will always be thankful. Lorein Powell, for that first opportunity back in 1998. Katalina Pereira, former ILE Director, present Vice-rector of Teaching, for her friendship, trust, guidance and unconditional support. To our current Director of ILE, Jose Soto, for successfully leading our beloved major and for his constant mentoring.

Finally, I could not conclude this article without also thanking all the students I have had the joy of having at one time or another in my classrooms throughout these many years. Thank you, dear students, from the bottom of my heart, without you, I would not have the beautiful memories that I treasure today and the many more I hope to continue harvesting through the years to come.

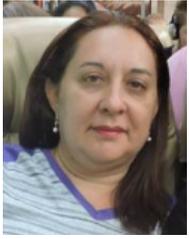
Thank you all and thanks UTN for 20 years full of great satisfactions, my profound gratitude to you all!

**"To teach is to learn twice over."**

**- Joseph Joubert**

## Exponents Of Constructivist Theories

By Gabriela Calvo (ILE Professor)



Costa Rican educational programs have to move from a traditional system to a more constructive one. The development of technology and the availability of information have

made that students and teachers have access to a great variety of data. This has changed the way people live and obviously the way they learn. Therefore, the teaching and learning process is being influenced by these changes. The old way of teaching, where students are the recipients of the information and the professor is the giver, cannot be the same anymore. The reality today indicates that students should have the necessary skills to be more independent since they have access to a great variety of information. As a result, personnel in charge of the curricular design should consider the importance of incorporating methodologies that help students to be independent and self-sufficient in our societies nowadays.

From the different educational models and theories, the constructivism is one that really fits students' needs today. In the constructivist model the relationship between student –teacher is more horizontal. In this way, the student has to participate actively in the class, giving opinions about a specific topic or exchanging ideas with others. Thus, the learner is able to critically listen to others, but at the same time interpret the information given. Contrary to the traditional model where the professor explains a concept and the student listens passively receiving the explanation, in a more constructive model the professor is a guide in the process. The learner is responsible for acquiring

the requested competences to apply those for the rest of his life. Moreover, the assignments the students should work on must be related to contextualized topics where the learners face real situations and problems that help them act properly in their future performance as professionals. Many philosophers have presented different points of view about the way people learn based on the constructivist theory. Among the most exponents of these basic principles, Piaget, Vigotzky and Gardner are some of the most relevant ones.

Jean Piaget's theory is important since it defines different stages in the life of an individual and depending on the stage, the students have the abilities to perform certain tasks or receive certain information. This is especially significant for children at school age. Piaget argues that: "teachers should understand that each individual child's cognitive development does not occur quickly and little, if any progress, may be assessed on a weekly or even monthly basis. They must not think that because something has been presented, it has been learned" (Simatwa, 2010). Therefore, it is important to consider the stage in which the learner is to analyse the type of objectives that should be developed based on the learner's abilities.

Besides, Piaget's theory, Howard Gardner points out the topic of multiple intelligences. This is also relevant for teachers to identify the way students learn. According to this philosopher, there is not a unique intelligence. There is a group of aptitudes the individual has and according to this, the person could learn using different strategies. For instance, the linguistic, musical, intrapersonal intelligence among others. Then, in the learning and teaching process it is necessary to consider a variety

of strategies to help different learners to achieve those competences. It is not possible to teach everybody in the same way. As a result, there must be a variety of appropriate strategies to different individuals in the classroom (Salgado, 2006).

Finally, Lev Semiónovic Vigotsky states the social interaction is a crucial element in the development of the individual's cognition. He explains how language is essential since it allows people to interact and relate to others. Based on his theory, individuals learn from others' behavior, values and ways to see and analyse the world. This interaction with other people allows the learner to respect others and accept other's ideas. According to this thinker, the learning process must consider the collaborative activities in the classes because the individuals need to work together to get common goals. These collaborative strategies allow students to learn from others and give better results. For example, the use of projects where different individuals are responsible for creating a final product.

The educational programs have to include in all levels the different aspects pointed out by the different theories. The learning stages stated by Piaget, the multiple intelligences of Gardner and the collaborative work presented by Vigotsky are essential elements that must be applied in the classrooms to get the desired results in the process. Considering students' needs and the interaction they may have with others to construct the required competences are some of the main elements that should be used in our educational systems to have happier students that develop his/her abilities in more contextualized contexts.

The UTN community includes professors, administrative staff and students. Each individual has something to say about everything. In this section, we give the university community the opportunity to express what they feel about different school, country and world issues that in one or another way affect or impact our lives, feelings and opinions. This month we asked students:

## What is the most memorable day of your life?



*So far the most memorable day of my life was when my daughter was born. That day I felt a special kind of love I had never felt before..*

*Milena Jiménez*

*My most memorable day was when I went to Golfito with my family. It was the first time I spent a night out of my home.*

*Michael Granados*

*It was when I sang in the church for the first time. Singing is my passion; I really love it. It was amazing.*

*Ratherine Ouliz*

*It was the first time I travelled to Belgium; I only had the chance to visit the city of Bruges, but I immediately fell in love with it. I am planning to move there someday.*

*Nicole Venegas*

*The most memorable day of my life was when I graduated from a photography program. It was a two year program, and I had to make a big effort in order to achieve my goal. I felt so happy that day.*

*It was when I found out I had passed the national examinations. I was very insecure and nervous about my mathematics exam. I dealt with tons of anxiety and stress all year long, so I felt a huge relief when I got the results.*

*Mariano Chaves*

*The most memorable day of my life was when my family took me to Magic Kingdom, Orlando because going there was a dream come true.*

*Michelle Monge*

*One of my most memorable days was in 2004 when the national soccer team came back from its participation in the World Cup. There were thousands of people outside the airport waiting for the players, and for one moment I had a feeling of Costa Rican unity..*

*Hailyn Fernández*



## Jose Soto Morera's Biography

By Marisela Gonzalez, Marisol Rojas, and Natalia Sánchez(ILE Student)

His name is Jose Soto Morera. He was born in January 1978 in San Ramón, Alajuela. He is the Director of the English Major of Universidad Técnica Nacional (UTN). He thinks this is an amazing university, and in his time here, he has worked collaboratively with his dedicated staff community, and students, to deepen their focus in growing and being better and better. From his birth, he remembers his grandfather telling him that he was the first one who saw him after he was born, and one of his earliest memories is when he was walking in the first year of preschool back in 1982. His grandfather was the most influential person to him as a child because he did not grow up with his parents. He remembers that there was always a dog in his house. Also, he used to watch TV, and play with kids in the neighborhood. None that he knew of; besides that, he was very afraid of sleeping alone, and he remembers his grandmother told him that once Jose was left forgotten by his grandfather at another house. It was one day on Sunday morning when his grandfather would go to church, and he left José at his other grandparents'. When he came back home, Jose's grandmother asked him where Jose was and he ran back to pick him up.

He had many favorite subjects to study at school, but all depended on the teacher who taught him; for example, he remembers his first grade teacher, and his sixth grade teachers the most. In high school, he definitely had a few teachers who were really good, especially in making the students feel motivated, and interested in their classes. Mostly he liked those teachers who went beyond their subject. His favorite sport is bike riding. He has never cared about football, or any ball team related sport.

Jose describes himself as sort of socially withdrawn; as a kid he had few friends. He thinks he was a good student; in fact, what he liked most about school was the school trips, and hanging out with his little group of friends in their houses. In fact, what he really liked the most about extracurricular activities as a teenager was playing the guitar with other kids; otherwise, Jose was the only kid in school who could speak English. During school he remembers admiring rock and roll bands of the late 80s and beginning of the 90s. He loves Def Leppard, and The Beatles. Jose started college at UCR and then he finished at UNA, and his most memorable college moments were hanging around with his peers. The reasons why Jose decided to attend college was because he wanted to pursue a career, so he started Software Engineering, but he changed to English. Now he got a degree in Teaching English as a Foreign Language and a Master's Degree in Second Languages and Cultures for the Teaching of English from UNA. He said that if he could do it again he would take the same academic path just that he would take other options as well.

Regarding jobs, José's first job was as a clerk at a grocery store, and his worst job was teaching at a place where he was demotivated; on the other hand, his best job is being Director of the English Major at UTN. He said that his career in addition to being paid money it has created great value in terms of connecting to people and making new friends.

In his personal life, Jose decided not to have children. The word family means to Jose unity, together-ness and ideal. His grandparents had a great influence on him as a person of strong values and humility, for that reason, he thinks he was raised appropriately. Due to Jose not having siblings, his closest family is his wife and his grandmother. He admires his grandfather who died in 2011, and this fact affects him because his grandfather raised him as a father, and brought him up accordingly. His definition of happiness is self-accomplishment, so he is proud of having accomplished academic goals. However, his happiest memory is the day of his graduation from his Master's Degree, and the day he got his driver's license. Jose is a big fan of God, but he said religion itself has faded out in his life, even though he has given more space to spirituality. He spends his time listening to music, watching movies, playing music, and reading. Jose's greatest fear is being alone, and his greatest hope is to be a self-accomplished human being. He thinks that after death we reborn, or go to heaven, but he said it depends on each point of view and life deeds. The main lesson he has learned in life is to be cautious, not anxious, and to ask when you do not know something.

## Video Games Effects On People

By Leslie Rojas (ILE Student)

Have you ever felt differently after playing a video game? Perhaps fulfilled or even sad? Since the invention of electronic entertainment by Physicist William Higinbotham on 1958, there's been a concern about the way this pastime activity influences human behavior. Some people accuse video games of making people violent. However, the truth is that video games have positive effects on people, improving the recovery from a physical or mental impairment, working as a training for a wide range of jobs and being successful while improving the social skills of the person playing.

As a stereotype, gamers tend to be labelled as lazy people who waste a lot of time sitting in front of a screen, but not all the games are about being still; lately, there's been a huge amount of games dedicated to help people recover physically and from mental illnesses. To illustrate, patients that need to recover one specific part of their body are put to repetitions using the limb that is damaged in short intervals; the difference between using a video game and just doing the repetitions is that when using a video game, it shows the correct movements needed and just accepts the movements that are correct; this can let the patient to recover at home without the physician supervision. For example, the Xbox Kinect, which is a camera that detects your movements and displays you on the TV screen to play games, is used by physical therapists to help stroke patients to recover (Tan, 2013). Also, there are video games which focus on recovery and prevention of mental diseases. For instance, the game Sea Hero Quest is focused on studying the dementia syndrome; gamers use a ship to navigate the sea; this helps scientists discover how the ability to navigate is lost over the years; which is the principal symptom of dementia. By getting feedback from all the users that play the game instead of doing small tests samples, scientists can get hours of data in a short period of time.

From the perspective of a working person, playing video games might look like a waste of time since the gamer does the same actions several times over. Nevertheless, many games require the action to be done again and again in order to achieve the correct outcome. That's why there's a lot of interest in using video games to train employees in their jobs and learn new abilities. When playing games designed to serve as training for a job, gamers must do activities that they would normally do at work while avoiding the monotony of just doing the action. It can be achieved by placing goals that need the gamer to overcome and by constant repetition improve their performance at the task while working. For instance, using the game Underground Surgical, doctors-in-training can practice their laparoscopic skills using a special type of controller which makes the game to resemble the real tools that are used for surgery. While humans tend to think that they are really smart, we currently are not really sure how we learn, but one thing that kids usually do those adults no longer do is playing (Mackay, 2013). Games have been proven to be one of the best way to learn since they offer the freedom to play even in short periods of time in such a wide range of environments that the usefulness has caught the attention of scientists. The creation of virtual environments which let you play with trial and error with no significant repercussions is definitively a big advantage we can get by playing video games.

Gamers as part of the denominated Nerd group tend to be seen as unsuccessful and lonely, but this has been proven wrong by recent rising stars of entertainment. Several youtubers that dedicate themselves to playing video games have become very wealthy with followers on their channels reaching the millions and even hosting shows for charity. While most of gamers tend to be shy and quiet, this doesn't mean they are lonely. When playing online games, gamers get to meet people with the same interests and taste, as gaming communities rise every day and people meet online more than ever, usually meeting people from all around the world. Getting to know other people is important in order to improve social skills, this teaches how others think and act. Other really important face of this are eSports which are a new type of sport. On this activity, teams of gamers compete one another to win a tournament with hefty prizes that go up to millions of dollars. This means that in order to win, teams must not only have to be good at the game, but it also demands that they have great teamwork which helps to improve the social skills of all the team (Edwards, 2013).

To summarize, the advantages of being a gamer are many, from meeting people from around the world to using an easy way to learn and helping people recover from diseases or injuries. Several other benefits and applications are being discovered every day. As humanity finds new ways to expand in the electronic entertainment the possibilities are endless. In a new world where you can go from the depths of the ocean to the vastness of space. Next time you have the chance to play a video game try it out taking into consideration these aspects as well as finding it to be more interesting, perhaps you will consider becoming a gamer.



## Glacier Country, Montana



Montana is a US state, located in the northwest of the country. With almost 150,000 square miles, it is the 4th largest state in the United States and it's one of the most sparsely populated with just around 1 million inhabitants. The western part is formed by the Rocky Mountains and other mountain ranges and also contains (part of) the Glacier National Park. Helena is the capital while Billings is the largest city. In the southwest you'll find a few gateways to the Yellowstone National Park, like West Yellowstone, making it a very popular state for nature lovers!



### Geography

With a land area of 380,850 km<sup>2</sup>, Montana is slightly larger than Japan and slightly smaller than Paraguay. It is the fourth largest state in the United States (after Alaska, Texas, and California).

Montana is well known for its mountainous western region, most of which is geologically and geographically part of the Northern Rocky Mountains. About 60% of the

state is prairie, part of the northern Great Plains.

Perhaps one of the better known attractions in Montana, Glacier National Park, together with Waterton Lakes National Park (across the border in Canada) forming the Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park, is a World Heritage Sight in northwestern Montana.

Glacier National Park is a nature lover's paradise, and apart from a handful of lodges and private inns, you won't find any towns, hotel chains or shops and stores. While the visitor's centers can get crowded at times, there are over a million acres of wilderness (not including Waterton Lakes, adjacent to Glacier on the Canadian side) to get lost in (but please don't get lost).

### Sights and Activities

Depending on the season, you can find unlimited opportunities for hiking, camping, bird and animal watching, snow-shoeing, cross-country skiing, biking, boating, and horseback riding. If you don't have the time or ability to take advantage of these experiences, you can still take in the visual wonders of Glacier National Park by driving across the park on the Going-to-the-Sun Road, which climbs right up the side of the Rocky Mountains. Some specific places to visit in Glacier National Park are:

### Many Glacier:

Many Glacier is a hikers paradise.

Trails radiate out in all directions, including two of the most popular hikes in the park, the Grinnell Glacier trail and the Iceberg Lake trail. Hikers can take a different trail every day for a week and still not cover all that the area has to offer.

### St. Mary Valley:

St. Mary is the eastern gateway to Glacier National Park. Prairies, mountains, and forests all converge here to create a diverse and rich habitat for plants and animals. The open meadows surrounded by dense forests can afford some great opportunities for wildlife viewing.



### Lake McDonald Valley:

Ten miles long and nearly 500 feet deep (152.4 m), Lake McDonald, the largest lake in the park, is a direct result of glacial carving. High peaks surrounding the lake all show evidence of the power of glaciers to carve even the hardest of rock. The powerful glaciers that carved the broad "u-shaped" valley that Lake McDonald sits in also carved smaller hanging valleys with wonderful waterfalls that are accessible by numerous hiking trails.





## Wonderland



Wonderland is the setting for English author Charles Lutwidge Dodgson under the pseudonym of Lewis Carroll's masterpiece *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* published in 1865. It tells the story of a girl named Alice falling through a rabbit hole into a fantasy world populated by peculiar, *anthropomorphic creatures* that act as normal people. The tale plays with logic, giving the story lasting popularity with adults as well as with children. It is considered to be one of the best examples of the literary **nonsense genre** (a broad categorization of literature that balances elements that make sense with some that do not, with the effect of subverting language conventions or logical reasoning).

*Alice's Adventures in Wonderland's* narrative course and structure, characters and imagery have been enormously influential in both popular culture and literature, especially in the fantasy genre.

Some of the main characters living in Wonderland are: the White Rabbit, the Mouse, the Dodo, the Lory, the Eaglet, the Duck, Pat, Bill the Lizard, Puppy, the Caterpillar, the Duchess, the Cheshire Cat, the March Hare, and the Hatter.

Since Carroll was a mathematician at Christ Church, it has been suggested that there are many references and mathematical concepts in the story's events and setting. For example, literary scholar Melanie Bayley asserted in the magazine *New Scientist* that Dodgson wrote Al-

ice in *Wonderland* in its final form as a scathing satire on new modern mathematics that were emerging in the mid-19th century.

### Summary

The novel begins with Alice sitting in her armchair lost in the maze of her thoughts. She tells her Kitty about the "Looking Glass World" that exists on the other side of the mirror where everything is topsy-turvy and backward. Just as Alice is wondering if they can go to the other side of the mirror to explore the looking-glass world, the glass begins to melt and Alice jumps to the other side. From here starts the series of meetings and adventures of Alice.

Alice meets the Red Queen who lets Alice play the role of a white pawn in the game of chess, much to Alice's delight. From here, she moves into the forest, where she encounters a goat, a beetle and a man dressed in white paper in the train journey. An important part of the novel is Alice's meeting with Tweedledum and Tweedledee, the twins who are mirror images of each other. On close reading, this episode reflects on the theme of inversion which is central to the novel.

After this takes place Alice's meeting with the White queen. This meeting is significant as the White queen tells Alice that time moves backward in their world. As they speak, the White queen, contrary to the logic of the real world, successively plasters her fingers, screams in pain and then

pricks her finger on a brooch. Alice then meets Humpty Dumpty of the nursery rhyme, who is arrogant and mocks her as she has a name that does not mean anything. According to him, all names should mean something.

Alice meets various other interesting people during the rest of her journey, like the Red Knight and the White Knight. The White Knight guides her to the eight square where she can be a queen. After becoming a queen she goes to a banquet but the party degenerates into total madness and confusion. After this, Alice wakes from the dream holding Kitty. She thinks aloud if her adventures were her own imagination or the dream of the Red King and the novel ends with a question posed by her to the reader -

"Which do you think it was?"

To read *Alice in Wonderland*, go to: <http://www.audiobooktreasury.com/alice-in-wonderland/>



## “English For You CR” presents,

### the + comparative, the + comparative



Today we want to go over a structure commonly seen when making comparisons:

***the + comparative, the + comparative.***

We use it to express cause and effect. For example:

***-The sooner, the better.*** (It is better if we do this as soon as we can).

***-The younger, the more hard-working.***  
(Young people work harder than older people).

***-The more I study, the easier I find this topic.***  
(I understand better because I study more).

***-The more you live, the more you know.***  
(I know more things because I am older now).

As you can see, **this structure can be used with short (-er) and long comparatives (more + adjective), or clauses** (I study, I learn, etc.).

It can also be used with the word less.

***-The more I know her, the less I understand her.***

***-The more I sleep, the worse I feel.***

You can listen to our podcast including this section, music in English, news, and more in:  
<http://www.EnglishforYouCR.com> and [www.facebook.com/english.foryoucr](http://www.facebook.com/english.foryoucr)

## earworm

**(informal) an irritatingly catchy tune**

### EXAMPLE:

The song played in the grocery store became an earworm for her.

[www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com)



## Venice Carnival

Carnival has got very ancient origins in Venice. It even seems that Carnival was already celebrated in the tenth century. During the Serenissima Republic the celebrations practically lasted six weeks, from the 26th of December to Shrove Tuesday when the bells announced the beginning of the Lent; in this period, people made merry from morning to night and the Republic tolerated everything. Everybody wore a mask behind which any social difference was temporarily abolished. Saint Mark Square and the other little squares of the town became vast stages on which people organized entertainments of any kind.

Venice Carnival was abolished by Napoleon at the end of the Eighteenth century. Its organization was resumed, and it was brought to its original splendor from 1979. Nowadays masks coming from all over the world use to crowd the Venetian squares, but above all Saint Mark square and its cafés; besides, the traditional masks, you can see queer and quaint disguises, and many dances, parties, concerts, and performances in the theaters are organized. On the last day, then, out of respect for tradition, the image of Carnival is burnt in St. Mark Square.

Information taken from: <http://en.venezia.net/venice-carnival.html>  
Photo credit: <https://pixabay.com/es/venecia-italia-carnaval-2089283/>

