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JULY

UTN Hosted Costa Rican Chemistry Olympics Round

Which Countries Are Doing The Most To Save The Environment?

Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde

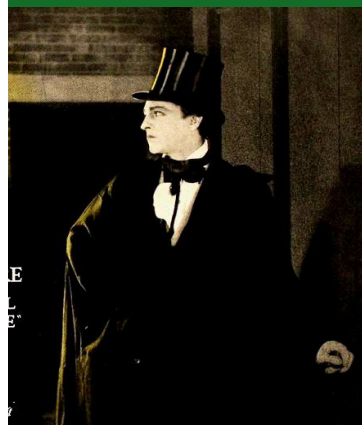
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COVER PAGE



In this issue, we are going to learn about The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde, which has been considered a criticism of Victorian double morality. 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. 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 on FACEBOOK.

Photo taken from:

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Dr._](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Dr._Jekyll_and_Mr._Hyde_(1920)_-Ad_1.jpg)

[Jekyll and Mr. Hyde \(1920\) - Ad 1.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Dr._Jekyll_and_Mr._Hyde_(1920)_-Ad_1.jpg)

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EDITORIAL

What Is Wrong With People Today?

by Eric Herrera (ILE Professor)



Many people thought that during the XXI century, humanity was going to evolve with all advances in technology, and that we were going to live happily in an equal society. The fact that Costa Rica is considered one of the happiest countries in the world portrayed a bright future for all. However, reality is different: the environment is tragically polluted, more and more animals are extinct, a litre of gasoline is cheaper than a bottle of water, the 26 richest people in the world own the same as the 3.8 billion poorest, a soccer team pays more than \$100.000.000 for a player, desperately poor immigrants die trying to get to another country, corruption has taken over all governmental institutions. In brief, more and more people feel deeply pessimistic about the future of our country or the world. How did more knowledge and better living conditions turn into something negative?

First of all, there is lack of mental health, which is defined by the World Health Organization as "a state of emotional and psychological well-being in which an individual is able to use his or her cognitive and emotional capabilities, function in society, and meet the ordinary demands of everyday life." Modern life is full of emotional challenges, and the pressure to succeed in order to achieve goals and, in most cases, improve the economic conditions blinds people from making the correct decisions. An easy example of this aspect is corruption in which a person who is in power (boss, politician, president, etc.) acts dishonestly, setting aside moral values and ethics as he/she perceives the opportunity to benefit at any cost.

Second, there is a lack of ethical leadership, which constantly endangers the stability of a company or a government and causes negative effects on almost everything. Talking to different academics from university business and administration programs, they express that the topic of ethics is not directly studied, in part because of the importance they give to other topics and to the short time to cover the program.

Some everyday examples of this lack of ethical leadership include conflicts of interest, abuse of public trust, lack of transparency, harassment and discrimination, or organizational secrecy. Finally and above all, there has been a deterioration in education where school and learning are seen as a product in which students become customers and teachers salespeople. Education is the cornerstone of any society. First, it was the need to obtain a title; then, it was the demand of certification; instead of appreciating education as a tool to improve life and be happy, most people now see it as an end. Because of this, more and more schools offer majors and programs as a supermarket promotes products. For example, in the past if a student did not pass, he/she had to repeat the school year because the objective was that the student could master the material and develop the social skills to deal with a life or responsibilities. On the contrary, today that same student is only seen as an investment/waste case for governments, so the importance has become to get rid of some waste of money in a classroom. The faster the student ends, the sooner that student will become someone else's waste and responsibility. This aspect is later seen in the poor performance of professionals including teachers, making this situation a vicious circle.

It is time for authorities to start thinking about these aspects. Emotional health and ethics must clearly be reflected in school programs and curricula. In addition, it is imperative to get down to business and clarify that education is not a business, or acquiring information, education is a formative process for life in which a person faces learning environments that allow him/her to understand life and get physically, mentally, and psychologically prepared to become a free, happy, and responsible citizen.

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World Health Organization. (2014). Mental health: a state of well-being. Retrieved from www.who.int/features/factfiles/mental_health/en/

Lactation Room In Atenas Campus

Translated By Izabela Sepúlveda (ILE Professor)

To comply with the decree about the use of Lactation Rooms in work centers, the Atenas Campus inaugurated its Lactation Room, which has been equipped for this purpose. This room is located in Apartment No. 5, next to the training rooms and it is available to workers, students or visitors who require it.

According to José Pablo Arguedas, coordinator of Human Development Management, of Atenas Campus, the social, economic situation and the desire for professional improvement of society has caused more and more mothers to leave their homes to work and leave their children in someone else's care. However, this should not be a

reason for the baby not to receive breast milk.

Currently, Atenas Campus has 653 female students and 74 female employees, which creates a need for breastfeeding mothers to extract their milk, or if they have the possibility, to have someone taking the baby to be breastfed at their workplace or study center without risk of contamination.

Also, Arguedas stressed that "this room, has been created taking into consideration the importance of the most appropriate feeding for all

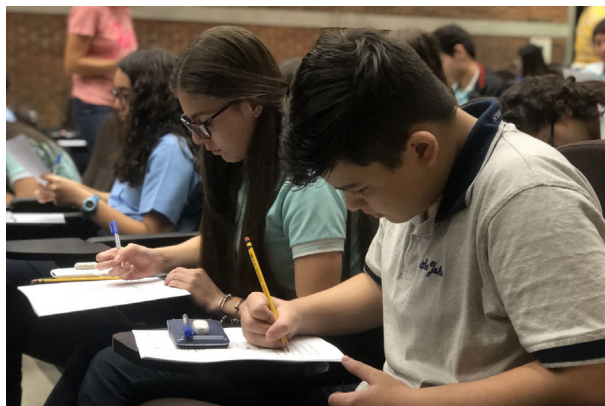


babies, due to the nutritional and immunological contribution it provides for their health, thus ratifying the commitment that the university has established with the welfare of students and workers."

See original news in Spanish in: www.utn.ac.cr/content/sede-de-atenas-inauguro-sala-de-lactancia

UTN Hosted Costa Rican Chemistry Olympics Round

Translated By Izabela Sepúlveda (ILE Professor)



The Costa Rican Chemistry Olympian (known in Spanish as OLCOQUIM) is an intellectual competition aimed at young students from high school, which is annually, and jointly organized by the Department of Academic Education of the Ministry of Public Education, the Ministry of Science and Technology and Telecommunications, the School of Chemistry of the Universidad Nacional, the School of Exact and Natural Sciences of the Universidad Estatal a Distancia, and the National Lab-

oratory of Nanotechnology of the National High Technology Center of the National Council of Chancellors (CONARE).

As of May 2019, the Universidad Técnica Nacional through the Management System of Research Laboratories (SIGELI) of the Research and Transfer Vice-Chancellor, became part of this organization, incorporating Dr. May-

nor Vargas Vargas, with the right to voice and vote on behalf of the UTN, which completes the group of State Universities of CONARE

Within the commitments acquired and as part of the functions, Dr. Vargas is responsible for collaborating with the organization and application of written tests, preparation and training of students and teachers for national and international Olympics and eventually participate in the international Olympics as part of the

Costa Rican representation team. For the XIX Costa Rican Chemistry Olympiad (OLCOQUIM, 2019), the first elimination took place on June 18th and the UTN facilities will house 61 students from the Alajuela area who registered as participants between March 1st and the 31st of this year.

During the tests for the XIX Costa Rican Chemistry Olympiad (OLCOQUIM, 2019), the elimination for the I Costa Rican Olympiad of Sciences (OLCOCI, 2019) was also carried out and 22 students are now enrolled.

In this way, the University contributes to the promotion, strengthening and development of scientific and technological culture in the field of chemistry, by stimulating the learning of secondary school students. Likewise, it promotes the identification of talented young people who can contribute to the future with the scientific and technological development of the country.

See original news in Spanish in: www.utn.ac.cr/content/utn-fue-sede-de-las-olimpiadas-costarricenses-de-qu%C3%ADmica

UTN Addressed The Issue Of Technological Accessibility And Technical Support In The Pedagogical Process

Translated By Izabela Sepúlveda (ILE Professor)

Within the framework of the VI Conference on Accessibility and Disability Analysis on May 28th, the Institutional Commission on Accessibility and Disability (CIAD) of the Universidad Técnica Nacional (UTN), held the VI Conference on Accessibility and Disability Analysis, which addressed the issue of technological accessibility and technical support in the pedagogical process for the university context.

The Day of Analysis on Accessibility and Disability took place as one of the activities to celebrate the National Disability Day. This activity began as a proposal of the Institutional Commission on Accessibility and Disability six years ago, as an invitation for reflection, which calls for considering better opportunities for equality, accessibility and equity for the disabled university population. The objective of education is for each person to develop their personality, aptitudes and mental and physical capacities to their maximum potential, and to prepare them to assume a responsible life within society. It is necessary then, to put into place laws that will help guarantee the access of disabled people to the different educational levels.

The activity was attended by Cecilia Sojo, the coordinator of the CIAD; Ricardo Ramírez, the Executive Director of the Pedagogical Training and Educational Technology Center (CFPTE) and UTN Chancellor, Marcelo Prieto.

Cecilia Sojo, the coordinator of CIAD, said that in the past they have been able to rethink different paradigms, visions, themes and even realities of disabled people, such as access to sports, culture and recreation, access to employment and education, among others. This year, on this day, the theme of reflection is Technological accessibility and technical support in the pedagogical process, for the university context.

"We are aware of the reality experienced by our disabled students and the support they require in the classroom. Likewise, we recognize that university teachers also demand tools that facilitate their teaching methodologies and so they can attend, without any doubt and greater sensitivity to the population that requires it. Technology is one of those fields that currently offers us the possibilities that can attend to their needs, which today are more in the university classrooms and looking for opportunities within Society," said Sojo.

For his part, the Dean of the Universidad Técnica Nacional, Marcelo Prieto, indicated the importance of the activity and commitment of Higher Education and above all, of the UTN, with the disabled student population.

"For us, **it is essential that students, who have some type of disability, have the elements and the necessary help**



to get a good quality education. It is unacceptable that a disabled student has disadvantages in relation to a student who is not," said Prieto.

In addition, he mentioned that there is still a lot to be done in regards to this topic, for example, to include affirmative actions in the admission process so that people in these conditions have a greater chance of accessing higher education.

The Executive Director of the Educational Training and Technology Center, Ricardo Ramírez, mentioned that it is important to strengthen Inclusive Higher Education with quality. To do so, it is essential to have support technologies that favor access, permanence and promotion of students with disability.

It is the University's commitment to promote that all people have the right to an equal access to the services that it can offer, to improve their living conditions, and thus be able to dilute the various barriers that may prevent their effective participation in society, on equal terms with others.

On this occasion, the inaugural talk was given by Mr. Mario Chacón Rivas from INCLUTEC of the Technological Institute of Costa Rica, who addressed the issue of current challenges and conditions to accessible technologies.

In addition, the topic of accessible experiences of university teachers in teaching was addressed. Focal workshops were held on: accessible educational materials, accessible videos, accessible language teaching and techniques accessible in the classroom.

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The activity ended with a discussion on student experiences with web applications that facilitate accessibility in university life.

WikiLeaks' Assange 'Suffering From Psychological Torture'

WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange has suffered "psychological torture" from a defamation campaign against him by the media, judges, and senior political figures, a United Nations human rights investigator said last month.

Nils Melzer, the UN special rapporteur on torture who visited Assange in a high-security London prison on May 9, voiced concern at fresh US criminal charges laid against Assange and reiterated a call for him not to be extradited.

Assange was too ill on Thursday to appear via video link from a British prison in a hearing on an extradition request from the United States, his lawyer Gareth Peirce told Reuters. He is in a health ward, Presstv reported.

"Mr. Assange has been deliberately exposed, for a period of several years, to progressively severe forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, the cumulative effects of which can only be described as psychological torture," Melzer said in a statement.

The Swiss law professor, an independent expert, was accompanied on the prison visit by two medical experts specialized in examining potential victims of torture and other ill-treatment, the statement said. They spoke with Assange in private and conducted a "thorough medical assessment."

"It was obvious that Mr. Assange's health has been seriously affected by the extremely hostile and arbitrary environment he has been exposed to for many years," Melzer said.

"In addition to physical ailments, Mr. Assange showed all symptoms typical for prolonged exposure to psychological torture, including extreme stress, chronic anxiety and intense psychological trauma."

The United States has charged Assange with espionage, saying he unlawfully published the names of classified sources and conspired with and assisted ex-Army intelligence analyst Chelsea Manning in obtaining access to classified information. He faces 18 US criminal



counts and decades in prison if convicted.

"My most urgent concern is that, in the United States, Mr. Assange would be exposed to a real risk of serious violations of his human rights, including his freedom of expression, his right to a fair trial and the prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment," Melzer said.

Assange made international headlines in 2010 when WikiLeaks published a classified US military video showing a 2007 attack by Apache helicopters in Baghdad that killed a dozen people, including two Reuters news staff.



Information taken from: <http://www.iran-daily.com/News/253594.html>
Image taken from: www.pixabay.com

Huawei Allowed To Conduct Business With US Companies Again

After over a month that saw the Huawei being shunned by almost every major US-based technology giant, President Donald Trump has today announced that US companies will once again be allowed to sell their products to Huawei. The US President said:

One of the things I will allow, however, is, a lot of people are surprised we send and we sell to Huawei a tremendous amount of product that goes into the various things that they make. And I said that that's okay, that we will keep selling that product. These are American companies... that make product and that's very complex, by the way, and highly scientific. And in some cases we're the ones that do it,

we're the only ones that do it. What we've done in Silicon Valley is incredible, actually and nobody has been able to compete with it, and I've agreed and pretty easily, I've agreed to allow them to continue to sell that product. So American companies will continue and they were having a problem, the companies were not exactly happy that they couldn't sell because they had nothing to do with whatever it was potentially happening with respect to Huawei, so I did do that.

However, this doesn't necessarily spell the end of troubles for Huawei because when he was asked whether Huawei would be removed from the US Department of Commerce's Entity List, President

Trump said that the two countries hadn't discussed that yet, and that it would be discussed at the very end of trade talks with China.

Still, this spells out some good news for Huawei, which has seen US based companies stopping all business dealings with the company, and some non-US ones ceasing business with Huawei as well. At the very least, US based companies like Google will once again be able to sell its mobile operating system to Huawei.

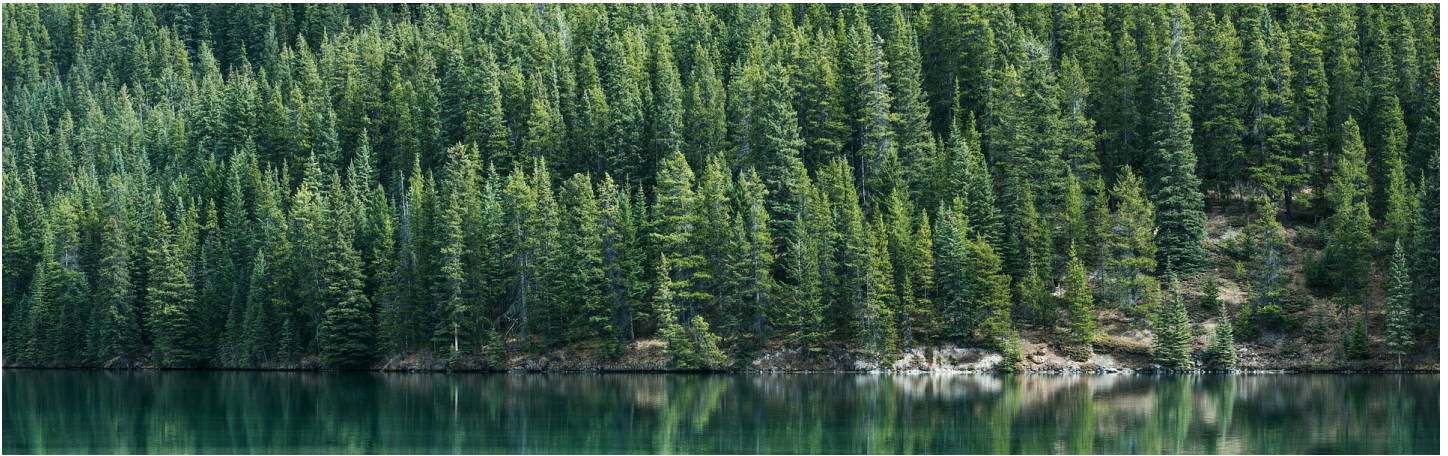


HUAWEI



Information taken from: www.techzim.co.zw/2019/06/huawei-allowed-to-conduct-business-with-us-companies-again/

Which Countries Are Doing The Most To Save The Environment?



There is perhaps no issue on Earth that is as truly global as that of climate change.

With worldwide temperatures projected to rise by between 1.4°C and 5.5°C over the next century, and with catastrophic consequences predicted for any increase greater than 2°C, it's vital we all play our part in reducing our carbon footprint and limiting global warming as much as we can, envirotech-online.com wrote.

It's clear, however that some countries are doing more than others in this respect. Using the Environmental Performance Index created by Yale University, 24/7 Wall Street have identified the countries which are doing the most to save the environment. However, it should be remembered that this leader board does not take into account the harmful emissions produced by these countries and that in several cases, those listed are also among the most polluting places on the planet. Here are the top five:

5. Australia

Although Australia was recently criticized by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) for its over-reliance on the damaging practice of coal combustion, it still ranks highly in several areas. For example, less than a quarter of its population (24.9 percent) are exposed to unsafe air

pollution, while 29.7 percent of its land is protected by the government and it has taken important measures such as banning plastic bags, halving food waste and constructing the largest lithium battery in the world.

4. New Zealand

With 0.0 percent of the Kiwi population exposed to poor levels of air quality, this tiny antipodean nation has some of the cleanest skies on the planet. It also enjoys the highest percentage of government-protected land of any country in the top 15 with 30.5 percent of its terrestrial and marine area safeguarded by law and is on track to meet greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction targets of 2030 and 2050, having already surpassed those set for 2020.

3. Norway

Thanks to its famous fjords, Norway has access to an abundance of hydro energy, meaning that it gains almost 100 percent of its overall power supply from renewable means. A small fraction (two percent) of its populace are exposed to poor air quality, although it does rank the lowest out of the top 15 for land protection, with a mere 5.1 percent of its territory subject to legislation. It also ranks poorly in terms of GHG per capita in comparison to other developed nations.

2. Finland

Another country to enjoy clean air

for 100 percent of its population, Finland is leading the way in a number of environmental areas, including increasing the share of renewable energy in its overall consumption profile, pursuing environmentally-friendly forms of road transportation and protecting forested and agricultural parts of the country. At present, just 14.2 percent of its land is protected, highlighting an area where there is plenty of room for improvement.

1. Denmark

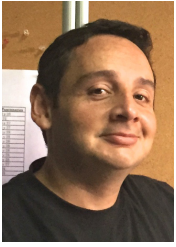
Its unsurprising that three Nordic countries take the podium positions on this list, although Denmark's place at the top of the pile might be more shocking. That's especially true when taking into account the fact that 78.8 percent of the population were exposed to high levels of PM pollution in 2017. However, a series of reforms has brought that percentage down to 56.9 percent in just one year, while it continues to set itself impressive targets in the fields of energy consumption, aiming for 50 percent renewables by 2030 and zero fossil fuels by 2050.



THE ILE ETHOS

Collective Wisdom

Written By Andrés Bejarano (ILE Professor)



There is no doubt that we all go through experiences that teach us important lessons in life but quite often we tend to forget and end up making the same mistakes that we should not have repeated had the lesson been truly learned. Things that we never imagined would happen to us but that helps us grow and become stronger either physically, mentally

and even spiritually.

For this reason, entire cultures, societies or even individuals create inspirational messages that function as reminders of what may happen to us if we do not follow those bits of wisdom that can only be obtained through the act of living.

There are obviously things that can only be learned by each one of us and nobody else and that the decisions that we make as individuals, have a different results for each person. However, there are some basic needs and challenges in our lives that can be more easily attained if we follow what I like to call "collective wisdom"; the Wisdom that we can derive from the experiences of either very well-known personalities such as writers, inventors, philosophers, artists, athletes and so on, which later become part of the wisdom that we all like to share, especially now that communication through social media has become one of the main means for sharing ideas.

Speaking of sharing, that is precisely what I would like to do today. Share some of what I consider the most compelling pieces of wisdom that come from different sources and that I often like to reflect upon to use them as guideness when I try to make important decisions or when I am struggling to understand the enigmas of life and the complexity of human interaction.

"My favorite things in life don't cost any money. It's really clear that the most precious resource we all have is time." Steve Jobs - American Entrepreneur (1955-2011). It is certainly impressive and even a little bit ironic to see that a man, who managed to become one of the richest people in the United States at a pretty young age, came to realize that money is not the greatest of all treasures but rather time. Come to think of it, the English language has a popular saying that goes: "Time is money" which still reveals a desperate attempt to assign a monetary value to a rather intangible and infinitely valuable resource. Therefore, I favor the Spanish equivalent "Time is gold" which conveys the true value of time much more accurately.

We all know that time has to be managed properly, especially because it is the only one resource that cannot be accumulated or retained forever.

I think it was Jerry Seinfeld who said once that for him the obsession of people to save time was pretty amusing for him since in the end, people had to use the saved up time doing something else and hence not being able to hold it forever.

Then we have this other famous quote that reads: "We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit", which has been frequently attributed to Aristotle for his assertions regarding how humans develop virtue but others credit it to the American writer and philosopher William James Durant. Regardless of whom the original phrase belongs to, this truly becomes a clear example of what I like to call "collective wisdom". There is no doubt that in addition to talent, the hours that we spend doing something that for us is worth spending time doing would ultimately determine the level of excellence that we reach on that particular thing. This may be, for example, what we do for a living or a talent that we are passionate about.

A musician can make a transition from excellent to virtuous not only depending on his or her talent but also on the number of hours that he or she spends playing and rehearsing to reach higher levels of mastery as the years go by.

Pilots, doctors, mechanics, engineers and even what can seem as easy to handle jobs such as drivers, bakers and others can start falling into the category of excellent professionals simply by doing what they love the most for considerable amounts of time.

Another interesting example that is worth remembering is that of language learners which need to invest great amounts of time to reach higher levels of competence in the chosen language. As you probably know, there are even scales on the approximate amount of hours that a language learner would require in order to move from one level to the next according to the European Frame Work Reference for Languages. This framework is currently the main reference around the world to determine how well a person speaks a foreign language and serves a parameter to tell the learners how much time they should spend in contact with the language in order to reach the goals that they have set for themselves.

Finally, we should bear in mind that **time is not only about work or about learning as much as we can but also about spending it with the people we love and reaching out a hand when they need it the most.** Collective wisdom is just another form of common sense, but sometimes we run out of it and we need a friendly reminder or even a slap on the face to start using it again.

One Cap At A Time!



I am sick and tired of you people. Truth be told. You, the one who drinks O2, coke, or any other soft drink daily. I am tired of you who buy Tupperware and plastic toothbrushes. You who buy ziplock bags and pack a carrot in it, and especially you, who asks for a double bag in the supermarket. Sick and tired of you I am. You are

careless with yourself, with the air you are breathing, with your health and the food you eat. Don't you see how bad this is? It is all on you!

I feel hopeful and inspired by you people. I feel optimistic when it comes to you, and young people, who commit to not using plastic and refusing bags. You who carry your own water bottle, and who think twice before buying shampoo or a razor just because it comes in a plastic bottle. I love you and admire you. Thanks for caring about you, me, and my daughter. I encourage you to keep it up, and even do much more.

This is not new. The World is filling up with our garbage. There are many actions that need to be taken CONSTANTLY, just to keep this planet going. There is little to be done, but "little goes a long way". Here is an action that students are doing in order to really do something. This is about a bottle cap campaign. Collecting and recycling one single cap at a time can make a big difference. And us at ILE understand that.

On February 19th, 2019, in an official communication (DECSC-164-2019) from the Dean, Emmanuel Gonzalez, we received the approval to do a Bottle Cap Collecting Campaign. Along with Amigos de los Parques Nacionales (ProParques), who are leading this campaign in Costa Rica. The campaign has run for almost five months here at UTN'a main campus, and it has been really successful!! ILE's Office is full of big bags that are full of thousands of caps.

Students, faculty members, and other members of our academic community from the main campus, and particularly, students from ILE, have committed to this cause. Caps are coming from everywhere, households, streets, restaurants, convenient stores, you name it! So far we have collected thousands and thousands of caps. In the pictures below you can see them, only in five months! All those caps could have ended up in landfills or even worse, in the ocean (therefore in our stomachs).

It is sad to see that we are happy to have so many caps. Ideally, we should not have caps to collect, but since society prefers convenience over anything else,

Written By Cindy Rodriguez (ILE Professor)

we have to do this type of movements. According to TEC, 80% of the plastic disposed of in Costa Rica goes to the ocean, which is an equivalent of 15 trucks (550 tons per day) of plastic thrown into the sea EVERY DAY!! 15 trucks!! IN OUR COUNTRY! (TEC, 2018).

Here you have some more alarming facts about our "green" and "happy country". We are the Central American country that imports more plastic. According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the plastic industry is the THIRD biggest in our country. And a total of 1 MILLION plastic bottles are bought EVERY MINUTE!!! (TEC, 2018). If these facts are not alarming to you, I do not what is.

So, this cap campaign is trying to make the difference, though many may think it is not a lot. Besides, there are other benefits! ProParques (along with the Red Cross) started this campaign with the objective of making Cahuita the first National Park with a wheelchair access, so disable people may be able to get into the ocean by themselves. In order to build the access, ProParques needs at least 260 kilograms of plastic caps to make a 10 tp 14 meter pathway to the ocean. That is a lot of caps!!

Therefore, we are going to continue all the way until December. The campaign has been so successful that ProParques has extended it for six more months. I am so glad we still have six months to collect much more waste and to turn it into something good, something positive. I wish we did not have caps to collect, but reality demands us to do so. Please help us with this campaign. Collect caps at home or workplace. If you have friends or family with supermarkets, restaurants or any other business where they can collect caps, please support this campaign.

Understanding Inquiry As The Practice of Freedom



In an attempt to more adequately understand the nature of inquiry, one eventually – and quite necessarily – runs into questions of philosophic purpose. Fortunately enough for us, educational theory isn't terribly shy in this regard. Economic utility, building a peaceful and pluralistic society, and honouring students' nascent potential all have staked their claim to our loyalties as an appropriate *raison d'être* for the myriad educational interventions we package, sell and ultimately make into the lives of students. What's more, teachers individually arrive with their own claims and rationales. These include building readers, promoting life-long learning and, most problematically, teaching children to 'learn how to learn'.

One theorist who has much to offer us is Maxine Greene, through her two seminal works, entitled *Teacher as Stranger* (1973) and *The Dialectic of Freedom* (1988). Strongly influenced by both existential and humanist thought – and a true trail blazer for women in the field of Educational Philosophy, to boot! – Greene was a strong advocate for student's abilities to make genuine, consequential choices in the context of their education, a practice of freedom in service of developing ethical awareness and democratic commitments in her learners. In this respect, Greene's ideas connected well, even operationalized, the better parts of what we have traditionally labelled a 'liberal education'. For Greene, education was intimately tied to an ongoing interface between the child (the self)

and the surrounding culture, an initiation into the cultural, aesthetic and moral world to be sure, but one in which the learners would come more profoundly to themselves as individuals capable of deciding, acting and committing themselves in reflective, articulate and socially just ways.

Inquiry – Creating the Conditions for Freedom

Inquiry, done well, offers us something remarkably powerful in terms of making this vision of educational purpose come to pass. We can envision a classroom where subject-specific content, critical and imaginative thinking tools, and large structuring questions are each deployed so as to create an ideational (concept-centered) space within which the students are situated, a space where they are both enabled and caused to make decisions impacting both the content and the outcomes of their learning.

This space of inquiry is itself characterized by a few dynamics that make it work – elements of relation between the student, text and the world, differentiation of ends and means, invitation into wonder, questioning, activity and choice, and disruption of any too-stable or self-assured truths. Constructivism, in particular a cultural-historical brand of constructivism, is the rule: Students are set into relation with significant cultural works, theorems, events, movements, et cetera, through and against which they negotiate the construction of knowledge, meaning and, ultimately, themselves.

ACADEMICS AND MORE

Too often in the field of education, like so many areas of life, stubborn contradictions beset us on all sides. Too often we claim that we want students to become independent learners AND we too often persist in teaching them in uniform ways using a narrow and rather standardized band of instruction and materials. Too often we claim to promote love of reading AND the statistics regarding adult readership remain stubbornly weak. Too often we bemoan the lack of interest, even imagination, in our learners AND we neither do a particularly good job at listening to what really sparks their curiosity nor finding the emotional core of what we're teaching so that content might become more relatable. There is too much passivity, disengagement and busy-work performed by and on behalf of students, AND we stubbornly insist on treating content as an end in itself, seeking to transfer data down the hierarchy of power and experience from the top to the bottom, while consistently conflating assessment with feats of memorization.

Education as a Dialectic of Freedom

Maxine Greene has much to suggest to us regarding how to root out and overcome our contradictions. Perhaps, with a sense of possibility and purpose, we are not so poorly equipped to structure meaningful opportunities for students to make choices and enact personal commitments in their learning. Perhaps we will be able to locate, alongside our students, a much-needed abundance of opportunity for them to exercise their values, make consequential decisions, and experience the implications of each in the world. Perhaps, hidden away in concept-rich and student-driven inquiry, those structured spaces of choice that are both developmentally appropriate and ethically defensible, **education truly is the practice of freedom.** Greene suggests that 'teaching always signifies



a type of intervention into someone else's life' (Dialectic, 175) and that thought alone, once we pause the blur of photocopying and quiz making for just a minute, ought to startle us into an appropriate sense of humility. The contradictions we face may possess deep historical, sociological and institutional roots, it is true, but nevertheless they remain fundamentally ours to confront with a sense of purpose and optimism. These contradictions are unavoidably ours to take up as professionals through the interventions – really, the choices – we make impacting the lives of others; we can choose to understand their roots, challenge their enactment into practice, and work to ameliorate their more deleterious effects. Then, and perhaps only then will we achieve our full mission, **'to create ourselves as human beings, as teachers capable of freeing other human beings to choose themselves'**. (Teacher as Stranger, 21)

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 a course in which you consider you learned a lot?

I think pronunciation courses are the ones in which I have learned many things. In those courses I realized I was mispronouncing many words. It is very important for you to pronounce correctly, for people to understand what you are trying to say.

Juliana Bolaños

Composition courses are extremely important and necessary for you to learn how to write correctly, which is necessary to get a job in the future.

Josue Romero

For me, pronunciation is the course in which I have learned a lot.

Since I have been taking pronunciation courses, my speaking skills have improved.

I have seen a big change.

Christian Moya

The most important course is grammar because it is the course where you learn the rules you use when you write and speak too.

Daniela Carranza

The most important course for me is composition because one day I will be working for a company, and I will have to write different types of documents properly.

Judith Corella

The contents covered in the pronunciation courses are very important, very interesting and are topics that we never learned in high-school, so they are extremely helpful to improve speaking skills.

Dayana Hidalgo

Composition class is undoubtedly, the course in which I have learned the most useful and engaging things.

I consider composition to be the most important course because in the long run it will help you to structure your thinking.

Leo Bado

I consider grammar courses are the most important courses of this major because you need solid foundation of grammar not only to write but also to speak. Grammar helps you in all the other courses.

Alejandra Villalobos



Toxic Relationships

By Milena Jiménez (ILE Student)

Without any doubt, no one wants to be involved in a toxic relationship. We always want to feel great and safe with our partner. However, not all relationships turn out as we first expected. Do you want to know if you are in a toxic relationship? Well, let's take a look at these three patterns: unhappiness, emotional imbalance, and low self-esteem. These are the most common characteristics of toxic relationships. If you identify yourself with at least one of those, you must find some help.

Generally speaking, if you are in a relationship where happiness is absent and fights and disagreements are common all the time, it is time to re-evaluate and take action to stop this toxic situation. Once you accept you are in trouble, you will feel much better, and you will understand that suffering is not part of love.

Moreover, the suffering of emotional imbalance is another pattern of unhealthy relationships, and it is crucial to identify the fear of being alone because consequently, problems such as anxiety and depression will appear. Therefore, it is necessary to learn how to deal and face critical moments, because they occur when a person behaves sensibly. Therefore, changing your attitude towards life and facing reality are the only options to overcome the problem and reach the life we all deserve.

Finally, if you or someone you know is displaying low self-esteem and is showing feelings of being undervalued that prevent him or her from reaching life's goals and being involved in social activities, and if there is a feeling that makes you believe that you do not deserve something better, try to believe in yourself and in your right to be happy. It is always good to get a new perspective on these issues that have come in an unwanted way to our lives. Looking for help is what you have to do when you are feeling undervalued by someone. Remember that if you do not love or value yourself, it is difficult for someone else to do it.

To sum up, we all deserve to have a better and healthy life surrounded by the ones that really love us. Although unhappiness, emotional imbalance, and low self-esteem are difficult patterns to deal with, do not be afraid; try to find some help and save yourself before it is too late.



When The Going Gets Tough, The Tough Get Going.

By Michelle Miranda (ILE Student)

I have always been the kind of person who thinks that everything in this life has a purpose. At my young age, my family and I have struggled through difficult situations that no one can image, and I used to believe that we would not be able to overcome those obstacles that have crossed our path. However, as time goes by, I have learned three golden lessons that have helped me to see things differently: life is not fair even if we act in the right way, everything in this life is temporary, and a positive attitude can turn your world around.

Even though life is not fair, in the end, it gives us what we deserve. My mother has always been the one who has raised her seven children, and it was completely difficult for her to be the only one who worked in order to bring bread to our table. Consequently, one of my brothers got a job, but at first, it was not as as he had expected, so he was not able to help us. For that reason, my brother was working hard to get a promotion. The way he prepared himself was incredible. He had all the knowledge and experience to assume this position efficiently; it was a great opportunity for him to grow both personally and professionally and also to help us economically. Unfortunately, envy always wins, and a co-worker who was new in this area did everything possible in order for him not to get the promotion. This was how my brother lost the chance. This is obviously something hard to deal with, and it might not be fair, but after some time a new opportunity appeared. My brother did his best, and this time the results were different. Now, he is working in a higher and better position than before.

All the bad things that one person will experience over their lifetime are temporary. Despite what happened to my brother, more tragedies were right around the corner. My grandpa was ill, and my sister had a terrible car accident in which the paramedics claimed that it truly was a miracle she was still alive. It was the hardest time for my family and me because we had to take care of her and assume all the expenses. Nevertheless, after the long process of recovery, today she walks cheerfully and lives life to the fullest. I believe when a tough situation happens, it is not to punish someone and make them miserable, it is a tool that people can use and learn from in order to make their lives more enjoyable. It is just a matter of time after something strenuous happens, something good will turn out in the end.

A positive attitude is necessary to face any circumstance. In spite of living some challenging moments, my mother never gave up. She has always been a determined and brave woman. There was no time in which she encouraged all my brothers and me to go ahead even if she felt worse than us. I really appreciate her mindset and courageous attitude to face any issue. No matter what had happened, she always had faith.

I understood that this life is full of challenges and difficulties, and they will be part of our lives forever. We cannot run away from all those tough experiences. Thus, instead of complaining about all the problems, we need to face them bravely and positively with confidence that you can overcome them. Look for solutions and try to move on. Life is about "Survival of the fittest". Those who adapt to tough situations, emerge successfully. Remember, when the going gets tough, the tough get going.

The Art Of Bonsai



Bonsai is the ancient art of growing and maintaining miniature trees. The growth of the trees is stunted using various techniques that include pruning and wiring.

The word “bonsai” consists of two Japanese words, bon meaning shallow container or tray, and sai, meaning a plant or planting.

Whilst bonsai has been practiced in several east Asian countries for centuries, it has been held in most prominence in Japan.

The art of bonsai is complicated if done right, but for enthusiasts, is a deeply relaxing and rewarding past time. I spoke to Mariquinha Kara, a bonsai enthusiast with 20 years experience and over sixty trees in her garden in Greendale.

So where does one begin? If you wish to start bonsai as a hobby, it is recommended that you obtain a few trees of different ages. Try to get some starter trees and always try to buy a few mature bonsai trees so that you get the idea of what you are trying to achieve with the younger trees.

There are five essential elements to note when caring for your bonsai. These are watering, placement, fertilizing, re-potting, pruning and disease.

There's no specific schedule or

routine for watering a bonsai. The best way to know how often you should water is to constantly check the soil which should never be completely dry. Try to keep it moist and wet but be careful not to overwater it because this can harm roots. If the leaves of the tree start to turn yellow, you could be overwatering it.

Caring for your bonsai also includes finding a nice spot for it. Some miniature trees need at least some direct sunlight on them, others not too much.

Fertilizers are another important component of caring for your bonsai tree. A general multi-purpose fertilizer should be used and applied by hand to each tree. Small amounts frequently are better than over-doing it as too much can cause leaf burn. Fertilizer must be applied to damp soil. For best results, apply immediately after watering.

When you grow a bonsai, there'll be a point when you will have to think about taking it from an old pot to a new one. This is called re-potting. Different species of trees have different re-potting periods, ranging from two to five years. To re-pot, soak the tree in a tub of water. Now remove the plant from the pot and take away

all the soil from the roots without damaging them. Examine the plant carefully, removing any diseased portions. Always prune the roots according to how they will fit into the new pot to be used.

Pruning is important for shaping your miniature tree. You must prune it constantly to form a design and to keep it looking the way you want it to look.

Just like full size trees, bonsais can be affected by pests and disease, although some creatures such as worms can be of benefit. If you have many bonsai and one gets infected with a fungus or virus, make sure you separate it from the other trees.

Horticulturist Andrew Mangwarara adds, “Only a few people are able to grow bonsai due to the nature of bonsai care. It requires daily attention. Growing bonsai requires skill, and the patience to learn potting, pruning, the selection of trees and feeding. Few nurseries also sell these special trees because they are difficult to produce and usually take many years for a finished bonsai. The older the tree, the more valuable it is.” And indeed this is true. One bonsai, that is centuries old, was recently sold for \$1.3 million at a bonsai convention in Japan.



VISITING LANDMARKS

ARKANSAS



Arkansas' official nickname is "The Natural State" and that tells you a lot. It has great state parks throughout the state, with wilderness comprising broadleaf forests. The northwest boasts the Ozark Mountains while the south and east of the state has flatter land and shows more of its agricultural heritage. The Mississippi River forms the eastern border of the state and gives a great



blues music heritage, great country music elsewhere (Johnny Cash and Glen Campbell were Arkansans) and folk and bluegrass everywhere. There are wonderful state parks with camping facilities and some with cabins. The Buffalo River has majestic scenery and easy canoe float trips (but go in late spring to be sure there is enough water). The summer is hot and humid; spring and autumn are wetter but mostly from intermittent heavy rain showers. Winter brings a little snow, but this time of year can still be humid. Spring is tornado season. The spelling and pronunciation of

"Arkansas" (It is always ar-kan-saw or ark-an-saw, not ar-kansas) reflect

the state's heritage. The name is a French pronunciation of a Siouyan word meaning "land of downriver people" and was prescribed by law in 1881. It is still illegal to mispronounce the name (**the law contains a clause stating that "the pronunciation with the accent on the second syllable with the sound of 'a' in 'man' and the sounding of the terminal 's' is an innovation to be discouraged"**), so be careful!

Natives and residents of Arkansas are called Arkansans, though the older "**Arkansawyers**" is also still used.

Arkansas, though not a part of the country's "**tornado alley**," is frequently affected by tornadoes during the storms which occur throughout the spring and summer seasons. Weather conditions can change rapidly and it is important to stay informed during tornado season as to the current weather outlook while travelling across the state.

If you are planning on traveling to Arkansas during the spring or summer months, refer to the Tornado safety page for important precautionary information.

Drunk driving can be a danger, especially in rural areas at night. **Arkansas is divided between "wet" and "dry" counties**, so many drinkers in the state must drive 10-30 miles away from home for a good time.

Arkansas' food resembles that of its southern neighbors. Much truly authentic and worthwhile southern cuisine is made in private homes, cookouts, or church functions, rather than actual restaurants. One exception is barbecue, particularly pork barbecue, which is widespread, and available in restaurants, roadside stands, and even trucks. Another regional staple is fried catfish, often it is served with hushpuppies, cole slaw, and french fries or a baked potato. Catfish is especially prevalent in the lowland and Delta regions of the south and east.

In terms of race relations, Arkansas has progressed in many respects since the 1950s. However, many small towns in the state, especially in the highlands, are mostly or en-



tirely white, and people of color may attract stares or unwanted attention. People of Hispanic background may be assumed to be recent immigrants. Likewise, some areas of the Delta, and of the cities of Little Rock, North Little Rock, and Pine Bluff are almost entirely African-American; and even absent overt racial tensions; poverty is widespread in these areas, and wealthier visitors of any background need to be aware of economic and social tensions. However, some areas in larger towns and cities are decidedly integrated.

DISCOVERING TECHNOLOGY



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An Introduction To Big Data

Big data: everyone seems to be talking about it, but what is big data really? How is it changing the way researchers at companies, nonprofits, governments, institutions, and other organizations are learning about the world around them? Where is this data coming from, how is it being processed, and how are the results being used? And why is open source so important to answering these questions?

What is big data?

There is no hard and fast rule about exactly what size a database needs to be for the data inside of it to be considered “big.” Instead, what typically defines big data is the need for new techniques and tools to be able to process it. In order to use big data, you need programs that span multiple physical and/or virtual machines working together in concert to process all of the data in a reasonable span of time.

Getting programs on multiple machines to work together in an efficient way so that each program knows which components of the data to process, and then being able to put the results from all the machines together to make sense of a large pool of data, takes special programming techniques. Since it is typically much faster for programs to access data stored locally instead of over a network, the distribution of data across a cluster and how those machines are networked together are also important considerations when thinking about big data problems.

What kind of datasets are considered big data?

The uses of big data are almost as varied as they are large. Prominent examples you’re probably already familiar with include: social media networks analyzing their members’ data to learn more about them and connect them with content and advertising relevant to their interests, or search engines looking at the relationship between queries and results to give better answers to users’ questions.

But the potential uses go much further! Two of the largest sources of data in large quantities are transactional data, including everything from stock prices to bank data to individual merchants’ purchase histories; and sensor data, much



of it coming from what is commonly referred to as the Internet of Things (IoT). This sensor data might be anything from measurements taken from robots on an automaker’s manufacturing line, to location data on a cellphone network, to instantaneous electrical usage data in homes and businesses, to passenger boarding information taken on a transit system. By analyzing this data, organizations can learn trends about the data they are measuring, as well as the people generating this data. The hope for this big data analysis is to provide more customized service and increased efficiencies in whatever industry the data is collected from.

How is big data analyzed?

One of the best-known methods for turning raw data into useful information is what is known as MapReduce. [MapReduce](#) is a method for taking a large data set and performing computations on it across multiple computers, in parallel. It serves as a model for how to program and is often used to refer to the actual implementation of this model.

In essence, MapReduce consists of two parts. The Map function does sorting and filtering, taking data and placing it inside of categories so that it can be analyzed.

DISCOVERING TECHNOLOGY

The Reduce function provides a summary of this data by combining it all together. While largely credited to research that took place at Google, MapReduce is now a generic term and refers to a general model used by many technologies.

What tools are used to analyze big data?

Perhaps the most influential and established tool for analyzing big data is known as [Apache Hadoop](#). Apache Hadoop is a framework for storing and processing data at a large scale, and it is completely open source. Hadoop can run on commodity hardware, making it easy to use with an existing data center, or even to conduct analysis in the cloud. Hadoop is broken into four main parts:

- The Hadoop Distributed File System (HDFS), which is a distributed file system designed for very high aggregate bandwidth;
- YARN, a platform for managing Hadoop's resources and scheduling programs that will run on the Hadoop infrastructure;
- MapReduce, as described above, a model for doing big data processing;
- And a common set of libraries for other modules to use.

To learn more about Hadoop, see our [Introduction to Apache Hadoop for big data](#).



Other tools are out there too. One that receives a lot of attention is Apache Spark. The main selling point of Spark is that it stores much of the data for processing in memory, as opposed to on disk, which for certain kinds of analysis can be much faster. Depending on the operation, analysts may see results a hundred times faster or more. Spark can use HDFS, but it is also capable of working with other data stores, like Apache Cassandra or OpenStack Swift. It's also fairly easy to run Spark on a single local machine, making testing and development easier.

Other big data tools

Of course, these aren't the only big data tools out there. There are countless open source solutions for working with big data, many of them specialized for providing optimal features and performance for a specific niche or for specific hardware configurations.

The Apache Software Foundation (ASF) supports many of these big data projects. Here are some that you may find useful.

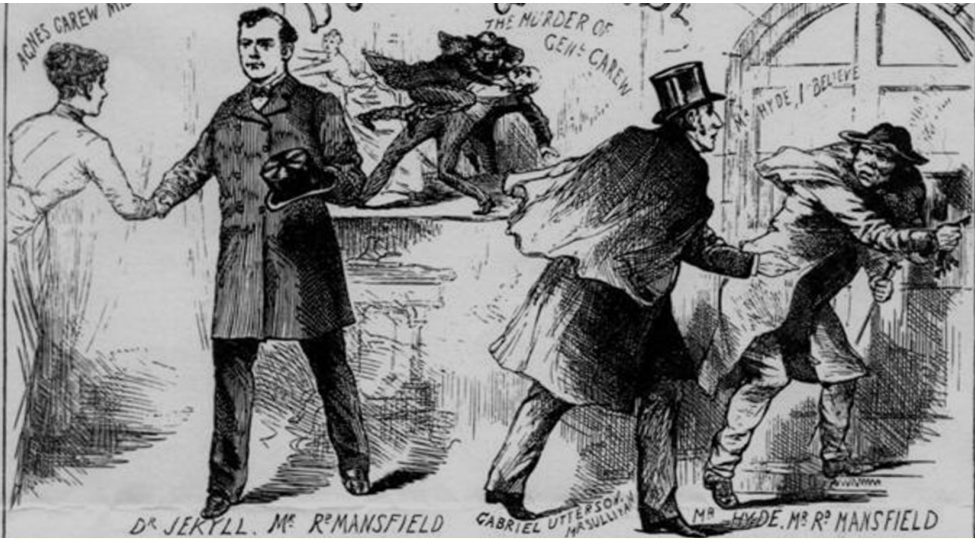
- [Apache Beam](#) is "a unified model for defining both batch and streaming data-parallel processing pipelines." It allows developers to write code that works across multiple processing engines.
- [Apache Hive](#) is a data warehouse built on Hadoop. A top-level Apache project, it "facilitates reading, writing, and managing large datasets ... using SQL."
- [Apache Impala](#) is an SQL query engine that runs on Hadoop. It's incubating within Apache and is touted for improving SQL query performance while offering a familiar interface.
- [Apache Kafka](#) allows users to publish and subscribe to real-time data feeds. It aims to bring the reliability of other messaging systems to streaming data.
- [Apache Lucene](#) is a full-text indexing and search software library that can be used for recommendation engines. It's also the basis for many other search projects, including Solr and Elasticsearch.
- [Apache Pig](#) is a platform for analyzing large datasets that runs on Hadoop. Yahoo, which developed it to do MapReduce jobs on large datasets, contributed it to the ASF in 2007.
- [Apache Solr](#) is an enterprise search platform built upon Lucene.
- [Apache Zeppelin](#) is an incubating project that enables interactive data analytics with SQL and other programming languages.

Other open source big data tools you may want to investigate include:

- [Elasticsearch](#) is another enterprise search engine based on Lucene. It's part of the Elastic stack (formerly known as the ELK stack for its components: Elasticsearch, Kibana, and Logstash) that generates insights from structured and unstructured data.
- [Cruise Control](#) was developed by LinkedIn to run Apache Kafka clusters at large scale.
- [TensorFlow](#) is a software library for machine learning that has grown rapidly since Google open sourced it in late 2015. It's been praised for "democratizing" machine learning because of its ease-of-use.

As big data continues to grow in size and importance, the list of open source tools for working with it will certainly continue to grow as well.

The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde



Robert Louis Stevenson is often dismissed as a second-rate scribbler of horror stories and adventure tales for children. He suffered greatly under the withering gaze of literary icon Virginia Woolf – who publicly disparaged his works during the height of her fame.

But there's been a reconsideration of Stevenson as a master of the neo-romanticism movement that sprung up in London during the 1880s. This revisionist take on Stevenson is primarily driven by "The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," which is a classic of the style and established Stevenson as a best-selling author in Britain and in the United States after its publication in 1886 (and many believe it was responsible for the widespread panic that ensued during the Jack the Ripper murders in 1888).

It's difficult to read "Jekyll and Hyde" with a clean slate – the characters are so infused into modern society that a reader would have had to have grown up in a vacuum cleaner not to have formed some kind of impression of the characters.

But despite the movies, comic books, plays, parodies and TV melodramas (even the children's show "Arthur" had an episode based on the story), the novella amazingly retains its freshness. Reading "Jekyll and Hyde" is like stepping through a looking glass and onto the gas-lit, cobblestoned byways of Victorian London. You can actually feel the chill of the fog and hear the click of walking sticks on the

stones.

Stevenson is a beautiful writer – much to Woolf's chagrin. He isn't flowery, however, preferring a concise, direct style and relying on good old fashioned verbs and nouns to tell the story. The results, while too straight-forward for the esoteric Woolf, are vivid portraits and strong characterizations. Take this narrative from Mr. Enfield:

"Street after street, and all the folks asleep – street after street, all lighted up as if for a procession and all as empty as a church – till at last I got into that state of mind when a man listens and listens and begins to long for the sight of a policeman. All at once, I saw two figures: one little man who was stumping along eastward at a good walk, and the other a girl of maybe eight or ten who was running as hard as she was able down a cross street. Well, sire the two ran into one another naturally enough at the corner: and then cam the horrible part of the thing; for the man trampled calmly over the child's body and left here screaming on the ground."

This "little man," of course, is Mr. Hyde. That may be the biggest surprise in the story: the crafty, evil doppelganger known as Mr. Hyde is a dwarf. A twisted and deformed dwarf, but nothing like the lurching giant that he is often portrayed as in film.

While disguised as a supernatural horror story, "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" is actually an indictment on Victorian morals. We told from the point of view of his close-friend, Mr. Utterson, that Dr. Jekyll is an intelligent, kind-hearted man who is well-respected as he moves into middle age. But in actuality, Dr. Jekyll is bored, frustrated, and exhausted by his propriety.

And that leads the good doctor to his basement laboratory to experiment with mind-altering chemicals, powders, and potions. There he discovers not only a way to unleash his primal urges, but in way that protects his reputation and identity. He has the perfect alibi because he has become another person – Mr. Hyde. Stevenson, of course, was prevented from telling his readers in detail what Mr. Hyde did on his midnight excursions to the seedy parts of London – but one imagines lots of alcohol, opium, gambling, and sex with prostitutes. Dr. Jekyll is seduced by this lifestyle, until it overcomes him and his urges become so debased that he turns to brutality and murder.

The story is told from the point of view of the lawyer, Mr. Utterson, and then in letters from Dr. Jekyll's medical school mate, Dr. Lanyon, and lastly in a written confession from Dr. Jekyll himself. Surprisingly, Jekyll's confession may be the weakest part of the narrative. The quick and easy flow established by Mr. Utterson and Dr. Lanyon's sections skids to a halt with more stilted and formal language. The change, however, isn't enough to derail the story.

Stevenson's truly a delight, but often overlooked by serious readers. "The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" is certainly worth the investment of time – because at about 75 pages it reads more like a short story than a novella. You've seen the movies, experienced the legend, so why not get the story from the original source? Especially when it's so much fun. To read the this novel, go to:

[The Strange Case Of Dr. Jekyll And Mr. Hyde](#)

“English For You CR” Presents, Past modals



We are familiar with the modals **could**, **should** and **would** to express possibility, advice or conditionals, for example.

In the past, however, they have different meaning and uses. In all cases, we use the auxiliary “**have**” and the past participle of the verb:

- John is late. He **could have got** lost. (speculation in the past)
- I **could have gone** with her, but I decided to stay home. (past possibility)

With **should**, we say,

- It's raining, I **should have brought** an umbrella.
(a good idea that I didn't put into practice).
- The package was sent a month ago. It **should have arrived** by now.
(deduction about a past event)

Finally, **would** can express

- I **would have gone** with you if I hadn't been so busy.
(past or third conditional)
- She **would have returned** the wallet she found, but the owner never came back.
(a hypothetical situation in the past).

You can find more reference here:

www.perfect-english-grammar.com/could-have-should-have-would-have.html

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

strawhat

adjective [straw-hat]

-of or relating to a summer theater situated outside an urban or metropolitan area: **strawhat theater**; **strawhat circuit**.

EXAMPLE:

Indeed, the **strawhat impresario** is not only at the mercy of the the customers.

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

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Karni Mata Temple

Karni Mata was a warrior-saint during the 14th and early 15th century who is widely referred in Rajasthan as an incarnation of Goddess Durga. She is the family deity of the Rathods in Jodhpur and Bikaner and held the privilege of laying the foundation stones of both the Mehrangarh Fort and the Junagadh Fort. It was Deshnok where she lived for most of her 151 years lifetime and it is here that she is said to have mysteriously disappeared.

Famous for its rats, called "Kabas", the Karni Mata Temple has received widespread media coverage in recent past. While there are many legends about the Kabas of the temple, most common perception is that the believers consider the rats as the incarnation of their ancestors, thus very holy. It is forbidden to kill a rat, and if one gets killed by mistake, one must offer a similar rat made of silver. The devotees offer sweets, fruits, cereals and milk to the Kabas which are then distributed to the visitors. The sighting of white rats is considered most auspicious as they are believed to be the incarnations of the sons of Karni Mata.

The current temple was built by Maharaja Ganga Singh of Bikaner about 100 years ago. Made of marble and stone, with occasional gold, the temple is in a style called "Madh". The main arched gateway is exquisitely carved in marble and opens to a courtyard leading to the inner shrine. The shrine is not well lit, however, it is not difficult to spot beautiful designs on its walls and ceilings, and rats all around!

There are large bowls of milk kept on the ground with the Kabas having a feast in a strangely orderly manner. They are everywhere, probably thousands of them! While the locals do not mind coming in contact with them, I was very ill at ease, probably due to my discomfort around all sorts of animals. Stayed just long enough to take some photographs, which did not come up well due to a lack of focus, and the hurried outside.

Information taken from: www.shadowsgalore.com/2017/11/karni-mata-temple-rat-temple-deshnok/
Photo credit: www.pixbay.com

