UTN Held Conference "Diversity And Human Rights: How Are We Coming Along?"

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Bunnies In Children's Books

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In this issue, we are going to learn why bunnies are central to many children's stories. Dr. Zoe Jaques answers questions about rabbits in children's fiction. 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: www.pixabay.com

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EDITORIAL

June 15th, World Elder Abuse Awareness Day , Did You Know That?

by Jose Soto (ILE Director)

What is more important than knowing the observance date of any event? In fact, it is knowing about the meaning behind it. This editorial started out a few days earlier with lines related to father's day. However, finding about the Elder Abuse Awareness day caught my attention, and I immediately related to a father's day celebration as well.

According to the definition from the web site timeanddate.com, , the observance seeks to reach worldwide consciousness on the fact that elders may usually go through emotional, physical, and financial abuse from caregivers or others. The awareness day also aims at understanding the conditions and options that the ageing population must face daily. The idea is not only to remember that June 15th is the awareness day, but it is also a day to reflect on how to reduce the elder abuse. In different countries, national and local governments, academics, private and public sectors come together along with senior citizens to discuss ideas about how to discuss acts of violence, create friendly elderly policies and increase reporting of incidences. (timeanddate.com).

Now think about your ageing relatives and make sure they are not part of any of the following incidences that United Nations (UN) mentions in 2019 regarding elderly abuse:

- "Around 1 in 6 older people experience some form of abuse, a figure higher than previously estimated and predicted to rise as populations age worldwide.
- Rates of abuse may be higher for older people living in institutions than in the community.
- Elder abuse can lead to serious physical injuries and long-term psychological consequences.
- Elder abuse is predicted to increase as many countries are experiencing rapidly ageing populations.
- The global population of people aged 60 years and older will more than double, from 900 million in 2015 to about 2 billion in 2050." (un.org).

We might have heard of several cases in Costa Rica regarding elder abuse, and the previous facts are not strange to us. As the ageing population is increasing due to a drop of newborns, the consciousness around the elderly must rise in turn, as we all go to become elders as well—or so we hope.

Taking this issue positively though, we must know that we are all entitled to honor the elder's wisdom and knowledge of life. The stories they tell us are full of hints of the past because they are the living remnants of a reality that no longer exists. Their accounts of decades ago are still of great value in their minds, and we must see it in their own lights. They are the living books, pictures and records of better or worse times that somehow teach us how to do things today. Advanced societies keep their elders as pillars of knowledge for consultation and not in institutions for Sunday visitations.

Having been able to accompany an elder to his final days left me with some of the most treasured teachings in life. We can sit down one day with a cup of coffee and talk about it. I am leaving you with a final thought for Father's Day: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you, as said in the Sermon on the Mount by Jesus.

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UTN Held Conference "Diversity And Human Rights: How Are We Coming Along?"

On Friday, May 24th, the Vice Presidency of Student Life, the Student Benefits and Scholarship Area, UTN Student Welfare Area and the Student Advocacy organized the discussion "Diversity and Human Rights, how are we doing?"

This activity was carried out within the framework of the commemoration of the International Day of non-discrimination towards the sexually diverse population, which is celebrated on May 17th of each year, date in which, in 1990, homosexuality was eliminated from the International Classification of Diseases and other Health Problems of the World Health Organization (WHO).

Actually, the UTN has an Intervention protocol for Sexual Harassment since 2017 and has pronounced itself free of all discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, while fostering an institutional culture of respect for the sexual diversity of the university community and society.

The activity began with the words of the Vice President of Student Life of the UTN, Marisol Rojas and the Chancellor of the UTN, Marcelo Prieto, who welcomed those present and reflected on the equality of the rights of the people.

Marisol Rojas, Vice Chancellor of Student Life said that "in a joint effort, as a sample of the permanent concern for the topics that call us in this activity, the Student Welfare Area and the Scholarship Area, together with the Student Ombudsman, with great skill and commitment, organized this discussion. From its title, it is easy to intuit that at the end of this activity we will have more questions than we have now; however, the goal we have is that we have a clearer awareness of that it is up to us to act as agents of change, as members of a progressive society, forced to change roles and to think and direct our gaze in other senses."

Rojas, mentioned that there are still countries where sexual acts of people of the same sex are punishable by death, in others, they are sentenced to jail. "In Costa Rica, there has been a lot of progress on this issue, but also many setbacks, the image we had of the country respectful, has had swings, so we have many opportunities to question and think about what we can improve."

For his part, the Chancellor of the UTN, Marcelo Prieto, mentioned that this activity is very important because the UTN has committed itself to making an effort by actively promoting, disseminating and discussing the subject of human rights. "There is an area of freedom, in which, neither society nor the State, have to intervene, because it corresponds to the private life of each of each and every human being, and there is a protection to it, where neither the other people, nor the State as a political organ of society, can intervene, as long as that right of freedom does not harm the rights and freedoms of others, "said Prieto.

During the activity, a conversation was held with the participation of a student from the University of Costa Rica (UCR) and a member of the Gente Diversa Collective, Cristopher Salas Rodríguez, a social worker and representative of the Costa Rican Demographic Association, UCR Professor Lindsen Morera Murillo, and member of the Gente Diversa Collective, Adrián Calvo Ugalde and also psychologist Laura Sánchez Calvo, who represented the international HIVOS organization.

Among the ideas that were shared in this event is the concept of Human Rights (Human Rights), which is associated with all those rights that defend human dignity and that are inherent to all human beings by the simple fact of being people. Experts said that human rights are subject to transformation and are conquests of social movements in the country and the world. Unfortunately, discrimination and hatred towards the sexually diverse population arise from a concept of normality that is imposed through the culture of societies.

One of the conclusions reached by the panelists and the public is that the public and private sectors need to carry out actions for full equality of the rights of all people, regardless of sex, gender, religion, political opinion, social origin, economic status or any other condition.

The event was attended by university authorities, academic and administrative staff, students from UTN Alajuela and Atenas Campuses, UCR students, and in addition, students of the Colegio El Carmen de Alajuela.

See original news in Spanish in: www.utn.ac.cr/content/utn-realizó-conversatorio-"diversidad-y-derechos-humanos-¿cómo-vamos"

UTN Students Participated in "24 Hours Of Innovation" Competition

Translated By Izabela Sepúlveda (ILE Professor)

A total of seven UTN students obtained - together with their teams - the 1st and 2nd place in some of the challenges established in the "24 Hours Innovation Competition" that took place on May 23rd and 24th, in the Auditorium of the National Council of Deans (CONARE),

The "24 hours of Innovation" is a competition that takes place annually, and that promotes the innovative attitude of the participating students.

The students are supported by the officials in charge of serving the country's innovative ecosystem, who during the competition become 22 coaches, 22 mentors and 14 jurors.

All of them encourage the culture of innovation in our country (so that it is recognized as an axis for development) and encourage participants to learn to know about the subject in a way that encourages their innovative and entrepreneurial spirit.

The "24 hours of Innovation" is an international competition with more than 1000 participants from the five continents. It is organized, each spring, by L'École de Technologie Supérieure (ÉTS) of Canada and in 2019 it was the twelfth edition. This initiative has concentrated in its different celebrations the participation of universities of countries from all continents.

In Costa Rica, participants receive support from Proinnova-UCR, TEC Emprende, Auge-UCR, Transferencia del Conocimiento y Vinculación Externa de la UNA´s office (OTVE), Masters´ Program in Gestión de la Innovación Tecnológica (Magit) of the UNA, Centro de Incubación de Empresas de Base Tecnológica de la UTN (CIEBT-UTN), el Programa de Desarrollo Gerencial de la UNED y la Fundación UCR.

The students of the UTN that won awards in the different challenges are the following:

CHALLENGE	POSITION	NAME	LOCATION	MAJOR
Banco Nacional	1st Place	María Fernanda Madriz Ramírez	Alajuela Campus	Engineering on Industrial Production
Banco Nacional	1st Place	Vivian Arleth Herrera Murillo	Alajuela Campus	International Relations –Foreign Commerce Administration
Proin	1st Place	María Laura Araya Barboza	Alajuela Campus	English as a Foreign Language
Kolbi	1st Place	Eduardo Antonio Vargas Umanzor	Pacific Campus	Information Technologies Engineering
Kolbi	1st Place	Briana Yariela Vargas Jiménez	Pacific Campus	Business Management and Business Administration
International Challenge	1st Place	Mario José Alvarado Zeledón	Pacific Campus	Administration and business management
Kolbi	1st Place	Karen Tatiana Arce Campos	San Carlos Campus	Enterprise Administration with emphasis on Human Resources

See original news in Spanish in: www.utn.ac.cr/content/estudiantes-de-la-utn-destacan-entre-los-ganadores-de-los-retos-de-la-competencia-"24-0

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Trump May Ban US Telecoms From Using Huawei Tech

The order, which could be signed during the last week of May, does not specify the countries or companies to be banned as "national security risks", but it is designed to target Huawei and Chinese telecoms in general, three officials familiar with the matter told Reuters.

It will invoke the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, giving the president jurisdiction over interstate commerce in case of an "unusual and extraordinary threat" to the "national security, foreign policy, or economy of the United States" originating "in whole or substantial part outside the United States", according to the officials, who said the US Department of Commerce would be responsible for developing an enforcement framework.

Trump has reportedly been weighing the order for over a year, and if he moves ahead, it will add to the gravity of the US-China trade war that has escalated over the past

two weeks. After negotiations with Chinese officials failed to produce a satisfactory trade deal last Sunday, Trump jacked up tariffs on Chinese goods to 25 percent, vowing to slap similar duties on thousands more products and triggering China to respond in kind.

The US government is already barred from using telecom equipment from Huawei and ZTE, another Chinese company, per an August executive order, and the Federal Communications Commission voted to exclude China Mobile Ltd from US networks last week. While the big four US wireless carriers – Verizon, AT&T, T-Mobile, and Sprint – have agreed not to use Huawei in their 5G networks, smaller carriers have made no such agreements, and many use equipment from Huawei and ZTE for cost reasons.

The Trump administration has stepped up its anti-Huawei rhetoric internationally, warning the UK that they risk being kicked out of the Five

Eyes intelligence-sharing network if they allow the Chinese firm to build any part of their 5G network earlier this month after leveling similar threats at Germany and other European allies. While the US insists Huawei products are backdoored, used to spy on behalf of the Chinese government, no proof of this spying has yet been produced - indeed, there is more proof that US uses its own companies' tech to spy, as Huawei executives have repeatedly pointed out.

Information taken from: https://en.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13980225000495:

Small Increase In EU's Total Greenhouse Gas Emissions

According to the EEA's Annual European Union greenhouse gas inventory 1990-2017 and inventory report 2019, total greenhouse gas emissions (including international aviation) rose by 0.7 % in 2017 compared with 2016. These official data confirm the preliminary estimates published by the EEA in October 2018. From 1990 to 2017, the EU reduced its net greenhouse gas emissions by 21.7 %. The EU is therefore still exceeding its 20 % reduction target set for 2020.

EU greenhouse gas emissions have decreased since 1990 as a combined result of policies, economic and structural factors and, on average, milder winters (requiring less energy for heating). The largest emission cuts have been made in the energy sector, due to efficiency improvements, increased use

of renewables and a less carbon intensive mix of fossil fuels — more gas, and less coal and oil. Energy efficiency and renewable energy will continue to play a key role in cutting future emissions and helping the EU achieve its 40 % reduction target by 2030.
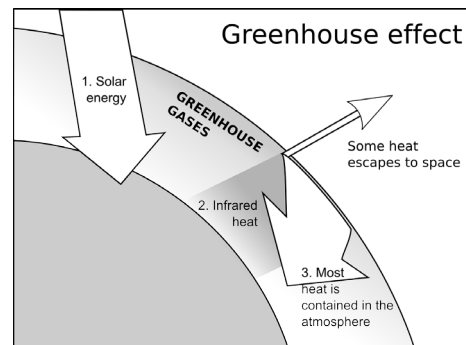
The EEA will publish preliminary estimates of 2018 emissions in the autumn.

The 0.7 % increase in EU greenhouse gas emissions observed in 2017 resulted from the main following factors:

Transport emissions continued to grow: for the fourth consecutive year since 2013, carbon dioxide emissions from road transportation increased — both for freight and passenger vehicles. Most of the increase was accounted for by higher diesel consumption by trucks and

vans, but consumption and emissions also increased for passenger cars. Emissions from international aviation increased substantially as a result of higher demand and consumption of jet kerosene.

Across the EU, several industrial sectors recorded higher emissions in 2017 as a result of higher economic and industrial activity compared to 2016.

Greenhouse effect

1. Solar energy

GREENHOUSE GASES

Some heat escapes to space

2. Infrared heat

3. Most heat is contained in the atmosphere

Information taken from:: www.eea.europa.eu/highlights/small-increase-in-eus-total-ghg   Image taken from: www.pixabay.com

Antibiotics In Some Rivers Exceed 'Safe' Levels

Concentrations of antibiotics found in some of the world's rivers exceed 'safe' levels by up to 300 times, the first ever global study has discovered.

Researchers looked for 14 commonly used antibiotics in rivers in 72 countries across six continents and found antibiotics at 65% of the sites monitored.

Metronidazole, which is used to treat bacterial infections including skin and mouth infections, exceeded safe levels by the biggest margin, with concentrations at one site in Bangladesh 300 times greater than the 'safe' level.

In the River Thames and one of its tributaries in London, the researchers detected a maximum total antibiotic concentration of 233 nanograms per litre (ng/l), whereas in Bangladesh the concentration was 170 times higher.

The most prevalent antibiotic was trimethoprim, which was detected at 307 of the 711 sites tested and is primarily used to treat urinary tract infections.

The research team compared the monitoring data with 'safe' levels recently established by the AMR Industry Alliance which, depending on the antibiotic, range from 20-32,000 ng/l.

Ciproflaxacin, which is used to treat a number of bacterial infections, was the compound that most frequently exceeded safe levels, surpassing the safety threshold in 51 places.

The team said that the 'safe' limits were most frequently exceeded in Asia and Africa, but sites in Europe, North America and South America also had levels of concern showing that antibiotic contamination was a "global problem."

Sites where antibiotics exceeded 'safe' levels by the greatest degree were in Bangladesh, Kenya, Ghana, Pakistan and Nigeria, while a site in Austria was ranked the highest of the European sites monitored. The study revealed that high-risk sites were typically adjacent to wastewater treatment systems, waste or sewage dumps and in some areas of political turmoil, including the Israeli and Palestinian border.

The project, which was led by the University of York, was a huge logistical challenge -- with 92 sampling kits flown out to partners across the world who were asked to take samples from locations along their local river system.

Samples were then frozen and couriered back to the University of York for testing. Some of the world's most iconic rivers were sampled, including the Chao Phraya, Danube, Mekong, Seine, Thames, Tiber and Tigris.

Dr John Wilkinson, from the Department of Environment and Geography, who co-ordinated the monitoring work said no other study had been done on this scale.

He said: "Until now, the majority of environmental monitoring work for antibiotics has been done in Europe, N. America and China. Often on only a handful of antibiotics. We know very little about the scale of problem globally.

"Our study helps fill this key knowledge gap with data being generated for countries that had never been monitored before."

Professor Alistair Boxall, Theme Leader of the York Environmental Sustainability Institute, said: "The results are quite eye opening and worrying, demonstrating the widespread contamination of river systems around the world with antibiotic compounds.

"Many scientists and policy makers now recognise the role of the natural environment in the antimicrobial resistance problem. Our data show that antibiotic contamination of rivers could be an important contributor."

"Solving the problem is going to be a mammoth challenge and will need investment in infrastructure for waste and wastewater treatment, tighter regulation and the cleaning up of already contaminated sites."

The finds were unveiled during two presentations at the annual meeting of the Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry (SETAC) in Helsinki on 27 and 28 May.

Tranquillity

Written By Merlin Pérez (ILE Professor)

It was seven o´clock of any regular Sunday morning and I found my thoughts to be the only force in the universe interacting in a way that might be described as a reverie.

Tranquil Streets
Tranquil neighbourhoods
Whisper of the trees
Serenity in grey hair heads sitting on the benches
Slow heart beats in the passers- by
Aroma of hot coffee coming out of its cup.
Beauty of life in the eyes, minds and hearts.

If we could only experience them every single day of our lives, then we could say that happiness and existence are not before the paradox of a duality but before the perfect match.
When you think that antisocial behaviour and violence has begun to accumulate in a variety of forms all over the world you feel extremely fortunate to experience quietude on a Sunday morning.

Aggressive behaviour may be motivated by different triggers but in Costa Rica we can identify economic factors, life standard disillusionment, the daily life hustle and bustle or levels of intrinsic or extrinsic motivation.

Every day we listen to people complaining about bullying in schools, high schools, workplaces, at home and even at church. On television, we watch news related to domestic violence, murders, rapists, assaults, animal cruelty, environmental destruction, politicians frauds, T.V series or soap operas that dehumanises every man or woman involved.

We are often in contact with stress, diseases, anger, loneliness and many feelings expressed by members of our society in the form of explosive reactions, angry faces, impoliteness or rudeness , as well as sarcasm, irony, blurred gestures on their faces , and many other nonverbal communication which denote and connote the attitude toward the society's perceptions or reality.

There are many types of abuse or violence that everybody is aware of but seems to be avoided because it takes the form of emotional, economical and even physical ways. We are talking about elderly people and children who spend their lives trying to get their relatives time and attention because all of us, run out of time for them. Our priorities as humans beings must cope with our dreams of enjoying as much as we can our existence and presence with our beloved ones but it seems so impossible to achieve because we are too busy worrying about financial issues, and the little time left we use it to argue, to intrigue, to complain, to let everybody know that we live in a decaying society and directly reinforcing aggressive and violent behaviours. Let´s stop for a moment and ask ourselves what do we need to be happy? Is it related to materialism in any way? Is it related to governments and justice? Has globalisation stolen our tranquillity and changed it into a deep emotional scaffolding? Are we part of the world's giant circle of violence that uses humans to build, make, create, transform, facilitate, promote or encourage in any way this abominably monster that destroys, disguises, nullifies, defeats, impedes us to stand for those who work hard for the progress of nations, for young people who dream for a better world, for those who have faith and strongly believe that tiny actions toward conservation is just the beginning to a giant victory, for those who find themselves making ends meet and still find the beauty in a sunset or sunrise, for those who believe that their day to day involves spending time with their grandmothers and grandfathers is learning time , for those who work embracing challenges that lead to positive results, for those who know that life is too short not to laugh or enjoy your mementos , for those who understand that tranquillity, calmness, or serenity is part of you, of the universe, of our micro and macro-self-awareness. If you are not, I challenge you to i**nspire yourself and others to take your time, that micro-second that determines the beauty of your Sunday mornings**.

Visual Literacy In The ESL Context

Written By Sandra Argüello (ILE Professor)

Photographs cannot create a moral position, but they can reinforce one—and can help build a nascent one.
-Susan Sontag

Though Sontag is referring specifically to photography, the same is true for images in general. The digital revolution we are experiencing makes visuals more present than ever in any person's life. The accessibility of mobile technology and computers makes it impossible to disregard the visual as a useful tool in educational contexts. However, how can visuals be significantly used in the university classroom?

Educators in the second language acquisition field are no strangers to images. In fact, modern textbooks like the National Geographic series and others are rich in high-quality images. Still, often enough those images are just mere illustrations of the topics being studied. To go beyond this basic level of using images, it's necessary to engage in visual literacy.

Literacy has been defined in many ways. The definition provided by Alberta Education seems very appropriate: literacy is"the ability, confidence and willingness to engage with language to acquire, construct and communicate meaning in all aspects of daily living." If we apply this concept to images, then visual literacy implies critical understanding and re-elaboration of ideas that come from the engagement (communication) with a visual text (photography, painting, video, signs, etc.). In order to do so, one needs to go deeper into the meaning of visuals by engaging not only the form but also the content.

Ben Goldstein, English instructor, created a chart of useful questions to ask students whenever we want to facilitate visual literacy in the classroom. He proposes three dimensions of viewing, affective, compositional and critical. The first category, affective, recognizes that learning happens also when what is studied is brought to the student's emotions, not just their brains. In this category, the student's personal perception is taken into account and validated. The compositional category deals with the surface level, the level of description of what the image presents. The third one is the critical category. This is the depth necessary for a well-rounded analysis. It recognizes that images are not necessarily innocent in the sense that there is some sort of ideology of world view being favored over others. It opens a world of possibilities for critical thinking.

The following is an excerpt of the Three dimensions of viewing chart proposed by Goldstein.

Affective/Perceptual	Compositional/Structural	Critical/Ideological
How does the image make you feel?	What elements can you see in the foreground/background, etc.?	What message does the image transmit?
Do you think the image is positive or negative? Or do you feel indifferent towards it? Why?	What has been altered, omitted from or included in the image?	Are any of the images stereotypical, idealized, non-representative or anachronistic?

This chart can be used in ESL classes, especially with intermediate and upper levels. I will mention an example I have used in Intercultural Communication courses, which are part of of the bachelor´s degree program. When studying gender stereotypes, images prove to be very useful in facilitating discussion. I have used images from the series called Fallen Princesses by artist Dina Goldstein. The photographer creatively reimagines the story of Disney Princesses after real life strikes them.

I have used in my class the following image of Snow White:

Following Goldstein's Three dimensions of viewing, I came up with the following questions for my Intercultural Communication class:

Affective/Perceptual	Compositional/Structural	Critical/Ideological
What is your first reaction to the image?	What can we infer about this family from the environment and objects?	What message do you think the photographer wants to transmit?
Have you ever experienced something like this?	What objects are specifically used by the father? The children? The mother?	What does the image tell us about gender roles in society?

At the level of the bachelor´s degree program, students are linguistically capable of developing complex ideas and sustain them by the readings done in class. They will be able to use words studied in class such as subordinated, gender expectations, gender roles, domesticity, and stereotypes, among others. However, the same could be applied to a high beginner class if questions are adapted. Here is a possibility:

Affective/Perceptual	Compositional/Structural	Critical/Ideological
Do you like this photo? Explain.	What are the objects you see in their living room?	Are the couple happy? Why is that?

Even though students might not have the lexical knowledge to engage in deeper discussions, by asking a question such as is the couple happy? It is possible to go deeper into the meaning of the image. Visual literacy requires work on the part of the instructor too. It calls for critical thinking and creative ways to incorporate images for purposes beyond description, which is ultimately, I believe, what educators of any subject are called to do.

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Learning is Not a Mechanism

by Jesse Stommel
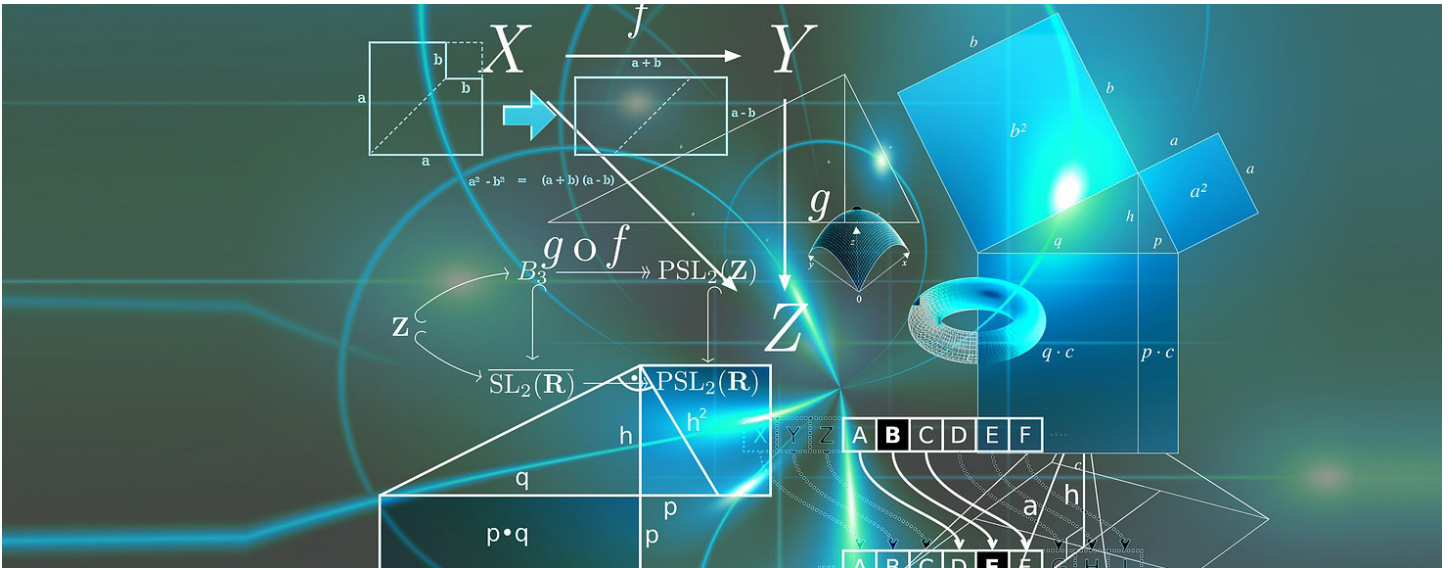
Digital pedagogy is not equivalent to teachers using digital tools. Rather, digital pedagogy demands that we think critically about our tools, demands that we reflect actively upon our own practice. Therefore, digital pedagogy means not just drinking the Kool-Aid, but putting the Kool-Aid under a microscope.

Talk of teaching with technology is not altogether (or even close to nearly) new. In 1915, John Dewey wrote in Schools of To-Morrow: **"Unless the mass of workers are to be blind cogs and pinions in the apparatus they employ, they must have some understanding of the physical and social facts behind and ahead of the material and appliances with which they are dealing."** The development and dissemination of educational technology has always had political, as well as practical, ramifications.

The large-format blackboard was first used in the U.S. in 1801. The vacuum tube-based computer was introduced in 1946. In the 1960s, Seymour Papert began teaching the Logo programming language to children. The first Learning Management System, PLATO (Program Logic for Automatic Teaching Operations), was developed in 1960. At the invent of each, there was fear, resistance, and the thoughtless slobber of over-enthusiasm. After the introduction of the Radio Lecture in the 1930s, Lloyd Allen Cook warned, "This mechanizes education and leaves the local teacher only the tasks of preparing for the broadcast and

keeping order in the classroom." This sentence is not all that different from the ones we've read about the Massive Open Online Course over the last three years, or about online learning over the last twenty five years. In the 19th Century, **Emily Dickinson hinted at the mechanizing of education in her poem, "From all the Jails the Boys and Girls," where she equates schools with jails but ultimately determines, "That Prison doesn't keep."**

Let's take a specific (and increasingly ubiquitous tool) by way of example. When I first taught online, I encountered the horror that is the gradebook inside most learning management systems, **which reduces students (often color coding them) into mere rows in a spreadsheet.** Over the last 15 years, I've watched this tool proliferate into all the institutions where I've worked. Even teachers that don't use the learning management system for its other decidedly more pleasurable uses have made its gradebook more and more central to the learning experience for students. On its surface, the LMS gradebook does not seem all that fundamentally different from an analog gradebook, which also reduces students to mere rows in a spreadsheet. But most learning management systems now offer (or threaten) to automate a process which is, in fact, deeply idiosyncratic. They make grading more efficient, as though efficiency is something we ought to celebrate in teaching and learning.

It seems easier to far too many teachers to imagine that students do work the way machines do — that they can be scored according to objective metrics and neatly compared to one another. Schools, and the systems we've invented to support them, condition us to believe that there are always others (objective experts or even algorithms) who can know better than us the value of our own work. I'm struck by the number of institutions that for all intents and purposes equate teaching with grading — that assume our job as teachers is to merely separate the wheat from the chaff. And I find myself truly confused when anyone suggests to me that there is a way for us to do this kind of work objectively. For me, teaching and learning have always been (and will always be) deeply subjective.

I recently worked with a student that admitted to stopping doing the work for the current week, because she was distracted by — "lost within," to use her words — a subject from a previous week. My response was simple and encouraging, "sounds good, stay lost." There would have been no column sufficient for representing this exchange in a gradebook, and this kind of exchange has been the rule more than the exception in my work as a teacher. The text in question, Mark Z. Danielewski's House of Leaves, is about exactly what the student described to me, going on a quest and getting lost. This is, for me, what learning looks like — not finishing assignments, not following directions, not dotting "i"s and crossing "t"s. It's a process of discovery that has no outcome fixed in advance. This kind of learning is about sitting (sometimes uncomfortably) with our not knowing. Grading inside a learning management system too often obscures, does not reveal, this process. I used these systems for years, struggling to find

ways to subvert their worst intentions, until I ultimately determined to simply say, "I would prefer not to."

If there is a better sort of mechanism that we need for the work of digital pedagogy, it is a machine, an algorithm, a platform tuned not for delivering and assessing content, but for helping all of us listen better to students. And, by "listen," I decidedly do not mean "surveil." The former implies an invitation to open dialogue, whereas the latter

implies a hierarchical relationship through which learners are made into mere data points. My call, then, is for **more emphasis on the tools that help us fully and genuinely inhabit digital environments, tools like ears, eyes, or fingers**. My call is to stop attempting to distinguish so incessantly between online and on-ground learning, between the virtual and the face-to-face, between digital pedagogy and chalkboard pedagogy. Good digital pedagogy is just good pedagogy.

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 does a person need to face the job demands of the XXI century ?

If a person wants to have more chances to get a job, he/she must be a practical person. The individual must be able to show employers what he/she can do by working hard and taking advantage of situations where soft skills are needed.

Yerika Ramos

I consider companies are demanding people who not only handle communication skills and a second language but also an attitude to adapt to different environments and socialize knowledge in a friendly atmosphere.

Jarrod Esquivel

Most companies are looking for people who have developed soft skills such as adaptability, work ethics, teamwork, problem-solving abilities, and effective communication.

Sulman Arias

My list of what people need today to get a job include: organization skills, technology knowledge, negotiation skills, critical thinking, and leadership.

Eva Hernández

One of the main abilities people need today is tolerance. Today people are very impatient, and everybody wants things fast, and that is not possible all of the time.

Carlos Ovares

The most important activities a person needs today are related to effective communication and the use of technology since the world is basically ruled by communication networks in which people need to be careful about saying things in an appropriate manner and use technology as a tool to communicate.

María José Solano

Some aspects I consider are important to face the job demands are: to be open-minded, to have enough knowledge of a specific area, to show leadership, and to be creative.

Ericka Barrantes

Among the different soft skills people need today to have better opportunities, I think assertiveness, which is being able to stand up for your own or other people's rights in a calm and positive way, without being aggressive and accepting when one is wrong, is one of the most important skills.

Michelle Monge

UTn
Universidad
Técnica Nacional

ILE
Inglés como Lengua Extranjera

Time

By Leo Bado (ILE Student)

I saw a waterfall
Somewhere in my mind,
Leaves falling off the branches,
The barking of a dog brought
By gentle May rain and
Memories rolling all over my body.

Time gone by,
Time before the time of my life
Time among my fingers
Time before my eyes
Flashes feelings and thoughts
That will die as tears in the rain,

Time, important time,
Time itself, a true portion of time
Is beyond physical existence,
Existence where the feelings
Are far more vivid
Those memories.

Time that stretches out
My words,
That contemplates me
From my childhood, and I am
On the edge of a timeless
Existence, looking faceless people,
Frightened by pouring rain,
Drawn by memories,
Exposed naked before an army of sad faces.

Time lay down on my lap,
Time that will never come back
Such as the water in the waterfall.

Deforestation

By Byron Ramírez (ILE Student)

In a distant forest, trees grow with tall branches,
Trusted among them, birds build their nest,
At dawn the nightingale sings merrily,
and at nightfall they dream happy diurnal flowers.

There are their magical dreams, full of beauty,
Pure illusions of nature,
How fleeting trails, shine in nights,
And they illuminate those who look with hearts.

"Today flowers in cities are scarce."
In the near future it is commented.
"The impure air cannot stand."
Nor are stars usually seen.

If the wind carried seeds of verses,
That are deposited in the minds and flourish
So that deforestation does not continue
Of those who consume the planet every day.

Euthanasia

By Christopher Venegas (ILE Student)

Have you ever thought about having the freedom to choose a pain-free death? Have you made a plan about what you would do if you ever ended up with a terminal illness? Have you ever considered dying by assisted suicide? Many people in their best years of life have posed these and more questions, and most of them have come up with the ideal technique for ending their lives by painless means; however, there is a stigma about having free will when it comes to deciding about your own existence. Euthanasia should be legalized because the decision of living is personal and not social; every individual deserves a painless death, and it saves hospital's resources if the terminal patient willingly decides to end it all by assisted suicide.

As a terminal patient, deciding when to end one's life should be a personal decision despite diverse opinions. Some people believe that the right of choice can only be "God's" will, as it is called in some religions. However, other individuals think that a person is the only one who can decide about ending his or her own life. When it comes to ownership of your life, religious people ensure that a god is the only one who has power over everybody's lives. Therefore, the popular belief is that dying by assisted suicide is considered a sin because that goes against their beliefs. The common belief is that one must die of natural causes instead of interrupting one's own life. Euthanasia is considered to be just a practical technique to end one's life painlessly. Besides, it is believed that the assisted suicide assistants are criminals because they end a life, even though it is consensual. All these ideas come from the knowledge that has been taught over the years in society.

Although a person's life can end as a result of an accident or natural causes, one's life can end in two different scenarios when it comes to being a terminal patient. The first one is when the patient decides to take his or her own life while being assisted. In this case, the person decides to die in a peaceful, painless way and with his or her approval so that it takes place. The other scenario is dying in a hospital bed. When terminal patients are in their last hours of life, they may feel stressed out and mentally overwhelmed although they are on medication during that period. In that event, the person remains in the hospital bed in an uncomfortable environment surrounded by his or her family and friends, and the patient may not have the ability to speak his or her mind about such a frightening situation.

An aspect to consider is the waste of resources in hospitals. Taking care of terminal patients is not an utter waste of time. Despite that, the costs of terminal patients represent a high inversion on behalf of public hospitals and relatives. If more people decided to leave the hospital and go to their homes, or a place where they can afford the euthanasia practice, public hospitals could save resources. In addition, those saved resources can be destined to patients who can recover in the short term. If the patient can afford the euthanasia practice, more people can have the privilege of being taken care of at the hospital without lack of medicines due to lack of resources spent on terminal patients.

In society, many people ignore arguments about this topic, and they do not even take euthanasia into consideration as a possible practice. However, new generations have come up with open-minded ideas about ending their lives and having free will. In general, the decision of a painless death should be respected as a personal choice although there are objections that oppose to the main purposes of euthanasia.

The Sociology Of Anime –
Origins and International Appeal

by Dr Zuleyka Zevallos

The history and influence of anime is rich and complex, from its origins in early 20th Century Japanese manga comics to its present-day popularity around the world. Korean communications researcher, Jin Kyu Park, has explored the influences on anime and its appeal to international audiences. Park documents that the growth of anime links back to Japan's economic boom in the 1960s, which enabled the development of new television genres, including anime.

The first televised anime series was Otagi Manga Calendar in 1962, but its successor Tetuwan Atomu in 1963 achieved greater popularity. Over the next two decades, the scope and influence of anime had spread beyond Japan. By the 1980s and 1990s, Park establishes that anime had developed a strong cult following around the world. Technological advances facilitated this process. With the diffusion of video recorders, fans were able to obtain copies of anime series and share them through anime fan clubs and conventions.

Several anime series contain the some of the most internationally recognised animated characters, including Astro Boy – the manga cartoon of the 1950s which was turned into an anime TV series in the 1960s. Anime took off to a wider worldwide market through Pokémon, a late 1990s video game which was turned into an anime (and which I, incidentally, could never get into).

To uninitiated audiences, the most easily observable and perhaps the most shocking aspects of anime are its graphic depiction of violence, sex and supernatural themes. Park has explored the international consumption of anime by its fans in a different light. Park argues that this popularity is due to the way anime integrates various cultural, historical and religious ideas from Japan and other societies. In particular, Park sees that anime's concern with spirituality marks it out as distinctive from other popular cultural animation genres.

It is not simply that anime regularly depicts non-human characters, such as demons, monsters, angels, aliens, magical animals, gods and other mythical beings. Instead, Park argues that the transcendental appeal of anime is that these beings often represent aspects of 'good' and 'evil', in a way that is less clearcut than other religious representations of morality, such as in mainstream Christianity.

The fact that anime cartoons borrow from various religious traditions makes it simultaneously distinctive and appealing to international audiences. Park interviewed American anime fans, one of whom explains the appeal of anime this way:

I guess I would say that because anime is so all encompassing, they aren't afraid to step into different cultures or ideas and then draw and make a storyline out of it and create something that's entertaining and beautiful at the same time. I think that's one of the reasons I like it so much. 'Cause they aren't restrained by anything. The sky is the limit. They can draw anything they want to. And still keep a cheerful attitude about it. I really like that.

Park's research shows that fans of anime see it as distinctive and 'beautiful', with its themes of social resistance, adventure and sacred quests. The appeal of social rebellion in anime films is expressed through the idea that anime is not 'restrained by anything'.

Anime, like other forms of animation, might be easily dismissed as light entertainment – thus falling into the realm of the 'mundane'. The longevity and international appeal of anime speaks to its unique contribution to transnational popular art.

Information taken from: https://othersociologist.com/2012/01/05/sociology-of-anime/
Photo credit: https://pixabay.com

ALABAMA

Alabama is a state in the Southern United States of America. The state is named after the Alabama tribe, a Native American group who used to live at the confluence of the Coosa and Tallapoosa Rivers. Alabama is known for its scenic beauty, and has a lot to offer those who enjoy the great outdoors.

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a Native American group who used to live at the confluence of the Coosa and Tallapoosa Rivers. Alabama is known for its scenic beauty, and has a lot to offer those who enjoy the great outdoors.

Talk

Many (though certainly not all) Alabamians speak with thick local accents so non-native English speakers may have difficulty understanding them. Within the two major urban areas of Huntsville and Birmingham one will find that most accents are of a General American variety while in the other two major urban areas of Mobile and Montgomery local accents are still widely prevalent.

Visitors to North Alabama (Birmingham and north) will experience accents that are more "country" in nature (Senator Richard Shelby is one example) while visitors to South **Alabama (south of Birmingham) will experience accents that are more closely reminiscent of those from the 1939 film Gone With the Wind and the 1994 film Forrest Gump**, which takes place in Southern Alabama. Former governor Fob James is a textbook example of a southern Alabama accent.

Festivals

Gulf Shores is home to the National Shrimp Festival. This outdoor event is held annually in October and features over 300 vendors that offer fine art, arts and crafts, an international marketplace and plenty of shrimp. Three stages also carry music continuously throughout the festival. Over 200,000 people attend the festival annually and it has been ranked as one of the top twenty events in the southeast by the Southeast Tourism Society, and one of the top five in the state. 2016 will mark the 45th anniversary of this festival.

Tuscumbia is home to the Helen Keller Festival. This outdoor event is held annually in June for three days (Friday to Sunday) and kicks off with a lengthy parade complete with floats and its riders throwing candy to bystanders, high school marching bands, horses, Civil War reenactors and Shriners zipping about in their miniature go-karts. Afterwards, Main Street is closed and is filled with local vendors selling everything from handmade crafts to fresh vegetables. An antique car show is also a highlighted feature. Many local and out of state bands perform throughout the day with at least one major performer, normally of the country music variety, performing Saturday night in Spring Park. Also performed at the birthplace of Helen Keller is a local production of the stage play The Miracle Worker which is a theatrical rendition of Helen Keller's childhood and interaction with Ann Sullivan. One little known fact about Helen Keller that most natives of Tuscumbia do not even realize is that she was an ardent and outspoken socialist during her adult life.

Eat

Seasoned crab claws and corn. Mobile Alabama has some of the

best fried seafood east of the Mississippi River. Don't forget to try local oyster bars and the shrimp is superb. Ask locals for recommendations that are off the beaten path and area favorites.

Alabama barbecue is outstanding and comes in many forms, but pork is always most popular. There are several award-winning barbecue "joints" in Alabama, and their claim to fame is typically "pulled pork", but they will offer ribs, too.

11 Must Have Android Apps
For Your Daily Use

by Tendai Marengereke

Android has reached 500 million activated devices worldwide, and slowly but surely devices running the operating system are making their way into the Zimbabwe market. There are so many options to download on the Google Play Store, I decided to make a list of apps that any Android user must have. This is a list of the apps I use on a daily basis myself. I live and die by these apps, although some of them maybe be a bit geeky they still remain very useful.

1. AirDroid – Free

AirDroid is an app that lets you control your Android device from any web browser. It works with your own personal Wi-Fi network, as long as the phone and the PC are connected on the same Wi-Fi you can launch the app on your Android device, go to the web interface on your computer, put in the passkey and you can access your files on the browser.

List of things you can do with the app:
- Wirelessly transfer files between your computer and phone
- Sending SMS on your phone from the web browser.
- Organise things like music, photos, messages and call logs.
- Install apps from your computer onto your Android device
- Save apps from your phone on your pc.

2. Avast! Mobile Security – Free

avast-androidThis is undoubtedly the best android security app that I have used so far. It offers a multitude of services:

Virus Protection – It scans apps and files for viruses

Privacy Advisor – It looks into each app, letting you know which have access to potentially dangerous permissions. It organizes them by permission categories.

Application Management – You can see all the applications installed in the device, force close them and read their system resources (size, CPU usage, Services, threads etc)

Shield control – It protects your device from web phishing when you are online. It searches every site you access for potential threats beforehand.

SMS & Call Filter – You can block incoming text messages and calls, as well as outgoing calls to/from specific phone numbers. So you can block those pesky marketing texts. Many uses for this feature come to mind, if your

child has an android phone, you can set which numbers they can access during school hours. Same applies for corporate phones.

Firewall – requires ROOT access, firewall allows you to block certain apps from running. You can choose whether you want them to be blocked while in WiFi reach or 3G.

Network Meter – measures your data usage on wifi or 3g.

Anti-Theft (some features require root access) – This is the best feature of the application and it could be a standalone application. It has many function
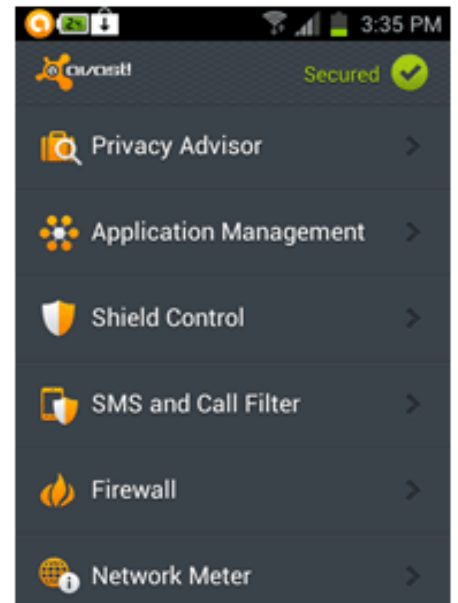
such as remote wipe, lock, siren, locate, SIM card change notifications and a wide array of text commands that you can send. You can set 2 special numbers, which will be used if the device is lost/stolen to send commands.

If installed with root access, the application will stay on the machine even after a hard reset, and the user can remotely switch on GPS, or data connection. you can check out more from the website. The anti-theft is installed as a separate app, and you can choose any name you want to give it.

3. Pocket – Free

I read a lot of articles on the web everyday and this app comes in handy when you want to save something for later reading. It has a beautiful, clean and minimalistic user interface. It's easy to organise your articles, files, videos. It can also sync files across multiple devices, and you can install browser bookmarklets for easy saving. Sometimes you get links and you can't open them immediately; simply pocket them.
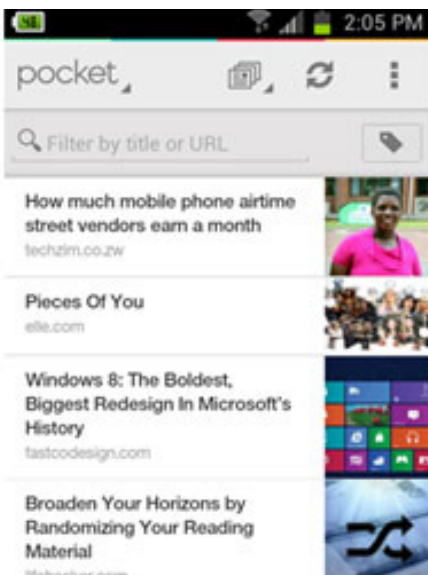
4. WhatsApp – Free

WhatsApp needs no introduction. Its uptake even in Zimbabwe has been rapid. It's a messaging app that uses your 3G (or WiFi when available) to provide a cheaper alternative to SMS and MMS.

5. Evernote – Free

Evernote lets you take notes and you can also store, images, audio/video clips. It synchronizes these notes to the cloud and you can access them from the web browser, Windows client or iOs client. It keeps your notes well organised, it is very essential for people who take down a lot of notes and memos.

6. Google Drive – Free

It is the best cloud storage for creating, storing and files and documents. If you had already been using Google Docs then Drive will be the best choice for you. It works perfectly with the other Google apps, since it was made by Google.

7. Instagram – Free

The famous app that was acquired by Facebook for a cool billion dollars. This is the best Photo-sharing app out there, it has beautiful filters that make it a joy to use. The filters basically enable you to turn your simple amateur photography into great professional pieces. You can also apply the filters to make your photos look old in a cozy way. So good is Instagram at doing this that professional photographers have expressed disdain for it.

In addition to creating some amazing pieces of art for you, Instagram allows you to geotag your photos (that is make the photo tell where it was taken) and seamlessly post to Facebook, Twitter and a number of other social sites. Your friends can follow you and comment on your picture posts right from Instagram.

8. Flipboard – Free

Flipboard acts like a magazine, but instead of scrolling from left-to-right, you flip each page vertically making the experience quite intuitively enjoyable and very cool too. It aggregates your social and rss feeds, and displays them in the magazine format. It's great tool for discovering content

9. Android-vnc-viewer – Free

If you use VNC on your PC, then you definitely need this viewer, its the open source viewer for the popular Remote Pc Access software. With the app you can see and control your computer's desktop from your phone or tablet. I mainly use it to control my home PC if i'm in bed and too lazy to stand up and switch of the PC.

10. TeamViewer– Free

Access remote computers on the go with the TeamViewer: Remote Control apps for Android, iOS, Windows 10 Mobile, Windows 10, and BlackBerry. Use your mobile device to provide spontaneous support or to remotely access an unattended computer.

11. Waze– Free

Waze is a community-driven GPS and navigational app that guides you through the shortest route possible while driving. It runs on a smartphone and can help you find directions and avoid traffic jams.

Information taken from: www.techzim.co.zw/2012/09/15-must-have-android-apps-for-your-daily-use/

Bunnies In Children's Books

What is the first fictional rabbit that comes to mind?

The first rabbit that springs to my mind has to be Lewis Carroll's albino bunny from **Alice's Adventures in Wonderland** (simply because I've been so involved in the 150th anniversary celebrations of the text this year).

He sparks Alice's journey into Wonderland, and she encounters him many times. What piques Alice's interest is that, like so many other literary bunnies, the White Rabbit has anthropomorphic action and curious attire (this rabbit, she notes, sports a waistcoat and carries a pocket watch). Tenniel's original illustration of him is probably the best known, although Walt Disney's animated version gives Tenniel a run for his money. Like Tenniel's, the 1951 Disney White Rabbit wears a jacket and carries an umbrella, but he gains trousers to cover a bare rabbit bottom.

Other illustrators have invested the White Rabbit with all manner of additional traits; from Arthur Rackham's slightly eerie looking version from 1907, through to Ralph Steadman's 1967 rendering of him as 'today's commuter' or Helen Oxenbury's more kindly, portly gentleman bunny of 1999. What is clear in most iterations of Carroll's White Rabbit is that he is not to be regarded as a pet even if his white coat and pink eyes are suggestive of the domestic.

A hare features in Aesop's fables, although these tales don't really become associated with a child audience until the late 17th century. Certainly rabbits are mentioned in 18th century lesson books for children, but Lewis Carroll's White Rabbit has to be an early example of a rabbit character in texts specifically for a young audience.

Are rabbits universally popular in children's literature?

Certainly they are popular in British children's fiction; rabbits feature prominently in A A Milne's 'Pooh' books, Alison Uttley's Little Grey Rabbit series, Ivy Wallace's 'Pookie' stories, Richard Adams's Watership Down, and, of course, Beatrix Potter's tales. But they also have a broader heritage; one might argue that the **Peter Rabbit** stories owe a great deal to Br'er Rabbit in the African-American folktales adapted by Joel Chandler Harris in the late 19th century. Beatrix Potter even illustrated eight scenes from the Br'er Rabbit Uncle Remus stories in the same years as she began her first sketches of Peter.

The contexts of the tales are entirely different, but certainly Potter's Peter recalls Br'er Rabbit in action, attitude and even gait. While Br'er Rabbit moves with a 'lippity-clippity' pace across the American south, Peter goes 'lippity-lippity' through the English country garden.

The US also gives us a host of other infamous bunnies: from 1910, Howard R Garis wrote the Uncle Wiggily Longears stories, about an elderly rabbit with a cane; the toy-rabbit-made-real is the poignant motif of Margery Williams's 1922 The Velveteen Rabbit and Margaret Wise Brown produced a number of bunny picturebooks. Walt Disney was also something of a pioneer when it came to the rabbit – Mickey Mouse began life as Oswald the Lucky Rabbit. So although these rabbits might be distinct from their British cousins, there is certainly an Anglo-American interest in anthropomorphising the rabbit in narrative.

Why have some rabbits become so much a part of British culture?

There is something captivating about the rabbit, but this is not an exclusively western phenomenon. Chinese, Japanese and Korean folklore include tales of the Moon Rabbit, as does Buddhist tradition. The peculiarly British charm of Beatrix Potter's tales made them immensely popular from the moment of their publication; more than 56,000 copies of The Tale of Peter Rabbit were printed in its first year of commercial sale.

Both Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Beatrix Potter's tales appeal to a particular notion of childhood which may or may not have a great deal to do with real rabbits. Alice's curiosity, piqued by spying the White Rabbit, and Peter's charming disobedience make for two particular compelling but also class-conscious child characters.

The interest in rabbits, and anthropomorphising them as characters, is perhaps rather a curious phenomenon in British culture. Rabbits occupy an almost untenable position as animals that we eat, experiment on, own as pets and make into characters in children's books, all within the same cultural context. They are one of the few mammals to occupy all of these distinct subject positions simultaneously.

Some of this awkwardness emerges in Potter's Tale of Peter Rabbit when Peter is threatened by the consumptive appetites of Mr McGregor (or, more truthfully, his wife, who had baked Peter's father in a pie). This 'accident' is a light-hearted threat, but nevertheless it exposes the multifarious ways in which the rabbit is
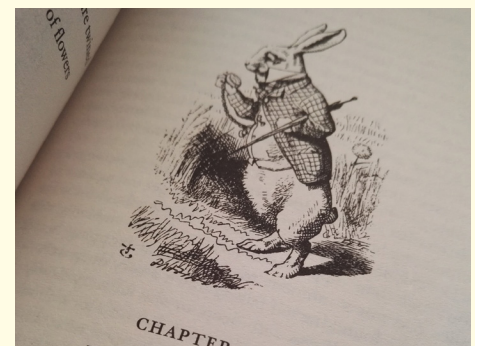
deployed – from a foodstuff, to a domesticated creature, to an anthropomorphic character aligned with the child reader – in British culture.

Do rabbits always play the rascal in children's stories?

The naughty rabbit is a popular motif, although the rabbit has broader associations, including as an arbiter of moral good. The Easter bunny, originally a hare, was once known for his judgments on children's behaviour at Eastertide and handing out gifts accordingly.

Rabbits in children's fiction sometimes assume a rather saccharine sweetness (the Flopsy, Mopsey and Cotton-tails, perhaps, when compared to the Peters). The toy rabbit of Margery Williams's tale navigates this line quite effectively. The velveteen rabbit is no rascal, but he isn't insipid either, and his tale of becoming a 'real' rabbit is marked by its frank depiction of a child's waning affections (which might well apply to a toy rabbit or a pet one).

Rabbits are also associated with luck: Disney's Oswald is a 'lucky' rabbit, Br'er Rabbit proves himself a lucky escape artist (as, of course, does Peter), and the 'lucky' rabbit's foot' is a tradition that exists in many cultures (although not so lucky for the rabbit in question).

What do rabbit characters do for us: are we really trying to see from an animal's point of view?

Many texts, especially those written for children, assume the point of view of an animal. The animal autobiography has a long history, made most famous by Anna Sewell in her 1877 Black Beauty, but including earlier texts such as Francis Coventry's The History of Pompey the Little (1751) or Dorothy Kilner's The Life and Perambulations of a Mouse (1783).

There is something compelling about the notion that certain humans are able to talk to animals in their own language, but it is also a practice in everyday communication with pets and young children. We 'converse' with babies and pets, assuming both sides of the conver-

sation and translating the actions of the child, dog or cat into a response.

On the one hand, these acts of translation might be considered reductive, in that they communicate an animal or child voice only through a human adult. But they also bespeak an interest in reaching across a divide to 'know' another person or creature. The representation of animals in literature works in much the same way: often animals are made to parrot human concerns. Black Beauty, for example, is as much concerned with the subjugation of women as it is with equine husbandry.

I would argue that it is impossible to 'use' an animal only as a symbol of something else. Animal representation automatically stimulates reflection upon real animals and their relations with human readers or viewers, even if that is not the primary purpose of the narrative.

Why do we sometimes depict animals in clothing?

We might argue that there is a merely a romantic charm to it. There is a gaiety to a text like William Rocoe's The Butterfly's Ball (1807) where animals are dressed up as humans to indulge in the delights of parties. Something similar occurs in the messing about in boats of Kenneth Graham's The Wind in the Willows (1908), although this text is also invested in moments of parody and nostalgia. The same impulses inflect narratives of toys coming to life or of miniature communities like those in Mary Norton's 'Borrower' books.

But dressing animals as humans also offers a playful engagement with the boundary between the human and the animal – a line which is both well established and rather strange, given that humans are, of course, just one of many mammals. By imagining ways in which non-human animals can be human-like, this boundary becomes much more permeable. Although dressing as a human might have little to do with animal subjectivity, it brings humans and animals into closer contact. It clouds the distinc-

tions between humans and animals, and indeed between animal species. Humans are the only animals which can ever be 'made naked', and clothing animals introduces some rather awkward and demeaning constructions of the animal which can dislocate the creatures from their natures for distinctly human ends.

Why are animals rather than human characters often used in moral tales?

There is a pervasive critical view that 'using' animals makes a moral a little more palatable. Although dressing an animal up might bring human and animal closer in some ways, there is still a distancing that can 'lighten' narrative didacticism. Animals also provide a 'veneer' for distinctly human narratives; although I would argue that the animality of the protagonists is never entirely lost. Political satires such as George Orwell's Animal Farm (1945) or autobiographical tales such as Han Christian Andersen's The Ugly Ducking (1843) operate in exactly this fashion.

I think one of the main reasons why animals are deployed in children's fiction so readily – whether in morality tales of otherwise – is because of the sense that there is a special closeness between children and animals that is lost in adulthood. Authors of children's books have capitalised on this connection.

The animal story is almost entirely reserved for young readers, with the exception of the occasional satirical text in which animals play a part but are rarely the focus. Part of the civilising process of growing up seems to be the putting away of childish things – towards an acceptance of a boundary between human and animal with the former in a position of dominance over the other. This is perhaps why there are far fewer young adult fictions concerned with animals. It is a pity that the possibilities of the animal story are not more readily available to an adult audience, too.

"English For You CR" Presents,
Making Small Talk in English

Many times when you meet an English speaker at a public place, you may need to break the ice and start a conversation by means of small talk. By this, we mean initiating a casual conversation, where you can use some strategies:

1. **Look for neutral topics:** "innocent" topics like the weather, the time you've been waiting in the queue, the time of the day, something curious both of you can see are excellent topics to start small talk.

2. **Introduce yourself:** as we said in a previous class, telling your name and ansking for the other person's is a good way of establishing a connection during a conversation.

3. **Avoid personal questions:** do not ask about civil status, salaries, routines, etc, as that may be taken as a nosy attitude or even harassment! Keep an interested but relaxed tone and topic.

Remember: small talk is about opening a door, creating confidence and trust, and avoiding uncomfortable silences. An exchange of three questions between both interlocutors should be enough to either continue the conversation, or part ways!

Give it a try!

disinvent
verb (used with object) [dis-in-vent]

-to undo the invention of; to reverse the existence of.
EXAMPLE:

A number of science fiction movies have actually had to "disinvent" existing technologies in order to retell the myth of how rebels against "the system" help preserve free and open societies.

/www.dictionary.com

Plastic Continent

It's official: the plastic trash that our technologically advanced society produces has generated…. a new continent. It's twice the size of Texas, and it floats in the middle of the north Pacific Ocean. As reported by the London Times, the massive trash dump consists of six million tons of plastic bags, bottles and other synthetic throwaways in various stages of degradation. This is actually only one-third of the estimated 18 million tons of plastic junk floating in the world's oceans.

The toxic soup of refuse was discovered in 1997 when Charles Moore, an oceanographer, decided to travel through the centre of the North Pacific gyre (a vortex or circular ocean current). Navigators usually avoid oceanic gyres because persistent high-pressure systems — also known as the doldrums — lack the winds and currents to benefit sailors.

The damage caused by these tiny fragments is more insidious than strangulation, entrapment and choking by larger plastic refuse. The fragments act as sponges for heavy metals and pollutants until mistaken for food by small fish. The toxins then become more concentrated as they move up the food chain through larger fish, birds and marine mammals.

While scientists believe that the Plastic Continent cannot be cleaned up, a crew of 30 seaman on the Kaisei, a decommissioned Japanese trawler, want to see what can be done. They will use special nets to try to collect 40 tons of plastic for a trial recycling project while trying to avoid catching much sea life. The ship will also use unmanned aircraft and "robotic surface explorers" to try to map the depth and size of the trash dump.

Information taken from: www.onthecommons.org/new-continent-plastic-trash
Photo credit: www.flickr.com/photos/kqedquest/2785503884