

2017

ISSUE #60

OCTOBER

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**What Is A Learning Environment?**

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

# COVER PAGE



Our coverage this month shows an image from one of the most famous stories of all times, The Canterbury Ghost by Oscar Wilde. Oscar Wilde is considered a bridge between 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century literature, and a pioneers of the Aesthetic school of thought. If you have an awesome picture you think could be the cover of one of The ILE Post editions, send it to [eherrera@utn.ac.cr](mailto:eherrera@utn.ac.cr). So far several readers have sent amazing pictures that we will be sharing with you soon. If you want to know

what is happening in ILE, follow us in FACEBOOK. Photo credit: <https://pixabay.com/en/haunted-castle-ghost-castle-weird-1004600/>  
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# EDITORIAL

## The Challenges of Student Involvement in UTN College Life

by Jose Soto (ILE Director)



Our memories of college life back in the day on the campuses of our Alma Mater are still living in our hearts and minds. The classes, events, activities, long study hours, project work and conversations with our peers, experiences, and all the different elements of college life were important steps in our academic and personal growth. We also certainly made a lot of friends, met a lot of new people, made our first professional contacts, but most importantly we knew we were college students. We all had an identity that was very strong in terms of belonging and commitment. In the end, this was very important to our professional growth. Has all of all this been lost with college students at UTN today?

UTN has not quite accomplished its full potentiality of college life for students, at least not quite yet. By making a quick search regarding other foreign universities we found that student affair offices promote the involvement of students with their campus and enhance their overall college experience through programs, services and leadership opportunities that support their mission and values of their universities. This is literally the case and mission statement of Houston Baptist University ([www.hbu.edu](http://www.hbu.edu)). How far is UTN from approaching students to promote college involvement in a similar way? There are several elements that can explain this phenomenon. This is not solely due to weak institutional policies, or weak student involvement either. There is a combination of variables that comprise a lack of student identification with institutional values. Among the various reasons that come to mind are the demographical characteristics of the students, personal goals and priorities, age, working conditions, and others. You could name more, but the outcome is clear—there is not enough student involvement.

One clear result of this is the elusive participation in councils and official organizations. For example, the conformation of the councils of majors are difficult to achieve since not all students take part in the elections. Another example is the student federation—which fortunately has been recently arranged thanks to some

committed students. Also, the cultural events and other academic activities have a low attendance usually because they are organized around class times and breaks, and the interest of students is in staying in class only. The effects of the lack of student involvement can be harmful to the integrality of the education that UTN seeks to provide.

At ILE, a weak student involvement in activities can lead to a poor acquisition of a foreign language, and the challenge is even more difficult. Basic elements in the acquisition of a language is determined by the learner's personal motivation, time devoted to practice, use of strategies and most importantly, space for exercising interaction and communication. Language students will see their learning and acquisition of language benefited when they are involved in a community of learning. That can be achieved by promoting college interaction through different activities on campus. This can happen by organizing student trips, hosting visitors, building arrangements, writing in THE ILE POST, offering tutoring, becoming assistants, making fraternities, volunteering, etc. All of these activities must be promoted within ILE. Finally, the challenges to achieve it are more difficult due to the student involvement at UTN.

Despite this unfavorable scenario, I would like to congratulate those collaborators, professors and directors at UTN who are passionate in considering students' involvement by organizing activities around the chronograms in their courses. Teaching classes is not only what professors must do. There is a lot more to do to provide students with not only knowledge and abilities, but also a sense of belonging to the institution as a learning community. This will ultimately offer a good part of the meaningful learning we incessantly talk about in our pedagogical model.



## UTN Integrated Water Resource Management Program

On 22<sup>nd</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>, and 29<sup>th</sup>, UTN Integrated Water Resource Management program lead a workshop on Training Facilitators for the Water Education Program of Teachers from the Americas and Caribbean region.

**Water resources management and education are crucial for providing tomorrow's children with social and economic stability in a healthy and sustainable environment.** One of the main objectives of this activity was to promote awareness of water and empower community action to solve complex water issues. Developing this awareness and respect

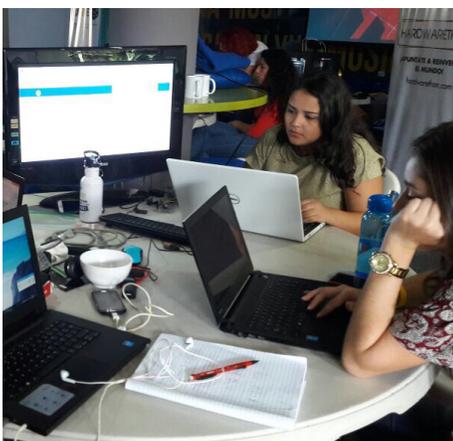
for water resources can encourage a personal, lifelong commitment of responsibility and positive community participation.

There was participation from community water managers from different Associations of Rural Water and Sanitation Systems (ASADAS), members from the Ministry of Environment and Energy (MINAE) and the Costa Rican Water and Sanitation Institute (AyA) from Upala, Los Chiles, and Guatuso regions with help from the United Nations Development Program (PNUD) and AyA. The activities and strategies during



the workshop were planned by the International Hydrological Program of UNESCO and the Water Education for Teachers (WET) program.

## UTN Present At Hardwarethon



UTN San Carlos Student from the Software Engineering Major participated

Hardwarethon is more than just a contest. Initiated in 2014 by six Cos-

ta Rican engineers who wanted to empower people to create start-ups utilizing all the maker trends and help promote social and economic development in their countries, it is a collaborative inventor's space for developing new technological ideas, projects and prototypes able to generate innovation.

The participants of this 'Unique Hardware Hackathon' are designers, engineers, entrepreneurs, hardware and software enthusiasts and students. Individually or in a team, they have 48 straight hours to develop their projects and transform ideas into real and valuable products and/or services. Organized by Imagine Sulá Batsu, several private

companies, and **some universities who provide space and offer hardware, software, tools and food, and also offer coaching and guidance needed to complete each project.**

At the end of the contest, all the participants have the opportunity to present their projects to a panel of experts and the best ideas are awarded. All teams interested in the further implementation of their projects can eventually receive opportunities to be followed by professionals and start a new business.

UTN was represented at this activity by Roxana Rodríguez Madrigal, Sugeyri Rojas Jiménez, Keylin Ávila Arce, Kembely Espinoza Bonilla, and Stephanie Hurtado Díaz.

## Cinema-Forum At UTN

The Image Technology Major with the support of Centro Cultural Español is holding a cinema-forum cycle about identity and decolonization. Eight movies carefully chosen to give input to understand and discuss how this topic has been presented and affects native cultures, ethnic mix, and the processes of decolonization.

Although direct colonialism has largely ended, the ideology of colonialism has lingered in the identity of people within the general cultural sphere as well as the institutions of political, economic, and social practices.

Cinema-forum activities are a technique to engage the audience into action, and teach and open discussion.



DATE	MOVIE	PRESENTER
September 25 <sup>th</sup>	Diamantes Negros	José Campos
October 31 <sup>st</sup>	También la lluvia	Esteban Aguilar
November 24 <sup>th</sup>	El barco prometido	Luciano Capelli
December 6 <sup>th</sup>	Bienvenido Mr. Marshall	José P. Porras

## UTN Received Luis Alberto Monge's Personal Library



On September 14<sup>th</sup>, UTN library staff worked on moving former Costa Rican President Luis Alberto Monge's personal library, as well as, some pictures and objects from his home to UTN's Luis Alberto Monge building located in front of Central Park in downtown Alajuela.

In his will, **President Monge specified he wanted the**

**university to keep them.** Among the most important objects, there are several distinctions and awards he received throughout his life. President Monge was born on December 29<sup>th</sup>, 1925, in Palmares and died on November 29<sup>th</sup>, 2016 from a cardiorespiratory arrest at his home in Santa Ana.

Before becoming President in 1982, Monge served as Costa Rica's first ambassador to Israel from 1963 to 1966 and was one of the founding members of the National Liberation Party (PLN) in 1951. He was also named a deputy in the Legislative Assembly, at the age 24, making him one of the youngest to have reached such rank.

Monge inherited an impoverished and distraught nation. The biggest issues his presidency dealt with were: the unmanageable economic crisis, the mounting foreign debt and the Sandinista-Contra crisis involving Nicaragua, the United States and Costa Rica's northern border region.

## Two Years Of Arje Journal



On September 26<sup>th</sup>, Teacher Training and Educational Technology Centre (CEPTE) celebrated Arje Journal's second anniversary.

Arje Journal is dedicated to **the study of UTN educational inquiry, and pedagogical praxis. It brings together scholars from different disciplines to share their diverse perspective and concerns about the teaching and learning process.** Arje Journal's main objective is to create a space in which to advance the ideals of progressive curriculum and democratic leadership in education through dialogue and action.

Arje Journal publishes outstanding educational research from a wide range of conceptual, theoretical, and empirical traditions. Diverse perspectives, critiques, and theories related to pedagogy – broadly conceptualized as intentional and political teach-

ing and learning across many spaces, disciplines, and from UTN authors.

UTN Chancellor Marcelo Prieto expressed that Arje Journal gives UTN community a space for reflection, discussion, exchange of ideas, and thought. Arje Journal is an open invitation to academic debate based on UTN's vision and academic responsibility that higher education institutions have. This journal is an excellent way of expression to show how UTN generates, builds up, stores and transmits relevant pedagogical information to share it with all.

As part of this celebration there was a conference and discussion on pedagogical mediation. Presenters explained that even though education can promote deep individual and social transformations for a sustainable culture, the experiences that higher educational centers are offering ignore the fundamental aspects that could contribute to the urgent change of perception and mentality needed. In order to achieve an effective higher education pedagogical mediation an ongoing critical dialogue and projects that respond to the particular needs of their social, political and temporal contexts are needed. Finally, there was a posthumous tribute to Francisco Gutiérrez who, together with Daniel Prieto as considered important elements behind the pedagogical mediation strategy.

To learn more about Arje Journal, you can go to <http://www.utn.ac.cr/cfpte/bolet%C3%ADn-arj%C3%A9> .

## 2017 Nobel Peace Prize: What Is ICAN?

The Geneva-based International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) has been awarded the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize.

In an announcement in Oslo, Norway on Friday, the Nobel committee cited ICAN's role in pushing for a global prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons, through the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which was adopted at the United Nations in July 2017 in a vote of 122-1 with one country abstaining.

ICAN Executive Director Beatrice Fihn told reporters that given the current political atmosphere around the world, the call to ban nuclear weapons is more imperative.

**"The treaty is meant to make it harder to justify nuclear weapons, to make it uncomfortable for states to continue the status quo, to put more pressure on them,"** she said.

Here are some things to know about the winner of this year's Nobel Peace Prize:

Before Friday, October 6<sup>th</sup>, ICAN

was a little known organisation based in Geneva, Switzerland.

Originally founded in Australia in 2007, ICAN has now become a global coalition of 468 non-government organisations spread over 100 countries.

International partners include peace organisations to humanitarian and environmental groups.

Among its coalition partners are The Ceasefire Campaign in South Africa and the Africa Peace Forum in Kenya.

Physicians for Social Responsibility in Bangladesh is also a partner, as well as the Arab Network for Research on Landmines and Explosive Remnants of War.

Public figures who have voiced support for ICAN include Nobel Prize winners the **Dalai Lama** and Desmond Tutu, as well as artist and activist Ai Weiwei, and internationally-known artists Herbie Hancock and **Yoko Ono**.

While ICAN's Beatrice Fihn said that the prize is a "huge" boost for her organisation and other groups



working on the nuclear weapons issue, the world faces significant hurdles related to the nuclear weapons and threats of war.

Just before the Nobel committee made the announcement in Oslo, US President Donald **Trump had threatened not to re-certify the nuclear deal agreed between world powers and Iran.**

Trump has also threatened "to destroy North Korea" if necessary, after its leader Kim Jong-un said that nothing can stop his country from acquiring ballistic missiles with capability of carrying nuclear warheads.



Information and image taken from: <http://mwcnews.net/news/europe/68526-what-is-ican.html>

## US Cuts Cuba Diplomatic Staff Over Mysterious Attacks

The United States is withdrawing 60 percent of its diplomatic staff and all family members from its embassy in Cuba after 21 diplomats suffered mysterious health attacks in recent months, US officials said.

Washington is investigating the cause of the unexplained attacks and has not yet identified the responsible party, but officials on Friday stressed the Cuban government was responsible for protecting foreign diplomats on its territory.

The Cuban government has denied any role and has also launched an investigation. Last week, Havana said it found no evidence to support US claims that several American diplomats were harmed in what US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson called surreptitious **"health**



**attacks"**.

The diplomats experienced unexplained health problems from attacks that occurred as recently as August, including **ear complaints, hearing loss, dizziness, tinnitus, headache, fatigue, cognitive issues and difficulty sleeping**, officials said. The union that represents US diplomats has said the attacks have re-

sulted in "mild traumatic brain injury" and "permanent hearing loss". Though officials initially suspected some futuristic "sonic attack", the picture has grown muddier. The FBI and other agencies that searched homes and hotels where incidents occurred found no devices. And clues about the circumstances of the incidents seem to make any explanation scientifically implausible. Barack Obama, reopened diplomatic relations with Cuba after more than 50 years and the embassy resumed operations in 2015. US President Donald Trump has taken steps to roll back some of Obama's reforms towards Cuba but has maintained the embassy in Havana.



Information and image taken from: <http://mwcnews.net/news/americas/68413-us-cuts-cuba-diplomatic-staff.html>

## Thousands Urge Spanish And Catalan Leaders To Negotiate

Thousands of people, many dressed in white, have rallied in Madrid and Barcelona, calling for talks to defuse Spain's worst political crisis for decades amid Catalonia's threat to secede.

The rallies in the Spanish capital and the Catalan city were held with the slogan **"Shall We Talk?"** in an effort to push politicians in both cities to end months of silence and start negotiating.

The wealthy northeastern region of Catalonia, with its own language and culture, has long claimed to be distinct from the rest of the country and on Sunday, October 2<sup>nd</sup> held a referendum on breaking away Spain, a vote the constitutional court had banned.

The Catalan authorities say that a majority of those who voted supported a split from Spain. Madrid says secession is illegal under the country's 1978 constitution.

Spanish authorities mobilised thousands of national police to stop Sunday's vote, leading to clashes with would-be voters as they tried to close polling stations in schools and remove ballot boxes. Nine hundred people were injured on polling day.

### 'Sort it out peacefully'

Sporting white shirts, protesters packed Barcelona's Sant Jaume Square where the Catalan government has its presidential palace, shouting "We want to talk!" and holding signs saying "More Negotiation, Less Testosterone!" and "Talk or Resign!"

Even though **2.2 million Catalan voted - with 90 percent backing independence** - the disputed referendum polled less than half of the electorate in a region that is home to 7.5 million people.

Catalonia's President Carles Puigdemont has vowed to make good on the results of the vote. Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy warned that the vote was illegal and has promised that Catalonia is going nowhere.

"We have to find a new way forward," said Miquel Iceta, the leader of Spain's Socialist party in Catalonia. "It's the moment to listen to the people who are asking for the problem to be solved through an agreement, and without precipitated and unilateral decisions."

In a separate rally in Madrid's Colon Square, thousands clamoured for the unity of Spain and against any attempt by the northeastern region to break away. The crowd bristled with Spanish flags.

The calls for dialogue and unity come after a traumatic week, with riot police storming several polling stations in an unsuccessful attempt to impede the referendum. Instead, hundreds of voters were left in need of medical attention.

### 'New opportunity for dialogue'

The bloodied vote was followed by a strike on Tuesday, October 4<sup>th</sup> across Catalonia to protest the police violence. Spain's King Felipe VI weighed in, sharply crit-



icising the Catalan government and parliament and accusing them of breaking the law.

The police violence drew widespread condemnation and forced the government to issue an apology on Friday, although tensions continued to rise after reports of plans for the Catalan parliament to vote on a unilateral declaration of independence on Tuesday.

Puigdemont and his separatist supporters were struck a blow when Catalonia's top two banks, CaixaBank and Banco Sabadell, as well as energy giant Gas Natural announced they were relocating their headquarters from Catalonia to other parts of Spain.

Other companies are considering such a move to ensure that the region's possible secession would not knock them out of the European Union and its lucrative common market.

Spain's Minister of Public Works Inigo de la Serna said on Saturday that "the companies will keep leaving and it's exclusively the fault of the members of the regional government".

The warnings by the business sector have coincided with the first calls from within Puigdemont's government to hold off on a declaration of independence.

Santi Vila, Catalonia's regional chief for business, told Cadena SER Radio late on Friday that he's pushing for "a new opportunity for dialogue" with Spanish authorities.

"We have to give it one more chance, maybe the last chance, and perhaps the only way that can happen is to start with a cease-fire," Vila said.

Vila said he would like to see Spanish authorities return powers to the region which they have assumed in recent weeks, including control of a large part of its finances.

It is unclear how widespread Vila's moderate position is inside the Catalan government, which is being pressured by separatist grassroots groups and the far-left party CUP to declare independence soon.

## Hungary, Finally!



The time has come again to contribute with an article to this monthly publication, but this time I feel like stepping away from purely academic topics and sharing more about personal experiences. And what could be more personal than one's roots, one's genetic makeup and one's origins and those of our ancestors? I think most people have an idea of where they come from and do even know the history of their grandparents and great-grandparents, and perhaps some even take all this for granted. However, when you have the blood of a very different culture in your veins, an uncommon last name, and some different looks together with little knowledge about who your predecessors were and how they lived, like I do, it all becomes a mystery you want to solve some time, somehow.



I always wanted to know more about my paternal roots, about my dad's family, about his culture. The problem was that first, due to my parents' divorce, I did not live with my Dad for a long time, and then he got sick

and passed away when I was a teen. Also, he only had one brother that I did not share much with, and my grandparents died before I even existed. The little information I had was that they all had escaped from Yugoslavia (their country at that time) in the 60's, due to the oppression suffered from the communist government they were against to.



The conclusions made based on the little information that I had and all my mother had told me that my dad had left me with some inexact ideas and many doubts. However, it was until much later that I really got the urge to do something and find out more about my origins. First, I read information about Hungary (as I had always been told my dad was Hungarian born) and learned about so many problems, wars, and battles that the people in that European region suffered for centuries. Romans, Huns, Tartars, Turkish, etc., and the two world wars were to blame for those situations and the subsequent series of political and economic changes that led to several periods of restructuring in the area. Many countries or pieces of them became parts of other nations, moving and separating families all over

By Xinia Nagygeller (ILE Professor)

the place, smashing their cultural backgrounds and mixing it with others. And guess what happened? I found out that my dad was born in Yugoslavia, a patchwork country created with pieces of different nations and which does not even exist today! So, where was my 50% of identity really from?

Fortunately enough, in the era of accessible information through the web and my command of English, as a grown up I was able to establish contacts with people who could have been my family. **Facebook helped me to find people with the same last name, which is actually very Hungarian** although not as common as you may think. At the beginning, an online translator helped to decipher what they were telling me in their language, until I found Attila Nagygeller, who happened to speak English and who, after sharing some old family pictures, ended up being my distant cousin. When I was younger, I had daydreamed that I had family in Hungary who knew I existed and wanted to know me, but they did not know anything about the whereabouts of their long lost cousins who had flown away crossing the Atlantic to a new life.



Thanks to this finding and some savings, of course, in 2012 I was finally able to step on Hungarian land and see the beautiful country my dad's ancestors were from. I visited the capital city, Budapest, and enjoyed sightseeing its main attractions and eating Hungarian food like goulash and palachinkas (crepes there). The city is a mix of different styles and cultural statements created by the old invasions of other peoples, like the Muslims, who erected a big mosque, the Jews with their downtown synagogue, the Roman water spas Gellért and Szécheny, the Parliament, Buda Castle, St. Stephen's Cathedral, and the many interesting bridges crossing the Danube river.



The Central Market was actually a place to remember forever with its food, its vendors, and especially with its little shops which sold traditional Hungarian embroidered and painted goods and ornaments I found so lovely.

During the last days of my trip, I finally met my kin there, Attila and his family: his dad, who

is my 3rd cousin, and his mom; and his wife and their three daughters (my 5th cousins!). The family welcomed me affectionately even though they did not know me, and I had a great time savoring the special dishes and drinks they had prepared for this special occasion. I stayed at their place for a couple of days and got to know more about my origins thanks to them. Well, it happens that the place where my dad was born had originally been a Hungarian region that became part of another country, Serbia. While discussing about my grandparents, their lives and their names, another truth came to light: my grandma's last name happened to be Serbian and not Hungarian as I thought. This new information has changed the whole perspective I used to have about my origins: so, does this mean that **I am 50% Costa Rican (with all the possible mixes there), 25% Hungarian and 25% Serbian?** Oh my God! Maybe I even have a gypsy ancestor over there, or a barbarian Hun as my great great great grandpa!

To continue with the story, Attila took me to visit the neighborhood where my father and his family used to live, located very near his house in the border between Hungary and Serbia. I cannot express the excitement and the feeling of seeing that place with my own eyes! Finally, I was at the place where one part of came from. The end of

the trip came too soon after that, and while traveling back to Budapest on a train, I was not able to contain my tears anymore, thinking that whatever made these people, my dad and his family, leave that precious land called home had to have been terrible and really threatening for their lives.



**Communism and oppression in that country are no longer the rule**, but unfortunately, my family and many others had to endure them or leave their lives there in order to have a better future for themselves and their children. And that is the conclusion of how I came to be: I was the realization of my father's dream of a better life. Now, my background is clearer to me, I know more about my genetic makeup (what makes me, me), and I have had the opportunity to learn a little about the culture and life in Hungary firsthand. I just hope I can go visit there again sometime in the future, because now it is even more a part of who I am.

## Travelling, A Learning Experience

By Arabella Alice

It is said that school is the most relevant place to learn academic concepts and gain knowledge. Although, real life is different and does not entail academic concepts and deals in practical knowledge. How do you achieve that? It is via traveling because traveling is an experience that is second to none!

It equips you with necessary lessons in life and sets you on the path where you experience life like never before. Experiencing things is far greater learning than merely going through your textbooks at school.

### 1. Traveling allows you to see and experience new ways of living

Traveling is truly an eye-opener of an experience and it changes your perspective on life. When you meet people of different cultures you begin to realize that all this while, I have been living and seeing life through a narrow lens. Of course, it doesn't mean that you try on cockroaches for your meal but I mean that is how the world is.

You should say gratitude if you live and eat better than most of the people out there. Something which is disgusting to you is the most celebrated thing at some other place. You can hear a lot and see pictures about different places around the world in school but to witness it with your own eyes is remarkable in the least.

### 2. Traveling forces you out of your comfort zone

In our school premises, we usually feel safe as it offers comfortable learning environment. We have familiar faces such as our friends, teachers, our parents are around and the familiar faces of the school staff. All from our neighborhood or city and exhibits similar traits like us.

But when you step out to travel, you try on new foods, diversity in culture, different languages, meet new people and get to explore new places. Thus, driving you out of your comfort zone. It is not a bad thing because once you are driven out, it shapes you into becoming a better version of yourself.

### 3. Traveling gives you the chance to reinvent yourself

You are often stereotyped for the way you are. Just because you are into Star Wars you will be labeled as a nerd in your school. But deep down you know that you are not a nerd just because you enjoy Star Wars material instead your personality is that of a rock star! In school, you may be a misfit but upon traveling you are as plain as a white sheet of paper. You can have a fresh start and can realize your true potential. No one will be around to judge you and you can be the person you always wanted to be.

### 4. Traveling helps you build confidence

When you travel far away from your country to a foreign, you are bound to ooze with confidence because

independent is what you have become. You have begun handle life on your own and the experience has made you strong that you can take any life challenge head-on. See, this is what traveling does to a person.

### 5. Traveling makes you a more interesting person

Do you want to be the one telling all sorts of adventurous stories? Well, if you have traveled enough, be prepared to dazzle audiences of all age groups because you will have a lot up your sleeves to share with the people.

It could be an interesting story from your safari visit in Africa where you were almost bitten by a lion or that time of the year in Spain where you were almost taken out by a bull in the "Pamplona's Running of the Bulls" festival. In school, you will have to imagine such stories which again no one would believe since most of the year you are in school so the question of safari or visiting Spain does not seem plausible.

### 6. Traveling teaches you better time management skill

In school, we have a certain deadline to comply with. However, if we don't meet them, it is not like it becomes a matter of life and death. If you are slightly delayed in your assignment submission, you can simply walk into the teacher's room and ask for an extension – problem solved.

But what happens when you have paid for an adventurous trip and you miss your flight? Can you ask for an extension from the pilot, meanwhile you get ready to board? What will happen although, is that you will lose money. Therefore, traveling teaches you to better manage your time.

### 7. Traveling will improve your planning and organizing skills

Planning and organizing skills is an art few have managed to master. When you travel, all you do is a plan and plan with precision because you cannot risk things getting out of hand at any cost. You organize well too, such as where will you

be staying, how long will you be staying, is there enough money to get me through my journey, where will I find kosher meat in town and the questions of the sort. Feeling those skills sharpened yet?

Travelling works as a guide and philosopher in our life. The more you travel the more you learn. The reasons given above are not an end of the list, there are many more things that can be explored through traveling experiences. Well, it's always not possible for everyone to travel around but should try wholeheartedly to pick up time out of busy life and enjoy the diversities of life. Even a short tour can leave you with vast experiences. Even along with learning traveling is a refreshment too.



## What Is A Learning Environment?

by A.W. (Tony) Bates

*'Learning environment refers to the diverse **physical locations, contexts, and cultures in which students learn**. Since students may learn in a wide variety of settings, such as outside-of-school locations and outdoor environments, the term is often used as a more accurate or preferred alternative to classroom, which has more limited and traditional connotations—a room with rows of desks and a chalkboard, for example.*

*The term also encompasses **the culture of a school or class**—its presiding ethos and characteristics, including how individuals interact with and treat one another—as well as the ways in which teachers may organize an educational setting to facilitate learning.....'*

This definition recognises that students learn in many different ways in very different contexts. Since learners must do the learning, the aim is to create a total environment for learning that optimises the ability of students to learn. There is of course no single optimum learning environment. There is an infinite number of possible learning environments, which is what makes teaching so interesting.

### Components of an effective learning environment

Developing a total learning environment for students in a particular course or program is probably the most creative part of teaching. While there is a tendency to focus on either physical institutional learning environments (such as classrooms, lecture theatres and labs), or on the technologies used to create online personal learning environments (PLEs), learning environments are broader than just these physical components. They will also include:

- the characteristics of the learners;
- the goals for teaching and learning;
- the activities that will best support learning;
- the assessment strategies that will best measure and drive learning
- the culture that infuses the learning environment.

Figure A.2.2 illustrates one possible learning environment from the perspective of a teacher or instructor. A teacher may have little or no control over some components, such as learner characteristics or resources, but may have full control over other components such as choice of content and how learners will be supported. Within each of the main components there are a set of sub-components that will need to be considered. In fact, it is in the sub-components (content structure, practical activities, feedback, use of technology, assessment methods, and so on) where the real decisions need to be made.

I have listed just a few components in Figure A.2.2 and the set is not meant to be comprehensive. For instance it could have included other components, such as developing ethical behaviour, institutional factors, or external accreditation, each of which might also affect the learning environment in which a teacher or instructor has to work. Creating a model of a learning environment then is a heuristic device that aims to provide a comprehensive view of the whole teaching context for a particular course or program, by a particular instructor or teacher with a particular view of learning. Once again, the choice of components and their perceived importance will be driven to some extent by personal epistemologies and beliefs about knowledge, learning and teaching methods.

Lastly, I have deliberately suggested a learning environment from the perspective of a teacher, as the teacher has the main responsibility for creating an appropriate learning environment, but it is also important to consider learning environments from the learners' perspectives. Indeed, adult or mature learners are capable of creating their own, personal, relatively autonomous learning environments.

The significant point is that it is important to identify those components that need to be considered in teaching a course or program, and in particular that there are other components besides content or curriculum.

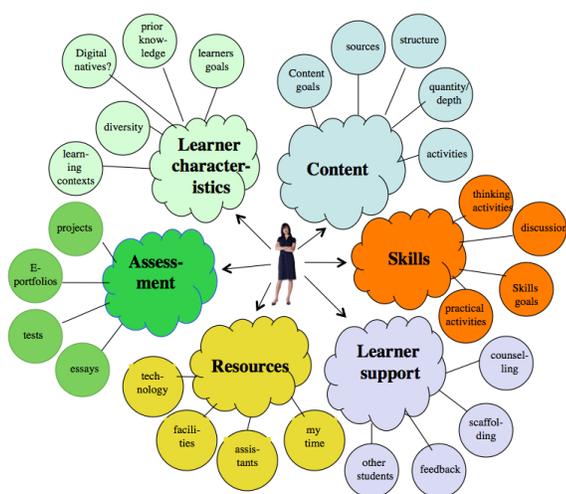


Figure A.2.2

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 an important lesson someone has taught you in life?*



*My son: when he was born, I understood what true love means. He has made me feel I must be a good person to help, teach, and guide him in life.*

*Alejandra Solís*

*My mother: She told me that we have to learn how to walk before we try to run.*

*Elizabeth Quesada*

*My aunt: she fought and defeated cancer; she never gave up.*

*Yanary Vega*

*My mother: she has always shown me how to say and do the right things.*

*Alexander Garceía*

*My sistertauhgt she thought me that no matter where you are from, you can do and achieve all your goals.*

*Carlos Madrigal*

*My mother: she has experienced many difficult times in order to give her family a better life; however, she never gives up and does everything to take her family ahead.*

*Alison Castro*

*My daughter: she once told me God is always around us; he loves us a lot, so we should not cry.*

*Karla Arias*

*A good friend: he told me that everything was going to be ok; every mistake is a lesson, and if you really want something, you need to work hard for it. It is not going to be easy, but you can do it.*

*Alejandro Soto*



## The Arrival (Movie Review)

By Marisol Rojas (ILE Student)

Language is necessary for communication among human beings. It is a way to transmit thoughts, ideas and feelings within a group of people that live near, and share time, education, customs and feelings. According to the Cambridge Dictionary, language is a system of communication consisting of sounds, words, and grammar, or the system of communication used by people in a particular country or type of work. For example: Unable to speak a word of the language, he communicated with his hands. ("Language", 2017)

Mankind needs language to speak, read, write or listen. Depending on the place where people are living, that language can vary. As reported by Babel.com, the ten most spoken languages in the world are: Chinese, Spanish, English, Hindi, Arabic, Portuguese, Bengali, Russian, Japanese and Punjabi. (Lane, 2017) However, there are a lot of different languages in the world that help to communicate and share knowledge about different cultures around the world. Even though, in many cases, we misunderstand the meaning of the communication that we are receiving, humans have several ways to try to understand the main message. Nevertheless, what would happen if aliens came our planet, and because of their appearance we would feel scare, and we would not be able to communicate with them? Usually people fear the new and unknown, besides if the communication is broken due to the language is not from this world, probably we would have a wave of fear, and the consequence could be a disaster.

In the movie Arrival Movie (Villeneuve, 2016), a linguist called Louise (Amy Adams), and a theoretical physicist called Ian (Jeremy Renner) must find a way to communicate with the mysterious visitors in order to learn what they want, and if those visitors are going to invade our planet. Both professionals make contact with those aliens. Louise discovers that aliens have a written language of complicated circular symbols in an aqueous environment, and she begins to learn some basic vocabulary. As she becomes more proficient, she starts to have visions of herself with her daughter and of their relationship with the absent father. Through the entire movie, the viewer discovers a lot of interesting data, like the linguist asked to the colonel army: How many aliens are there, and if aliens have mouths? This fact is important because for starting the basic process of communication the linguist needs to know what is the base of the alien's communication: if they speak, emit sounds, produce signals with their hands, or others.

Usually, words have several meanings; sometimes people know the most common meanings, but in other cases, people do not know about all the meanings that a word has. In the movie, a perfect example is when Louise recommended to the colonel to ask another linguist the meaning of the word "war" in Sanskrit. Colonel answered, "it is a wish"; Louise replied "field of cows". This was the correct answer in order to prove her knowledge. Here it is reaffirmed that the language is so vast and varied that even experts in linguistics make translation errors.

In this movie, people can appreciate how a linguist uses her knowledge for encouraging communication. For instance, Louise decided to use a sign with the word human, and aliens answered with a type of aqueous ring. It was the first encounter between humans and aliens. Later on, Louise explained that aliens had to understand what a question was, and the use of the word "you" in singular and collective way. We can find in our booklet that in language we have symbols that in a cultural group, everybody agreed in the meaning and its use. ("Language and Culture: The Essential Partnership", 2017) For this reason, Louise used those signs. She wanted to have some basic vocabulary in common in order to create patterns among all signs, and with this information she would establish a communication channel because she has to teach aliens how to answer the question why. It is necessary to have enough common vocabulary to understand the information.

As a result of this, Louise uses simple vocabulary like eat or walk, associated with examples, like her partner walking from the place (By imitation). In this part of the communication process, Louise decides to take off her clothes and extend her hand over the glass; the reaction of the alien was to put his tentacle on the glass. The alien tried to communicate too. Louise explained that aliens needed to see her better, without the special costume. In this part of the movie, Louise tries to interact with the aliens. She tried to catch the full attention of the aliens, because she considers their mindfulness is important because it is a key to getting knowledge about both cultures, and especially in order to communication between them. It is essential to take into consideration that when the individual tries to understand an unknown language, the assignment of the meaning per word could be misunderstood. As in the movie, when General Shang wants to communicate with heptapods through games like chess instead of teaching the language as Louise did. As a result, aliens could believe that they have to win the game because this is a type of competition, but what it means that for the aliens that this could be the destruction of mankind. This situation could mean that if aliens want to invade our planet, aliens have to attack and win.

Another important point is when Louise asked aliens about their purpose on Earth. The answer was “to offer a weapon”, but the sign used for the word “weapon” could mean tool too. This situation caused that the twelve countries, where the spaceships were located, immediately started to think in an imminent alien invasion. In this case, my opinion is human race feel fear of the unknown, so when Louise received the message about a “weapon”, the governments felt they were being threatened, for this reason sovereigns decided to interrupt all types of communication among them; in fact, the Chinese government gave to aliens the following ultimatum “get away from here or you will be under attack.” The problem of misunderstanding a message is clear here. This situation could finish in a war against aliens.

Besides, Louise discovered that there is no correlation between the heptapod says and writes. Aliens’ writing is semasiographic, which means that any system of writing that uses graphemes which denote meaningful elements of speech (“Semasiography”, 2017). This language does not represents sounds, and the written language does not have forward or back direction. It is called nonlinear orthography. In the movie the linguistic explained that in this type of written language, people can write a sentence with two hands, starting in both sides. People only need to know the space that words will occupy. Moreover, in the movie, the main characters talk about the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. This hypothesis says if people submerge into the language, they can learn that language, and the language people speak determine how they think. It affects how people see everything. This language not represents sounds, and the written language does not have forward or back direction. It is called nonlinear orthography. With this in mind, Louise will have to discover that the gift, the weapon and the tool have the same meaning: Aliens want to give to humanity a gift which is a weapon and a tool at the same time that is their own language: Heptapod language.

Something that caught my attention was to watch how the linguist made measurements with a ruler over the aliens’ signs. I think she did it for finding some patterns among every sign. In the end, Louise had several words to understand what the aliens wanted.

As a conclusion, through language people can develop their society and culture. Moreover, those people can extend their knowledge to other societies for the purpose of establishing criteria where the respect for other cultures is the main source of values in order to understand the coexistence with others.

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## What Is The Mediterranean Diet?



The ancient Greek word “dieta”, from which the word diet derives from, means balanced lifestyle, and this is exactly what the Mediterranean Diet is; it is much more than a nutritional pattern. The Mediterranean Diet is a lifestyle, not just a food pattern that combines ingredients from local agriculture, recipes and cooking methods of each place, shared meals, celebrations and traditions, coupled with moderate physical activity, favoured by a welcoming climate, completes a lifestyle that modern science recommends us to adopt for the benefit of our health; making the Mediterranean Diet an excellent model for healthy living.

The Mediterranean Diet is a valuable piece of cultural heritage that from simplicity and variety has resulted in a complete and balanced combina-

tion of food based on fresh, local and seasonal food as much as possible.

Mediterranean population is characterized by low infected various chronic diseases such as heart disease and diabetes, as a result of eating habits of healthy food, and that is its greatest impact in lower rates of diagnosed chronic diseases and also decrease their weight in a healthy way.

Mediterranean diet is based on eating large proportion of legumes, grains, olive oil, fruits and vegetables, eating a moderate amounts of fish, dairy products, and finally eating a low percentage of meat, for that it is very rich in fiber and beneficial healthy fats, colored fruit and vegetables, which are rich in antioxidants, this diet helps on effective weight loss without depriving the body of various important nutrients.

The Mediterranean diet designed to maintain a healthy weight, and usually this diet involves in eating grains, beans, vegetables and fruits. This diet

does not include eating a lot of meat while depends on the intake of olive oil mainly because it is an important source for the body of beneficial fats.

The Mediterranean Diet is characterized by abundant plant-origin foods such as bread, pasta, rice, vegetables, legumes, fruits and nuts; the use of olive oil as the main source of additional fat, moderate consumption of fish, seafood, poultry, dairy products (yogurt, cheese) and eggs, as well as small amounts of red meat and a daily moderate intake of wine generally at meals.

The researchers also showed that living bacteria that are used to prepare the yogurt may also contribute to the provision of good health for the people of the Mediterranean area. Of the important elements that are used in the diet of the Mediterranean is the garlic, it helps prevent blood clots and lower cholesterol level and it also helps protect against cancer.



## New Orleans



New Orleans is known for a host of attributes like its famous **Creole food**, abundant alcohol, music of many styles, nearby swamps and plantations, 18th & 19th century architecture, antiques, gay pride, streetcars, and museums. Nicknamed **the Big Easy**, New Orleans has long had a reputation as an adult oriented city. However, the city also offers many attractions for families with children and those interested in culture and the arts. It is a city with a majority Roman Catholic population owing to its European origins.

Famous festivals like **Mardi Gras** and Jazz Fest bring in tourists by the millions, and are the two times of the year when one needs to be sure to book well in advance to be sure of a room. The city also hosts numerous smaller festivals and gatherings like the French Quarter Festival, Creole Tomato Festival, Satchmo Summer-Fest, the Essence Festival hosted by the magazine, Halloween parading and costume balls, Saint Patrick's Day and Saint Joseph's Day parading, Southern Decadence, and so many more. The city takes almost any occasion for an excuse for a parade, a party, and live music, and in New Orleans most events often have a touch of Mardi Gras year round. Like they say, New Orleanians are either planning a party, enjoying one or recovering from one. Party down! It is a city of great culture with a clash

of French, Cajun and some Spanish designs. You may see some voodoo activity at night. The streetcar rides are fun and many of the stores carry exclusive cultural art such as the blue dog collection.

A local joke has it that New Orleans really does have **four seasons: Summer, Hurricane, Christmas, and Mardi Gras**. Summer is certainly the longest; for about half the year, from about late April to the start of October, the days are usually hot, or raining, or hot and raining. Winters are generally short and mild, but subject to occasional cold snaps that may surprise visitors who mistakenly think the city has a year round tropical climate. The high humidity can make



the cold snaps feel quite penetrating. Snow is so rare that the occasional light dusting of flakes will make most locals stop what they are doing to stare.

If you are visiting the French Quarter, casinos, or just the Central Business District, a car may be more of a burden than an asset. Most hotel parking is valet/remote/expensive/difficult at best. New Orleans is ready for visitors, and the rapid transit, trolley cars and buses are plentiful 24/7. **Walking is fun** and healthy during daylight and early evening. After midnight, you may want to call a taxi, but likely it will be a short trip at reasonable cost. For a great way to see the city, try renting a bike from one of the several bike rental companies in the French Quarter or Marigny.

**What to do?**

**Stroll historic neighborhoods** look at



the architecture and businesses, and people watch in the French Quarter, Faubourg Marigny, Faubourg Tremé, Bywater, Esplanade Ridge, Uptown, Algiers Point and Carrollton

**Streetcar rides** St. Charles Avenue (green cars) is the oldest continuously operating streetcar in the U.S.; the Canal Street route also provides a pleasant ride

**Riverboat cruises** - short or long cruises, some of which have quite good jazz bands on board. Enjoy the Steamboat Natchez Riverboat Cruise. Great way to enjoy 3 attractions-in-one ... New Orleans food and music during a cruise down the Mississippi. Aquarium-Zoo Cruise - riverboat cruise package is a great way to see the Aquarium of the Americas and the Audubon Zoo

**River ferry** - the budget alternative to riverboats, take the free pedestrian ferry from the foot of Canal Street across the Mississippi to Algiers Point and back for a great view of the river, downtown, and the Quarter

Walking tours including voodoo, jazz history, French Quarter, or Garden District ones

**Bicycle Tours for history**, architecture, or hurricane damage.





## Oscar Wilde (1854-1900)



### Early Years

Oscar Fingal O'Flahertie Wills Wilde was born on October 16<sup>th</sup>, 1854 in Dublin, Ireland. He was the second child of parents Sir William and Jane Wilde; his older brother, William Robert Kingsbury Wills Wilde, was born in 1852 and his younger sister, Isola Francesca Emily Wilde, would be born in 1857. Wilde's mother, born Jane Frances Elgee, was a woman of immense character whose thoughts and actions heavily influenced her son. His mother was a prolific poet who published nationalist poems in Irish newspapers and his father, who was a physician, wrote many successful medical books.

In 1864, Wilde and his older brother were sent to live and study at Portora Royal School in Enniskillen; it was here that Wilde began to make a reputation for himself.

Wilde was awarded a Royal School scholarship to Trinity College in Dublin. At Trinity he showed an aptitude for classics, and was awarded the Berkeley Gold Medal for Greek near the end of his study in 1874. Confi-

dent of his strength in the subject, Wilde took an examination on June 23<sup>rd</sup> of the same year which gained him a Demyship (or scholarship) in classics at Magdalen College, Oxford.

### Personal Life

After experiencing the excitement that was his American tour, Wilde had little interest in remaining stationary. In the years immediately succeeding his return to London he would live in Paris for a few short months and return again to America, all the while finishing his second play *The Duchess of Padua* (1883) and attending the New York opening of his first play, *Vera* (first performed in August of 1883). Unfavorable reviews of the performance and continued financial concerns led Wilde back to his mother's suggestion that he marry into a wealthy family.

He had met Constance Lloyd in May of 1881, prior to his first trip to America, and now, with his mother's approval, began to seriously consider her as a marriage prospect. Ellmann suggests that Wilde's interest in marriage was not only the result of a desire to secure himself financially, but also the result of his **need to project a heterosexual image of himself onto society** (233). By this time, rumors were already circulating about his homoeroticism and his flamboyant manner of dress did nothing to help the situation. Since homosexuality was still illegal, these rumors had a negative affect on his credibility, and consequently, on his success as a writer. Therefore, thinking a marriage might help to silence such gossip, Wilde proposed to

Lloyd in November of 1883 and married her on May 29<sup>th</sup> of the next year. Lloyd received £250 a year from her grandfather and would receive nearly £900 a year after his death, thus easing Wilde's financial problems. Overall, the match was a happy and supported one, though it is probable that Lloyd admired Wilde more so than he did her (Ellmann 247).

When Wilde underwent ear surgery on October 10<sup>th</sup>, 1900, he developed a severe case of meningitis from which he would not recover. Wilde died in Paris on November 30<sup>th</sup>, at the young age of forty-six. Robert Ross, his former lover and loyal friend, was by his side and alleged that Wilde was consciously received into the Catholic Church upon his deathbed.

Wilde was first interred at Bagneux, though his remains were later moved to Père Lachaise Cemetery where they still remain. His funerary monument, designed by Jacob Epstein, is inscribed with a stanza from his poem,

***The Ballad of Reading Gaol:***  
***And alien tears will fill for him***  
***Pity's long-broken urn,***  
***For his mourners will be outcast***  
***men,***  
***And outcasts always mourn.***

Some of his most famous stories include: **The Canterville Ghost** (1887), **The Happy Prince and Other Tales** (1888), and **The Picture of Dorian Gray** (1891).

If you want to read Oscar's Wilde's work, go to:

<http://wilde.astorialand.com>

## “ENGLISH FOR YOU CR” PRESENTS, CAN AND CAN'T



Can and can't are two modal auxiliaries that we use in English to express **abilities or inabilities**.

For example:

- I **can** drive a car. (I have the ability to drive a car).
- I **can't** speak French. (I don't have the ability to speak French).

As all modals, they don't change with the subject:

- She **can** dance like a pro.
- He **can't** help you now.
- We **can** listen to music all day long.

When speaking, in US English they tend to be pronounced as **/Kɪn/** in the affirmative “can”, and **/Kæ:nt/** for the negative “can't”. As you can see, the negative form is longer and more emphatic: **/Kɪn/** vs. **/Kæ:nt/**

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<http://www.EnglishforYouCR.com> and [www.facebook.com/english.foryoucr](http://www.facebook.com/english.foryoucr)

## netiquette

[net-i-kit, [ket]

**the rules of etiquette that apply when communicating over computer networks, especially the internet.**

### EXAMPLE:

**The rules of “netiquette” are not exactly static or undisputed. Are emoticons appropriate in formal emails?**

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



## Oktoberfest

Oktoberfest (also called Wiesn) is a German festival that takes place on the Theresienwiese, a public place in the center of Munich. It is every year, from the end of September to the beginning of October. It is a big social event. There is lots of eating and drinking. It is on for sixteen days ending on the first Sunday in October. If this is the first or the second the festival is extended to the end on 3<sup>rd</sup> October, the Day of German Unity. This is the day when East Germany and West Germany joined into one country again in 1990. The first Oktoberfest was on **12<sup>th</sup> October 1810**. The feast was for the wedding of King Ludwig I of Bavaria and Therese of Sachsen-Hildburghausen. The feast lasted for 5 days. There was music, eating and drinking. At the end of it there was a big horse-race. The next years they had this horse-race and the feast again, because the people had liked it so much. Today the Oktoberfest is the world's largest fair, and it has become very famous and popular. About six million people visit it every year. Many people and tourists from all over the world come to Munich for Oktoberfest. Other cities have copied the Oktoberfest, and now they also hold feasts that are similar to the Oktoberfest.

Information taken from: <https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oktoberfest>  
Photo credit: <https://pixabay.com/en/oktoberfest-hofbräu-marquee-535122/>

