



Link

english magazine

18

By **Nadya Milena Camacho Contreras** (9th semester undergraduate FIGRI student, the World in English elective)

In the last few decades, technology has developed in an accelerated way which has culminated in the invention of several devices that nowadays ease communication between different cultures and, most importantly, different languages. As it is today, the way we learn English or any other language has a close relationship to what we watch on TV, what kind of music we like and what our favorite movie may be.

It is not weird to hear someone say that by watching movies or listening to music in another language they have improved their abilities in another language. What is even more interesting, and constantly passes over our heads, is that by doing this we are learning much more than just a language. The way that content is presented to new generations is not only fun and interesting, but richly engrained in the culture present in things such as video games, TV shows, movies, music and internet videos. These are frequently part of a bigger scheme: mainstream culture.

This mainstream culture is defined by different products with an extremely broad target audience. In other words, mainstream culture is composed, among other things, of the media outlets that are created with

the idea of reaching people all over the world who have different cultures and, yes, different languages. The rapid evolution of technology has facilitated this content exportation, as now we are able to subscribe to Netflix and watch the same shows as anyone in the United States, without having to wait for those shows to be dubbed and transmitted on television or in movie theaters.

The thing with this massive spread of mainstream culture, usually created and promoted by the United States, is that by watching those shows or listening to certain music we are able to learn some traits of the environment in which they were created. Nowadays we have a more accurate vision of how society in the US works without ever having to be there; today, English students all over the world may know the same about conjugations as they know about acronyms like OMG, LOL or YOLO.

This is not, by itself, a bad thing, as it has made learning English as a second language easier, more interesting and interactive. Nonetheless, it is important to be careful while consuming this media, as much of it is not the most linguistically correct or even remotely informative, so it is necessary to have a critical eye regarding what we see and learn from. Other than that though, technology and popular media are great tools to learn a second language and the culture behind it.

From ABC to OMG: The mainstream way of learning English.

Hello, and welcome to issue 18 of Ink, the Externado University's English magazine!

Once again we have a great selection of articles for you to enjoy, covering such diverse topics as changes in modern life and languages, the environment and public transport in Bogotá.

Remember that this is your magazine, and your participation is extremely important. The Ink blog is a great place for you to

share and comment on the articles, and also read some blog-exclusive articles: <http://inkenglishmagazine.blogspot.com/>
You are also more than welcome to participate in future issues of Ink; just ask your English teacher or send us an email.

Enjoy!

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The idea of Ink is to display pieces of writing, in English, by members of the Externado community. As we try to maintain authors' originality as far as possible, you may find some minor mistakes in the articles. The views expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the Externado University.



STUDYING ABROAD IS A BIG HIT

By **Natalia Quintero Montañez** (1st semester undergraduate FIGRI student, level 4 English)

We are so blessed to study at the Externado University, which gives us a lot of possibilities to be the best professionals in the country and also in the world. This is thanks to the opportunity that is offered us in the university to go to study in another country. Internationalization is something that most people are looking for, but not everyone has the possibility to go to another place to do a degree or a master's.

If you want to study abroad it is important for you to know what options the university has for you. The first one is a simple exchange, which is for the person

who wants to learn the language and wants to learn about the place and the culture while studying. If you are interested in this exchange you need to have at least a B1 or B2 level of the language and a minimum average of 3.8, and you can do this when you have finished the third year of your degree. The second one is a post-graduate program which you can apply for while still studying your undergraduate degree. You need a level of at least C1 in the language of the country that you want to go to. You will go to another college and you will be evaluated normally, and at the end of your time there, you will receive your qualification. When you return to Externado University you have to finish your undergraduate degree and when that is finished, you will have the possibility to immediately do a PhD in the country of your choice. You can decide where you want to go to do this program because the university has plenty of agreements with foreign universities.

It is important to study abroad because it gives you an advantage over others when looking for a job. In the world of work, big foreign companies are looking for professionals with good academic bases, and really well-prepared people. If you have a post-graduate and also a master's degree, and even a PHD you have a good chance to get the job. That isn't all of what a university abroad will give you though, as it will also change you. When you study abroad, you have another vision of the world, just because you know how the world works. Also, you can choose where to work, you can work in your country or go to another country because you know the language and even better, you can represent Colombia in organizations such as the UN. You can do whatever you want when you are studying at the Externado University. It's important to recognize though, that if you take advantage of all the possibilities that the university offers its students, you will have everything you want and most importantly, you will be what you want to be. You will make your dreams come true and also your life will be how you want it to be.

For more information about studying in another country, contact the FIGRI Intercambios office: internacional@uexternado.edu.co

And the award for the best goal scorer goes to...

By Laura Daniela Cortés V. (5th semester undergraduate FIGRI student, English Skills Through Multimedia student)

Time's running out. The match will finish soon, but all the boys move their feet as fast as they can. As soon as the referee blows his whistle, the Titans gather around and celebrate. One of them is Juan Daniel, or as everyone calls him, Gafu.

At the age of eight, Gafu started to play soccer because his parents wanted him to improve his skills. Everyday he had to go to Alejandro Brand Soccer Academy and that's where the challenges began.

"I had to quit because I was ten. I had to train with older boys so I felt like I didn't fit at all."

He played in Equidad Seguros for a year and then went back to Alejandro Brand Soccer Academy, where he had the opportunity to go to a camp in the United States. There, headhunters were looking for new talented players to give them scholarships.

"I won a scholarship for 60% of the enrolment but it was still too expensive for my family and by that time we had financial worries, so I couldn't stay in the U.S."

As he was telling me about his experiences in Argentina, Gafu seemed happy about all the memories that came to mind. In that country he learnt true life lessons.

"Being a young soccer player in Argentina is really hard. There, soccer seems to be a religion. Everyone plays this sport, and there are many professional soccer players so trying to be successful was difficult as Argentinians think foreigners want to steal their opportunities."

Missing his family and friends was the main reason to come back to Colombia. He decided to focus more on studying since he'd lost a year at school due to the absences he had. However, he had to balance school and soccer as he started to play in Millonarios.

"When you play soccer here in Colombia, you get to know people from different parts of the country, and also people with different lifestyles. For some of them, soccer is the only way to have a bright future, to be able to give their families a house or food."

Gafu was in the last year of school, so all he wanted was to spend time with his friends and go to parties.

"Going to parties is not good for a soccer player. A soccer player needs to be a hard-working person, disciplined and efficient. That wasn't healthy for me because I got injured so I couldn't play for 6 months."



At that time, he realized that he wouldn't become a professional soccer player, despite the progress he had made. After he graduated, he started at the Externado University and now he's studying Finance and International Relations.

"My university offers the chance to play soccer, so I decided to apply. Also, they're considering giving scholarships to those who play sports."

Due to his academic responsibilities, he left the university team because he didn't have time to train, so now he plays with his friends in championships organized at El Alcazar every weekend. Now, Gafu thinks of soccer as a hobby. He's focused on studying, but he'll never forget all the experiences he learnt from this sport.

When I asked him about his most prized award, he laughed and said:

"I have a bunch of medals and trophies, but the most important one is the "Best Goal scorer" one I won last semester."



by **Emelyne Coulon-Oliero** (undergraduate FIGRI French Exchange student, the World in English elective)

Living abroad in a little city

The first time I went abroad for a long period I was 18, and I went from France to Venezuela. I participated in an exchange program with Rotary International that allowed me to stay in the country for 10 months. This organization sends students from all over the Earth to other countries. You are hosted by a local family that sends their son or daughter abroad with the same organization.

I had only learnt English back then, and I was sent to Coro, a little city in Falcon state on the coast. The city was so small that very few people knew English. That was kind of a problem for me because I had very bad Spanish. But do you know what? That was the best thing that could have happened to me. I was forced to communicate in my host language and in three months I spoke very good Spanish. My only issue was that the Corianos had some very colloquial words and pronunciation: this is the thing with little cities.

Living abroad in a big city

This is my second time abroad: I am in Colombia for one year at the Externado de Colombia University. When I arrived, everyone talked to me in English: people see my face, which does not seem to be from this side of the world, and communicate with the most global language that exists right now. This is an important point: it is easier to travel in big cities because you can communicate with almost everyone if you speak English.

There is also another thing that is an advantage of living in

Bogota: the Spanish spoken in this city is so neutral that I can understand almost everything. When I left Coro, I still had some difficulty understanding everything, but this is not the case in Bogota. It is a city of culture, diversity, foreigners and a lot of tourism and this helps foreigners learn a neutral Spanish that can be understood in every Spanish-speaking country.

Learning Spanish in Latin America

When I started to speak in Spanish in Bogota, people realized that my Spanish was kind of fluent... but I clearly was not from here. I used some words that aren't from Colombia. For example: I went to the Oma in the seventh avenue and I ordered a parchita juice... The waiter stared at me as if my sentence was not in Spanish. Well, he just did not know what it was. Actually, in Colombia, parchita is maracuyá.

This is the thing with Latin America: every country has specific words, even if they speak the same language. This is one of the charms of this continent.

My advice:

- If you just want to travel to discover the world, go to big cities first, learn some vocabulary and then you can venture to a more colloquial city.
- If you want to speak another language fluently and quickly, go to a little city where no one can speak to you in another language than the one you want to learn.

But, the most important thing:

TRAVEL AND ENJOY IT!

From France to Venezuela and Colombia



GMOs



By **Yeimi Tatiana Rey Daza** (1st semester undergraduate FIGRI student, level 4 English)

Genetically modified foods, or GMOs, are foods which have had their hereditary genetic traits modified by adding other genetic materials. This genetic material imparts desirable characteristics, such as making fruit or vegetables not as soft, giving them a better color or taste, a greater resistance to plant diseases, or other characteristics.

This modification is done with genetic engineering. The Flavr Savr tomato was one of the first available genetically modified foods, which reduced the softening process and so enabled the tomatoes to ripen without becoming too soft for commercial distribution. However, the product was withdrawn from trade in a short time because of the cost of production. Today there are many transgenic foods like potatoes, corn, coffee, carrots and others.

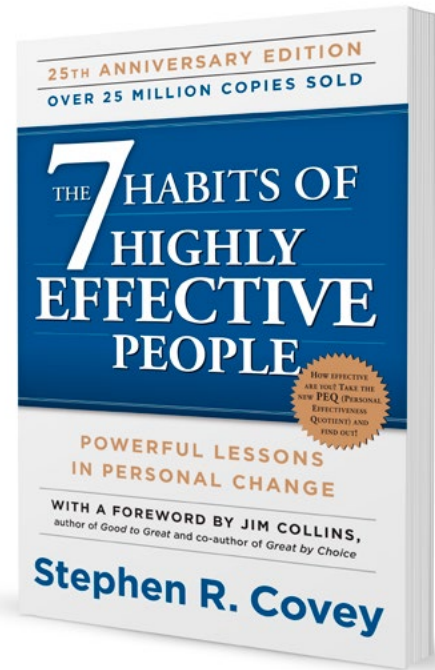
They have some advantages, such as a greater resistance to insects which minimizes pesticide use and contributes to protecting the environment. Those foods have a slower degradation process which allows consumers to receive fresher food.

However, they have disadvantages too. Those foods could cause allergies because of the substances they contain. The production of these foods can also cause changes in countries' economies, exports and imports.

In the 90s Colombia was a self-sufficient country in agriculture, meaning that Colombians could live from their own food production. Organización Semillas states that GMOs were approved here more than 12 years ago. In 2007 with the commercial release of modified corn, Colombians began to eat GMOs without knowing the consequences for human health. Today 85% of corn and 95% of soybean products consumed by Colombians are brought from another country. Those products are the GMOs which are bought the most around the world.

In 2015 the Constitutional Court said that Colombians have to be able to read on the label what ingredients foods have. Colombians could then choose which foods to eat. It is very important that we know what we are eating every day, because we can choose what the best option is for our health.

The First Self-Help Book I Actually Liked



By **Juanita Riveros Villamizar** (8th semester undergraduate FIGRI student)

I have never been a big fan of self-help books. In fact, I used to profoundly dislike them and thought that through novels one could learn much more while enjoying good literature. For this reason, when a friend of mine recommended I read *The 7 habits of highly effective people*, my first reaction was to set the book aside. However, a subtle curiosity invaded me and I ended up googling the name of the book, which turned out to be a well-known book written in 1989 that has sold more than 25 million copies. I then decided to look it up in my kindle book store. I thought I would give it a try, read the free trial and then have enough arguments as to why that wasn't my type of book. That was the plan, at least.

Having no high expectations I started reading the book but to my surprise I did not feel bored or overwhelmed with unrealistic ideas. On the contrary, I was absolutely captivated by it. Everything in it was real and I could relate to the author's thoughts and stories. When the trial was over, I did not think about it twice and bought the book.

As the name states, the book lists 7 habits to become a more effective person. However, my purpose here is not to summarize each one of them. Instead, I would like to share a couple of ideas that the book made me wonder about:

1) The victimization habit we need to be aware of and stop.

Think about something you have wanted to change in your life since long ago. Think about why you have not changed it yet. Is it because of time, money, the people who surround you, or your personality? We are used to blaming others for not achieving or being what we want, but the only ones capable of changing these issues are us. No matter how you were raised, what your genetics are, or what situation you are in. We, as human beings, always have the freedom to choose how to face any situation in life. To illustrate this, the author mentions Victor Frankl, the Jewish psychiatrist who survived the death camps in Nazi Germany. He states that Frankl, after being tortured and having lost his family, realized that the only thing the Nazis could not take away from him was the power to determine his response to such a horrific situation.

2) Keeping the balance

Nowadays people have more issues to deal with than they did before. We are probably more stressed out because though the day still has 24 hours, the number of tasks that need to be done increases every day. There are always urgent, non-urgent, important and unimportant things to do. Usually, people focus on short-term pressing tasks while completely ignoring the important but not urgent issues that will pay off in the long term: such as exercise, planning and relationship building. These are things we know we need to get to but will probably push off. The clue is to classify our different tasks and to realize the importance of those non-urgent vital issues that in the end will help us achieve our goals.

These are just two ideas of the great variety the book has that hopefully have made you wonder a little about the way you think or the way you act. It may sound basic or easy but I can assure you they are linked to the deepest and most complex essence of being human. That is the reason why I consider this book to be so valuable and interesting. Bearing in mind I could barely condense a part of all the information contained in the book, I strongly encourage you to read it. You won't regret it.

Sea Turtles: Animals in Danger

By **Harrison Hurtado** (5th semester undergraduate Economics student, level 4 English)

Currently, the amount of pollution in the world is increasing and this is producing environmental, social and economic problems, but one of the most difficult problems that is caused by this issue is the extinction of animals, for example sea turtles.

Sea turtles are the oldest still existing reptiles. Now, they are in danger of extinction. One of the most important causes of this is illegal hunting. Many of these animals are harpooned or caught with nets. This practice is carried out with the purpose of eating their meat or selling their shells to make crafts.

The pollution of the seas and beaches has destroyed the habitat of these animals, without considering the rubbish that causes respiratory and bowel problems, causing their death.

Given the feasible danger of extinction of this reptile, the governments of Puerto Rico and the USA protect them through laws. These laws forbid them from being hunted and also prohibit any other action that endangers the life of this reptile. Breaking any of these laws can have a penalty of USD\$100,000 in Colombia or one year in jail.

Finally, with the purpose of stopping these animals from becoming extinct, biologists from the Department of Natural and Environmental Resources have created projects to shelter sea turtles when they lay eggs. These hatch on beaches and are patrolled to protect adults and nests and also collect data about reproduction to help create recovery strategies. Also, it is very important that people help in this project by campaigning to clean the seas and beaches because these animals live or shelter in these places. For example, there are many problems with sea turtles in Choco beaches, like Playon el Valle and El Almejal. It's important that we do everything we can to help these animals in Colombia.



Underwater Rugby: Another Choice

By **Andrés Felipe Gallego** (1st semester undergraduate Economics student, level 4 English)

Sports in Colombia are so monotonous. We are only interested in soccer, and in some cases cycling. Other sports are not common here, and much less underwater rugby.

Underwater rugby is a German sport created by divers who used to use their physical capabilities with mini-games. This sport is played in a pool with a depth of around five meters, and it's played with a plastic ball. There are two teams of six players (with another six substitutes) and they have to score goals by putting the ball into their opponent's basket. The team that scores the most goals wins. It is a contact sport where players need to have different abilities, like strength, speed, movements, or just controlling their

oxygen consumption. The only equipment the players have is their swimsuit, goggles, and the snorkel.

Around the world the sport is not conventional, but there are some leagues in different countries. In Colombia there is just one league which is divided into two: "A" teams and "promotion" teams. Through the year there are around eight tournaments in different cities. The best Colombian UWR teams are the "Orcas" and "Castores". The Castores are Bogota's team, and they train in the aquatic complex.

Underwater rugby is an open sport that can be played just for fun, even when the best players also work and study. For people who like swimming, this is a great way to relax and have fun. We need to start promoting different sports and cultures, and underwater rugby can be an interesting option.



Public Transport in Bogotá: whose fault is it?



By **Nicolás Alejandro Delgado Morales** (1st semester undergraduate Economics student, level 4 English)

“Complaining”: it’s all about that word. We just can’t put up with transport like that if we are eight million people in one red bus. What if I told you that the solution is in our hands?

Public transport is a really big problem in Bogotá and we as students have to use it all the time and it gets annoying when you have to spend around three hours of your day on a bus. That is time that you could use to work on projects or study or even hang out with your friends or spend time with your family. The other thing is the safety, because we can’t relax on a bus: we need to have eyes in our backs. The main problem, which affects us in so many ways, is inequality.

We, as tax-paying citizens, hope for a lot of things that the government must give us, but it won’t happen. It’s obvious that we deserve good quality public transport, but it doesn’t mean that it has to be comfortable. In first world cities like Tokyo, there are people who work with the state and their job is to push people into the subway. This shows us that public transport has to be efficient, but this is not supposed to be comfortable. It means that if it takes me two hours to get home in my car, in public transport it must take 45 minutes maximum.

Another problem is that we complain about everything: “Petro damaged the city, this is why we are like this,” or “Peñalosa sucks, he only wants to make bollards in our city, and he doesn’t have the vision to govern a city with all those types of problems.” Hearing these sorts of things is becoming more and more common in Bogotá, and people, instead of making a change, just talk and talk and talk as if through doing this they were solving the problem.

It’s also true that we can’t just demand better quality public transport if we spend all our time being disrespectful to others, being intolerant, or fighting for a seat. We become selfish and we only think about ourselves. Obviously there are exceptions, but if we want a change, all of us have to make it – not just one of us, but all of us.

One of the most important things is, instead of saying bad things and blaming other people, asking “what are we doing to solve this and make this better?” One of the main things is how we act – we aren’t citizens of Petro’s or Peñalosa’s city, but OUR Bogotá, and it depends on us. The change begins with the little things that mean being a better citizen in public transport and in the street. If we are talking about public transport, the change must begin with us, for example by giving a seat to a woman who needs it, letting people get out of the bus before we get in, and respecting others. If we demand better quality but don’t pay the fare, we are being liars with ourselves and we are disrespecting the city and its citizens.

If we try to treat people better they will respect us, and if you give, you receive just as much. Those simple things are, however, easily forgotten when we are looking for a seat or also when we are driving. The car is also a clear example of our culture, and this isn’t just my opinion. In the British Council, there are many teachers from all over the world, and who have lived in our country for various years and so have had the opportunity to notice all the things that are probably normal for us but very strange for them. One teacher I had there told us one day, “Bogotanos are pretty ‘normal’ in the streets, but just wait until they go inside a car or motorbike – they go crazy behind the wheel. They become completely different people, and there is no kindness in how they act.”

Finally, the solution is in us. The first step is that we need to stop blaming each other. Stop talking, and just do it! If we want a better city we are the people who can change it. It isn’t the job of a politician or mayor – we are the solution, and we only have to realize that and be different.

The Breakfast Club



The Emotion of Watching 80's Movies

By **María Paula Rincón** (1st semester undergraduate FIGRI student, level 4 English)

Last year, *Back to the Future*, one of the most amazing movies, celebrated its 30th anniversary. Just imagine the feelings of the actors and filmmakers who imagined a completely different future from what we have now, sadly enough without us even having flying cars.

There are so many great 80s movies though like *The Breakfast Club*, which is an amazing film about five teens who are completely different from each other. It's a film that anyone from adolescence to older people will enjoy, as it explores themes like love, friendship, problems and drama.

These five teenagers in detention can make a lot of changes in their lives. Since the moment they meet, they know that their future will be different, and that future could be great or horrible, but it really means that making a change is the best thing. The meaning in this film is that you will always meet people, and they might be very different from how you are, but that doesn't mean that they are bad people. It can even mean that you can be more comfortable and learn what it means to be completely you. The people around us can show us another point of view about the meaning of friendship and loyalty.

When you see this type of film, you feel like you are inside the movie, and you get excited, sad, and feel all the same emotions that the characters feel.

New generations must see this kind of movie, because when we see films like this, we learn a lot from the cultures of young people at that time, and at the same time, we learn many life lessons.

With all of this in mind, go to your computer, grab a lot of popcorn, and enjoy one of the most amazing movies ever made.

"...We think you're crazy to make us write an essay telling you who we think we are. You see us as you want to see us – in the simplest terms, in the most convenient definitions. But what we found out is that each one of us is a brain, and an athlete, and a basket case, a princess, and a criminal. Does that answer your question?"

Sincerely yours, *The Breakfast Club*"

Children & Drawing

By **Paola Stephany Molina Caro** (1st semester undergraduate Hotel & Tourism Management student, level 4 English)

When we ask children to draw or paint a picture, they immediately start to create something and they are happy to show those pictures to other people.

However, when adults are asked to do the same thing, they say that they are not good at drawing or start to draw but take time because they don't have ideas, or because they are nervous.

Most people think that artistic talent is something that people are born with, and so a person either has talent or not. However, I think that we don't have to be born with a talent to be a good artist. It depends on the years of training, practice and hard work that have played a part in the creation of great pieces of art.

In addition, love is also very important. Most artists are successful because they are passionate about their art – they love what they do. It helps them to improve their ability.

While having natural talent may give people an advantage, hard work appears to be a necessary part of the creative process. In other words, artistic ability can be learned and developing this talent is important because it is one important way to express yourself. So, don't make excuses, try to be creative today!



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Healthy, Delicious & Home-made

By **Juliana Beltrán Vega** (1st semester undergraduate Social Communication student, level 4 English)

Do you like ice cream? I suppose that the answer is yes! However, ice cream can be a little dangerous, can't it?

If you take care of your body and your figure, eating an ice cream is often like a crime – something that means you have to do exercise for a full week afterwards. You don't need to have this drama though! Here is a recipe for a delicious ice cream that you can make at home and eat without feeling guilty!

This recipe uses kiwis, which are rich in vitamin C and fibre and are great antioxidants, as well as helping us with nervousness and stress. You'll need eight ripe kiwis, two avocados, the juice of one lemon and honey, or stevia if you prefer. Cut the kiwis and avocados into big cubes, put them into a liquidizer, add the lemon juice and blend it all. Later, add the honey or stevia to your liking, and remember that frozen sweet foods lose their intensity.

Finally, we put everything into the freezer and wait until it is ready in about 2 or 3 hours. Then you have a great tasting dessert!

This ice cream is healthy, delicious, and helps your body. Remember that after eating it you don't need to do exercise for a month. The only thing you need to do is enjoy it and smile!

