

---

---

# ELI STUDENT VOICES

---

---

Volume 16, Issue 1

Spring, 2012

## Full of Options

(1<sup>st</sup> Place)

Latifah Ahmed Almulhim  
R/W 32

You may be close to it, smell it, touch it, hug it, kiss it or even sleep with it, without anyone placing any blame on you. It was the most exciting hobby of my generation. "Captain Majed" was a good character to love for this game, and it became my nickname later on. Yes, the ball has been my favorite hobby since my childhood.

In contrast with other girls, who played with dolls or teddy bears, I grew up with soccer. I was the oldest child, I have two younger brothers, and most of my cousins are boys. However, I didn't enjoy my childhood as a girl because of the high expectations from my Mom's side to be the best student in my school. Actually, when I asked her to buy me a Barbie, she rather gave me a book!

So the question came up, how could I blow off steam? Defiantly, by playing soccer. It helped me to release the stress. I used to go out in the street, I would put on two pairs of shoes as a goalkeeper, I would scream, and spit like boys.

To tell you the truth, I wasn't attractive. I dressed like the boys, and I didn't have girl features. No wonder, I was the most masculine girl you have ever seen in my neighborhood. Though, there was a lot of criticism at that time, I am proud to say that soccer was my passion.

Obviously, the ball reflects my personality. When I was following it, I was following my dreams. When I kicked it, I kicked my anxiety. Moreover, when I caught it, I reached my aims and goals. No matter how you kick it, it keeps on going the playground. It does not have a beginning or an end, it tells us; there are no limits in life.

Unfortunately, I forgot my skills. I have now two left feet in soccer. On the other hand, I keep my short hair, and I am still a good runner. I run 7 miles every single morning. Presently, I am 25 years old but I need to play, so amid my busy schedule I try to find methods to play with my favorite "ball." I play with it, with my precious beads when I pray to the Lord. In addition, I hold my favorite ball, put it underneath my shirt, trying to imagine my future baby when I will become pregnant.

This is my journey with my favorite toy, from the most masculine to the most feminine. It's just such a great ball, isn't it?

## How to Apologize

(2<sup>nd</sup> Place)

Asma Assanee  
R/W AG

*"Apology is a lovely perfume; it can transform the clumsiest moment into a gracious gift."*

*Margaret Lee Runbeck*

For many people the word apology simply means "I'm sorry." However, the art of apology is not as simple as saying, "I'm sorry." It needed to be polished and refined to make it a heartfelt apology; that is, it needs to start by showing reconsideration and end by offering restitution. Therefore, the question here is what are the things that make an apology meaningful?

Obviously, there are many ways to apologize for hurting, insulting, failing or injuring others. Nevertheless, the ideal approach for proper apology depends on five important criteria. First, the injured party needs to recognize that the offender understands what exactly he or she did wrong by showing recognition. That is, the offender has to recognize his or her fault by accepting full responsibility for the injury by saying, for example, "I'm ashamed that I hurt you" or "It is my fault, I admit it" or simply "I was wrong." However, you do not want to justify too much otherwise it will look like fault excuses and the victim may not accept the apology from its first part.

For instance, if you are trying to apologize for ruining someone's jacket that you borrowed, you cannot say, "I am sorry *if* I made you upset, *but* it is not really my fault because someone has just painted the chair that I sat on and then it started raining." These all are trivial excuses that make the apology look very counterfeit. Another thing to pay attention to is the use of the italicized words above "if" and "but," as they are considered words that destroy the perfect apology. The addition of these simple and small words can contradict everything that came before it, as it makes the apology conditional and turns the apology back onto the recipient. Saying "but" in the example above is like saying, "although there are many reasons for running your jacket, they were all out of my control and that the world most likely caused it." Thus, someone should be careful where to place these little words.

Second of all, the offender has to accept full responsibility for the injury and should identify his or her role in the situation. That is, the receiver of the apology has to hear that the offender is taking complete responsibility for his or her actions and any harm that was caused. Saying "It is my entire fault" or "I accept the full responsibility for what I've done," is a very important element for the honest apology to be complete

because it gives the apology a sense of sincerity and shows that the offender is really taking blame for injuring the other party. Although accepting the full responsibility could be a hard thing to do sometimes, accepting full responsibility when offering an apology is a great approach that shows integrity, modesty and a willingness to accept liability after all.

Offering remorse or true regret is the third part for building the perfect apology. This basically means "I'm sorry," a simple and a straightforward sentence that has the two magic words. As easy as it should be to say these two magic words, it is sometimes tempting and attractive for many of us to use more than those two simple words. Hiding behind excuses can easily destroy the perfect apology. Therefore, one should atone for the wrong thing that occurred by only holding to the words that carry the true meaning of apology within such as, "I'm sorry or I apologize."

Giving assurances that the transgression will not happen again is a good way to end the apology. That is, offering restitution and compensation for the offense by saying, "What can I do for you?" or "How can I make it up to you." This can be beneficial to both the offender and the receiver of the apology. The offender can be relieved of any remaining guilt because at this point he or she has met all the apology requirements. For the receiver, emotional healing can take place following the apology, as he or she can feel much better about forgiving the offender. The offender can make the apology look even better by making a promise about the future that asserts no mistakes will ever be repeated again. For example, someone could say something like, "I promise I will never wear your jacket without your permission again." Moreover, the offender can perform a kind or thoughtful gesture to make it up to the person, as it will help to emphasize our sincerity and make the injured party feel better. For example, taking him or her out to a nice dinner or a movie is a proper choice. Keeping with the previous example, you can continue to make a sincere apology by adding, "I'm sorry I ruined your jacket; I accept the full responsibility for what I've done. I promise I will never wear your jacket. Please let me pay for the dry cleaning."

One last thing to mention about apology is the timing frame. Timing is important when apologizing because sometimes delays can make the original issue complex and make the injured party less open for forgiveness. On the other hand, instant apologies can be risky sometimes as some people need time to come down from the situation that made them get angry. Therefore, giving the injured party you want to apologize to some space and time before approaching him or her with your apology can be helpful and appreciated. However, be sure not to wait three weeks to apologize. A day or two may be the best, depending on the degree of injury. This will give each side time to think about what was done or said, and to gain some insight and perspective into the situation and their motivations.

To conclude, a sincere apology is a great tool for healing damaged relationships. It can be a powerful device for a person who has been wronged and a healing one for an injured party. Apologies that are insincere and full of excuses can do more harm than good. One cannot control how the apology will be accepted, but if one did the best to make it sincere the odds are pretty high that it will be accepted and that

the injured one will feel much better as a result of the sincere apology.

## **A Purple Rock**

*Dilienny Urbina*

*R/W 44*

Once upon a time, there was a beautiful girl who lived in a solitary town called "Dilyville". Her name was Sophie and she was 15 years old. She was tall, blonde, and a white girl with green eyes. She was the best in her class, but she was not an expressive person; she always had problems communicating with other people. In her home, she was the youngest of 3 brothers, and she grew up without her father because he never accepted her as his daughter. However, she was a happy girl who had many goals in her life such as to help her community to develop into a big town.

She always went to Sarah's home (her best friend) after class because she liked to do homework and stay there until night.

One day, she was walking to Sarah's home when she saw a beautiful rock. She was surprised, so she decided to take it and figure its meaning out. The rock was purple and it shined like a diamond. Its shape was oblong and it was very soft. "What is this beautiful rock? It seems like it has magic inside and I almost can see my face here because it is so shiny," she said. "I will keep this as mine and I will try to see what I can do with it."

After that, she went to her home and she showed the rock to her family. Everybody was surprised about the beautiful discovery but she told them "Please do not touch this because I do not know who its owner is and maybe this rock could be dangerous." Her family respected that and she went to her bedroom to hide it. She put it into a small black box next to her bed and she decided to sleep.

The next day when she woke up, a big purple light was invading her bedroom with color. She was extremely surprised; she almost could not talk because everything was purple. "Where does this light come from?" she said. Suddenly she looked at the small box where she kept the rock, and she saw that the light came from the special object. She could not believe that it was happening to her. Because she did not understand anything, she invited Sarah to her home to show it and try to find an explanation for that.

Half an hour later, Sarah came to Sophie's home and she went to her room. Sarah was excited, jumping and happy because she felt like if she were in a Disney movie. "Maybe this light has a cave to enter to another world," Sarah said. But Sophie was worried about it. She took the rock and she put something to hide the light but it was nothing. The light was still there. "What will I do with this? I don't know why it now has a purple light and I just want this light off," exclaimed Sophie with a desperate voice.

When she said that, the light went off and the rock was in its normal state again. They were stunned because the rock did what Sophie wanted. In that moment they knew that the

rock was there for a reason, but they did not know what they can do with this.

Sophie told Sarah to go for a walk with the rock. They left the house. While they were walking, Sophie was touching the rock with her hands. Suddenly, they stopped walking and they took a rest in the forest. They were under a big tree when they saw it had a big hole. "Look at this hole Sarah! I think it has the same shape and size of the rock, I will try it here," said Sophie who was interested. When she tried the rock, it fit perfectly there and the purple light turned on again but with more intensity. In addition, the tree started to talk and it said, "Hello Sophie, Welcome to your dreams tree. Thank you for discovering me. I was waiting for this moment for almost 400 years. You were the one chosen to make your dreams come true. You just have to tell me what you want to do and I will do it, but it has to be just one dream."

"Who chose me? Why? And, how can you talk?" Sophie said. "Don't worry, everything is ok! I just can tell you that the rock found you because it has a power inside to perceive the honest and good people, not the envious. I think the rock was looking for someone with those characteristics and you appeared on the way. I am a magic tree and the only one here, but nobody knows that. People always want to destroy me because they say that I am too big and an old tree. However, I am still alive. Now that you understand everything, tell me your wish," said the tree.

Sophie said that the only thing that she wanted to do is improve her town. She wanted to add more places to work, green areas, better roads, children parks and a big Hospital with an ambulance service. And immediately the tree did all of these. The place changed into a big town with a modern infrastructure. The people of the town were happy and surprised at the same time. Also, Sophie and Sarah were excited.

The tree said to people that it was Sophie with her good heart who changed everything in the town and it said, "Sometimes the person who does not look as a leader, is the person who has the abilities to change things and improve them. The age, social status or the physical appearance do not matter to be successful because the only important thing is the way that she or he thinks."

After that, people respected Sophie more and she had more friends. The situation with the magic tree helped the community and the girl in taking care more of the special things they had and they never destroyed the tree. On the other hand, the tree never talked again but people from other towns came to see the magic tree in Dilyville. This story became famous all around the world.

## Causes and Effects of Learning Another Language

Afnan Almagrani  
R/W 42

In this world there are many languages. Learning another language has been increasing recently. According to a summary by *M. Turner*, the number of second language speakers was 571 Million, which is 8.3% of the world

population. So some people like to learn other languages to understand other languages people. Language is the method of human actions and expression, either spoken or written; it is an essential means of communication between people and it is the way to communicate with them. It is very important to learn more about different languages, because it is open the possibilities to improve your lifestyle by getting a better job. Also, teaching another language help us to communicate with the foreign people. There are so many causes and effects of learning another language.

Language is very important to communicate with other people. The main obvious reasons of learning another language are to achieve their goals; to study and knowing how to speak so that they can communicate. In the words of Jenna Sauber, "*Learning a foreign language is about learning about the culture and opening your mind to a new experience, the more that we are open to other cultures and languages, the more we know, the easier our job becomes to create those bridges with someone else. That's a quality and skills that are required in any type of job, no matter where you are.*" For example, if we are involved in business it is easy for us to communicate. Likewise, people can work in international business; they could travel from and to many foreign countries and speak fluently and understand the people who speak different language. So it is important for the employers and travelers to any countries are different from us.

Jenna Sauber wrote, "*You can learn a great deal about how another culture perceives something by learning their language*" and she said "*Learning about the cultures of different people around the world is beneficial and can help you in re-examining your own culture and realizing how many of your daily behaviors are driven by established cultural norms.*" Other reason is to be knowledgeable about several of multi cultures; we are in different cultures and religions. If we know other languages it is easy for us to socialite.

On the other hand, when people have causes and reasons to learn other languages, there are also the effects of it. The effect of learning another language is developing knowledge from different countries traditions and cultures when they travel. Furthermore, it's easier to find jobs because nowadays when people speak another language, the majority of people know two or three languages to communicate with customers and you will be understand the foreign customers and help them for anything they require, so if you know other languages it easy to find jobs. This effect is very important because if we have knowledge we will know how to understand the situation. For instance, if we are looking for a job in other countries it will be easily for us to give more details or information. We can answer what they ask and they mean. Even though, we are in different cultures and religions. If we know other any languages it will be easy for us to socialite. Other impact is skills of thinking. Dr. Ellen Bialystok from York University stated "*the studies have established that learning other language has a beneficial effect on cognitive development in children, recent studies using both behavioral and neuroimaging methods to examine the effects of bilingualism on cognition in adults.*" It has been shown through extensive scientific research that learning a second language makes you

smarter. This is not only in the area of language but in all areas. Although, these sounds hard to believe, it has been shown in many different studies that students who learn a second language become better in all aspects of academic life including.

Overall, language plays role of interaction between two persons. It helps to share thoughts, emotions and opinions. It develops communities and knowledge. There are many causes such as education, employment and travel. Another is for business and getting married which developing our social culture. The effects of learning another language are easy to find job and develop knowledge. Moreover, people can know more about many different cultures through speaking another language. In my opinion, learning a different language is very important for people. We should learn other languages to communicate with people because it is important to know what they are thinking.

### References

- Bialystok, E. (2012). *Lower Your Risk of Dementia: Learn a Second Language*. Medical Breakthrough. Retrieved from [http://www.ivanhoe.com/channels/p\\_channelstory.cfm?storyid=29226](http://www.ivanhoe.com/channels/p_channelstory.cfm?storyid=29226)
- Sauber, J. (2012). *Professors: foreign languages valuable in workplace*. Kansas State Collegian. Retrieved from <http://www.kstatecollegian.com/professors-foreign-languages-valuable-in-workplace-1.2725312#.T4AMsZmmh2A>
- Turner, M. (2012). *Professors: foreign languages valuable in workplace*. Saint Ignatius High School. Retrieved from <http://www2.ignatius.edu/faculty/turner/languages.htm>

## An Old House with Five Rooms

Hyejeong Choi

R/W 50

There is a thousand year old house with five rooms. A woman is living in the first room. She is wearing a long, bright, yellow, colored dress like forsythias. Her room is filled with many kinds of plants, such as Boston Ferns, Weeping Figs, and so on. She has a lovely and cute baby who always makes her smile. Once you get into her room, you can smell fresh lavender. Tra la la la! She sings a beautiful song for the other tenants. However, the girl in the next room really hates to hear her happy song.

The next room girl is wearing a green T-shirt, green pants, a green jacket, green socks, and a green hat. The room smells nasty. She likes to wear as many clothes as possible, even though it is not cold, because she does not want anyone to wear more than her. There is a telescope which lets her observe other people. She likes to see and hear other people's failures or unhappy stories. Hooray! Whenever she hears the crying sound, she becomes happy. What she does not realize is that she has never really been happy, because her happiness always depends on others.

Sob, sob, sob. The crying sound always comes from the third room. An old woman is wearing old and ragged, grey clothes in the room. It has no light, so it is very cold inside, and covered with shabby, yellow wall-papers. The very thin and wrinkled old lady always stays in the room. She has no family. She does not eat much, and rarely does other things, but sobbing or crying. She is never curious about outside. Some kinds of cemetery odors assail the nose around the room.

Be careful! You are now in the angry man's room. He is wearing a burning red T-shirt and bloody pants. Don't be surprised even if you hear lots of thumping sounds as he hits the door or his desk, because he easily gets angry even with a small thing. When he is agitated, he sweats heavily, and his face often turns red. He likes to eat hot food, so his room smells spicy. Oh, he is furious now, so we'd better go to another room!

The last room is all pink. A couple live in the room. It even smells sweet as honey. On the soft and fluffy carpet, they are dancing to the music. Their hearts are going pit-a-pat. They do not care about outside, but concentrate only on themselves and their love. Now, you are out of the house, and ask the landlord the five people's names. The first woman is Happiness, the second girl is Envy, the third old lady is Sorrow, the fourth guy is Anger, and the last couple is Love. These five emotions have existed for more than thousands of years. Even Adam and Eve felt them! Everyone has rooms for each of them in their mind. Which room is the largest room in your house?

## A Catastrophe or an Unwise Decision?

Carlos Catilino

RW 42

Thousand years ago, a permanent culture was developed by part of Mexico, Honduras, Belize, and Guatemala. This culture is named "The Mayas." By the sixth century, this culture had faced many catastrophes such as wars and the destruction of the environment. The destruction of the vegetation and the tropical forest brought as a consequence that these areas became unproductive. According to Kenneth Pakenham (2011, p. 199), "After this, conflicts probably intensified among the Mayan cities over the declining resources of the region." After facing these problems, the unwise decision and the vanished vegetation reduced the population from 5 million to a few tens of thousands (nowadays). This reading shows how a negligible decision could become in a substantial decision, and how they can affect an area or a country. To summarize, these wrong decisions brought as consequences with irreversible changes. These changes have affected the Mayas' population nowadays.

### Sources

- Pakenham, K. (2011). *Making Connections: High Intermediate*. (Second Edition) New York City: Cambridge University Press.

## **The Importance of English**

*Johaysa Pereira*

*R/W 40*

Have you ever thought about the relevance of the English language around the world? Even though, English has become one of the most popular languages around the world, some people believe that English is not the best language in the world because it is very hard to learn. However, other people allege English is the best language to learn because it is the universal language of education, language of successful economics, and the language of technology.

English is an international language because it is one of the most useful for people. In addition, the most important countries around the world use English as second language to educate people. In fact, in many countries people learn English skills during all the academic period because it is considered the international language. For example, when children grow up, and they go to the high school, college, and university, they learn English to improve their academic skill, and they can communicate with other people in another country.

Learning English is very important because it is the mother tongue of two important nations in the world, the United States and England. These countries have been world powers in the economics and sciences for decades. Furthermore, these two nations are ahead compared to most countries. For this reason, when a company wants or needs to make a business with another company in another country and both language are different, the best way to communicate is English. Therefore, in order to get a good job and access to certain job, it is essential speak English.

The English language is also extremely important for the technology. In fact, there are programs and electronic devices that are only commercially available with instructions in English. For example, PCs and Macs are programmed with commands in English. In addition, people who work with programming language have to know English because it is necessary to understand all commands.

In conclusion, the English language is used everywhere at any time. Therefore, people who speak English have more benefits than people who don't speak it. In addition, English can be the difference between a business, success, and the difference between getting or not getting a good job. Furthermore, English is very important to communicate with everybody, and people can understand terms and documentation of technology.

## **Reflections of a Young Venezuelan**

*Lenin Berrueta*

*L/S 43*

Venezuela is a country known by its pretty beaches, natural resources such as petroleum, and unique beauties. However, sometimes these benefits of a country cover problems that in many cases we do not like to talk about. One particular issue is taking control of everything in Venezuela – the

payment for services of materials which the recipient is not due, under law, or when elected representatives make decisions that are influenced by vested interest rather than the interest of the country's political ideologies – corruption. Corruption has affected the Venezuelan society for a long time, and until today, it remains as one of the most concerning problems of the country. But, what is corruption in Venezuela? And in what ways has corruption affected its citizens?

### **Description of the Problem**

According to The Transparency International (2011), Venezuela has been evaluated as one of the most corrupted countries in the world. In many opportunities, previous Venezuelan presidents have called in many of the members from the Interior Ministry to cope with the problem, demanding more effort in the fight against corruption and impunity, and to affirm the need to transform police forces as well as justice corps. However, no one has been able to address this problem completely.

Throughout history, accusations have emerged against many politicians in the country; using friends to fill authority positions as opposed to going through the proper procedures, politicians have often been criticized of cronyism. In addition, corrupted political officials misuse their political authority to advance in personal economic interests. Unfortunately, the persons with power to act against it are not doing much to solve the problem. Not only have the judicial power and police forces been taken by the problem, institution like the National Assembly turn a blind eye to the problem as well. Therefore, corrupt officials have not had much control.

Where exactly does all of this corruption come from? Some people say that when a country becomes wealthy, the system begins to be corrupted by the large sums of money circulating in the government – as was the case with Venezuela when natural resources such as gold and petroleum were discovered. The combination of the lack of knowledge in financial management and an unjust political leader driven by greed and selfishness challenged the moral of many officials. Gradually, large financial transactions began to be “pinched” by certain underpaid public officials. In turn, the judges, congress, and police, sometimes also with low salaries, are bribed to look in the other direction while these “pinches” were made. Consequently, anyone who might be in charge of justice either turned a blind eye or they were busy participating in the problem themselves. Ultimately, this led to corruption in the society, which now brings us to the current deadlock.

People nowadays would do anything to save themselves. As a result, impunity has become more common in the country. In many areas, only “the law of the fittest” works. This issue of bribery and fraud is growing. For instance, if you are traveling by car, the police could ask you for money if they notice anything wrong with your car or if you have anything missing information in your documents. If you want to find a document quickly, you only have to talk with the appropriate persons, give them enough money, and they will solve your problems for you – with a price.

## Personal Opinion on the Issue

Corruption in Venezuela has grown out of hand. Many of us constantly wonder, day and night, election after election, decade after decade, who is to blame? When will it be solved? Or even, we doubt if there is even a solution to corruption. However, while we sit and wonder, we failed to realize that the problem may be within ourselves.

Although it is difficult to accept, corruption has become a serious problem because of the tremendous political and social unwillingness within the people, which have interfered with the fight against corruption. If we check the facts, we will find that this belief of “nothing can be done” is untrue. For instance, it is the case of some Venezuelan cities, like Chacao or Baruta, where people became aware of their responsibilities as citizens and decided to assume their role and make a difference to turn these areas into model cities. Simply, the progress was made by combating problems together, implementing and enforcing rules as well as punishing violators.

It is easy to say that something is impossible to solve and do nothing to solve it, but it would be hard to explain to our children why we did nothing to improve our country. Sometimes we are selfish and ignore our responsibilities, waiting for others to take the initiative rather than doing it ourselves. However, we have to take the first step to start a great marathon of change, but how can this be done?

## What Can We Do to Solve the Problem?

There are many valuable people in Venezuela: honest, humble, but above all, innovative and hardworking. All of them have to unite to reach a common goal – the construction of a new Venezuela – a just, peaceful, and safe country. It is not easy, but if we get together to achieve this goal, everything else will come later. We have to forget our differences and fears. We should leave our pessimism behind and stop criticizing. Together, we can construct a democratic and perfect nation that our constitution described.

First we have to start with ourselves. We have to ask ourselves if there is something we can do for our country, and then just do it. Then, we should teach by example to others until everyone becomes aware of the problem, and show them that being a good citizen is possible. We have to follow the law and constitution we created: being honest, speaking against crime, and fulfilling our duties as citizens. As John Heider said in *The Tao of Leadership* (1985), “If your life works, you influence your family. If your family works, your family influences the community. If your community works, it affects the nation. If your nation works, it affects the world. If your world works, the ripple effect spreads throughout the cosmos” (p. 107).

Next, we should learn to stay up-to-date with the current events in our country. In a speech to the Congress of Angostura on February 15, 1819, Simón Bolívar, the national hero of Venezuela, said, “An ignorant people is the blind instrument of its own destruction” (Think Exist Quotes, 2012). In many cases, people trust in appearance or are hooked by glamorous speeches when they do not even know what is

happening in the country. We have to be careful about whom we vote for or whom we are supporting; to do this. We have to pay attention to current events and stay informed. Remember, one vote can change many things.

Lastly, everybody knows that things are bad and change is needed, so stop complaining and criticizing, and start participating in efforts with your fellows to solve the problem. Never give up! Elections are designed to find the best possibilities for a country, and if we do not take advantage of this opportunity, we would miss an opportunity to make great changes. We have to keep looking for opportunities without being intimidated by failure because there will always be a way. Eventually, we will achieve what we all want and better things will come. Then, it will be possible to encourage our politicians to make structural changes. Changes that will make us stronger, reduce the intervention of politicians in the appointment of administrators justice, promote diversity of ideas throughout the country, disqualify any officials involved in acts of corruption, as well as changes that will improve the education system based on a framework of a democratic state of law and social justice. Finally, if all of these goals are reached, we have to take care of our nation and do not let it fall again into the jaws of corruption.

## How to Inform People of the Problem

The great Greek philosopher Archimedes once said, “Give me a fulcrum, and I shall move the world,” meaning that even the best plans have to find their way to people so they will know about it (Think Exist Quotes, 2012). People need to be aware of what they can accomplish if they work together. To help inform individuals of problems and solutions, we can have conferences across the country, give out pamphlets, and create television commercials to be played across the country. To fight for a cause together, we must first be unified.

First, a non-profit organization, *A Better Country*, will be set up to explain and inform everybody about how the power of joined citizens can cope with problems like corruption. Books, movies, and conferences can be used to let Venezuelans know that a change is possible. If you are honest, humble, innovative and hardworking, come join us to make the changes come true. Remember, anything is possible if we try.

Another way to spread the word is to have informative campaigns that will help Venezuelans know who are and were their politicians; this will help people understand what is happening and help them make informed decisions. Also, an alternative national media with the help of professional and honest reporters will be opened; everybody will be free to be informed of the truth through *Channel 7*.

It is our duty to help and to take care of our country. We should promote values such as honesty, diversity of ideas, professionalism, open-mindedness, respect, justice, and of course, democracy. Finally, we will encourage the people to vote with intentions of making the changes come true.

## Conclusion

All in this world but death has a solution. Many countries were like us in the past, but they started to work

together and finally they reached the goals they have always waited for because they never surrendered. If we all join our forces to overcome the difficulties, without being overwhelmed by the problems, we can turn over a new leaf and build our dreams on a new Venezuela – a prosperous, secure, and just Venezuela where parents, rather than teaching their children to fear the world, are guiding their children to share dreams with their fellow neighbors.

We are a country with many beauties. As Venezuelans, our greatest secret to coping with life's problems is that we are always happy, funny, intelligent, and innovative. Do not let the viciousness of corruption take advantage of you. Use the best things that life gives you to feel the beauty of the land where you were born, to feel proud of yourself and your fellows. And be aware that although the road ahead is long, the journey can be completed.

Even though corruption may be one of the most ferocious forces that have destroyed the economy, justice, and even the society, there is another unstoppable force higher than any obstacle – the people united will never be defeated. We have the power if we decide so. Do not forget that we are not alone. Millions of Venezuelans are wondering everyday if a new country is possible, and the answer is, "Yes." However, no change is possible if there is no will. Be awake, be aware, get involved, be informed, be humble, and be patient. The change is coming and it has a date! You decide when... Viva Venezuela!

### References

- Heider, J. (1985). *The Tao of leadership: Lao Tzu's Tao Te Ching adapted for a new age*. Atlanta, GA: Humanics Publishing Group.
- Think Exist. (2012). Retrieved from <http://www.thinkexist.com/>
- Transparency International. (2011). *Corruption Perception Index 2011*. Retrieved from <http://cpi.transparency.org/cpi2011/results/>

## Huge Population in China

Chen Cao  
R/W 42

The whole world enjoys the advantages from huge population. First, China provides a big market, and it still has great potential. Take the automotive sales for example. Now, over 15 million cars are sold in China per year and the number is still increasing dramatically. Second, China provides cheap labor and intelligence resource for the whole world from the workers in the international factories to scientists in the national labs. We can see all kinds of staffs "made in China" around us, even in US. China now, is named "World Factory." People all over the world benefit from it.

However, we cannot ignore the problems from the huge population. First, the fast development in China results from the increasing consumption on natural resources. Now the oil consumption is the largest in the world, and it still increasing. Second, the large population gives the challenges on

public infrastructure. I have an example, this is maybe crazy for you, but is normal in China. Before the Chinese New Year, Chinese people should go home to enjoy the time with family. During the week before Chinese New Year, the air companies, railways, long-routine buses would have overall 1 billion passengers. Most people, like college students and factory workers, need depend on the public transportation. It is common to stay in railway station for three days to buy a ticket. Maybe someone can say, why don't you sell the tickets online? Actually, we did. But you can image that how many people compete the tickets in the same time. The website corrupts immediately. And another example here is the electricity insufficient supply in China. Even though the construction speed in China is so fast, it still falls behind the speed of the electricity consumption increases.

To solve these problems, China adopted several policies. First is "One Child" policy. It started from the end of 1970s. This policy required that each couple, especially in big cities, only can has one child. And this policy has been strictly operated. From then, the increasing speed of Chinese population slowed down, China's population has been controlled efficiently. Second policy is called "China western development". In China, most people live in the east part, which is close to the ocean. The western part, with much fewer people and lower GDP(Gross Domestic Product), caused the government's attention. Since its rich nature resource, western part of China has great potential, then China western development policy was announced around the beginning of this century in order to change the unbalanced economy development in China.

These two policies changed China significantly and positively. However, these two policies still result in some problems. First, as the speed of the population slowed, the rate of aging is accelerating. Tania Branigan said, "Life expectancy has soared in China, while fertility has plummeted due to strict birth control policies. In 2009 there were 167 million over-60s, about an eighth of the population. By 2050 there will be 480 million, while the number of young people will have fallen." Second, the labor pool in the future will shrink fast. Stephen Green also said, "The overall story is clear? Thanks to the decline in births 20 years ago, China's labor pool will likely stop expanding in size very soon". Third, the one child policy changed the culture and value. Traditionally, one family would have several kids. Like my father has 6 sisters, and my mother has 2 brothers. Now, most youth in China born after 1980s, like myself and my husband are the only child without brothers or sisters. One child policy and abortion made the unnatural gender ratio in China. Right now, some places propose to modify it. Like Shanghai, couples with PhD degree may be legally have 2 children. Of cause people claim it's not fair. However, how to make it fair is a big problem.

To sum up, on the one hand, huge population is a strength of China; on the other hand, the problems huge population caused are also serious. It is hard to make a classification and it is not able to cancel this policy for all society present.

### Sources

Tania Branigan. (2012, March 20). China faces 'timebomb' of aging population. <http://www.guardian.co.uk>

Joan Feng. (2011, March 6). China's huge labor pool shows signs of drying up. <http://business.inquirer.net>

## **A Midsummer Night's Dream**

*Jinah Kim*

*R/W 50*

The yellow moon glanced brightly on the house. His girlfriend was looking for him to get out of the house. She saw the bright moonlight from a room and she panicked because the room was in a gravity-free state. Clocks, desks, books, and white and black chess pieces were floating in the room. The room began to float toward the sky and she was also flying in the air. This changeover happened in one blink. Suddenly, she heard that fluttering sound of the books in the wind. She was swept away by turbulent air then it stopped. She began to scream out “ahhhhhh” while she was falling. She fell to the ground with a thud. She just opened her eyes, and she bit her arm to feel lively pain and sniffed around. There was only an earthy smell, slightly wet soil, and damp air. Her eyes caught a sight of an abundant green tree and her fiancée was sleeping beside her. She was in blank amazement, and she thought that they were in a fairy tale - “A Midsummer Night's Dream”.

## **The Barriers of English**

*Abdulrahman Alkhalaf*

*R/W 42*

People misunderstood while they learn a second language; even after mastering the second language. Culture, a student's pronunciation, and Americans “themselves” are barriers to master the English. Culture is a part of the language. Therefore, students and Americans have different notions of manners: generosity, greet, sincerity, ... etc; for example, looking directly at a speaker while he or she is talking is considered a sign of politeness in Americans' culture, yet it does not matter in some other cultures. A student's pronunciation is a second barrier to being fluently in English. One time I tell my roommate, who was an American, about my trip to Washington DC; however, he asked me again and again what was the city I went to. This shocked me: how does not he know his country's capital? Then I realized that I was pronouncing Washington DC wrongly. Finally, Americans are the third barriers to a student to master the English. The ELI's classes, for example, sometimes a student is taught by his or her teacher in afternoon the opposite of what he or she learned from the other teacher in the morning. If this happens in English academy school, happening in other places is more possible. Even though working hard can break the three barriers, “I think that my biggest attribute to any success that I have had is hard work. There really is no substitute for working hard” Maria Bartiromo said.

## **Learning More Than a Language**

*Jose Delgado*

*R/W 40*

When people go to another country to learn the native language, it is not enough just to know the grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation in order to become a good speaker. People should learn greetings, culture expressions, in this case smiling; and etiquette.

Every country or culture has different ways to say “Hi.” Each country usually has its own manner to greet the people, such as a hand shake, hug, bow, and kiss. For example, Venezuelans usually kiss to say “Hi”, but Americans do not like to greet in that way because is uncomfortable for them. American people always shake hands, and, with close friends; they usually hug, too. Therefore, people need to know which way is correct within the society.

Americans often smile at everyone, even without knowing the person. This behavior seems strange or be misinterpreted by some people. For example, and American person can smile at a Venezuelan, but the Venezuelan is not going to answer with a smile. The Venezuelan would seem rude to the American. Hence, it is not just important to know the words. It is also significant to know how to reply with gestures, expressions, and correct behavior, too.

Another thing that Americans like to do is to give complements and say “Sorry” in almost any situation. It is normal that Venezuelans give complements to each other, but not as often as Americans do it. In addition, Venezuelans apologize only when they do something wrong, unlike American people who say “Sorry” or “Excuse me” even if they have not done something wrong.

In conclusion, knowing only the rules about the grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary of a second language is not sufficient for having control of the language. People will also have to learn about culture, etiquette and the expressions of the country to be proficient with the language.

## **Effect of Studying in the ELI**

*Afnan Almarglani*

*R/W42*

Studying in the ELI can affect a lot of students. They can help the foreign student to develop their skills in English by offering a variety of classes in an academic or general class.

For example, classes in reading, writing, grammar, academic listening and speaking, preparation student to be perfect and eligible to take test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). Most of the students in the ELI are studying English to apply and enter a college or university in the United States. Also, many students are interest to studying English to improve their job achievement. Students will get a new experience and practice by learning English and have fun time with helpful activities.

Other courses can teach electives, such as Business English, Conversation Strategies, and US Culture. These

courses can help business students feel comfortable with the English language used to participate in business courses and communication. Through of this grammar, vocabulary, slang, writing and reading, students will be able to succeed in graduate level business studies while also gaining job skills. As well the students will have using language is a social act and full knowledge about the culture of the United States. In addition, the ELI provides an academic learning environment where international students can develop their English language proficiency.

To sum up, ELI designed to help students acquire knowledge, communicate ideas, and prove their capability in English through the Intensive classes. These courses provide international students with a foundation for success in reaching their academic and professional goals.

## **My Father**

*Rodrigo Ramalho*

*R/W 42*

It is very important to have someone in our lives who we can trust. Everyone needs someone that we can tell everything to and share our feelings with. A really important person in my life is my father. He makes me always feel better and encourages me to do the things that would be the best for me. He teaches me about our work, gives me positive advices about my relationships, and helps me financially.

Relationships are very complicated. We should always ask others' people opinions . My father is a perfect person who always gives me accurate advice for these kinds of things. Sometimes, when I am in trouble with my relationships, he shares his life experiences with me, and it is very important for me to solve these kind of problems. If he just looks at my face, he knows when I am having some problems. Once, I was very upset with my girlfriend, so he came next to me and just asked, "what did happen?" After that, I was surprised by his attitude. He gives me the best support that anyone could give. He always makes me see my relationships through other people's eyes.

My Father has taught me how to love our t-shirt factory. It is the best place to work in the world. Everything that I know about our t-shirt factory was taught to me by him. I have the pleasure of working up every day and going to work. When I have some problems inside the factory, he always has the best solutions for them; I just have to ask him. I remember a long time ago, when I started to work with him, and I did not know anything about the factory. Nowadays I would say that I know a lot about it. I have to thank him for everything that he has taught me about our business.

When we have someone that supports us with money, it is perfect. It is very unfortunate when someone wants to study, but does not have enough money to pay it. My father keeps me in the US to study English, which will be very important for my professional life. He pays for my food, apartment rent, health insurance, and many other things. He always supports me financially. He knows that I know the value of money, and that is why he helps me with wherever I need.

To sum, when we have someone important in our lives, we should always pay attention and stay next to this person in all kinds of situation which we are. The value of having someone that really loves us is immeasurable. My father makes me wish to win in this life.

## **Wanderings of the Abandoned Man**

*Sofia Costas-Velasco*

*R/W 4*

“Can I ask you a question? How would you feel if someone decided to take everything you have and imprison you in an inter-dimensional travel through space and time only to finally realize life is not worth living without something to live for?”

“What are you talking about? You crazy, man,” responded the man sitting in front of me on the bus.

It was Monday Dec. 20, 1998 in Rockwood, FL. I don't even know why I still try to talk to people; I'm no longer part of the mankind, and I don't belong here. Even though I have been everywhere and I know everything there is to know about this world; if I had only one wish, I would wish to forget it all. Life is simpler that way. Life is simpler than what people like to believe. That's why they are so enchanted by it. The mystery; they like to think there is something else beside our mere existence. How I envy them.

I'm not really sure who I am anymore, I guess that's what happens when you don't stay in one place for too long. You start losing your identity. I don't remember what I used to like or dislike. It's like I am a character of a bad TV sitcom. I once read that you are who you are because of your past. So if you lost your memories what is left of you?

I stepped out of the bus; it was the last stop anyway. Now what? I don't need to sleep or eat. I can't die so what's the point. I don't remember since when it has been this way or for how long. I decided to stop trying to hold on to who I was a long time ago.

Dec. 20, 1945

It was morning again and as I walked through this city I saw the same faces and the same fake smiles even though I know this is a new place. I haven't been here before, that is something new for a change. I decided to stop at a newsstand to see what date it was. I have always been very careful with not slipping any detail about the future; it would probably cause a disaster, and I really don't want to find out what worse punishment than this could there be.

The man who sold me the newspaper looked very familiar but not like the other people. I stopped to look at him for a moment and he said, “You don't know me, not yet at least. But you will, we will meet soon.”

From all the questions I wanted to ask him, not a single word came out of my mouth.

“To be more precise we will meet in 13 years, 2 hours and 23 minutes. Of course years for people like me and you are a measure of distance not time. We move in a different way than the other people do. Life is a delicate thing; don't mess

with the natural order of it. You know why you have to live this way, don't you?" He waited for me to say something but since I couldn't he continued.

"I guess you don't know; after all you haven't even been born yet. Well you better get going then."

"Go where?" I asked. I was freaked out by what he had just told me and I was very hard to impress. He pointed to the sidewalk across the street and I ran where he had signaled me but didn't quite make it...

Dec. 20, 1973

Did that man from the newsstand know I was going to be hit by a car when he told me to cross the street? I guess I'll ask him when we meet again. "Don't mess with it." What haven't I been doing but not messing with it? Everything I have done is to get as far apart as I can from this world, although no matter how hard I try life keeps hitting me in the back. Maybe I'm seeing this all wrong; what if it is something I didn't do that has created this curse--not something I did wrong? Where am I? I had never felt this funny before. I had lost all focus and found myself more than once thinking of the future encounter I will have with the news man -- as I had named him. And then it finally hit me. The sin I had committed was the most horrible mistake a man can make, I had lost hope.

## **My Mother**

*Alwaleed Aldhafeeri*

*R/W 60*

Her words of wisdom still guide me today  
Her faith in me gives me wings to fly  
To achieve my dreams every day  
She is my mum, who else would she be.

Her advice to me as a bird was set free  
When I was sick, she used to sleep next to me;  
I am sure she would do so if I were sick today

My name doesn't change, yet it does  
When it comes out from her mouth  
Her sound makes me stronger.

With her arms hugging me,  
I will never die because of hunger  
Kind, nice, and mild adjectives  
Can never describe her wonder

God, thanks for giving me her face as moon  
I pray to see her soon.

## **What Would I Do If I Would Win the Mega Millions Lottery?**

*Juvenal Carratala*

*R/W 42*

What can I do with 640 million dollars? I will suppose that I won the lottery. First, I would have thrown a party with all the alcohol of Gainesville. After that, when I would have regained consciousness, I would start thinking on more serious things. I would give the half of my money to my parents; although wouldn't be sufficient in comparison with everything they have done for me, but I think they would be fine with 320 million dollars. Then, I would have another half, which grand part of them would be donated to The Okapis Organization. In addition, I would contribute to researches about the multiple sclerosis; I would give all the rest of my money for a cure. Finally, I would pay scientists to invent a chip that contains the knowledge of English, and give it to all ELI students. However, if I would win hundreds millions dollars, I really wouldn't like to have them. I would prefer to do my best to gain my own money; when the things are easy, eventually become boring.

## **Jeddah Until Now**

*Shdha Maskeen*

*R/W 42*

Jeddah has changed a lot since I was a child. Jeddah was quite like any city in the past. Everyone knew each other. I remember when I was a child; my neighbors cared about my family. We used to celebrate Ramadan for 7 days in my home every year. Now a day, we celebrate individual. Also, stores in Jeddah were small and they tended to be traditional. Now if you want to see traditional things, you can go to a place called Al-Blad: there are a traditional clothes, accessories, spices, and rugs. However, now open space in Jeddah has dwindled because of the development; they build skyscrapers and every one build own house; it has become crowded. Clearly, Jeddah has had a lot of changes. I am proud of Jeddah because it has been challenging to make these changes and it is a city where I have grown.

## **Different Culture, Different Behavior**

*Mariela Castañeda*

*R/W 40*

Venezuelans have the perception that by knowing the English language very well, their communication with Americans will be great. However, when people come to the US, they may be surprised by getting into a misunderstanding. Therefore, Venezuelans have to recognize that there are several cultural differences between those two countries.

In comparison to Venezuela, Americans use different kinds of greetings. For example, Venezuelan women kiss each other when they meet, but American women hug each other. In addition, Venezuelan men shake hands and/or hug when they greet, even if they don't know each other very well. However, American men shake hands when they meet a friend, and they just hug close friends. Another example is the way men and women greet each other. Venezuelan women and men hug and kiss each other while Americans hug each other only if that person is a close friend, and kiss only family or loved ones.

Americans and Venezuelans also differ in their rules for apologizing. In Venezuela, 50% of people apologize if they do something wrong while another half doesn't say anything. Furthermore, if someone hit somebody else unintentionally, in 99.9% of the cases, the person who was hit does not say "sorry" because it was not his/her fault. Unlike Venezuelans, almost all Americans apologize a lot of times even if it was not their mistake.

Finally, American culture varies from Venezuelan culture in accepting and refusing. In Venezuela, there are some times when etiquette requires people to accept things even if they don't like them. For instance, when a group of friends is having lunch together, it is not polite to begin eating if all the dishes are not on the table. In addition, in other situations, people don't accept something at first because they don't want to seem impolite (they wait for a second chance) while in other instances, if people don't like something, they refuse saying "thanks". In contrast, in the US, the majority accepts or refuses depending on what they want to do.

In conclusion, Venezuelans and Americans differ in greetings, apologies, and accepting or refusing. Furthermore, the comprehension of these common rules helps Venezuelans to behave appropriately in order to communicate better with American people, and avoiding misunderstandings. Therefore, it would be an excellent idea for Venezuelans to learn some of those guidelines.

## Best Language in the World

*Youngjun Jeon*

*R/W 40*

Most people use English to communicate with international people and they think English is the best language in the world. However, there is a critical flaw. Every language has its own advantages and disadvantages. English also has these. There's no best language in the world. It is only by chance that English has become the global language. Here are three main reasons about why English is not the best language in the world.

First, English pronunciation is very hard to learn for non-native speaker. Distinguishing between 'R' and 'L' is an especially confusing problem. For example, when I came to America, nobody understood my pronunciation "loom (what I want to say was room)". I had taken difficult time that day.

Second, there is so much regional slang. Even though one of my roommates is American, he didn't know all the slang in the U.S. For example, when I asked about "Internet slang" to Mike my roommate, he also didn't know the meaning of "YOLO" which means "you only live once". Many people still don't know about this, but most American teenagers know.

Third, we can't judge which is the best language. We have to respect every language. Every language has its own traits, and language is reflected in national culture and custom. For example, East Asia countries which are Korea, China, Japan have respectful suffix, so their citizens became more polite. They are called "the country of courteous people".

For these reasons, English can't be the best language. In fact, all languages are the best.

## My Nice Family

*Elbaluz Armada*

*R/W 10*

My family is small but very happy all the time. They are from Venezuela, and my grandfather is from Italy. My parents live in Puerto Ordaz. They love me and miss me because I don't live with them. They are together on the weekend because my grandmother cooks great food in her house. Sometimes my aunts and my cousins sing for all the family and everybody in the house is smiling.

My father works in a big company. He is a teacher of math and physics. He is very hardworking and always knows the solution to any situation.

My mother is my best friend. She helps me when I have some trouble. She talks to me about everything, and I love that. She is the one who makes the decisions at home.

My sister is twenty-one years old. She is studying education at a university. She likes her work because she really loves children.

Sometimes, my mother and my sister go out together because they have common friends. They go to the pool, to the clubs, to the cinema, but just on the weekend. Usually, they go to the restaurants on the weekend and have a great time together. During the week, they are very busy with their jobs.

My family is the best family in the world. I love my family and they love me.

## Remembering Her

*Adriana Samper*

*R/W 50*

Rshhhhhhh, rshhhhhhh, rshhhhhhh sounds the grains of sand. The sand was like multi-colored pearls smooth as silk running through my fingers.

While I'm playing with the sand, I feel a nasty taste in my mouth.

When I have closed my eyes, her heady perfume hit me, and for a moment I was back to this other sand, where we have loved each other.

Woooooummmm, woooooummmm, sing the waves.

The water is cold, but my skin is burning, and so is my heart.

Oh, it would be so much easier, if the salty water didn't remind me of her skin...

If I only could be refreshed by the sea, if the sea only could blot out her image...but it is only iodized water that I smell, and salty skin that I taste, not a sign of consolation.

Awhhoooooo, awhhoooooo speaks the wind.

Is it really the stabbing wind, or her voice calling for me?

If I close my eyes, I can almost feel her sweets words.

Why does the wind play with me, when I had almost forgotten her voice? Why does he keep bringing me her musky perfume?

Ckrk, ckrk, ckrk, crackle the flames.

My clothes are still wet, but I don't really care.

When I look in the fire, I can almost touch again, her moist lips, full of passion, full of fire.

I will put some more sticks in, if you don't mind, and say that it is the acrid smoke that makes me cry.

Ahh, ahh, ahhhhh, I hear her in my mind.

I will never touch her soft skin again, but I still hear her in my mind.

If I could only close my eyes forever, and taste her cherry mouth again...

If I could only close my eyes forever, and so stay with her, submerged in the spicy smell that our loving bodies know how to create...

## The Differences Between Native Speakers and Language Learners in the U.S.

*Jinhyuck Kim (Nathan)*

*R/W 40*

English learners will experience uncomfortable situations in conversation with native speakers, if they haven't already experienced that. Sometimes, particular speech or behavior has different meanings among same language speakers, than what the language learner is expecting, and such meanings depend on culture, place, and their community. That is why the behavior and speech of English native speakers can be hard to understand for language learners.

First, Americans say 'sorry' when they are affected by someone's mistake though it was not their fault. People who are learning English think that saying 'sorry' should be said only when something was really their fault. However, the native speaker's 'sorry' has a different meaning than what people think. They are acknowledging that something happened, and that they are not upset by it.

The second thing is that native speakers express their feelings or what they want to say by using large gestures and various facial expressions. They want to show what they feel or think very clearly. For example, when they explain something, they are using their arms and acting. However, foreign speakers might just use speech, when they talk. Otherwise, they only use the large gestures and acting in situations where it is hard to explain something complicated.

Finally, using eye contact in conversation is different between American speakers and the language learners. In the U.S., when two Americans talk with each other, they might make eye contact in order to show that each person is focusing on their talking. On the other hand, some foreign speakers think that eye contact is rude. For instance, in other cultures, if someone is talking with another person of higher status and glares directly at him or her, he or she might take offense. Such thinking and behavior could be more natural in their country.

In conclusion, behaviors such as saying 'sorry', big gestures, and eye contact could be understood very differently

in conversation between native speakers and foreign speakers. Therefore, second language learners should keep cultural differences in mind and should try to learn about those particular situations.

## Things to Make Taiwan Better

*Hsiao-Chia Hu (Natalie)*

*R/W 50*

"Ahem". Come to think about it, there are some things that can change in my country to make Taiwan better. First of all, it is the traffic issue. Second, making us green. Third, it is about the people. We should broaden our global perspective.

"Beep-beep", "toot toot". These are the sounds that Taiwanese are familiar with. Taiwan is a small island and has a dense population, so traffic is always a tough problem. The narrowness of the streets causes traffic jams. Not to mention the noise of the traffic and traffic pollution makes the city stressful and dark. I think the government should plan more public transport systems that can ease traffic congestion especially in a big city like Taipei. There are no more places for people to drive their own cars on the street. Thus, nothing solves the problem better than building more public transit.

"Achoo". Nowadays more and more people get allergies or asthma because of the smog and dust. In my opinion, air pollution is unavoidable in a modern country. But air pollution is harmful to our health. So I think making green Taiwan is very important. The government should plant a lot of trees by the sidewalks, parks, schools, etc. Not only to beautify the country's face, but also to improve the environment.

"Boo". Every time we are unfairly treated on the international stage. We can do nothing but complain. So I think we should build up our abilities. Taiwanese should learn more foreign languages: English, French, German, it doesn't matter. Moreover, we should learn international affairs, and care about the world issues. Young people should take any chance to go abroad to see the world and broaden their horizons. Even though we live a small country, we can still have great ambitions and big dreams.

"Wow". Taiwan has few natural resources. We should use them effectively and try the best to protect and improve society. We should reduce driving our own cars and increase planting trees. We people should do the best to let the world see us.

## 1800 and Now

*Dilienny Urbina*

*R/W 44*

Over the years, we have experienced real changes in different things which made us advance or stay in the same place. Comparing the modern times with the life before the year 1800, it is easy to find that there are not only many similarities but also there are some interesting points to contrast between these two eras. One similarity is the political system; and the differences are the lifestyle, the technology, and the marriages.

The big similarity is the political system. Before the year 1800, people in some communities had the freedom to decide which person could be their leader. It was called "Democracy." Nowadays, the democracy is still a form of government in some countries around the world; one example of that is Mexico which keeps applying the principles of this political way to manage people based on their preferences.

Moreover, there are three big differences between the year 1800 and modern times. The first one is lifestyle, which has changed radically because people in the 1800's were more relaxed than now. They didn't have worries or big problems to think about because they were focused on family and work; however, now people have stressful lives based on work, political problems and addictions like drugs or alcohol. Also, the technology didn't exist in the pre-modern era, but now it is an important tool and everybody loves it because it makes our lives easier. Besides in the 1800's arranged marriage was the only way to finish the single life; in contrast to the modern era in when there were still some countries that used this method of marriage. Furthermore, a the majority of the countries around the world, people can now choose their future partner or have a relationship before they get married.

Thus, definitely there are more differences than similarities. Even though time has passed, the political system is the same in many countries. On the other hand, there are notable differences in lifestyle, technology, and marriage. Finally, it is necessary to know about the way our ancestors used to live in order to be familiar with our history.

## Language and Social Behavior

*Khalid Alhazzani*

*R/W 40*

Many people believe that learning a second language depends just on the learning of four basic elements of any language; grammar, listening, speaking, and writing skills. However, this is not enough. The best way to avoid miscommunication with native speakers is to be aware of the relationship between the social behavior and the language. In fact, there is a strong connection between any language and the social behavior of native speakers. Therefore, concurrently studying the four basic elements of language and the social behavior of the people who speak that language is the best way for better communication.

Eye contact is one social behavior that is treated differently by western and eastern people. In western culture, eye contact is a good behavior and indicates how polite a person is, while eye contact is considered impolite and bad personal behavior by eastern people. If western and eastern people meet with each other and they have a short conversation, all of them will act based on the background that they are familiar with. A misunderstanding may occur if both of them aren't aware of eye contact behavior of each culture.

Miscommunication may occur between two people who are speaking the same language, but they are from different places with verity in social customs. For instance, Americans apologize 1000 times/day. This is normal behavior in United

States even when they don't do anything wrong and the Americans are expected to hear apologize from the other, otherwise it will bad behavior. While Britain, apologizing is less common and restricted to a person who made the mistake. Therefore, spending plenty of apologizing isn't accepted by Britain's culture while American's culture is expected to hear apologizing all the time.

Smiling may also be interpreted in different way based on who sees the smile. For example, Americans are always smiling. This behavior shows that person is nice and respectful. Gabon, a country located in Africa, may interpret Americans' smiles as sarcasm. In conclusion, different people see smiling from different points of view.

In conclusion, from these examples, it is clear that the language is affected by the social behavior. If the language learner knows the social behavior of native speakers, it will help the non-native speakers to integrate into the society.

## Should a Child Know If He or She Was Adopted?

*Carmen Castro*

*R/W 60*

Do you have a relative who has been adopted? Do you know how he or she found out about the adoption? Was it an easy situation or was it painful and confusing? I consider that adoption is an amazing opportunity for people to have the chance to become a family. Those who deeply wish to become parents can join children who are waiting for the caring love of parents. Instead of the positive facts related with adoption, it could also be a difficult situation, especially for the adopted children, to know that he or she was adopted. While I know some groups of people consider that the adopted child should never know about their adoption in order to avoid them the possibility of having confusion and pain, most specialists in the area recommend that children must be informed. The most important reasons that support this recommendation are: In the first place, reliable research has demonstrated that children accept their adoption as a positive situation when they are informed since they are very young; also, looking forward the welfare of their children, parents must have control of the way and the time their adopted children will know that they were adopted because it could happen that the child finds it out from an inadequate source; in addition, parents need to find out the best ways to orient their child on the knowledge and acceptance of the situation and must also respect his or her right to know that he or she was adopted.

Recent research has shown that it is good for children to know that they were adopted since their very early childhood.

Moreover, parents who tell their children that they are adopted when they are very young allow the children to get the information in a correct and painless way; consequently, those children will have a better approach to their situation. A child who knows that he or she is adopted since his or her early childhood is more likely to accept the fact in a natural and positive way.

Another reason that supports that small children must know that they are adopted is that parents must have control of the way their adopted children will know that they were adopted. Parents can control when to inform their child, but cannot control the fact that the children can get the information from another person. For example, a classmate, at school, could tell a child that he or she is adopted. In a case like this, it is pretty sure that the child will be confused and stressed, putting him or her into an overwhelming and out of control situation. Therefore, it is best for parents to inform their child that he or she is adopted in a way recommended by specialists.

Some opponents of the fact that children should know if they are adopted consider that their knowing the situation could bring them unnecessary pain and confusion, which may be possible. Despite their not substantiate position, it is a fact that adopted children will find out that they were adopted any way and any time, and the resulting feelings must be uncertain if it happens in an uncertain situation. Parents who adopt children also accept the responsibility to find the best ways to orient their child on the knowledge and acceptance of the situation. Most specialists have shown studies that give parents recommendations about the ages to inform their children that they are adopted and the better ways to do it. Furthermore, parents of adopted children must also respect the child's right to know that he or she has been adopted, and also the conditions of how the adoption happened. One of the best ways to face uncertain or complicated situations is with knowledge and information.

In summary, it is extraordinary that people who want to become parents and children who need a family can get together through an institution like adoption. Important specialists state that it is good for children to know about their adoption since their very early childhood; also, it is highly recommended that parents have control of the way and the time their adopted children will know that they were adopted; more important, parents also have the responsibility to find information and advice about the most convenient ways to inform their child about the adoption and must respect his or her right to know that they were adopted. In spite of the position of some uninformed groups that think that adopted children should never know that they were adopted, important research has shown that the children that are informed since their early childhood accept the adoption better than those who find it out as adults or in un-recommended ways. For the mentioned reasons, adopting parents must be willing to receive information and orientation from specialists that will help them, as a family, to follow the more successful recommendations related to ages and ways to give their child the information about their adoption.

## **Unforgettable**

*Gonzalo Coca Andreu*

*R/W 50*

Can you fall in love with a perfume? I believe it. Some time ago I was waiting in a line at a shop behind an amazing girl. I remember that she was so cute. But the thing that made

me “fall in love” with her wasn't her body. Her perfume smelled awesome; the way that her perfume combined with her skin was incredible. The most wonderful thing I ever smelled was the perfume of this girl. Unfortunately I never met her.

## **The Way to Learn the Beauty and Wisdom of the World**

*Hye Jeong Choi*

*R/W 50*

Let's say you have an ability to write stories very well. Many readers will be touched by your great novel. However, some people would never be inspired by anything of your novel, simply because they cannot understand your language. Language has a border, but music does not.

We often get inspired by music from other countries whose languages we have never heard. This is the power of music and that is why we love music from a very early age. Some parents let their babies listen to classical music even before they are born. It often does not have any lyrics, but the melody itself is so beautiful and harmonious. As it comes with a large orchestra with various types of instrument and high musical skills, it takes a long time to practice together until the orchestra players make it perfect. They should cooperate and listen to others' sound as well as his or her sound. One person cannot make it beautiful alone, but one can make the whole sound terrible. When they play classical music on the stage, we are very surprised and inspired by the harmony they create. From one point, we all are the orchestra players with different instruments who play for a better world. Classical music shows us that we cannot make a great world unless we cooperate all together.

While classical music teaches harmony and cooperation are important to make beautiful world, jazz shows us how beautiful it could be when we accept others who seem totally different from us. Jazz music came up from the point where African American music tradition and Western music tradition met. African traditions and Western traditions are so different that it often seems incompatible, but jazz music blurs this strict boundary between them and makes a wonderful mixture. In jazz music, there is no color or discrimination but only splendid fusion.

Pop music is sometimes not as good as classical music in terms of high culture, but it reflects directly what ordinary people think and feel. Many consumers of pop music are young people and they enjoy it every day. When they are happy, they listen to pop music with happy lyrics. When they are in love, they look for pop music with lovely lyrics and listen to it. When they break up or have a hard time, they also listen to pop music. It is surprising that sometimes music can comfort us more than anybody. As pop music tells things that go on in our daily lives, we often relate to it and sympathize with the song's messages. Pop music works as a good outlet for our emotions.

Unlike classical music, jazz and pop music, religious music is more for religious people. It is composed and played for religious purposes. Whatever the religion is, it always has its own religious music that its believers listen to and sing.

Religious music often is a vital part of worship. It is not boring, and it is something that everyone can do easily. However, as people listen to it and sing it more and more, the lyrics often contain the essence of the religion and remains in our mind unconsciously, and touches the deep feelings of our souls. Religious music has been a good and effective way to spread religion in the world.

Traditional folk music has been handed down from generations to generations in one nation or culture. We often do not know exactly when and by whom it was composed, but it does not matter, because it was changed a lot while it was handed down by people who sang it. Songs tell about what people went through, what they needed, and what they hoped for, in brief, what the life of local people was like. Therefore, traditional folk music reveals the soul and identity of a nation or culture. We often play it when we need to show our own identity of a country or culture. While a lot of contemporary music becomes more and more westernized, traditional folk music remains the same and keeps our own identity and diversifies world music.

We often see people putting on earphones and listening to music while they are walking the street, studying or even sleeping. However, we sometimes use it only to block out noise. Let's take some time and immerse ourselves in music itself. Music will show us the beauty and wisdom of the world.

## Heart Snore

*Latifah Ahmed Almulhim*

*L/S 60*

I never ever thought that my heart could snore...  
It was frozen between both my hands...  
I seek you...to help me...  
So I stood against your door...  
In a stormy, cold December...  
The darkest snow I had ever seen...  
I slept without coat over your steps floor...  
As an icy feather on a glacier...  
Need you to feed my feeling...  
I had been about to ignore...

Because you always tell me that I can meet you there...  
You will be there...therefore...  
I waited for you just to ask you...  
To put my heart among your ribs...  
To feel warm, comfort...  
With a feeling...I had been about to ignore...

Frustrated, Disappointed...  
I lollygagged...to the place...we first met...  
It wasn't unique...  
Under a fir tree...except you named it..  
Our love shore...  
I saw your knitted mitten...  
I made it for you...  
Beside a log...  
I screamed with that feeling...

I had been about to ignore...

But you held me tightly...and whispered...  
Come down...my gingerbread...  
I have heard your heart...so I was here before...  
I stared into your eyes telling you...  
With the last feeling I had been...  
About to ignore...

I was there asking you for your love...  
No less...no more...  
You answered...I am your fireplace...  
I promise you...I am yours...  
Again under our fir tree...nor...  
Our love shore...  
Without...the heart snore...  
I admitted...no one as you...can give me this feeling...  
That I have had...I adore...

## Heart Diseases in Saudi Arabia and USA: Similarities and Differences

*Mater Mahnashi*

*R/W 42*

Heart diseases are the most epidemic diseases around the world. They become more dangerous depend on a lot of factors. To compare between Saudi Arabia and United States in heart diseases you have to conceder some important points. The International Health Organization said that the numbers of people who die because of heart diseases annually in the US are more than that in Saudi Arabia for the following reasons. In Saudi Arabia, according to statistics, cardiovascular disease amounts for 22 percent of deaths each year (The Saudi Gazette.2010). In 2008, over 616,000 people in the US died of heart disease (Center for disease control and prevention. 2008).

First of all, the population in the USA is more than Saudi Arabia so there are different types of people with different culture and that include different types of food and different types of sporting culture which absolutely are going to effect on people's health. The population of Saudi Arabia is 27 million and population of the US is 313 million (Wikipedia. 2011).

Second, almost all people in the USA like to eat fast foods. On the other hand, the people in Saudi Arabia prefer to eat fresh food and traditional food which is healthier than fast foods. More than 50,000,000 people in U.S. depend on fast food. Americans alone spend over 110 billion dollars for different types of fast food that is over a quarter of Americans (Myfit. 2010). For example, Americans like to eat hamburgers which contain a lot of calories but in Saudi Arabia they prefer fresh foods which come from farms. The people of Saudi Arabia are descended from tribes of nomadic sheep and goat herders and maintain many of the traditions of their past. Traditional foods like dates, *fatir* (flat bread), *arikah* (bread from the southwestern part of the country), and *hawayij* (a spice blend) are still eaten by Saudis today (Food in every country. 2011).

Next, the government of Saudi Arabia provides family health primary care (FHPC) free that help people to check their blood pressure and sugar level in their blood to avoid early heart attack. However, the FHPC system in the US is not available for everyone because it is too expensive so a lot of Americans can't check their blood regularly. So there are big chances to get heart diseases suddenly. Generally the heart diseases are very dangerous and need a lot of work from all types of community to stop this epidemic. Finally, all countries around the world have to work together and improve the level of education and help the humanity to stop this epidemic.

#### References

- The Saudi Gazette.2010 . How many persons die in Saudi Arabia because of heart diseases. [www.saudigazette.com](http://www.saudigazette.com) .
- Center for disease control and prevention. 2008. In 2008, over 616,000 people in the US died of heart disease. [www.cdc.gov/heartdisease](http://www.cdc.gov/heartdisease).
- Wikipedia. 2011. Population of countries. [www.enwikipedia.org](http://www.enwikipedia.org).
- Myfit.2010. More than 50,000,000 people in U.S. depend on fast food. [www.myfit.ca/nutration](http://www.myfit.ca/nutration).
- Food in every country. 2011. The people of Saudi Arabia are descended from tribes of nomadic sheep and goat herders and maintain many of the traditions of their past. [www.foodbycountry.com](http://www.foodbycountry.com)

## Different Culture

*Rawan Blaisi*

*R/W 40*

Some students have to live abroad for the purpose of completing their education. As a result, students will face different culture. For example, eye contact, saying sorry for anything, and be on time are the most common shocked for many students.

Eye contact is important for Americans, when they talk to you they have to look at your eyes. However, I often don't make eye contact with other people speak to me, I just look around, while I'm talking but once I came to U.S, the first thing that I felt uncomfortable with, when I talk to my teachers or anyone the eye contact make me feels that I had made some mistake. In time, I learned that eye contact is important and it's not something weird.

Another strange thing about living in the United States is how often people say, "I'm sorry." Every time I hit someone accidentally, I heard "I'm sorry," even if it was my fault. Later, after I had met many Americans, I realized that it's from their culture. In contrast, in my country, I never heard anybody say "sorry" in public places only close friends and my family say "sorry," but when I go out even if someone hit me accidentally they never say sorry. As a result I learned from American people how to say "sorry" even if wasn't my fault.

Being on time is one of the most important things for American people. I have never in my life been on time when I was in Saudi Arabia. I was always late, and I don't pay

attention to time, but when I moved to the U.S, I discovered that all Americans respect time. For example, if you have a meeting with your friend to do homework together, you must be on time. If you are not, they are going to be mad at you.

In conclusion, different cultures have different customs. When you travel to another country, you will learn the good thing from them. Eye contact, saying sorry and be on time are the most things that shocked me in the beginning, but later I learned how to do it, and I'm proud of this.

## What Is the Most Important Language

*Tadayoshi Kusakabe*

*R/W 40*

Today, many people believe that English is the absolute best language. However, I would argue that Chinese is the most important language. Nowadays, China is one of the most important countries in the industrial world. Since the end of 20th century, Chinese industry has grown rapidly. For example, the word "Made in China" is seen in many countries. In addition, China has discovered numerous mines in the country. Rare earth metal is especially important in industry today. Many foreign companies have visited Chinese executives to persuade them to get a right for trading rare earth metals. Needless to say, these negotiations have been conducted in the Chinese language. In fact, many Chinese executives are able to speak only their native Chinese language. This is because they are around fifty, and several decades ago, English education was not popular in China. With these changes, Chinese economy has increased. This means China has become an important country in the political world. Therefore, we cannot ignore the Chinese language.

## Culture Shock

*Hebab Alsaegh*

*R/W 40*

Every country around the world has its own culture, and some of these cultural behaviors might shock people such as the immigrants who moved from their country to study English in America. They will face many different cultural.

There are differences in the cultures between the United States and Saudi Arabia. One of these is, how Americans greet each other. It's very common for Americans greet people with a handshake. Hugs are reserved for people whom they know well. On the other hand, people in Saudi Arabia greet by kissing cheeks even if they don't know each other. In the United States, it's a strange thing to greet someone by hugging or kissing for the first time, while in Saudi Arabia, it is not.

Another example of culture shock in the United States is the "apologizing." Americans apologize for many different reasons. For example, Americans say "sorry" if they hear bad news about someone, like death, and if they don't know an answer for any question, they answer by saying, "sorry." However, Saudi Arabians apologize only when they

made a mistake. Moreover, some Saudis don't say "sorry" even if they should say it.

Another culture shock was how Americans avoid unpleasant situations by calling the police for minor problems such as if a neighbor is playing music too loud. Other neighbors call the police or the apartment complex's office and complain instead of going to talk to them. Whereas, in Saudi Arabia, if a neighbor is faced with any problem from another neighbor, he/she will go and knock at the door to talk with him/her and let him/her know that he/she is bothering the other neighbors. Only if there is still no response will they take another action.

In conclusion, every country has their own culture, and sometimes, this culture might shock people, but there are many benefits to culture shock. For example, people will learn new and good things from this culture, and probably it will be their culture too in the future.

## Nightmare Can Be Real

*Ghadah Ghazi Alharbi*

*R/W 44*

Once upon a time when the weather was cloudy at midnight.  
No one was awake.  
All of my family was sleeping. It was very dark and I couldn't hear anything except the sound of the wind and the rain.  
I was afraid and quiet. I decided to go to my mom and dad but, suddenly when I got up, a bright light come from out of the window, and I saw a shadow of something moving.  
I said, "What's that god! I can't recognize and I am afraid."  
"Oh my god is he coming in to my room?"  
God help me what is happening? I forgot to shut my window!!  
I thought, "What can I do?"  
I thought, "I should hide under the bed because he won't see me."  
I was crying and was very afraid  
I started to hear a sound from the window.  
What the hell?  
He is opening my window.  
My tears were like a waterfall at this moment.  
"Huh what's that?"  
"Mu, muo"  
"Oh god, it's a cat"  
"But how did she come to my window?"  
I was afraid she was not a cat.  
Maybe it is someone who resembles a cat.  
Or maybe there is inside her a ghost.  
Atcho , atcho opus I started sneezing. He will catch me.  
"Mu, muo, muo."  
Oh god I think it's really a cat.  
Let me get up out from under the bed and turn on the light.  
Ohhhhh sorry little cat.  
You are so cold and wet.  
I thought you were a ghost or a thief!  
I am so sorry cute cat.  
Let me dry and cover you to make you warm.  
Sit here and don't move.  
I want to bring you some food.

You look so hungry.  
Mmmm what shall I let her eat?  
Sweet cat I am coming, don't be afraid it's me.  
Who is moving in my room now?  
"Little cat keep quiet.  
I am coming now. I told you not to move.  
I am coming sweet cat  
Oh!!!  
Where did she go?  
Cat where are you!?  
I brought you some milk to drink.  
I am afraid to look where she went?  
Ghost: Ha ha ha  
Ghost: For who are you looking  
Ghost: I am not a cat?!  
Ghost: He he he I am a ghost .  
Ghost: I was cold and I made myself a cat to let you take care of me....  
Ha ha ha  
Ghost: I am in your room. You can't see me and I can see you.  
Ghost: Why are you quiet? Talk and say something.  
Girl: Why ... Why .... Why...  
Ghost: Why!! What?  
Ghost: Talk what is wrong.  
Girl: Why did you do that?  
Ghost: Because if I told you I am a ghost you will not take care of me.  
Ghost: And you will not help me.  
Ghost: I was very cold and wet.  
Ghost: Ha ha ha  
Ghost: I am lucky you are afraid of me.  
Ghost: Don't be afraid!  
Ghost: "If you will be afraid, I will bother you all the time."  
Girl: do not do it, please please, I will die.  
Ghost: You know! I want to have fun?  
How?  
Ghost: I want to break your window?  
Girl: Why would you do that?  
Ghost: Because it is winter and I want to come with my family to your room and feel warm.  
Girl: Do not do it please!  
Ghost: Shrub?  
Ghost: I will do it!! Without taking any permission from you.  
It is my day dear he he he.  
Mother: Dear sweetie wake up it's time for school.  
Girl: aaaaaaaaaa are you the mother ghost.  
Mother: What's wrong dear??  
Mother: I am your mom  
Mother: Are you ok?  
Girl: Noooo I am not, let the ghost go out of my room.  
Mother: Dear you are dreaming  
Mother: I think it is a nightmare...  
Girl: What?  
Girl: Nightmare!!!  
Girl: Oh thank you god I was dreaming.  
Mother: Dear I am in the car don't forget your sandwich.  
Girl: Ok mom.  
Teacher: Hello everybody how are you today.

Student: We are good teacher, what about you?  
 Teacher: I am good thank you dear student.  
 Girl: I am not good.  
 Teacher: Why dear?  
 Girl: I dreamed a bad dream.  
 Teacher: Was it a nightmare?  
 Girl: Yes it was.  
 Ghost: No I am real hehehe.  
 Girl: He is whispering in my ear. He is not a nightmare. He is a real.  
 Teacher: Dear are you ok? Do you have any fever?  
 Girl: No I don't. I want to go home I am afraid.  
 Teacher: "Ok I will call your mom to come and take you, you are not ok."  
 Girl: mooom it was not a night mare. The ghost speaks to me.  
 Mother: Dear don't be crazy.  
 Ghost: He is not crazy hehehe. I am real believe him.  
 Mother: Who is speaking?  
 Ghost: I am the cute ghost.  
 Mother: Get out of my house.  
 Ghost: Be friendly mother, don't let me mess your house right now. I want to be your family friend.  
 Mother: How a friend and we can't see you.  
 Ghost: Please, I don't have a family I am alone. Believe me I will help you every day. I will do the dinner and clean the house before you will come from your work, and I will take care of your Son every day please leave me with you.  
 Mother: Oh dear ok I will let you leave with us but don't bother anyone. Take care if the house.  
 Mother: Ghost we are going for a walk come with us.  
 Ghost: "wohooooo " I will.  
 Mother: When you enter the car talk to me because I can't see you.  
 Ghost: Ok sweat mom. I am here you can go dear.  
 Mother: Please play soccer with my doughtier and take care of her dear.  
 Girl: Ghost where are you. Throw me the ball.  
 Ghost: Ok dear catch the ball. "woohooo " I am enjoying playing with you.  
 Finally, The ghost was one of the family, and he lived with them and loved them.

## **Korean Food Culture**

*Eunhyung Ju*  
 R/W 42

There are many kinds of traditional food culture in Korea. Koreans eat 'Bak' boiled rice and 'Kimchi' every day as main foods, just like Americans eat bread and cheese. Kimchi is representative of fermented food made from cabbage, radish, red pepper and so on. Maybe, some foreigners may not eat Kimchi because it is spicy. Also, in Korea, there are many different types of rice food. The representative rice food is 'Ddeok', in English we can call 'rice cake'. Koreans eat Ddeok on special days like birthday, New Year's day, Thanksgiving day, funeral, etc. If foreigners go to Korea, what food do they want to eat? According to survey of foreigners visiting Korea,

they like 'Bulgiki', 'Bibimbak', and 'Ddeokbokgi', of course including Bak and Kimchi. Bulgiki is made from beef, soy source and sesame oil. Bibimbak is mixed some vegetables, egg, and Bak. And Ddeokbokgi is spicy as a Korean rice cake snack.

Next, Koreans generally use spoons and chopsticks to eat some food. It can be difficult for foreigner to eat foods with chopsticks. Even if Korea, China and Japan in Asia use chopsticks, the way how to use them is different a lot. How can we use chopstick as the way of Korean? First, we hold one chopstick between inside of the thumb and the fourth finger, and then we place another chopstick between index finger and middle finger and hold with thumb. One chopstick must be fixed in one place and another chopstick helps you to grab some food.

To sum up, Koreans mainly eat rice, vegetables and fermented food like Kimchi, including a little meat. And Koreans use chopsticks to grab some food instead of forks. Each country in the world has different food culture, like kinds of food, eating manner, and others.

?

*Adriana Samper*  
 R/W 50

She is a tall, thin and beautiful woman.  
 She has no age, no address, no family.  
 She is known all over the world, sometimes venerated, always respected, most of the time frightening every human being.  
 She has a lot of representations, like a goddess, or like a demon.  
 She is everywhere, and can show up in a lot of different ways.  
 You should know who I'm talking about.  
 Her name is Death.

## **The Perfect Apology**

*Ricardo Saez Graterol*  
 R/W AG

Walking on the UF campus you can encounter a wide variety of people; different backgrounds, different nationalities, different things that make different people what they are today. Even though we are all different there is one main thing in common, we are all human. That is obvious but no matter what background or where your last name comes from we all share one unpleasant aspect, mistakes. Sometimes on purpose, sometimes not, or sometimes it is just an incurable defect in our genes that makes us commit mistakes.

There is a saying in my country: you are today the decisions that you made yesterday. Since we wake up we make decisions; sometimes these decisions only affect us and sometimes others. So as human beings our decisions can't be always right and we commit a mistake. What if these mistakes influenced what someone else is today? Or think about it another way, what if someone else influenced your life with their mistakes? Regardless if someone means it or not, mistakes and offenses are around the corner, so there is a good way to

keep the harmonious existence of human beings on earth, an apology.

An apology won't take the time back so you can restore what you did wrong but definitely can make your and others' future better. So in order to keep families together, friendships friendly and relationships in the proper status, let's have a look at some basic rules of a legitimate apology.

Depending on each person, an apology should include several features commonly required. In the first place it is necessary giving a detailed account of the situation. It means that a specific account of the offence should be given to insure that the offender and the offended are on the same page. Doing this confirms the feelings of the offended because the offender itself is reviewing what happened. Being accurate about this aspect is very important since you want your apology to be as sincere as possible and part of that sincerity relies on focusing only on the offense. It means apologize for what has been done, not for the reasons or causes of your mistake.

After giving the detailed account, you want to let the offended know that you realize the damage or hurt that your offense has caused. It permits that the offended feels that you are aware of the situation and fully understand why that person is offended. Acknowledging the situation will allow the offender to respond to it in a proper way according to the magnitude of the problem caused.

Once you have given a detailed account of the situation and realized the problem caused, it is time to take actions for what you have done. It means to take responsibility for your acts. It is important to not offer excuses for what you did. It gives the sense that you are not really asking for an apology but your intention is to justify your acts. Remember that in this case it is not about you but about the other person so instead of giving reasons for what you did, let them now that you realize that you are responsible for the situation.

Now comes the moment of truth. It is time to show repentance. Let the very well known "I am sorry" or "I apologize" roll. Even though you can use several words to show repentance you should stick to those two basic sentences. This is the main purpose of an apology: to let the other know that you are sorry. Nevertheless, saying you are sorry may not be enough. You should let the offended know that you will not do it again because there is no real repentance if you offend someone repeatedly,; it would become a practice then.

Having done all of this it is now time to ask for forgiveness. Offering some kind of action to repair your damage is beneficial because it shows to the offended your commitment to your apology. Besides that, a good reward may make the offended forgive more easily.

Doing all that lets the offended feel that he is in control of the situation. You as the offender put all the cards on the table and there is not much of what you can do now, just expect denial or acceptance of your apology.

Summing up, even though there is not a perfect recipe for an apology since it depends on several aspects like the magnitude of the offense, the consequences of it or the offender itself, there are some elements that should be included in every valid apology. It will help you deal with your daily life and have a better relationship with your surrounding world.

## Finally I Love Him

*Latifah Ahmed*

*R/W 32*

"Complicated." I know it is a strange word to begin with; however, it is the exact word to explain our relationship. It has been complicated! When I want to talk about him I don't know why, I have the feeling that I will never complete the sentence, even if it's really completed.

Our relationship started before I was born. Obviously, I heard his name for the first time when I was 14 days old. Day after day, I became older. My parents were trying to name him in front of me purposely and UN purposely as they were trying to convince me with the idea that my future was between his hands. But I was too young to figure out who he was.

Everybody in my family loves him. When Mom told me stories about him, I asked myself from where does he get all this power to change people's minds? My problem with him was if he loves me this much why he doesn't want me to see him? Any girl in my position would like to feel desirable and valuable. I asked Mom several times about him. She told me "He loves you more than can you expect, he just doesn't want to be limited by your imagination about him, and this is also the way you should think about your life." Even though I admired his personality, I was in self-conflict. So I kept asking myself: if he loves me, where was he when Dad lost his job and became flat broke? If he loves me where was he when my grandmother was suffering from Alzheimer's? If he loves me where was he when my uncle passed away?

One day I talked to Mom honestly. I remember trembling. I told her "Mom I know that we don't have a strong relationship but please I want to ask you for advice, for the first time I understand you're upset because dad works far away from our home town, and you raised us alone. Mom I am exhausted, I need him since I have been alone. Mom help me what I have to do?"

"Read his messages, and think about his words" she said. Her answer confused me more than before, it wasn't enough. One day, while I was cleaning my apartment, I found an old book, even the word dust can't describe how much it was outdated, there were a lot of messages in it one of my favorite was "your life will change to the degree that you change your actions and thinking about it to the degree that your life will change".

I tried to trust him, I believed him intensely, because I needed him; I needed him to guide me to the right path. It was the biggest transformation in my life. I was able to talk to him, and I realized his point of view. He told me that he loves me unconditionally, he loves me to the degree I can find him anywhere at any time, he loves me to the degree he can hear me in any language even if I keep silent. I used to address him my messages through the universe. I have just figured out, that I could see him in many scenes but I was lowering my eye sight.

He was existing, and still exists. Now I see him in how little rain can straighten a flower stem, I can see him when I close my eyes. Even more, when I drop to my knees and press

my forehead against the floor, when I pray. Dear God I love you.

## **For Your Recipe Add Earth, Air, Fir and Water**

*Hye Jeong Choi*  
R/W 50

### **Earth**

In a very quiet place, suddenly, there was a loud bang! Jacob heard it, and thought that something very heavy and solid had fallen. If it is edible, it might be too tough to chew. As earth in the four Greek classical elements is considered as a symbol of rigidity and stability, earth represents things that rarely change, and we think that they would have a delicate fragrance, almost odorless.

### **Water**

On the other hand, there was trickling water. He touched it, and it felt smooth and cool. Since water can accept and contain everything, the taste of water varies from sweet to bitter taste depending on what it has in it. Likewise, if there is a lot of salt in it, its smell will change to salty tang, and this is why water represents changeability.

### **Air**

Outside, the wind murmured in the tree. He could not actually touch the air, but he could feel the soft air in the breeze. While he was outside taking a rest, his neighbor started to cook barbeque, and he was assailed by the smell of it. He swallowed the air, and he felt like he tasted the barbeque, but in fact, nothing was in his mouth.

### **Fire**

Shh, he was sneaking up on his neighbor's house. He wanted to see the barbeque, but what he saw was the hot and burning firewood used for cooking the barbeque. When he suddenly thought about eating the fire in his mouth, he thought that it would be like eating millions of hot peppers at the same time. As he smelled the sharp, pungent odor from the fire, he felt like his nose got stuffed up with ashes, so he ran away from the place.

"Everything consists of four basic elements, which are earth, water, air and fire!" shouted the ancient Greek philosophers. This argument faced sharp counterarguments, and it has already proved wrong. However, if you consider it as good advice on how to live a balanced life, you will smell something fresh and awakening from this old theory, and it will become a very useful principle. Things taste better when different tastes are mixed like hot and sweet rather than only hot or sweet. You will have a full flavored life if you balance the elements of earth, water, air and fire in your life.

## **What Makes a Perfect Apology?**

*Hyerim Lee*  
R/WAG

We people make mistakes because we are not perfect. We often have an argument and a quarrel among our friends, family, and colleagues and it is never easy to apologize properly. Making an apology seems not to be a big deal; however, it is a very dangerous and complicated matter to engrave in our minds. Moreover, sometimes people are afraid of apologizing because there are several wrong common beliefs.

For example, people think that when a higher officer apologizes to a member of the staff, the person would lose their leadership. In addition, let's assume that two people are involved in an accident and when a person says, "I am sorry" first for the accident, the other person would institute a lawsuit and the person would lose a lot of money by admitting the fault. For these reasons, an apology is not straightforward. However, when we make a mistake and commit a fault, the most effective and powerful method to right the situation is an apology. It does not mean that a real apology is to say "I am sorry." The typical statements, such as "I said I am sorry", "I am sorry, is everything okay now?", "Ah! Sorry," are used only for people who do not know what an apology is. We need to know the appropriate way to make a sincere apology. In fact, it should always have these steps: showing recognition, accepting responsibility, offering remorse, offering restitution, and promising.

First, recognition of one's faults as a first step makes a sincere apology easier. Do not say, "I am sorry" when you do not recognize your fault. If you do, then you are jumping out of the frying pan into the fire because it is very important to indicate what you did wrong and know what makes the person feel upset. Apologizing just to try to gain the victim's favor is not an efficient way. In addition, when you apologize, do not use any communication devices. The victim would think that the offender considers the apology as an annoying work. When people apologize in person, it would be easy to express one's truthful emotion. But, if you cannot apologize in person, writing a letter would more likely move the victim's mind and give forgiveness to you than depending on text messages. A sincere apology can be enacted by a brave person who can face one's mistakes truthfully.

The next step of a sincere apology is to acknowledge responsibility for one's faults. After recognizing your faults, you need to explain yourself and take a full responsibility. When you apologize, do not use a conditional word, "if," because this word destroys a perfect apology. When you say something like, "I am sorry if I hurt you," you are making a fauxpology. The word "if," has connotation of one's idea that the victim is ungenerous or they pay too much attention to a small thing. Furthermore, do not include any reason as an excuse to defend yourself and to convince a victim. You are not the person who judges the mistake and they do not care whether you have an excuse or not. It is a fact that you already damaged them and what you just need to do is take a sincere responsibility and say, "I am sorry that I hurt you."

In the middle of an apology, showing regret leads a victim to a positive response. Now you need to express how you feel about what you did wrong. For example, you can say, "I regret that I hurt your feelings," or "I feel terrible about that." These statements can convey how you feel regretful for the victim and the victim is more likely to accept the apology. Also, we can see how powerful expressing regret is in a court. When the offender shows his regret, a judge might shorten the imprisonment time length. Moreover, the timing is a key to make an effective apology. You'd better express your true regret to the victim as soon as the incident happened. While the victim is trembling with rage, however, it is better to delay the apology until the anger abates because it does not seem that you think about your fault deeply when you apologize immediately after the incident.

Offering restitution also has a significant effect on a process of apology. Simply speaking, restitution is an action to restore one's loss, damage, or injury. For instance, when you lose someone else's bike unintentionally, you could retribute the lost bike by monetary compensation. However, these actions would not fulfill a sincere apology if a person approaches it with a doubtful manner. It is not a simple process because the aspiration of doing this is to free the victim from the physical or psychological damage and redeem yourself from the fault you committed. It is also critical that the restitution should be done after conceding your fault and showing your regret. If the restitution is improperly done before the previous steps, the victim would not accredit your intention to apologize genuinely and consider you as a coward who attempts to escape from your responsibility.

The last step of an effective apology is to promise that you will not commit the same mistake ever again. In this step, as a result of promising it, you would get closer to receive forgiveness from the victim. Even though promising that it would not happen again and asking forgiveness have an idealistic role to complete a perfect apology, many people do not include this step in a process of apology. In addition, it can be more elusive for elderly people to ask forgiveness because they have a high self-esteem that hinders them from confessing their faults. A statement like "Please forgive me. I won't do it again" would help both victim and the offender re-develop a relationship while diminishing feelings of hatred and guilt. We can say that these actions can be a final destination of the excursion of a sincere apology.

Until now, we have reviewed the five steps that are necessary for making an appropriate apology. The apology "I am sorry," cannot be a real apology if we do not follow the five steps successfully. These are: showing recognition, accepting responsibility, offering remorse, offering restitution, and promising. We all do make mistakes and apologizing is not simple to do. Maybe a perfect apology never exists. However, it does not mean that we cannot be a good person because we all have rights to apologize for our faults. All we need to know is that you will make a sincere apology only when you are ready to face your fault thoroughly. Apologizing truthfully makes you step beyond who you used to be. Sincerity should always follow an apology and they will never be separated from each other.

## Is English the Best Language?

*Miguel Meneses*

*R/W 40*

Many people argue that the English language is the best language in the world. However, there are many reasons why this belief is wrong. Some of the reasons why this belief is wrong are that English is a hard language for its pronunciation; and because people believe that is the most spoken language in the world but this is not true, and even worse, it is becoming less popular than before.

Some people believe that English is the most widely spoken language in the world. However, this is false. In fact, there are more Mandarin speakers in the world. The *Summer Institute for Linguistics (SIL)* estimates a significant number of almost one billion of persons of the world speak Chinese. In contrast only 475 million persons in the world speak English. It might be true to say that English is the most internationally used language in the world. For example, English is used for international business. However, Chinese is also becoming more popular in the business world than English.

Another reason why English is not the best language is because it is a really hard language to learn. It has an incredibly complicated grammar and pronunciation. For example, English is harder to learn than Spanish. If we speak about some characteristics like the pronunciation, English has a lot of silent letters in many words. Spanish only has one silent letter, the 'h' as the words "ahora" where the letter "h" is silent and its pronunciation is "aora". However, English has silent letters such as the second "e" in the word "interesting", and the u in "double." The English language also has another difficulty in pronunciation. It isn't spoken the same as the way that you write it. For example, in Spanish the letters only have one sound; however, in English one letter can vary in the pronunciation depending on the word.

Another example is that English has a significant number of phonetic vowels. While Spanish has 5 pure vowels and 5 diphthongs, English has 12 pure vowels sounds and 8 diphthongs (Coe, 1987). As a result, is really difficult for people who learn English because they have to memorize more sounds and the different uses of each one. Spanish has a strong relationship with the sound of the word and its spelling. For example, written Spanish only has 3 double letters such as "LL" "RR" "CC. In contrast, English has 5 times as many. This causes Spanish speakers to reduce double letters to only one, or overcompensate by doubling a letter unnecessary when they are learning English.

In conclusion, all these contrasts explain why the belief that English is the best language in the world is wrong. English is not the most widely spoken language in the world, and English is very difficult to learn. As a clever man once said, "Making English grammar conforms to Latin rules is like asking people to play baseball using the rules of football".

## References

Coe, N. in Swan, M. & Smith, B. *Learner English: A teacher's guide to interference and other problems.* (1987) Cambridge University Press.

## Cultural Difference Between Countries

*Veronica Chacon*

*R/W 40*

Many people go to study English in an English-speaking country. The language learner is exposed to a new language, new people, and new culture, and can feel overwhelmed. This is an important point to know, because many people sometimes can feel uncomfortable when they see diverse behaviors. There are several differences and similarities in the cultures of Venezuela and The United States.

First, people from the two countries have different greetings. Most of the people from Venezuela greet with a kiss on the cheek. However, people from United States only greet with a handshake or a wave, and also they say, "Hello". Americans, can feel uncomfortable when any person from Venezuela come closes to them to kiss on the cheek.

Another important difference, is that people from other countries, usually have different ways to express their feelings. People from Venezuela, usually are happier and extroverted. Venezuelans often express emotion if they are in a good or bad mood. On the other hand, people from USA are quieter and they don't show their feelings much. They only express their sentiment with a person who is very close to them.

Finally, many countries use eye contact to attract the attention of another person. In Venezuela, they use this eye contact but they consider this very impolite. However, people from The United States think different, Americans like eye contact. For them, sometimes represents that people are paying attention to what the other person is saying. If one person is talking about one topic, people who are listening should pay attention and showing that they are interested in what the person is saying.

In conclusion, this explains why it is important to have the knowledge about behaviors from other countries. In my opinion, if people will go to study a second language in an English-speaking country, they have to try to adapt to different manners and cultures. If people try to do that, they can avoid uncomfortable moments.

-----  
*Editor's Note: In the following nine paragraphs, students in GM 33 practice using used to/would, simple past tense, and since/for.*

## My Favorite Sport

*Jose Delgado*

Around eleven years ago when I was a child, I **used to play** different sports. I **would swim**; I **would play** tennis,

basketball, and soccer, but I **used to love** to swim more than playing any another sport. I swam for around 3 years. I **used to be** excited to go to swim practice and compete with my friends. Of all the sports that I **used to play**, the one which I miss most is swimming.

## My Childhood

*Gonzalo Coca*

During my childhood, I **used to go** to school every day. I miss those times when one **didn't use to worry** about anything. I **would play** all the time with my friends. We **used to play** soccer and basketball. It was awesome; I have a great memory of that time. I remember that we **used to pick** the names of real soccer players and then we tried to play like them.

After class, I **used to meet** with my friends. We **would watch** TV and **play** some video games, too. My friend and I **never used to study** a lot, just enough. We **wouldn't do** homework; for this reason, our parents **used to punish** us, and **wouldn't let** us to play soccer anymore.

Finally, I **would say** that what I **used to do** does not matter now. The only thing that matters now is doing what I have to do, always bearing in mind the past and what I **used to do**. My past has allowed me to be who I am today.

## My High School Years

*Ahmed Aloraini*

My life changed a few years ago. I **used to be** a student in high school. My days were pretty long. I **would get up** early every morning and **go** to school. After classes, I **would go** to my part-time job at my father's office. I **wouldn't get** home until 8 pm, and then I **would have** to do homework. Today, I have an 8 am-3 pm schedule at the ELI at UF, and my evenings and weekends are free.

## My Spring Break

*Ahmed Muawwadh*

My Spring Break was amazing. First, I **traveled** to Miami and Fort Lauderdale. We **were** there for four days. We **went** to South Beach. We really **had** a nice time and we **enjoyed** our time there. After that, we **went** to Panama City Beach and we **were** there for three days. It **was** an amazing beach. Everyone **danced, drank and listened** to music. There **were** many parties on the beach which we really **enjoyed**. We also **went** to clubs.

What I **learned** about American culture is that they love to enjoy time with each other and they love to have fun with friends. I **practiced** English on my vacation. I **practiced** English by talking to people and ordering food from restaurants and by making hotel reservations. In conclusion, I'd say that I and my friends really **had** a good Spring Break. I hope everyone else **enjoyed** Spring Break as well

## Friendship

Mustafaeva Emiliya

I was born in Uzbekistan. Like many children, when I was young, I **used to go** to elementary school. My childhood was very rich. I remember how I **used to ask** my Mom to buy a toy for me, or how I **would come** home with my friends, and we **used to have fun**.

When we were growing up, I remember how we **used to go** to the parties and discos. Also, we **used to like** to go somewhere on weekends. I grew up in Russia, which has cold winters and, consequently I **got used to spending** all my free time in the cold season in the open air. Friends and I **used to ski** every weekend. In summer time, however, we usually **used to go** on picnics or to the beach.

I will never forget those times when we **used to talk and plan** our futures. Many of my friends now have families with kids and full day-to-day lives. As time goes by, there are changes in behavior, our vision about life and personal values. If somebody asks me if I had a happy childhood with a considerable quantity of loyal friends, I **would** answer yes! No one can take the place of friends with whom one has grown up, dreamed of the future together, and gone forward together! I am an adult now and there is no place for childhood now, just memories. I do miss my friends.

## Studying at the ELI

Turki Almuhawaw

I went to Gainesville in January to study at the ELI. I **used to learn** English outside the United States. I **would** study hard to get high grades. Before I came to Florida, I **used to speak** English as much as I could. Now, I want to listen, speak and write English, too. Hopefully, studying at the ELI is the best choice to practice my English. I **am used to studying** here during my first semester and I want to move through all my levels. I imagine that I will continue to be a Gator and study at UF.

## My Music

Rafael R. Rodríguez G.

Tonight is going to be an excellent night because there will be the concert of a great DJ from England. I **used to watch** his videos; in fact, I **used to listen** to his music, too. He is amazing. He **used to have** an excellent performance at every concert. I **would listen** to his music all day long. Someday, I hope to go to a live concert of his because, in my opinion, he really gives great performances now when he is on stage.

## My Childhood

Veronica Chacon

I am going to talk about my childhood. First, I **used to go** to high school when I was younger. I **would wake up** early

in the morning to dress up. After that, I **would eat** a big breakfast. I **would spend** the day at school. In the afternoon, I **would arrive** home after class around two or three pm. In addition, I **used to go** to the Olympic Gym every day. Also, when I didn't have too much homework, I **used to play** with my neighborhood friends or my classmates. I **used to spend** a lot of fun times with them. I **would like** to repeat those moments from my past.

## Learning English

Mohammed Albalawi

**Since** I came to the USA, I have been to three different schools. The first school was Inlingua. I studied there **for** three months. Then I went to The Language Academy **for** six months. Now, I have been at the ELI **for** four months. **Since** I came to the ELI, I have learned a lot of new things. Also, I made new friends. ELI is the best school I have been to. There are many people who want to help us. **Since** I came here, I have met five teachers; they are all good. At the ELI every day, we find something new and helpful. In conclusion, I hope that learning English here will give me luck and a successful life!

-----  
*Editor's Note: These final seven pieces of writing are Letters to the Editor. Students in R/W 42 respond to the recent shooting of an African-American youth by a Neighborhood Watch captain.*

## Letter to the Editor

Carlos Catilino

Dear editor of The Guardian Times,

I'm writing this letter to you because I am concerned about the "Trayvon Martin case." However, is George Zimmerman guilty? I have just read many questions, but few answers. According to chapter 776 of justifiable use of force "The person who uses force knew or had reason to believe that an unlawful and forcible entry or not forcible act was occurring or had occurred." But my question is why did Zimmerman shoot? Around the world, people have many versions and hypotheses but nobody knows the reason. But I think he is guilty, and I will tell why I support it.

First, it is not a secret that are lot of racist cases where white people try to bully black. First, Zimmerman followed the correct steps, like calling the police because he saw something unusual. But Zimmerman didn't listen to the policeman on the phone who said "don't follow him (Trayvon Martin)." This action shows that Zimmerman tried to intimidate Trayvon to make him leave the area because Zimmerman followed Trayvon for a while without a good reason. If Zimmerman hadn't followed Trayvon, he wouldn't have shot. However, Zimmerman didn't pay attention to the warnings and decided to chase Trayvon.

Another reason is that Zimmerman said that Trayvon tried to attack him, but it hasn't been proved yet. Trayvon was on the phone at the moment Zimmerman faced him, so how could he fight and be on the phone? He alleges that Trayvon wanted to instigate against him. But being a seventeen-year-old guy would Trayvon fight against an older and taller guy than him. According to Richard Luscombe, a witness said "I saw two men on the ground, one on top of the other. I felt they were scuffling and I heard gunshots which to me were more like pops." This kind of evidence had shown that Zimmerman is the person who started the fight.

Finally, the police didn't take the correct steps. When they arrived the scene and they did drugs and alcohol tests on Trayvon, instead of testing Zimmerman. The correct way is to test both; it is to know if they are under the influence of drugs. You might ask if Zimmerman was under the influence of drugs. We don't know, and it is a question that we won't know the answer to. An investigation should have been done with the correct steps, in order to determine who the guilty was.

To resume, in my letter I'm strongly agree with the theory that Zimmerman is guilty. Even, the evidences are not enough to send him in jail. According to Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, "Everyone is innocent unless proven otherwise." Nevertheless, in my opinion Zimmerman is guilty and, this murder didn't happen if he hadn't followed him. Solving a problem has many easiest ways, and in this case to shoot was not the right way. Thanks for your time and attention to my letter.

With admiration,  
*Carlos Catilino*

#### Sources

*The Guardian*. (2012). Trayvon Martin killing: Witness says he saw Zimmerman walk away uninjured. Retrieved from <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/mar/30/trayvon-martin-witness-zimmerman-uninjured>

## **Letter to the Editor** *Abdulrahman Alkhalaf*

Dear Editor of the Alligator,

Accidents and events happen every moment in our world; yet, recently the Trayvon Martin case catches people's attention. I would like to share my opinion in the case with your readers. While the case has been treated neglectfully by police, it is being given more than its size by media and people. The other thing I want to explain is the relationship between this case and discrimination.

The police let George Zimmerman go free according to the section 776.012, Florida statutes state law which states that a person is justified using force against a criminal even if the person kills the criminal, if a person is attacked at his or her house. The victim was killed *in the street*. Also, no one has a

sincere sense will believe that Trayvon, who has a skinny body, can harm a huge man like Zimmerman. Whatever happened between Trayvon and Zimmerman could not be enough to cause for Zimmerman to kill Trayvon. As a result, the case needs more investigation.

From 2003 to 2009, the rate of violent hate crime victimizations in the United States increased from 0.5 per 1,000 persons age 12 or older to 0.8 per 1,000 (Bureau of justice statistics). There is a connection between African Americans and discrimination in many events in their live. People are two groups in this. Some people look at it as an advantage for African Americans. On the other hand, some of them look at it as a negative part of African Americans' history that does not disappear yet. Since Trayvon was an African American, some people believe Trayvon was attacked because his race.

I totally agree that Trayvon's case has to be solved as soon as possible; however, it is being given more than its size. Cases nationwide, such as unemployment, losing home, and health care insurance deserve more attention from the media and people. Trayvon is dead; nothing worse can happen. On the other hand, people who do not have jobs, homes, insurances, and food are suffering everyday with shallow hope that their life will be better one day.

The longer Trayvon's case is not resolved the more complicated it become; the number of the people who are against the police's decision is growing. People against the police's decision because whether a criminal is guilty or not is a judge's job; the police were not supposed to let Zimmerman go free without more investigating. This is prospective reason for reopening an old wound "discrimination." Even though the discrimination is obvious, we should not focus on it because this will affect negatively the case's statement. So Trayvon's case has to be done as soon as possible because there are bigger cases to take care of them.

Sincerely,  
*Abdulrahman Alkhalaf*

The 2011 Florida Statutes Chapter 776  
[http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App\\_mode=Display\\_Statute&URL=0700-0799/0776/0776.html](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&URL=0700-0799/0776/0776.html)

Bureau of justice statistics- Hate Crime  
<http://bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/index.cfm?ty=tp&tid=37>

## **Letter to the Editor** *Juvenal Carratalá*

Dear New York Times,

I'm writing to you because I want people know about an incomprehensible event as the death of Trayvon Martin. He was just 17 years old when was murdered by a gunshot last February, in Orlando, FL. The killer's name is George Zimmerman, a Latino of 28 years old. Zimmerman said he killed the unarmed teen in self-defense. Nobody knows exactly

how this could have happened even the police. Some people are protesting so that this event be investigated thoroughly. My purpose is that New York Times shows this information and makes it known because this case looks like a racist murder and the police haven't taken impartial decisions in the case.

To begin, I'm going to explain what "supposedly" happened. Trayvon was watching a basketball game in his house with his father when he decided to go to a convenient store. After he bought some snacks and a drink, he was walking back to his home. Apparently he was walking close to Zimmerman's residence, and it was a sufficient reason for Zimmerman to follow this "suspect" teen. According to The Daily Beast, "before George Zimmerman shot and killed 17-year-old Trayvon Martin, the Neighborhood Watch volunteer called 911 to report a suspicious person walking around". The officer on the phone told him to stop following the "suspect"; he ignored the police orders, and he met him. When Zimmerman met Trayvon, he decided shot him with a gun in his chest. According to CNN News, "Zimmerman tells police he shot Martin in self-defense. In a police report, Officer Timothy Smith writes that Zimmerman is bleeding from the nose and back of the head". This argument was enough to leave him free.

People have expressed their opinions about the event. Many of them have protested for the poor participation of the police in the case. It is illogical how Zimmerman just for claim that it was in self-defense can be free. Another unknown factor is why Trayvon Martin's dead body was given a blood alcohol and drug test, but Zimmerman wasn't. Also, others say that Zimmerman killed the teen because he was black; and it was a racist attitude because the teen was walking alone in a rainy night, and he seemed "suspect" for Zimmerman.

Next month a jury in Florida will check the case and the Justice Department will look for more information. The most likely that can happen is the police will arrest George Zimmerman. However, the case is not just arrest Zimmerman because it is not difficult to realize that racism exists even in law enforcement. The United States faces a serious racial problem, and people are demanding justice for Martin and also for all people who are discriminated for their race.

To sum up, Zimmerman has to be arrested and punished for his decision to kill an unarmed black teen. In the U.S. the racism has to disappear, but if the racism is even in the law, how could it disappear or be controlled? The only way this can change is that people fight together against to racism as much on the streets as in the law. What I want is the New York Times to join in this campaign to help in this case, and in the disappearance of racism.

Sincerely,

*Juvenal Carratalá*

#### Sources

Timeline of events in Trayvon Martin case. (March 30, 2012). CNN Justice. [http://articles.cnn.com/2012-03-30/justice/justice\\_florida-teen-shooting-timeline\\_1\\_gated-community-twin-lakes-news-conference/2?s=PM:JUSTICE](http://articles.cnn.com/2012-03-30/justice/justice_florida-teen-shooting-timeline_1_gated-community-twin-lakes-news-conference/2?s=PM:JUSTICE)

Trayvon Martin outrage. (March 20, 2012). The Daily Beast. <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2012/03/20/george-zimmerman-s-911-call-before-trayvon-martin-s-death-audio.html>

## Letter to the Editor

*Rodrigo Ramalho*

Dear Alligator editor,

Trayvon Martin case has shocked and created so much controversy. A lot of people have made videos talking about the case with different opinions. Actually no one knows what really happened, but every single person has their own different opinion about it. However, most of the evidence about the case have shown that Zimmerman acted wrong. The police should arrest George Zimmerman while they investigate better the case.

According to Mike Schneider, "Zimmerman has claimed self-defense in the slaying of 17-year-old Trayvon Martin and has not been charged, but many black leaders are demanding his arrest, and state and federal authorities are investigating". Even though Zimmerman felt that his neighborhood was in danger because a young guy was walking home at night, he should not have shot him. How could Zimmerman think that he was going to protect his neighborhood by killing someone that he did not know? His neighbors might be afraid of walking around right now. Instead of protecting the neighborhood, Zimmerman did the opposite by making everyone afraid of going out. If Zimmerman wanted to protect his neighborhood because he was afraid of Martin, he should have just called the police and notify them of what was happening.

Instead, he killed a kid that apparently did not do anything wrong. He acted hastily because he did not know if Martin was going to do something wrong. Why was Martin suspicious to Zimmerman? Because he was walking alone at night on his way home or because he was black and dangerous? Probably because he was black. According to most people who are following this case and have written their opinions on the internet, Zimmerman is racist. Some people have claimed that he shot Martin like if he was shooting an object just because he does not care about black people and also Martin alive or not was not going to make a difference for him. That is why Zimmerman did not think so much before shot. Maybe if Martin were white, Zimmerman might not have even followed him.

However, based on Schneider's article, Zimmerman might be a neighborly person; because he so far has acted friendly and helpfully with his neighbors and he also has called the dispatcher more than 46 times telling distrustful situation which he has been in the neighborhood. In this case George Zimmerman killed with no reason, so he should be in the jail while the investigators find out what really happened. He would have protected the neighborhood more if he just let the police did what they were supposed to do.

Most of the people in the world that kill someone just because they deduce that the victim is going to do something

should be arrested. People cannot kill each other just because they guess the person is dangerous, but the police must arrest George Zimmerman. If the police will not arrest Zimmerman, this case could happen again in the future. If humans act like Zimmerman, the world is going to be a mess.

Sincerely,

*Rodrigo*

#### Sources

Schneider, M. (2012, March 22). Was Sanford shooter a vigilante or good neighbor? *The Daytona Beach News-Journal*. Retrieved from <http://www.news-journalonline.com/news/local/west-volusia/2012/03/22/was-sanford-shooter-a-vigilante-or-good-neighbor.html>

Robles, F. (2012, April 06). Shooter of Trayvon Martin a habitual caller to cops. *The Miami Herald*. Retrieved from <http://www.miamiherald.com/2012/03/17/2700249/s-hooter-of-trayvon-martin-a-habitual.html>

## Letter to George Zimmerman

*Thierry Kabore*

Dear George Zimmerman,

I'm writing to you, not just to condemn you as many people do, but also to make clear some unanswered questions. Your life, as Trayvon's family, has changed forever since February 26, 2012. According to reports, you were volunteering as neighborhood watch, when you shot a 17 years old black teenager to death. According to The Christian Science Monitor report on March 21, you still haven't been arrested and I cannot understand that.

You told the police that Martin seemed suspicious to you, and that's the reason you were following him. In your assignment you had the right to do it but you did something stupid by killing an unarmed teenager. No matter what he responded to you because he figured out you were following him, you shouldn't have to pull the trigger; you should have just to calmed down.

You know as I do, racism still exists. And for what reason a neighborhood watchman can shoot to death a black unarmed human being? Many people conclude it's just pure racism and you have to go to jail. Maybe you are not racist but how can you really justify what you did? As "The Washington Post" has mentioned, you called 911 and the dispatcher told you to stop following him but you didn't.

I am pretty sure you are going to claim self-defense and in your version of events, as CBS reported, Martin knocked you down and pounded your head on the ground so you did not have any opportunity to retreat. Unfortunately for you, nobody said they had seen the beginning of the altercation. They just saw you beside a dead body.

Dave Kopel, a contributing editor, by alleging that "The normal rule in American law is that a police officer must

have 'probable cause' in order to arrest someone," shows that the police without proof couldn't have arrested you but you can't convince me that a teenager who was just carrying some ice tea and skittles and talking on his phone could be a danger to you.

A newer version of the police video shown by ABC News Monday shows discoloration of the top of your head when you were escorted to the Stanford police headquarters. This cannot be conclusive to what you argued first of being attacked when you were heading on foot back toward your vehicle. I do believe as Gary Kleck, a criminologist and gun-crime expert at Florida State University, said on ABC News that your injury would also be consistent with the fact that Trayvon was struggling to defend himself.

Certainly, you are still lying because Martin is dead and can't testify anymore what really happened that night. I hope the federal investigation will show up some evidence sooner and you will get arrested and face justice.

Sincerely,

*Thierry Kabore*

#### Sources

Bute, J. (March 29/2012). Does Trayvon Martin's death expose a dangerous statue? *The Washington Post*.

Jonsson, P. (Mar 24, 2012). Who is George Zimmerman, and why did he shoot Trayvon Martin? *The Christian Science Monitor*.

Grier, P. (March 28, 2012). Why hasn't George Zimmerman been arrested? *The Christian Science Monitor*.

Trumbull, M. (April 3, 2012). George Zimmerman head wound gives little clarity to Trayvon Martin Case. *The Christian Science Monitor*.  
<http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?Index=4&did=2625102611&SrchMode=1&Sid=1&Fmt=3&VInst=PROD&VType=PQD&RQT=309&VName=PQD&TS=1333744555&clientId=20179>

## Letter to the Editor

*Chen Cao*

Dear Alligator editor,

I am writing to you to show my opinion about the case that the fatal shooting of Trayvon Martin. It has spurred a national response now. I want to share some ideas with you.

First, let's go over the whole case to see what happened then. On 26, February, Trayvon Martin, a 17 teenager, was shot to death by "George Zimmerman, the neighborhood watch volunteer, he said he acted in self-defense", but police didn't find any weapons on the boy. However, police didn't arrest Zimmerman under the law in Florida, nor administer a drug or alcohol test. They also did not

run a background check, even though several witnesses reported that they heard a scuff, then a cry for help, and then a gunshot. Moreover, Peter Grier said, "Since the shooting other evidence has come to light, such as the assertion by Martin's girlfriend that during a cell phone call he told her he was being followed and was trying to escape, the Stanford police could have botched their initial investigation". That is the case, sounds plausible, but people get angry.

Racism discrimination is a historical issue in America. In this case, some people feel angry because they believe Zimmerman shot the boy because of color, in other words, racism discrimination. They asked for what reason was the boy killed? According to Michael J. Mishak, "George Zimmerman, the neighborhood watch volunteer, told police Martin looked suspicious because he was wearing a hoodie". It's really ridiculous to kill a person just because he was wearing a hoodie. We don't know whether Zimmerman is a racist, but this possibility indeed existed. Racism is not a problem that can be solved just for this case, but at least, this case makes more people reconsider the racism and what is right. What is important not only for the black people, but also for the white people, even for the whole society.

Additionally, the main issue for the public is justice. Besides the racism problem, I believe people feel angry because they know it is wrong to take other people's life without any reason. Peter Grier said, "Florida Stand Your Ground law allows the use of force against a criminal attack, as do virtually all states". No matter if Zimmerman was a racist or not, no matter if Trayvon was a good guy or a criminal. Under Florida's former law, people can shoot an aggressor if it's "self-defense". That makes people shot others totally legal without any responsibility, they just need to say "oh, it was in self-defense". So the most important thing was who initiated the physical attack and whether the shooting was justified under Florida's laws.

How to respect life is serious issue. In America, people were allowed to buy weapons even in Walmart. Many America families have guns, but they never abuse it. People are safe in America because the strict law protect them. But in this case, the law still needs to be modified in details to protect the innocence in regardless of racist, that is what people wish to make change. Bernard M. Baruch said, "Every man has a right to be wrong in his opinions. But no man has a right to be wrong in his facts". Some people are still racist today but given no right to go out and kill others. After all, we cannot make a perfect law system, but we hope we can make people have the sense to Respect life, which is the ultimate and effective process to build a harmony and healthy society by people themselves.

To sum up, from this case, we should reduce the racial prejudice, improve and modify the law to protect innocence in details, and establish the sense to respect the human life. I was very impressed by the words Trayvon's mother said: "This is not about a black and white thing. This is about a right and wrong thing."

Sincerely,  
*Chen Cao*

### Sources

- Peter Grier. Trayvon Martin case: Why hasn't George Zimmerman been arrested? (+video). The Christian Science Monitor. Mar 28, 2012.
- Michael J. Mishak. Legislators don hoodies to protest teen's killing; State lawmakers call on U.S. to investigate death of Trayvon Martin in Florida. Los Angeles Times. Mar 30, 2012.

## **Letter to the Editor**

*Eunhyung Ju*

Dear Alligator editor,

I am writing to share my opinion of the accident that Zimmerman spotted Trayvon Martin, who is 17 years old and black, walking to get home. Yesterday, I read the article about the killing of Trayvon in my Reading/Writing class, as soon as we finished reading it, my classmate including me resented Zimmerman's action. As I read more articles related to the killing of the teenager like recoding of 911 calls, I couldn't understand why Zimmerman was not guilty, even though he killed an unarmed teenager, and couldn't stand the accident any longer. So I decided to send the letter to you because I can't attend the rally demanding Zimmerman's arrest, as a person who wants to take care of children regardless of their color and gender.

Based on Beth Karas' article, the shooter, George Zimmerman, a neighborhood watch captain, said he shot Martin in self defense. Zimmerman hasn't been arrested, and the killing has generated a lot of discussion about a Florida statute called the "Stand Your Ground" law. I couldn't understand his excuse and the police that have not arrested him as the murder because of the Florida law known as 'Stand Your Ground Law' and say that they have found no evidence to dispute Zimmerman's claim. I read the strange law many times; it gives people the right to protect themselves with deadly force even outside of their homes. That sounds unreasonable. Definitely, Zimmerman was crazy killer to murder, who takes away the teenager's future and the family's happiness. I think, of course, the strange law of Florida takes away the teenager's dreams and the family's smile.

According to Arelis' article, the girlfriend of slain Miami teenager Trayvon Martin spoke to the family attorneys, detailing the final moments before he was shot to death by neighborhood watch volunteer George Zimmerman. The 16-year-old girl, who was not identified, said in a phone call recorded by ABC News this morning that as Trayvon was walking he told her "some man was watching him" so he pulled his hoodie over his head. As you saw this article, the claim that Trayvon was the aggressor is absurd. On the contrary, the teenager felt terrible because Zimmerman followed him alone at raining night. Trayvon acted by no means something that Trayvon threaten Zimmerman's life. By the way, how can Zimmerman shoot the young boy only going toward home? Imagine the boy's family in sorrow, heartbrokenly. Maybe, at

that time, they would wait lovely son, and they will wait their precious son even now and permanently.

Also, I think if Trayvon were not a black boy, Zimmerman would not have shot him. If not, why did Zimmerman report the boy to be suspicious without proper reason? In US, as I know, there is still racial discrimination between black and not black. Sometimes, we can see the accidents on the media, like the black is annoyed by raciest neighbor.

In the US, more than a million people have on signed an on-line petition demanding Zimmerman's guilt and many communities have held rallies for the same purpose. Maybe, if Zimmerman has not been arrested and charged as guilty, the rallies will keep going. The accident has to been investigated from the first fairly again. Finally, if the investigation is humanly fair and objective, not depending on the law, everyone would understand it.

The most important thing, the 'Stand Your Ground Law' has to be modified as soon as possible. I hope that in Florida, killing people with the same way like Trayvon must not happen any longer at our society.

I want you to tell many people's opinion demanding Zimmerman's arrest for Trayvon and his family.

Sincerely,

*Eunhyung Ju*

#### Sources

- Crimesider Staff (Mar.19.2012). 911 calls released in Trayvon Martin fatal shooting. CBS NEWS. Retrieved from [http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-504083\\_162-57399800-504083/911-calls-released-in-trayvon-martin-fatal-shooting](http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-504083_162-57399800-504083/911-calls-released-in-trayvon-martin-fatal-shooting)
- Beth Karas (Mar.21,2012). Trayvon Martin shooting-What is Florida's 'Stand Your Ground' law? Retrieved from <http://www.hlntv.com/video/2012/03/21/floridas-stand-your-ground-law-under-fire>
- Areliis R. Hernández (Mar.20.2012). Orlando Sentinel. Trayvon Martin's girlfriend speaks out about final moments before teen's slaying. Retrieved from [http://articles.orlandosentinel.com/2012-03-20/news/os-trayvon-martin-girlfriend-speaks-details-20120320\\_1\\_shooting-death-gated-attorneys](http://articles.orlandosentinel.com/2012-03-20/news/os-trayvon-martin-girlfriend-speaks-details-20120320_1_shooting-death-gated-attorneys)

#### **Thanks from the Editor**

Thank you for sharing your writing with everyone. I hope you enjoy reading your fellow students' writing. Also thanks to Megan Forbes and the University of Florida Bookstore for arranging the gift certificates, to Melina Jimenez for publicizing this issue of Student Voices, to the Reading/Writing instructors for supporting their students in their writing, and to Maya Shastri, Karen Owens, Tom Ratican, Helen Lin, Stephen Carr, and Todd Allen, for reading and evaluating the entries.

Thanks everyone!

Steve Flocks



**English Language Institute**

**PO Box 117051**

**315 Norman Hall**

**Gainesville, FL 32611-7051, USA**

**Phone: (352) 392-3354**

**Fax: (352) 392-3744**

**Email: [StudyEnglish@eli.ufl.edu](mailto:StudyEnglish@eli.ufl.edu)**

**Webpage: [www.eli.ufl.edu](http://www.eli.ufl.edu)**