



# link

english magazine



---

**TAKE IT**  
**EASY**

---

**Green** is  
**better**

---

**“Colombianadas”**



**May**  
**2013**

Welcome to the new look Ink, the Externado University's English magazine.

We'd like to say a big thank you to everyone who sent in articles for this issue; we received a record number of articles for the magazine, and we read each one carefully. Unfortunately, we don't have space to publish everything, but we hope you enjoy the articles we've chosen. Please remember that contributions to the next Ink are always welcome.

Enjoy!  
Phil Stoneman  
INK coordinator. [figri.idiomas@uexternado.edu.co](mailto:figri.idiomas@uexternado.edu.co)

**Editorial team**  
Phil Stoneman, Jill Fortune, Maite Mariño, Niamh Harnett

Contributors come from a variety of different faculties and English levels

Laura Ayala, Laura Fonseca, Pavla Fuertes, Laura González, Daniela Hernández, Lina Hernández Valencia, Andrea Lozano, María Alejandra Martínez, Catalina Piñeros, Beatriz Andrea Quintero, Catalina Reyes, Andrea Serrano, Andrea Tauta Hurtado,

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



**Article and Illustration by Pavla Fuertes**  
(undergraduate Social Communication student)

Sometimes I'm in the street, walking with big steps, bated breath, my heart in my hand and this overwhelming sense of stress and anxiety... and suddenly, for a few seconds I stop and think: Why? Why am I acting in this way? Am I running away from someone? NO. Am I late for an important meeting? NO! Maybe I have some outstanding tasks to do? That's not true either. It's at this moment that I realize that I'm inevitably involved in the current modern time.

Everyday dynamics load onto our shoulders the responsibility to be someone in life, making our achievements look insufficient and forcing us to aim for our goals like a race against time, just to show how successful we can be.

How often do we spend time on ourselves? Just to think, reflect and dream? Nowadays those activities are antonyms of productive life and in this way, negative things that are just for "lazy people". Our time asleep is probably the one time of the day we have to ourselves, but some of us prefer to "die" for only six hours or less, because time is gold.

But even when you think that you can't fight this situation, there is a way to overcome it. Just do what you want, and when you have decided what to do, do it all with passion, convinced that you will love it every day, and in this way, the next time that you feel your heart in your hands it will be with the pleasure of knowing that was the best thing that you could do for yourself.

Life is easy.



Left to right:  
**Jose Joaquin Narváez, Estefanía Abello,  
Laura Alejo, Sergio Pardo, Catalina Naranjo**

The English Area would like to congratulate FIGRI's CFA\* team who after winning the national contest were invited to participate in the international competition this year held in Toronto, Canada. The five members of the team, together with two faculty members, participated in this important event. We would like to congratulate the group for this accomplishment and their immense success.

\* Chartered Financial Analyst

# The magic bus experience - Bogotá edition

By **Andrea Tauta Hurtado**  
(undergraduate FIGRI student)

One of the few things that remain global these days (at least aside from the internet) is the public transportation system. It's something so common to all of us that sometimes we ignore all those tiny little things that make our own cities unique. In Bogotá, the public transportation system is one of those things that I believe are incredibly remarkable and particular to this city.

We have all gotten on a bus before and we can all agree we know the drill almost by instinct, I dare say. You wave your hand as it passes by and when it stops you get on and pay the fare and grab a seat if one is available. In most places, that is as much action as you are going to get for the rest of your journey but here in Bogotá it is when all the interesting stuff starts to happen.

The bus stops abruptly, making a clinking noise combined with the wheezing of the hydraulic break, that almost makes you think that the bus is trying to catch its own breath. A man in raggedy clothes jumps over the counter and speaks loudly "god bless you sir"; he looks at all the passengers briefly and continues his speech (they all sound almost the same). I'll indulge you with a rough translation "ladies and gentlemen first and foremost let me bid all a safe and pleasurable trip, let me also apologize if I am making you uncomfortable or if I'm bothering you, it really is not my intention." Right after these words is where the speech varies from person to person. The man will continue on to tell you how he can't get a job and he needs to collect money so that he may pay for a room for him and his family for the night. Whether the story is true or not I'm going to go ahead and say chances are fifty-fifty.

Here is where the business end of the activities begins. Some will sell you jewelry, others potato chips or similar packaged foods, toothbrushes or little sculptures; the price is almost always the same, take one for five hundred or three for a thousand. The bus becomes something else entirely; if I were to try and compare it to anything, I would say the closest thing there is to such a place would be a town plaza, where all the merchants gather to sell their goods to the town's folk.

You see, it's not all about the purchasing of miscellaneous items; there are also live acts, guitar players, rappers, clowns, story tellers, the list goes on and the creativity of these "characters" and entertainers is as vast as the daily war for the buck; the stage is set and mobile, the audience is captive and in a way forced to be engaged with the performers and this bus you got onto has been transformed into an improvised and unexpected circus tent. So next time you get on a bus in this dear city of mine, remember you might not just be paying for a ride home, you might also be paying for a surprise show whether you are willing to give up a coin or not.

# From a fish memory to an elephant memory

By **Laura Ayala**  
(undergraduate FIGRI student)

Are you one of those people with a good memory, someone who can remember everyone's name at a party and never forgets an appointment or special dates? If your answer is NO, you may have a fish memory. No worries - this article is aimed at helping you to understand the disadvantages of a poor memory and probably most importantly, how to improve it.

Being able to remember facts helps us to save valuable time and money. If you don't forget exactly what you need from the supermarket at the moment you leave your house, you won't have to go back again, for example. Also, an elephant memory is so useful in order not to make the same mistakes which is a good advantage in your studies, work and of course personal life; you can use your good retention to memorize names, faces, birthdays, anniversaries etc. so you don't disappoint people and thereby improve your social life.

How we remember things can depend on a number of little changes such as using blue ink and yellow notepaper to write down information that you must remember in the future, such as an exam. That's because blue and yellow are colours that catch our attention and stimulate our brain. Another useful tip if you want to be able to remember someone's name is to try to concentrate on it and use it as often as possible in conversation.

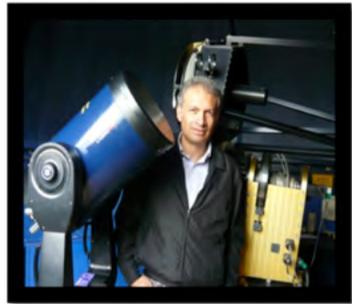
So, as you can see, there is still hope for all of you who believe you have a fish memory. And that's because fish memory is just a myth. You can always train your brain to be able to remember things more easily. Activities like doing crosswords, word searches or playing chess can help. Moreover, don't hesitate when you think about making a note in your diary, mobile phone or on a post-it note. Nobody has the capacity to remember everything but you can have some help!

**Do you want to practice your English?**

Try our new  
**Student Self-access  
section!**



# ASTRONOMY:



## AN IMPORTANT SCIENCE

By María Alejandra Martínez (undergraduate Social Communication student, level 3 English)

The Engineer Raul Andres is the current director of the Astronomical Observatory of the Sergio Arboleda University. He began his working life as a mechanical engineer, and a few years later became a specialist in astronomy at the National University. He has played several important roles within the country and has been recognized for his achievements in the field of astronomy both nationally and internationally.

**How do you define astronomy, taking into account the time you have already spent in this field?**

**RA//:** For me, astronomy is a science inherent to human beings, because man has always looked to the sky. The first people who walked the earth observed that there is a phenomenon which is day and night and for me this is the beginning of astronomy. The objective is to understand where the planet is located, how the cosmos is, how it was created, if it will have an end, etc.

**What is your daily routine like?**

**RA//:** I work in the academic area, where my main function is the research and dissemination of everything to do with science and space,

therefore in my day to day routine I share all the knowledge that people want so much in Colombia. The plans that the Astronomical Observatory has are very interesting because what we want is basically to teach the basic concepts of astronomy, understand basic phenomena, etc. Then what I basically do is to assist students and direct the Astrobiology courses. On Thursday we have the observation of space telescopes, an event which is attended by many people, and this is open to the public.

**Considering that you were leading “Colombia in orbit”, what can you tell me about this great investigative project?**

**RA//:** The “Colombia in orbit” project was in the years 2004 to 2009, and it was intended to develop and implement a satellite with the

name Liberty 1. This was the objective of the project and I was aware of everything that was going on with the satellite. Liberty 2 was launched in order to continue the investigations in this area, and the idea of this is to tell the public what we are working on, what has been discovered and what was the purpose of sending these satellites into space.

**4. The approaches the observatory is currently handling are computational astronomy and space engineering. What are these two approaches?**

**RA//:** The focus we are taking is a little different, because we are currently working on social projection, i.e. how we can allow our expertise to serve Colombians, to make them better people. So we have the idea of doing basic courses, where people can learn about the basics of astronomy, and logically do research about astronomy. We also want to do this with the continuation of our studies of the satellite Liberty 2.

**5. Do you believe that there is life on Mars, or that in the future the Moon will be populated?**

**RA//:** Well, I think that man can return to the Moon perfectly, because we have the technology to do it. The thing is that we haven't found a reason to send human beings back. In the past, what people really wanted to show was the power that they had over the planet, especially the United States and the Soviet Union. I think it is more feasible to send robots than humans. What I think you will see is an exploitation of commercial and economic space, in the part of the low orbit close to the Earth.

**6. How is Colombia in the field of astronomy? Are we doing well or do we need more technological development in this area?**

**RA//:** With the astronomy in the country, so far we have three important ideas to highlight. One is basic education, where we teach the key concepts of astronomy. That is being done, but in a very slow way. On the level of technological development we were quite late, and one of the reasons is the weather problems that the country has; we do not have clear skies, and so there are not many good views of the heavens. However, the solution to this problem could be to use radio astronomy which does not need the climate to be applied, but is done through radio waves.

**7. What do you think is the most beautiful thing about astronomy?**

**RA//:** That it is a science that lets you know everything about the human being, which in turn should be a prior knowledge to be able to understand what is day and night, year-round, and also know why we are surrounded by planets, stars and that everything is in constant change.



# Green is better

By Andrea Serrano (undergraduate FIGRI student)

Probably nobody thinks about the importance of green in our lives. Don't worry, this isn't another article about global warming, this is an invitation for you to stop your routine for just one moment and reflect about everything that nature gives us. I don't believe in magic or superstitions but it's true that sometimes we need to recharge our energy to continue with normal activities as students, and for this reason I believe green is better.

For example, in foreign cultures where feng shui is used, people live in a good way. The population believes the green color has a strong relation with nature and harmony. Both humans and animals have different behavioral and social performance when they change their habitat, and therefore eastern countries prepare their architects to understand how they integrate construction with the environment without damaging it. Now these kinds of studies are so important because creating friendly spaces is possible.

In academic places where a lot of plants and flowers grow, students can develop their cognitive functioning better and therefore they have better performance. If you want to maintain a good balance in your life, especially if your city is stressful (like Bogota), you must look for a way to have spaces to relax. The proposal is to improve your mental and physical health.

Lots of scientific studies suggest that visiting gardens, forests and green areas helps people to be more generous and trust a little more in their communities. Also, they have demonstrated that the environment around inhabitants influences behavior, self-control, discipline and irritability. People who do not have contact with parks, gardens or natural reserves are likely not to be able to manage their emotions.

Finally, violence and crime levels increase in the absence of green areas. Where cities do not have green areas, children suffer from obesity while adults have more cardiovascular diseases. These are several arguments for concluding that green is better!

Do you ever feel bored about the things that you do daily? Have you ever thought about doing something that can change the routine of your life? Well, I'm pretty sure that we all think about this stuff at some point, but sometimes we just let it go or make excuses like "I don't have time", "it is very difficult" or "I don't have enough money".

Challenges are a fun and interesting way to feel less bored about your routine and in some cases you don't need money or special abilities to make them work. All you need is a little will-power and the determination to create a new challenge in your life. Challenges can be long or short term but the important thing is that you decide to change aspects of your daily life that you don't like or that you would like to be improved.

Don't worry; I'm talking about simple things like starting to clean your room, smiling all day long, and stopping smoking or yelling when you are really mad. You may not see it now, but big changes usually come from little details and if you start modifying little things you will have different habits before you realize it.

Challenges are also designed to make us capable of overcoming difficult or sad situations. I'm saying that if we start to make more personal challenges, we will be stronger, wiser, and less heartbroken in life. Not only because we will have the feeling of being stronger after accomplishing something that was hard,

but also because we will feel confident about ourselves and our abilities.

Have you ever heard the quote that says "everything that happens in life happens for a reason"? Well, I think every action or move that we make in our life teaches us something. Can you imagine how much you will learn about yourself and others by accomplishing a challenge? Maybe you will learn something really valuable that may be useful in the future.

Personally, I have done a 30-day challenge and it turned my point of view upside down. I chose to give a present to a different person every day, and I can tell you, I realized that I was capable of stopping my routine and making a cute gift for someone that probably doesn't expect to receive anything from me. Also, I think I wasn't aware of how blessed and gifted I am. Now I just see everything as a gift of life!

You should dare to create a challenge for yourself, don't you think? I assure you, it will be amazing!

Students on the English Skills Through Multimedia course this semester set themselves a challenge and carried it out over 30 days. The activity, based on an idea from a TED presentation by Matt Cutts ([http://www.ted.com/talks/matt\\_cutts\\_try\\_something\\_new\\_for\\_30\\_days.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/matt_cutts_try_something_new_for_30_days.html)), was a learning experience for all – try it!

# Live Challenges

By Catalina Piñeros Duran  
(undergraduate FIGRI student)

Students on the English Skills Through Multimedia course this semester set themselves a challenge and carried it out over 30 days. The activity, based on an idea from a TED presentation by Matt Cutts ([http://www.ted.com/talks/matt\\_cutts\\_try\\_something\\_new\\_for\\_30\\_days.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/matt_cutts_try_something_new_for_30_days.html)), was a learning experience for all – try it!



# CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

## Between Colombia and Switzerland



By Beatriz Andrea Quintero (undergraduate FIGRI student)



Last year, I had the chance to live with a Swiss girl and it was such a great experience because I noticed how different we are in lots of aspects of our lives. I think it is important to examine different cultures now that globalization is part of our daily lives and has turned into a major issue and opportunity.

So in order to go alongside globalization and avoid any possible cause of confusion, it is essential to understand each other's points of view and ways of interacting. I have decided to talk about 3 aspects: individualism/collectivism, family relationships and the avoidance of uncertainty.

Individualism is the extent to which people identify themselves in terms of "I" or "WE". I have found that Colombian culture is a highly collectivistic culture because we tend to think more as a group, taking into account what others believe. On the other hand, Swiss culture is an individualistic culture. They believe that the achievements of the group are not as important as separate achievements. Furthermore, relationships are clearly separated from business and should not be mixed; this clearly doesn't happen in Colombia.

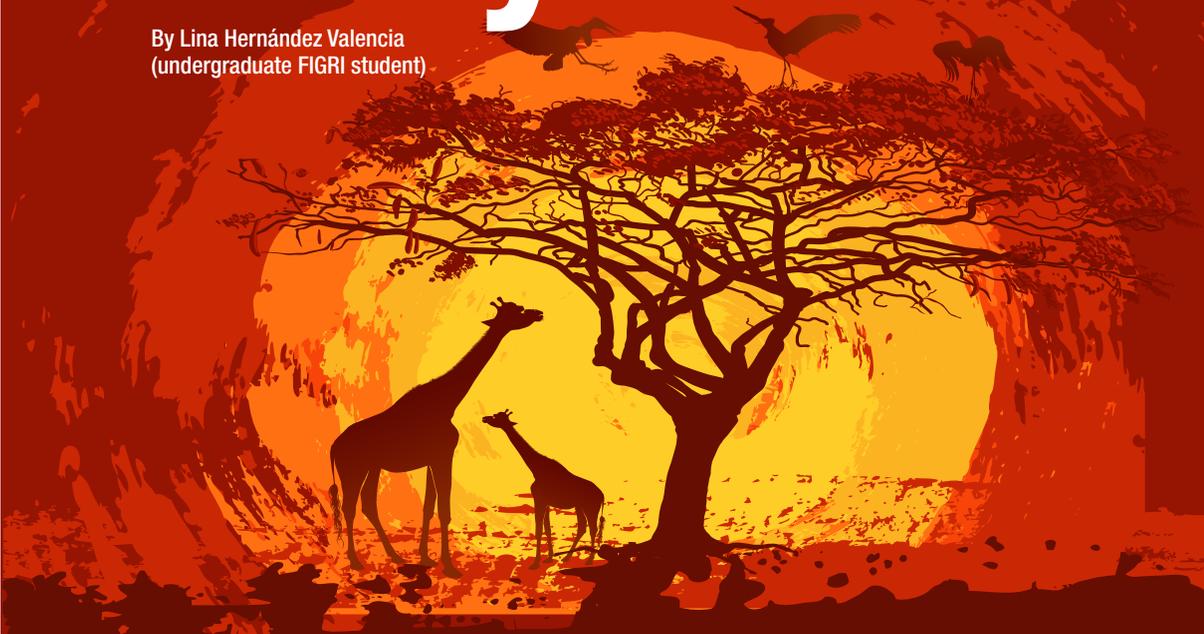
Family relations are also very different. In Colombia, we tend to share a lot of time with our family like "family Sundays" and we are very dependent on our parents, even when we are over 18. We usually live with our parents while we are doing our degree and even afterwards. In Switzerland, it is far different. They tend to be more independent and it is common that as soon as young adults finish high school, they move away from their parents and most Swiss adolescents have a job and pay for their studies and expenses. WE DON'T.

The avoidance of uncertainty deals with how people handle the uncertainty of what is going to happen in the future. Colombians usually prefer to avoid unfamiliar situations and are less willing to take risks than the Swiss; Swiss people love taking risks. Another big difference is that Swiss people are very punctual and they feel a strong need to be busy all the time and work hard, while Colombians don't.

To conclude, Colombians are very different from the Swiss. While Colombians are resistant to change and more concerned about things such as job security, collective accomplishments or family relations, the Swiss are more willing to take risks; freedom and personal accomplishments are highly valued and family relations are not as close as they are in Colombia. Still, even though we are very different from each other, it is really nice to share time with people from Switzerland.

# Hollywood, Bollywood, Nollywood

By Lina Hernández Valencia  
(undergraduate FIGRI student)



Each time I hear the word Africa I sadly make an association with safari and famine. Although hardly anyone associates it with an economic power, some might name Nigeria as a powerful film producer. Nigeria is the largest country in Africa with a population of 160 million, the number one economic power of this continent and one of the world's eight biggest oil producers.

When I first read that Nollywood was rated as the third movie producer with more films per year after U.S.A (Hollywood) and India (Bollywood) I was surprised and shocked. I searched for some info on the internet and I realized that the complete success of this industry is due to their low budgets and the short time it takes to produce these films, which can take, for example, just 10 days and cost approximately USD\$15,000. The main difference between the California/New Delhi productions and Nigerian films is how they are presented to the audience. Thanks to their lack of monetary resources, in Africa, movies are not presented in theaters; they are sold on vcd or dvd which sell an average of 50,000 copies or even more.

Nollywood has become a powerful \$250 million dollar industry that employs more than one million people in Africa. The competition with Hollywood has arisen because many Africans were tired of watching how Americans had created a stereotype that associates them with violence, poverty and drugs. I watched some trailers from Nollywood and I was amazed by the new concept of movie producing these people have. These films are made in real locations, with no special effects, and they are based on real stories and are a complete mirror of African reality.

Nigerian films have broken boundaries around the world as they have been presented in international festivals since 2005, and 44% of the products are translated to English. South Africa opened satellite television networks to present them, and there is also the Africa Movie Awards to reward the best in the industry that try to give us an example of how Hollywood has made society believe there is just one way to make movies.

# EASTERN DIRECTIONS FOR YOUR LIFE

By Andrea Lozano (undergraduate FIGRI student)



A few days ago, I had to read the “Analects of Confucius” for my seminar called “Asia” and in this article I would like to share some of the passages of moral teachings that I have found useful. I have realized that they are so basic and helpful for making your life simpler since they are guidelines of how to approach different circumstances and to maintain your relationships with others in the most peaceful and smart way.

The passage I liked the most is “Don’t have friends who are not like you”. I think that if you consider this a rule when getting to know somebody, you will avoid most of the possible conflicts that end up making people hate each other and feel resentment. It is not about seeking people who have same ideas, tastes, hobbies, way of life or thinking as you. It’s about being sure the person has the same values you were taught to have before you give the best of yourself in a friendship that the other person won’t appreciate. If you find out the person is like you in that sense, then you will be sure about what to expect from her/him when facing tough situations and you will probably make a constructive relationship that affords beauty, calm and support to your life.

Another relationship that becomes essential in your life when it happens is the one you have with your boyfriend/girlfriend. If you have a mate, it is supposed that he/she is your friend, so should have already implemented the first rule that says he/she is like you. For that special relationship you should add: “Make fidelity and sincerity your baseline”. This

will assure the building of trust between both of you and will keep you away from jealousy. In a very logical way, one can assume that this special kind of friend will offer you respect, tranquility and love while helping you grow as a better human being. You will gain self-confidence, self-esteem and joy while sharing beautiful moments together.

However, I think that not even practicing every single instruction of Confucius can really assure you that you won’t be harmed by people you love, like being betrayed by a friend or suffering heartbreak. In those kinds of moments in which it is difficult to keep calm and think clearly of what to do or say, and basically because you may realize you haven’t grown up enough, you need a very definite direction to get over it. Then is when the following quote is useful: “Don’t talk about matters already done, you may not protest about what has happened, you may not blame the past”. If you have got the willpower to do what Confucius said, you will see that you will have your mind clean about what happened up to the point you forget it, as you are not constantly bringing it to your mind when talking about it and when hearing what people have to say about it.

I hope you have learned something useful from reading this article as I did when reading the Analects of Confucius. You should really consider these directions for experiencing harmony in your life and finding equilibrium between your inner and outer person, the interactions with other people and the situations that result of that way of life.

# “Colombianadas”

By Laura González (undergraduate FIGRI student)

On February 25th I was reading a magazine and I found an article, which I think describes us Colombians very well. The article is called “manual to distinguish a Colombian abroad” written by Maria Jimena Duzan (revista semana online).

The author begins by saying that Colombians are the only ones that, when they want to buy something, say “Me Regala” which means to get the product for free. According to Maria Jimena Duzan, if you go to Spain for example and ask the waiter: “Me Regala...” he will probably answer that you have to pay for it.

Another fact is that Colombians usually clap when the plane lands; this is the best way, according to the author, to know if there are any Colombians on the plane. This might be because Colombians love to clap; they do it even when it is not necessary.

I know many of you who have family or friends abroad have suffered from the famous “Encargo”. Colombians do not have any problems about asking you to take for them whatever whim they have, and they are usually things which are difficult to carry like Obleas with Arequipe, Bocadillo, Coffee Delight or sometimes even bigger things like decorative items for their houses.

Finally, something I think should not be this way is that when Colombians travel abroad they do everything they do not do inside Colombia. They do not throw trash in the streets, they respect the lights, and in general they are well behaved and obey the other country’s laws and traditions. So I do not understand why it is possible to do all of this outside Colombia instead of doing it within Colombia and taking care of our country.

You have probably noticed how Colombians tend to name everything in English; that is why you can find someone called Usnavy or Onedollar and restaurants with a terribly misspelled English name. This may be because many Colombians wish to be North Americans or from any other place but Colombia; basically in Colombia there is a lack of patriotism.

To conclude, we Colombians are full of weird and funny features; if you stop and take time to think about it, you will notice how special we are.





# Enjoying Work

By Catalina Reyes (undergraduate FIGRI student)

Statistics related to people who don't like what they do for a living are astonishing. According to a Gallup survey published by Forbes magazine, 71% of workers are not engaged in their work. This is a consequence of not loving what they are supposed to do and not being able to take the risk of quitting and searching for new job opportunities that are suited to their skills, dreams and passions.

I believe that we can turn those numbers around if we take the time to get to know ourselves better, make a life plan and execute it. So if you are worried about getting a job after graduating, this might open up your mind and probably help a bit.

A good start in order to make this possible is to identify what you are passionate about. If you have no idea, it is worth writing down a list of those activities which fulfill you; those that make you happy and during which time passes so fast that you don't even notice because you are completely absorbed by it. It is also important to evaluate what you are good at because it is not a secret that as human beings we are all different and that's why everyone has different talents and develops different abilities.

When you combine both aspects, your mind will clear and you will be able to picture yourself working in the right place. It doesn't matter if it is in an enterprise or as self-employed; what really matters is that you are good at it and that you enjoy it at the same time.

Even though it is crucial to have a clear goal of what you want, it is also necessary to make a plan of how to reach it. In order to do so, you must know the requirements to obtain the desired job and from now on work hard to fulfill them. So, if you are supposed to perfectly manage Excel, why not take an Excel course? Or if you are required to speak French, it would be a good idea to go on a foreign exchange program. For this reason, action must start NOW.

Finally, I encourage you to start working on your CV, preparing for an interview, asking for job recommendations from your friends and relatives, volunteering for social work and getting some work experience.

I hope that with these suggestions you can think again about your future plans related to the labor experience. I am pretty sure that if more people started liking their jobs or whichever activity they do for a living, people would have better lifestyles, better health, and most importantly a better relationship with their families.

The Oriental Animation World of

# Hayao Miyazaki

By Daniela Hernández (undergraduate Figri student, level 3 English)

Have you ever seen an oriental cartoon? If so, you are sure to know the great master of Japanese animation, Hayao Miyazaki, and if not, then I will tell you about him and his magnificent work.

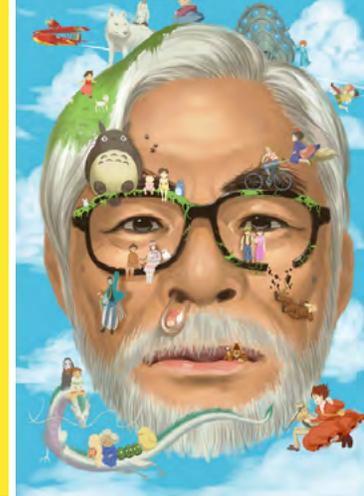
First of all, Hayao Miyazaki was born in Tokyo on January 5th, 1941, and he became strongly influenced by Osamu Tezuka, "the father of manga", with whom Miyazaki became obsessed. He was also influenced by his family environment due to the work of his father who directed a business which made rudders for war planes, and because of this he developed a fascination for aviation and war literature. These topics would later appear in his movies with the inclusion of flying gadgetry and the pacifism that he promotes. On the other hand, we can see the admiration that he felt for his mother, who was a woman with a strong personality. This also became a distinctive sign of his movies: decisive women with a strong personality.

Although his work consists of movies that seem targeted to young audiences, they have a thematic background encouraged to create awareness of current problems such as the necessity to take care of the environment. In addition, they offer interesting stories where magic and romanticism are mixed. His first movie is entitled Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind (1984), which discusses the topic of the war and of the environmental damage that man will cause to the earth if he does not become responsible.

Other movies he has created are My Neighbor Totoro (1988), Kiki's Delivery Service (1989) and Princess Mononoke (1997).

There are also those films that are part of the most brilliant stretch of his career, like Spirited Away (which won the Oscar for best animated movie 2002), Howl's Moving Castle (2004) or Ponyo (2008).

If you find this information interesting, you can find both reviews and the movies themselves on the Internet. Snap out and discover a new alternative and vision of cinema animated by the hand of this great master.



# A challenge that the youth **must assume**...

By **Laura Fonseca** (undergraduate FIGRI student)

Nowadays, the entire world is facing social problems. In the past, we used to think that in European countries and in the USA, people lived a dream-like life even if it wasn't the case. However, after the financial crisis of 2008 it's clearer that problems are everywhere and the illusion of magical places to live is more and more ambiguous.

Social problems are clearly a government issue but the way people react to them essentially is too. Lack of opportunities, poverty and the lack of a state presence, which is the case in our country, have bound people to look for a better life even if it is by illegal ways. Also, we can't forget about the government corruption that has excluded people instead of gathering everyone together.

The story of many people whose lives have drastically changed, like Pablo Escobar, just to mention the most common example from our country's history, encourages young people to take the easy way to make money and get power. Pablo Escobar was a drug dealer who after a few years doing illegal business became one of the most influential people in the country.

The drug problem, even if it seems to be the biggest problem, is not the only one. Robberies and fraud are part of the daily life of many neighborhoods, not just in Colombia but around the world. The

main feature of these neighborhoods is the lack of education due to the lack of government action.

It's a cliché to hear that young people are the future. They reflect the level of life of where they live and as a result almost everywhere, they are the outcome of an accumulation of defects in the education system.

No matter why the conditions are as they are, either by violence and poverty as is the case in underdeveloped countries, or as a result of a financial crisis as is the case of European countries. The important point is not what generated the panorama; the really important fact is the way people find solutions to get over the problems. Young people can leave their countries looking for better opportunities abroad. For example, in Spain, the emigration rate increased sharply between 2010 and 2012 (during the financial crisis), and Colombians have always gone to the United States to follow the American dream. Another option for young people is to stay and work for the country, in order to create jobs and contribute positively to the social conditions.

Discovering the country's needs is not an easy task. Creativity, leadership, and invention are capabilities that should be taught and encouraged from an early age. All this with the aim of preparing better people that could lead the world to a better future.

Visit our website:

[www.uexternado.edu.co/englishlink](http://www.uexternado.edu.co/englishlink)

Also, join us on Facebook  
by searching for "Externado English",  
and follow us on Twitter: @UExtEnglish



Institución de educación superior sujeta a la inspección y vigilancia del MEN

[www.uexternado.edu.co](http://www.uexternado.edu.co)