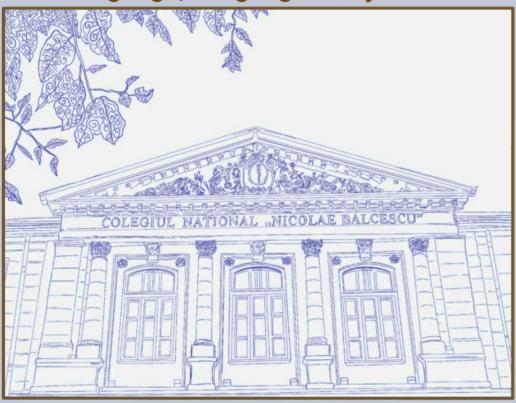
BĂLCESCU - PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

Language, Language Everywhere



COLLEGE LANGUAGE MAGAZINE December, 2025

ISSN 2539-9278 ISSN-L 2539-9278

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Section A: students' work

THE HISTORY OF AUTOMOBILES

PAVEL STEFANIA, Profesor coordonator Stefan Anca, Colegiul National Nicolae Balcescu

The history of automobiles sure is a long one, but how did it start?

Well, it all started in the 3500 BC in ancient Mesopotamia when the wheel was invented and it quickly spread to other civilizations and after that there were no more developments, other than carts, and carriages pulled by horses during the 18th and 19th century, and that was the first kind of transportation.

Until 1672 when a Belgian Jesuit in China, Ferdinand Jesuit developed the steam engine, however it wasn't a practical means of transportation, but it was a crucial point in the history of the automobile. That's until when Nicolas Joseph Cugnot came in and further developed steam-powered vehicle.

The next would be in the evolution of the automobile is the invention of the gasoline engine, which would mark the beginning of the internal combustion engine era. The first engine was built by Samuel Brown in 1823, but it wasn't until the late 19th century that it was further developed. In 1876 the first successful gasoline-powered car built by the German inventor, Nikolaus Otto.

As time passed on, the invention of the gasoline engine and the development of the internal combustion engine led to the rise of the automobile industry, which quickly replaced the horse drawn carriages. The automobile grew rapidly in the late 19th and early 20th century, with many different manufacturers producing cars, this led to the growth of the automobile industry, which created jobs and improved transportation. They became more affordable and accessible, which led to an increase in car ownership and a change in the way people lived and worked. Cars allowed people to travel farther and faster, which led to the development of suburbs and the growth of the tourism industry. However, he internal combustion engine also had negative impacts on society, such as pollution and dependence on fossil fuel.

The development of autonomous technology, also known as self-driving technology, is the latest step in the evolution of the automobile. The concept of self-driving cars can be traced back to the 1920s and the 1930s, with early research into autonomous navigation being conducted by groups such as the US military and General Motors. However, it was not until the 21st century thar significant progress was made in the development of autonomous technology. In the early 2000s, companies such as Google and Tesla began investing heavily in the development of self-driving cars, and by the 2010s, several companies. Have begun testing autonomous cars on public roads.

The future of self-driving cars is uncertain, but many experts believe they have the potential to have a positive impact on society. Self-driving cars have the potential to improve road safety, reduce traffic congestion, and make transportation more efficient. In addition, self-driving cars have the potential to improve accessibility for people who cannot drive, such as the elderly and people with disabilities. However, the future of self-driving cars also raises concerns, such as job losses for human drivers and the potential for hacking or other security issues. As the technology and societal acceptance evolve, the impact of self-driving cars will become clearer.

With time, automobiles became part of our daily lives, it changed the way we move to other and with it also comes consequences like pollution, dependency on fossil fuel and its not going to be easy resolving it. As future comes, there will also be many opportunities to change our way we see automobiles and make this world a better place.

EUROPEAN LANGUAGES- CULTURAL DIVERSITY

CRISTIAN LEONARD ANDREI Profesor coordonator: ADINA VALENTINA CHIORPAC, COLEGIUL NAȚIONAL "NICOLAE BĂLCESCU", BRĂILA

Even though it is not everyone's mother tongue, English has become a common language throughout Europe. It is used in business, technology, education, and tourism, and millions of people learn it as a second language. In this way, it helps people from different countries communicate and brings cultures closer together.

At the same time, globalization and technological development are shaping the evolution of European languages. Some dominant languages are spreading quickly, while others, spoken by smaller communities, are at risk of disappearing. For this reason, many communities make great efforts to keep their mother tongues alive, and multilingualism is becoming Europe is one of the richest continents in the world in terms of linguistic diversity. More than two hundred languages are spoken across its territory, and each of them tells a story about the history, culture, and identity of the peoples who speak them. Languages are not just tools for communication, but true bridges between generations and nations.

Most of the languages spoken in Europe belong to the large Indo-European family, though not all. The most widespread ones are the Romance, Germanic, and Slavic languages. The Romance languages, including Romanian, French, and Italian, originated from Latin, the language spoken during the Roman Empire. These languages share many common features, such as grammatical structure and similar vocabulary, but they have developed differently over time, forming distinct cultures and identities.

The Germanic languages, such as English, German, and Dutch, come from Northern Europe and have had a huge impact on the world, especially through English, which has become a global means of communication. The Slavic languages, spoken mainly in Central and Eastern Europe, including Russian, Polish, Czech, and Croatian, stand out for their rich pronunciation and complex grammar systems.

In addition to these major families, Europe is also home to other valuable languages. The Uralic languages, such as Finnish, Hungarian, and Estonian, are unrelated to the Indo-European family and have their own unique structure. The Celtic languages, like Irish and Welsh, have survived over the centuries in certain regions, even though they are no longer as widespread as they once were. There are also completely isolated languages, such as Basque, which is not related to any other known language and remains a mystery to linguists.

Each European country has one or more official languages. In France, people speak French, in Germany, German, and in Spain, Spanish, but there are also important regional languages, such as Catalan and Basque. In Switzerland, the situation is unique because four languages German, French, Italian, and Romansh have official status. At the continental level, the EU recognizes 24 official languages, and all institutional documents are translated into these languages so that citizens have equal access to information.

Beyond official languages, there are hundreds of regional and minority languages. These are often spoken in smaller communities but represent an essential part of Europe's cultural heritage. Important examples include Catalan in Spain, Welsh in Wales, and Breton in France. Many of these languages are protected through educational and cultural programs so they can be passed on to future generations.

European languages are not just means of expression, but true cultural treasures. They reflect the history of a continent full of diversity, traditions, and identities. Preserving and promoting these languages is not only an act of respect for the past, but also an investment in the future of a united and multicultural Europe.

FROM PAGES TO PRIZES

LAURA MARIA NEAGU, THEODORA ALINA PSAROPOL, IRO VOINEA
Profesor coordonator: ADINA VALENTINA CHIORPAC,
COLEGIUL NAȚIONAL "NICOLAE BĂLCESCU", BRĂILA

We believe that reading in English is one of the best ways to truly understand the language. It's not just about learning new words it's about connecting with the way people think, express themselves, and tell stories. When we read in English, we notice how naturally we pick up new vocabulary and grammar without even trying. It feels more real than studying rules from a textbook because we see how the language is actually used. Over time, we've become more confident in both writing and speaking just by reading regularly. Reading also gives us a glimpse into different cultures. Every book, article, or story teaches us something new about how people live and what they value. It's like traveling without leaving our room. We have also learned to understand humor, emotions, and perspectives that we might not experience in our own culture. What we love most is how reading sparks our imagination. Some stories stay with us long after we finish them they make us feel things, think differently, and sometimes even inspire us to create something ourselves. (Laura)

Reading in English is not only a skill taught in school, it also unlocks access to powerful stories, the ability to articulate profound ideas, and a connection to global culture. We had this experience firsthand when we took part in the national contest "CDIdei în cărți", where reading in English helped us to create something meaningful. The competition invites teams of three students to present a book through creative interpretation, including a representative object, a reading sheet, and a live presentation. We decided to work on "The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas" by John Boyne, a very touching tale about friendship and humanity in one of the darkest periods in history, for our project. The book's themes of innocence, prejudice, and moral courage gave us a lot to think about and to share. We divided the work between us: Laura wrote the book sheet, Theo kept a reflective journal, and Iro, designed the representative object, a drawing with the two boys holding hands. Our team ultimately won First Place, and we were proud not only of the trophy and diploma but also of how reading in English furnished us with the tools to analyze, create, and communicate. It confirmed our belief that reading books in English might be a challenge, yet it would also teach us empathy and help us grow both as students and as human beings.(Iro)

Reading books in English is like opening a secret door to the world every page is a passport to new ideas, cultures, and ways of thinking. It sharpens your mind, strengthens your vocabulary, and lets you connect with stories in the language they were born in, capturing every nuance and emotion. The more you read, the more fluent your thoughts become not just in English, but in creativity, confidence, and curiosity. So grab a book, dive in, and let English be the bridge between you and the endless universe of imagination, knowledge, and self-discovery. (Theodora)

DISCOVERING FAHRENHEIT IN ENGLISH

ELLYA CIREAȘĂ, DARIA STANCIU, RALUCA VOINEA Profesor coordonator: ADINA VALENTINA CHIORPAC COLEGIUL NAȚIONAL "NICOLAE BĂLCESCU", BRĂILA

Our personal thoughts

Raluca: Reading this novel was a powerful experience. It felt intense and real, and it challenged me to see the world around me with different eyes. It was brilliant, dark, and unforgettable.

Ellya: This book was more than a story—it was a warning. I was struck by how easily society gave up its voice. It made me appreciate the value of thought and expression so much more.

Daria: I found Fahrenheit 451 absolutely gripping. It made me think deeply about freedom, silence, and how fragile knowledge can be. The message stayed with me long after I closed the book. Reading and understanding the book:

Ellya: Reading Fahrenheit 451 in English was challenging for me. Some of the words were unfamiliar, and the way the author described things was sometimes confusing. I had to re-read parts or use a translator. But the story itself was very interesting, especially the idea of banning books and controlling people's thoughts. I liked that it made me think deeply. The downside was that I couldn't always follow the symbolism or deeper meanings without help. But the good thing is that I learned a lot of new vocabulary and improved my reading skills.

Daria: I actually enjoyed reading Fahrenheit 451 because the message felt really powerful. It made me think about how technology affects our lives and how important books are. I didn't find the language too hard, but some of the writing was really metaphorical and weird at times, which made it hard to follow. A con is that I didn't feel very connected to the characters — they felt distant. But I think reading it in English helped me appreciate the author's style and the way he uses language to create strong emotions.

Raluca: For me, reading Fahrenheit 451 in English was a mix of frustration and fascination. I loved the themes — censorship, conformity, the power of books — and I could see connections to today's world. But the writing style was sometimes dense and confusing, especially the long descriptive passages. I had to read slowly to really understand it. A pro is that the book encourages a lot of discussion and analysis, which was great for class. A con is that the plot can feel a little rushed at the end. Still, I think it's a book every student should read at least once.

THE ADVANTAGES OF PARTICIPATING IN TRANSLATION CONTESTS

MARIA-DANIELA TUDORICĂ PROFESOR COORDONATOR: PAULA-CLAUDIA GHEŢU COLEGIUL NAŢIONAL "NICOLAE BĂLCESCU"

As a final-year high school student who has participated in translation contests throughout the past few years (Romanian to English, specifically), I have come to appreciate how valuable these experiences can be. In a world that is becoming increasingly interconnected, the ability to move meaning across languages is more important than ever. Translation contests may seem intimidating at first, but they offer a wide range of academic, personal, and cultural benefits that go far beyond the competition itself.

One of the clearest advantages is the improvement of language skills. Classroom exercises certainly help build vocabulary and grammar, but translation contests require a much deeper level of understanding. Working from Romanian to English, I often had to analyze subtle shades of meaning,

choose precise equivalents using a dictionary, and preserve both the tone and the intention of the original text. This kind of close reading strengthens comprehension, while the process of crafting an accurate and fluent translation improves writing ability. Over the years, preparing for these contests helped me expand my vocabulary, sharpen my grammar, and express myself more naturally in English.

Translation contests also cultivate critical and creative thinking. Translating is not simply replacing one word with another; it involves interpreting context, understanding cultural references, and making thoughtful choices. Many times, I had to decide between several possible translations, each with slightly different implications. This taught me to evaluate alternatives, think flexibly, and justify my decisions. Such skills are valuable not only for language studies but across all academic subjects, as well as in real-life problem solving.

Another important benefit is the sense of achievement and motivation these contests provide. Each year, preparing for the competition pushed me to set higher goals for myself and stay disciplined in my study habits.

In conclusion, participating in translation contests throughout high school has offered me far more than improved language proficiency. These competitions have strengthened my analytical skills, deepened my cultural awareness, and given me both motivation and a sense of accomplishment. For any student interested in languages, communication, or simply personal growth, translation contests are a valuable opportunity to develop as a learner and as a globally minded individual.

THE TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF LEARNING FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Dumitrescu Oana Cristina Profesor coordinator-Ghețu Claudia Colegiul Național Nicolae Bălcescu Brăila

In an era defined by unprecedented mobility, digital interconnectedness, and cultural exchange, the ability to communicate across linguistic borders has evolved from a desirable skill into an essential one. Learning a foreign language is no longer merely an academic pursuit; it is an investment in intellectual growth, cultural awareness, and global citizenship.

Mastering a foreign language profoundly enhances cognitive flexibility. Numerous studies have shown that multilingual individuals demonstrate improved problem-solving skills, heightened creativity, and superior multitasking abilities. The process of navigating between linguistic systems strengthens neural pathways, resulting in enhanced memory retention and sharper analytical skills.

Beyond cognitive benefits, language learning opens the door to cultural literacy. A foreign language allows learners to grasp the values, humour, and worldview of another community. This fosters empathy, tolerance, and deeper human connection.

In today's globalised job market, multilingualism also provides a clear competitive advantage. Companies increasingly seek individuals capable of negotiating and collaborating across borders, and advanced proficiency stands as a testament to perseverance and cultural sensitivity.

Ultimately, learning a foreign language enriches one's identity and sense of belonging in a diverse world. More than a tool for communication, it is a gateway to becoming a more informed and compassionate global citizen.

SPECIAL

IOANA TIMEEA BADEA, PROFESOR COORDONATOR PAULA-CLAUDIA GHETU, COLEGIUL NATIONAL NICOLAE BALCESCU

My first connection with English happened when I entered kindergarten and started learning the alphabet. From then on, a spark grew in me, something that could never be completely extinguished. My love for English has always been there, it never left me alone and always encouraged me to discover new paths in life.

Choosing the Philology-Intensive English profile has been one of the most meaningful decisions I have made as a student. I never had an interest in Mathematics, Physics, or Biology, it has always been English that held a special place in my heart.

One of the greatest advantages of this profile is the large number of English classes we have each week. This constant exposure has given me the opportunity to truly immerse myself in the language, learning vocabulary, grammar, literature, and culture at a much deeper level. Thanks to the rigorous training and continuous practice, I was able to take the Cambridge FCE exam and even obtain a C1 level, something that has increased my confidence and made me believe I was able to do anything I want in life.

A wonderful example of what this profile stands for is my English teacher, whose passion, patience, and dedication have inspired me throughout my journey. I always admired how much she loves English and how her teaching always makes me happy and interested. My English teacher showed me that I should always choose the career that makes me feel fulfilled, and never base my decisions on what other people say. Having a different dream from others does not make you weird or stupid and we should feel proud of ourselves for being unique.

Moreover, having so many English classes has given me the chance to take part in different competitions and activities. These experiences helped me improve my communication skills, think more clearly, and challenge myself. Every contest was a new opportunity to learn, grow, and express myself in English with more confidence.

In the end, choosing the Philology-Intensive English profile has helped shape who I am today in ways I never expected. Studying what I love has taught me that it is far better to be special than to blend in. This profile has allowed me to turn my passion for English into a defining part of my identity.

CARVED INTO THE BARK

CRISTINA IOANA ENACHE prof. coordonator Monica Claudia Ion Colegiul Național "Nicolae Bălcescu", Brăila

If you would let me be, I'd be your guide...
I'd kindle another faith inside you
So, through my eyes you'd see
Even forests that are not so green.

Sink into my voice, For I let you hide inside my soul, And let my hand be your path, And give your trust to me.

Let the air scatter us in tandem,
Let our chests tremble the same —
Even for a quarter of a second,
May life ring within us on the same wave.

If my soul were bound to yours, There would be no evil left in the world; Perhaps only then would you know How and how deeply I feel you in everything.

If all the earth understood, It would spoil us with honeyed fruit, And the trees would recognize us, Soothe us with their leaves.

May their branches embrace our arms, The soil now mixed with our bones, And we would see each other only by the face, Forever carved into the bark

I AM MALALA

ROXANA MONICA DAVID prof. coordonator Monica Claudia Ion Colegiul Național "Nicolae Bălcescu", Brăila

If someone asked me to present a book which is at the core of my principles and values, one that motivates me to fight for my rights and defend my beliefs, I would undoubtedly choose I Am Malala: The Story of the Girl Who Stood Up for Education and was Shot by the Taliban, written by Malala Yousafzai and Christina Lamb. For me, this more than just a biography, it's an empowering story about a young girl who dared to stand up for her aspirations and paid a high price for voicing her opinions.

Her powerful memoir, co-authored with journalist Christina Lamb, tells Malala's story as a Pakistani girl who stood up for girls' education, despite the growing threats from the Taliban in her region. She was shot by a gunman in 2012 but miraculously survived, and her story became an international inspiration for human rights activists around the globe.

Malala Yousafzai grew up in the Swat Valley of Pakistan, where education for girls was discouraged and eventually banned by the Taliban. From a young age, Malala had a strong passion for learning, influenced by her father, Ziauddin Yousafzai, who ran a school and supported education for all. As the Taliban began taking control of her hometown, life became dangerous, especially for girls who dared to go to school.

Despite the threats, Malala spoke out publicly and became an advocate for girls' education, even blogging for the BBC about her experiences while using the pseudonym Gul Makai. This made her a target, and in 2012, she was shot in the head while returning home from school by bus. Miraculously, Malala survived and, after extensive treatment, went on to recover in Birmingham,

England, where she currently resides. Her story spread globally, making her a symbol for peace and the fight for education.

After the attack, Malala's mission only grew stronger. She founded the Malala Fund, continues to advocate for education rights, and even won the Nobel Peace Prize, becoming the youngest-ever recipient at just 17 years old! This book is not just a story about her life but also a call to action, emphasizing the importance of education as a basic human right and inspiring people of all ages to fight for change.

Malala's storytelling feels both intimate and universal, as she shares the simplicity and the hospitality of her fellow villagers, the strength of her family, and her dreams for a world where every girl has the right to learn. I appreciate the fact that this biography balances Malala's point-of-view with a broader perspective on the issues she faced. Her resilience shines through, reminding readers that even one person is powerful enough to inspire change.

Although we live in a country where women are respected and their contribution to society is greatly valued, we must remind ourselves that not everyone is as lucky as we are. There are still many states around the world where women's rights are restricted, making it nearly impossible for them to stand up for themselves because they know that if they dare to speak out, repercussions will follow.

So then why did Malala continue her activism despite the increasing pressure of the Taliban? The answer to this question can be found in her famous quote: When the whole world is silent, even one voice becomes powerful.

In my opinion, we can only fight against disinformation with knowledge. Therefore, by investing in our education system, we can make a change for a better future!

EVEN IF

ADNANA VASILE prof. coordonator Monica Claudia Ion Colegiul Național "Nicolae Bălcescu", Brăila

Even if we broke up, I know I'll meet you in a coffee shop maybe years later, after we've both been someone else for a while.

But when I look at you the way your smile tilts, the familiar eyes that still carry the summer we first fell in love. I'll sit across from you,
coffee forgotten between us,
laughing like old friends,
while my heart remembers seventeen-year-old me,
scribbling your name everywhere
and thinking this love would never fade.
And when we finally stand,
our hands won't brush,
but the space between them
will throb
like love that never left,
only learned to wait.

OBJECTIONS

ALEXANDRU CRISTIAN CIUPERCĂ prof. coordonator Luminița Mocanu Colegiul Național "Nicolae Bălcescu", Brăila

We are all like candles in the wind, our minds are nomads in the land of uncertainty, yet our hearts bind us to one another, no matter the distance. If as long as man can deliver a pure message, it will somehow reach another, then why is it that every man's an island?

Hello everybody, I am Alex Ciuperca, and I am here to deliver my speech from two main standpoints, a philosophical one and a personal one, with each of these representing the two sides of a man's identity and of his belief.

From a philosophical standpoint, the unity of man is debated on the grounds of human nature. Many believe that individuality is ingrained in human nature, that we are all strangers till the very end, born alone and dying alone, too complex to understand one another, with connections that serve only to further validate our individuality, our ego.

I disagree with this, and I firmly believe that human beings are born with a social characteristic, that they are born connected with each other, and only through severe trauma do some develop antisocial characteristics or identities. Such a belief is founded upon the connection between mother and child in the months of infancy, for it is the only connection we are guaranteed to experience; it is the only truth a human can currently say about themselves and the truth bioengineering will negate in the not-so-distant future.

Nowadays, technology is so advanced that we can predict accurately our body's evolution using genes; in a sense, we can predict what we will become and also what we are—that is, if we were to exist completely exempt from outside phenomena, which is impossible, and also, condensing a human being's evolution only within its biological definition and excluding all philosophical parameters is a grave mistake, and here's why:

Philosophy completes the human being; it brings forth the subjective complexity of an individual and fuses it with a concept of thought, altering the human brain in a small way, which adds itself on top of all the prior such changes. Philosophy is, in itself, an individual's definition; it is that which is purely regarding the extremities of man's ideals and evolution and is true to one for as long as it is the creation or interpretation of himself.

Taking this into account, one should say about oneself that they know what they are only to the extent they are willing to acknowledge that they are a philosopher.

I am a man who had the opportunity to play at a theatre with a team of small actors. I also had the opportunity to talk with what I can only describe as masters of this craft, amazing people, fun and energetic all the way and deeply understanding. Furthermore, I never would have expected the people of many faces to be so authentic; it is perhaps because they accepted the fact that they are formed of anything but themselves; perhaps they were forced to realise the danger of the ego in truthful, pure communication and connection.

One day I was talking to such an actor, the subject was somewhat trivial, but that which was important was the non-verbal cue. Whenever their voice was soft, the body was fluid and the message light, but when the voice got sadder, the body's calmness turned toward the self; in a visual depiction of inner turmoil, the message became unbearable, and I couldn't help but shed a tear.

That spark of sadness came purely from the connection between the actor and me; it was something not created by myself, yet it burnt in me, and so I realised how soft were the hands that moulded my soul just then and how powerless I was before them.

How pleasant a thought that my soul was held by another and in their ever-graceful love was so slightly changed that I only realised it when those hands were no longer there; and even more pleasant a thought that there may have been so many more hands that I can't ever remember, for they were so soft I couldn't feel them, but they were surely there. And to the hands that have yet to hold me, I'm grateful that I'll never know when you will come; I'll know only you're here.

And to you, if you know what you are, if you can feel the shape of your soul, you will never know what you may be, for you have yet to feel the hands that are to mould you and to show you the subtleness of love all over again.

WHERE TO, Pilot?

ROXANA CODREANU, CLASA a VI- a, CNNB Profesor îndrumător, Luminita MOCANU

Hi! How are you? Well? Perfect. I can speak more about myself. I'm Roxana and something's on my mind lately, a proverb, about you being the pilot of your time.

Makes you ask a question, isn't it?, Where to pilot?,, obviously!

It looks like my attempt to participate brought me and you here, you listening and me trying to explain how time can be our plane.

I want to convey with this speech that both time and how you use it are important. It seems like you the pilot. Congratulation! You will start with the first seconds after the takeoff and from then on, from the first steps, you will continue to learn. You will discover all kinds of lands, some beautiful, some ugly, even some you are not sure about, but it is only your decision what you want to do. You always decide where you stay, how long you stay, and how much attention you give each place. You'll create pleasent and unpleasent memories, you'll live experiences, smiles, bruises, but the important things is to go on the way you feel good and not let anything knock your wings.

As an example, I want to mention a show that brought me and my classmates lots of joy. It anyone from my classroom is here, they know I'm talking about Sheldon and a fun fact about him is that he also was afraid of time passing and life changing. But he understood that, even though change is scary, we can get through it by controling our plane. Now let's get back to the actual idea.

In the end, you'll aproach the last landing and, when life will drain from you and pass before your eyes, be proud of what you see and who you see . And if someone ever mentioned you , let them remember you as a good , hard working , responsabile and fair person.

So, if controling your time is heading us to the life of your dreams, why are we still complaining. Us, people, we always want more and more. That reminds me of Puss in Boots movie. Well, the moral of that story is that a life is enough time to live, just one is enough, enough to make it good.

I hope for you all to have the luck of never facing something over your power and be the best pilots you can be

As a final reminder, I want to ask you: " If life has given you a plane full of time, why are you sitting around instead of exploring your world?".

REVIEW OF "DIRTY HARRY"

TRANCĂ IUSTIN DANIEL

prof. coordonator Luminița Mocanu Colegiul Național "Nicolae Bălcescu", Brăila

The song "Dirty Harry" by Gorillaz is a striking fusion of hip-hop, funk, and alternative rock that delivers both infectious rhythm and sharp social commentary. Opening with a groovy bass line and crisp percussion, the track immediately captures the listener's attention, while the playful yet menacing synths create an atmosphere of controlled chaos. The inclusion of the San Fernandez Youth Chorus provides a haunting, almost militaristic contrast to the laid-back rap verses by Bootie Brown, emphasizing the tension between innocence and violence.

Lyrically, the song critiques the glamorization of war and the cyclical nature of conflict. Lines like "I need a gun to keep myself among" reflect a society where fear and self-preservation dominate, forcing individuals into aggression. Damon Albarn's subtle vocal refrains blur the line between satire and lament, making the message more unsettling.

Overall, "Dirty Harry" is not just a catchy tune but a layered piece of art. Its brilliant production, memorable hooks, and biting lyrics invite repeated listening and deeper analysis. Gorillaz succeed in transforming a danceable beat into a profound statement about militarism and cultural complacency, proving that pop music can be both entertaining and intellectually provocative. This track stands as one of the band's most daring and thought-provoking works.

LANGUAGES OPEN DOORS

Alexandra Trifan and Elena Nistor GABRIELA NECULAI Nicolae Bălcescu National College

Foreign languages are more than just tools for communication; they are bridges that connect people, cultures, and opportunities across the world. For students, learning a foreign language is not only an academic exercise but also a transformative experience that shapes their personal and professional lives. The phrase "Languages open doors" is particularly true in the modern world, where knowledge of languages provides access to education, careers, friendships, and cultural understanding. First, foreign languages enrich a student's education. Beyond the grammar rules and vocabulary, each language carries with it a unique way of thinking and perceiving the world. By studying another language, students develop critical thinking, memory skills, and creativity. They are exposed to new literature, films, traditions, and ideas that broaden their horizons. This academic growth fosters curiosity and makes them more open-minded individuals.

Second, languages play a crucial role in future careers. In today's globalized society, employers value candidates who can communicate with international partners and clients. Students who master foreign languages find doors opening to internships, scholarships, and job opportunities abroad. Whether in business, tourism, science, or technology, multilingualism is a competitive advantage that often makes the difference between being one candidate among many and standing out as an asset to any organization. Moreover, foreign languages open doors to human connections. Students who travel or study abroad can form friendships and meaningful relationships with people from different backgrounds. These encounters build tolerance, empathy, and intercultural competence. Speaking someone's language shows respect for their culture and often leads to deeper, more authentic communication than any translation could provide.

Languages also play an important role in personal growth and confidence. Learning to express oneself in a new language is rarely easy, as it requires patience, courage, and persistence. At first, students may feel nervous about making mistakes or being misunderstood, but over time they learn that mistakes are part of the process and valuable opportunities to improve. Every achievement, whether it is holding a simple conversation with a native speaker, writing an essay in a foreign language, or finally understanding the meaning of a favorite song, becomes a source of pride and motivation. These small but meaningful steps gradually build self-esteem and give students the confidence to take on bigger challenges. At the same time, learning another language also encourages self-reflection, since it offers new ways of thinking and expressing ideas. Through this process, students not only connect with the world around them but also open inner doors toward self-discovery and personal growth.

When most people think of learning a new language, they imagine memorizing vocabulary lists, practicing grammar rules, or repeating phrases from a textbook. While these steps are part of the journey, the true impact of language learning goes far beyond the classroom. Acquiring a new language doesn't just give us words to speak—it transforms how we think, how we connect, and how we see the world.

Every language carries its own structure, logic, and worldview. By learning another language, we begin to notice that there are many different ways to express ideas. For example, some languages emphasize respect through formal and informal speech, while others describe emotions with words that don't even exist in English. This shift in perspective makes us more flexible thinkers. We start to realize that our way of seeing the world is not the only way, which broadens our minds and nurtures creativity. Over time, learners become more comfortable with uncertainty and more willing to take risks not just in language learning but in life itself. This ability to embrace failure as part of growth is one of the most surprising rewards of the process.

Languages truly open doors—doors to knowledge, to careers, to friendships, and to new ways of thinking. Every new language expands horizons and deepens human connection. In a world where communication is the bridge to understanding, those who speak more than one language carry the keys to many doors. When someone learns another language, they do more than acquire a new set of words; they step into a different way of seeing the world. Every language carries with it unique ideas, expressions, and cultural wisdom that cannot always be translated. This means that with each new language learned, a person gains access to perspectives that enrich not only their intellect but also their emotional and social life.

Ultimately, the power of languages lies in their ability to unite people. They remind us that while we may come from different cultures or backgrounds, the desire to communicate is universal. To learn a language is to say, "I am willing to meet you halfway." It is a step toward cooperation, friendship, and peace. This is why languages will always remain powerful keys—keys that open not just doors, but entire worlds.

FIGURES AND FACTS

CĂTĂLIN-MIHAI MATEI Profesor GABRIELA NECULAI, Nicolae Bălcescu National College

Europe may be one of the smallest continents, but it is home to a variety of languages. In total, there are over 200 native languages spoken across Europe.

When we look at the most spoken languages, if you only count native speakers, Russian is the most spoken language in Europe, followed closely by German. German is mostly used across central Europe, mainly in Germany, Austria, Switzerland and parts of Belgium and Italy.

However, if you count total speakers, English is the most spoken one. It has become the most common language used for business, tourism, and the internet across the continent. French and Italian are also widely used, though way less than they used to.

Most European languages are "distant cousins". For example, Spanish, Swedish, and Hindi all share ancient roots. But there are some exceptions: Hungarian, Finnish, and Estonian are completely different. They belong to the Uralic family and sound nothing like each other.

Basque, spoken in a small region between Spain and France, is not related to any other known language in the world. It is likely the oldest surviving language in Europe.

Sadly, not all European languages are thriving. There are a lot of smaller languages that are at risk of disappearing. Languages like Breton (France), Sami (Scandinavia) and Manx (Isle of Man) have fewer speakers every year. However, in places like Wales and Ireland, the local governments are working hard to revive their native languages, teaching about them in schools.

Across Europe and across the world, every language tells a unique story about those who speak it.

WHEN THE CODE SPEAKS ENGLISH

NISTOR ELENA PROFESOR COORDONATOR: TONCEA CRISTIAN COLEGIUL NAȚIONAL "NICOLAE BĂLCESCU"

At first glance, subjects such as English and computer science seem to occupy opposite ends of the educational spectrum. One invites us into a world of artistic expression and complex grammatical rules, requiring in-depth reading, textual analysis, and the development of oral and written communication skills. The other, by contrast, leads us into a universe of binary logic, precise algorithms, and strict syntax, where the main task is writing functional lines of code and solving problems through logical thinking, using a computer. Computer science takes us, rather, toward a world of the machines of the future, in contrast to English, which seems to immerse us in a cultural and artistic universe, among the pages of novels, guiding us to study American or British literature and improve our grammar.

Yet beneath this apparent difference lies a fundamental connection, a common denominator that unites them in a surprising synergy: the English language itself.

This deep interdependence makes English classes, unintentionally, also a form of preparation for computer science, giving students a real and often unnoticed superpower that can catapult their success in the digital era.

1. The vocabulary of code is a pillar of global understanding

The most obvious point of connection is vocabulary. Absolutely all modern programming languages—for example, Python and C++—are built on a foundation of keywords and grammatical structures borrowed directly from English. These are not random symbols, but meaningful terms designed to be intuitive and easy to understand for programmers all over the world.

- if = if: A fundamental logical condition that dictates the program's flow.
- **else** = **otherwise**: The alternative to the *if* condition.
- **print** = **display**: The command that instructs the computer to show information on the screen.
- **return** = **return**: The instruction that specifies the value a function sends back to its caller.
- **for = for**: An iterative loop, essential for repeating a block of code.
- while = while: Another loop that repeats a block of code as long as a condition is true.

Moreover, good programming practices dictate that even custom names—variables, functions, classes, or modules—should be written in English, following conventions such as userName, totalAmount, displayMessage, calculateAverage, or fetchData. This standardization is not merely a convention, but a practical necessity: it ensures that any programmer, from any corner of the world, regardless of their native language, can read, understand, and collaborate efficiently on a code project. Without a solid understanding of these English terms, learning programming becomes exponentially more difficult—similar to trying to learn a language without knowing the alphabet.

2. Grammar and syntax go hand in hand

The parallel between English and code does not stop at vocabulary; it extends deeply into structure and precision. Just as an English sentence follows strict grammatical rules (subject, predicate, complement, agreement, verb tenses, punctuation), code also has an impeccable syntax without which it cannot function.

A comma placed incorrectly in an English sentence can completely change its meaning (for example, "Let's eat, grandma!" vs. "Let's eat grandma!"). Similarly, in programming, a missing brace, a forgotten semicolon, an incorrectly closed bracket, or forgetting to update a counter—creating an infinite loop in languages such as C++—can lead to compilation errors, program crashes, or unexpected behavior.

For instance, in C, if you forget to write return 0; at the end of the main function, the program no longer knows what value to send back to the operating system. The result? A strange number

appears on the screen, completely unrelated to what you intended. It is amusing and frustrating at the same time—a clear sign that the program did not finish its job properly.

Exercises in grammatical analysis in English, which train the mind to identify structures, relationships, and dependencies between words, are surprisingly similar to the process of debugging code. A programmer must "read" the code, identify syntax or logic errors, understand its flow, and correct it with the same precision a linguist uses to correct a flawed sentence. This discipline of precision, cultivated through language study, becomes an essential transferable skill in programming.

3. Information is in EnglishThe strongest argument for

The strongest argument for the importance of English in computer science is that almost all learning materials, documentation, and innovations appear first—and often only—in English. Imagine being a programmer facing a technical challenge or wanting to explore a new technology. Where do you look for solutions?

- Online tutorials and courses: The internet hosts countless platforms offering thousands of courses, most of them in English.
- Official documentation: Every programming language, library, or framework has detailed documentation, almost universally written in English, which is essential for understanding its features.
- Forums and communities: Websites such as Stack Overflow (the programmers' bible for problem-solving), GitHub (the collaboration platform for open-source projects), or Reddit host discussions, questions, and answers predominantly in English.
- **Books and technical articles**: The latest research, trends, and approaches in IT are published in academic journals and specialized books, mostly in English.
- **Developer blogs**: Many industry experts share their knowledge and experience through blogs written in English.

Without solid competence in English, access to this immense knowledge base is severely limited. You cannot understand explanations, formulate clear questions, contribute to discussions, or keep up with the dizzying pace of innovation in the field. In practice, you isolate yourself from the global programming community and from the resources essential for learning and growth.

4. English is the language of the modern world

English is no longer just a foreign language—it has become a global language. If you want to do something meaningful with your life, whether in programming, medicine, art, or sports, you need it in 100% of cases. No one wants a doctor who does not understand English: if a patient's life is in danger and they come from a country with a rare language not taught in schools, but they speak English, a doctor who does not know English will not be able to help them.

The same applies in the world of software—would you trust someone who does not understand English to write an important program for you? If they make a basic mistake, confusing an *if* with a *for*, plans can be ruined. Moreover, programming language documentation is in English. User manuals and video tutorials are in English. The largest online platforms, from YouTube to professional networks like LinkedIn, require English if you want to truly benefit from them.

And it is not just about computer science. If you want to study abroad, take part in an Erasmus project, travel, or work in an international company, English is your entry ticket. Often, it is the difference between staying on the sidelines and playing on the big field.

The moral of today's article

English classes and computer science classes are not two separate worlds. They are two parts of the same preparation, and together they give you a real advantage for the future. English opens access to cutting-edge resources and information, forums, and tutorials where you can find answers to any problem. Computer science gives you the tools to put everything you learn into practice.

When you know English, you can learn faster, search for solutions on international websites, and understand official documentation directly, without confusing translations. You can collaborate with students or programmers from other countries, participate in online communities, and prepare for a career in which English is already a basic requirement.

English and computer science teachers play an essential role here. They show us that these subjects are not just for grades, but for real life. When you write a program or search for a solution on a forum, you are actually repeating English vocabulary and practicing logic. Every line of code is also an English lesson; every error fixed is proof that you can think in a structured way.

This combination is one of the greatest superpowers that high school offers you. Remember it—and use it!

English – the Universal Language of Computer Science

TRIFAN ALEXANDRA Prof. coordonator TONCEA CRISTIAN Colegiul Național "Nicolae Bălcescu", Brăila

The term **informatics** comes from the combination of the words *information* and *mathematics*, designating the science of information processing, especially with the help of computers. Historically, informatics developed as a science from mathematics, and the corresponding English term is *Computer Science*.

To understand why English has become the universal language of computer science, it is necessary to look back and analyze the historical context. The first modern computers were built in the 20th century, during a period marked by major scientific discoveries. The United States and Great Britain played a central role in this development.

During the Second World War, Great Britain developed **Colossus**, considered the world's first programmable electronic computer, which was used to decipher German codes. Shortly afterward, in the United States, **ENIAC** (Electronic Numerical Integrator and Computer) appeared, the first general-purpose computer. All documentation, manuals, and scientific articles related to these projects were written in English.

Thus, from the very beginning, English established itself as the working language in the field of computing. This tradition was later strengthened by the emergence of figures such as Alan Turing, who published his fundamental works on computing machines in English, and by the influence of American universities such as MIT or Stanford, where research in computer science was conducted and presented in the same language.

This situation created a precedent. Countries that wished to keep up with technological progress had no other option than to adopt English as the language of communication and documentation in computer science. Without this, access to resources, research, and innovation would have been much more difficult. As the field developed, research papers, documentation, and manuals continued to be written in English, establishing a lasting tradition. Thus, we can say that *the universal language of computer science was not chosen randomly*, but formed **naturally**.

Computer science is the study of computers and computing systems, which is why we can say it is part of *everything we do*. It is a vast field that includes absolutely everything - from various mathematical algorithms that make up software to the way software interacts with hardware. Computer science stimulates innovation in engineering, business, entertainment, education, and science; therefore, opportunities in this field are unlimited. In most industries, computer science professionals are involved in programming, systems analysis, database administration, software development, and many other activities.

Computer science and English are two interconnected fields, because English is the universal language of IT, enabling access to resources, documentation, and professional communication. Without this linguistic competence, the path of a future specialist becomes much more difficult. That is why, in schools and universities, the emphasis on learning English is increasing

alongside the development of technical skills. Looking to the future, we can observe that technology is advancing at an astonishing pace. Artificial intelligence, virtual reality, blockchain, and biotechnology are just a few rapidly expanding fields. In all of these areas, English remains the main reference language.

Even though automatic translations are becoming increasingly advanced, they cannot fully replace direct knowledge of the language. A professional who understands and speaks English has a clear advantage, because they can interpret nuances, communicate fluently, and understand cultural context.

A particularly interesting field is **artificial intelligence**. Most of the datasets used to train language models are in English. This makes English the "native" language of artificial intelligence.

Even interaction with virtual assistants, software robots, or machine learning platforms takes place largely in English. Specialists who develop artificial intelligence algorithms must understand complex concepts, and explanatory materials are published in international scientific journals written in English. Thus, we can say that English is no longer just a tool for communication between people, but also a language that computers and artificial intelligence "speak."

Why is English important in computer science? Most technical documentation, courses, tutorials, manuals, troubleshooting guides, and books in the field are written in English. Access to the latest technologies is facilitated by knowledge of English. Programming languages are predominantly based on English, using syntax and libraries derived from the English language. A programmer cannot work efficiently without understanding instructions, error messages, or resources, which are inevitably written in English. Moreover, participation in international conferences, collaboration with international teams, and jobs in multinational companies require strong communication skills in English. IT companies seek professionals with very good English skills, offering a broader job market and opportunities for development, specialization, and career advancement.

Globalization has radically transformed the IT job market. Today, a programmer from Romania can work on a project for a company in the United States or Japan, while the team may include members from India, Germany, or Brazil. The language that unites these different cultures is, almost without exception, English.

This reality makes English no longer just an "advantage" on the job market, but a *mandatory skill*. Those who do not know it are, unfortunately, disadvantaged, even if they have remarkable technical abilities.

Computer science is part of our daily lives, its influence constantly increasing - from mobile phone applications to any device equipped with a processor. Smart homes, modern automobiles, digital banking services, video games, and social media networks are all products of computer science.

We can state with certainty that English is the universal language of computer science. Without it, access to knowledge, resources, and opportunities is severely limited. On the other hand, those who master both computer science and English have unlimited possibilities ahead of them. As technology advances and digitalization penetrates all areas of life, the connection between computer science and English becomes increasingly strong. Learning English is not just a school or professional requirement, but an investment in the future - an investment in the chance to actively participate in building the digital world we live in. If computer science is the engine that drives the world forward, then English is the fuel that powers it; therefore, **English is, and will remain, the universal language of computer science** - the key that opens the door to the future and the symbol of unity in a digital world in constant transformation.

L'Europe qui parle : D'une voix à plusieurs

Daria Alexandra Şerban

L'Europe est reconnue comme le continent natal de nombreux pays, le lieu où ont fleuri de multiples cultures et traditions. On y trouve un véritable trésor de plus de 200 langues autochtones, dont la plupart tirent leur origine du proto-indo-européen. Une langue ancienne, oubliée par le temps, parlée il y a des millénaires à travers les steppes d'Europe et d'Asie. De cette langue sont nées les

grandes familles linguistiques : latines, germaniques, slaves et grecques. Ainsi s'est tissée la diversité linguistique de cette union en une vaste toile.

Au fil des siècles, les langues d'Europe ont évolué, se sont mélangées, influencées et transformées. Les échanges commerciaux, les migrations, la littérature et les découvertes scientifiques ont permis aux peuples européens de se rapprocher sans jamais perdre leurs particularités. Chaque langue garde la mémoire d'une histoire, d'un peuple et d'une façon unique de voir le monde.



Aujourd'hui, dans une Europe unie, le multilinguisme joue un rôle essentiel. Il permet aux citoyens de mieux se comprendre, de collaborer et de construire ensemble un avenir commun. Les institutions européennes encouragent l'usage de plusieurs langues officielles afin que chaque voix puisse être entendue et respectée, indépendamment de sa taille ou de son influence.



De plus, la technologie moderne a transformé la manière dont les langues se rencontrent. Internet, les médias et les réseaux sociaux favorisent les échanges interculturels et rendent l'apprentissage linguistique plus accessible que jamais. Grâce à ces outils, les jeunes Européens peuvent communiquer au-delà des frontières et découvrir la beauté de la diversité linguistique au quotidien.

En automne 2001, le Conseil de l'Europe a décidé de célébrer cette diversité linguistique et culturelle. Il a créé la fête

des « Journées des langues européennes » afin d'encourager l'apprentissage des langues étrangères tout au long de la vie, célébrée chaque année le 26 septembre.

Ainsi, la Journée des langues européennes nous montre que la diversité linguistique est une richesse à préserver et à transmettre, et qu'apprendre une langue étrangère, c'est aussi découvrir une nouvelle culture et rapprocher les peuples.

Les mots qui unissent l'Europe

Georgiana Mariana Dobre

Nous avons tous entendu, au moins une fois, de la part des profs de langues étrangères, que le 26 septembre on célèbre la Journée internationale des langues Européennes. Mais combien de gens savent que cette journée a été créée par le Conseil de l'Europe avec un but profond — encourager les gens à apprendre des langues et à apprécier la diversité culturelle de notre continent?

Ce qui nous attire vraiment dans cette fête, ce n'est pas seulement la tradition ou les jeux, mais leur valeur fondamentale : les traditions culturelles. Dans les écoles, cette journée est souvent célébrée avec des activités éducatives, des concours de traduction, des présentations sur différents pays européens ou des moments artistiques en plusieurs langues. Le but n'est pas seulement d'apprendre quelques mots nouveaux, mais de comprendre et d'apprécier

combien la communication et le respect entre les différentes cultures sont importants.







La Journée Européenne des Langues nous rappelle que, peu importe nos différences, les langues nous unissent. Par elles, on peut construire un monde plus ouvert, plus tolérant et culturellement plus riche. C'est une occasion de penser à la puissance des mots, à la beauté de la diversité, et à l'opportunité d'apprendre toujours quelque chose de nouveau.

Alors, célébrons cette journée pas seulement comme une simple festivité, mais comme un pas vers la compréhension, le respect et l'amitié entre les gens. Parce qu'au final, la langue que nous parlons peut être celle qui nous lie et nous rend plus forts dans ce monde globalisé.

Section B: teachers corner

Artificial Intelligence and Foreign Language Learning

Prof. Toncea Angelica Nicolae Bălcescu National College

In recent decades, the development of technology has radically transformed the way we learn, communicate, and work. One of the most fascinating areas of technological progress is artificial intelligence (AI), which has begun to profoundly influence education, including the process of foreign language learning. While in the past, learning a language involved textbooks, teachers, and hours spent in classrooms, today, smart applications, chatbots, and AI-based platforms offer interactive, personalized, and efficient methods for language learning. This article aims to explore how artificial intelligence has revolutionized foreign language learning, the advantages and disadvantages of these technologies, as well as the challenges and future perspectives of this phenomenon.

What is Artificial Intelligence and How Does it Work in Education

Artificial intelligence is the branch of computer science concerned with developing systems capable of performing tasks that traditionally require human intelligence. These include speech recognition, machine translation, natural language processing, image recognition, and decision-making. In education, AI is used for: learning personalization, student performance evaluation, instant feedback provision, simulation of conversations in foreign languages, and creating content adapted to students' individual needs. Through these functions, AI not only simplifies the teaching process but also makes it more accessible and attractive to users.

AI-Based Foreign Language Learning Tools

There are numerous applications and platforms that use artificial intelligence to support foreign language learning. Among the most well-known are:

Duolingo: Duolingo is one of the most popular language learning applications, using AI to adapt exercises based on user performance. The application collects data on frequent mistakes and adjusts lessons to strengthen the learner's weak points.

ChatGPT and other conversational chatbots: Language models like ChatGPT allow users to practice conversations in various languages in an interactive way. Users can write questions or sentences, and the model responds in a natural manner, correcting potential errors and suggesting better alternatives for expression.

Google Translate with voice and visual support: Although initially a simple text translation tool, Google Translate now uses neural networks for more precise translations and has advanced features, such as voice recognition or translating images with text written in another language.

Mondly and Rosetta Stone: These platforms use technologies like speech recognition and augmented reality to create more engaging learning experiences. Mondly, for example, has a chatbot that converses with the user, while Rosetta Stone offers real-time pronunciation correction.

Advantages of Using Artificial Intelligence in Language Learning

One of the greatest advantages is the capacity of AI to personalize the learning process, linked to the possibilities of personalization and adaptability. Each user learns at their own pace and has different strengths and weaknesses. AI can detect these differences and adapt lessons and exercises according to individual needs.

AI makes it possible to learn languages without the need for a human teacher or costly material resources, making it globally accessible. With a simple internet connection, anyone can learn a language from anywhere in the world, at any time.

One of the most frustrating parts of learning a language is repeatedly making the same mistakes. AI offers instant feedback, which helps in quickly correcting errors and consolidating knowledge.

Another major benefit is the possibility of practicing real conversations with a chatbot or virtual assistant. This method provides learners with essential practice in fluent speaking, without the pressure or anxiety associated with speaking in front of a real person.

Current Limitations and Challenges

Despite all its benefits, the use of AI in foreign language learning is not without limitations.

Even though AI can provide grammatically correct translations and conversations, it lacks a deep understanding of cultural context, nuances, and idiomatic expressions. These elements are essential for mastering a language at an advanced level.

Another risk is that users might become dependent on AI-based applications and avoid real-life interactions. Human communication involves more than just words: intonation, facial expressions, body language – aspects difficult for an AI to replicate.

Any AI-based system learns from data. If the data is incomplete or erroneous, the results can be imprecise. For example, some automatic translations can be misleading or incorrect, especially in the case of colloquial language.

Although some fear that AI might replace teachers, the reality is that their role is transforming, not disappearing. Teachers become facilitators of the learning process, guiding students in the use of digital resources and offering emotional, cultural, and social support – things that AI cannot provide. A teacher can explain subtleties of the language, offer real-life examples, and adapt lessons according to the students' socio-cultural context. Furthermore, human interaction remains essential for motivating and engaging learners.

Future Perspectives

As AI continues to evolve, it is expected that foreign language learning methods will also become increasingly sophisticated. Possible trends include: the use of virtual reality (VR) to simulate conversations in realistic environments, personal voice assistants that can sustain complex conversations with users, simultaneous automatic translation using portable devices, extensive gamification of the learning process, with personalized and motivational experiences and integration of AI into formal educational systems, as a support tool for teachers and students, and probably many others soon.

Artificial intelligence has become a reliable ally in the foreign language learning process, offering efficient, accessible, and personalized solutions. However, it must not be overlooked that a language is more than a set of grammatical rules – it is an expression of culture, emotions, and identity. AI can facilitate learning, but it cannot fully replace the human experience. Thus, the most effective approach is a hybrid one: combining the advantages of artificial intelligence with the support offered by teachers and conversations.

Computer Algorithms for Automatic Translators

Prof. Toncea Cristian Nicolae Bălcescu National College

Machine translation is one of the most visible and useful fields of applied artificial intelligence (AI) in everyday life. From using translation applications while traveling to interpreting technical documentation in foreign languages, automatic translation systems have become indispensable in the era of globalization. But behind these seemingly simple tools lies an entire architecture of complex computer algorithms, built to process natural language, understand the semantic structure of sentences, and accurately render the content into another language. The purpose of this article is to explore the types of algorithms that underpin modern automatic translators, explain how they work, and discuss the challenges and future directions of machine translation.

Machine translation is not a new concept. The first attempts date back to the 1950s when rule-based systems were used. Over the decades, machine translation technologies have gone through several major stages:

- Rule-Based Machine Translation (RBMT)
- Statistical Machine Translation (SMT)
- Neural Machine Translation (NMT)

Each stage involved different algorithmic methods, from formal grammars and bilingual dictionaries to complex deep neural network models.

Algorithms in Rule-Based Machine Translation (RBMT)

RBMT systems relied on predefined grammatical, syntactic, and lexical rules, created by linguists and programmers. Translation was carried out through a three-step process:

- 1. Linguistic analysis of the source text segmentation, morphological, and syntactic analysis;
- 2. Semantic transfer conversion of structures from the source language into intermediate structures;
- 3. Text generation in the target language application of rules to form correct sentences.

Algorithms Used:

- Deterministic and non-deterministic Parsers used for syntactic analysis;
- Transition Graphs for morphological analysis;
- Rewrite Rules for transfer between languages;
- Natural Language Generation (NLG) algorithms.

Limitations of RBMT:

- Requires a huge volume of rules for each language pair;
- Cannot manage complex semantic ambiguities;
- Costly to maintain and expand.

Algorithms in Statistical Machine Translation (SMT)

In the early 2000s, RBMT was surpassed by statistical translation, which used large bodies of bilingual texts to learn how to translate automatically, based on probabilities. SMT does not "understand" the language, but learns patterns of co-occurrence of words and phrases, using techniques from statistics and machine learning.

Key Components of SMT:

- Alignment Model identifies correspondences between words in the two languages (e.g., IBM Model 1-5 algorithm);
- Language Model estimates the probability that a sentence is correct in the target language (e.g., n-gram models);
- Translation Model determines the probability that a word or phrase from the source language is translated in a certain way.

Algorithms Used:

- EM (Expectation-Maximization) for probabilistic learning of alignments;
- Viterbi Algorithm for determining the most probable translation;
- Bayes' Theorem used for combining language and translation models;
- Heuristic Decoders for exploring the vast space of possible translations.

Limitations of SMT:

- Translations often unnatural and rigid;
- Difficulties with languages that have very different word orders;
- Requires huge parallel corpora for training.

Algorithms in Neural Machine Translation (NMT)

Since 2016, Neural Machine Translation (NMT) has become the gold standard in the field. It uses artificial neural networks to learn the relationships between the source and target languages in a holistic manner, without relying on explicit rules or alignments.

The Basic Architecture: Encoder-Decoder

- Encoder transforms the source sentence into a numerical vector (semantic representation);
- Decoder generates the sentence in the target language, step by step, based on the vector and previous outputs.

Algorithms Used in NMT:

- a. Recurrent Neural Networks (RNN) and LSTM: Initially used in the encoder and decoder; they can process sequences but have problems with long sentences¹⁰⁵.
- b. Attention-type Algorithms: Introduced to allow the model to focus on relevant words in the source sentence¹⁰⁶; Examples: Bahdanau Attention, Luong Attention¹⁰⁷.
- **c. Transformer:** Proposed by Vaswani et al. (2017) in the paper "Attention is All You Need" ¹⁰⁸; it eliminated the need for RNN or LSTM, using only attention mechanisms ¹⁰⁹; it is the architecture used by Google Translate, DeepL, ChatGPT, etc. ¹¹⁰.

Mathematical functions involved in Transformer:

Scaled Dot-Product Attention:

$$Attention(Q, K, V) = softmax\left(rac{QK^T}{\sqrt{d_k}}
ight)V$$

Where Q = queries, K = keys, V = values.

Training algorithm: backpropagation + optimizers like Adam;

Decoding algorithms: Greedy Search, Beam Search, Top-k sampling.

Examples of Modern Automatic Translators and Their Algorithms:

- a. *Google Translate*: uses NMT with Transformer and immense linguistic corpora; is trained on data from the web, articles, subtitles, forums, etc.; can perform direct multilingual translation, without an intermediate language.
- b. *DeepL*: considered one of the best translators in terms of quality; uses an optimized variant of Transformer and a high-quality corpus; offers a more natural and fluent translation.
- c. Facebook (Meta) No Language Left Behind (NLLB): a project for the translation of underrepresented languages; trains models on hundreds of languages; uses transfer learning and advanced optimizations for low-resource languages.

Current Challenges and Future Directions

- a. Translation of Low-Resource Languages: Current algorithms require massive data to function optimally. Machine translation of rare or indigenous languages is a challenge because there are not enough linguistic corpora.
- b. Ambiguity and Context: Even advanced neural models can produce incorrect translations in the absence of clear context. For example, the word "bank" can mean "bancă" (financial) or "mal" (riverbank).
- c. Ethics and Privacy: The use of online translators for sensitive documents raises data security issues. Also, models can learn and reproduce biases from the training data.
- **d. Multimodal Translation**: The future of translation also includes the simultaneous processing of images, sound, and text. Algorithms will have to integrate information from multiple sources to provide the most precise translations.

Machine translation has come a long way from the rigid rules of the 1960s to the sophisticated neural networks of today. Computer algorithms are the heart of these systems – whether it's statistical methods, neural networks, or Transformer architectures. The future of machine translation is promising, but not without challenges. With the improvement of algorithms, the increase of linguistic resources, and the integration of context and culture in translation, we are getting closer to the ideal of fluent and precise communication between all the languages of the world.

BEFRIENDING THE SCIENCE LAB: OBTAINING NATURAL DYE

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Natural dyes have been used for thousands of years, from prehistoric cave paintings to ancient textiles. Unlike synthetic dyes, natural dyes come from plants, minerals, and even insects, offering earth tones and unique hues. This document explores how to extract and apply natural dyes scientifically, blending tradition with modern experimentation.

1. Historical Roots: Ancient Egyptians dyed fabrics around 2000 B.C. using plants like madder and indigo. The British "red coats" wore uniforms dyed with madder root, while Picts used woad to paint their bodies blue. Indigenous cultures worldwide have passed down natural dyeing knowledge for generations, connecting environment and craft.

- 2. The Science Behind Natural Dyes: Plant pigments such as chlorophyll, carotenoids, and anthocyanins provide colour but often need mordants to fix them to fabric. Mordants like alum (potassium aluminum sulfate) and cream of tartar chemically bind dye molecules to fibres, enhancing colourfastness. pH changes can alter dye colours, demonstrated by red cabbage turning from red to blue depending on acidity or alkalinity.
- 3. Preparing Your Natural Dye Lab with students, step-by-step. Common dye sources: onion skins (orange), beetroot (red), turmeric (yellow), black beans (purple), blueberries (blue). Fabrics: animal fibres like silk and wool absorb dyes better than plant fibres such as cotton or linen. Equipment: pots for simmering, cheesecloth for straining, jars for dye baths, and mordants for pretreatment. Step 1-Chop plant material finely and simmer in water (ratio ~1:4 plant to water) for 20-40 minutes to release pigments. Step 2- Strain the liquid through cheesecloth to create a dye bath; optionally add mordants like alum and cream of tartar. Step 3- Immerse pre-washed fabric or yarn in the dye bath, simmer gently for 20-30 minutes, then soak longer for deeper colour. Step 4- Observe colour changes during soaking and after drying; note that some dyes fade over time without mordants. Avocado skins and pits yield earthy pinks and browns; no mordant needed but colours may fade. Onion skins produce vibrant orange to rusty hues; alum mordant improves colour retention. Real-world example: silk ribbons dyed with avocado skins retained colour vibrancy for over four years in wedding décor. You can experiment with pH modifiers: adding vinegar (acid) or baking soda (alkaline) to dye baths alters final fabric colour.

Conclusion: Natural dyeing can be used as a STEAM activity: combining science, art, and history for engaging learning experiences. STEAM encourages curiosity, experimentation, and environmental awareness. Techniques like tie-dye and batik can be applied using natural dyes for unique patterns. Indigenous knowledge and sustainable practices highlight the importance of respecting natural resources. Invitation to readers: start your own natural dye experiments and discover the vibrant colours hidden in everyday plants.

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THE BOOK – A WINDOW TO UNEXPLORED WORLDS

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In a world where time seems to pass faster and faster, where the daily noise tires our minds and scatters our thoughts, the book remains an oasis of peace, a silent but powerful refuge. It is, perhaps, the simplest and most profound medicine for the soul.

A book is not just a series of words. It is a window to unexplored worlds, a mysterious dialogue between writer and reader, an inner journey that heals, illuminates and transforms. In its pages, we find forgotten emotions, we learn life lessons, we feel that we are not alone in our struggles.

When the soul hurts, a suitable book can be comforting. When thoughts are confused, the right words can bring clarity. When life seems meaningless, the stories of others can restore hope. Reading is a silent but profound form of therapy – it helps us understand ourselves, empathize with others, and find our balance.

Each book we read is a seed planted in the garden of our soul. Some sprout immediately, others remain silent for a while, until their time comes to bloom. But none of them remains without an echo.

Reading teaches us patience, introspection, compassion. It frees us from the prisons of our own ignorance and gives us freedom of thought. It is a form of spiritual nourishment, an exercise in freedom and love.

In a time when technology offers us instant, but superficial information, the book remains a symbol of depth. Where there is noise, the book brings peace. Where there is chaos, it brings order. Where there is emptiness, it fills with meaning.

How can we, teachers, cultivate a love of reading?

As teachers, we have a beautiful and delicate mission: to awaken in students a love of books. It is not enough to impose mandatory readings on them – we must arouse their curiosity, show them that reading can be a joy, not a chore. Here are some practical ideas:

- Choose books appropriate for their age and interests. Sometimes, a contemporary book or one with current themes can arouse interest more quickly than a classic that is difficult to understand at a young age.
- Read passages together in class, with passion. The tone, intonation and emotion with which a teacher reads can completely transform the way students perceive a story.
- \bullet Organize a "reading corner" in the classroom a friendly space with a variety of books, where students can browse and discover at their own pace.
- Encourage free discussions about books. Let students express their opinions, even if they are not academic. Learning also comes from honest expression.
- Use technology to support reading. Recommending audiobooks, e-books or interactive applications can be a bridge between their passion for technology and reading.
- Be a role model for readers yourself. Talk to them about what you are reading, what book moved you or made you smile. Students are more attentive to what we do than to what we say.

A love of reading is not imposed, it is cultivated. With patience, creativity and warmth, we can ignite in the souls of students the spark that, perhaps, will later become the fire of a life accompanied by books.

Because, in the end, books are the most beautiful medicine for the soul – silent, but healing, simple, but profound.

DEVELOPING TEACHERS' POST EXPERENTIAL LANGUAGE SKILLS FOR AND THROUGH IMPLEMENTING EUROPEAN PROJECTS

ADINA VALENTINA MIHAI CHIORPAC COLEGIUL NAȚIONAL "NICOLAE BĂLCESCU", BRĂILA

(Teachers) have a professional commitment to develop their skills and expertise in classroom practice and other related matters through an agreed programme of continuing professional development. $^{\it l}$

In this article I will discuss the importance of continuing professional development for teachers, the institutions involved in this process and a number of strategies and resources available for attaining this goal.

Teaching is lifelong learning. It's that learning which motivates many English language professionals to keep teaching when the benefits from other jobs would otherwise draw them away. Completing an academic program is really only the beginning of a lifelong quest to better understand our students, ourselves, our discipline, and the approaches and techniques we can use to help others to become competent users of English.

A number of resources are available to stimulate new ideas and to help us reconsider old ideas or practices. They will become even more important when I find myself in settings where there are fewer colleagues to share concerns and ideas with on a regular basis than when I was a

student. Some of the ways in which we can continue to grow as a teacher and become a better-informed ESL professional include:

- participating in professional associations concerned with the teaching of English, including attending local, national, or international conferences;
- subscribing to journals and regularly reading periodicals about language teaching and learning and related fields;
- placing the name on mailing lists of major ESL/EFL textbook publishers and information clearinghouses or resources centers;
- offering to review texts for publishers or journals;
- participating in electronic (e-mail) discussion groups and using the Internet to access language teaching and learning websites and electronic journals;
- serving on textbook selection committees in ESL program;
- working on curriculum or textbook development teams in ESL program;
- attending or giving in-service workshops and seminars for teachers;
- participating in summer institutes or special programs to augment and update the knowledge and skills;
- researching issues in classroom or participating in research projects that will enable the teacher to work with colleagues from the same and other institutions who are engaged in analyzing issues relevant to the classroom;
- working collaboratively with professionals in other fields;
- being mentored by experienced colleagues and then becoming a mentor to novice teachers or those who are new to institution or program.

"Key competences for lifelong learning", as defined in the *Recommendation of the European Parliament and the European Council* in December 2006, are considered as relevant in schools across the EU member states and accordingly in Teacher Education as well. These are assigned to specific subject areas:

- communication in the mother tongue;
- communication in foreign languages;
- mathematical competence and competence in science and technology. More cross-curricular competences are:
- digital competence;
- learning to learn;
- social and civic competences;
- sense of initiative and entrepreneurship;
- cultural awareness and expression.

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TALKING THE TALK: HOW MODERN ENGLISH EXPRESSIONS HELP US CONNECT

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If you've ever listened to native speakers chatting, you may have noticed something: they don't always use "textbook English." They use short, catchy expressions that make conversations sound natural, friendly, and sometimes funny. Learning these expressions can help you understand real-life English—and make you sound more confident when you speak.

Imagine this: you and your friend are planning a movie night. You suggest a horror film, but your friend says, "Hmm... I'm not feeling it." That doesn't mean something is wrong; they simply aren't in the mood. Maybe they want a comedy instead. So you change the plan—no biggie. After all, choosing a film shouldn't be a drama.

Sometimes we want to express our emotions clearly—but not too dramatically. That's when low-key helps. For example, "I'm low-key tired today," sounds softer than "I'm exhausted." And when we feel something strongly, we switch to high-key: "She's high-key excited about the school trip."

Modern English is full of reactions—quick emotional responses that show surprise, shock, or even laughter. If someone says something unbelievable, you might hear: "He actually ate the whole pizza? I can't even!" When something feels special, unique, or extra satisfying, you'll often hear: "This song hits different."

Communication isn't just about feelings—it's also about opinions and decisions. When someone says, "That's on you," they're telling you the responsibility belongs to you. Didn't study for the test? That's on you. Chose to stay up late gaming? Also on you.

On social media, you'll often see people commenting with "It's giving..." followed by a vibe or impression: "Your outfit is giving summer vacation." It's a creative, fun way to describe style and atmosphere.

Not everything we hear should be believed immediately. That's why English speakers often say: "Take it with a grain of salt." It's a reminder to stay critical—especially online.

And when tasks seem challenging but possible, the word doable is perfect. A long project? Doable. A weekend road trip? Definitely doable.

And when someone makes a personal choice that doesn't affect you, the best response is: "You do you." It's a supportive way of saying: be yourself.

Modern expressions make English more than a subject—they make it a living language. Using them helps you understand native speakers more easily, participate in natural conversations, sound confident and contemporary, and express feelings and attitudes quickly.

You don't need to use all of them every day. Start with your favorites, try them in class, and notice how they change your communication. And remember: language evolves—so stay curious, stay open, and most importantly, you do you.

THE ADVANTAGES OF THE TRANSLATION CONTESTS

PAULA CLAUDIA GHETU NICOLAE BALCESCU "NATIONAL COLLEGE"

Translation contests offer unique advantages such as skill development, recognition, cultural exchange, and career opportunities. They combine competition with collaboration, motivating participants to improve while also building community among translators.

Some advantages of translation contests one could think of are:

- They promote Language Learning & Cultural Understanding Contests like the EU's *Juvenes Translatores* encourage young people to learn foreign languages, fostering intercultural dialogue and helping them appreciate diversity.
- Skill Development & Practice. Participants sharpen their translation abilities by working with challenging texts. This helps them refine accuracy, creativity, and adaptability in real-world translation scenarios.
- Motivation & Engagement. The competitive element boosts motivation, pushing learners and professionals to perform at their best. It creates a stimulating environment that encourages continuous improvement.
- Recognition & Career Visibility. Winning or even participating in contests can enhance a translator's profile. Awards, certificates, and public recognition provide credibility and visibility in the industry.
- Networking & Community Building. Contests often bring together translators from different backgrounds. This fosters collaboration, peer feedback, and professional connections that can lead to future opportunities.
- Confidence & Personal Growth. Competing helps translators build confidence in their skills. Even those who don't win gain valuable experience and resilience from participating.
- Opportunities for Students. Many contests are designed for students, offering them a chance to test their abilities, gain exposure, and prepare for careers in translation

Translation competitions in schools help students sharpen language skills, boost confidence, and foster cultural awareness while preparing them for global opportunities. There are also a lot of benefits for Students such as: Language Mastery. Students apply grammar, vocabulary, and idioms in real-world contexts, strengthening fluency. Another benefit is critical thinking: Translation requires problem-solving, interpretation, and nuanced decision-making, which enhances analytical skills. Last but not least is confidence Building: Competing validates students' abilities and motivates them to continue learning languages.

In short, translation competitions are not just about winning—they are powerful tools for building linguistic expertise, cultural sensitivity, and global readiness among students.

Diversitatea lingvistică în cadrul Uniunii Europene

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Créée après la Seconde Guerre Mondiale pour ne plus jamais se confronter aux conflits sanglants, l'Union Européenne cherche la prospérité, la paix, le progrès et l'entente pour tous ses habitants. Actuellement, l'UE ressemble à une mosaïque complexe, comptant 27 pays membres, plus exactement, 450 millions habitants.

À l'intérieur de cette immense organisation, on utilise trois alphabètes - latin, grec et cyrillique et 24 langues officielles - l'allemand, l'anglais, le bulgare, le croate, le danois, l'espagnol, l'estonien, le finnois, le français, le grec, le hongrois, l'irlandais, l'italien, le letton, le lituanien, le maltais, le néerlandais, le polonais, le portugais, le roumain, le slovaque, le slovène, le suédois, le tchèque. Parmi ces 24 langues officielles de l'UE, quatre font partie des dix langues les plus utilisées au monde : l'anglais, l'espagnol, le portugais et le français.

Mais pourquoi y a-t-il seulement 24 au lieu de 27 ? Au moment de l'adhésion, chaque pays doit choisir une seule langue officielle même s'il en a plusieurs. C'est le cas de l'Irlande qui a préféré l'anglais au détriment du gaëlique et de la Malte qui a choisi toujours l'anglais, sa langue officielle au lieu du maltais, sa langue nationale. De plus, l'allemand est parlé en Allemagne et en Autriche et le grec est utilisé en Grèce et à Chypre. Au-delà de ces 24 langues officielles de l'UE, il y a une

soixantaine d'autres langues régionales et locales qui sont parlées par 40 millions de personnes et de nombreuses langues apportées par les migrants. D'ailleurs, en 2019, il y avait 175 nationalités cohabitant au sein de l'Union européenne, ce qui signifiait autant de langues potentielles. Comment gérer une telle diversité?

Dès le début, l'ambition de l'UE a été de protéger l'identité culturelle et linguistique de chaque État membre. Le plurilinguisme est l'un des principes fondamentaux de l'UE et le slogan européen « Unie dans la diversité » est bien connu. Cette devise qui garantit le plurilinguisme au sein de l'UE se reflète dans l'article 22 de la Charte des droits fondamentaux de l'UE et dans l'article 3 du traité sur



l'Union européenne. Ce dernier précise que « l'Union européenne [...] respecte la richesse de sa diversité culturelle et linguistique, et veille à la sauvegarde et au développement du patrimoine culturel européen ».

À cette fin, les documents juridiques et les synthèses sont disponibles dans toutes les 24 langues officielles. En outre, chaque citoyen européen doit avoir accès à l'ensemble des documents de l'UE dans la « langue officielle » choisie par son pays au niveau européen. Il doit également pouvoir écrire aux institutions et recevoir une réponse dans cette même langue. Les réunions du Conseil de l'Europe bénéficient, elles-aussi, de la traduction dans toutes les langues officielles. Pendant une telle réunion, les députés européens peuvent s'adresser dans n'importe quelle langue officielle. Pour ce faire, les institutions emploient un nombre impressionnant d'interprètes et traducteurs. Rien qu'au Parlement européen, environ 300 interprètes permanents sont mobilisés. L'institution a aussi régulièrement recours aux quelque 1 500 interprètes indépendants accrédités.

Un autre but de la politique multilinguiste européenne est d'encourager l'apprentissage des langues étrangères sur le continent européen. Les bienfaisances de la maîtrise des langues étrangères sont évidentes autant sur le plan social que sur le plan personnel : sensibilisation culturelle, cohésion sociale, entente mutuelle, prospérité, nouveaux débouchés professionnels. Concrètement, les élèves et les étudiants de tous les États membres de l'UE ont la possibilité d'accéder aux mobilités ou approches pluridisciplinaires grâce aux programmes Erasmus+, Listiac et Multimund. À cela, on ajoute des initiatives comme *La Capitale Culturelle Européenne* qui promeuvent les valeurs locales, les langues minoritaires et régionales ou des compétitions de traduction telles que *Juvenes Translatores* ou *Europe Créative* qui encouragent la compréhension d'une autre perspective et d'une culture différente. Pour célébrer la richesse linguistique de l'Europe, à partir de 2001, on a établi le 26 septembre comme une date officielle de La Journée Européenne des Langues.

Malgré les intentions de l'UE de préserver la diversité linguistique de ses pays, il faut reconnaître le péril de l'utilisation intensive de la langue anglaise dans les institutions européennes et parmi la population. Contesté après le Brexit - surtout par la France et l'Allemagne qui auraient voulu renforcer le statut du français et de l'allemand dans le cadre de l'UE, l'anglais continue d'en être une langue officielle. Et cela parce que le Conseil de l'Union Européenne ne se met pas d'accord pour l'éliminer et que l'anglais est la langue officielle pour l'Irlande et la Malte.

En guise de conclusion, à l'encontre de toute autre organisation internationale, l'Union Européenne respecte la diversité linguistique, religieuse et culturelle de tous ses États membres afin d'éviter les discriminations, les iniquités et de renforcer le dialogue interculturel, la tolérance et le sentiment d'appartenir à un patrimoine européen commun.

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