



LSI Living

LANGUAGE STUDIES INTERNATIONAL - BRIGHTON NEWSLETTER FOR STUDENTS BY STUDENTS

Je suis Mohammed Charlie

By Mohammed Chirani (France)

Last year, as I was having dinner with Luz, a cartoonist at Charlie Hebdo Magazine, he told me he was being threatened and consequently, protected by the police after drawing a cartoon depicting an image of the prophet Mohammad. As a Muslim, I felt hurt because we venerate the prophet Mohammad and we are not allowed to represent him by drawing or acting, even in the good way. It is part of our faith. I disagree with what he did because it was reckless - in the sensitive political context in Middle East during the war in Iraq and Afghanistan under the Bush administration. Those images of the prophet, in this context, were seen by the majority of Muslims, as another symbolic attack against Islam by the West. I also told him that I condemned the people who threatened him. I explained him that threatening a person for insulting Islam is actually anti-Islamic behaviour. The Koran even provides a space for expression of the opponents of the Prophet, when they treat him as a « liar », « sorcerer », « manipulative », « crazy », etc. In this regard, Koranic instruction is to prevent escalation and not to answer back. After this discussion, we went out for a drink and had a good time in Paris at night.

Luz was lucky. He escaped assassination because he overslept. He was 30 minutes late for the Charlie Hebdo editorial meeting, on that black Wednesday morning, where 12 of his colleagues were murdered, in a cowardly attack, in the name of Allah by two French-born sons of Algerian-born parents. I am a

French-born son of Algerian-born parents and I am Muslim. However, I have incomparably more common points with Luz and those who were killed. We share the value of democracy, freedom, freedom of speech, human rights and equality. Yes, I am a French Muslim, but I am a journalist when journalists are killed by terrorists, I am a Jew when Jews are killed by a terrorist in a Kosher supermarket, and I am a police officer when police officers are killed by terrorists; but mostly, I am just a Frenchman whose country is being attacked by terrorism.

All over the world, there are misguided fanatics who are killing others in the name of a perverted Islam. I do not share the same vision of Islam as those terrorists. My Islam teaches me to love others regardless of their religion or belief. My Koran says, "Whoever kills a soul, it is as if he had exterminated mankind entirely. And whoever saves one – it is as if he had saved mankind entirely". My prophet taught me to respond Salam (peace) to people who could offend my religion. I am not alone in thinking that and I am not a representative of a minority of Muslims. I speak and other voices than mine speak and will speak more and more in this direction. The majority of the 6 million Muslims of France share this understanding of Islam and condemn this terrorist attack against our country.

For ten years, I lived in Algeria during the civil war in the 1990s where 200,000 Algerian Muslims were massacred by Islamist terrorists. We have forgotten Muslims are the number one victims of worldwide terrorism, e.g: attacks in Syria, Iraq, Pakistan, and Yemen etc. Terrorism is not only the enemy of the West, it is the enemy of humanity. There is no clash between civilizations, between Us (the West) and the Others (Muslims), or the other way around depending on your perspective.

JE SUIS CHARLIE...

The goal of terrorists is to cleave French society so that everyone retreat to his community and reject the others. If we give in to the temptation of simplification in terms of Us (the West) and Others (Muslims), they will have won.

Let us be clear, there is a clash indeed; it opposes itself. Those who hate others because they are different (fundamentalists, Islamophobes, racists and anti-Semites) and WE, who believe in the human values of Egalité (Equality), Liberté (Liberty), and Fraternité (Brotherhood). Today, we need more than ever to come together for the love of France and its values.

Mohammed Chirani is a former representative of the French authorities in a "banlieue" (sensitive urban area), involved in the RAN network (Radicalization Awareness Network) and author of "Réconciliation Française. Notre Défi du Vivre Ensemble" (trans: "French Reconciliation: Our Challenge of Living Together") Editions Nouvelles François Bourin, Janvier 2014.



In an expression of solidarity with the victims of the Paris attacks last week, Brighton artists, activists, and average citizens posted artwork in the foyer of the Brighton Dome. Image: Mohammad Chirani



LSI Living Columnist Momo interviews our intrepid Director of Academic Studies, the effervescent Rachel Vallins:

Momo, LSI Living : Hey Rachel, first of all, could you please introduce yourself, tell us about your background and how long have you been working at LSI?

Rachel, Academic director at LSI :

Hey Momo, I've been working at LSI since 2005. I remember the day of my interview, I walked into the school and students and teachers welcomed me and I felt at home immediately. I was a teacher here for nearly 7 years, then I became Assistant Academic Director 3 years ago. Since December 2014, I've been the Academic Director. I'm not from Brighton, I grew up in a really boring town called Guildford, it's between here and London, so I moved to Brighton as soon as I could.

Momo : As you said, you have just become A cademic Director at LSI, Could you tell us more about your new position and what does it consists of?

Rachel: *I'm so excited about my new position! This week I've been thinking about that question a lot and if you ask me in a year I might have a better answer. Basically, it's my job to make sure that teachers and students are in the right place at the right time.*

Momo : Do you miss teaching ?

Rachel: *That's a very good question and the answer is a big, fat YES. I really enjoy teaching, but I can't do two jobs at once so I had to choose. I hope I'll get the opportunity to do some teaching during the year. I'm lucky because I still have a lot of contact with students so that helps.*

How To Teach an Old Dog New Tricks

By **Donato** (Alison's online student)

Are you in your thirties/forties/fifties/sixties? Does your English go slightly beyond "Nice to meet you" and "How are you?" Do your children use English like a secret language, so that you are never aware of what they are getting up to? Trust me, it is never too late! Here is some good advice to improve your English based on my own experience:

- Attend an LSI Brighton course. Yes, your classmates will be teenagers looking at you as if you are a strange insect who's fallen in their soup. One of them could even tell you: "You know, my mother is much younger than you!" [true story]. The right reaction to that? Stop crying and go on studying!
- Book an LSI Brighton e-learning course. On Skype your teacher's speech could sound something like "Let's go on reviewingbzzz exercibzzzz can you hearbzzzzzzzz...". No, that's not a wireless connection problem: they are just testing your listening comprehension.
- Convince your boss that his/her English is not as good as he/she thinks and he/she really needs to attend an LSI Brighton course. At work, you will sadistically ask each other: "Have you done the homework for Alison?" It is a good incentive, I'm telling you.
- In Brighton, force yourself to talk with English people. Don't be shy, that's the only way to improve your English. Be relaxed and try to get on with it.
- Driving your car to work, wear your earphones and start a conversation with your invisible teacher. Be careful, he/she is very strict...
- Watch English movies in the original language. It is going to be a weird experience, I know, but when you get Maggie Smith's lines in

"Downton Abbey", oh, guys, you will be so excited!

- Try to read English books. Don't start with the greatest masterpiece in UK literature: you will never get through it. Start with comic strips, instead, and then go on to something else. If you have a hobby, choose a publication dedicated to it: reading will be easier and pleasant.
- Study A LOT and do your homework. You have lost a good part of your neurons, (sorry about that), and learning is not as easy as when you were in your 20s. BUT, you are older and more mature (I mean, you should be...) so that when your classmates are leaving for a party on the beach, tell them "Enjoy the party!", take your

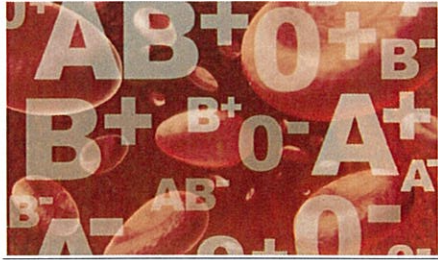


worksheets and review the lesson. (It sounds a little bit sad, right? Yeah, I agree with you).

- Listen to your colleagues' English speech. When you realize that they are making A LOT of mistakes that you wouldn't make, well, you'll have the kind of satisfaction you rarely have at work.
- There are so many chat and discussion forums. Sign up and let's start to write to someone in the UK. OK, your wife/husband/girlfriend/boyfriend probably wouldn't be happy at all to know about that. But in a couple there are some secrets that have to be kept...

What Is Your Blood Type?

By Binny (Korea)



Does Your Blood Type Match Your Character?

It is believed by some countries that your astrological sign reveals a lot about your personality. However, in Asian countries, blood type is a common way to predict a person's character:

Type A

The Type A character is typically timid. They are sensitive and not assertive. But they are punctual, trustworthy, and patient. They are generally considered to be sincere and prudent, and they seek stability. They don't want to stand out so they are not interested in being the life and soul of the party.

Type B

Type B people have strong personalities. Because of this character, they are often told they are a little bit psycho. However, they have good concentration and are quick-witted. They have a sterling sense of humor but sometimes naughty. They are very imaginative, so research says that they are more likely to have jobs in graphic design.

Type O

Type O's best features are being active and self-confident. They are the type who hate losing, and are stubborn. But they have sense of humor and are optimistic. That's why they get along with anyone. They are generous and emotional. Sometimes, they live by loyalty and will die by loyalty.

Type AB

Type AB people are dreamy, fussy, and cold-hearted. Type AB can be quite two-faced as well. But they are excellent schemers. They think analytically and calmly, so they hardly ever lose their temper. They are very good at what interests them, but they refuse to do things they are not interested in. They are usually stylish because they are people of unique individuality.

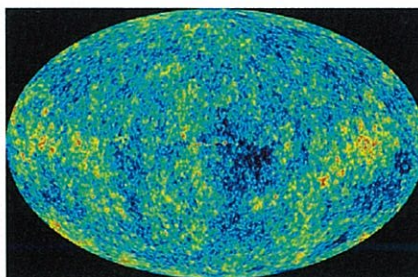
The Mirror Universe

By Mehmet Ali Yaman

Time runs in one direction, but new research indicates that the Big Bang might've created a mirror universe where time runs backward.

Julian Barbour, at the University of Oxford, has proposed a theory that says a low-entropy early universe is inevitable because of gravity, and ultimately that's what gives time its arrow. They tested the idea with a basic model with 1,000 particles and the physics of Newtonian gravity, to see how it worked. Here's *Scientific American's* take on the findings:

The system's complexity is at its lowest when all the particles come together in a densely packed cloud, a state of minimum size and maximum uniformity roughly analogous to the big bang. The team's analysis showed that essentially every configuration of particles, regardless of their number and scale, would evolve into this low-complexity state. Thus, the sheer force of gravity sets the stage for the system's expansion and the origin of time's arrow, all without any delicate fine-tuning to first establish a low-entropy initial condition.









To take that a step further, the study also shows the "simulated Big Bang" actually happened in two directions — meaning if the real Big Bang followed the same rules, it would've created a mirror universe where time essentially runs in reverse from our universe. Basically, time would run backward there. Here's how Barbour described the potential findings, in what almost sounds like the pitch for a high-concept sci-fi flick:

"If they were complicated enough, both sides could sustain observers who would perceive time going in opposite directions. Any intelligent beings there would define their arrow of time as moving away from this central state. They would think we now live in their deepest past."

The Origins of Chinese Astrology According to Legend

The myth and mystery that surround Chinese astrology make it difficult to appreciate its wisdom. But myth is part of its tradition. The fanciful legend of the Buddha and the 12 animals, for example, describes how Chinese astrology began:

The Buddha invited every creature on earth to take part in a festival celebrating the new year, but only 12 arrived. To show his gratitude, the Buddha granted each of these noble animals the honor of ruling the planets for one year every 12 years, when each animal would influence the character of people born during its year of reign.

	Snake	1941 1953 1965 1977 1989 2001 2013
	Horse	1942 1954 1966 1978 1990 2002 2014
	Goat	1943 1955 1967 1979 1991 2003 2015
	Monkey	1944 1956 1968 1980 1992 2004 2016
	Rooster	1945 1957 1969 1981 1993 2005 2017
	Dog	1946 1958 1970 1982 1994 2006 2018
	Pig	1947 1959 1971 1983 1995 2007 2019
	Rat	1948 1960 1972 1984 1996 2008 2020
	Ox	1949 1961 1973 1985 1997 2009 2021
	Tiger	1950 1962 1974 1986 1998 2010 2022
	Rabbit	1951 1963 1975 1987 1999 2011 2023
	Dragon	1952 1964 1976 1988 2000 2012 2024



This Crazy Week...

By Delia Chandler, Editor LSI Living



Wow, what a week. But I don't need to tell you all that. We all have been going through your own little personal "circle of hell" this week. We all have "holiday hangovers", and we all are bloody freezing! And the world... well, it seems to have lost its damn mind... again.

To those of you who have just arrived I say this: get a good raincoat. Umbrellas are useless. But don't worry. The weather will get better... by May. So stop feeling sorry for yourselves, take your vitamin C, and embrace the wind, rain, and lack of sun. Bundle yourselves up in that brand new raincoat and go breathe in the beauty of our raging, tumultuous sea. She's moody, but gorgeous this time of year. But do it from a safe distance. Mother Nature can have a sick sense of humor.

To those of you who have been here for a while, I say: Put on your raincoat and stop complaining. You know the weather won't get better until May, so stop feeling sorry for yourself, take your vitamin C, and embrace the wind, rain, and lack of sun. Bundle yourselves up and go breathe in the beauty of our raging, tumultuous sea. She's moody, but gorgeous this time of year. But you are an old pro by now. You know how close to get to her before she gets grumpy.

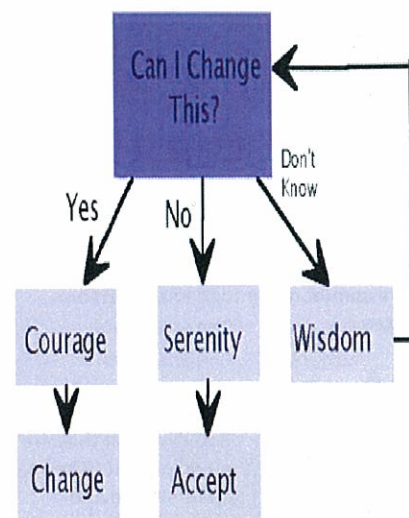
And to myself, I say: remember "The Serenity Prayer".

The **Serenity Prayer** is the common name for a prayer authored by the American theologian Reinhold Niebuhr^{[1][2]} (1892–1971). It has been adopted by Alcoholics Anonymous and other twelve-step programs. The best-known form is:

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, The courage to change the things I can, And the wisdom to know the difference.

Now, I'm not an alcoholic (nor am I a Christian, and some of you are not as well so fill in the blank as needed), but I sure do need to relax. And so do you. So relax... stop beating yourselves up... go have some fun... the language will come to you at times when you least expect it, and in ways you would have never imagined. Amen.

The Serenity Prayer as a Flow Chart



ANGRY	APART	BLESSINGS	CHERISH	CHRISTIAN	CONFUSED
DARK	DIVORCED	EXPERIENCE	FAMILY	FORSAKE	FRIENDS
GOOD	HOPE	LIGHT	LOSSES	MOTHERHOOD	OASIS
PAIN	PARENTS	REARRIED	RESPONSIBLY	SIBLINGS	STRENGTH
THANKFUL	TOGETHER	TRAIN	TRIALS	TRIPLE	TRIUMPHS
TRUST	TWICE	UNIQUE	UPSET	WORKING	

J	U	N	V	W	O	R	K	I	N	G	W	K	T	P	E	H	T	U	Y
P	U	T	X	T	R	I	P	L	E	O	F	B	S	V	B	O	Q	E	T
O	E	O	P	Y	T	R	I	U	M	P	H	S	U	T	G	S	T	O	L
X	I	G	H	T	V	D	P	F	K	G	S	T	R	E	N	G	T	H	I
K	N	B	R	T	H	S	B	K	C	T	T	I	T	S	U	N	B	F	B
R	V	B	S	A	E	J	Z	N	S	M	A	H	E	U	Q	I	N	U	I
D	U	G	Y	T	F	T	T	A	T	L	E	O	X	S	E	L	Z	Q	S
U	J	U	X	X	K	A	I	H	S	R	Z	V	W	O	J	B	Z	K	N
A	L	H	G	A	P	A	R	T	T	R	E	M	A	R	R	I	E	D	O
J	N	R	S	K	R	A	D	Z	J	M	G	N	T	I	C	S	W	O	P
E	S	G	N	I	S	S	E	L	B	C	O	A	J	F	R	H	Z	X	S
X	D	W	R	G	R	L	D	F	J	H	O	T	G	U	J	V	V	N	E
P	N	H	B	Y	D	E	A	A	N	R	D	T	H	D	P	Z	S	W	R
E	E	O	R	Z	S	M	H	F	K	I	G	V	V	E	A	L	I	Q	N
R	I	P	E	U	I	S	O	C	V	S	A	B	D	B	R	O	S	I	J
I	R	E	F	L	E	R	P	O	L	T	A	P	N	I	E	H	A	M	Y
E	F	N	Y	S	S	C	R	Y	I	I	B	L	W	M	N	R	O	K	K
N	O	W	S	A	S	C	I	F	G	A	H	E	H	Y	T	M	H	O	J
C	K	O	K	O	E	J	Z	W	H	N	Q	I	X	Q	S	Q	K	X	D
E	L	E	Z	D	Z	J	N	N	T	V	N	Y	Z	Z	Q	J	N	Q	K