

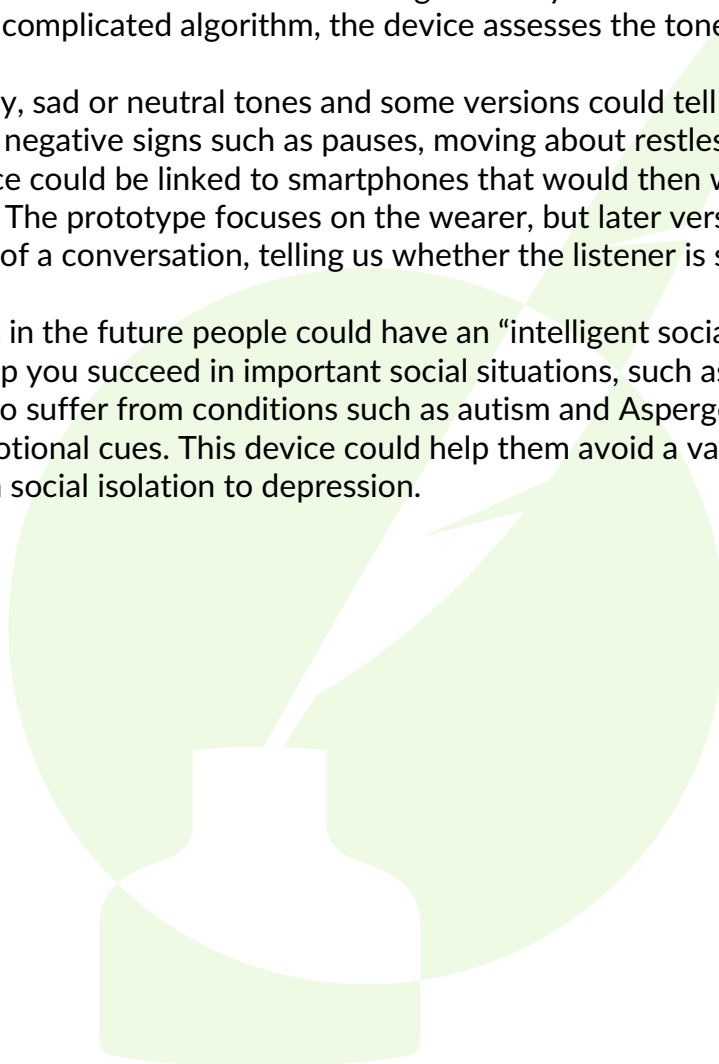
TEXTO A

An End to Tedious Conversations

Have you ever worried that your conversations might be boring? Well, help could be at hand from a watch that gives a warning buzz if you have been talking too much and in a monotonous manner. Scientists from Massachusetts have created a device worn on the wrist that uses artificial intelligence to read the tone of conversations. The watch is loaded with sensors that capture physiological data such as heart rate, blood pressure, temperature and movement. That information is then combined with audio recordings to analyse a conversation's energy levels and vocabulary. Using a complicated algorithm, the device assesses the tone with an 83% accuracy level.

It understands happy, sad or neutral tones and some versions could tell you if you are boring others by collecting negative signs such as pauses, moving about restlessly or putting a hand to your face. The device could be linked to smartphones that would then warn you if a conversation was going downhill. The prototype focuses on the wearer, but later versions could also analyse audio from all sides of a conversation, telling us whether the listener is still interested in what we are saying.

Experts believe that in the future people could have an "intelligent social coach right in their pocket". It could help you succeed in important social situations, such as job interviews. It could also help people who suffer from conditions such as autism and Asperger's syndrome, since they struggle to read emotional cues. This device could help them avoid a variety of negative consequences, from social isolation to depression.



QUESTIONS

A.1.- Are the following statements TRUE or FALSE? Copy the evidence from the text. No marks are given for only TRUE or FALSE. (Puntuación máxima: 2 puntos)

a) Scientists have invented a device that alerts you with a visual signal when you are having a tedious conversation.

FALSE. Evidence from the text: "Well, help could be at hand from a watch that gives a warning buzz if you have been talking too much and in a monotonous manner." There is no mention of a visual signal.

b) The new watch, as it is now, collects information from both parties involved in the conversation.

FALSE. Evidence from the text: "The prototype focuses on the wearer, but later versions could also analyse audio from all sides of a conversation, telling us whether the listener is still interested in what we are saying." Currently, the watch does not collect information from both parties.

A.2.- In your own words and based on the ideas in the text, answer the following questions. Donot copy from the text. (Puntuación máxima: 2 puntos)

a) What kind of information does the new watch need to analyse conversations?

The new watch needs physiological data such as heart rate, blood pressure, temperature, and movement, along with audio recordings to analyze a conversation's energy levels, vocabulary, and tone.

b) In what ways might this new invention be useful in the coming years?

The new invention could be useful in several ways in the coming years. It could act as an intelligent social coach, helping individuals improve their communication skills and succeed in important social situations like job interviews. Additionally, it could assist people with conditions like autism and Asperger's syndrome, who struggle to read emotional signals, to avoid negative consequences such as social isolation and depression.

A.3.- Find the words in the text that mean: (Puntuación máxima: 1 punto)

- a) way (paragraph 1) **manner**
- b) gadget (paragraph 1) **device**
- c) trainer (paragraph 3) **coach**
- d) achieve good results (paragraph 3) **succeed**

A.4.- Complete the following sentences. Use the appropriate form of the word in brackets when given. (Puntuación máxima: 2 puntos)

- a) **Although/ Even though** many new devices have started to conquer the market, smartphones are still the **most** popular gadget among young people.
- b) If you **were** (be) a boring salesman, **what** would you do? Would you wear one of those new watches?
- c) This is the first device that **matches** (match) different types of data to read the tone of conversations. Every detail **is put** (put) together with the greatest precision.
- d) Complete the following sentence to report what was said.
“What else did you buy?” I asked the girl **what else she had bought**.

A.5.- Write about 100 to 150 words on the following topic. (Puntuación máxima: 3 puntos)

Are you a fan of the new technologies? Justify your answer.

I am undoubtedly a fan of new technologies, and I firmly believe that embracing them is a justified choice. The advent of the internet, social media, and messaging apps has revolutionized communication, bringing people from different corners of the world closer together. These platforms facilitate collaboration, knowledge sharing, and staying connected with loved ones.

Moreover, new technologies have significantly improved the efficiency and convenience of daily tasks. From smartphones to smart home devices and AI-driven virtual assistants, our lives have become more streamlined and automated. This provides us with more time to focus on activities that matter, fostering personal growth and development.

Beyond personal benefits, new technologies have played a pivotal role in transforming industries and driving economic growth. Innovations in artificial intelligence, renewable energy, and biotechnology can address pressing global challenges like climate change and healthcare disparities. Embracing these technologies offers the potential to create a sustainable and equitable future for all.

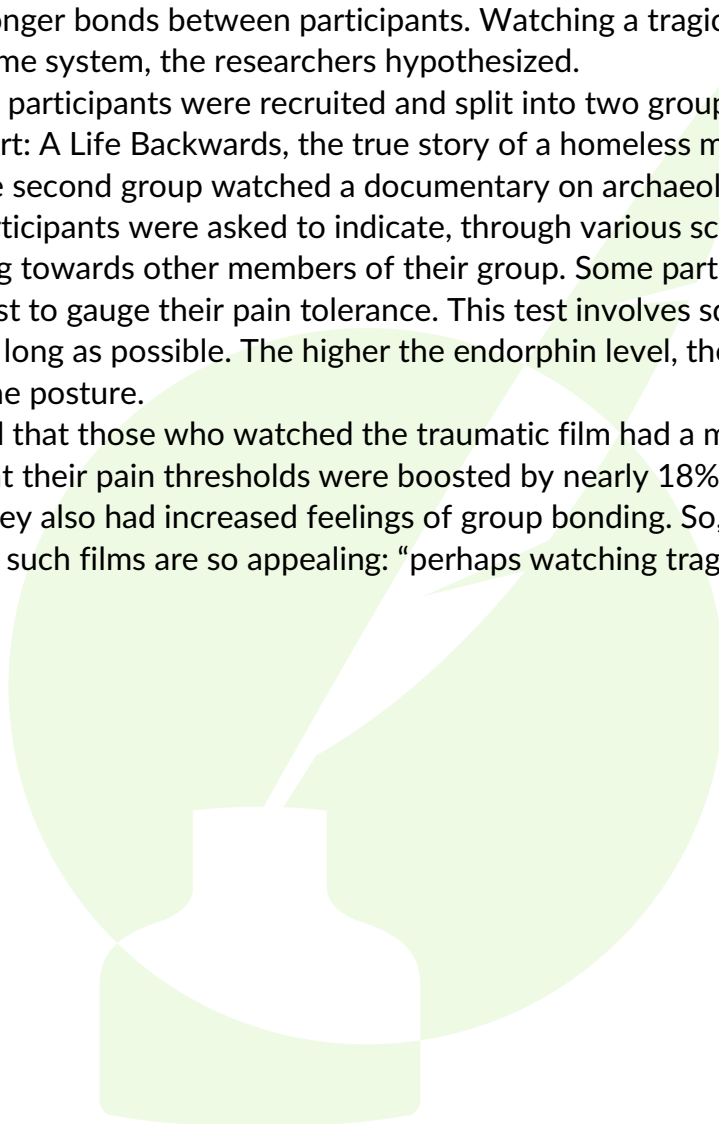
TEXTO B

Tragedy Can Be Good for Your Health

“Why do we waste so much of our time and money going back to novels and films that make us cry?” asked a research team at the beginning of a new study. In their previous investigations of group activities like dancing, laughing and singing, they found that feel-good chemicals called endorphins were released in the brain, leading to increased pain tolerance. They also discovered that there were stronger bonds between participants. Watching a tragic film unfold in a cinema might trigger the same system, the researchers hypothesized.

For their study, 169 participants were recruited and split into two groups. The first group was shown the film *Stuart: A Life Backwards*, the true story of a homeless man with a troubled childhood, while the second group watched a documentary on archaeology. Before and after seeing the films, participants were asked to indicate, through various scales, their mood and their feelings of belonging towards other members of their group. Some participants were also asked to do the wall-sit test to gauge their pain tolerance. This test involves squatting with their back against a wall for as long as possible. The higher the endorphin level, the longer a person should be able to sustain the posture.

The results revealed that those who watched the traumatic film had a much stronger change to their moods and that their pain thresholds were boosted by nearly 18% as compared to the control scenario. They also had increased feelings of group bonding. So, psychologists may have found a reason why such films are so appealing: “perhaps watching tragic films is good for your health!”



QUESTIONS

B.1.- Are the following statements TRUE or FALSE? Copy the evidence from the text. No marks are given for only TRUE or FALSE. (Puntuación máxima: 2 puntos)

a) According to the text, dancing and singing produce a stronger resistance to pain.

TRUE. Evidence from the text: "In their previous investigations of group activities like dancing, laughing and singing, they found that feel-good chemicals called endorphins were released in the brain, leading to increased pain tolerance."

b) In the investigation described in the text, tragic stories lead to a heightened sense of connection between people.

TRUE. Evidence from the text: "The results revealed that those who watched the traumatic film had a much stronger change to their moods and that their pain thresholds were boosted by nearly 18% as compared to the control scenario. They also had increased feelings of group bonding."

B.2.- In your own words and based on the ideas in the text, answer the following questions. Do not copy from the text. (Puntuación máxima: 2 puntos)

a) Describe the pain tolerance test and its purpose.

The pain tolerance test involves participants doing the wall-sit test, which requires squatting with their back against a wall for as long as possible. The purpose of this test is to measure the participants' pain tolerance and see how their endorphin levels affect their ability to withstand the posture.

b) Give two reasons why the researchers consider that watching dramatic films may be good for you

Two reasons why the researchers consider that watching dramatic films may be good for you are that watching tragic films triggers the release of endorphins in the brain, leading to increased pain tolerance, and that those who watched the traumatic film in the study experienced a stronger change in their moods and increased feelings of group bonding, suggesting that tragic stories might enhance emotional well-being and social connection.

B.3.- Find the words in the text that mean: (Puntuación máxima: 1 punto)

a) set off (paragraph 1) **trigger**

b) problematic (paragraph 2) **troubled**

c) measure (paragraph 2) **gauge**

d) attractive (paragraph 3) **appealing**

B.4.- Complete the following sentences. Use the appropriate form of the word in brackets when given. (Puntuación máxima: 2 puntos)

a) Romantic films, **which** are sometimes very silly, are often more entertaining **than** westerns.

b) I felt like the **luckiest** (lucky) person in the world after I **won/had won** (win) two tickets to attend a play in New York.

c) I really don't feel like **going** (go) out to the cinema tonight. I'd rather **stay** (stay) home and watch TV.

d) Complete the following sentence to report what was said.

"Can you meet me at the cinema, Doug?" Mary wanted to know **if Doug could meet her at the cinema.**

B.5.- Write about 100 to 150 words on the following topic. (Puntuación máxima: 3 puntos)

What are your favourite types of films? Name one film and explain why you enjoy it.

Movies are a beloved form of entertainment, and everyone has their favourite genres. For me, science fiction holds a special appeal due to its imaginative worlds and thought-provoking themes. Among the many sci-fi films, "Inception" stands out as a captivating masterpiece that continues to fascinate me.

Science fiction movies transport me to incredible and futuristic realms, igniting my imagination. "Inception," directed by Christopher Nolan, exemplifies the genre's magnetism. Its intricately intertwined plot, mind-boggling twists, and captivating visual effects keep me engaged throughout.

The film's well-developed characters add depth to the narrative, making it a truly immersive experience. Additionally, the movie's practical stunts and stunning visuals create an unforgettable cinematic journey.

In a nutshell, "Inception" remains an all-time favourite due to its complexity, compelling storytelling, and visual brilliance. It epitomizes why science fiction holds a cherished place in my heart and continues to inspire my love for films.

