A brain-based approach to teaching English as a second language
by Tanju Deveci

Brain-compatible learning environment is one of the crucial elements for our language program to be successful. This kind of environment needs to be body-friendly. The furniture should be rearranged to provide more space, and to more comfortably seat students. This will reduce stress by allowing students to have more personal space. Furthermore, the environment needs to be enriched. The school should offer an interesting and inviting setting, with emphasis on objects from the real world. A lot of resource should be available to the learners. Among these are books, videos, etc. Dorner (2002) states that immersion in enriched environment causes neurons to enlarge and dendrites to grow, which results in a denser, heavier brain that has a greater capacity to problem-solve.

Some may believe that language immersion can only take place in an English-speaking environment. Although I, also, believe that immersion in English-speaking environment may lead to quicker language acquisition, I am convinced that we can immerse students of English as a second language in their home countries as well. The main way of doing this is to create appropriate physical environment, which, in return, affects the emotional states of our learners. In such environment, students are given English names and identities, and they imagine that they are in England, or the United States of America. If they are business English students, we can create an office environment where every student plays a role of an employee, the manager, the photocopy-man, etc. Dhorty & Jensen (1998) say that playing with a new identity can be a very liberating experience and students will responds in remarkable ways. Their ego-investment and self-consciousness will begin to diminish, and spontaneity and humor will soon take their place.

Depending on their roles, they can carry out their daily routines, work on business reports, take part in "office meetings", etc. They are encouraged to use English as much as possible, and their L1 actually becomes the foreign language. The physical environment includes all types of English or American artifacts and posters of places in England or America. Guest speakers should be invited to class, as well. Actually, immersion should not be limited to the classroom. They can even have fieldtrips to American/English firms working in their-home towns. If the necessary arrangements can be made, they can even work at these firms for a few hours a week.

Finally, it is crucial to mention that the brain strives to have feedback to survive. Assessment is one way of giving feedback. Assessment has always taken place and it will preserve its importance and necessity in the future as well since it informs students of their progress. However, how we assess our learners is of great importance. Our learners need to have plenty of feedback, but it has to be specific and immediate. We also need to vary our assessment techniques. The main reason for this is that we know that students learn in various ways (and at different rates). In our assessment techniques we have to focus on the development of "whole brain" capacity and each of the different learning styles. In this way, we can have more complete and accurate information about our learners' language acquisition. Jensen (1996) suggests that we use observations in problem-solving, give learners a choice in activities and games to play and watch, use discussion and reflection after a play, movie or musical, watch the type of learning and intelligence used most, allow for the use of music and sounds, allow students assess themselves, give them a choice on type of assessment, let journal or diary writing with reflection and personal growth and allow them to produce mind maps. In these ways, students will be able to demonstrate understanding by being able to use the learning in different contexts. They will produce meaningful products that move beyond personal success, and students will be able to use a variety of inquiry skills to solve problems, create products, and access information. Therefore, learning will be reflected by assessment. As long as the rubric or guidelines for success are clear, students will not be surprised to see the results of the assessment, and...
assessment will incorporate high-level, complex knowledge (Tileston, 2000).

References
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Biodata
Tanju Deveci studied Adult Education at Ankara University, Turkey. He did masters in English Language Teaching at Middle East Technical University, Ankara, and received his PhD degree in Adult Education and Lifelong Learning from Ankara University. He taught EAP in Bilkent University, and Sabanci University in Turkey. Currently, he works as an Assistant Professor of Communication at the Petroleum Institute, Abu Dhabi.
Among his research areas are speech acts, andragogical orientations of language learners, learning styles and lexical competence.
Tanju Deveci can be contacted at: tanjudeveci@yahoo.com
some tasks to be solved. These tasks are related to the language structures that are required to be learnt. In Grammar Translation Method, the goal of learning a second or foreign language is mainly to be enabling to read the literature of that language and is to get benefit from intellectual development that results from foreign and second language study. Grammar Translation Method enables to learn detailed grammatical rules of target language and enables to translate into and out of the target language. 8. 2 Communicative Approach to the Teaching of English as a Second Language Language is an open-ended system. It is a changing phenomenon. Parole is individualistic in nature. Chomsky defines them as competence and performance. Competence is the knowledge of the abstract rules of the language, while performance is the actual use of language based on this abstract knowledge. Learning a language covers different areas of language. English enjoys the status of second or third language in India. It is not a foreign language as German or French are. Not a single area of life remains untouched by its influence. It is aptly described as a window on the world.