

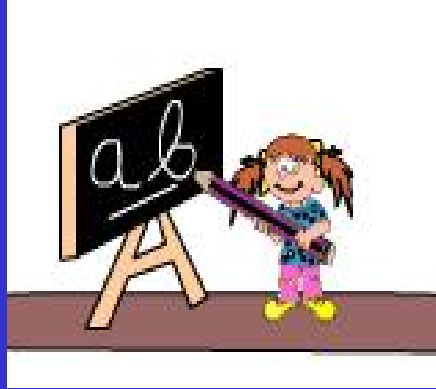
LEARNERS AND LEARNING: The importance of affect

Sabanci University
ISTANBUL, 2007

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University of Seville

(Instituto Cervantes, Istanbul)





- **FACT: Many students lack motivation, find classrooms irrelevant, make little process in learning, may not become useful members of society.**
- **FACT: Many other students show enthusiasm in the classroom, learn the language well, take away from their classes very important life skills as well as language skills.**

- **FACT: Sometimes, no matter how hard we prepare our material, our classes are unsuccessful**
- **FACT: Sometimes we can experience the magic of seeing deep and lasting learning going on in our classes**

Affect refers to a wide range of phenomena that have to do with emotions, moods, dispositions and preferences.

(Oatley and Jenkins)



**THE MIND WITHOUT AFFECT
ISN'T REALLY MIND AT ALL.**

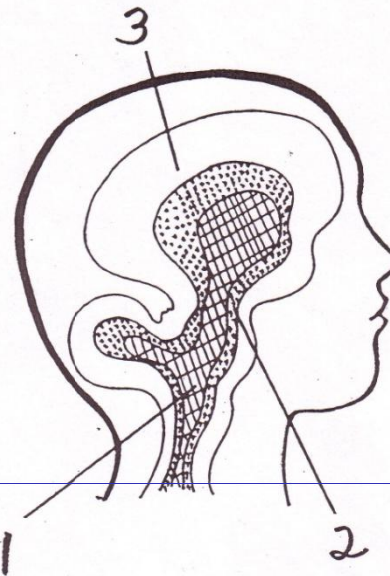
(Joseph LeDoux)

**The dinosaurs of the future will be
those who try to live and work only
from the head.**

Dr. Robert K. Cooper

neo-cortex
(thinking)

brain stem
(survival)



limbic system
(emotions)

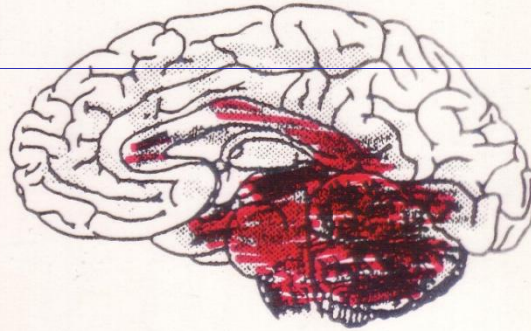
THE TRIUNE BRAIN

(Dr. Paul MacLean)

Brain Activity in States of:



High Challenge, Low Stress



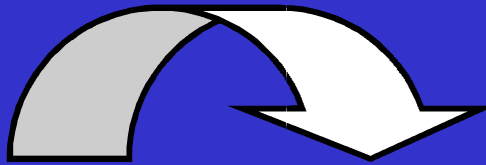
Stress, Anxiety, Threat or
Induced Learner Helplessness



**The truth of the matter is that about
99% of teaching is making students
feel interested in the material.**

(Noam Chomsky)

Success in learning depends less on materials and techniques and more on what goes on inside and between the people in the classroom. (Earl Stevick)



- **Success in learning depends less on things –and more on people – and the affective side of learning**

Affect in language learning

```
graph TD; A[Affect in language learning] --> B[Individual factors]; A --> C[Relational factors]; B --> D[motivation]; B --> E[anxiety]; B --> F[learning styles]; C --> G[crosscultural]; C --> H[classroom]; F --> I[self-concept, self-esteem]
```

Individual factors

Relational factors

motivation

crosscultural

anxiety

classroom

learning styles

self-concept, self-esteem

cognitive



affective

physical

IN A PET SHOP

A: You are the shop assistant

**B: You want to buy a tropical fish.
Ask how much it costs, how to take
care of it, etc.**

CARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE ACTIVITIES

- They have personal meaning for students
- They are examples of real communication
- They take into account mind, emotions and the body
- They offer choice
- They facilitate good group dynamics

**Technique is what the teacher
uses...**

until the real teacher is there.

(Parker Palmer)

**“To know” and “to do” is part of being a
good teacher...**

but above all “to be”.

- Lecturer
- Teacher
- Facilitator

knowledge of the language, of methods
...and of ways to create a
psychological atmosphere
conducive to high quality learning

It includes the consideration of what
happens inside and between the
people in the classroom.

(Adrian Underhill)

After a class that didn't go well, what do you do?

- Complain to your colleagues
- Get in a bad mood
- Blame the weather, the students or... yourself
- Eat chocolate

Will any of these help you?

What can help you?

REFLECTION

A diagram illustrating the Learning Cycle. It consists of three rectangular boxes. The top box is light orange and contains the word 'LEARNING'. Below it are two yellow boxes, 'EXPERIENCE' on the left and 'REFLECTION' on the right. A blue rectangular area connects the bottom of the 'EXPERIENCE' box to the bottom of the 'REFLECTION' box, forming a continuous path.

LEARNING

EXPERIENCE

REFLECTION

Process of reflection

- Think of a situation where things didn't go very well.
- Remember all the details about what happened and how you felt.
- Investigate reasons for behaviors
- Generate multiple explanations for what happened.
- Decide what changes could be made so in future situations things could go better.

LANGUAGE OF EMPATHY

Positive situations:

How wonderful (exciting, nice...)!

I'm really happy for you.

Well done! Good job! Wow!

Congratulations. That's terrific!

That's the way to do it.

You are really lucky.

Negative situations:

Oh, dear! That can't be.

Oh, no! What a problem!

That's too bad. I'm so sorry.

What a pity! Poor you.

How awful (terrible, dreadful, embarrassing...)!

A very good friend is coming to visit you.

Your flat has been broken into again.

Today is your birthday.

Someone stole your wallet/handbag.

You have just been given a 20% raise in salary.

You have a terrible toothache.

You've just won a free trip to anywhere you want to go.

You lost your keys and can't get in to your house.

Exchanged in ELT conversation class in Seville, Spain

Teacher: Antonio, what did you do last weekend?

Juan: I goed to a big party and met Shakira.

**Teacher: No, I went to a party.
Carmen, what did you do last weekend?**

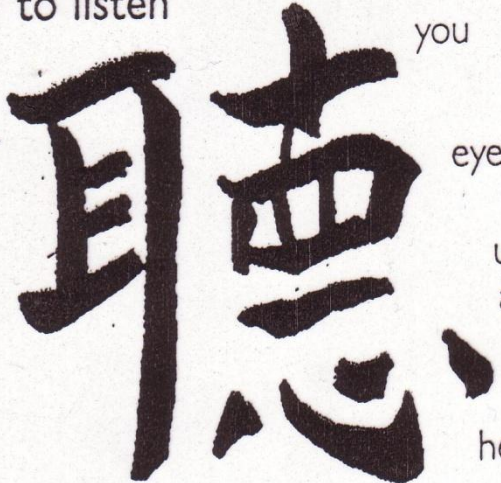
Active Listening

To do:

- **Empathize, don't judge**
- **Listen with attention to what the speaker is saying, to both the verbal and non-verbal language.**
- **Show interest and understanding**
- **Stay with the speaker – don't interrupt**

The Chinese verb 'to listen'

ear you eyes undivided attention heart



Revell and Norman 1997

**Learning is first intermental – between minds that interact – and only later does it become intramental.
(Vygotsky)**



Group dynamics: study of the life and functioning of groups

- Forming
- Consolidating
- Performing
- Problem-solving
- Ending



to live together as brothers...

as fools.

or we will die together

We must learn

(Martin Luther King)

We must learn to live
together as brothers....

or we will die together
as fools.

(Martin Luther King)



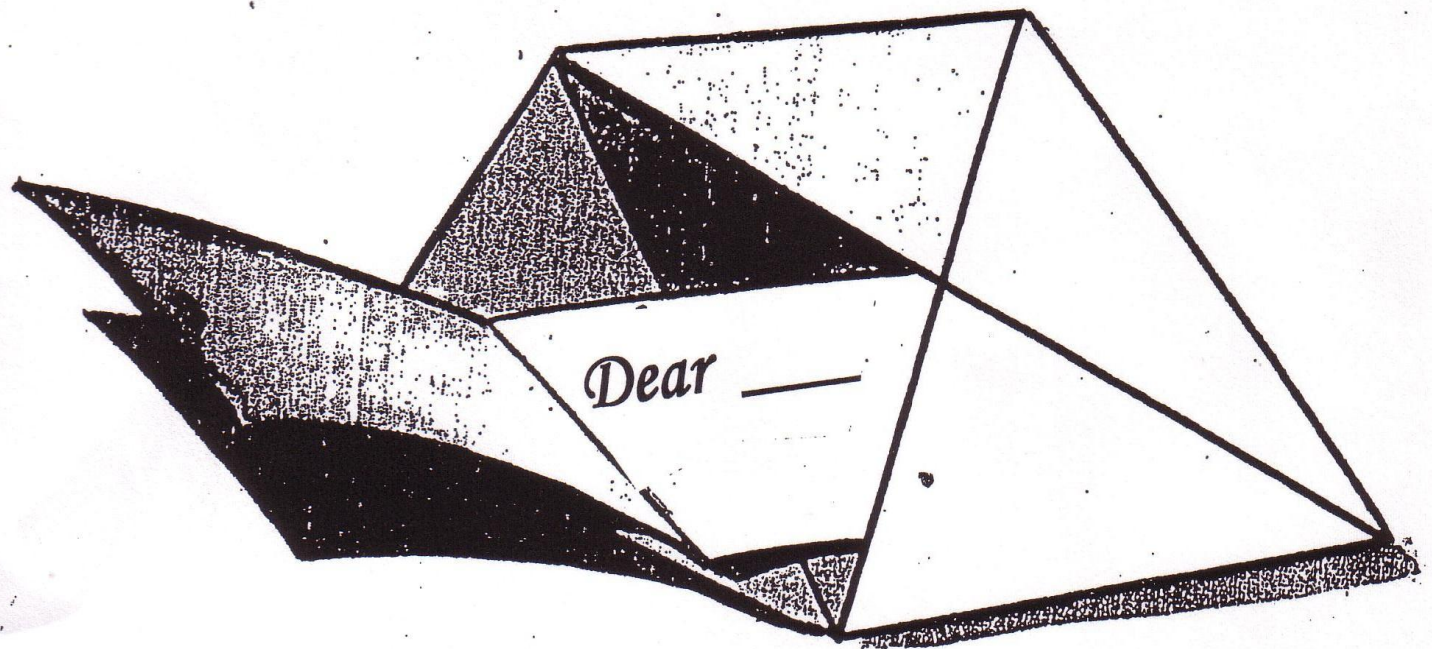


We must learn to live
together as brothers....

or we will die together
as fools.

(Martin Luther King)

a) Before the year ends, think what you would wish for your classmates. Choose at least two of them and send them a note with your wishes.



b) Comment in class on the notes you have received.

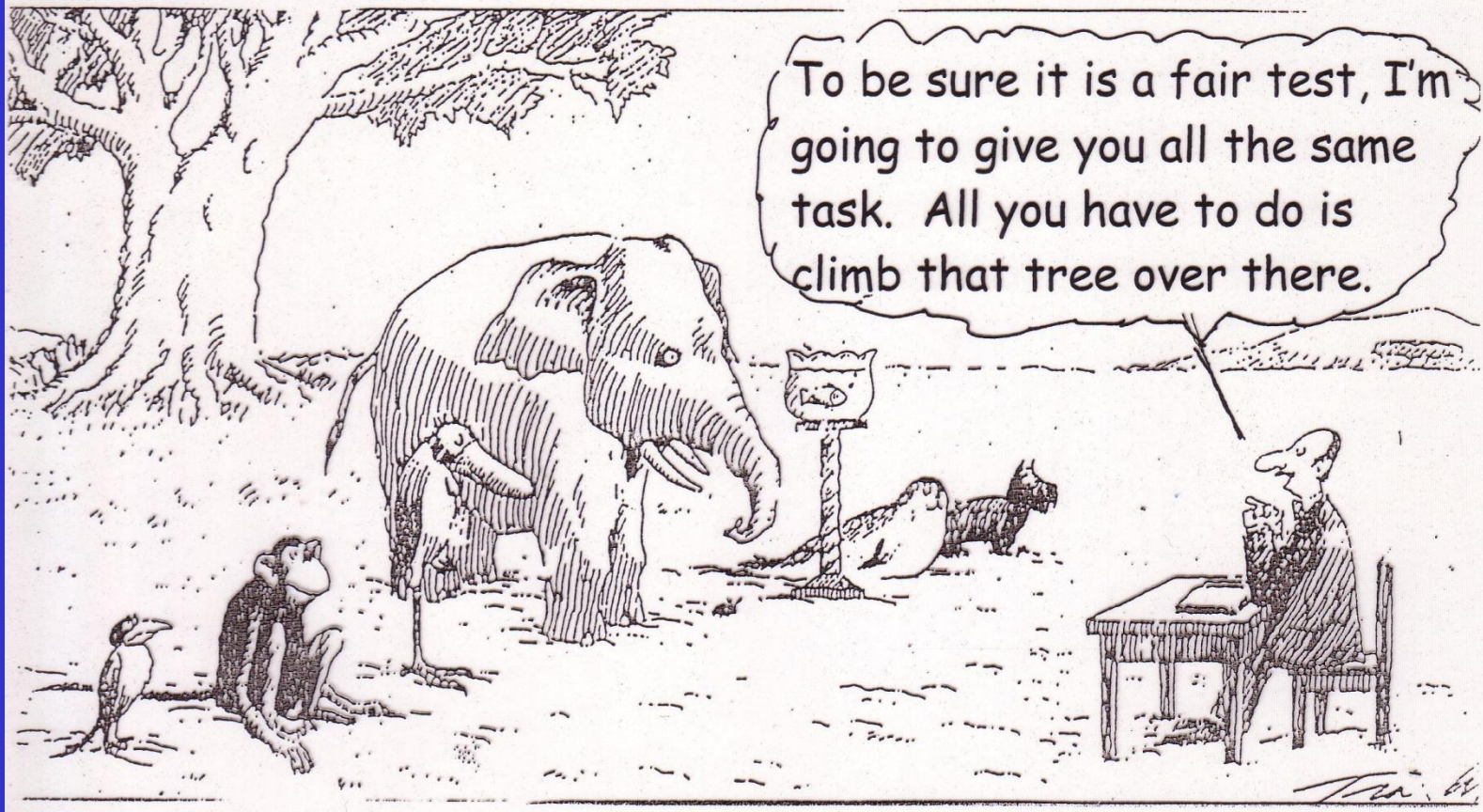
Group Dynamics and Language Learning: An affective matter.

- Attentive, relaxed students learn better.
- An emotionally secure atmosphere encourages students to speak.
- For effective interaction it is important for students to get to know each other.
- Group dynamics influences how we feel in the classroom and that influences what we learn.

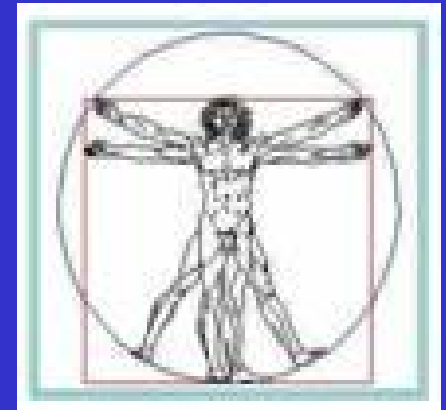


Using only the textbook greatly limits your capacity to participate in innovative and creative teaching.

Leo Van Lier



Multiple intelligences, multiple ways to learn





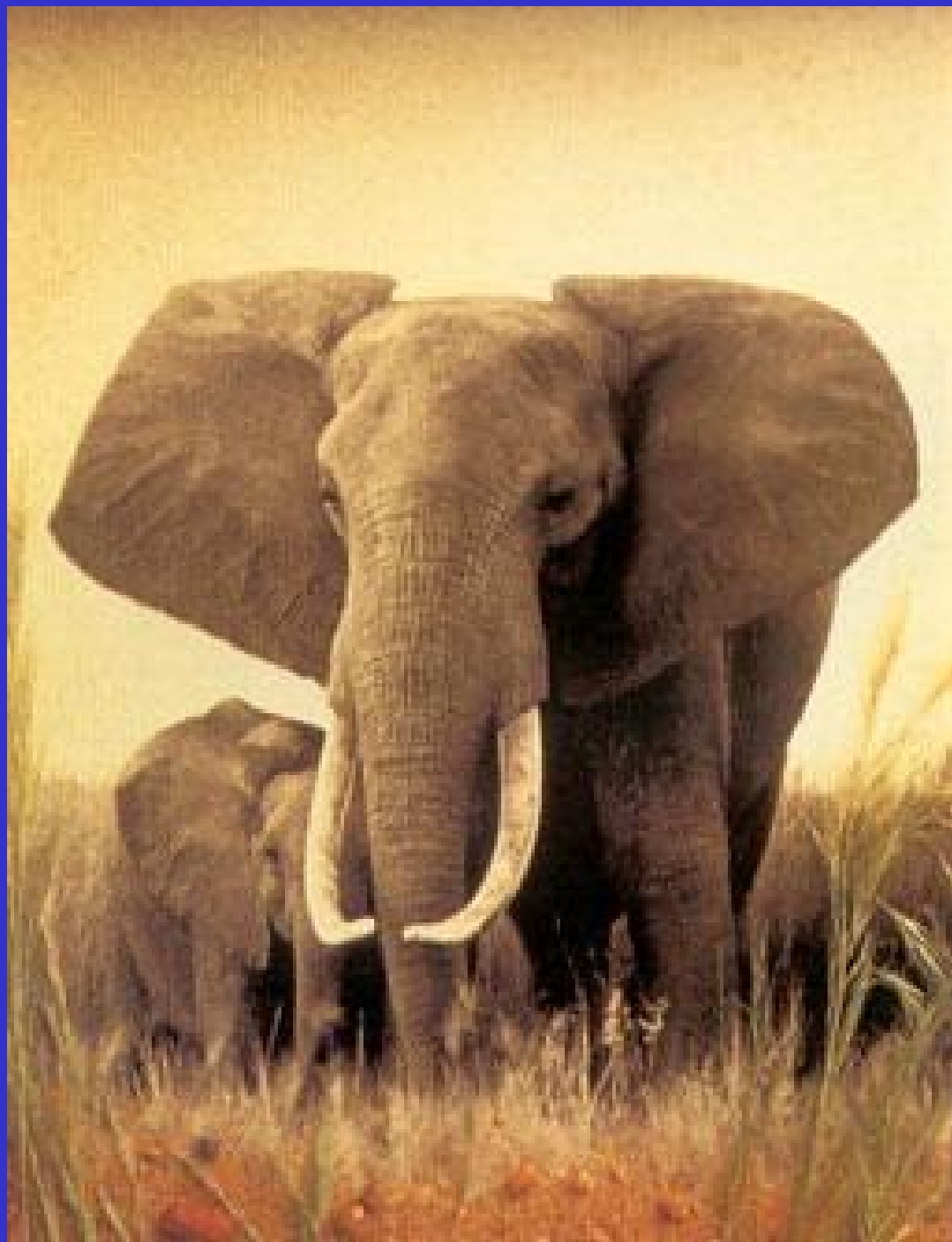
Little Red Riding Hood and the Wolf

Roald Dahl, *Revolting Rhymes*

Activating Mental Imagery

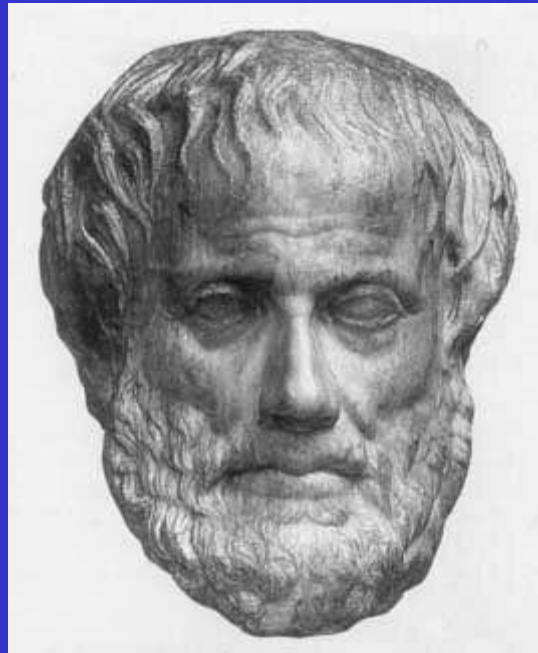
- Having different sensory experiences without an external stimulus.
- Seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, tasting in the mind (with the mind's eye, the mind's ear...)





**It is impossible to think
without mental pictures.**

Aristotle



**I postulate images
as the basis for
mind.**

Antonio Damasio

**(winner of Prince of Asturias
Prize for science, 2005)**



In language learning work with mental imagery can:

- **Increase learner's cognitive skills, their memory and their creativity**
- **Enhance their motivation**
- **Strengthen their self-concept**
- **Help to focus their attention**
- **Improve their reading and listening comprehension**
- **Provide things they want to say when they speak or write**

Paivio's Dual Coding Theory and second language learning

It is especially important to learn the second language in association with appropriate nonverbal referents – either visible or in imagery - which represent the knowledge of the world.

(Alan Paivio)



I consider the concept of the ideal self the most powerful and versatile motivational mechanism. When we think about our ideal self - the attributes we would like to have -, it helps us to formulate goals for our future and to reach them.

Zoltan Dörnyei

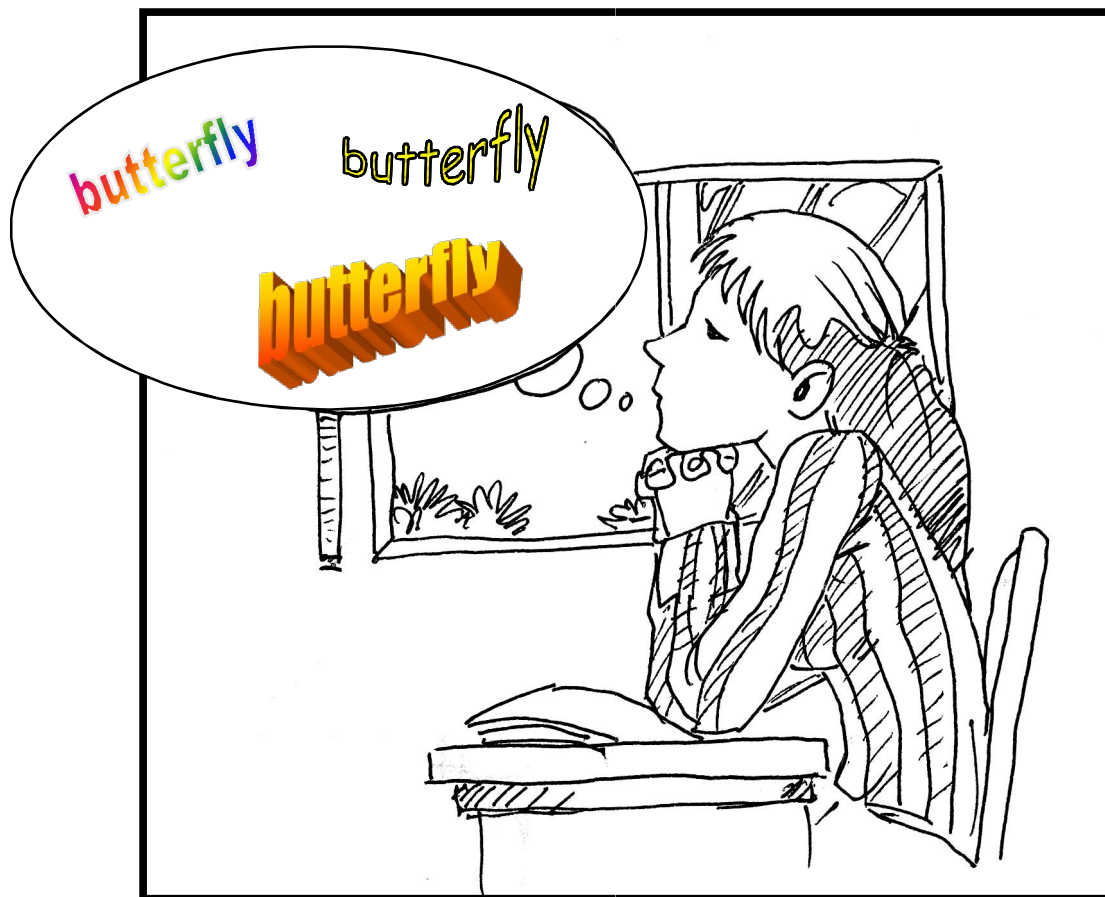
Doug Brown's Visualization Game



Visualize yourself speaking the language fluently and interacting with people. Then when you are actually in such a situation, you will, in a sense, have been there before.

**I ALWAYS HAVE SOMEONE TO
TALK TO IN ENGLISH**



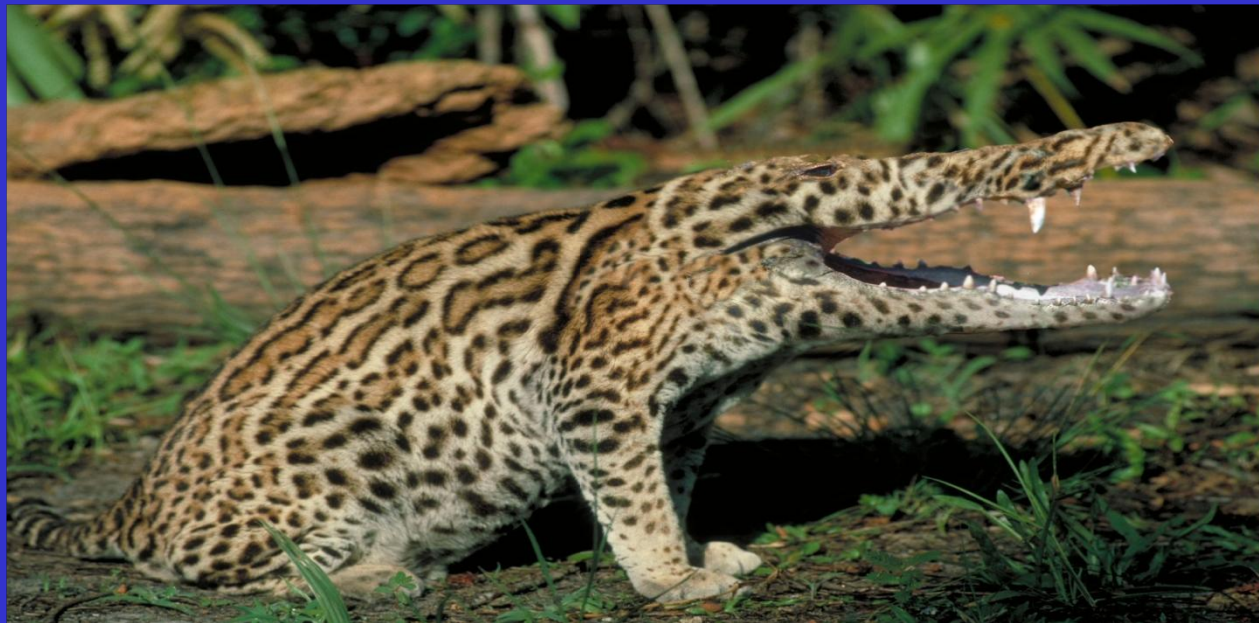




- **What was Sara wearing?**
- **What happened when Michael came in?**



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POSITIVE QUALITIES

love

harmony

beauty

goodness

compassion

understanding

confidence

courage

cooperation

friendship

determination

order

serenity

happiness

joy

gratitude

generosity

light

energy

enthusiasm

vitality

humility

patience

loyalty

freedom

optimism

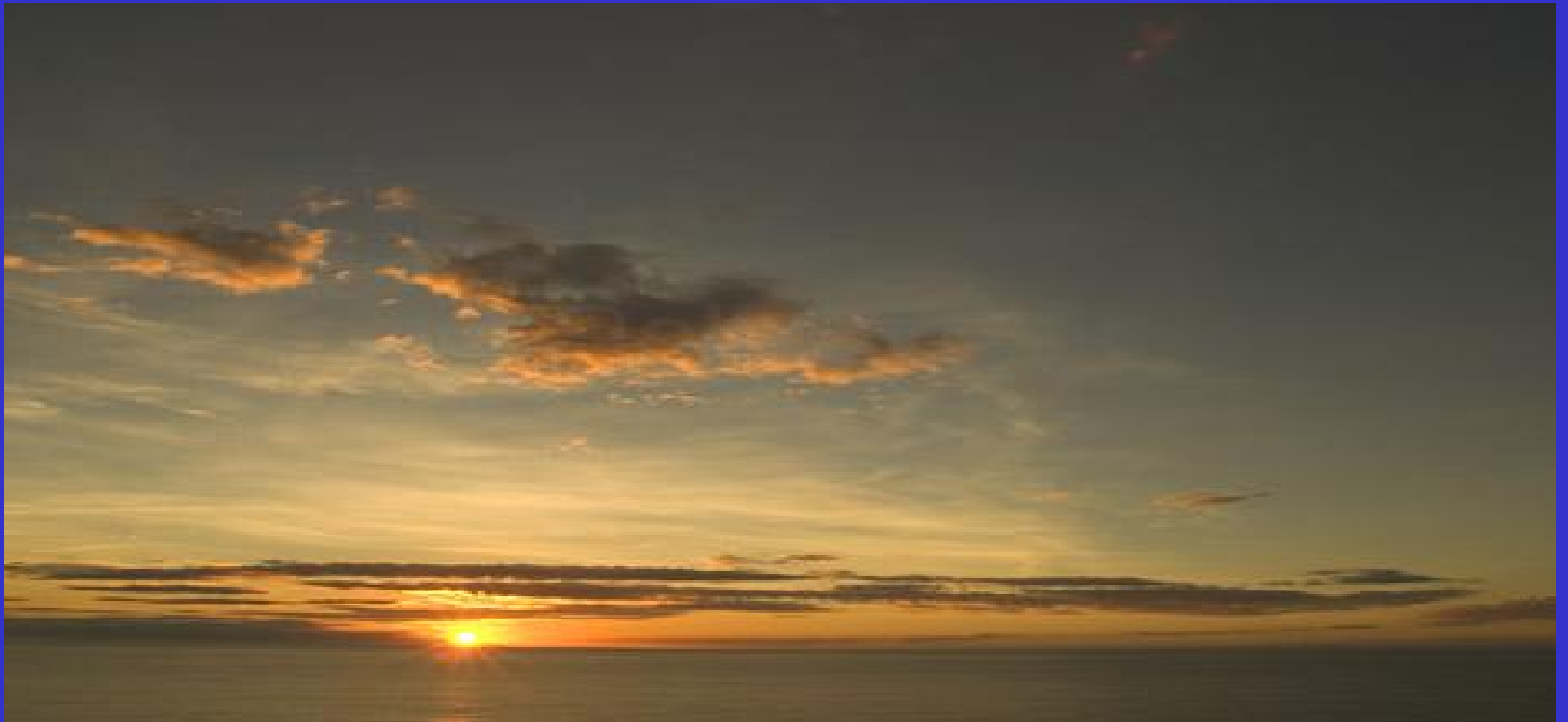
peace

wisdom

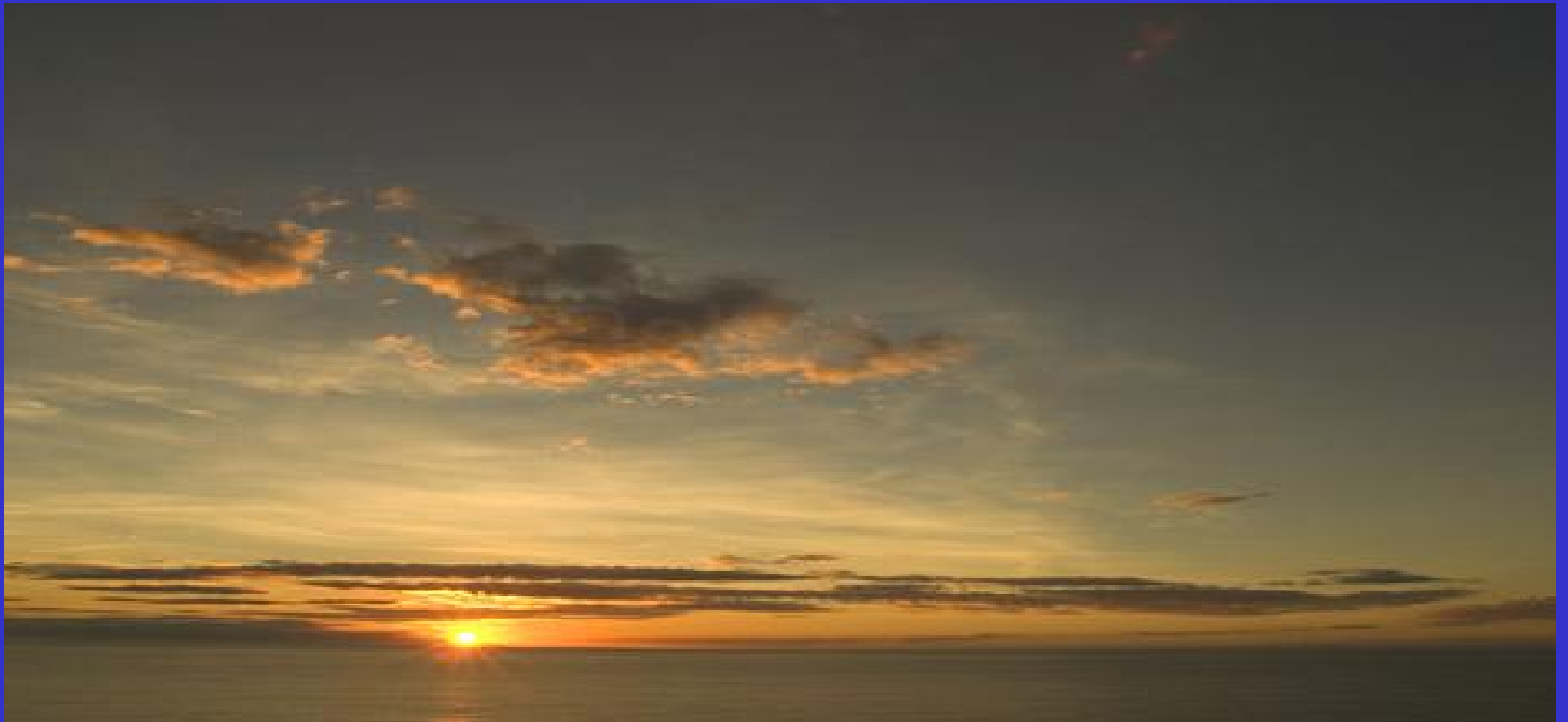


The end?

No, it's only the beginning



*We all create many images.
Let's tune in to the ones that take us
where we want to go.*



Tom: What did you use to do when you were a child?

**Mary: I used to play games with my sister.
Did you play football when you were little?**

Tom: No, I lived in the country and there was no one to play with.

Mary: When did you move to the city?

Tom: We came here when I was 15. Did you live here when you were little?

Mary: Yes, I did.







Tools

questionnaires, video/audio tapes, interviews with students, student or teacher journals, conversations with colleagues

You are worried about your students' attitudes towards English. You want to promote a positive feeling towards the language and you need to know what your students' attitudes are.