

RACHEL PALING

BRAIN FRIENDLY GRAMMAR

Neurolanguage Coaching



Express Publishing



Introduction

Most language learners hate grammar. May I add that most teachers hate grammar too! In fact, grammar is mostly delivered in a very unstimulating, unfriendly way for the brain. Often teachers just use grammar books as the anchors and they simply walk the learner through and believe that the learner should absorb and be able to apply the theory immediately. The major problem with this approach is that the brain's attention is not sufficiently stimulated, and in fact the brain has no particular motivation to make the information stick – or even the necessary provoked connections to process that information as useful for real and personal situations.

In addition, many teachers often just launch into an explanation of the grammar, which a learner may have heard time after time, causing them to “switch off”, bored with the explanations and therefore unable to bring the grammar into application and use. This is often due to the fact that the learner has not “assumed” or “consumed” the understanding into practical reality.

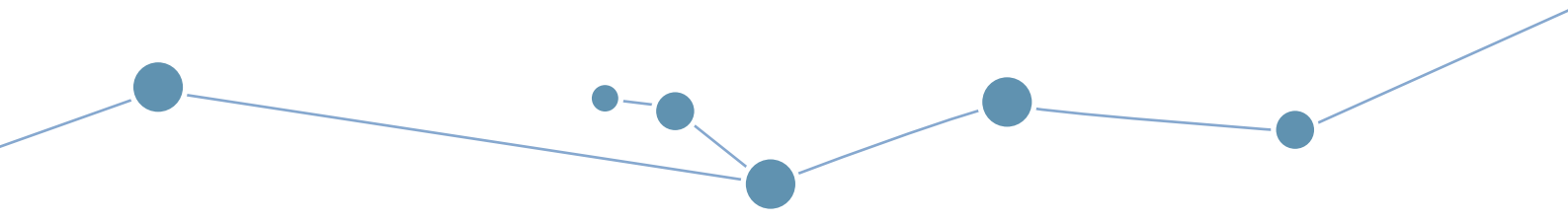
Over the last 30 years, we have really seen so many technological advances in neuroscience and our fundamental comprehension of how the brain functions, learns and reacts. However, it is only in the last 10 years that we have witnessed these scientific discoveries being implemented in our practical daily lives. Personally, I believe that we are still learning how to bridge the gap between the neuroscientific research and its practical application.

This book is designed to breathe new life into grammar, making it an enjoyable, curiosity arousing, connection-stimulating discovery, which energises both the coach and the learner through extremely interactive and extremely brain-friendly coaching conversations.

The book is divided into three parts: A) the theoretical part in simple terms, which gives the rationale behind this approach to the grammar, B) the practical part, which explains how to put the theory into practice and C) examples of break-downs.

A) The theoretical part incorporates core principles from the neuroscience behind the techniques; these principles help the brain to potentially learn in a much more efficient and faster way. We will explore each of the following to comprehend these core principles of neuroscience.

1. The brain looks for reasons to facilitate understanding.
2. The brain works better in a curiosity state.
3. Every learner is unique – the process is learner-centric.
4. The bigger picture gives the beginning and an end – clustering topics, creating patterns and maps for the brain.
5. Chunking down calms the brain.
6. The brain makes use of native grammatical structures when learning target languages.

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7. Stress and an over-aroused limbic system inhibit neural plasticity and formation of memory.
 8. Ownership of the learning process is an essential ingredient for learning.
 9. Positive processes and positive feedback stimulate the production of norepinephrine and dopamine.
 10. Open questions and constant equal status interaction remove threats and stimulate the opening of the mind.

B) The practical part involves a two-step process:

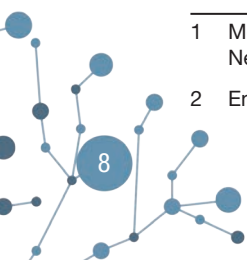
1. Chunking down grammar clusters to create a “script”. This first part includes the practical steps to be able to do this.
2. Using the PACT PQC¹ model in practice. This part explains the PACT PQC model which I have created to deliver any grammar topic through brain-friendly coaching conversations and explains step-by-step how to deliver these types of conversations.

C) This part contains a library of suggested script examples demonstrating areas that have already been clustered and chunked. These break-downs are recommended guidelines for coaches to use as their “script for signposting” through the grammar conversations.

Finally, the book ends with my personal conclusion of how to en-RICH² the learning process to adapt learning to the learners of the twenty-first century as well as a summary of the reasons that Neurolanguage Coaching[®] is a brain-friendly process, method and approach.

1 Model created and copyrighted by Rachel Marie Paling in 2012, published in Neurolanguage Coaching Choir Press, 2017

2 En-RICH[®] Copyright Rachel Marie Paling, 2018





Past Simple chunked down

The Past Simple in English is a “time-focused” tense, whereas the Present Perfect is an “experience or results” focused tenses. I always try to convey to learners that the Past Simple is the “true past” tense, indicating finished actions in the past. It is important to really get the learner to connect to the trigger words and highlight the danger of sentences that begin with the action and the time at the end of the sentence. For example, French, German or North Italian speakers may make a mistake with “I spoke with him yesterday” as their native tendency would be to say “I have spoken” first and as the time adverb comes at the end, by the time they have voiced the verb and realized then it is too late and the mistake has been made. The coach has to assist the coachee to naturally come into the Past Simple and break the habit of “I have...”.

The coach can also help the coachee to create irregular verb families. Just presenting the coachee with a list of irregular verbs is not helpful and also creates fight or flight with such a long list. It will really break down the learning process if the coach and coachee create verb families and patterns for the irregulars and also highlight the most frequent, most relevant or the most interesting for the coachee.

Latin-rooted verbs are mostly the regular verbs in English and the Germanic origin verbs are the irregulars. This can help Latin and Germanic origin language speakers to understand faster which are irregular and which are not. Germanic origin speakers can draw great comparisons to assist the learner to create bridges and connections to the English verbs.

Singen	sang	gesungen
Sing	sang	sung
Sprechen	sprach	gesprochen
Speak	spoke	spoken
Finden	fand	gefunden
Find	found	found

Past Simple

What is the overall “focus” of the Past Simple?

Time focus, events in the past, finished actions, habits in the past

FORMATION

- Affirmative
- Question
- Negative
- (contractions)

Past form - Verb families (see previous pages)

Did?

Did not

USE

- Concrete time in the past - when?
- Facts in the past
- Time Clause Since
- Repeated Past Actions
- Habits in the past

When?

“Since you broke your arm you have not played tennis.”

“We went to Spain three times last year.”

TRIGGER WORDS

Related Topics

1. Present Perfect vs Past Simple (Experience vs Time focus)
2. Past Simple vs Past Continuous (Single past events vs situation existing at the time)
3. Past Simple vs Past Perfect (sequence in time of past events)



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BRAIN FRIENDLY GRAMMAR

Neurolanguage Coaching

Grammar – most language learners hate it, and in fact most language teachers hate it too! Brain Friendly Grammar enlightens language educators as to why learning grammar has been so dry and unstimulating in the past. Next, it distils neuroscience into a simple spoken coaching conversation that harnesses the ideal conditions for absorbing and retaining information. In this way grammar is discussed and explored with the learner in a quiet brain friendly conversation.

After explaining the theory behind the principles, Rachel outlines the practical applications of this knowledge before giving a detailed breakdown of areas to cover, step-by-step, so that neither coach nor learner will ever feel lost with grammar again.

This book is not a traditional grammar book and is probably very different to any other grammar book that you have read. It is really intended for language educators who already have knowledge of grammar or even for polyglots or language specialists who also have a very good grasp of the mechanical side of the language.

If you are new to teaching or coaching grammar, Rachel suggests using this particular book as the skeleton script for the grammar coaching conversations, but then use the traditional grammar books for the in-depth knowledge pertaining to the theory.

By using the versatile Neurolanguage Coaching PACT PQC model, language educators will gain more confidence and be more motivated to deliver grammar, transforming language learning into stimulated, curiosity arousing conversations that may impact learners in an extremely positive way.



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ISBN 978-1-4715-8417-6



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