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History of NLPt

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Neuro-Linguistic Psychotherapy - NLPt

Early developments in Europe

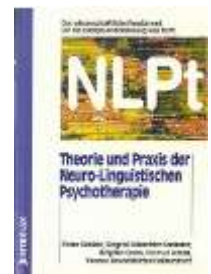
United Kingdom

In the mid 1980s therapists within the UK became interested in NLP and started to integrate some of the underlying principles within the technology into their psychotherapeutic practice. As this interest developed over time, the Association of NLP (ANLP) formed a counselling and psychotherapy section and joined UKCP (UK Council for Psychotherapy) in 1992. By 1996 this section of ANLP started to separate from mainstream NLP and a formal division, ANLP - PCS (Association for NLP – Psychotherapy and Counselling Section) was created that could represent neurolinguistic psychotherapy in the wider therapy field. (For more info refer to chapter 'The emergence of neurolinguistic psychotherapy as a therapeutic modality' in this document.)

Austria and other countries

In 1995 in Vienna Peter Schuetz, Helmut Jelem and Wolfgang Karber started to work on curricula for a training in Neurolinguistic Psychotherapy which they called NLPt. In order to gain european recognition as a modality for psychotherapy, they invited fellow colleagues from other countries to found country associations for NLPt. Among the first country associations were Germany, Switzerland, Austria, United Kingdom and more. Soon www.eanlpt.org was founded. Peter Schuetz, one of the founding members writes (email July 23, 2016): "*In 1999 EANLPt was accredited in www.europsyche.org, based on our strong 4 years curriculum. The first empirical research on psychotherapeutic NLP in Europe was done in Austria 1993-1996 but published much later only, 2004 (see <http://www.nlpt.at/res9.pdf>).*

In 2001 the book 'Theorie und Praxis der Neurolinguistischen Psychotherapie' was published in Vienna, also translated into Croatian language, but not into English."



The principal ideas of Neuro-Linguistic Psychotherapy (NLPt)

*The following text appears courtesy of
Austrian Center for NLP and NLPt (Österreichisches Trainingszentrum für Neuro-Linguistisches Programmieren und Neuro-Linguistische Psychotherapie)
http://www.nlpt.at/englisch/frame_main_eng.htm (downloaded July 26, 2016)*

! Please note: This text reflects the stand of the EANLPt. It does not reflect a general consensus of how NLPt is viewed and understood. !

Neuro-Linguistic Psychotherapy is a systemic imaginative method of psychotherapy with an integrative-cognitive approach.

The principal idea of Neuro-Linguistic Psychotherapy (NLPt) is the goal-orientated work with a person paying particular regard to his/her representation systems, metaphors and relation matrices.

Methodology

In the course of the therapeutical work in NLPt the verbal and analogue shaping and the integration of the expressions of one's life and digital information processes is given an equal share of attention.

The aim of the method consists in accompanying and giving support to human beings so that they can obtain ecologically compatible goals. Further the method helps to position the subjectively good intentions underlying the symptoms of illness and/or dysfunction so that old fixations about inner and outer unproductive behaviour and beliefs can be dissociated and new subjectively and intersubjectively sound behaviours and beliefs can be established and integrated.

Neuro-Linguistic Psychotherapy (NLPt) as a method of personal development and communication training (NLP) is of course to be found in many other fields: education, counselling, supervision, coaching, management training, sport and health psychology. But as a method of psychotherapy it has a clearly distinguished, theoretically and methodologically elaborated core and wide application scope even though it originally was established in an "anti-psychotherapeutic subculture".

In this context it is linked to a single, pair or group therapeutical setting. Within the framework of the psychotherapeutic contract, a protective frame, and professional discretion, the focus is turned to the achievement of goals in health and well being.

Roots

NLPt developed independently with reference to the basic elements created by Milton Erickson, Virginia Satir and Fritz Perls in the 60s and 70s. Because of the acceptance of NLP and NLPt concepts by other psychotherapy schools in the 90s as well as of the creation of a holographically integrative NLPt theory, an average well educated and specialized public often happens to forget - due to an understandable political positioning of the established associations' interests in the face of younger schools - that NLPt was successfully passed on over three generations of psychotherapists, and that the theo-

ry of this method - compared to other schools - has an even longer tradition which is now well established and practiced whole over Europe.

Theoretical Framework

The formation of the Neuro-Linguistic Psychotherapy (NLPT) is based on five traditional theories that were created at different historical moments, which are complementary to each other, and it is based on an assumption resulting from the modelling process:

- The Cybernetics of the Theory of the Mind by Gregory Bateson, in particular of the logical levels of Learning and of the Unified Field Theory as a further development by Robert Dilts.
- The social-cognitive Theory of Learning by Albert Bandura together with the Modelling Approach, improved in practice by Richard Bandler and John Grinder.
- The Transformational Grammar established by Noam Chomsky and the postulates advanced by Alfred Korzybski's concept of time binding, and Glasersfeld's, which served as a basis and influenced the linguistic models developed by Bandler and Grinder.
- The assumption of a fundamental orientation of human action towards goals (Pribram, Galanter, Miller, TOTE, 1960)
- The theoretical writings of William James emphasizing the inherent sensory representation systems as basic elements of information processing and of subjective experience.
- The assumption of the existence of functional and independent parts of one's identity encompassing conscious and unconscious process elements, resulting from the practice of modelling the works of Fritz Perls, Virginia Satir and Milton Erickson.

On the basis of these theories and assumptions as well as of the generatively designed modelling processes the NLPT range is laid out as an open architecture that may become wider because of new developments from ongoing practical work.

Similarities to and differences from other methods:

First, from a pragmatic point of view it has to be said, that the phenomenon of an intensive exchange of psychotherapists, representatives of the various psychotherapeutical orientations, can be observed at present in part also due to presentations/trainings of NLPT in Central and Western Europe.

Secondly, the actual, practical work of well trained psychotherapists relying on traditionally opposed theory concepts moves closer and closer.

In this context it should be clearly stated that the qualified psychotherapeutical work, performed in all psychotherapeutical associations in Central Europe is highly appreciated.

The following contrasts other schools represented in the Austrian Psychotherapy Commission and the EAP are mentioned on the one hand because of the explicit demand by the Ministry of Health, and on the other hand to facilitate the understanding of NLPT concepts.

Considering the contrast between NLpt and Psychoanalysis, particularly with respect to the traditional school methodology, these two methods have two features in common: the importance attached to relations and the fundamental power of unconscious processes. The significant difference between these two is the consequent and detailed orientation of NLpt towards goals and actions, the emphasis on the creative resources, as well as the conception of the parts' metaphors - without the absolute commitment to have a symbolic logical meaning. There is also the emphasis on rapport, and there is the different way of dealing with resistance - at a methodological and a theoretical level.

In the case of considerable personality/identity disorder, the NLpt concept provides a psychotherapeutical support over a period of one or more years, where the emphasis is put on the aspect of support and slow adaption. In general NLpt prefers shorter interventions with the intention of longer intervals between the sessions. The time needed for the therapeutical sessions is not fixed like in common time schedules, but adapted to the patient's situation and to the intervention. Further the enhancement orientated conception of the Future Pace in NLpt - both mental and real trial action - is certainly marking a contrast.

Another contrast consists in the emphasis on an analogue presentation and externalization of inner realities, either by representing the perceptual positions or by objects. Also the use of ambulant therapies or a walk together with the patient (analogue to Reich and Freud) are well grounded in the NLpt theory and are often found in practice.

This abovementioned also relates to group psychoanalysis and other psychodynamic/analytical methods.

One important conceptual similarity should be mentioned here: the similarity between the idea of positive encouragement within the framework of the analytical school of the Individual Psychology of Alfred Adler and the approach of the subjectively good intention of the NLpt.

Principal contrasts to the Dynamic (Group) Psychotherapy particularly in single sessions, which is highly regarded by NLpt because of its knowledge of group processes, is the emphasis on analogue parameters during the treatment and the far more relevant orientation towards goals which the DGt, represented by W. Pechtl (1994) and P. Schütz, slowly introduced since 1988. It should also be mentioned that Kurt Lewin, the founder of modern group work and field theorie, was heavily influenced by William James and Alfred Korzybski.

The main difference between the traditional Integrative Gestalttherapie with which NLpt is connected through one of its models (Fritz Perls), as well as with the phenomenologue, Prof. Hans Vaihinger, is to be found in the more differentiated and goal orientated work in NLpt, in the greater emphasis on the linguistic representation systems and their neuro-linguistic observability, in the acknowledged work using anchors, in the formal thinking strategies and submodalities as well as the greater emphasis on associated and dissociated conditions at work in the first, second and third position (hot seat work) respectively in the emphasis of the transformation between the states.

The contrasts to the Psychodrama, most appreciated by NLPT because of its likewise easy access to the creative resources of human beings, resemble those of the Gestalttherapie though the NLPT concentrates its work more on the individual and the Psychodrama more on a group, both historically and pragmatically. In addition the NLPT focuses during the group therapy method on the outer description of the inner representation, on the loyalty organisation and on the re-orientation because of its significance for the recuperation.

A difference to the Cognitive/Behavioural Therapy respectively to the traditionally applied behaviouristic models, both fascinating and influencing NLPT because of their similarity in the cognitive approach, is that NLPT sets stricter instructions of anchoring (reinforcing) and of the integrative approach using trances and metaphors.

The spheres of contrast with respect to the traditional Autogenic Training (Relaxation through Self-Hypnosis), highly esteemed by NLPT because of its numerous assumptions of trance processes, are primarily to be found in the fact that the NLPT rarely refers to stereotyped formulas, but concedes freedom to find one's personal representation systems and individual metaphors. In addition NLPT seems more goal orientated.

The contrast to the Katathym Imaginative Psychotherapy KIP, highly regarded by NLPT because of its similar way of trance work, consists in the greater emphasis on work which is mostly free in content (e.g. 6-Step-Reframing), opposite to analytical interpretations and offering fixed meaning symbols. Also NLPT seems to emphasize more goal-orientated work.

The sphere of contrast to the classical Hypnotherapy to which the NLPT feels closely related due to the common origin of Milton Erickson's work, refers to the deeper integration of detailed representational thought strategies and mixed physiologies in the work and the greater emphasis on the loyalty organisation of individuals.

The contrast to the classical client-centered non-directive Psychotherapy of Carl Rogers, which is considered to be important by NLPT because of its patience and of its absolute commitment to the human being, is likewise characterised by its orientation towards goals, its intentional intervention applying trance and anchoring and a different use of linguistic models.

The NLPT feels related to the classical Transactional Analysis concerning the acceptance of the unconscious, the stressing of the loyalty organisation and the orientation towards action settled in the intervention technique, but its concept differs regarding the open architecture of the model of the parts in contrast to determined conditions of the "I" and an even greater orientation towards goals.

The Systemic Psychotherapy and the NLPT agree certainly on their common model, Virginia Satir, and her work. Apart from her exemplary influence they feel related to each other as colleagues, supporting both the systemic and the neuro-linguistic orientation, further to the origin of the parts concept and additionally to the theoretical concepts of the different descriptions of the world, and last but not least the granting of the paradigmatic use of humour in the psychotherapy.

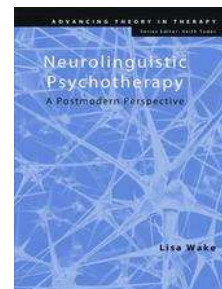
A differentiation between NLPt and the systemic psychotherapy as systemic imaginative approach is the intensified integration and consideration of trances and everyday trance states, their influence on the system and the individual identity and finally the far more detailed work on orientations towards goals and states to be reached in the single therapy, the stressing of rapport and resonance phenomena and the fascinating, systemic work dealing with representation systems, submodalities and timeline concepts.

Neurolinguistic Psychotherapy – A Postmodern Perspective

*The following text appears courtesy of
Lisa de Rijk (formerly Wake) MSc, RGN, PhD Cand.; Director Awaken Consulting & Training Services Ltd
www.awakenconsulting.co.uk
Author of NLP: Principles in Practice; Neurolinguistic Psychotherapy: A Postmodern Perspective;
The Role of Brief Therapy in Attachment Disorders.
Editor of The Clinical Effectiveness of Neurolinguistic Programming.*

Excerpts from the book (pages 1-13):

Wake, L. (2008) Neurolinguistic Psychotherapy – A Postmodern Perspective
London: Routledge ISBN 978-0-415-42541-4



Introduction

[...]

"The discipline known as NLP began, before it had a name, with an interdisciplinary community of people. (Richard Bandler, John Grinder, Leslie Cameron, Mary Beth Megus, David Gordon, Robert Dilts, and myself, to name but a few. We were motivated by a shared curiosity about how we know, about how we learn, how we communicate, and how we change. And how we can influence the process of change in a well-formed, ecological way. The patterns of NLP were not imparted to us, but unfolded in our learning." DeLozier (1995)

The emergence of neurolinguistic psychotherapy as a therapeutic modality

Neurolinguistic psychotherapy emerged out of the development of Neurolinguistic Programming (NLP), a psychology of performance excellence that was developed by Bandler and Grinder. In the mid 1980s therapists within the UK became interested in NLP and started to integrate some of the underlying principles within the technology into their psychotherapeutic practice. As this interest developed over time, the Association of NLP (ANLP) formed a counselling and psychotherapy section and joined UKCP (UK Council for Psychotherapy) in 1992. By 1996 this section of ANLP started to separate from mainstream NLP and a formal division, ANLP - PCS (Association for NLP – Psychotherapy and Counselling Section) was created that could represent neurolinguistic psychotherapy in the wider therapy field. Therapists such as Brion, Burt, Chalfont, Clarkson, Gawler-Wright, Janes and

Lawley recognised that there was a need for neurolinguistic psychotherapy to be developed separately to NLP and an independent legal entity was set up, formally separating ANLP–PCS from ANLP in 2000. By 2002, ANLP–PCS changed its name and became The Neurolinguistic Psychotherapy and Counselling Association (NLPtCA) representing approximately 70 therapists registered with UKCP. During this time, my role was initially training standards officer, and I worked closely with Gawler-Wright to consider how standards could be developed to ensure that they were more flexible and had a greater emphasis on generic psychotherapy rather than proceduralised models generated from the methodology of NLP. Later in 2002, I served as Chair of NLPtCA and represented the modality within UKCP, particularly on the NHS Committee prior to being elected as Vice Chair and then Chair of UKCP. This platform has enabled neurolinguistic psychotherapy to be represented at a number of levels and has been used to inform the development of the field.

Since 2000, there has been a considerable expansion in the number of psychotherapists from a range of modalities using neurolinguistic psychotherapy as an additional skill set. Neurolinguistic psychotherapy is currently represented by an accrediting member organisation within the Experiential Constructivist Section of UKCP and there are also two Member Organisations that represent neurolinguistic psychotherapy as a wider therapeutic approach within the Hypnotherapy Section of UKCP. These two institutes are BeeLeaf Institute for Contemporary Psychotherapy and my own Awaken Institute for Outcome Oriented Psychotherapy, which I run with my husband and other colleagues. Awaken and BeeLeaf, founded by Pamela Gawler-Wright in 1993, continue to collaborate in the development of training and registration of psychotherapists in the modality, as well as furthering the community's commitment to enhancing its theoretical and research basis.

Psychotherapy and Neurolinguistic Psychotherapy

The purpose of this book is to consider the relationship between neurolinguistic psychotherapy and psychotherapy in general. The field of neurolinguistic psychotherapy, already alluded to earlier, is represented within two Sections of UKCP. There are a number of reasons why the modality is held within these two Sections:

- Neurolinguistic psychotherapy has emerged from the work of three therapists, Erickson, a Psychiatrist and hypnotherapist, Satir a family therapist, and Perls, a gestalt therapist. As a modality it could be represented through family and systemic therapy, humanistic and integrative therapy, the preferred home of gestalt therapists, or hypnotherapy.
- Neurolinguistic psychotherapy is a brief outcome oriented therapy therefore a few individuals in the field have argued that there is little need for personal therapy as part of the training requirement, while most regard the weekly commitment to therapy to be contrary to strategic therapeutic treatment plans, hence it will not meet the needs required of humanistic and integrative psychotherapists.

- Only a very small amount of Perls' work is credited within the modality, although much of it is grounded in his practices of skilled facilitation of experiential sensing of reality, therefore it cannot be seen to accurately represent the entirety of gestalt therapy
- The work of Satir that predominantly influenced Bandler and Grinder was her use of specific questioning processes, later referred to as the meta-model and her work on parts or roles that individuals adopted within families. Although she worked systemically with her clients, this has not been incorporated significantly within NLP and therefore is under-represented in some presentations of neuro-linguistic psychotherapy. The systemic aspects that neurolinguistic psychotherapy has adopted more widely are those of Bateson and Dilts and working with the ecology of the self system. This has been added to by Gilligan and his theories on self-relations.
- In considering the influence that Erickson has had on the development of neurolinguistic psychotherapy, and in particular some of his students and contemporaries, such as Haley, Rossi, Rosen, O'Hanlon and Gilligan, there has been a natural leaning towards more unconscious communication and integration. This has influenced considerably the work of Gawler-Wright, who represents contemporary neurolinguistic psychotherapy within the hypnotherapy section of UKCP, as do my own trainings.
- One of the basic philosophical tenets of neurolinguistic psychotherapy that underpinned the work of Erickson, Satir and Perls was that everyone lives in their own model of the world. This forms the basis of constructivism, and NLPTCA continues to find its home within the experiential and constructivist section of UKCP.
- The modality as it is represented in its purist sense is struggling to find its place within the wider theoretical models represented in psychotherapy. There is very little literature available that references neurolinguistic psychotherapy and I would hope that this book will encourage a wider debate within the field. McDermott and Jago co-authored a book in 2001 on Brief NLP Therapy, and there is also literature by Gawler-Wright and Lawley & Tomkins that have added to the field. Gawler-Wright is a well respected Ericksonian therapist and her thinking moves neurolinguistic psychotherapy into the contemporary world through the work of Erickson, Rossi and Gilligan. Lawley & Tompkins have developed further the work of Grove and there is now an increasing level of interest in the use of Clean Language processes as a therapeutic model. Kostere & Malatesta, Bolstad and NLPTCA have stayed closer to a later modelling of NLP by such contributors as Andreas, James and Woodsmall as a psychology that offers a set of applications and procedures within psychotherapy rather than a psychotherapeutic process.

Within the book, I present developing and new ideas in the work of neurolinguistic psychotherapy, and bring together the founding principles of the therapists originally modelled by Bandler and Grinder. The book considers the roots of constructivism and systems thinking as a basis for a therapeutic model. It includes the concept that neurolinguistic psychotherapy is a methodology rather than just a method applied within a given context, and what this means for the therapist in practice.

It also aims to raise questions in the readers mind about the place of unconscious processes and depth relational therapy within the context of neurolinguistic psychotherapy.

Psychotherapy or applied psychology?

A dichotomy exists within the neurolinguistic psychotherapy field that creates a challenge for neurolinguistic psychotherapists. There is a tendency by some therapists to develop neurolinguistic psychotherapy as a behaviourist model of an applied psychology, whereas others, and I include myself here, prefer to see neurolinguistic psychotherapy embedded in the roots of constructivism, hypnotherapy and relational psychotherapy. I aim to present a debate on these apparent opposites and build on the work of Tompkins and Lawley (2006) who conceptualise the two approaches as being synergistic. They refer to the main principle of neurolinguistic psychotherapy as enabling the client to 'change their existing model of the world' (p. 35). This means that any model that the therapist builds changes as they work with clients. By using 'the client's patterns of behaviourto construct a model of the client's internal processes...the therapist attempts to figure out how the structure of the client's subjective experience so consistently gets them the results they get' (p.35). The therapist works with the subjective experience of the client to 'direct the client's attention' (p. 35) and to 'use their own body and voice for maximum therapeutic effect'. (p. 35)

Just as NLP is a model of a model, and is based on subjective experience, so is my own interpretation of neurolinguistic psychotherapy. I wish to respect the range of maps that currently exist within neurolinguistic psychotherapy and hope to create a space whereby more maps might be considered, while at the same time recognise that the only territory that matters in therapy is that of the client and much of that lies undiscovered.

NLP per se is portrayed as a methodology, which, when applied, can have effective results on facilitating a client to change their behaviours and thereby their results. What is missing from this and main-stream literature on NLP is the wider therapeutic perspective of Erickson, Satir and Perls. This was over and above the aspects that Bandler and Grinder modelled, with various elements from each of the therapists originally modelled now influencing the work of therapists today. Chapter 1 provides the historical and conceptual overview of NLP from its roots through to a model of psychotherapy. The remainder of the book will consider a wider perspective of psychotherapy and bring in new theories to enhance the original model of NLP and neurolinguistic psychotherapy.

Although Bandler and Grinder modelled the linguistic components of Erickson's work, and this rightly has its place in the success of NLP today, it would be naïve to consider that this is 'all' that made Erickson's work a success. In this book, I aim to develop this early work, by bringing to mind the work of Erickson that has been so elegantly captured by Rossi, Haley, and O'Hanlon. To consider only the linguistic structure of Erickson's work is to leave out the essence of what made him such an effective therapist who dared to go to places that many therapists are reluctant to consider. I would hope that in this book, I will encourage therapists to look beyond the method, tools and techniques that are now the trademark of NLP and bring to life much of what was successful in Erickson's work.

[...]

Approaches in neurolinguistic psychotherapy

Neurolinguistic psychotherapy finds itself spanning a number of different therapeutic philosophies and is directly influenced by the work of Erickson, Satir and Perls. As the modality has developed, the influences of systems theory, cybernetics, use of metaphor, the unconscious, and solution focussed work all add to the repertoire of skills and approaches of the neurolinguistic psychotherapist. In essence, neurolinguistic psychotherapy finds itself split into two main schools of thought. The more cognitive and programmatic approach has close links to cognitive and behavioural therapies and builds on the programmatic and modelling work of Bandler, by utilising strategies to affect and influence therapeutic outcome. In this approach the therapist stays outside of the relationship with the client and operates from a model of facilitating change in 'how' the client does what he/she does.

The more unconscious hypno-psychotherapeutic approach involves the therapist as a core element of the therapeutic process and recognises that all behaviour and therefore all change lies within the unconscious and it is only through direct communication with the unconscious that change can occur. In *Uncommon Therapy* Haley (1993) emphasises Erickson's strategic aspect and the idea that 'the clinician initiates what happens during therapy and designs a particular approach for each problem.' (p. 17). Haley points out that Erickson communicates with patients, not only in metaphors, but that he also used metaphor to facilitate unconscious change. He notes that Erickson avoids interpretations and that he would feel that 'typical insight interpretations of unconscious communication are absurdly reductionistic, like summarising a Shakespearean play in a sentence.' (p. 29) Yet it would seem that this is what programmatic therapists who adhere strictly to the model portrayed by Bandler and Grinder are at risk of doing.

In understanding this perspective of working within the metaphor, Lawley and Tompkins (2005) have integrated the work of Grove with the metaphorical work of Erickson and developed a therapeutic method of modelling the client's inner landscape through their work on symbolic modelling.

Bateson adds much to the epistemological aspects of neurolinguistic psychotherapy through his work on cybernetics. His influence on both neurolinguistic psychotherapy and family therapy enables a common grounding for the two modalities. His perspective that each of us are connected through a series of interrelationships within a system and it is only by influencing the greater system that we will create a sense of balance in the system.

[...]

The success of neurolinguistic psychotherapy to speak to and through the somatic intelligence of both client and therapist was perhaps pre-empted by where its originals placed their attention in the psychotherapeutic setting. Perls emphasis was on the reality of sensory experience in the here and

now, Satir's trademark was sensitivity to body, voice and touch in the exchange of emotional meaning and Erickson was almost fixated in his attention to the expression of internal events through observable physiological events which he greeted as sincere and eloquent communications from the unconscious mind. In neurolinguistic psychotherapy the main modeller of these somatic processes fell to one of the women in the original team of developers, Judith DeLozier, previous training in both dance and anthropology ensured that these vital elements were not lost to the more cognitive bias of Bandler and Grinder. (Gawler-Wright 2007 P. 36)

Theoretical backings and further discussions

The chapters of the book move beyond the basic application of material learnt at traditional practitioner and master practitioner level. It brings in perspectives from other modalities that were not modelled by Bandler and Grinder and yet were inherent components of the work of Erickson, Satir and Perls. [...]

