

## **Summary of Presenters and their Paper Titles**

Listed alphabetically by lead presenter

**A Neuro-linguistic Programming-informed psychological approach to the treatment of Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (ME/CFS): A case study and initial findings from a longitudinal investigation**

Author: Megan **Arroll** and Anna Duschinsky

**The potential of utilising Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) in qualitative research**

Author: Rob **Burton**

**Exploring the perceptions of efficacy of an NLP related intervention: A linguistic analysis of the 'Dilemma Integration Technique'**

Author: Joe **Cheal**

**Training in influencing skills from Neuro-Linguistic Programming modelled from hypnosis and family therapy), in combination with innovative maths pedagogy, raises maths attainment in adult numeracy learners**

Author: Richard **Churches**, Allan, F., Bourne, J., Bouch, D., Dennison, J., Evans, J., Fowler, J., Jeffers, A., Prior, E. and Rhodes, L.

**An evaluation of how the iWAM motivational test can be used to achieve improved customer service**

Author: Denis **Coleman**

**Teachers' professional identity: A study into how NLP and non-NLP trained teachers in Slovenia talk about their professional identity and their work**

Author: Tatjana **Dragovic**

**NLP modelling and Grounded Theory: similarities and differences**

Author: Tatjana **Dragovic**

**How does exploring metaphorical representations of organisational change at its best affect levels of well-being in an ambiguous and rapidly changing public sector work environment?**

Author: Fe **Foreman**

**NLP R&R Project – An Update**

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**Four findings from Neuroscience that expand and explain NLP techniques**

Author: Richard M. **Gray**

## **Summary of Presenters and their Paper Titles**

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**Meta-programs: Trait or state?**

**Author:** Bruce Grimley

**The impact of Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP) training in clinical practice: A case study**

**Authors:** Suzanne Henwood

**Coaching as form of leadership development in consultant radiographic practice**

**Authors:** Suzanne Henwood and Lisa Booth

**Reducing the negative impact of dyslexia amongst nursing students**

**Author:** Olive Hickmott

**'Metaphors we teach by': An exploration into how HE lecturers reflect on and conceptualise their experiences of teaching via the use of clean language interviewing model of exploring metaphors**

**Authors:** Mohammed Karolia and Rob Burton

**The use of a self-rating questionnaire in tracking changes in the self-perception of students over an NLP Practitioner course.**

**Authors:** Pam Keevil and John Seymour

**The impact of Neuro Linguistic Programming on the personal development of school leaders**

**Author:** Pam Keevil

**Does reframing language, in the positive, enhance learning for students with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and promote positive relationships with teaching assistants in secondary school?**

**Author:** Voldis Kudliskis

**Mental strength in elite professional goalkeepers**

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**The NLP/Neuro-Semantics approach to benchmarking coaching skills: How valid and how useful?**

**Author:** Susie Linder-Pelz

**The decision-making strategies of project managers – research results and a proposed model**

**Author:** Tim Lyons

## **Summary of Presenters and their Paper Titles**

Listed alphabetically by lead presenter

**'Symbolic Modelling' as an innovative phenomenological method in NLP research: the work-life balance project**

**Authors:** Wendy **Sullivan** , Rupert Meese, Paul Tosey, James Lawley, Margaret Meyer

**Motivation in the workplace: what meta-programs can tell us about performance & retention?**

**Author:** Patrick E.C. **Merlevede**

**What is the phenomenon we call experience?**

**Author:** Maarten Kae **Paulsen**

**Developmental NLP: A reflexive dimensional analysis of post formal adult development**

**Author:** R. Scott **Pochron**

**Eliciting meaningful data: The case for qualitative research studies of NLP and for NLP in qualitative research studies**

**Author:** Rosalinde **Scott-Hodgetts**

**Fad or know-how? Paradoxical attitudes towards knowledge and their implications for NLP**

**Author:** Paul **Tosey**

**Interpretative viability and the co-consumption of management concepts: An examination of the field of NLP**

**Author:** Rory **Tracey**

**Aligning identity in legal services firms; do senior partners in legal services firms possess the core characteristics of identity to work in alignment within the firm?**

**Author:** Sally **Vanson**

**'Waking up and Moving on': A preliminary case study exploring the role of the therapy relationship**

**Author:** Lisa **Wake**

**Symposium: What do we mean by research in NLPt?**

**Authors:** Martin **Weaver** and Sian **Lloyd**

## **A Neuro-linguistic Programming-informed psychological approach to the treatment of Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (ME/CFS): A case study and initial findings from a longitudinal investigation**

**Authors:** Megan Arroll and Anna Duschinsky

Dr Megan Arroll is the Director of Research for The Optimum Health Clinic and holds a Visiting Research Fellowship at the University of East London. Her research interests include numerous medically-unexplained conditions such as ME/CFS, MdDS, fibromyalgia, etc. and uses both quantitative and qualitative methods in her work.

Anna Duschinsky MA(Hons) holds a degree from Cambridge University, and has numerous qualifications in mind-body approaches including Hypnotherapy and NLP. Anna is Director of Psychology at The Optimum Health Clinic where she has specialised in working with ME/CFS and stress related conditions, and has over 10,000 hours of clinical experience.

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### **Abstract**

Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (ME/CFS) is a chronic, multi-system disorder with no clear biomedical aetiology (Carruthers et al., 2003). Due to its uncertain causation, this condition has proved difficult to treat (Chambers, Bagnall, Hempel, & Forbes, 2006) with the largest high-quality outcome studies centring on Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (Price, Mitchell, Tidy, & Hunot, 2008) and Graded Exercise Therapy (Edmonds, McGuire, & Price, 2004), techniques which are often rejected by patients. A small, private integrated health clinic has utilised components of Neuro-linguistic Programming (NLP; Andreas & Andreas, 1994; Bandler & Grinder, 1975; Dilts, Hallbom and Smith, 1990) in an effort to provide those with the disorder an alternative to the aforementioned treatment modalities. To begin, individuals are assessed on a number of characteristics that have been found to be important in the predisposition and maintenance of ME/CFS, such as a drive towards action and achievement (Van Houdenhove, Onghena, Neerinckx, & Hellin, 1995), trauma (this can be high- or low-grade trauma) (Van Houdenhove et al., 2001) and daily stressors (Van Houdenhove et al., 2003), all of which can lead to anxiety and heightened arousal, culminating in a chronic activation of stress loop. After these patterns are identified, trained therapists utilised NLP techniques such as the pattern break/anchoring method to retrain the nervous system out of its hyper-alert state and into a calmer, more present and more empowered one which enables activity management without relapse or 'payback'. With continued professional support, steady and sustained improvements have been shown, as assessed by a longitudinal investigation study of the Clinic's methods. In a Clinic-wide study investigating the psychological, nutritional and combined interventions provided, 138 participants (110 females, 79.7%; mean age 42.86 years; mean illness duration 9.52 years) completed a battery of measures (Medical Outcomes Survey Short-Form 36, Multidimensional Health Locus of Control Scale, Multidimensional Fatigue Inventory, CDC CFS Symptom Inventory, Maladaptive Stress Index) at baseline and 72 participants at follow-up (52.17%

response rate). Within the psychology group alone, significant differences were found between time-one and time two in measures of physical functioning, social functioning, general mental health, vitality, general health perception, internal and chance locus of control, general fatigue, activity, motivation, mental fatigue, muscle aches and pains, memory problems, difficulty in concentrating and the maladaptive stress response. In order to illustrate clearly the NLP aspects that have led to these results, a brief case study will be presented first. The lady ('S') in question was very driven and with a deep seated anxiety, with an intense need to be in control. ME/CFS was triggered by a busy work and family life and a traumatic life experience in the form of a Tsunami and an earthquake. Over the first three months of treatment S went from bed-bound to enjoying everyday activities without worsening symptoms; within 18 months S had made a full recovery and was pregnant with her fourth child.

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## **The potential of utilising Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) in qualitative research**

**Author:** Rob Burton

Rob Burton is a Principal Lecturer at The University of Huddersfield. His Doctoral research focussed on NLP and Learning Styles of Student Nurses. He is Co-Editor and author of the book 'Nursing: Transition to Professional Practice'. He is an NLP Master Practitioner and Trainer.

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### **Abstract**

The aim of this paper is to discuss the potential of NLP approaches in relation to qualitative research. The discussion will be developed and examples provided from a part of a Doctoral Thesis entitled '*Learning Styles and Neuro-Linguistic Programming Representational Systems in Nurse Education*'. Further discussion will then take place around qualitative approaches in NLP and the potential utilisation of NLP techniques as legitimate methods in wider qualitative research fields. This includes the suggestion of using logical levels, perceptual positions and the BAGEL framework (Dilts et al, 1980, Roberts, 2006,) in developing research questions and analysing data (Burton, 2009), and the use of the NLP meta model as an interviewing method (Mitchell, 2000).'

In the actual study the relationship between Learning Styles and Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) internal representational systems in Student Nurses was explored (Burton, 2004). It was conducted using a mixed methods approach, quantitative and qualitative: Firstly, a questionnaire package was delivered to student nurses to ascertain their learning styles and internal representational preferences. Secondly, in the qualitative aspect, participants were video interviewed to determine how they structured their learning experiences internally and how this was demonstrated in their body positions and their language. The qualitative aspect of the research will be used to underpin this discussion.

It is fairly well accepted that interviews are flexible and adaptable ways of finding information and that qualitative data may be useful in supplementing and illustrating any quantitative data obtained in research (Robson, 2002). Within the interviews in the study the questions were asked utilising the meta-model of Bandler and Grinder (1975) to challenge the generalisations, distortions or deletions that the informants offered. In this way the respondents were able to describe their experiences in clear, concise sensory-grounded language. Hollway and Jefferson (2000) suggest that face-to-face interviewing has become the most common type of qualitative research method used in order to find out about people's experiences in context and the meanings they hold. It could be argued that NLP approaches can enhance the interpretation of such experiences by providing wider forms of data.

In the study the data were analysed using the process of content analysis. Priest, Roberts and Woods (2002) describe content analysis as facilitating the production of core constructs from textual data through a systematic method of reduction and analysis. The body movements of the participants were also analysed using the BAGEL framework from Dilts et al (1980) as a basis. This enhanced the analysis by providing a richer interpretation of the content that the students were describing.

One of the criticisms often levelled at NLP is its lack of empirical research evidence and rigour (Roderique-Davies, 2009). Research in NLP is developing and there is a growing evidence base around the topic. Studies into NLP have regularly used qualitative approaches as a basis. For example, Brown (2004,) reports a qualitative study investigating NLP meta-programmes in the classroom. Ashok and Santhakumar (2002) investigated improvement of quality in three different occupational groups, Bolstad and Prochazka (2003) discussed two case studies related to NLP interventions in reducing chronic pain.

In conclusion it is hoped that the discussion will raise awareness and contributions to the potential for NLP in qualitative research.

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## Exploring the perceptions of efficacy of an NLP related intervention: A linguistic analysis of the 'Dilemma Integration Technique'

Joe Cheal is an NLP Master Trainer and a partner in the GWiz Learning Partnership. Working with NLP since 1993, he holds a degree in Philosophy & Psychology and an MSc in OD & NLP. He is the author of 'Solving Impossible Problems' and editor of Acuity: The ANLP Journal.

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### Abstract

In NLP, the 'Visual Squash' technique (e.g. Grinder & Bandler 1976) is a dialectic parts integration approach for resolving internal dilemmas and conflicts. Whilst the Visual Squash appears to be anecdotally effective in a therapeutic 'closed eyes process' context, it may be less credible in an organisational setting in resolving business dilemmas (personal, group or strategic). In order to create an acceptable business/coaching tool that could be used with groups, the author developed the 'Dilemma Integration Technique' based on the model of the Visual Squash. This new/adapted technique uses the positive intentions/benefits of each side of the dilemma to create a third way and/or deeper understanding of what intentions are driving the dilemma.

This research report will present the findings of four case studies (separate mini-training sessions varying in time length of 45 to 90 minutes, and group size ranging from 11 to 43) where the intervention has been applied as a group intervention for individual dilemmas. In each session, every individual filled in a brief questionnaire about their dilemma before *and* after the intervention. The aim was to establish perceptions of the *immediate* effect of the technique.

The primary research took a qualitative case study research approach including some 'directed' action research (Saunders et al 2007), which developed as the training sessions commenced and the author learnt from the previous sessions. For this reason, the sessions are treated as four separate short-term 'case studies'. Three of the case studies used a subjective scoring system before and after (scaling 1-10). Whilst perhaps limited in scope and not necessarily statistically significant, it was deemed to add potential value to the qualitative approach.

The before and after data was analysed using a content analysis approach, exploring three distinct areas:

- 1) the use of paradoxical linguistic indicators (Cheal 2009),
- 2) the change in language style using linguistic analysis software (LIWC – Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count, developed by Pennebaker 2011),
- 3) other patterns that appeared to emerge e.g. meta-model violations (Bandler & Grinder 1975), expressions of feeling 'at cause' and/or 'at effect'.

Results were very encouraging with immediate self-report scores improving with each group. Possible reasons for this will be discussed. Confounding variables and design issues will also be discussed, for example the reflexive nature of the researcher acting as facilitator/trainer.

The linguistic analysis confirmed some of the author's previous research and also added and refined further possible indicators, e.g. for determining a person's state of readiness for resolving a dilemma.

It is hoped that the study will lead to a more refined technique and a greater understanding of the language that maintains and resolves dilemmas.

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## **Training in influencing skills from Neuro-Linguistic Programming (modelled from hypnosis and family therapy), in combination with innovative maths pedagogy, raises maths attainment in adult numeracy learners**

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Richard Churches is a Principal Consultant at CfBT Education Trust and a Doctoral Researcher in leadership and organisational behaviour at Surrey Business School, University of Surrey. His research explores the hypnotic effects of charismatic leadership oratory. He is an NLP Master Practitioner and British Psychological Society Level B qualified.

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### **Abstract**

Case study research suggests that NLP influencing strategies benefit teacher effectiveness. Maths pedagogy involving higher-order questioning, challenge, problem solving and collaborative working may be a way of improving attainment in adult numeracy learning, however, such strategies may be less effective if the relationship between teacher and learner does not reflect sensitivity to attitudes, beliefs and emotions (areas in which advocates of NLP claim effectiveness). The present study investigated these claims and the combined effect of such approaches using a pre- and post-treatment test design with 173 adult numeracy learners. Teachers were randomly allocated to three conditions, these were: (1) teachers given no training (control condition); (2) teachers trained in innovative maths pedagogy (including more frequent higher-order questioning, challenge, problem solving and collaborative learning); and (3) teachers trained in both NLP and the innovative maths pedagogy. NLP training included suggestion using language patterns modelled from hypnosis, body language modelled from family therapy and spatial anchoring for emotional state management. A significant within-subject mean difference in maths test scores for the innovative maths pedagogy group ( $MD = 10.97$ ,  $t(66) = 7.292$ ,  $p < .0005$ ,  $\eta^2 = .446$ ) was nearly twice that of the control ( $MD = 5.67$ ,  $t(42) = 3.099$ ,  $p = .003$ ,  $\eta^2 = .186$ ). Although an attainment gap between pre- and post-treatment scores for the innovative treatment group alone (without NLP) appeared to close over time post hoc between-group contrasts indicated differences between pre- and post-treatment means were not statistically significant ( $p = .404$  and  $p = .689$ , respectively). With the addition of NLP training, post hoc between-group contrasts showed mean maths attainment significantly improved compared to the control ( $p = .040$ ) with mean difference, pre- and post-treatment attainment, increased to over three times that of the control ( $MD = 18.35$ ,  $t(62) = 9.552$ ,  $p < .0005$ ,  $\eta^2 = .595$ ).

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## **An evaluation of how the iWAM motivational test can be used to achieve improved customer service**

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Denis Coleman MA MSc is the founder & MD of InnoChan Solutions. He holds qualifications in Coaching, NLP, Emotional Intelligence (Bar-On & iWAM), Extended DISC, Micro-expression and Supply Chain Management. He has considerable commercial experience and an interest in bridging the gap between hard business processes and the cognitive skills required to carry them out.

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### **Abstract**

The primary aim of this research is to investigate the possible benefits of applying EI (Emotional Intelligence) knowledge in the function of CRM (Customer Relations Management). The function of CRM has become clouded over the years and there are regular reports in the media about poor CS (Customer Service). This intrigued the author who asks why CS levels are falling in a recession when surely the opposite should be happening as companies fight to attract customers and survive. The author wondered if the economic environment itself was proving to be a root cause for the seeming decline in CS levels as people take any available job in order to keep working rather than a job they would be happy in. This led the author to raise questions about the motivation of staff working in customer facing roles. The iWAM motivational test was selected as the core EI measure as it is currently one of the most in depth tests available that captures the Metaprogrammes of a client and provides accurate information on how and why people do what they do in a work environment.

During previous academic studies, the author noted that there is a body of research in the field of CRM but it all appears to relate to data management rather than delving into the actual interaction between the customer facing staff member and the customer.

For the purposes of this project, the research was limited to a range of companies operating in the South East of Ireland. These companies ranged in size from one-man Owner/Manager type organisations to larger companies employing in excess of 50 staff. In order to research the effects of CS and EI across different industries, the selected companies were operating in broadly different industry sectors including Lifestyle, Property Management, IT, Fast Food, Food Manufacturing, Admin Services, Craft and Café. This provided a broad spectrum for the investigation and provided plenty of variety in customer experience and requirements.

Initially, research was conducted into the current and relevant literature from a variety of publications in order to gauge the current views and approaches to CRM, the customer and EI.

Using the iWAM test, the author was able to research the NLP Metaprogrammes of people working in the CRM field across a range of company sizes and industry sectors in order to analyse the key patterns currently used and to identify the optimal motivators and Metaprogrammes for people working in Customer facing roles. The author further believes that such knowledge would be of benefit as it:

- Will increase the knowledge of the Metaprogrammes required for customer facing roles and,
- Will demonstrate the practical application of NLP in the commercial environment

The research shows the benefits of increasing the level of focus on the interaction between staff and customers. The new insights that were realised by the participants in this project helped to improve how they view and deal with customers and while further research is required, this initial bridging of the gap between current research and the need for greater focus on the client/customer relationship demonstrates just how important such developments are.

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## **Teachers' professional identity: A study into how NLP and non-NLP trained teachers in Slovenia talk about their professional identity and their work**

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### **Abstract**

The paper reports on a study into how teachers trained in Neurolinguistic Programming (NLP) and non-NLP trained teachers in Slovenia talk about their professional identity and their work.

Neurolinguistic Programming is a behavioural model and a set of explicit techniques, developed by Bandler and Grinder (1976) by studying patterns created in interaction between brain, language and body. This study has defined NLP as an approach to developing professional practice through modelling.

The study has examined 14 Slovenian primary school teachers' personal and professional development (focussing on NLP-based personal development trainings) in the period after the Balkan wars; the rationale for the study being the researcher's personal experience of being a teacher in the midst of the Balkan conflicts. The main aim of the study has been to explore the teachers' subjective experiences and representations of their professional identity and their work with a hope of developing the professional practice. The study also explores the literature on professional and personal development and teachers' professional identity, and shows how both professional and personal development may be connected to teachers' professional identity by taking them beyond purely behaviour, skills, procedures and knowledge levels. E.g. Louis (1994) suggests a change of focus from skills, knowledge and procedures to an emphasis on "values, both at the grand level ('caring for kids') and at the daily level" (p.8) as crucial for teaching. Woods *et al.* (1997) suggest that teaching is a matter of values and that people teach because they believe in something. Thus it can be argued that teachers' personal and professional development is as much connected to their values, commitment and their identity as to their professional knowledge, skills and procedures. In the last decade, teachers' professional identity has emerged as a separate research area (e.g. Bullough, 1997; Knowles, 1992, Beijaard *et al.*, 2004). Beijaard *et al.* (2004) carried out an analysis of studies on teachers' professional identity and concluded that identity is not a stable entity, but rather could be seen as an answer to the question: "Who am I at this moment?", thus considering identity as something that is 'fluid' and ever-changing.

The topic is explored through a qualitative approach using semi-structured interviews and non-participant structured observations. Additionally, reflexive diaries and video-stimulated interviews are examined to acquire a deeper insight into the internal processes of the participants. In the

thematic analysis of the data both deductive and inductive coding was used. The idea of using a comparison group of teachers, which has had no NLP-based training in order to compare and look for similarities and differences in the way teachers talk about their work and identity has proved to be fruitful and significant. The study has also benefited from a 'constructive' critical theory approach which fitted well with the rationale of the study.

The paper's main focus is on the findings of the study, which showed significant differences and some similarities between the two groups of teachers (NLP trained and non-NLP trained) and their way of talking about professional identity and their work. The NLP trained teachers tended to focus on a positive self-image underpinning their professional identity with values such as safety, development and satisfaction. The non-NLP trained teachers emphasized the importance of being an instructor as part of their professional identity underpinning it with values such as equality and fairness. There was also evidence of similarities in the two groups' perception of the teacher identity as being multifaceted and teaching being a calling. The study also showed potentially interesting implications for the design of continuing professional development (CPD) courses. One such is the dominance of skills and knowledge in Slovenian CPD trainings for teachers, where a stronger focus on beliefs, values and identity might have a greater impact. Another is the apparent gap (as already demonstrated by Friedman and Philips, 2004) between how professionals and professional associations see CPD. Professionals, in Friedman and Philips' view, have a 'limited' view of CPD, seeing it as training, a means of keeping 'up-to-date', or a way to build a career. Professional associations, on the other hand, see CPD as part of lifelong learning and personal development. The role of NLP trainings as CPD contribution to lifelong learning is still to be explored by further studies. However the present study has contributed to the realisation that NLP trained teachers appear to talk about themselves as more self-sustained compared to non NLP trained teachers. They also appear more prepared to maintain their professional identity irrespective of personal, social or political changes/critical events.

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## **NLP modelling and Grounded Theory: similarities and differences**

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### **Abstract**

The paper accounts, on one hand, for the history of the development of modelling as used in Neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) and on the other hand of Grounded Theory. It also presents a conceptual analysis of similarities and differences of NLP modelling and grounded theory and proposes further steps for recognition of the potential of NLP modelling for becoming a recognized research methodological approach.

NLP has been defined as a behavioural model and a set of explicit techniques, developed by Bandler and Grinder (1976), by studying patterns created in interaction between brain, language and body. NLP modelling is a process of detecting distinctions by constantly comparing and contrasting (on macro and micro level) in order to detect 'the distinction that makes the distinction'.

Grounded Theory was developed as an approach to social research by the sociologists Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss in the mid 1960s. Their collaboration in research on dying hospital patients led them to write the book 'Awareness of Dying' (1965) and subsequently 'The Discovery of Grounded theory' (1967). In this research they developed the 'constant comparative method' later known as Grounded Theory.

The paper explores the features of grounded theory as a research methodology and compare them with elements that underpin NLP modelling as a process of data collection, data analysis and model-building. Modelling is a process that includes the following phases: Distinction detection – an idea that was promoted by Bateson (1972/2000) and is related to what the philosopher Peirce (1992) called abduction; Patterning (noticing the reoccurrence of the distinctions made and chunking down to the 'pearls'); Model building (organising a coherent and simple description of the essential patterns). The three phases of the NLP modelling process could be carried out in seven distinctive steps.

Grounded Theory, according to Glaser and Strauss (1967), is a theory that is grounded in data. Theory in Grounded Theory is the end point, not the starting point, as it is in hypothetico-deductive research. Glaser and Strauss claimed that there is often no need for any separate test of a grounded theory, because it is grounded in the data (*Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p. 4*). The process of Grounded Theory is usually carried out in seven steps

that are happening at the same time. The paper conceptually compares the mentioned two sets of seven steps.

The paper also presents an example of a currently on-going study of creative music teaching in Australian secondary school where NLP modelling is being used as research methodology approach.

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## **How does exploring metaphorical representations of organisational change at its best affect levels of well-being in an ambiguous and rapidly changing public sector work environment?**

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Fe Foreman, Director of Buddleja Transformations Ltd is an organisation development consultant and UKCP psychotherapist in training. Fe is an INLPTA Trainer of NLP and a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development. Her research interests include organisation development practice and working with metaphors therapeutically.

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### **Abstract**

This study investigates the effects on well-being of using symbolic modelling and clean language to explore employee experiences of organisational change at its best in a UK Special Health Authority that faces an ambiguous environment and rapid change.

Martin et al (2005) cite multiple references noting that organisational change is a significant source of stress, and is associated with a wide range of negative behavioural, psychological, and physiological outcomes. They note that poor adjustment to change is characterized by feelings of threat, uncertainty, frustration, alienation, and anxiety.

Change management practices are widely used to mitigate such effects. Bordia et al (2004) found that management communication, participation and control mediate the deleterious effects of uncertainty, while Callan (1993) noted that empowering employees enables them to cope more effectively.

This study adds to the existing knowledge base by investigating the effects on well-being of exploring employee metaphors for organisational change at its best.

Lakoff and Johnson (1981) define metaphor as “understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another.”

Lakoff (1993) demonstrates that the locus of metaphor is thought and not language, indicating that metaphor is part of our ordinary way of conceptualising the world rather than simply a linguistic mechanism used to share meaning.

Symbolic modelling, and the clean language questions it employs are methods for assisting individuals and/or groups in exploring their metaphorical experience. NLP modellers Lawley and Tompkins (2000) modelled clean language from the therapeutic work of David Grove, recognising the efficacy of his work.

Clean language has been used in a variety of settings to support improved outcomes, including with challenging young people in schools in Hackney (Doyle 2010), and with the long-term unemployed to support returns to work (Training Attention 2006). However, Jacobs and Heracleous (2004) note that there is relatively little research on how organisation development practitioners might elicit metaphors to assist with targeted issues at work. This study seeks to fill this gap by investigating the use of clean language in workshops, and symbolic modelling in 1:1s.

This study follows Lawley et al's (2010) study of work-life balance in applying clean language as a research methodology, exploring whether:

- there is a connection between metaphorical exploration of organisational change at it's best and well-being
- the impact of group and 1:1 interventions on well-being differ
- patterns can be detected across individuals to provide insight about resourcing individuals through change.

This quasi-experimental study involves forty-one participants in control, 1:1 and workshop groups. The study is an interrupted time-series comprising initial, post intervention, and twelve-week post intervention well-being measures using the Ryff scales. The study includes phenomenological study of lived experiences of organisational change, and of experiences of the study interventions through semi-structured interviews. The study adds to the body of evidence of the efficacy of NLP interventions in a business change setting, providing guidance to practitioners for the use of metaphor and clean language.

The study concludes in February 2012 with completion of statistical and phenomenological analyses. At the conference results, conclusions and suggestions for further research will be presented.

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## **NLP Research and Recognition Project: An Update**

**Authors:** Richard M Gray & Lisa Wake

Richard Gray is an Assistant Professor in the School Criminal Justice and Legal Studies, Fairleigh Dickinson University. His research interests include addictions, the neurophysiological basis of NLP techniques and altered states of consciousness. He is the author of Archetypal Explorations, published by Routledge in 1994.

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### **Abstract**

The NLP Research and Recognition Project is a registered not-for-profit corporation that is committed to the research and networking that supports the validation of NLP and NLP techniques using the best scientific methods available, publishing that research in peer-reviewed academic journals and sharing that research freely with the NLP community, and the wider community of academics and providers of Mental Health services.

Along with research the Project is committed to helping the community to create training and certification standards in a way that both honors those who have committed their professional careers to NLP and provides NLP certifications on a professional level that will match the requirements of other Professional Organizations.

The Project is committed to providing standardized protocols, wherever appropriate, so that techniques can be subjected to scientific testing and to ensure that training in those techniques meets minimal performance standards

The project is currently working to provide the clinical community with a refined, fully manualized version of the Visual-Kinesthetic Dissociation protocol for the treatment of PTSD, that is being

promulgated as Reconsolidation of Traumatic Memories (RTM). It is our hope that through a program of rigorous research, publication and training we will open the broader scientific community to the value of NLP and its techniques with an initial emphasis on phobia and PTSD

To this point, mostly through the efforts of Frank Bourke (2010), we have received preliminary approval of congressional funding for a pilot test of the protocol, completion of a manual, and the training of service providers. Lisa Wake (2008) has been working to enlist the aid of the NLPt community and other clinicians in the UK and Europe more broadly, in replicating the designs developed in the states and publishing them in scholarly journals. The Project has compiled and entered into contract for the publication of the first major book-length review of the research into NLP and the science that supports it from parallel findings. The book includes contributions from an international body of NLP-trained therapists and practitioners

Two papers on the V/KD-RTM Protocol have been published in peer-reviewed journals (Gray, 2011; Gray & Liotta, 2012) and we anticipate that the book and journal articles will foster replication studies in the larger scientific community.

It is our hope that through the process of research, testing and publication the RTM protocol will be recognized as an evidence-based treatment for PTSD and introduced into widespread clinical practice. The RTM clinical treatment protocol is administered by Masters level mental health providers who have been trained and certified in the procedure. Training and certification in the protocol takes one week for NLP certified master practitioners and two to three weeks for Masters Degree level mental health providers with no previous NLP training.

The current presentation will provide an update on the work of the R&R Project and will solicit cooperation from others working in the field.

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## **Four findings from Neuroscience that expand and explain NLP techniques**

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### **Abstract**

Recent systematic reviews of the literature in search of the neural mechanisms underlying NLP techniques including the RTM-VK/D protocol, The Brooklyn Program and anchoring procedures have uncovered several features of neural circuitry and functional neuro-anatomy that explain why certain NLP techniques work as well as they do and provide indications for the design of other techniques and interventions. This paper also makes contributions towards the linking of NLP practice to the growing body of Neuroscience research.

A body of recent work points to the mechanism of reconsolidation as a plausible mechanism for the RTM -- VK/D model in the treatment of PTSD and phobias (Gray, 2010; Shiller & Phelps, 2011, Schiller, Monfils et al., 2010). Perhaps more importantly, the mechanism outlines a syntax for change that NLP has long understood but until now has been unable to specify a supporting mechanism rooted in well-established principles of Neuroscience.

Canonical neuroscience has held that the transfer of long term memory from hippocampal stores to permanent cortical networks takes approximately thirty days (Morris, 2006; Tse et al., 2008). Preclinical work by Morris and his team has shown in principle that new learnings can be integrated into previously established long term networks in about 24 hours by taking advantage of protein synthesis generated in the activation of those older, related networks. This provides a neural base for NLP techniques including reimplanting, the new history generator and other patterns.

Olaf Sporns (2010) and other researchers have described neural organization in terms of small world networks. Feil et al. (2010) has suggested that meaning and behavioral salience are often determined by which circuit defines the behavioral context. This work represents a neural base for the phenomenon of context dependent memory effects. It also suggests a mechanism for reframing, meta-stating and Erickson's (1954) whole life reframe.

Finally, during the last fifteen years research into functional circuits in the brain has led to the identification of the default mode network (Greicius, Krasnow, Reiss, & Menon, 2003; Raichle & Snyder,

2007; Smallwood, Brown et al., 2011). This circuit, consisting of the ventro-medial prefrontal cortex, the anterior and posterior cingulate gyri, medial temporal lobe and the precuneus, are highly activated during internally directed activity and largely inactive (as an independent circuit) during externally oriented activity. Insofar as the functional areas associated with the circuit are related to evaluation, self control, memory, prediction of future behavior and empathic understanding of others, their importance in understating the effects of inward oriented focus as in trance, meditation, and altered states of consciousness cannot be overestimated. It is suggested that when the activation of the circuit is made accessible by a classically conditioned anchor, it may represent a behavioral off-switch for problem behaviors.

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## **Meta-programs: Trait or state?**

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Bruce Grimley is a chartered occupational psychologist with HPC registration. He is interested in the design and robust testing of NLP and his book on the theory and practice of NLP comes out in the Autumn of 2012, (Sage). His occupational interests are well-being and coaching in the workplace

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### **Abstract**

Personality is a nominalization which is defined by different psychologists in different ways. Hall and Lindzey (1957) point out there are as many definitions as there are theories. Will Schutz (1994) told us personality is the person we choose to be to fulfil our needs at any moment, both conscious and unconscious. However Edwin Guthrie told us personality are those habits and habit systems of social importance that are stable and resistant to change (Childs 1997).

Deary and Matthews (1993) argued that trait theory is not only alive and well but flourishing. In this paper I argue that NLP needs to be able to robustly state its case for a situational perspective in the context of such established trait paradigms as the Neo-PI-3 and 16pf5.

Despite the early work of Rodger Bailey 40 years ago the only NLP instrument to be registered with and reviewed formally by a scientific body is Cdaq. However in the review process it was criticized because the NLP paradigm was not made sufficiently explicit in order to effectively provide an NLP context for administration and interpretation.

Specifically the reviewers say “the user would need a deeper understanding of NLP than this introduction provides to use the instrument effectively within the NLP paradigm” (British Psychological Society 2007).

Linder Pelz (2011) acknowledges confusion about the NLP construct of Meta Programs. Citing many different definitions, she quotes Miller (2010) who points out that presently we do not know the characteristics of Meta Programs. However Linder Pelz argues that if one is to develop a psychometric one must play by the rules. Unless we demonstrate a range of statistical reliabilities and validities which are then available for peer review and scrutiny all we actually have is a list of questions.

The purpose of this paper is to introduce the reader to some of the challenges in constructing a well designed personality questionnaire which has good reliability and validity and real use within an organizational environment. It will also explore the relevance of the NLP view of personality in today's economic environment.

The paper will show how the challenges of test construction reach into the fundamental epistemological assumptions of the designer.

The paper will also emphasise in terms of NLP personality theory that there is very little research of any substance in circulation. For a paradigm which seeks to study the “structure of subjective experience” this is an oxymoron.

This paper will demonstrate for illustrative purposes how a second draft of items was created from an initial draft making use of item analysis and statistical measures (N=225). The instrument currently being constructed is in the process of improving on Cdaq by putting the questionnaire construction, administration and interpretation firmly within the NLP paradigm. The test and its supporting literature will be submitted to the BPS for registration and review by the end of 2012.

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## **The impact of Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP) training in clinical practice: A case study**

**Authors:** Suzanne Henwood

Dr Suzanne Henwood is an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Social and Health Sciences at Unitec in Auckland, New Zealand. She is an NLP trainer and is keen to explore ways to introduce NLP into health care practice and to research the effectiveness of doing so. Her other research interests lie in professional development, leadership and advanced practice.

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### **Abstract**

#### *Background*

This presentation explores a small longitudinal case study of 8 students who have studied NLP in relation to their role as a health care practitioner and the perceived impact of their training on clinical practice.

In health, Henwood and Lister (2007) wrote probably one of the first books regarding NLP applied specifically to health care practitioners (of any discipline) to use within their practice in a clinical setting. Other books have been written specifically for doctors (Thomson and Khan, 2008), with some specifically about using NLP in medical consultations (McDermott, Duncan and Walker, 2002; Moulton, 2007).

Outside of NLP specifically, training effectiveness is a well published topic, though still there remains some debate as to whether impact on practice has been definitively shown as a result of training and continuing professional development (CPD) (Lee, 2011).

Tharenou, Saks and Moore (2007) talk of a '*scepticism*' about the link between training and results or impact and that results criteria remain '*sparse*', especially at organizational level. While specific skills based training can show an immediate effect in practice, the impact of softer skills, often seen to be within the wider framework of '*personal development*' is harder to quantify and NLP skills often fall into this '*softer*' category.

It is within this context that this study explores the perceived impact of NLP training on clinical practice.

#### *Design*

A case study approach, with a phenomenological stance, using an electronic and semi-structured and prompted reflective questionnaire, with qualified health care practitioners in the UK was employed. A small number of follow-up interviews were also conducted to further validate the

findings, to clarify perceived impact and to explore in greater depth some of the critical incidents recalled. The qualitative data was analysed using an interpretive thematic analysis to establish the major themes which emerged from the data.

Eight health care practitioners in the UK responded to an invite to participate in the study, from a range of health care backgrounds. They had all undertaken NLP training in the previous 18 months with one NLP training company who specializes in NLP health care training, coaching and consultancy.

Within the limitations of this case study only claiming to describe these 8 participants, the study is deemed to be valuable to offer insight into potential benefits of NLP training on clinical practice, a new area to research.

### *Results*

From the data, it was apparent that individual practitioners perceived positive value in the NLP training they had undertaken. There was a clear positive expectation of learning, prior to the training, which may have further impacted on the level of positive outcomes achieved. Personal gains were reported outside of work, as well as related directly to professional practice. Practice improvements and patient gains were outlined, but wider professional gain was not so strongly elicited. Some barriers were identified on returning to work, which inhibited the use of NLP in practice. Further areas for potential use of NLP training were suggested by the participants.

### *Conclusion*

The limited number of participants in this case study means that the results of this research cannot be taken as generalisable across all NLP training activities. However, the data clearly shows that for these participants, through the training they had undertaken, that new NLP skills were used to enhance clinical practice for individual health care professionals and for their patients: there was clear evidence of how new skills had been used to improve clinical practice and patient care outcomes. There was also evidence of personal gains, outside of the health care environment. More research is required to explore the range of conditions in which the training is effective and how the impact of training can be measured for actual impact.

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## **Coaching as form of leadership development in consultant radiographic practice**

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### **Abstract**

#### *Purpose*

This paper is part of a wider, CORIPS (College of Radiographers Industry Partnership Scheme) funded case study, which explored the leadership function of 6 consultant radiographers in the UK. One aspect of the project was the provision of executive coaching, by NLP coaches, over an 18 month period and its perceived impact on leadership development.

Robinson-Walker (2005) in her 'Reflections on Executive Coaching' stated that the purpose of coaching is to 'provide a safe place for candid dialogue and to develop a relationship that will facilitate growth'. Bartlett (2007) says that despite different definitions, one commonality is the 'aspect of focus on improving performance'. In reality though, little research has been published of rigorously measured impact of coaching on clinical practice.

#### *Methods*

Within a longitudinal case study, executive coaching (using a Neuro Linguistic Programming coaching model) was offered for each participant on 3 occasions over 14 months. While no particular tools were prescribed in advance, the two NLP coaches, used a variety of tools, deemed to be appropriate

within the sessions to respond to individual need as it was presented. Popular tools, frequently cited included perceptual positioning, values elicitation and submodality work.

Data was gathered from the coach (in reflective notes) and coachee (through in-depth interviews by the co-researcher) as to the perceived effectiveness of that coaching. Open interviews, reflective diaries and coaching notes were used to triangulate the data to increase the validity of the results obtained, looking for verification of findings from different sources. Participants were encouraged to use 'critical incident recall' to capture real experienced changes in practice to add depth to the data collected and to increase the validity of any claims made.

A thematic analysis was undertaken across all qualitative data to identify common themes and to offer insight into the issues which emerged from the data. Data was coded (by the lead researcher) at word, sentence and paragraph level both descriptively and interpretively to generate a rich description of the coaching process and its perceived effectiveness.

In addition the Leadership Qualities Framework (LQF) was used to offer an objective score outlining any changes to leadership qualities over time. Participants received (and shared with the researcher) the LQF report and their perception of the LQF facilitation interview offered as part of the LQF fee.

Interestingly in the literature, papers discussing coaching in health care are becoming more prevalent, though few rigorous studies regarding measured outcome were found. Cunningham and McNally (2003) wrote a case study regarding improved performance using 360 degree feedback, personal coaching and group learning groups within a medical centre in USA. They concluded that the coaching was integral to the learning process and accelerated learning. Gracey (2001) claims coaching is essential as a leadership skill and essential for Advanced Practice Nurses. Batson and Yoder (2009) claimed coaching increased self efficacy in nurse managers. Karsten (2010) in a case study claimed that coaching offers leaders new ways of working alongside increased organisational effectiveness. However, none of these papers offers rigorous research to evidence the views expressed. Ely et al (2010) offered a review of the literature into coaching evaluation and found that self reported change in behaviour is the most frequently assessed outcome and that other aspects are not evaluated such as coach/client relationship and the coaching process. De Meuse et al (2009) in a meta-analysis of coaching effectiveness highlighted the lack of research around the coach themselves, which they deemed to be one of the biggest variables. In this study only two coaches were used to reduce that variable.

This study also looked at objective measures of change (using the LQF), whilst also exploring consultants perceptions of changes (using critical incident recall to offer validation of those changes in practice) and their perception of what had contributed to any change, as coaching was only one component of development activity throughout the time of the data collected.

### *Results*

Coaching was perceived to be a valuable tool in supporting the consultant radiographer role. The participative nature of the NLP tools were particularly commented on as 'surprising but helpful' in changing behaviour in practice. Specific examples of where NLP tools had helped with clients and colleagues were cited by consultants, demonstrating the value of NLP coaching methods.

Consultants were confident to bring their own individual needs and development aspirations to the coaching sessions and each reported positive gains in specific areas, related to those topics. Objective gains were also demonstrated in the LQF (although it is not possible to determine the percentage change that was due to coaching alone).

Initial uncertainty as to the nature of executive coaching was quickly allayed, with positive results being demonstrated and a perception that ongoing coaching would be beneficial in the role.

### *Conclusion*

The paper details the consultants experience of coaching in relation to leadership development and offers recommendations as to how coaching could be used as an ongoing development tool. The study clearly demonstrate that leadership function can be impacted on over time and suggests that coaching would be a valuable development tool for advanced and consultant practitioners.

Due to the small sample size it is not possible to determine whether these results would be generalizable, though the total population of consultant radiographers is small, so this small sample represents a reasonable percentage of them. The study was designed to offer valid and reliable data for this cohort, at this time and does not claim to be generalizable across all consultants in health care, though may offer some interesting questions which could be explored across a wider population base.

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## **Reducing the negative impact of dyslexia amongst nursing students**

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### **Abstract**

#### *Background*

This paper describes a planned joint Research Project (2012) by the International Association for Health and Learning (IHL, [www.tiahl.org](http://www.tiahl.org).) and Coventry University. It will employ techniques developed by the author to reduce the negative effects of the symptoms of dyslexia in both academic work and clinical practice.

These techniques (Hickmott and Bendefy 2006, Hickmott 2011) are grounded in the NLP Spelling Strategy, developed from the studies of Malloy (1989) and Loisele (1985, cited in Bolstad 2002), and are claimed to be able to produce dramatic changes in people's ability to spell and read. They extend and simplify the published NLP Spelling strategy by utilising the visual abilities displayed by those with dyslexia. This approach is supported by the Neuroscientific research of Shaywitz (1996, 1999), Florance (2004) and Glezer *et al.* (2009).

#### *Proposal*

The proposed study is to test how effective these strategies are for nursing students with dyslexia through an experimental design, and to assess the impact of these on the students' nursing practice. Initially a whole year group from the Coventry University Nursing degree programme will take part in an assessment using the IHL skills survey.

The project will:

- Identify from independent standard dyslexic assessments a minimum of 20 students who have been assessed as dyslexic.
- Test this sample of nursing students on a number of skills.

- Randomly allocate those who agree to participate into either the group who will be taught new skills (the 'new skills' group) or the control group.
- The 'new skills' group will attend 3 workshops at 2 week intervals and a final one at the end of term. The control group will receive standard dyslexia tuition from a specialist tutor from the disabilities office at Coventry University to improve their memory, spelling, reading and written skills. The participants will be requested not to discuss the nature of the intervention outside the intervention group for the period of the research, say 1 term.
- Both groups will be re-assessed using the standard tests after 6 weeks of practice and repeat the IHL self-assessment survey.
- All the research project students will be tested after a specific period in practice to assess whether the new skills have improved aspects of their practice or whether they have remained the same. The specific aspects of practice to be assessed, such as record keeping, drug administration, drug calculations, is still to be decided.

### *Sample Recruitment & Ethics*

A sample of 10 or more nursing students for each group will be invited to participate following university ethical approval. They must meet the following inclusion criteria:

- Have a diagnosis of dyslexia from a registered dyslexia assessor
- Be a 2nd or 3rd year nursing student (this could cover a number of nursing specialities e.g. adult, child, mental health, learning disability) within the Faculty of Health & Life Sciences at Coventry University

Following ethical approval, every nursing student meeting these inclusion criteria on the University student data base will be contacted by letter informing them of the details of this study and inviting them to take part through informed consent. A consent form will accompany this letter. These students will be allowed to maintain their dyslexia status in class for additional support.

### *Analysis, Evaluation and Findings*

If the interventions are effective, we would expect to see significant differences between the scores of the 'new skills' group and the control group in the second assessment. While the numbers are likely to be too low for robust statistical analysis, the study should be sufficient to indicate whether this approach has promise, and whether a larger-scale trial should be developed.

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## **`Metaphors we teach by': An exploration into how HE lecturers reflect on and conceptualise their experiences of teaching via the use of clean language interviewing model of exploring metaphors**

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Mohammed Karolia is a Senior Lecturer at the University of Huddersfield. His research interest revolve around identifying how principles of Positive Psychology, NLP and Clean Language can be used to promote lifelong learning and is currently working towards his doctorate aimed at examining the influences of metaphors in education.

Rob Burton is a Principal Lecturer at The University of Huddersfield. His Doctoral research focussed on NLP and Learning Styles of Student Nurses. He is Co-Editor and author of the book 'Nursing: Transition to Professional Practice'. He is an NLP Master Practitioner and Trainer.

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### **Abstract**

In this session a presentation will be delivered on the topics of Metaphor and Clean Language. This paper aims to explore a developing doctoral study based on the research question 'What relationship is there between lecturers' use of metaphors, their beliefs about teaching and how this influences their teaching practice?' It is envisaged that discussion of Clean Language topics can enhance the awareness and skills of those that utilise NLP by developing knowledge of its application in NLP technologies.

The proposed qualitative study is to be conducted using interviews utilising the 'Clean Language' model. This is a model developed by the late David Grove and modelled by Lawley and Tomkins (2000) to better understand metaphors via a series of questions that are not hindered by the interviewers own assumptions, ideas and biases. It is suggested that this gives participants the opportunity to explore their thoughts and feelings in a way that is as close to their comprehension of the experience as possible. The application of this approach as qualitative research methodology will be explored and discussed.

The proposed study arose out of an interest in metaphor and Clean Language of the author. Bullough et al, (1992) suggest that teachers hold beliefs which influence not only how they teach, but also how they interpret their experiences of teaching, which Haney et al, (2002) describe as being an interactive process where one construct influences the other. To better understand these constructs, Mahlios, Massengill-Shaw and Barry (2010) suggest that it is necessary to research the metaphors which are representative of these constructs to identify how teachers organise their

thinking and plan their actions (Cook-Sather, 2003). Therefore it is appropriate for further exploration of these concepts.

The importance of exploring metaphors has been stressed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), Grove (1996) and Geary (2011) who concur that individuals do not ordinarily talk about their experiences in concrete explicit terms but rather in metaphors. Grinder and Bandler (1981) suggested these could fall into two types of metaphor, isomorphic and universal. An isomorphic metaphor is a story or analogy that represents or is similar to another situation. A universal metaphor is when a more generalised example is given but is one where the respondent may have had some experience of the subject matter. Therefore there is some relevance to further exploring metaphor and its application to NLP as a method for understanding the building blocks of how individuals code their experiences of the world around them. By gaining these understandings it is possible to develop relationships in order to empower individuals based on the form and content of their experiences (Dilts et al, 1980). Geary (2011) argue that an exploration of the metaphors a teacher uses to reflect on their experiences will give a more thorough insight into how they contextualise their experiences of teaching, how this in turn informs their teaching practice and the impact on their relationships with their students (Mahlios, Massengill-Shaw & Barry, 2010). For example, a lecturer describing their work with a group 'as a calm oasis of creativity' is likely to rationale their experiences of teaching differently than a lecturer who describes their work with a group as 'a battle for hearts and minds'.

In this discussion the concepts outlined above will be fully explored and participants will be encouraged to engage in the debate and provide their own understandings of metaphor, clean language and its impact on them and their teaching. It is anticipated that discussion will take place related to the developing research study and analysis of experience and application of metaphor by teachers and educationalists.

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Research Report

## **The use of a self-rating questionnaire in tracking changes in the self-perception of students over an NLP Practitioner course.**

**Authors:** Pam Keevil and John Seymour

Pam Keevil is a qualified NLP Trainer currently in the final year of her Ed. D. with the University of Gloucestershire in which she is researching the impact of NLP on the personal development of school leaders. She is a retired Primary School Head Teacher.

John Seymour is an internationally recognised NLP Master Trainer with some 25 years' experience of providing NLP training to Practitioner, Master Practitioner and Trainer Training levels. He has also provided bespoke training to many different organisations.

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### **Abstract**

Validation and credibility are critically important issues for NLP if it is to achieve its full potential to contribute to human welfare as an accepted change technology (Liotta and Bourke, 2011). There have been increasing calls for research-based evidence in NLP (Wake and Moxom, 2011). This research project potentially addresses both validation and credibility with a single quantitative psychometric instrument. This instrument measures the development of students over the course of an NLP Practitioner Training, and has the potential to validate the efficacy of applying NLP skills to personal development. If this instrument were used by different NLP training organisations, it has the potential to improve the credibility of NLP by also addressing the thorny issue of the quality of NLP training.

In Wilber's (1996) model of personal development, adults, if they continue their development, can take five years to move through a spiral of development in which they adopt a less egocentric and more exocentric world view. As a result of this development, they have more flexibility and can adapt more easily to challenging circumstances. This resonates with Rogers (1969) concept of a 'fully functioning person' and Maslow's (1954) 'self-actualising person'. Such individuals would also demonstrate two of Gardner's seven multiple intelligences (Gardner, 1983). These are 'inter personal intelligence' in which they understand what motivates other people and how best to work with them and 'intrapersonal intelligence' in which they can form an accurate model of themselves and are able to use that model to operate more effectively in life.

Trainers of NLP at JSnlp have noticed consistent changes in the individuals' perceptions about themselves in line with the developments described above. This has been evident in the written work that they must produce over the period of the NLP Practitioner training course. As a result, it was decided to develop a questionnaire to be administered at the start and at the end of an eight month period in which delegates took an NLP Practitioner course which may provide some measurement of these change.

A series of statements were devised to correspond to the four areas of self awareness, social awareness, self management and relationship management. Each of these areas were further subdivided into two elements. A final forty statements which it was thought were appropriate were selected with each of the eight elements having five associated statements. These statements were designed to elicit a response agreeing or disagreeing with the statement. The statements in the questionnaire were designed to elicit attitudes, opinions or beliefs about the individual's own self development which are often described as 'unverifiable' except by the self-reporting of the individual (Sudman and Bradburn, 1983). The use of a Likert (1932) rating scale was used, and designed to place people on a broad continuum (Oppenheim, 1992). At the present moment, the questionnaire is being administered over a three year period to test whether it has reliability in terms of consistency (Robson, 2002). Questionnaires can then be used with different NLP training programmes and with a control group to investigate generalizability and concurrent validity (Creswell, 2009).

The result so far suggest that taking an NLP Practitioner course enabled participants to make shifts that, if they happened at all, would usually take five years, over a period of eight months, with some notable variations. In this paper we will explore these changes and suggest reasons for them.

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## **The impact of Neuro Linguistic Programming on the personal development of school leaders**

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Pam Keevil is a qualified NLP Trainer currently in the final year of her Ed. D. with the University of Gloucestershire in which she is researching the impact of NLP on the personal development of school leaders. She is a retired Primary School Head Teacher.

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### **Abstract**

Successive governments have expected improved educational outcomes for pupils in schools regardless of circumstances (Whitty, 2008). It is believed that a key driver for school improvement is the quality and style of the leadership and management of the school (OFSTED annual reports, 1995-2008). Ideal leadership styles, however, as put forward by the National College of Leadership (2007) have mirrored the shifts in emphasis of the business or non educational world. Current theories of leadership have moved far beyond the 'traits theory' of the 'great man' of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in which key individuals, male, white and Anglican, educated in the public school system were somehow fitted to positions of leadership (Gronn 2003). The leader now recognises and acknowledges emotions (Hargreaves, 2008), is authentic and reflective (Begley, 2008) as well as being able to interweave the heart and the head (or feelings and thought) which is described as 'resonant leadership' (Goleman, Boyatzis and McKee 2002). Gardner's multiple intelligences would suggest that these attributes can be described under his terms of intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligences as they combine knowing one's own feelings and how one might react to events with the ability to understand and recognise emotions in others (Gardner, 1993). Such leaders demonstrate elements which may be described as emotional intelligence (Goleman, 2000) and which are evidenced by self management and self awareness.

It is argued in this study that taking an NLP Practitioner training course will have a greater impact upon the personal development of school leaders than other leadership courses. This comparative study involves in depth interviews with five leaders in education who have undertaken a full NLP Practitioner programme and compares their responses to five leaders who have undertaken a developmental leadership programme. The interview questions will be designed to draw out examples of any changes in the self in both behaviours and perspective (Mezirow, 1990) as an individual and as a leader and any subsequent impact on the educational experience for pupils. The selection of the ten individuals is based upon purposive sampling with individuals selected because they have particular characteristics; they are leaders in education who either completed NLP practitioner course in the past three years or have completed the required NPQH qualification (National Professional Qualification for Headship). The structure and content of both courses is also analysed and compared. The hypothesis is that if the personal development of the leader is considered to be important in educational settings, NLP skills training will have a positive impact upon this development.

The research report will outline the findings to date and suggest particular aspects of the NLP Practitioner training course which have had most impact on the personal development of the individuals involved.

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## **Does reframing language, in the positive, enhance learning for students with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and promote positive relationships with teaching assistants in secondary school?**

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Dr Voldis Kudliskis is Post-16 Provision Coordinator at South Dartmoor Community College. His research interests involve examining the application of NLP in education. He has produced a Ph.D. thesis specifically scrutinising the value of NLP in a post-16 educational environment; he has authored and co-authored a number of journal articles.

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### **Abstract**

Credibility of Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) as a model for excellence continues to be questioned due to limited research-based evidence to support this concept. Increasingly there is a need to draw the research community and NLP practitioners and clients together to explore this model for excellence. The aim of this paper is to provide an opportunity for all stakeholders, particularly those with an interest in education, to examine the usefulness of specific NLP strategies when implemented to support students with Special Educational Needs (SEN). It is suggested that such strategies may enhance approaches to learning for students with general SEN and help to promote positive relationships with teaching assistants in secondary school.

This paper explains the relevant key principles of NLP (see Bandler and Grinder, 1975; Grinder and Bandler, 1976; Grinder, 1991; Jacobson, 2000; O'Connor and Seymour, 2003; and Wake, 2010) associated with this study and gives brief consideration to concerns raised by some in the research community about the substance of NLP (Diamantopoulus *et al.*, 2008; Beyerstein, 2001; Heap 1998; and Rosen 1997). This then leads to an outline of the arguments relating to appropriate implementation of SEN provision in contemporary education, especially for those students in secondary education (see Garner, 2009).

This is followed by a description of an exploratory research study that was recently completed, within the Interpretivist paradigm, which examined the extent to which reframing of language, used in a specific educational context, contributed to enhanced learning experiences for students with general SEN. This study is a reflective account of an action research study set within a rural community college. It is a single site, multi-voice study and was created to capture the experiences and perceptions of specific aspects of NLP for those taking part. The findings indicate the following: Firstly, that the reframing of language, in the positive, has a positive impact on students with SEN in classroom-based activities as these students demonstrate behaviours and responses that suggest enhanced learning experiences; secondly, teaching assistants report that the use of these specific NLP strategies promote a more positive relationship with SEN students. In short, the results are encouraging as it appears that the development and use of positive language through reframing leads to higher levels of rapport which, in turn, enhance the learning experiences for students with SEN and the teaching assistants who work with them. The evidence suggests that NLP can be a vehicle to aid learning, as this 'psychological' approach can merge with both external interaction processes and internal psychological processes (Kudliskis and Burden, 2009).

Whilst this is an exploratory interpretivist study, the conclusions may be considered to add weight to evidence that NLP can permit the exploration and subsequent understanding of the intentions,

motives, motivations and social processes of individuals as demonstrated in a specific educational context; this, in turn, provides a platform for future research in this area.

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## **Mental strength in elite professional goalkeepers**

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Jeremy Lazarus is a certified Master Trainer of NLP, an accredited coach and an executive and sports performance coach. His clients include businesses, the NHS, entrepreneurs, athletes and teams. He has authored three best-selling NLP books. Jeremy is also a qualified accountant and corporate treasurer.

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### **Abstract**

#### *Background to the research*

One of the many areas that NLP can be effective is the area of sports performance. Numerous elite athletes have highlighted the importance of mental strength, for example: *'If two performers or two teams are quite evenly matched, the difference between who wins and who doesn't is largely due to who holds together best under pressure.'* (Hemery, 1991, p.193). There are many similar quotes from athletes such as Sally Gunnell OBE, (Grout and Perrin, 2004, p.51 and p.64) and Valeriy Borzov (Hemery, 1991, p.163).

One of the most financially lucrative, and consequently pressurised sport, is football. Within football, probably the most pressurised playing position is that of goalkeeper, where mistakes are normally costly, both in terms of the result of the match and the consequent financial implications.

#### *Research Approach*

There was no initial 'research question'. The starting point was the author's own curiosity about how elite goalkeepers use 'mental strength' to cope with the pressures of their role (he had been a semi-professional goalkeeper and a qualified football coach and goalkeeping coach), and from research done into two elite goalkeepers (Newman, 1992), where *'several emergent themes are discussed, including confidence, concentration, dealing with nervousness/anxiety, and preparation'*. These four areas, plus the area of 'dealing with mistakes and setbacks', were the main topics of the research. The study sought a greater understanding of how the interviewees experienced and dealt with these five areas, and whether it would link into aspects of coaching and NLP. The study consisted of semi-structured interviews with six goalkeepers (in the top two divisions of English football) and four goalkeeping coaches (in the top division). The interviewees were asked questions on each of the five areas, plus some more general questions, to explain both the importance of each of the five areas and the processes that they followed in dealing with the five areas. As Corbin and Strauss (2008, pp.35–36) assert, *'it is impossible to know prior to the investigation what salient problems or relevant concepts will be derived from this set of data. There is always something new to discover. If everything was known about a topic beforehand, there is no need for a qualitative study'*. The author

recognises that this type of study involves some subjectivity, especially given that, '*data are collected by participants and by observers, all of whom have varying degrees of involvement and attachment*' (Jankowicz, 2005, p.111).

### *Results of the Study*

The study not only shows that each of these five areas are extremely important aspects of mental strength, it offers insights into the mental processes that the goalkeepers undertake to remain mentally strong and links them to concepts and techniques within NLP, in particular demonstrating a link with a concept in NLP known as 'The Principles for Success' (Lazarus, 2010, p.38) as well as advanced anchoring, the mind-body link, submodalities, and some NLP Presuppositions.

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## The NLP/Neuro-Semantics approach to benchmarking coaching skills: How valid and how useful?

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Susie Linder-Pelz has a PhD in Sociomedical Sciences and worked as a behavioural science researcher before developing an NLP-based career coaching practice. Her writings include 21 peer-reviewed articles, 19 reports of commissioned research and five books including *NLP Coaching: An Evidence-Based Approach* (Kogan Page 2010).

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### Abstract

In the field of coaching there is much discussion about the skills and competencies valued by clients (Grant 2011) and about the need for trainers to understand which coach behaviours have impact and how they interact (Passmore and Gibbes 2007). Various coaching bodies are developing competency frameworks, ethical guidelines and benchmarks for best practice, including the use of professional supervision (Linley 2006).

One of the applications of NLP modeling is as a type of benchmarking (Dilts 1998) and Michael Hall (2011) has used benchmarking in the development and training of coaches since 2003. His approach to the benchmarking of coaching skills is to model both behaviours and meaning-making because his earlier work on 'meta states' had demonstrated how it is possible to model not only behaviours but also self-reflexivity, beliefs and abstract knowledge. So Hall has led the development and use of very specific coaching benchmarks grounded in NLP and Neuro-Semantics; these benchmarks are now used in coach training and certification in the Meta-Coaching community around the world. Videos and written materials demonstrate how these benchmarks are used to facilitate skill development but no independent studies have been carried out.

The aim of the present study was to throw light on the development and use of Hall's benchmarking model over a seven-year period. It addresses three research questions:

1. How robust and trustworthy was the process Hall used in identifying the key coaching skills and their specific behavioural indicators? (Malterud 2001, Searle 2004)
2. How effective is benchmarking in developing coach competencies and improving coaching standards? Is there support for Hall's hypothesis that the more often we see the behaviors of competencies in a coach, the more likely a client will evaluate the coaching to be successful in facilitating the goals of coaching?
3. How do coaches and trainers experience the benchmarking of their own and others' skills?

While the researcher is a trained Meta-Coach she has, since 2005, only been involved in independent research and writing. This study was in part explorative and descriptive (of the process of developing and implementing a new benchmarking methodology within a practitioner community) and in part a qualitative evaluation study (Kelly 2004). It involved analysis of documentary evidence and semi-structured interviews with a purposive sample of trainers and coaches in the practitioner community (Gobo 2004, Knox and Burkhard 2009). To address the first research question the researcher looked at Hall's benchmarking project through the lens of 'action research' (Ladkin 2004); for question 2 she reviewed written materials

and interview responses; for question 3 she did a systematic thematic analysis of the interview data (Braun and Clarke 2006).

In this paper the researcher explains her choice of methods, the steps she took in data collection and analysis, and her findings. Also, acknowledging the limitations of this research, she offers suggestions for further studies, including one that is already under way. Finally she discusses the implications for competency-based and researcher/practitioner models of coach training (Grant and Cavanagh 2004, Kemp 2011).

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## The decision-making strategies of project managers – research results and a proposed model

**Author:** Tim Lyons

A career project manager, Tim Lyons has additionally qualified as an NLP Master Practitioner and Master Coach and recently carried out modelling research on decision-making by novice and expert project managers as part of an MA in NLP. His chosen area of study includes communications and decision-making in project environments. MD of Gestionnaire Ltd. MA (Coaching and Neurolinguistic Programming, Kingston University, 2011); INLPTA Master Coach; ICC Coach; NLP Master Practitioner; ANLP Member; APM Member.

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### Abstract

As part of a Masters degree in Coaching and NLP, a research programme was undertaken to study the decision-making strategies of professional project managers (PMs). Research questions were:

1. Do project managers use any decision-making strategies at all?
2. Are there common recognisable patterns in the decision-making strategies of experienced project managers?
3. How do these compare to existing studies of decision-making?

To lend context to this study, and the reason why it is important, below is a quote from Dr Martin Barnes CBE, President of the Association for Project Management, who has studied & written extensively on the subject and is the inventor of the Time-Cost-Quality triangle, universally used in PM today. Considered by many to be a leading authority on the subject, he agreed to take part in the study, where he stressed the importance of decision-making to project management:

*“The quality of the management of any particular project is dependent on the quality of the decision-making... it’s all decisions – there’s nothing else...”*

As part of this programme material dealing with decision-making from within the NLP domain and also from the older and wider field known as Decision Theory was studied. This yielded a set of possibly useful decision models or model elements.

A study was then carried out using a small group of professional PMs currently working in construction, transportation and IT. Three types of evidence were used in order to discover relevant patterns: an on-line survey using the Inventory for Work Attitude & Motivation (iWAM) system. This is a questionnaire-based test devised by Belgian consultants JobEQ and is based on the NLP metaprogram model of cognitive thinking styles. It identifies a person's motivational and attitude preferences and claims to predict how a person will behave in various job types; second, a fly-on-the-wall observation during each subject's project meetings; and finally a 1-to-1 scripted interview on camera that asked subjects about how they made decisions. They were additionally asked to associate into past decision points. From this, observable strategies were elicited and compared to published methods to determine points of similarity or difference.

A conclusion reached was that many published models are not suitable for project environments – some had been developed in specific fields such as the military or civil service

and simply would not work. It also became clear that although PMs are trained in a number of specialist areas within their domain, they do not as a rule get any training whatsoever in decision-making, and thus do not apply consistent strategies when doing so. While this does not always lead to erratic or wrong project decisions, it does mean that there is considerable scope for modelling the exemplars. The study observed distinctions between strategies used by expert PMs compared to novices.

From the conclusions of this study, the author is developing a model for decision-making in a project environment that brings together key elements of published methods and strategies observed in participants. Finally this is described as the Decision Vee Model.

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## **'Symbolic Modelling' as an innovative phenomenological method in NLP research: the work-life balance project**

**Authors:** Rupert Meese, Paul Tosey, James Lawley, Wendy Sullivan, Margaret Meyer

Rupert Meese (lead author) is an established Symbolic Modeller with a broad range of experience from Gestalt Psychotherapy, NLP, Biodanza and Improvised Comedy. Rupert is currently bringing much of his understanding of the systemic nature of experience to bear towards a PhD in Machine Psychophenomenology.

Dr Paul Tosey is a Senior Lecturer at the Surrey Business School. His research interests include organisational learning and transformative learning, and he is co-author of 'NLP: a Critical Appreciation for Managers and Developers' (Palgrave). He has trained as a Master Practitioner of NLP and as a Clean Language facilitator.

James Lawley is co-author of 'Metaphors in Mind: Transformation through Symbolic Modelling' and over 40 articles. He has been developing Symbolic Modelling and David Grove's Clean Language as a research methodology since 2003 having collaborated with Liverpool John Moores University, Macquarie University, University College London, and University of Surrey.

Wendy Sullivan (speaker) is a specialist Clean Language trainer, NLP trainer, coach and psychotherapist. Owner of Clean Change Company and co-author of 'Clean Language: Revealing Metaphors and Opening Minds' (Crown House), she is interested in researching Clean Language/Symbolic Modelling to maximise the efficacy of their use in real life contexts.

Margaret Meyer is a change consultant, brand consultant, researcher and coach who uses Clean Language across the span of her work. She has developed applications of Clean Language for brand development, strategic planning, sales and market research. With Wendy Sullivan she trains and mentors professionals in the use of Clean Language.

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### **Abstract**

We present an innovative use of modelling employed as a research methodology in a pilot study seeking insight into the mechanics of a commonly-used but undifferentiated concept: "work-life balance" (WLB). We found Symbolic Modelling [1] - a recent development in the field of Neuro-Linguistic Programming - to be particularly suited to this kind of investigation as it allows the emergence of 'what is' and has a natural tendency to map the provenance of each concept and nuance. Symbolic Modelling is a metaphor-based practice, in the phenomenological tradition [2], that uses a questioning process called 'Clean Language' [3] which seeks to elicit subjective

experience with minimal semantic and metaphorical contamination from the questioner's language.

We present potential methodological enhancements [4] which address the contemporary critique of phenomenological research methods [5] and significantly extend the capability of qualitative research through Symbolic Modelling's ability to reveal the structure of subjective experience through isomorphism with the structure of reported metaphor.

This project applied Symbolic Modelling in order to elicit the naturally occurring metaphors for WLB from six managers. The analysis of the unique metaphor landscape for each manager yielded one key finding: although the "work-life balance" metaphor is commonly used, none of the interviewees' main metaphors overtly involved "a balance".

Specifically, Symbolic Modelling as a research methodology can: provide a coherent research strategy that guides the researcher from formulating the research question to analysing transcripts and reviewing features and patterns of the data; distinguish between metaphors introduced by a researcher into their questions or interpretation, and those that originate in, and faithfully represent, interviewees' subjective worlds; and offer the interviewer the means to elicit and model the interviewee's metaphor landscape. The approach can also provide explicit and systematic principles and techniques that can be shared by researchers, thereby increasing the transparency of the process of interpretation.

This methodology could be used, for example, to facilitate quality evaluations by users of NLP, heretofore an untapped source in NLP research [6], e.g. modelling an NLP client's experience before an intervention and again following, to elicit the nature of any changes. One drawback with this approach is that awareness arising directly from the metaphor elicitation can itself be a powerful agent for change, as shown by the spontaneous changes made by a number of the WLB interviewees.

We propose that this research method is well-suited for research into NLP, given that a positivist reductionist stance has been much critiqued in social sciences [7] and yet the value of carrying out empirical research in NLP is becoming more widely acknowledged [8]. In addition, Symbolic Modelling, with its alignment to contemporary thinking about language and cognition in relation to metaphor [9], [10], seems well-positioned to facilitate 'NLP to become discussed routinely within research communities' (Tosey & Mathison 2009:p143). We hope that as relationships develop between NLP and other disciplines, cross-fertilisation will follow and the community of inquiry into NLP will continue to grow and flourish.

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## **Motivation in the workplace: what meta-programs can tell us about performance & retention?**

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Patrick Merlevede's is the founder of jobEQ. His research focuses on work motivation and factors predicting job performance. He co-authored several books, including "7 Steps to Emotional Intelligence" and "Mastering Mentoring & Coaching with Emotional Intelligence". He completed the NLP trainer's training at NLP University in 1996.

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### **Abstract**

This research focuses on detecting the effect that meta-programs have on job performance and retention. In this longitudinal study, various teams of salespeople working for a large organization have been followed from April 2009 till the end of 2011. The sample was homogenous, in the sense that all 312 salespersons were selling the same range of products to B2B customers and everyone was given the same training in terms of product knowledge and sales skills.

The salespersons were asked to complete a forced ranking survey which measures preferences on 48 meta-program patterns in the work context. Subgroups of people were selected based on performance data and retention data, and compared to the meta-programs data. As a result, several models were built to predict performance and retention.

A first research question was which meta-programs would predict retention. To answer the question we compared a group (n=111) who stayed 2 years and longer with a group (n=51) who left very quickly (after maximum 3 months). The most significant findings (t-test with  $p < 0,01$ ) had to do with the people staying longer being more convinced by hearing, showing indifference to rules, paying less attention to external sources of reference and being more motivated by power. 11 other parameters proved to be significant ( $p < 0,05$ ).

A second research question was which meta-programs could predict job performance. A subset of the top 8 performers was compared with the 15 of the low performers. The most significant findings (t-test with  $p < 0,01$ ) had to do with high performers being more able to work individually (without other people around) and paying less attention to affective communication. 10 other parameters proved to be significant ( $p < 0,05$ ). Based on these findings a model was built to predict job performance.

Apart from explaining the research methodology used, which combines methods from statistics and psychological testing with principles from NLP modeling, this paper will discuss the implications of these findings for the organization in terms of recruiting, coaching, training and management of the sales people.

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## **What is the phenomenon we call experience?**

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*Maarten Kae Paulsen, PhD is Associate Professor at Lillehammer University College, Faculty of Education and Social Work. He is director of studies in counselling educations. Among his research interests are the epistemological basis for NLP, and human learning and communication in complex systems. He has explored NLP since 1981.*

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### **Abstract**

At the core of NLP is the tenet that subjective experience has structure (Bandler & Grinder, 1975). In this article I focus on the foundation of experience and discuss the question: "What is the phenomenon we call experience?" I explore the answers in two steps. First I look for a neurological basis for experience. Second I look for the subjective counterparts to a neurological basis for experience.

Creutzfeldt (1977) shows that neocortex has a structure that consists of four layers of nerve cells coupled in feed forward and feedback loops. The loops influence how humans handle sensory based information. The function of the nerve cells in the first layers, are to determine sensory based information that need attention. If it needs attention, a signal goes further to the second layer. The function of these nerve cells, are to detect what the sensory based information is about. The nerve cells inform what is sensed. If what is sensed has any significance to the individual who is sensing, a signal goes to the third layer. The function of the nerve cells in this layer is to figure out how the information is significant for the individual and act upon what is going on. If the nerve cells are not capable to figure out what the significance are, a signal is sent to the forth layer. Here the function of the nerve cells, are to figure out what the significance of the information can be.

The four layers in neocortex partly make up an objective structure for how the brain process sensory based information. I say partly because there are other neurological processes in the brain that influence subjective experience. What I have done is to delimit a neurological system that is essential in structure to how humans experience.

In step two I explore the subjective experience as counterparts to the objective neurological systems. I apply a distinction between form and process (Bateson, 1980). Forms are the aspects of phenomenon that humans become aware of in their minds. The processes are the underlying prerequisite for the form. I claim that human experience is an interaction between form and process in and between four levels, consisting of attention in sensing, categorization in perception, meaning in part/whole via metaphor and transformation via creativity. Each level is a counterpart to Creutzfeldt's neurological levels. I argue for the claims with theories developed on attention and sensing (Freeman, 2004), categorization (Lakoff, 1987), perception (Noë, 2005), meaning in

part/whole (Gendlin, 1997), metaphors (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003), transformations (Fauconnier, 2002) and creativity (Boden, 1990).

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## **Developmental NLP: A reflexive dimensional analysis of post formal adult development**

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### **Abstract**

We live in difficult times. On one side we see fantastic growth in knowledge and technology. On the other side we are faced with complex problems as broad reaching as climactic, financial and political instability. Kegan (1998) argues “we are in over our heads” in that the problems we currently face are of a level of complexity that most people are not able to grasp (Commons & Ross, 2008). Postformal Adult Developmental Theory examines the cognitive and emotional shifts that enable people to embrace complexity.

Inhelder and Piaget (1958) laid the groundwork for the basic understanding of cognitive development of children, of which the formal operations stage was held for a long time as the final stage in cognitive development. Subsequent work (Kegan, 1982,1998; Kegan & Lahey, 2009; Jaques & Cason, 2004; Torbert, 2004; Commons & Ross, 2008) has yielded a deeper understanding of cognitive changes that occur in adults, described in the literature as postformal development.

The NLP literature does not specifically address postformal development. The NLP literature has typically resisted theoretical analysis (Tosey & Mathison, 2003; Linder-Pelz, 2010) in favor of practical application. Dilts & Delozier (2000) specifically acknowledge that NLP has not addressed developmental issues. Burton (2003) has examined Piagetian development through the lens of NLP, but does not specifically address postformal development. Hall, Bodenhamer, Bolstad, and Hamblett (2001) model personality using NLP and Neuro-semantics, and while their analysis does have implications to postformal development, adult development theory is not explicitly addressed.

This present work is based on a reflexive dimensional analysis (RDA) of postformal developmental theories examined through NLP and Neuro-semantics as a metatheoretical lens (Wallis, 2010a). RDA is a technique in metatheoretical research that involves analysis of the literature to identify robust relationships between components of theories of interest (Wallis, 2010b).

Some such findings are presented below:

1. Postformal development involves increasing complexity in the construction of meaning (Kegan 1982, 1998), and consequently increased capacity to accomplish tasks of greater complexity (Jaques & Cason 2004; Commons & Ross, 2008).
2. Kegan's Subject-Object theory reframes the NLP presupposition that individuals have all the resources they need; rather, they have all the resources they need to achieve outcomes at the stage of performance at which they are capable.
3. Higher stages of development lead to a progressively more complex sense of self-identity (Kegan 1982, 1998; cf. Hall et al., 2001). In NLP terms, there is greater awareness of the difference between the map and the territory, and flexibility to engage in "triple loop learning" (Torbert, 2004), by adjusting inner beliefs and external actions to achieve desired outcomes.
4. Postformal stages of development correlate to a longitudinal shift in dominant metaprograms, with greater flexibility in changing metaprograms.
5. Higher stages of development can be achieved through external support (Commons & Goodheart., 2008).

It is my hypothesis that NLP applied to adult development can open new opportunities for further research and application of NLP techniques to support and accelerate postformal development.

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## **Eliciting meaningful data: The case for qualitative research studies of NLP and for NLP in qualitative research studies**

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### **Abstract**

This paper addresses two interrelated issues: what is likely to constitute an appropriate research paradigm for the study of NLP and how constructs drawn directly from NLP can be used as powerful tools to enrich the design of research projects across different areas of the social sciences.

It is argued that whilst quantitative research does have a place in the social sciences – particularly in identifying issues and problems for investigation – it is generally not effective in providing a meaningful analysis of the complex contexts and interactions that contribute to such issues/problems (Flyvberg, 2004). Furthermore, it is asserted that statistically dominated research is unlikely to inform subsequent decisions about how best to make positive changes in relation to the issues/problems under investigation.

For the reasons outlined above, an alternative approach for research in NLP is proposed: one that has been used successfully for decades by social science researchers, labelled by Harry Wolcott as ‘rigorous subjectivity’ (Wolcott, 1994).

The author’s commitment to a predominantly qualitative approach within her own (educational) research career has been further reinforced by her awareness of NLP concepts. Indeed, it seems untenable that any researcher who understands both the principles of NLP and the nature of statistics could justify using statistical instruments as dominant tools in their research design, given that nominalisations and generalisations are an integral part of the statistical process. Distortions are also apparent when statistical information is interpreted inappropriately and unfortunately this is a common problem - partly because of a false belief that statistical instruments (e.g. attitude scales) are objective rather than subjective. The extent to which such a view is a misconception is demonstrated in a recent research study within the field of NLP (Wake, 2010), when the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (1965) – which has a high level of *statistical* validity - had to be abandoned as a research instrument because its developer’s ‘map’ was so far removed from those of Wake’s

subjects that some of the latter had difficulty in even understanding the terminology. Further problems arise because the mathematical concepts that underlie statistical methods are not sufficiently understood by researchers employing them (Imai, King & Stuart, 2008; Sterne & Davey Smith, 2001). Examples of such distortions are cited, including those relating to the discussion of the relative performance of girls and boys within educational research (Walden & Walkerdine, 1985).

The case for adopting the 'rigorous subjectivity' paradigm is further supported using exemplars drawn from the author's previous publications and those of other researchers in the social sciences. Also, the data from these earlier studies is critically reviewed using NLP constructs, to demonstrate how the studies could have been enriched were such constructs employed in the research process.

Finally, results of a pilot study currently being undertaken by the author are reported, in which the Meta Model and an adapted version of a Triple Description are used as central design elements within the research methodology.

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## **Fad or know-how? Paradoxical attitudes towards knowledge and their implications for NLP**

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### **Abstract**

This paper explores the nature of knowledge and some implications for NLP. It considers American pragmatism as a potential philosophy of knowledge to underpin NLP.

A broad distinction is sometimes drawn between 'academic knowledge' and 'managerial knowledge' (Jarzabkowski, Mohrman, & Scherer, 2010). The former is characterised by its rigour but criticised for its lack of relevance. For the latter, the position is reversed (e.g. Nicolai & Seidl, 2010).

Neuro-linguistic Programming (NLP) provides an example of a body of managerial rather than academic knowledge. Used widely by managers, coaches, consultants and trainers, its legitimacy is often contested (e.g. Roderique-Davis 2009). While it emerged from a university setting, NLP was not the result of formal academic research and it lacks an academically recognised evidence base. Its identity in terms of academic knowledge is ambiguous – for example, it is informed by cybernetics (Bateson, 1973), brief therapy (Watzlawick, Beavin, & Jackson, 1967) and linguistics (Grinder & Elgin, 1973).

Yet paradoxical views exist about managerial knowledge. Some scholars criticise it for a lack of rigour and/or evidence base; concern is often expressed about 'fads' and fallacies (Abrahamson, 1991). Knowledge used by practitioners may be discounted or neglected because it does not conform to the norms that apply to academic knowledge.

This contrasts with the views of other scholars who acknowledge the *heuristic* role of managerial knowledge in processes of organising, sense-making and learning (as in practice-based studies, Gherardi, 2009). This heuristic role appears to be reflected in claims that NLP is 'useful' rather than 'true'; that it is a model, not a theory, the prime criterion for assessing any model being whether it works; and that effectiveness is attributed to the congruence of the practitioner rather than to the accuracy of the knowledge they enact.

As a possible way forward, NLP would appear to have a strong affinity with the criterion of 'usefulness' found in American pragmatism (Feilzer, 2010), especially in its normative sense of 'whether knowledge/theory helps to advance one's cause/project and improve one's immediate circumstances' (Kelemen & Rumens, 2008, p. 41). It is not suggested that such observations necessarily remove criticisms about (for example) the lack of rigour in NLP; however it is relevant to ask from what perspective NLP as system of knowledge should be judged. If NLP is understood as 'managerial knowledge', could ideas taken from American pragmatism provide its philosophical underpinning?

The implications of this debate are potentially significant for understanding the contents of NLP; evaluating NLP as a body of practice; and generating new knowledge in the field.

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## **Interpretative viability and the co-consumption of management concepts: An examination of the field of NLP**

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### **Abstract**

#### *Purpose*

The main aim of this research is to examine the dissemination and consumption process of management ideas within the field of NLP, potentially providing reasoning for its continued existence within management knowledge and learning. The theoretical basis for this research will be the literature regarding management fashions. Whilst examining this process, the research will attempt to provide empirical evidence for 'Interpretative Viability', defined as "*a certain degree of ambiguity in a fashion's content*" (Benders and Van Veen, 2001), an interesting yet under-researched characteristic of management fashions. A further aim of this research will be to seek out evidence of 'co-production' which if positive has strong implications for the practice of NLP.

#### *Design/methodology/approach*

The primary research method will be Flanagan's critical incident technique, interviewing a series of NLP consultants to provide examples of either modification (Interpretative viability) or user influenced changes (co-production) within the diffusion process. Given the failing of previous positivist literature to provide a comprehensive picture of a management fashion's dissemination, an interpretivist viewpoint will be adopted. It is the belief of the researcher that rich qualitative data is required in order to give a better understanding of the unique subjective experiences which occur throughout the diffusion process. This approach will also allow distinctions to be made on whether or not key actors in the process actively engage with the knowledge being passed on.

#### *Findings*

Not yet available.

#### *Research limitations/implications (if applicable)*

The scope of this study is primarily aimed at examining Interpretative viability. However, further developments within the literature such as the 'co-production' and 'co-consumption' of management concepts will also be explored. This research will by no means seek to provide a definitive answer, but does represent a tentative step forward in assessing these new concepts.

#### *Practical implications (if applicable)*

The research can potentially result in a number of outcomes;

- The practical implications of interpretative viability have been thus far under-theorized, However, an understanding of the malleable nature of management knowledge could be an important tool for those who teach and engage with such content.
- If suggestions of 'co-production' are found within the research, it could add an interesting new dimension to the realm of management consultancy. Observing how consumers change management concepts to fit within their organisation could lead to more relevant and practical training methods.

### *Originality/value*

The application of management fashion literature to the field of NLP is an original contribution, and the implications of Interpretative viability to its practice have been highlighted above.

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## **Aligning identity in legal services firms; do senior partners in legal services firms possess the core characteristics of identity to work in alignment within the firm?**

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### **Abstract**

This exploratory study used grounded theory to discover whether senior partners in large law firms in the UK held the core characteristics of identity to work in alignment in the changing context of deregulation and increased commercial activity and competition. It targets the Neurological Levels Model (Dilts and DeLozier, 2000) by carrying out an investigation at the identity level, supported by more traditional academic research and includes work on Metaprogrammes, Spiral Dynamics, and other NLP related works. Using a combination of participant interviews and secondary analysis of published material, (analysed using NVIVO), knowledge was generated to review changes resulting from the Legal Services Act, implemented in 2011, and the components of identity, and individual and peer alignment in these senior partners. The term 'alignment' is used in this study to describe both a state and a process.

The study suggests that senior partners do not currently display many of the attributes to take their firms into a successful future. Senior partners reported living a facade, having difficulties with boundaries and the complex role of partner. They seem to focus on eliminating problems rather than striving to achieve goals, and are more interested in 'I' than 'we'. All of this presents huge challenges for a successful response by the firms to deregulation. There was little evidence of simultaneous identification with the firm and the profession, and this with other findings left a gap between the individual and the collective as well as a gap between the role and core identities of the individual.

More positively, there is some evidence of identity negotiation and where participants were doing some personal change work, this was driven by the hindrances to, and supporting beliefs about, the required behaviour at work, and possibly informed by an imagined image of best 'self' or 'group member'.

The findings result in, and support, a practitioner model; 'CONTRIBUTIONS' which is proving transformational in the coaching and facilitation of individual senior partners and teams. The study, which was completed as a Doctoral thesis (DBA) in 2011, offers original contributions to academic knowledge including; building on the 'identification' literature, linking in the concept of 'secondary

gain' and specific evidence from the legal partner group against generic concepts of identity literature.

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## **'Waking up and Moving on': A preliminary case study exploring the role of the therapy relationship**

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### **Abstract**

This pre-pilot study continues the research project that was reported to the 2008 and 2010 conferences (Wake 2009, 2011). Using a qualitative thematic analysis, this study looks at the experiences of young people who have attended the WUMO (Waking up and moving on) workshop or utilised the work book with their youth workers, and the experience of some of the youth workers.

The aims of the study are:

- To identify what young people attending the workshop consider as useful
- To identify what was considered as unuseful in the workshop
- To identify if they would recommend the workshop to their friends
- To identify what differences or changes they made that they directly attribute to the workshop

Semi structured interviews were held with a convenience sample of participants from the workshops to understand their experience of the workshop and how this may have influenced their life. Further interviews were held with two youth workers to understand their perspective on the experience.

The study is qualitative by design using a grounded theory approach and is designed as a pre-pilot within a wider PhD project to understand the process of change within a brief model of therapy.

The literature supporting this study includes the early work of Bandler and Grinder and their observations of the behaviours of therapists. Bandler and Grinder (1975a), in their modelling of Satir, Perls and Erickson, noted that these therapists 'have very clear intuitions about how to employ these techniques to challenge and expand the client's model' (p156). In their interviews with Erickson, Bandler and Grinder elicited his experience of deep trance work with Huxley who experiences an introject of Erickson and an attachment response, linking

his external communication to his own internal infant figure (1975b p.119-124). As NLP has developed, very little has been done to pursue the original understanding of the therapy relationship and in most instances in general NLP training, it is not considered to be important. Where studies have been conducted that look at attachment processes and the development of self-care behaviours in a family setting, there is some evidence of the effectiveness of NLP (Crandell 1989, de Miranda 1999).

The study reported in 2010 (Wake 2010) identified that therapists were using intuitive elements in their work in ways that had not been taught to them as part of their therapy training, which links back to the early findings of Bandler and Grinder, although this was not pursued as part of the modelling work. The author's continued study into this area has revealed that NLPT (neurolinguistic psychotherapy) matches some of the core requirements of Schore (2003) in his review of effective principles of psychotherapy for those with affective disorders, most of which focus on the therapy relationship and notably the intuitive ability of the therapist to manage right brain to right brain communication.

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## **Symposium: What do we mean by research in NLPt?**

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Martin is UKCP registered Neurolinguistic Psychotherapist and is a qualified supervisor and trainer. He worked with the now closed 7th July Assistance Centre for people affected by terrorist activities and natural disasters and now develops training in Resilience using NLP. In 2008 he contributed to the first NLP Research Conference.

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## Outline

As psychotherapists both of us are curious about the intended outcomes of research in Neurolinguistic Psychotherapy. What might those outcomes encompass?

- to show that in some way NLPt “works”?
- for “them out there” to take our work seriously?
- to know in ourselves that there is some “objective evidence” that our time is well spent?
- is there something else?

Are we in perhaps in danger of simply engaging in the ‘research allegiance effect’ (Luborsky et al., 1999) in that we are looking for and hence finding evidence which supports our own orientation? Would this be a bad thing?

By creating a space specific to neurolinguistic psychotherapy we aim to explore some of the fundamental questions about our relationship to research. We would like to look at defining both priorities and measures for this activity called “research”.

## Structure

00:00 Introduction – a brief overview of ourselves and each member present to describe themselves.

00:15 In groups of two or three to consider the following question and complete a flip chart of the major points raised:-

- What are the underlying motivations, reasons and myths underlying our interest in conducting more research into NLPt?

Feedback by reading the completed flipcharts and discussing the content.

00:30 Then a group session focussed around the questions below and informed from the above discussion:-

- Who exactly is interested in this research - practitioners? therapists? coaches? academics? "the profession?" others?
- Who will be the stakeholders (loosely, the contributors and beneficiaries) in this project?

Feedback by reading the completed flipcharts and discussing the content

00:45 In groups of two or three to consider the following questions and complete a flip chart of the major points raised:-

- What are the benefits and drawbacks of scoping out priorities and measures for acceptable research?

- Who defines these, and how can they become the accepted norm among those wishing to conduct research now and in the future?

Feedback by reading the completed flipcharts and discussing the content.

- How willing and prepared are we to openly present such findings?

1:00 - Finish

We hope that by the end we will have a clearer understanding of what the participants mean by research in NLPt. Given the paucity of activity in this area we may develop some suggestions for areas of research and maybe even how this impacts on the training of neurolinguistic psychotherapists. This could in turn lead to some agreed outcomes for research activity.

### **Bibliography**

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