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DURHAM
NLP IN
EDUCATION

" The NLP training initiated an abundance of personal learning which will have a particular influence upon my teaching and classroom management"

NLP has immediate impact on teaching and learning of Durham pupils

An impressive conclusion drawn by project participants

During the summer of 2006, staff from four County Durham (UK) schools took part in a pilot project designed to explore the potential impact of a variety of NLP-based interventions on the development of teaching and learning.

The schools were asked to take part in this ground-breaking project because of their previous commitment to developing new and innovative ways of enabling and facilitating their pupils' learning.

Each school nominated about five members of staff, teachers and teaching assistants, who would be willing to learn some new skills and undertake a small-scale research project about the impact of those skills on the children in their care.

None of the people involved had any prior experience of NLP.

The four-day programme was arranged in three separate parts:
- on the first two days, staff learned some basic NLP, and designed their research
- they then had three weeks to undertake the research and prepare their report
- on the first morning of second two days they reported on their findings, and during the rest of the time learned some more NLP skills.

These results are truly impressive

This report outlines the findings from the research projects. What you'll discover is an impressive array of positive effects of the use of NLP-based interventions not only on the children, but also on the staff themselves.

Contents

The Durham NLP Project

2006

Attention and Engagement

Research Plan

The aim of my project was to put in to use during my teaching one aspect of NLP, namely, the Milton Model. I wanted to determine whether I could impact on the level of engagement and attention of the children in my group by altering my language patterns to include those of the Milton Model. The measurement of this was always going to be subjective. The time scale set for this project was less than three weeks in the classroom. Would there be a discernable difference within such a short time frame?

Implementing the Research Plan

The project was implemented by planning the opening of lessons in detail. This included the manner of delivery (awareness of personal state) and the use of embedded commands and suggestions, quotes and positive language. The introduction of the children's individual work was also planned in the same way. Initially these two points in each lesson were the focus, however, I soon found that the patterns were becoming more natural and I could incorporate them quite readily in to the rest of the lesson. (The more I practised, the more automatic it became and the more impact I could see!)

The impact of the change of language patterns was observed on day one! An 8 year old hearing impaired boy in my group is very nervous and a worrier. I had previously constantly told him: "Don't worry, this isn't hard and if you get stuck, I am here to help you."

In the light of what I learned about the way language can lead the brain I realised that I had been inadvertently telling this little boy to worry because the work was going to be so hard he would need help. So, of course, he did! As soon as I stopped using that language his panic vanished and his behaviour changed. All I needed to do was to say:

"I know you will easily do a great piece of work because you have loved this story and you have got lots of lovely ideas, I am sure you will enjoy writing about them."

The child immediately produced his first ever piece of totally independent writing. There was no panic, no delaying tactics and no pleas for help – a total transformation. I have continued to find that the atmosphere in lessons has been more relaxed and more positive. The children seem to engage in the lesson and maintain concentration for longer. They are definitely happier to 'have a go' at tasks independently.

Impact

I have learned an enormous amount, in a very short time frame, about how my personal state and the language patterns I use, impact on the states of my pupils and upon their willingness and ability to learn. The NLP in Education Project has caused me to reflect in detail on aspects of my teaching, and my pupils' learning. The evidence I have observed in my classroom of changes in pupils' behaviour has been very rewarding, although admittedly, very subjective.

Opportunities provided on the training course to practise the skills required to implement NLP in the classroom have been very helpful. So too was the chance to question other people about their research and findings in other educational settings.

I have developed skills that have enabled me to analyse my own state and use of language patterns, and to work on changing these to help achieve desired outcomes in pupils' learning. This will be an ongoing process but, in a very short time, I have observed very positive changes.

Project Context

Sue Fraser works with hearing impaired children at Durham Gilesgate Primary

Focus

I decided to focus on the use of the Milton Model. I wanted to determine whether I could impact on the behaviour and attention of certain children by altering my use of language patterns.
Initially I aimed to concentrate on our language patterns at the opening of each lesson and also at the point of introducing the children's independent work.

Support Accessed

There were many opportunities during training to share ideas and experiences with other professionals who were implementing NLP techniques in a variety of educational settings.
Information has also been available on the NLP in Education website and forum.
Additionally, the fact that groups of staff from the same institution have been able to be involved in the project together has meant that we have been able to support each other through the sharing of experiences and observations.
The opportunity to learn about other groups' research projects was invaluable and there were aspects of work discussed that I will be trying out in my teaching.

Early Years - Behaviour

Research Plan

I decided to focus mainly on one child (G) a little boy who has quite severe behavioural problems. My focus was on helping him to settle and be less excitable whilst not damping down his natural and entirely normal exuberance. At the time of the research, his English speech was not very clear. I wanted to see if his problem (and ours) could be helped by NLP techniques, and more one-to-one attention.

I also wanted to use music more in the Nursery, and experiment with different types of music and the times we use it.

Impact

G improved considerably. We all worked extremely hard to praise him at all times and to be aware of our use of language when working with him. I tried using the Circle of Excellence with him to help him imagine a boy who was really good friends with everyone, and made his daddy happy every day (he is extremely close to Dad who brings him to school). I also used stickers with him and he really WANTED those stickers! I had thought perhaps he was too intelligent to be 'bribed' but I was wrong. I made it more specific and worked on him producing 'desired states' by saying what the sticker was for i.e. sitting down properly, crossing legs, not hurting friends etc., and he understood that too.

As well as impacting on one individual I was keen to notice how I could use the NLP I'd learned to impact on the rest of the class, and on the staff I work with. After the initial NLP training session I reported back to my colleagues in the Nursery. There are four other members of staff as well as myself and we work as a team but do different tasks on a rota basis.

I used more positive and motivational language straight away. We have tried before to use anchor points, but because we move into different rooms during group work times, I found that the use of anchor points was not working as well as I had hoped. I think that many of the things that I learned during the second 2 days of training will be beneficial in helping others see things the NLP way - for example the Language Pattern cards were very useful, and I am introducing them into Nursery for other staff to use.

We tried using music and this worked well sometimes. I found it worked best when I was working with a small group of children using classical music as a background: it seemed to help them achieve a calm state.

State Management

Research Plan

My main aim for my own professional learning was to find out about the principles of NLP and consider how they could impact upon my teaching and learning strategies in the classroom.

My main aim for the pupils was to create a more 'positive' state for learning using NLP strategies that I had learned about. To achieve these aims I planned a five-step process:

1. Assess the pupils' current state of mind at key moments throughout the day. Identify times of the day where the classroom state could be improved.
2. Trial pieces of music at different times of the day for different purposes. Consider factors such as pace and rhythm of music, volume level and whether the music has words.
3. Record the 'feeling' of the state of the classroom during the different pieces of music.
4. Reflect each day upon which pieces of music were successful at which points during the day and consider why.
5. Create a bank of music that is suitable for key points during a day and record it on planning.

The resources I needed were a programmable CD player and various CDs. I actually ended up using my laptop computer quite often as the skins images which appear on the interactive whiteboard where also very useful in creating an atmosphere. These skins moved and rotated in accordance with the music which was being played.

The success criteria for the project were that:
- pupils would have a positive state of mind ready for learning;
- the level of pupil noise would be lower, and
- the pupils' learning would be encouraged.

A positive response from the pupils on how they felt about different pieces of music would also be considered.

The time scale for the project was initially one month. This was determined by the NLP training course dates which were one month apart. The findings for the project had to be sufficient for me to justify continuing the project.

The only ethical implications I had to consider were anonymity of pupils when referring to the project.

Implementing the Research Plan

To implement my project I began by looking at the key times in the day when pupils' state was not appropriate for learning. The key times I identified were:
- Children entering the classroom on a morning.
- Children returning from outdoor activity.
- Children returning from lunch.
- Children tidying the classroom.
- Children getting changed for PE.
- Children preparing for home-time.

After all of these activities the pupils needed some form of settling to change their state of mind for learning. This is where I decided to trial music as a form of atmosphere creation. I began to play different types of music at home to listen to the pace and rhythm of the music and try to predict how I thought the pupils would react. I then planned for music to be trailed and included the music on a lesson plan. I would briefly note down at the end of a day the response each piece had created.

Over the course of the time in school I began to find particular pieces of music caused a different response. One fast piece of music I selected for tidying up caused a frantic state of mind. I had thought the piece would make the children tidy up quicker and be ready to begin work. Instead it made them tidy frantically and when they sat down they were still very unsettled, and not engaging with the learning for at least the first five minutes of the lesson.

During one handwriting session I decided to look at how music would affect the engagement of the learner if it was played whilst they were working. The piece I chose was a classical instrumental piece as I didn't want the music to disturb the children. I chose handwriting as I decided it wasn't a task that needed a great deal of active concentration – in comparison to something like addition where children need to count and often calculate out loud. The music really seemed to help the children to focus upon the task, and it really helped them to carry out their task within a quicker time span. As this had succeeded, I used it the following week in the same lesson. I believe this is something I would like to investigate further to consider other learning which could be influenced by music.

Significant discussions with other staff provided me with more music to trial. One teacher mentioned how music without words is better for instilling concentration on a specific task as words can distract their learning. This influenced my choice of music further.

I am currently in the process of putting together all of the most useful music tracks I have onto one CD with a note beside each track as to the influence the music 'should' have. I will regularly use this CD from September 2007 with my new Reception class.

Impact

From my 'positive state project' I have gained an enormous amount, which will significantly impact upon many areas of my life. My awareness of the positive impact of NLP upon people I come into contact with is heightened. This has influenced not only the way in which I speak and react to my pupils, but also to staff and other people I meet outside of school. The NLP training initiated an abundance of personal learning which will have a significant influence upon my teaching and classroom management.

In particular, the findings of my research project will influence the fact that I use music at key points during a day to create a positive state and 'readiness' for learning. The improved 'state' of the class after the use of music has had the most influence upon my keenness to change my approach, and I intend to feed back to all of the staff in our school on the benefits of using music in the classroom for changing pupils' state.

I would hope that my next classroom monitoring session from senior management would show that I consider the pupils' readiness to learn before I begin each lesson. This has supported methods I already used including Brain Gym and Brain Juice (water) which were a regular part of my classroom routines. The inclusion of music will improve that routine further.

I had the opportunity to speak to a class of NLP trainees about how my project had worked. I also had my two support colleagues who were available to discuss and evaluate the project.

Our school is also creating the opportunity for all NLP trainees to speak to our whole school staff regarding our project findings and implications for the impact of NLP for all of our pupils.

The project gave me the opportunity to develop my teaching style and classroom management with a resulting positive benefit upon the pupils. I became more of aware of how pupils' state can have a huge impact upon their 'readiness to learn'. I could see how crucial it is for teachers to create that state to ensure true learning takes place. The benefits of music were clearly demonstrated, and I am using music more at home when I carry out different activities and feeling different emotions (e.g. stress, urgency).

At this stage I am continuing to trial different pieces of music within my class and assessing their appropriateness in creating different states. I will also continue to adapt my teaching style to incorporate more of the NLP strategies into my everyday practice.

Attitude to Reading

Research Plan

The aims of my project were to:
- find a more effective and positive approach to reading with pupils throughout the school and
- implement a more consistent approach, enabling pupils to learn and enjoy.

I planned to work for 3 weeks on an individual reading programme based on the year 6 pupil's stage and interests.

Implementing the Research Plan

I withdrew the pupil from the class to work in a small room used as a story room for nursery age pupils. The room was decorated with the nursery children's paintings of zoo animals. Comfortable rocking chairs, and music to aid accelerated learning, pupils' own choice, playing in the background, created a relaxed atmosphere. The pupil remarked how it was "just like home ".

I implemented this for 15 minutes on a morning and 15 minutes on an afternoon for 3 weeks over a 4 week period due to a holiday week being one of these weeks. I used the Oxford Fuzz Buzz reading scheme introduced to the pupil in September 2005. These books are enjoyed by a large number of pupils throughout the class.

The annual assessment, carried out in May 2006 using the Salford reading test, gave the pupil's reading age as 5:7 years. After the 4 weeks the assessment was repeated, and the pupil's reading age had increased to 6:10 years.

The pupil's interest in reading had also increased dramatically and is now at the stage where the pupil is asking to read.

Impact

The results from the project have proved to me that children learn differently in different settings.

Employing new strategies has been beneficial to me, giving me a greater awareness of the environment in which children learn and its impact on the learning achieved.

The result from this reading project has been shared throughout the school.

I feel I will be able to continue using this strategy throughout the school with all pupils showing reading difficulties. This will enable those children to develop stronger reading skills, and increased confidence and ability, whilst learning in a relaxed, calming and soothing environment.

Spelling

Research Plan

The aims of our project were for us to:
- find more effective approaches to teach spelling and
- ensure pupils would learn and retain spellings more easily

We planned a 3 week project using the weekly spelling activities as a focus. We decided to make small changes each week to the structured approach, and to test the children each time so we could measure the impact. The spellings would be scored out of 8, and our success criteria were:
- to improve the full mark score and
- to improve the ' more than 5 out of 8' score

Implementing the Research Plan

Week 1 - baseline
- Spellings were given as usual. A spelling test was carried out and the results were used as a baseline for the research.
- Spelling pattern was 'i before e'

Week 2 - start of project
- Spellings were written on the right side of the white board with the spelling pattern written in a different colour
- Eg chan**ge** or **ge**rm etc
- Children copy spellings in spelling log using a coloured felt tip to show the spelling pattern
- Children to work in pairs spelling out letter by letter
- ' spell change...c..h..a..n..g..e..' other child jots down spelling
- Children write spellings in handwriting books (joined script)
- Use Look, Cover, Write, Check sheets and write 'ge' in a colour . Encourage to look upwards to recall the 'look' of the spelling. 'Can you see the word?'
- Spelling test

Week 3
- Spellings were written on the right side of the white board with the spelling pattern written in a different colour. The children all moved seats during the spelling session to allow a straight forward view to the white board.
- Children were given fragranced felt tips to record the spelling pattern.eg **gi**ant en**gi**ne
- Because the children with special educational needs did not seem to be responding to the changes introduced so far – their scores were not particularly changing - they were given spellings on cards with the target blend highlighted in textured materials (net, corrugated card, bubble wrap, string, fur).
- Spelling test

Impact

The data illustrating the changes in the pupils' spelling scores is on the next page, and there are a number of conclusions we have come to as a result of the project and analysis of the scores:
- The evidence has proved so overwhelming that the use of as many sensory channels as possible (visual, auditory, kinesthetic, olfactory, gustatory (not used in this research)) can make a huge difference to a child's ability to memorise spellings.
- An awareness of eye accessing cues, where to place the spellings, how and where to ask children to visualise words etc, also improved their ability to remember spellings.
- The extra time element involved when using these activities is minimal (with the SEN group being the exception, but it would be manageable.)

Andrea Pearson and Kelly Field work with Y4 at Framwellgate Primary

Focus
Spelling has always been taught in a structured way throughout the week. I felt the attainment in spelling could be improved by implementing simple changes in the approach used, and using the ideas put forward during the NLP course.
Some children struggle when learning spellings, and strategies need to be found and employed which work for them. I felt I was doing my utmost to support the children and if my approaches did not suit particular learners, they needed to be changed or adapted.

Support Accessed
The support given on the the NLP in Education Forum was invaluable. It was positive and very encouraging – often giving helping hints.
Within school we worked closely together to ensure the ideas used with all pupils, including those with special educational needs, and we were able to discuss ideas an plans.
We had the full support of the Head teacher, including time given for analysis. This gave our professional learning more focus and gave us a heightened awareness of approaches and systems which could be appropriate.

- Because they were changing the pen within each word, the children were more focused when learning spellings.
- This will have an impact on the teaching of spelling within our school. Many of the problems which some children had with retaining new spellings will be addressed.
- The added effect will be a much more open and flexible approach to the teaching of a range of primary curriculum content.
- The use of test results and observation gave the most appropriate forms of evidence with which to analyse the effect of implementing these approaches.

Impact Data
The following tables detail the impact on the children's ability to learn and recall spellings.

Table 1 - Raw Scores out of 8

	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3
	No of children	No of children	No of children
8	5	18	20
7	5	2	1
6	4	2	3
5	4	0	2
4	2	0	0
3	2	0	1
2	1	2	0
1	3	0	1
0	2	1	0
Total children	28	25	28

Variations in the total number of children are because of absence

Table 2 - Expresed as a percentage of total pupils taking spelling test:

	% Full Score	% Over 5 correct
Week 1	18	46
Week 2	66	81
Week 3	71	92.5

Re-phrasing Language

Research Plan

I was aware that I often used very similar phrases to get attention both at the start of lessons, and at change of activity points during the lesson. Getting attention and speaking to individuals to refocus their attention also involve a similar collection of phrases. I thought these phrases could be improved by NLP techniques.

I hoped that the use of the changed phrases might have a positive effect on the time taken for my target class to settle to tasks.

I made a note of the phrases which I think I usually say in class, and I recorded a lesson with this class so I could write down the actual phrases used in that lesson.

I re-wrote some of my phrases using NLP techniques, and used the new phrases in class.

Implementing the Research Plan

I wrote out some of my commonly used phrases and then re wrote them using NLP techniques so I would have a 'crib sheet' of improved phrases to use in the class. Some of the phrases are as follows:

- As you are settling down to this lesson can you open your books and write the title.*
- I was wondering if you were watching the video...
- When everyone is quiet we'll be able to begin.*
- While you are enjoying this activity today.....
- You are here today in this room on Friday you can begin to read this section...
- Now, as we begin to pack up..
- While you are here today you are going to enjoy learning about....
- I was talking to Mr Nicholas who said how much you enjoyed figuring things out.
- Now we'll start to watch this video together we'll have some fun seeing who can be first to spot...
- Now you are learning new skills you can learn easily.

There were only two occasions when I specifically tried out the phrases in the class. In the first lesson I said two marked * phrases at the start of the lesson but did not have any set opportunity to say any of the other phrases in the lesson as I did not really refer to my notes and they did not seem to fit. This was a group work lesson where I gave a lot of individual praise to students as they tackled the tasks. I told students how well they were doing, and was very specific about what they had done well

In the second lesson I had the sheet of phrases ready at the start of the lesson again and I said the two marked * phrases again. 'When we are all quiet' does sound much more positive than 'stop talking' but I did revert to saying 'quiet please!' during the lesson. I did not use the other phrases. It was just not practical to learn them off by heart and there was no time in the lesson to quickly refer to the sheet and say an 'NLP type' phrase.

Impact

I could not say that the use of a few phrases in the class had a noticeable effect on the time it took for this class to settle. The effect of this research project has been more noticeable on me than on my classes. I am much more aware of the use of negative bias phrases in all of my teaching (e.g. the use of don't, can't, difficulty, problem) etc. and I have been much more likely in all of my classes to try to use positive phrases now I realise I have a choice of phrases.

I will report back on the project to the senior management team of the school in writing and verbally. The group of staff in Framwellgate School Durham will present the results of their projects to the research and development group in the school, and will run a CPD session for interested staff in the new term.

Positive Talk

Research Plan

Having decided o our focus, we had a series of meetings to discuss the way forward and decided that we would use the following NLP 'techniques' when the student entered a negative state:

- Avoid using negatives such as 'Don't ' and 'Can't'. Instead give clear instructions as to what the student will do e. g 'Don't swing on the chair' becomes 'Place the chair legs on the floor and complete section one of the task'
- Use the 'quoting' technique e.g. 'I was talking to Mr McCreedy yesterday and he was saying you completed an excellent essay in English. I want you to do the same in Business'
- If a student says, 'I can't do this', rather than say, 'Yes you can', ask them what they are having difficulties with and offer clear advice on how they can improve
- Use three facts followed by something that you want the student to believe is true e. g 'You've completed your last piece of coursework to a high standard, you've worked really hard all lesson and you've completed all of your homework. Now I want you to achieve a 'C' grade for this next piece of work'

We would monitor this through a 'positivity' report as follows:

- Student enters the room in a positive frame of mind
- Student responds to given instructions in a positive manner
- Student responds to teacher's attempts to change his state of mind (if required)

The report would be marked on a four-point sliding scale with one being refusal to follow instructions and four, fully complying with instructions and displaying a positive attitude.

Implementing the Research Plan

Initially we decided to work in two subject areas of Business and English, yet because of time restrictions only managed to trial the techniques in one area (the following is from Jane Hutchison).

The one lesson where I had to focus specifically on the student because of a change in state had varying degrees of success. At first I felt that I hadn't been as successful as I had initially hoped in changing the student's state in that lesson, yet although the change wasn't immediate (i.e that lesson) success did happen. The student came to the room the following lesson with a completely different outlook. Previously he had claimed that he wasn't bothered about his coursework and that he didn't care if he got an 'E' grade, yet the following lesson he approached me and told me that he wanted to achieve a 'C' grade and could I help him to do so. Since then he has had much more of a positive outlook and recognises himself that he can improve.

Impact

The whole area of NLP has helped me enormously in my teaching and in my role as Head of Department. I feel that by using the skills learned over the four days my pupils are much more responsive. Staff have noticed the positive effects that I have had on some of their students and have even asked me to 'NLP their student' I have realised that it needs much more practise until it becomes a natural part of my teaching style, but am excited by the challenges that it poses. It has aroused my natural curiosity and I find myself wanting to read more about the subject (Jane Hutchison).

Project Context

Jane Hutchison and Mark McCreedy teach at Framwellgate School Durham

Focus

Framwellgate School Durham is a school for 11 - 18 year olds.
We decided to focus on changing one Year 10 student's negative state to a positive one. The student frequently 'flipped' from a positive state, and remained in a negative one for the remainder of the lesson.

Support Accessed

We decided to work together with this particular student as we both were finding similarities in his behaviour. We had a meeting to discuss the student's attitude and decide on the way forward.
This way of working was extremely beneficial as it meant that we could discuss common problems and try to find common solutions. It was also useful as Mark had an overview of what was happening in other subject areas because of his role as 'Achievement Centre' manager.

State and Language 1

Research Plan

By the end of the project, through the use of a NLP model, I expected to see an increase in the target pupil's communication with staff, and a more relaxed and confident attitude displayed by her. In putting the intervention together I referred to a variety of information sources including:

- Reports and reviews on the pupil
- Materials and good practice from the NLP course
- Information relating to the Milton Model of communication
- Recent work undertaken related to ASD and examples of strategies employed to aid communication. (In-house training led by members of County Durham's ASD support team).

With the emphasis on the beginning of a lesson, Milton Model language patterns were to be used to help motivate the pupil.

Implementing the Research Plan

Because of a number of external factors, I was only able to implement my interventions for one week before reporting back to the NLP group. I used Milton Model language patterns particularly at the start of lessons and the process was by no means one of steady upward progress. Some sessions were better received than others. There could be a number of reasons for this, with the following being most influential:

- inexperience of deliverer, me or my support assistant
- pupil's level of ASD

Another important factor was made obvious about half way through the project. The support assistant had not attended the NLP course so was given information second hand and without benefit of some practice. It must also be noted that the same person does have some difficulty with "positive" attitudes. On a few occasions, but not with the observed pupil, she spoke in a "negative" fashion towards other members of the group, and, in many ways, this affected the positive feeling in the class. There are obvious implications for future training.

Impact

By the end of the week the targeted pupil was showing signs of increased communication. She was beginning to look more relaxed and at one time actually instigated a short conversation.

Whilst one week is only a short time, and with this pupil we take one lesson at a time, there did appear to be some change in attitude and behaviour.

There are a number of useful conclusions that I can draw from this project:

- it is important that all members of a team are conversant with NLP
- learning about NLP highlights the need to clarify language
- the work has demonstrated the importance of one's own "state" and how it can affect the learning of others
- using this approach develops a more positive feeling in both staff and pupils
- working in this way extend the range of communication available.

Project Context

Keith MacClelland teaches at Walworth School

Focus
Walworth School is a special school for 4 - 11 year olds.
The pupil on whom I focussed my work was an 11yr old female. She had recently undergone assessment related to ASD. She can often be withdrawn and insular, followed by times when she is verbally and physically aggressive. She rarely takes part in general question/answer sessions and hardly ever instigates conversation with staff. At the beginning of a lesson she appears to "switch off" and relies on staff to support her to start and complete work.

Support Accessed
Regular dialogue with the Head Teacher who also attended the NLP course.
Discussions with other staff members who attended the course.

"Such was our level of success we have decided to continue our use of positive language"

State and Language 2

Research Plan and Implementation

We integrated our learning about state management and language patterns into our overall approach to the pupil. The following itemises the actions we planned and implemented:

- developing a gradual approach to new social situations
- raising awareness of underlying causes of anxieties
- using a calm, clear voice, giving simple directions, and explaining consequences of behaviour
- management of our own states, particularly being aware of body language
- being specific with instructions, and using the child's name first
- providing a predictable, structured environment offering routines with visible, clear boundaries for specific areas for work and play
- using of a timer
- using a visual timetable, and visual clues - activities built on pupil's strengths
- creating social stories incorporating Milton Model language patterns, that addressed problems of moving into a new classroom environment
- encouraging the pupil to listen to the story either read to him or on tape until action required is achieved
- developing our own communication skills using what we learned on the NLP programme
- using session plans devised by the pupil and teacher togehter
- discussion will follow the child's lead when he chooses two activities that he wants to do in the session
- Encourage appropriate communication skills between adults, coaching, mentoring, and peer support

Curriculum activities were then placed at intervals throughout the session until he had achieved objectives, his and the teacher's, with a small reward in the middle of the session and larger final reward at the end.

Impact

The pupil responded within three days and came into the classroom willingly. The NLP Milton Model language patterns were used by both members of staff in the classroom which made for a bigger impact on all of the children. Such was our level of success, we have decided to continue our use of positive language and social stories to help us tackle the next problems we need to overcome with the pupil.

The pupil's peers became much more supportive, encouraging him to conform to the class rules. This resulted in a happier boy. He is by no means perfect but we have noticed a significant improvement.

Project Context

Karen Deller and Tracy Day both work at Walworth School

Focus

Walworth School is a special school for 4 - 11 year olds.

The pupil on whom we focussed presents with a number of challenges including: an inability to listen and attend to relevant information; an inability to understand the literal and non-literal meanings behind spoken words and ideas; an inability to express ideas, question, comment, discuss and have meaningful conversations; impairment of social interaction; impairment of social imagination; inappropriate behaviour. The pupils also has a number of strengths including: responds to face to face eye-contact and positive interaction; will take turns and communicate with peers occasionally.; clear facial expression and body language; will listen to short stories and musical pieces.

Support Accessed

Regular dialogue with the Head Teacher who also attended the NLP course.

Discussions with other staff members who attended the course.

"By the end of the week I felt much less stressed and calmer"

State and Language 3

Research Plan

I planned to utilise state management (my own, that of my support assistant, and the pupil's), and Milton Model language patterns to modify the behaviour of a very challenging 8 year old boy (pupil A). Because of a number of circumstances I only had one week in which to create any change, this makes the results all the more remarkable.

Pupil A presents with a complex set of needs including:
- severe speech problems which make him very difficult to understand, and so he shouts to compensate
- communication difficulties causing A to often say the opposite of what he actually means, but he has no problems with receptive language
- being verbally and physically abusive towards adults - swearing, kicking, spitting, hitting almost daily
- extremely low self esteem, referring to himself as thick and stupid
- trying to self harm
- until 18 months ago he received 2:1 tuition and has only been in full time education since September 2005 even though he is in Year 4
- his situation had recently deteriorated for reasons outside school control leading to his violent incidents becoming more serious and a number of fixed tern exclusions
- he will seize any opportunity to absent himself from school
- he always tries to disrupt at some point of the day
- he tries to avoid completing independent tasks.

Because of his behaviours resulting from those needs, other children in our class had become very resentful of him and often expressed the wish that he wasn't in our class. Recently his mother had told us that she felt she was at the end of the road with him. Our school was also wondering what to try next!

Given this very complex situation I agreed the following with my support assistant:
- that we used to have very positive attitude in class and we needed to get back to that
- it was very important that the staff team should be happy and smiling, with relaxed body-language, at the beginning of day. We would use the smiling and body-language as an anchor throughout the day
- we had stopped playing music as part of beginning of day routine and we both felt it was important to start again - another part of the anchoring process: music, nice activity, smiling adults = positive atmosphere

- that we were using too many negatives eg 'don't', so we decided to use Milton Model language patterns, and be less confrontational
- that we needed to use rewards more than negative consequences eg instead of, 'If you don't finish your work you will miss your choice time', we could say 'I know you are going to be able to finish this and then you can have a great time at choice time playing with the cars'.

We decided to pilot an NLP-based approach for one week and then evaluate its success with regard to Pupil A. Our success criteria would be that A would get fewer MIRs (referrals for seriously unacceptable behaviour), complete his independent tasks, and there would be fewer incidents of class disruption.

Implementing the Research Plan

As part of my implementation I discussed a number of specific approaches with my classroom assistant:

- the 'Circle of Excellence' and idea of a whole class character - visual picture, music (possibly Mission Impossible theme which would link to other classroom themes /displays)
- we looked at eye accessing cues and discussed how we could use this, and agreed it would be especially useful during 1:1 activities. Also that when children could not meet our eyes it was not necessarily because they were guilty or lying
- Milton Model language patterns could make a huge difference by concentrating on the positives, and constantly reminding children of the rewards instead of the negatives
- we realised that we had not been managing our own states very well recently, and how we needed to be much more positive
- the use of anchoring. Smiling could remind children of happy times such as at the beginning of the day, and also that we needed to start playing music again as it had been a powerful anchor for our class.

Research Diary (5th - 9th June, 2006)

Monday

- A good start to the day - Pupil A welcomed in to the classroom.
- The first challenge came when he refused to read. Used Milton Model to defuse the situation and it worked!
  'I know you can read really well and you will be able to read this book quickly then we will be able to go and change it and you will be able to choose another book'.
  The rest of class applauded when he finished reading - major break through, they would have jeered before. Their behaviour mirrored our adult behaviour.
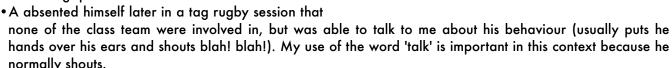- Pupil A was challenging again at lunchtime. The Milton Model worked again.
  'I know you wanted to go to computers but you will have a really good time in the quad and this afternoon we will make time in class for you to use the computer.'
- Over all, a good day with A on full points, the first time since before Easter.

Tuesday

- Taxi driver informed school that A had problems at home.
- I feared for the worst but remained positive and managed my state. Lots of smiles when he arrived in class even though he immediately switched the lights off and hid behind the door. Chatted to him about football , and he got his colours out and sat at his table and completed his picture.
- Refused to participate in whole class activity during Literacy but again talked round using Milton Model, reminding him of fun he would have at choice time and after a few moments he rejoined the activity.
- On full points again at the end of the day.

Wednesday

- Classroom observation visit from A's Educational Psychologist during the Literacy lesson. I managed my state really well. Lots of smiles and enthusiasm, even though I was feeling quite anxious and imagining a worst case scenario. I engaged in lots of positive interaction with A, reminding him how well he did in yesterday's Literacy lesson, how much fun we were going to have at Forest School, and how many points he had this week already.
- The Educational Psychologist was very impressed with A, saying that it was the longest she had 'seen him participate. She commented positively on how well he was able to recall yesterday's learning, and the fact that he was able take turns when answering questions.
- A absented himself later in a tag rugby session that none of the class team were involved in, but was able to talk to me about his behaviour (usually puts he hands over his ears and shouts blah! blah!). My use of the word 'talk' is important in this context because he normally shouts.
- Mixed behaviour at Forest School. The Forest School Leader was not familiar with the use of the language patterns. A absented himself at the end of day as he was going to his taxi.

Thursday

- Small problem in Numeracy, not buying in to whole class activity as usual. But unusually very short lived, approximately 3 minutes, then back on track after I used the Milton Model again, to great effect:
  'Remember how proud you were on Tuesday when you got full points in Numeracy. I know you can do it again. You are doing so well and you have already given me some really good answers and I know you are going to really enjoy lunchtime when you go to computer group.'
- Unfortunately absented on return to class after lunch.

Friday

- A difficult day for A because it was unstructured (whole school involved in activities around football World Cup day). Did voluntarily come and sit next to me in class during first lesson while colouring a picture but found outside difficult; lots of 1:1 support needed, but didn't absent himself or become abusive.
- Didn't look as happy. Unstructured situations are going to need more thinking about.

Impact

- Pupil A finished the week with a Gold Award for the first time this year!
- His peers were much more tolerant and supportive of him, a massive change from before half-term.
- He was able to complete all independent tasks for the first time in weeks, and took a pride in his achievements.
- His general demeanour improved: not as noisy, more prepared to listen, less frustrated with himself.
- Managing my own state worked really well because by the end of the week I felt much less stressed and much calmer.
- Everyone in class benefited, eg ASD children had a much calmer, less anxious week (much less screaming)
- Showed us that more work needs to be done. Even though he had a better week he still managed to absent on several occasions and this needs to be addressed.
- Also showed the importance of a whole school approach - when other staff became involved (tag rugby and Forest School) A's behaviour deteriorated because they were not using the same methods. At Forest School it was very much a negative consequences-based approach, (don't do that or this will happen), rather than focusing on the rewards he would receive. Also the threat was made that the whole class would return to school because of A's bad behaviour, causing hostility to A from the rest of the group, and a deterioration in every ones 'state'.
- This variation in A's behaviour illustrates the effectiveness of the NLP-based approach in that, when it was used by the staff, his behaviour was so much better and he looked much happier. An unexpected though very welcome bi-product was that the whole class was more supportive and forgiving, and less unhappy.

NLP in Education

Research Project

"There are a number of useful conclusions that I can draw:
- it is important that all members of a team are conversant with NLP
- learning about NLP highlights the need to clarify language
- the work has demonstrated the importance of one's own "state" and how it can affect the learning of others
- using this approach develops a more positive feeling in both staff and pupils."

To discover how you can develop your own NLP in Education skills go to our website at www.meta4education.com,
or email us at enquiries@meta4education.com

Durham NLP in Education - Project Outline

Working in Education today is a constant challenge. More and more children and young people display negative attitudes to learning and school, and staff in schools are experiencing increasing behavioural and learning difficulties in their pupils. NLP provides very effective techniques, strategies, and solutions to the problems of teaching and learning, motivating and engaging students.

This ground-breaking project is the result of a unique collaboration between John Carey, Senior Inspector, Durham LA and Kate Benson, International Director of Education for the Society of NLP

What is NLP?

- NLP is a set of beliefs, attitudes, and skills that enable people to achieve more than they could previously conceive. It uses specific applications based on language and body language to enable neurological change by reprogramming the brain to work more elegantly and effectively.
- When people fail to understand or change in some way, it is not that they are 'broken' but that they are uneducated in how to use their brain and often have an impoverished internal world. By enriching this world people are able to learn faster and more creatively.

What was the pilot about?

- The pilot was an opportunity for school staff to be involved in ground-breaking research into the application of NLP for everyone working in schools - including the pupils! The participants were part of an small group of 4 schools, working with a maximum of 25 teachers/support staff. The associated training enabled them to learn in very specific ways how learning actually works.

- The project encouraged participants to use language in powerful and elegant ways to ensure children and young people really understand them, and, as a result, are motivated to explore and learn more.
- Learning how teaching becomes easier and more enjoyable when you can use the skills, behaviours, and attitudes of NLP.

What did it involve?

- People learning and having fun! There were lots of practical activities and games, storytelling and metaphors, because the chemical mixes that help learning are the same ones that create pleasurable states. Stress inhibits learning, and relaxation encourages it. Throughout this process the participants became more aware of the theoretical underpinning of NLP in a way that enabled them to use it practically.
- The whole project was designed over two sets of two days with time in between for the participants to undertake a small-scale research project exploring the impact of utilising the skills learned during the first two days of the programme.
- The sessions were held at the Science Learning Centre, Durham, at no cost to the school, and Durham Local Authority made a contribution towards the cost of supply cover, should it be required. Such is the level of interest in this pilot that key figures in the field of NLP sponsored it.

What were the benefits to the schools involved?

The schools benefited from using NLP by improving the quality of teaching and learning for students. The participants shared many of the techniques they learned, such as engaging and motivating students, supremely effective communication, improved tutoring, lively learning and much more. All of this work was focussed on raising standards of achievement and, crucially, on helping schools raise levels of emotional wellbeing in their staff and pupils.

NLP in Education Practical Outcomes

Adults in school are able to:
- integrate the fundamental attitudes and assumptions of NLP, to become a more creative when working with their pupils
- make learning generative so adults and pupils continually learn
- communicate elegantly using the power of language with precision
- change negative and unhelpful beliefs their pupils may have about themselves and their learning
- establish and maintain rapport to bring reluctant pupils on board
- pace pupils so they learn better
- know what their pupils are thinking through calibration techniques
- change, and maintain behaviours
- understand the learning processes of their pupils so they can create more flexibility in their teaching and their pupils' learning
- use language patterns that create useful learning states for their pupils, and gather more information about their needs.
- elicit what their pupils really want so they can set effective goals that they will achieve and are motivated to act on
- utilise anchoring appropriately in the classroom
- change their own and their pupils' states so they enjoy what they do even more
- help pupils to access and build internal resources so they realise they have their own answers
- install strategies for effective learning.