THE VALIDITY OF SOME EARLY CLAIMS OF NEURO-LINGUISTIC PROGRAMMING

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My knowledge of NLP began in the early 1980s when I did some basic training in the UK and read some of the main texts at that time (Bandler & Grinder, 1975, 1979; Cameron-Bandler, 1978; Grinder & Bandler, 1976, 1981; Lankton, 1980). I wrote several reviews of the experimental literature on the subject in the 1980s (Heap, 1988a, 1988b, 1989) which are on my website at <www.mheap.com>. After that, I lost interest. My last publication (Heap, 1994) on the subject was a review for *Counselling News* of *Introducing Neuro-Linguistic Programming* (Revised Edition) by Joseph O'Connor and John Seymour.

Definition and origins of NLP

In the Introduction to their book, O'Connor & Seymour (*op.cit.* p xii) state, 'NLP is the art and science of excellence, derived from studying how top people in different fields obtain their outstanding results. These communications can be learned by anyone to improve their effectiveness both personally and professionally'.

There is absolutely no question that the origins of NLP and its initial impact were in the field of counselling and psychotherapy.

These claims (extraordinary, but sober in comparison to many versions of the same) were made by the originators of NLP, Americans John Grinder, a linguist, and Richard Bandler who I was always given to understand was a mathematician. However, according to *Wikipedia* and other Internet sources he has a background in psychology, holding a BA in Philosophy and Psychology and an MA in Theoretical Psychology and had an early interest in gestalt therapy.

Whatever the case, **there is absolutely no question that the origins of NLP and its initial impact were in the field of counselling and psychotherapy**.

Grinder & Bandler (1976; see also Bandler & Grinder, 1979) state that they studied transcripts and films of sessions of psychotherapy undertaken by certain therapists who had a reputation for being successful and their aim was to pass on what they had thus learned to other therapists. The psychotherapists they say they studied were Fritz Perls, the founder of Gestalt Therapy, Virginia Satir, a family therapist, and Milton Erickson, a psychiatrist best known in the field of hypnosis (to which, in the opinion of some, myself included, his contribution has been vastly exaggerated and distorted) but also noted for his use of strategic interventions. Bandler and Grinder claimed to have distilled from these observations a set of ideas and practices that other therapists can learn and thus enhance their own effectiveness with their patients and clients.

Put this way, this seems a reasonable, non-contentious thing to do and indeed it is fairly standard practice in psychotherapy training. However, it becomes clear when you read the early literature that the claims that Bandler and Grinder make do not simply refer to the particular techniques, ploys and styles of the select number of individuals they studied. They are statements about the way human beings in general behave and think and communicate with one another. In other words, they are the kind of observations and assertions that one would expect to appear in textbooks of human psychology, to be taught on psychology courses at schools and colleges, to be the subject of research in psychological laboratories at our universities, and to inform broader theories of social and cognitive psychology.

However before I summarise these particular claims, I want to say more on the original promotion of NLP as a sensationally effective and rapid form of psychological therapy. In a paper that I wrote on NLP in 1988 for *The Psychologist* (the monthly magazine of the British Psychological Society) I made the following observations:

'It is explicitly stated (e.g. Bandler & Grinder, 1979, p ii; Lankton, 1980, pp 9-13) that by using NLP, problems such as phobias and learning disabilities may be disposed of in less than an hour's session (whereas with other therapies, progress may take weeks or months). A recent NLP workshop announcement claims that spelling problems may be eliminated in five minutes *(NLP Training Programme)'* (p 261-262).

I further noted the following extraordinary claim by one of the authors of Bandler & Grinder (1979, p 103):

'I've seen a therapist take away a phobia and give it back *nine* times in a single session without the faintest idea what she was doing'.

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It is even alleged … that a single session of NLP combined with hypnosis can eliminate certain eyesight problems such as myopia …, and can even cure a common cold.

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And I also remarked:

'NLP appears to be applicable to the full range of problems which psychologists are likely to encounter – phobias, depression, habit disorder, psychosomatic illnesses, learning disorders, and so on. It is even alleged (Grinder & Bandler, 1981, p 166) that a single session of NLP combined with hypnosis can eliminate certain eyesight problems such as myopia, and can even cure a common cold (*op.cit.*, p 174)….. *(Also, op.cit., p 169)* Bandler and Grinder make the claim that by combining NLP methods with hypnotic regression, a person can be not only effectively cured of a problem, but also rendered amnesic for the fact that they had the problem in the first place. Thus, after a session of therapy, smokers may deny that they smoked before, even when their family and friends insist otherwise, and they are unable to account for such evidence as nicotine stains'.

Accordingly, in one of my papers (Heap, 1989, pp 118-119) I gave the following description of NLP, one that I still consider accurately portrays how NLP at that time represented itself:

'*(NLP)* is a model of human behaviour and cognition which describes how people represent their world, how they interact and communicate with it and with one another, how it can be that they experience distress and disappointment in these interactions, and how they can be helped to change their representation of the world to alleviate their distress and cope with life more effectively and with greater fulfilment. Based on the tenets of NLP, strategies have been formulated whereby it is asserted that counsellors, therapists and communicators may enhance their effectiveness in helping their clients, and therapeutic procedures have been outlined which it is claimed bring about far more rapid and effective changes than hitherto in the formal practice of psychotherapy.'

The historical context of NLP

There is an important historical context for the development of NLP. I have summarised this on my website and the following is an adaptation of this summary.

NLP was one of a plethora of therapies that appeared from the 1970s onwards, many originating in the USA. There were a number of reasons for their emergence at that time, notably disaffection with the prevailing orthodoxy in mainstream (i.e. medically-dominated) psychotherapy in the USA, namely psychoanalysis. (We may also include the 'client-centred' approach espoused by Carl Rogers.) The reasons for this were the slow pace of psychoanalysis, its very lengthy timescale, and doubts about its theoretical underpinnings and efficacy. One should never, however, underestimate the importance of another influence, namely the increasing reluctance of medical insurers in the USA to fund lengthy courses of psychotherapy.

In these newer therapies, the professional is actively engaged in the application of *techniques* presumed to facilitate the changes that the person is seeking. This is in sharp contrast to the psychoanalyst or client-centred therapist, who is much more passive and is trained to resist the temptation to take control of the therapy and offer advice to the client or otherwise intervene in a way that would seem to be obviously helpful to him or her. In such therapies, the major vehicle for the improvement in the client's mental health is the relationship that he or she establishes with the therapist ('transference' in the case of psychoanalysis; trust and rapport in the case of client-centred therapy).

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It is noteworthy that in their writings, the two major pioneers of cognitive therapy, Aaron Beck (e.g. Beck, 1976) and Albert Ellis (e.g. Ellis, 1962), both describe how frustration with these restrictions led them finally to reject psychoanalysis in favour of the cognitive approach. But perhaps this period in the historical development of psychological therapies is best summed up by the following observation made by a gestalt therapist at that time:

'To justify his hire, the therapist must be able to assist the patient to move in the direction he wishes, that is, to accelerate and provoke change in a positive direction. We are rapidly leaving the time when the therapist, in the absence of more specific knowledge, relies on "something" in the relationship that will result in "something" happening. We are approaching the time when the therapist can specify procedures that promote rapid change in a way that the patient

can experience directly and others can observe clearly' (Fagan, 1971, p 96)

Predictably, then, the plethora of psychotherapies that emerged during the 1970s and onwards tended to adopt as their main selling points their 'powerfulness' and the rapidity by which the practitioner could achieve effective results. Despite this, most of these therapies have tended to remain off the mainstream, not least because of the development of 'evidence-based' approaches (i.e. grounded in ideas and research from mainstream psychology and supported by clinical trials) by far and away the most successful being cognitive therapy. (Behaviour therapy already existed, but in the USA at least, it was not so influential and was rather limited in its scope. It has however proved to be a potent ally of cognitive therapy and now 'cognitive-behaviour therapy' (CBT) is, in many quarters, regarded as *the* orthodox approach to wide a range of psychiatric disorders, not uncommonly in conjunction with medication).

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It is probably true to say that although CBT advocates do insist that it is effective and time-limited, they are not strident in these claims. Nowadays the most notable explicit expression of this movement towards short-term psychotherapy that has influenced the mainstream is 'brief solution-focused therapy'; though highly cognitive and behavioural in its approach, its origins may be traced in significant part to Erickson's followers, though less so to Erickson himself.

Some early claims of NLP

In this paper I restrict my analysis of NLP claims to those that appeared in the 70s and which are presented in Bandler & Grinder (1975, 1979), Cameron-Bandler, (1978) Grinder & Bandler (1976, 1981) and Lankton (1980). I have nothing to say about specific therapeutic manoeuvres that are advocated in these texts and little about later claims, except in general terms.

The map and the territory

At least at the time of the early literature on NLP, one of its central philosophies (non-controversial and certainly one that resonates with CBT) was 'The map is not the territory', which I understand is due to the linguist Alfred Korzybski (see M. Newbrook's article in this issue). Our interactions with the world are informed by the mental maps that we create of it and not directly by the world itself (the 'territory'). Our maps may be limited in many ways - out-of-date, impoverished, distorted, inflexible

and so on. The choices that we make available to ourselves based on our maps may thus be restricted and our transactions with the world may accordingly be needlessly frustrating and difficult (Bandler & Grinder, 1975, p 7). Therefore, in order to assist the client in overcoming the difficulties he or she experiences in life, it is the therapist's task to communicate with the client from the perspective of the client's map and not his or her own.

The meta-model

Briefly, Bandler & Grinder (1975) asserted that a person's map of the world may be adversely influenced by three processes: generalisation, distortion and deletion. (There is some affinity between these ideas and the more comprehensive classification of cognitive distortions provided by CBT.) These processes are adaptive but may also lead to an overly distorted and impoverished representation of reality and undue restriction of the choices available to the person.

Bandler & Grinder (*op. cit.*) contend that the processes may be revealed in a person's use of language and they describe in considerable detail various linguistic manoeuvres that can assist the client in developing a richer and more useful map. Specifically, the therapist asks the client (using what Bandler & Grinder term 'meta questions') to elaborate upon his or her statements (or as Bandler & Grinder say, the surface structure) whenever they appear to be incomplete or to involve distortions or over-generalisations. For example, if the client says, 'I'm scared' the therapist may say; 'Of what?' (*op.cit.*, p 41); or if the client says, 'Nobody pays attention to what I say', the therapist may ask, 'Who specifically?' or 'What specifically do you say?' (p 82).

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According to NLP the internal maps that people make of their world are characterised by the five senses: visual, auditory, kinaesthetic, olfactory and gustatory.

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Again these ideas are not controversial but once more do not appear to be very original and much of what the authors are recommending may proceed automatically anyway in everyday communication and in counselling and psychotherapy. Also, their exposition is unduly elaborate and complicated and they appear to be presenting the 'meta-questioning' process as a kind of psychotherapy in itself. What I find particularly contentious is the authors' linkage of their ideas to Chomsky's concepts of deep and surface structure (cf. Watt, 1984, and M. Newbrook's article in this issue).

Representational system

Another of the early ideas presented by Bandler and Grinder, and one that is repeated in books on NLP to this day, is that of **representational system**. According to NLP the internal maps that people make of their world are characterised by the five senses: visual (V), auditory (A), kinaesthetic (K), olfactory (O) and gustatory (G). Kinaesthetic requires some explanation, since 'kinaesthesia' normally refers the sense of movement or muscular effort whereas in the NLP literature it refers to feelings in general: cf. '*(I)*n the kinesthetic input channel, specialised receptors for pressure, pain, temperature and deep senses (proprioceptors) have been shown to exist' (Grinder & Bandler, 1976, p 5). I have never heard an explanation of why they chose this term.

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At any time, any person's conscious activity (e.g. thoughts and memories) may be using predominantly one of these modes, particularly V, A or K. According to Grinder & Bandler (1976) the representational system being employed is revealed by a person's style of speaking, specifically his or her 'predicates' (verbs, adjectives and adverbs). A person who is thinking in the V mode will tend to use expressions such as 'I see…', 'It looks to me like…' and 'I have a clear picture of…'. Someone who is thinking in A mode will use phrases such as 'I hear…', and 'It sounds like…'. The K mode is associated with expressions such as 'I feel that…', 'It's heavy going', 'I am out of touch with…'. (Presumably, examples of expressions associated with the O (olfactory) and G (gustatory) mode are, respectively, 'It all smells a bit fishy…' and 'It's rather tasteless'.)

To a degree, these claims seem quite reasonable. For example if I say, 'Sue looked very cheerful today', it wouldn't be at all surprising if an image of Sue looking cheerful pops into my mind at this point. Likewise if I say, 'I felt really sick yesterday' it is at least plausible that I bring to mind, amongst other things, the awful feeling in my stomach that I had at the time. But does it mean that whenever I use the expression, for example, 'I see', (e.g. 'I see what you mean' or 'I don't see the relevance of this') the associated cognitive activity is 'in the visual modality'? Well, according to Grinder and Bandler (1976, p 11) it certainly does mean that, as will be made clear in a moment.

Representational system and eye movements
Another important assertion that Bandler and Grinder make about representational systems is that they are revealed in a person's eye movements. They claim (Bandler & Grinder, 1979, p 25 *et seq.*) that a person engaged in cognitive activity in the visual mode will tend to look upwards (left for remembering, right for constructing); a person looking horizontally left or right will be using the auditory mode (remembered and constructed, respectively) likewise looking downwards and to the left; and the kinaesthetic mode is associated with a downward gaze to the right. A final eye position is eyes unfocused and looking ahead, which is interpreted as accessing visually represented information (see also Lankton, 1980, p 46).

Without making any systematic observations, one could speculate that people engaging in visual imagery *may* look upwards in order to project their image on the least cluttered part of their visual field, which is more likely to be above them - the ceiling, a wall, the sky, etc. - than below. Likewise when describing a bodily sensation, people might tend to look downwards because that's where the feeling is most likely to be located. For example, reference to a nauseous experience may be accompanied by a cursory glance towards the gut area and people may be more likely to look down when experiencing negative feelings – cf. the crestfallen posture of someone relating a tale of woe. However, I am merely guessing here.

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At the time Bandler and Grinder made these assertions there was in fact a research literature on ocular gaze and cognition. In one study (Kinsbourne, 1972), right-handed participants were found to have a tendency to turn their head and eyes to the right when interpreting proverbs, but when visualising familiar places or performing calculations they tended to look upwards and to the left. However, one influence on direction of gaze is whether the investigator is standing in front of or behind the participant (see review by Ehrlichman & Weinberger, 1978). So it is reasonable to say that at the time in question, there was some very limited collateral support for the NLP assertions on eye movements.

Preferred representational system
Another early NLP assertion was that of a preferred representational system (PRS). 'Furthermore', say Grinder & Bandler (1976, p 9) 'each person will have a most highly valued representational system which will differ from the most highly valued representational system of some other person. From this fact – namely,

that person X has a most highly valued representational system that differs from that of person Y – we can predict that each will have a dramatically different experience of the world when faced with the "same" real world experience. … In order to identify the client's most highly valued one, the therapist needs only to pay attention to the predicates which the client uses to describe his experience'.

This is later described in more detail as follows (*op.cit.*, p 11):

'Comments such as "I see what you're saying" are most often communicated by people whose most highly valued representational system is visual. And they are literally "making pictures" out of what they hear. Our students first go through a stage of not believing this; secondly they begin to listen to people in this new way and become amazed at what they can learn about themselves and those around them; thirdly they learn the value of this knowledge'.

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The authors then proceed to outline a simple set of instructions on how to identify a person's preferred representational system.

<u>Matching verbal and non-verbal behaviour, including representational systems</u>

The final assertion from the early NLP literature to be considered here is that to achieve effective communication and gain trust and rapport, communicators (such as counsellors and psychotherapists) should match, mirror or pace the other person's verbal and non-verbal behaviour (e.g. aspects of speech, body posture, breathing and blinking), thereby tuning into his or her representation of the world. This can be done directly, such as by matching the person's body movements or breathing pattern with one's own, or indirectly, say by slightly nodding one's head in time with the person's breathing or following the person's blinking with a finger movement. These manoeuvres were promoted as being highly effective and they influenced other authors. For example, in an exposition of the use of NLP ideas with chronically mentally ill people, one therapist (Dolan, 1986, p 67) claimed to have been able to exercise a stabilising influence on an agitated patient by discretely moving her finger in phase with the man's gross body movements.

Bandler and Grinder are also very emphatic that one must match those predicates that the person is using that reveal the representational system associated with his or her internal map at that point in time. For example, if the person says, 'I can't get a grip on things' one would not reply, 'I see what you mean' or 'It sounds like you're stuck'. The consequences of this kind of mismatch are, according to Bandler and Grinder, highly deleterious for effective communication. According to them, a good therapist takes care to match the client's representational system when communicating with him or her. For example, in response to the following (Bandler & Grinder 1979, p 11)….

'Well, you know, things are really heavy in my life…
It's just like I can't handle it, you know',

….they recommend that the therapist say something like:

'I understand that you feel certain weight upon you, and these kinds of feelings that you have in your body aren't what you want for yourself as a human being. You have different kinds of hopes for this'.

Thus, the art of effective communication.

There is some plausibility in the idea of 'speaking the same language' as someone with whom you are communicating (although it may not always be appropriate if the person expects otherwise) and this probably happens automatically. There is indeed evidence predating NLP that postural congruity generally– i.e. matching body language – is associated with higher levels of interpersonal rapport (Charny, 1966; Dabbs, 1969; LaFrance & Broadbent, 1976. As an aside, I understand that when two friends are disagreeing with one another over something, their postures may become *more* congruent, as if to communicate the message 'Although we are in disagreement, we are still good friends' – *see note 1*.) However the claims that Bandler and Grinder made go considerably beyond this.

Evaluating the above claims

If the above assertions on representational systems and their behavioural manifestations are correct, then Bandler and Grinder have made some very remarkable discoveries about the human mind and brain and they would have major implications for human psychology, particularly cognition and neuropsychology. Yet there is no mention of them in learned textbooks or journals devoted to these disciplines. Neither is any of this material taught on psychology courses at pre-degree and degree level. When I speak to academic colleagues who spend their working lives researching and teaching in these fields they show little awareness, if any, of these claims.

Why this almost total neglect of a body of knowledge that, if it has any authenticity, should occupy a pivotal role in the study of human psychology? One obvious solution is to examine the original work undertaken by

Bandler and Grinder that led them to their conclusions. To arrive at these kinds of generalisations about the human mind and behaviour would certainly require the prolonged, systematic and meticulous investigation of human subjects using robust procedures for observing, recording and analysing the phenomena under investigation. There is just no other way of doing this. Yet, when they made their assertions, the authors never revealed any of this to their students and to their readers; they merely stated that this is what they had noticed.

'There is only one group that we know of that is characteristically organized differently: the Basques in the Pyrenees of northern Spain. They have a lot of unusual patterns, and that seems to be genetic rather than cultural....'

Look, for example, at this claim by one of the authors when asked by a student, 'How does this pattern of accessing cues *(eye movements)* hold up under cultures?'

'There is only one group that we know of that is characteristically organized differently: the Basques in the Pyrenees of northern Spain. They have a lot of unusual patterns, and that seems to be genetic rather than cultural. Everywhere else we have been - the Americas, Europe, Eastern Europe, Africa – the same pattern exists in most of the population. It may be a neurological bias that is built into our nervous system as a species' (Bandler & Grinder, 1979, p 35).

Following this, in response to a question on ambidextrous people, the statement is made,

'They will have more variation from the generalizations that we have offered you. For example, some ambidextrous people have visualization reversed and *not* the auditory and the kinaesthetic, or vice versa' (*op. cit.*).

Concerning their claims on matching representational systems they say the following:

'Typically, kinesthetics *(i.e. people whose preferred representational system is kinaesthetic)* complain that auditory and visual people are insensitive. Visuals complain that auditories don't pay attention to them because they don't make contact during conversation. Auditory people complain that kinesthetics don't listen, etc. The outcome is usually that one group comes to consider the other deliberately bad or mischievous or pathological' (Grinder & Bandler, 1976, p 17).

And in Bandler & Grinder (1979, p 11) they say, 'We spent a lot of time going around mental health clinics and sitting in on professional communicators. It's very depressing. And what we noticed is that many therapists mismatch in the same as that we just demonstrated'.

'Would a congenitally blind therapist be at a disadvantage?' Asks one of their students (*op. cit.*, p 45).

No, because according to Bandler & Grinder there are other cues to a person's representational system:

'For instance, voice tone is higher for visual access and lower for kinesthetic. Tempo speeds up for visual and slows down for kinesthetic. Breathing is higher in the chest for visual and lower in the belly for kinesthetic. There are *lots* and *lots* of cues'.

I could fill many more pages with these kinds of extraordinary claims (and indeed Bandler and Grinder do), but let me just add one more from Bandler & Grinder (1979, p 40):

'A lot of school children have problems learning simply because of a mismatch between the primary representational system of the teacher and that of the child. If neither one of them has the flexibility to adjust, no learning occurs. Knowing what you know now about representational systems, you can understand how it is possible for a child to be "educationally handicapped" one year, and to do fine the next year with a different teacher, or how it is possible for a child to do really well in spelling and mathematics, and do badly in literature and history'.

'Typically, kinesthetics complain that auditory and visual people are insensitive. Visuals complain that auditories don't pay attention to them because they don't make contact during conversation.....'

Have I made my point? To be able to make with any confidence any single one of these claims about the human mind and behaviour would necessitate an enormous amount of honest systematic work, the gathering together of mass of data, and the deployment of not a little ingenuity. In the absence of such effort and diligence, it would be dishonest and perverse to use these claims as teaching material, particularly when the trainees are people who earn their living by ministering to the welfare or education of others.

Knowledge is power. Anyone making these kinds of claims is making a claim for some kind of power. With power should come accountability. Accountability in this case is making the evidence available for public scrutiny. Exactly how were the observations made? What exactly was observed – **can we look at the data please?** How was the reliability of the observations established? How

were the data processed in order to arrive at the conclusions? And so on. None of this is disclosed to us.

Independent studies of NLP claims

As it happens, during the 1970s and 80s, some people took the claims about representational systems seriously enough to subject them to experimental scrutiny. Many of these experiments were in the form of dissertations for Masters degrees in the USA (though some were subsequently published as peer-reviewed journal papers). This research has been reviewed by Sharpley (1984, 1987) and Heap (1988a,b; 1989 - see <www.mheap.com>). Like much research in psychology, the results are not entirely consistent. However, a fair conclusion is that on balance the studies collectively provide little support for the claims for representational systems and their literal association with language, or for the idea of a preferred representational system, or for the claim that these representational systems are reliably associated with eye movements. Matching relevant predicates may confer some advantage for rapport but probably as part of the more general matching of linguistic content and style.

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My impression is that NLP has become much more practical (technique driven) than theoretical since the early days, though all of the claims that I have discussed continue to be made.
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The methodology of the above studies has been criticised by Einspruch and Forman (1985) but in my opinion they provide fair tests of the claims in question, which are stated in unequivocal terms by Bandler and Grinder, who make it clear that the phenomena are robust and potent psychological processes, easily demonstrable on training course by tutors and trainees, and indeed in everyday life, by following a set of simple instructions.

Further developments of NLP

I cannot comment with any authority on the developments of NLP ideas since I did my review papers. However, I have kept my eyes and ears and other sensory modalities open, as it were. Having been heavily involved in the hypnosis scene, nationally and internationally, since the 1970s, I have discussed NLP with many of its advocates (not, on the whole, psychologists like me) and not a few critics. There is no shortage of books to dip into while one is wandering around bookstores (including those at airport departure lounges) and there is of course the Internet, which has much on the topic. My impression is that NLP has become much more practical (technique driven) than theoretical since the early days, though all of the claims

that I have discussed continue to be made. I also have the strong impression that many of the procedures and techniques that are recommended in the current NLP literature are little different from those described by non-NLP sources, and indeed are often informed by common sense. It is difficult to understand what they have in common with each other that merits their being given the same label, and what that label, 'neuro-linguistic programming', is supposed to mean. The astonishing claims about what NLP can achieve continue unabated and I can only recommend that readers consult the Internet for evidence of this.

I believe that the following impressions are also likely to be reliable.

1. NLP continues to make no impact on mainstream academic psychology

2. NLP has made only limited impact on mainstream psychotherapy and counselling

3. NLP remains influential amongst private psychotherapists, including hypnotherapists, to the extent that they claim to be trained in NLP and 'use NLP' in their work.

4. NLP training courses abound and NLP now seems to be most influential in management training, lifestyle coaching, and so on. Particularly with reference to this, the term 'growth industry' appears to be apposite.

I know little about this last-mentioned area of work but I am intrigued by this gradual extension of NLP beyond psychotherapy. This may have something to do with the fact that the supply side of the market for psychological therapies looks pretty much saturated and the major potential customer in the UK at least, namely the National Health Service, tends to favour a limited range of products, notably those that are labelled 'evidence based'. The same appears to be true for medical insurance arrangements in the USA. When I say 'customer' I mean not just clients and patients wanting help, but also people wanting to train as therapists (or develop their existing repertoire of skills). My impression is that the extension of NLP into management training, etc. is all to do with finding wider markets for its products (and packaging and repackaging its products to suit those markets).

Like most of what we do, much of it comes down to money in the end.

Note

1. This is based on a personal communication from Professor Geoff Beattie but I have yet to locate the references for this work.

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The Origins of Neuro Linguistic Programming brings together the recollections and thoughts of some of the main protagonists from the very early days of NLP. In 1971 Richard Bandler and Frank Pucelik were students at Kresege College at the University of California Santa Cruz. Today everyone claims to be one of the developers of Neuro Linguistic Programming. Now we learn who the real developers actually were. Further, we are reminded that the meta model is the real heart of Neuro Linguistic Programming and that it can only be mastered through on going practice. Neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) is an approach to psychotherapy, self-help and organizational change. According to Grinder, the linguistic aspects of neuro-linguistic programming were based in part on previous work by Grinder using Noam Chomsky's transformational grammar.[25]. However, according to linguist Stollznow (2010), this system of analyzing language is intended as theory, not therapy. Despite the NLP community's being splintered, most NLP material acknowledges the early work of co-founders Bandler and Grinder, as well as the development group that surrounded them in the 1970s. In June 2001, the lawsuits were settled with Bandler and Grinder agreeing to be known as co-founders of NLP.[citation needed].