Contributions of Neurolinguistic Programming in School Education

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Neurolinguistic Programming, had its origin in the 70s, with the studies of Richard Brandler, in mathematics and computer science, at the University of California in Santa Cruz.

After some time, Richard decided to study psychology and observed that when a person thinks about a traumatic or difficult event, in a positive way successive times, the event stops of being worrisome and bad for the person, and become something without threats to the individual. Therefore, Brandler found that the way you think about something, makes all the difference in how you are going to experience it. This discovery was named by Neurolinguistic Programming as Modeling of Human Excellence, and consists in the reproduction and transformation of behaviors and beliefs.

Enthused by studies on human behavior, Richard Bandler started a Gestalt therapy group made up of students and members of the local community. John Grinder, professor of linguistics at the University of California, agreed to oversee Brandler’s therapy group. Discovering the similarity of their interests, they decided to combine their knowledge in computer science and linguistics.

Programming the minds of people through the use of language, is based on a set of models, strategies and changes in the beliefs that their practitioners use in order to achieve excellence and personal and professional development.

Based on linguistic and behavioral patterns Richard Bandler and John Grinder built mental models that could be used by others in different areas of life such as work, school, health, emotions, business and interpersonal relationships:

- **Programming**: guides that our thoughts, feelings and actions can be programmed and modeled so that we can reach our objectives and goals.
- **Neuro**: refers to the central nervous system, which processes the information we collect through our five senses: hearing, sight, smell, taste and touch.
- **Linguistics**: Suggests that language (verbal and non-verbal) and how we use it in our daily life, reflects what we think, feel and believe.
- **NLP** allows the individual to change their way of thinking and acting in order to achieve the desired and specific results, through the interaction between the brain, language and behavior.
- **Neurolinguistic Programming** is a learning model that allows the individual to understand how thought is processed (neurologically), and the impact of this in the behavior and in the decision making as well. This pedagogical tool allows the student to know and understand how the brain works and how to modifying the way of thinking an acting in order to achieve the objectives that are expected from any field of human activity.

What are the benefits that NLP can bring to academic and professional life?

- **Self-awareness**: NLP allows a person to search different goals to achieve the same goal in order to encourage them to reflect better

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on their options and preferences. Therefore, the individual awakens the desire to know and explore better; the different ways of achieving the objective goal.

- **Brain plasticity:** NLP allows the individual to think in different strategies to each new situation or learning. This makes the human brain reorganize itself, and new connections are formed, resulting in new skills.

- **Motivation:** in the work approach of NLP, the professional has the opportunity to improve their knowledge and skills in order to enhance the performance at work and in the academic area, which provides greater motivation and encouragement to develop new projects and activities.

- **Social intelligence:** social intelligence is the ability to know how to interact with different groups and people in society. Through neuro-linguistic programming, the individual learns to develop better communication and empathy skills, through the transformation of thoughts and attitudes, thus providing more balanced and healthy interpersonal relationships.

- **Education and Training:** In the classroom NLP helps the teacher to better understand how the student learns, as the student’s brain captures the knowledge and processes the information. Besides, values the different learning styles exist, and understands that each student is a unique human being, and for this reason has his/her particular way of developing learning.

- **Vocational Guidance:** Professional choice occurs at a time when young people are immersed in doubt, either through the imposition of parents, or for imperative reasons of their own institution of education. Vocational orientation with NLP will help young people to think better about their options, values, beliefs and internal motivations, since neuro-linguistic programming is a technique that develops self-knowledge and stimulates decision-making.

- **In the coaching process:** Coaching with NLP allows individuals to be more productive, creative and confident about their objectives and values, through the use of attention and concentration techniques. The learning with coaching NLP, makes it possible to overcome the blockages and the most negative results in order to develop new skills and abilities.

Neurolinguistic Programming applied in the classroom

Communication is a mechanism that involves four essential elements: our physiology (body), our language (words), our thoughts (focus of our attention) and our perceptions (or set of beliefs).

Our communication (verbal and non-verbal), reflects our thoughts and feelings. We act in accordance with our values and belief systems. Thus, the teacher in class, manifests their behaviors and attitudes in accordance with principles and rules of conduct that she believes appropriate. The way we communicate, determines how we are perceived by the people we address.

A factor that impacts a lot in the learning process is the emotions. Learning based on fear and tension, only brings to the students’ academic life, stress and panic, thus blocking the quality of the understanding of the knowledge taught in the school. In the classroom, it is essential that teachers acquire the ability to handle student’s emotions, so that they can learn in a joyful, dynamic and relaxed way. Another important factor to develop the best of each child, teaching them according to their particularities and needs, is the knowledge of the predominant learning style in each student.

Each child collects the information and interprets it in a different way, from his colleague in the classroom. This means that each person has their own way of learning. The teacher, realizing the learning style of each child, will be able to plan and implement the educational content in a assertive and effective way.

When the teacher teaches a student taking into account his learning style, the child can process the content better, and thus absorb the information more easily. In practice, the teacher can apply activities that address the three learning styles, so that each child is able to understand, learn and participate:

• **Students with the visual system:** Visual learners learn more and better when the content is visualized through books, posters, slides, examples written on the board, or by reading texts, images and graphics. It is essential that teachers use written instructions for use, rather than orally. In addition, it is a good strategy to send to the visual student the summary of the lesson that will be teach in the classroom.

• **Auditory students:** Students who present the auditory system as the preferred, better understand the information when it is exposed orally by the teacher. These students develop their learning effectively when they are reading a text aloud, listen to a recorded audio story, or participate in a discussion. The auditory learner also benefits by repeating the instructions received or by conducting oral evaluations. As a didactic strategy the teacher can use audio resources, such as audio-books, storytelling, or reading aloud.

• **Students with kinesthetic learning style:** These students learn best through movement and practice. Kinesthetic students need free learning spaces to move, as in the outdoor activities or practical classes in the lab, for example. Games, group dynamics, parodies, songs, and rhymes are examples of didactic resources that can be used with these apprentices.

**Neurolinguistic Programming Techniques in the learning process**

NLP offers some tools that can make learning process and the relationship teacher-student more enjoyable and productive:

• **Rapport:** It means being in tune with what the other person is saying, even if you do not understand or disagree with the topic that is being talked about. In a classroom, for example, it is said that rapport exists when the teacher is able to create empathy for the students.

Empathy (rapport) in NLP can be developed in order to bring teachers and students closer, allowing more effective communication between them, and thus have a more pleasant and productive learning environment. In this way we can facilitate the process of empathy through the reflex technique.

• **Reflection:** the reflex technique aims to imitate the behavior of another person, in a discreet and gentle way, through small gestures and body movements, such as body posture, hand gestures, facial expressions, movements of the eyes and the head.

In the classroom environment, for example, the teacher can always try to make eye contact with the students by gently shaking her head in affirmation, which indicates that she is paying attention to the student's explanation. It’s very important that the teacher can consider the student's point of view in the classroom and, through this, add to his reflection positive comments about his explanation.

• **The Anchoring Technique:** Anchors, for neuro-linguistic programming, are external stimuli that trigger internal states. They are visual, auditory or kinesthetic triggers that cause an internal response for the student, becoming in this way, the learning process more motivating and enjoyable. For this to happen, it is necessary that the teacher can take into account the three learning channels (Kinesthetic, visual and auditory) presents in the students, and develop lessons considering this teaching strategy.

For example: visual students can capture better knowledge through images; Kinesthetic students have a greater facility of attention and concentration in activities that explore movement, while auditory students, better develop learning through auditory characteristics, such as lectures, reading texts aloud, among other strategies using the sound like a teaching tool.

• **Reframing:** This technique aims to transform any type of negative behavior into a positive one. In the school environment, this practice occurs when the teacher observe in more detail the behavior and attitudes of each student at the time of the class, especially the reactions linked to the emotions and motivations of the students.

A very positive exercise is to stimulate the student to reflect on their own learning process. For example, even if a student does not like math, the teacher can suggest that him talk about the most difficulties that he has in the subject, and what could be done to learn math in a more enjoyable way. Thus, through the renunciation technique, it is possible to take any experience that in principle seems
unpleasant, and become that in a motivating and positive situation.

Final Consideration

Each student captures and understands the educational content differently than the other classmates, and this is so because each sensory channel of our brain is stimulated differently, taking into account the need and motivation of each person. However, this does not mean that a visual person cannot become kinesthetic. What will make the difference in a child’s development and learning is the type and intensity of the stimulation that he will receive throughout his life.

In the classroom, Neurolinguistic Programming presents as an School Education contribution, the development and applied of academic contents according to the learning style of each student. In this way, the teacher will not judge the student for not understanding something of content, but will try to analyze their own teaching method, in order to adapt the material to the learning styles presents in the class.

Through NLP the teacher can help students identify their own motivations in the learning process, applying the best teaching strategies according to the learning style of each student. Pedagogical contents based on Neurolinguistic Programming techniques guides the teacher in a better understanding on how students learn more efficiently in the classroom.

NLP in the educational environment values the different learning styles of knowledge, and understands that each student is unique in interest and motivation, and therefore has its particular way of process new information and developing learning as well.

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