

Utilizing the Neurolinguistic Programming Technologies in Foreign languages Teaching Practice in Ukrainian Universities

Tetiana Kovalevska

Ukrainian Language Department
Philology Faculty, Odesa National I. I. Mechnikov University
Odesa, Ukraine

Anastasia Kovalevska

Ukrainian and Foreign Languages Department
Management and Business Technologies Faculty, Odesa Regional Institute for Public Administration
of the National Academy for Public Administration under the President of Ukraine
Odesa, Ukraine

Abstract

The research paper considers the main provisions of the new scientific direction of Neurolinguistic Programming (NLP); its fundamental goal is determined, which first of all includes optimizing the interactive interaction in practically all discursive genres of modern communicative space; the effectiveness of utilizing several NLP techniques in the Ukrainian educational segment is substantiated, first of all - in the process of teaching foreign languages, in particular English, given its international status and scientific potential. The main aim of the study is to review the relevant NLP techniques aimed at optimizing the teacher's professional skills, and hence the effectiveness of the learning process as a whole. Such techniques include predicate, meta- and Milton-model personal identification, as well as spelling. The significance of the study is determined by the fact that this set of neurolinguistic techniques will be extremely useful both in creating comfortable communicative learning conditions as the basis of its effectiveness and inactivating the students' psychocognitive abilities and increasing their professional competence level. The main question of the research paper is how to generally contribute to educational process optimization, mainly, in teaching foreign languages in the Ukrainian-speaking environment. In the study, both general scientific research tools (descriptive method, analysis, synthesis, observation) and special experimental methods (recording and comparing the results of applied NLP techniques, surveys, evaluations) are utilized. The main findings of the research allowed to determine the students' individual neurophysiological mechanisms (representative priorities) in the process of educational data perception; to identify cases of the students' deviant behavior through the reconstruction of their verbal and nonverbal behavior and adjust the communicative background to create a comfortable learning environment; to apply the elements of correct suggestibility to strengthen the students' cognitive activity, and the naturalization of teaching data; to enhance the processes of memorization, effective assimilation and competent reproduction of new data through the directed activation of representative systems (visual, audible, kinesthetic) and the corresponding submodalities.

Keywords: Neurolinguistic Programming, teaching foreign languages, predicate identification technique, Metamodel and Milton-model identification technique, spelling technique, learning efficiency, Ukrainian universities

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Introduction

Neurolinguistic programming is an essential area of research and optimization of interpersonal interaction in almost the entire current discursive genres spectrum: medicine, advertising, politics, media, etc. NLP strategies are based on studying of the subjective reflections, analyzing and identifying the human's inner world's elements, and the skill of constructing the positive communicative behavior models, which gains utter significance within the empathic modeling aspect (Rogers, 1975), primarily due to the increased aggressiveness of the modern information space, and the need to empathize it. Within this aspect, NLP's strategies and tactics acquire immense relevance in the educational segment of the modern communicative space, since bringing up a smart and creative individual largely depends on the pedagogue's ability to activate the pupil's / student's psycho-mental potential, "wake up" one's hidden powers, direct them into the natural field of this individual's intellectual skills. Though, this ability entirely depends on the pedagogue's possessing the knowledge about qualifying the neurophysiological and psycholinguistic personal specificity, about the nature of the relevant verbal and non-verbal markers, which, if identified, would make it possible to objectively reconstruct the object's (pupil's / student's) behavioral dominants, and, as a result, guarantees establishing harmonious interaction based on the ecological and maximally correct suggestion (Lozanov, 1971). This approach becomes crucial when learning a foreign language, especially English, in the Ukrainian-speaking environment. The rationale of the study is defined by the globalization of modern interactive processes determines the urgent, almost mandatory need to master the full range of English resources for comfortable, adequate communication with English and other linguistic and cultural communities, which in the vast majority speak English as the world's most widely spoken language. The lack of such knowledge, the inability to compare, correctly expose their own philosophical, psychological, value and other universals which are represented in language, onto other linguistic specifics, "... will make us inflexible in our ability to communicate with people in a dynamic world that is constantly changing" (Matsumoto, 2002, p. 23).

At the time being, knowledge of English allows for independent acquaintance with the vast fund of modern scientific achievements (in any field of expertise), which are also often initiated in English-language sources and, accordingly, provide a range of competencies, i.e. "... acquisition of knowledge and skills through experience and learning at the intersection of cultures, in situations of confrontation with many uncertainties through independent monitoring and self-regulation to achieve success in a dynamic cultural context" (Solodka, 2015, p. 59) and in the field of professional activity as the basis of the future influential, self-sufficient personality, which is ready "...for a successful (productive, effective) activity taking into account its social significance and social risks that may be associated with it" (Tatur, 2004, p. 24). Though, to this day, the specificity and factors of optimizing the mastering a foreign language (mainly the English language) remain at the forefront of humanitarian problems, although its maximum relevance for Ukrainian educators has been recognized (Solodka & Perea, 2018) due to the peculiarities of Ukraine's historical development and the psychomental specifics of its citizens. Thus, the urgent need to optimize learning the foreign languages in the universal pedagogical practice and in Ukraine in particular (Akkuzu, 2014; Butova & Dubskikh, 2014; Dimukhametov, 2006; Pavlova, 2000; Solodka, 2018; Yu. Tatur, 2004) determines the general research problems and proves the relevance of addressing them, emphasizing their significance for improving the effectiveness of learning the foreign languages in Ukrainian universities. Despite many existing approaches to

solving these issues (axiological, contextual, culturological, which we support and value, we especially emphasize the relevance of the facilitation approach (Dymukhametov, 2006; Rogers, 1975), as a result of which the students/pupils as the participants of the learning process "... develop skills of empathic understanding. They become the participants interested in creating conditions for the formation of meaningful teaching and personal development in general due to restructuring the personal attitudes during interpersonal interaction" (Dimukhametov, 2006, p. 78). Creating such an "empathic understanding" (Rogers, 1975), firstly, involves the ability mentioned above to identify the individual/individuals through his/their verbal-nonverbal behavior to understand the "self" of the interlocutor, and secondly, involves quite active use of adequate suggestion techniques to activate perceptual processes and strengthen the cognitive activity of the teaching object (Bakirov, 2020). The latter approach is quite established in pedagogy, as it became officially recognized in the 70s of the last century with the advent of the suggestopedic works of Lozanov (1971) and his followers in the areas of hypnopedia, relaxopedia and rhythmopedia, which received the status of "superscience" at first (Ostrander & Schroeder & Ostrander, 2000). However, some appropriate techniques were used without considering the neurophysiological features of perceptual processes, which sometimes created incorrect effects and caused criticism, outrage, and subsequently led to their deactivation.

Today, the development of Neurolinguistic Programming (NLP) is a new field of knowledge with a powerful scientific direction, which contains a thorough methodological apparatus and a system of practical techniques and technologies that can correlate with the neurophysiological mechanisms of influence on the cognitive and psychoemotional sphere of personality and optimization of learning processes as a whole and teaching foreign language in particular. The relevance of NLP techniques and technologies is recognized by both domestic (Kutuza, 2018; Selivanova, 2010) and foreign (Alder, 2000; Bandler & Roberti & Fitzpatrick, 2014; Jacobs, 2010; Dilts, 2000; Kovalyov, 1999) researchers in the field of Linguistics, Psychology, Communication. However, the NLP tools still aren't actively used and developed in the field of education in Ukraine, although foreign scientists recognize their effectiveness (O'Connor & Seymour, 1997; Pligin, 2000; Prokopenko & Gaiduchenko, 2016), which determines the need for scientific qualification and verification of techniques and technologies of Neurolinguistic Programming in the process of teaching foreign languages to the students of Ukrainian universities.

This determines the relevance of the proposed article and determines its purpose in connection with the review analysis of relevant NLP techniques aimed at optimizing the professional skills of the teacher, and hence the effectiveness of the learning process as a whole. This goal involves solving the following tasks: 1) to highlight the main ideas of NLP; 2) to describe the basic techniques of the predicate, meta- and Milton-model identification, as well as spelling; 3) to express their relevance in the segment of educational discourse in general and the study of foreign (English in particular) language in the Ukrainian-speaking environment. Researching and experimental proving the effectiveness of predicate, meta-and Milton-model identification techniques, as well as spelling, in the Ukrainian-speaking student environment hasn't yet been the subject of scientific qualification, which determines the research paper's scientific novelty and practical significance and emphasizes its relevance.

Literature Review

Basic Ideas of Neurolinguistic Programming

O'Connor and Seymour (1997) define it as art and science of personal mastery” (p. 10), O. Selivanova (2010) – as “a cross-sectoral direction of researching the communicative processes and communicative influence optimization, aimed at studying the individual’s behavioral mechanisms that, basing on the certain cognitive strategies, models, and skills, realize the positive programs of effective discourse conduction and management” (p. 497). Domestic NLP researcher Kutuza (2018) interprets this science as a creative synthesis of neurophysiological, psychomental, and linguistic components that provide stereometric analysis of the verbal-nonverbal contour of the personality and allows to create, on the one hand, a deep empathy, and on the other – a powerful influential correction. The following three basic fundamental ideas, reflected in the very name NLP, are its substrates: the “neuro-” part indicates that any behavior is based on neurophysiological processes, connected with the genetically coded representative systems’ influence; the “linguistic” part emphasizes that the results of the psyche’s neurological operations are represented on the verbal and non-verbal codes level and offers “a systematic approach to defining the language’s role in the thinking and communication processes” (Alder, 2000, p. 9), since “almost regardless of what human nature’s expressions make the focus of the researcher’s work up, these are almost always ones connected with language and communication” (Sternin, 2001, p. 88) and the “programming” part illustrates that there are specific behavioral patterns that help us «organize our thinking, feelings and beliefs in order to achieve the goals we set” (Alder, 2000, p. 9), since “one interacts with the environment via his / hers inner programming: the individual reacts to the problems and perceives the new ideas according to one’s own psychological programs type, and these programs are different for everyone” (Dilts, 2000, p. 24).

Conceptually, NLP is based on a synthesis of the provisions of Philosophy, Linguistics, Cognitive, Humanistic and Gestalt Psychology and Cognitology, Neurophysiology, enriched with the advanced results of the cybernetic and IT sciences.

Within the scientific paradigm of this science, the so-called “postulates” defined as “the parts of NLP’s epistemological base; basic tenets on which the other parts of the model rely heavily” are extremely weighty element. Usually, the scientists who are studying neuro-linguistic programming resort to the following ten basic positions, which are necessary to apperceive and share to understand and effectively use the means of NLP. In this research work, special attention would be paid to the first and the fundamental postulate of NLP – “the map is not the territory”. This postulate explains the fact that the human’s representative systems (visual, audial, sensory, gustatory, and olfactory) are the channels of perceiving the surrounding information, but their genetic specificity already determines some divergence between the information we acquire and the actual state of things, scilicet – exhibiting this statement’s sense onto the communicative axis – different people perceive and interpret the same situation in a different way, “regarding the cognitive and axiological priorities of their inner world” (Kovalyov, 1999, p. 25). The famous American scientist Jacobs (2010) emphasizes that “the only world we could know is the mental one created by the impulses of our neurons, and it is exceptionally subjective... everything we know is our personal version of this world” (p. 15). This postulate creates the basis for empathic communication, effective feedback (Akkuzu, 2014),

because in this case, the "otherness" of the individual is realized, his right to other worldviews, assessments, and priorities is recognized, which is reflected in a number various neurolinguistic techniques aimed at intensifying the learning processes. Such techniques include, first of all, predicate identification, meta- and Milton-model identification, as well as spelling one.

Predicate Identification of Personality

In the network of this technique, it is emphasized that our environment perception depends on numerous factors, the neurophysiological filters being one of the most important ones, since they are connected with our natural information perception and processing channels, called the modalities of the representative systems (RS) in the paradigm of NLP. These systems play a unique role of the experience language, which forms and is spread onto all the other processes: thinking, reminiscing, imagination, perception, consciousness. Each person has a dominant modality, which "is usually used to acquire access to the data stored in our memory" (Alder & Heather, 2000, p. 126), and a so-called primary modality, which defines "the certain way of processing the data" (Alder & Heather, 2000, p. 127), even though the common perception usually happens on the channels synesthesia (interference) level. Thus, it is plausible to state that the dominant modality is used internally, to identify the personal implicative inner cognitions. At the same time, the primary one deals with externalized perception and environment detailing. Modalities, or the representative systems, assist in accentuating the particular reality segments in our inner world. In contrast, the subjective world picture is formed by the originality of the relations between these. Each RS a person has is reflected in the language, scilicet each language's lexis mandatorily has nomens designated to mark the modality-marked extralingual reality concepts which are relevant for the human existence and have gained the verbalized status throughout the evolutionary processes, as well as the solely verbalized attributes of the modality phenomena – the names, the features, and the properties of each RS. If we can define the interlocutor's dominant and primary RS, then we can imagine exactly how this person is thinking, to wit, "the RS ideas are an extremely useful mean of understanding how different people are thinking, and reading the access signals is a priceless art for those willing to optimize their communication with the other people" (O'Connor & Seymour, 1997, p. 54), which, undoubtedly, is an exceedingly relevant tool for optimizing the educational process, establishing the empathetic, trustworthy relations between its participants. Besides, the ability to identify the pupil's/student's actual RS allows the teacher to diversify the presentation of the material - from emphasizing its visual markers (illustrative material) to kinesthetic (mnemonic anchors) and audio fixation (reading, listening). This, in turn, individualizes the learning process and creates comfortable conditions for its intensification, and the students' enjoying it (Butova, Dubskikh & Sevast'yanova, 2014).

Metamodel and Milton-model Identification of Personality

NLP's innovation and creativity lie within the correct, scientifically well-based combination of the different areas of the humanitarian knowledge, which guarantees a comprehensive understanding of the personal and collective reality perception, as well as the total human's existence. In this aspect, NLP utilizes the so-called Metamodel of Language, which includes the hierarchy of the linguistic elements illustrating the deviant communications zones and highlighting the communication's problematic segment, which requires specific corrective tactics to make the message totally emphatic.

The metamodel is based on three universal laws of modeling: which, in turn, are represented by the corresponding language markers of lexical-semantic and grammatical levels: the processes of omission are represented by nominalizations (nouns originating from verbs); non-specific nouns of hyperonymic nature and the possibility of subjective content (i.e. *pleasure, happiness*); non-specific verbs without a reference index (passive forms and predicate forms); judgments (adverbs with ascertaining semantics, e.g., *really, unconditionally*). Generalization processes are represented by universal quantifiers (pronoun-adverbial nouns with maximal generalization, e.g., *all, daily*) and modal operators of possibility/necessity, which "set boundaries outlined by unspoken rules" (O'Connor & Seymour, 1997, p. 127) and which include a range of modally colored parts of speech with appropriate semantics. Distortion processes are represented by complex equivalence (syntactic "if, ... then ..." model); presuppositions, which are "ideas or statements that must be considered commonly understood in order for communication to make sense" (O'Connor & Seymour, 1997, p. 278); causative complexes, which, according to Grinder and Bandler (1996), belong to the class of semantic inaccuracies and are associated with the speaker's beliefs that a person (or set of circumstances) can act, that in some necessary way will make another person feel a certain feeling or inner state; so-called "mind-reading" related to "the speaker's beliefs about what another person may know, think or feel without having direct communication from the speaker" (Grinder & Bandler, 1996, p. 151).

On the other hand, NLP is oriented not only towards optimizing the communication (which is the principal aim of this science), but at carrying out the powerful influential effects of multitier nature: starting with the clear systematics of the verbal suggestogenes presented within the so-called Milton-model, and up to a whole complex of extralinguistic influential markers covering the individual's neuro-physiological and psycho-mental structures (i.e., neurolinguistic metaprograms) and making it possible to perform the complex strategies of the deep influential reconstructions of predicted nature, which we consider to be an integral part of any training.

Spelling Technique

Aside from these, NLP possesses the other techniques which are especially relevant for the educational processes, i.e., spelling (competent writing strategy), in the network of which the mnemonic activation relies on the neurophysiological laws of the personal perception, particularly, the visual fixation. This technique has been actively used by foreign scientists, for example, in the experiments of O'Connor and Seymour (1997), Pligin and Gerasimov (2000), but on Ukrainian soil, it just starts becoming active. It is primarily aimed at activating mnemonic processes through visualization and the involvement of other submodalities. Thus, its first stage consists of a positive emotional setting and visual fixation of the language material (preferably presented on the upper left part of the blackboard/whiteboard/paper, as this is the direction associated with the visual construction). The second stage deals with the visual reproduction of the word image, the third one presupposes its graphic fixation; and the fourth one includes mnemonic fixation of the word and its auditory reproduction in reverse order.

Methods

This goal determined the feasibility of using several research methods, including such general methods as descriptive to highlight the features of various NLP techniques and determine its specificity; methods of analysis and synthesis for detailing and further generalization of the

analyzed data; observation method for recording and critical interpretation of the results of experiments.

Among the special methods, the experimental one of recording and comparing the results of predicate, meta- and Milton-model identification and spelling techniques was utilized, which allowed to reveal the effectiveness of their application while learning English as a foreign language; the survey method allowed to verify the expected results; the assessment method revealed the students' individual attitude to the classical and neurolinguistic data memorization techniques. These experimental methods were implemented while teaching English to the Management and Business Technologies Faculty students of Odessa Regional Institute for Public Administration of the National Academy for Public Administration under the President of Ukraine. The experiment involved 30 first-year students, including 16 girls and 14 boys. All students live in Ukraine, speak Ukrainian as the mother language, all of them studied English in high school (1-2 years ago).

Results

Experimental predicate identification was being held for two weeks. During this period, the experimenters (authors of the research paper) carried out graphic and audio recording of predicates, which were used by the students in oral answers to thematic questions while translating the analyzed text data and during their own presentations. Given the rather limited number of students in English language groups, the experimenter was able to establish the neurophysiological priorities of almost every student (60% visual, 30% auditory, 10% kinesthetic) and then communicate with each of them, selecting the appropriate predicates. Most of the girls belong to dominant auditory RS group, most of the boys – to dominant kinesthetic one, and the visual one is equally divided between both girls and boys. Implementing the neurolinguistic techniques of predicate, meta- and Milton-model identification and the spelling one will create the most comfortable educational environment for effective teaching, which was emphasized by the students themselves during interviews and the lecturer's work evaluation (rating evaluations of lecturers by students are conducted in ORIPA NAPA). This, on the one hand, contributed to the lecturer's maximum psycho-emotional and cognitive adjustment to a diverse student audience. On the other hand, this has allowed to enhance the efficiency of mastering the relevant data.

The experimental implementation and testing of meta- and Milton model identification techniques was carried out in the same way. The experimenter's ability to identify and correct problem areas in the students' behavior, as well as to apply the correct suggestion techniques allowed to create the most comfortable learning atmosphere. At the same time, it was noted that in other groups of students, where these techniques haven't been implemented, the effectiveness of learning was lower, and the overall communicative background of relations between the students within the group and between the students and the teacher wasn't as comfortable as one in the experimental groups. Considering the results of the experiments, the authors decided to implement the aforementioned techniques in all the courses they teach.

The experimental study of the spelling technique effectiveness was conducted during the first - second classes (in the beginning of the school day), which allowed ensuring the students were active and ready to effectively apprehend the data. For example, the students who were studying the "Job and Profession in Management" topic were offered to divide the list of new vocabulary

(30 words in total) into two parts (15 words each). It was suggested to memorize the first part using the spelling technique (visual fixation from left to right, as this direction is associated with visual construction; connection of visual or other submodalities, etc.), the second - in the usual way. The results of the survey during the next lesson showed that the level of mnemonic and visual fixation of the words of the first group almost doubled the corresponding indicators for the second group, which proved the effectiveness of this NLP technique and gave grounds to involve it in the learning process.

Discussion

The interpretation of the experiment results gives grounds to state that the maximum efficiency of these techniques could be achieved in two stages. The first one involves techniques of predicate, meta- and Milton-model identification to create a comfortable communicative background and the correct impact on the students' psycho-emotional state. In the second stage, the spelling technique is implemented to activate the students' cognitive (primarily - mnemonic) abilities. Thus, implementing these techniques will create the most comfortable educational environment for effective teaching, enhancing the students' psychocognitive abilities in learning foreign (primarily English) language, as well as the active formation of in-depth competence.

Conclusion

So, according to the modern NLP scientists, at the time being, the very ideas of NLP occupy the top place in the exceedingly wide amplitude of the humanitarian sphere, where the educational segment has a lot to borrow from the NLP's methodological base to optimize the educational processes in their various expressions. The NLP techniques we have described, firstly, promote empathy of educational process as a basis of its efficiency; secondly, make it possible to strengthen the mnemonic ability during the perception of complex material; thirdly, make it possible to exercise a correct influence on the personality of students, which also activates the cognitive creativity of teaching objects, etc. Besides, implementing these techniques helps to create a comfortable environment during the learning process and create a trusting relationship between a teacher and a student. The relevance of utilizing these techniques has been proven in the authors' own pedagogical experience, particularly in English classes.

Recommendations

Prospects for further use of NLP techniques in the educational segment are seen firstly, in implementing them while teaching students of different specializations (humanitarian, natural, technical educational institutions, etc.); secondly, in developing practical recommendations on how these techniques could be effectively used for the students of different nationalities and ethnicities; thirdly, in involving the reframing and anchoring techniques aimed at individualizing teaching and strengthening the students' mnemonic abilities into the pedagogic activities.

About the Authors

Tetiana Kovalevska is the Academician of Ukraine's National Academy of Higher Education, Doctor of Philological Sciences, Professor, Ukrainian Language Department Head of Odesa I. I. Mechnikov National University. Scientific interests: NLP, Suggestive Linguistics, Cognitive Linguistics, Theory of Communication, Psycho- and Neurolinguistics. ORCID ID: orcid.org/0000-0002-5956-2599

Anastasia Kovalevska is a PhD in Philology, Ukrainian and Foreign Languages Department Associate Professor of Odesa Regional Institute for Public Administration of the National Academy for Public Administration under the President of Ukraine. Scientific interests: NLP, Suggestive Linguistics, Spin-Doctoring, PR/GR, Profiling, IT. ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1031-5546>

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