USING NLP IN SUPERVISION

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Rezumat

În lucrarea de faţă am considerat necesară trecerea în revistă a tehnicii modelării în NLP pentru a exemplifica rolul mentorilor în desfăşurarea activităţilor subalternilor, în oferirea şi îmbunătăţirea abilităţilor asistenţilor sociali. Reuşita unui sistem depinde, în mare măsură, de abilitatea angajatului respectiv de a împărtăşi celorlalţi calităţile sale. Utilizarea NLP în supervizare poate sprijini accelerea capacităţii de învăţare, dezvoltarea continuă a noilor căi de gândire, indiferent de schimbările din lumea exterioară, renunţarea la tiparele şi obiceiurile vechi, tradiţionale, care restricţionează dezvoltarea profesioniştilor. Folosirea NLP-ului ajută supervizorii în conturarea propriilor formule pentru a răspunde la lumea tehnologiei înalte, de a construi relaţii de calitate cu oameni, fie că e vorba de o întâlnire cu ceilalţi profesionişti ori cu beneficiarii serviciilor sociale. De asemenea, NLP permite dezvoltarea flexibilităţii, punând la dispoziţie mai multe alegeri şi mai multă putere situaţiilor diferite cu care se confruntă specialiştii. În ansamblu, scopul învăţării NLP este acela de a genera învăţarea viitoare.

Cuvinte cheie*: supervizare, modelare, NLP, dezvoltare personală.*

Abstract

In this report I considered necessary presenting the modelling technique in NLP to emphasize the role of the mentors in subalterns' developing activities and in improving the skills of social workers. The success of a system depends largely on employee's ability of sharing his qualities to others. Using NLP in supervision may support increasing the capacity of learning, the continuous developement of the new ways of thinking, regardless of changes in the outside world, giving up on old and traditional habits or patterns, which restrict the developement of the professionals. Using NLP helps supervisors to define their own formulas for responding to the new high technology world to bulid quality relationships with people, be it a meeting with the others professionals or with the beneficiaries. Also, NLP allows the developement of flexibility, offering more choices and more control in different situations. Overall, the meaning of NLP is to generate future learning.

Keywords*: supervision, modelling, NLP, personal developement.*

Résumé

Dans cet article, j'ai consideré nécessaire de souligner l'importance du modélisation en NLP pour exemplifier le role des mentors dans les activités des subordonnés, en fournissant et en ameliorant les compétences des travailleurs sociaux. Le succès d'un système dépend en grand partie de l'abilité de l'émployée de transmettre aux autres ses compétences. L'utilisation du NLP en supervision permet l'accélération d'apprentissage, le dévéloppement des nouvelles idées, malgré le monde extérieur, la renunciation des vieilles habitudes et tendances, qui limite le dévéloppement des professionels. L'utilisation du NLP

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aide les superviseurs à trouver des solutions, d'établir des bonnes relations avec les professionnels et avec les bénéficiaires. Aussi, NLP permet le dévéloppement de la flexibilité, offre plus de choix et de puissance pour les situations différentes qui les specialists rencontrent. En ansemble, le but du NLP est de générer le future de l'apprentissage.

Mots clés: supervision, modélisation, NLP, développement personnel.

1. What is NLP?

The evolution taken by NLP, from the first formulated ideas, and till its actual status, it is sort of amazing. Still, it is easier for us to understand the meaning of this affirmation by shortly following its history. Practically, the birth year of the NLP is 1970, and the place - The University from Santa Cruz, California where its two founders John Grinder, linguistic teacher, and Richard Bandler, a mathematician and expert in informatics, met. Neuro-linguistic programming was created by this two contemporaneous moderators, John Grinder and Richard Bandler when they started to study who 'successful people' are functioning, but also how this strategies, values and faiths can be transmitted (O'Connor, 2010, p. 390). NLP is a system of personal development based on methods very practical. NLP studies the quality, and in general everything that is exceptional – how the individuals do to get noted and the organizations to have exceptional results. The methods can be taught to others in such a way that these to obtain similar results. This process is called modelling. Modelling means more 'how' rather than 'why' (Knight, 2007, p. 199.) In order to model, NLP studies the way in which we structure our subjective experience – what we think about our values and beliefs, and how we create our inner world, starting from our experiences to which you attribute a meaning. No event has a meaning in itself, we are giving them a significance, and different person can give other meanings to the same event.. So, NLP studies the inner experience. NLP started by studying the best communicators and reached the systematic study of human communication. It evolved by adding practical tools and general methods through modelling the skills of some exceptional persons. These tools are used on international scale in sport, business, training, sale, justice and education. Despite all this, NLP is more than a simple collection of techniques. It is a way of thinking, a vision based on curiosity, exploration and amusement (O'Connor, 2010, p. 11). The name of Neuro-Linguistic Programming comes from the three domains which it reunites: N neurology (the brain and how we think), L linguistic (how we use the language how this affects us), P programming (the word is borrowed from IP, especially to underline the fact that our brain was "programmable", meaning that we can modify the strategies, the ways, the techniques, the methods we have with others which are more competitive, which will take us in the right direction. NLP explores the relationships between how we think (neuro), how we communicate, verbally and non verbally (linguistic) and our methods of behaving and emotion (programming)

(Collingwood and Collindwood, 2001, p. 7). NLP reunites more techniques developed along the years and combines them with new discoveries. It consists in studying the greatest experts of change but also in recognizing the talents which exists in each person. NLP is a discovery trip (Knight, 2007, p. 30). The elements of NLP do not fit perfectly in the categories 'programming', 'neuro'and 'linguistic'. Even though, these denominations act as an umbrella under which the subject can be inserted. The first 'technical umbrella' is neuro. Neuro deals with the way in which we use our mind, body, and senses to think and to give meaning to our experiences. The more conscious we are about our ways of thinking, the more flexible we are, and as a result, we have much more influence over our destiny. The way in which we use our language to facilitate the change represents a big part of the old working of John Grinder and Richard Bandler, the creators of NLP. In business, the language is one of the best method of influence. NLP is a reproduction process of a model of our exceptional talent or of others. The programming, the essence of NLP, offers the possibility of learning the NLP abilities, to set off and codify the exceptional talent and also for the discovery of our own resources in accomplishing our true potential (Knight, 2007, p. 3).

2. The reproduction of our own models with NLP

With the help of NLP, we can learn the structure of our strategies which we apply on ourselves, we can reproduce the models which we use. We first learn how to reproduce our own models with the help of NLP, we become a model with principles that influence the people around us. For example, once we learnt to set our goals, we are more capable to help others to set their own goals (Knight, 2007, p. 237). The techniques from this section come from the reproduction of those model people who reached the excellence concerning the capacity to be guided by themselves. By attaining this competences, we will also develop new ones, which fit our personal, unique circumstances. The competences and the entrepreneurial style become more and more significant for this era. No matter if we work for us or for an organization, we need more than ever to have the capacity to lead ourselves. NLP is the modality to give a meaning to our own direction, to set free the resources which pertain naturally to us and the capacity to influence others, to realize state of optimal creativity creating thus the biggest number of behavioural solutions (Robbins, 2002, p. 32). One of the NLP assumptions is that we all have the same neurological talents, so that every one on this world can do everything, meaning that we also can, if we lead our nervous system in the same way. This process of discovering what exactly people do to obtain results is called modelling. We reach to the conclusion that if it is possible for others in this world is also possible for us. The problem is not if we can obtain the results which the other person has obtained; here is about strategy - how does the other person to obtain

results (Robbins, 2002, p. 33). The capacity to chose the best emotional state, to fit to the circumstances, is one of the most powerful and still less considered competence which we have. The emotion is important in a efficient thinking as well in taking the wise decision but also in allowing a clear thinking (Goleman, 2001, p. 41). When we can choose our mood, we can choose the techniques and the type of influence we wish in a situation. Each of us have their own values and beliefs, which lead each move we do and each word we utter. Sometimes, the respective beliefs are what we want them to be, other times they are not. Our own convictions influence and determine our behaviour. They form the screenplay of our life – our convictions dictates us how to act in front of the situations and the people we meet during our life. In most cases we don't realise that these convictions reflect in every aspect of our life and in the same time influence them. And, each conviction has its own structure, which we can influence if we chose to do so (Knight, 2007, p. 293). The convictions creates our social world. The fact that NLP considers convictions as some axiom means that it perceives them as behavioural principles. We act as if they are real, and if the results suit us, then we can go one acting as if they are real. If our beliefs don't bring us good results, then we have the possibility to change them. We need to act according to our convictions, only in this way they are meaningful, thus, convictions are principles of taking action, not empty ideals (O'Connor, 2010, pp. 36-37). If we want to reproduce the model of a performance we want to reproduce it in such a way so that it can influence our behaviour. Also, to have access to those inner resources which inspires us, specifically in a context, we have to be capable to 'decrypt' the conviction which helps us in a certain situation (Knight, 2007, p. 294).

Why is it important to learn to imitate the models? We need to know to imitate the models if our work depends on our ability to influence others. We all have strategies of learning, taking decisions, buying and motivating ourselves. If we want to influence ourselves or others, we can do this if we use a relevant strategy (Bandler, 2008, p. 51). If we already have a good capacity in influencing others and we never encountered the concept of modelling, then probably we do it unconsciously. Even so, we can't leave this abilities to rely on luck or intuition – we need to excel in our domain. The most competent and respectful people with power of influence know how to identify the person's strategy they come in conflict with and know how to use this strategy and adapt their communication so that it suits to the person (Knight, 2007, p. 227). Modelling is a way to guarantee the certitude and the consistency of the results we obtain. "Modelling is the map of the implicit knowledge in explicit knowledge" (Bostic St. Clair and Grinder, 2001, p. 271). Our way of behaving is determined or motivated by a result, we realise we attain the desired result according to some set of criteria. We constantly compare our present mood with our desired mood, to discover it they match. When they become equivalent, we know we reach a point, for example, we obtained our result. If our present mood is completely different from the desired one, we need to start

another operation to discover if this brings any change (Bandler, 2008, p. 24). We all live extreme events, but what we do about them depends of our subjectivity. If we want to reproduce the result we recognize in ourselves and in others, then what we can study is the structure of that subjectivism. Not only that we learn to reproduce those abilities, but we respect the uniqueness of the individual inter-pretations we give to life. If we can learn to respect the individual culture, probably we can start to do the same with the people in general (Knight, 2007, p. 232).

3. Learning through modelling

NLP is an accelerated learning strategy to identify and to use the models in the outside reality. In NLP (Neuro-linguistic-programming), the term of modelling has a totally different meaning from the usual one, the one we find it explained in the DEX. Modelling according to NLP is learning by reproducing the models of others (Dilts, 2007, p. 15). As we well know, modelling is part of the arsenal methods of psychology. Though, in NLP, modelling not only plays a first role but also contains some specialised elements, NLP being the one who contributed in a significant way at the development and extension of the possibilities in applying this method. Modelling reunites two big measures. The first one is analytical and regards the profound identification and investigation of these patterns of efficiency. In this way, we have models regarding the use of language, models of negotiation, models of efficient learning. This technology which we use to create models can be use in modelling the personal performance. NLP counts on the assumption that we can model are own experience and accordingly accelerating the learning process in an extraordinary way). A part of our fundamental abilities were learned through reproducing the models of others. If we go back in time with the mind or if we look carefully around us, we will discover that the true experts in reproducing the models are the babies and the small children. We did the same during that period of our life, but while we grew up we adapted to the traditional methods of learning by accumulating the cognizance, loosing though this ability. Is it good or bad? Other time I wouldn't even ask myself this question. An ability which we consider long forgotten can represent the shortcut to success which we are always looking for (Knight, 2007:198). Being all in a continuous searching for success, we inevitably notice that are extremely few those who know how to truly use the inner resources. Do we want to develop in this direction? If the answer is positive, the first step is to trust in ourselves, in the way we learn, we develop, coordinate, take initiative, and deal with the constant changes. What can help us? Modelling. Modelling is the methodology which leaves behind a set of techniques, presented by Richard Bandler. It is a systematic way of learning of a new aptitude which someone rooted so much that even they don't know who they did it. Modelling is not something necessary to learn, but rather something we should remember (Bandler and Grinder, 1982, p. 50).

Sue Knight in her book The techniques of Neuro-Linguistic-Programming, describes the modelling as being the way to wisdom and real personal fulfillment, more than that, it is a model of respecting and valuating our unique qualities which we have. Modelling is a state of curiosity and altruism. It is the wish to listen, watch, respect others, to learn from others, but also to find our own inner resources of which we are not always aware, to get them to light and especially to value them for our own good. It is an interest for process beyond the content. It is not only a technique, but a life style, thus everywhere we will be and whoever is around us, we can learn and grow up continuously (Knight, 2007, p. 199). Interesting is that we can apply successfully this things in business where changes are spectacular and welcome when they assure the success. But we have to admit that a system rooted already in the tradition of a company is hard to be changed without a certain strategy. Now, many companies have a system of guidance where the leading members, in one of the stage of their development, are distributed to an older employee with much more experience, from whom they will learn. The success of this system depends mostly of the certain employee ability to share to the others his qualities. Often, they don't know their most important aptitudes, don't know to talk about them, and don't even know to explain what exactly of what they do have big importance in obtaining the success. If though, the student is familiarized with the NLP system of reproducing the models with different aptitudes, he can select the aptitudes which he needs to learn, regardless the conscious level of these by his mentor. Including the person of which the model is reproduced can benefit from this process and learning from the reactions of others towards the way he structures his experience. In this way, the mentors themselves can reach a high level of their aptitudes they have. Modelling in business led to significant progresses regarding the way in which the aptitudes are learn (Knight, 2007, p. 208). There are unique patterns which work in a company, in a department, or in a market segment, and patterns which don't work in other fields. Modelling allows us to analyse this specific patterns of a certain context for reproducing the excellence in a certain domain (Dilts, 2007, p. 208). By identifying those person who succeed in your organization, not only we will be able to reproduce their success, but we will be able to help those people to maintain a consistency in their realizations. Someone said that modelling in the secret weapon in today business, with the condition to be well used. It is easy to access the strategies you wish, even if their use in business haven't become a common practice. Each individual or organization who uses this way of thinking will continue to lead the game many years from now on.

The idea is that modelling represents a different way of thinking and working, from the present one. Offering a chance to the people from a company to reproduce the model of some aptitudes means offering them the methods of reproducing of some models to find solutions in any situation they are in. We can apply the process of modelling to our own person, by reproducing one ability or competence from a certain area of our life or work with the purpose to use it in another context.

Usually we obtain results through the programmes we unroll in our mind and through our actions. When we walk, drive the car, talk, read, laugh, is less probable that we are aware by the way we are doing this things. The programmes which make them possible are coordinated by subconscious (O'Connor, 2010, p. 180). They are known under the name of strategies. If we want to reproduce a personal model of excellence or a model of someone else, we need to activate also the conscious and the unconscious strategies which allows us to do what we are doing. As an example: when we know someone's strategy who knows how to lead his life, then we hold the key for reproducing that experience in our personal life.

Sue Knight in The techniques of Neuro-Linguistic-Programming, describes an exemple very eloquent of what the complexity of a strategy really means. When a chef cooks the perfect dinner, he doesn't only respect the recipe, but he also respects a recipe of thinking and behaviour. For example, it's possible that he imagines the way the food would want to look like (visually), what smell it should have (olfactiv) what would be its consistency (sensitive) or how the guests would manifest their delight (acoustic) (Knight, 2007, p. 204). Understanding a strategy gives us the strenght to choose when and how to use it. For example, if someone likes to influence a decision of ours, will succed only if he understands our strategy and not trying to impose his strategy (O'Connor, 2010, p. 182). A strategy involves creating a imagine of we want, searching inside us an answer regarding the viability of the result. It is important to remember that when we ask someone "how do you do this"? we ask in fact the awareness of his own strategy and it is unlikely that the person to be able to give a direct answer. Be it he will say I don't know, be it he'll say what he thinks he's doing. Infrequently his answer coincide with what he really does. To succed extracting a strategy, the person whoes model we want to reproduce has to follow or to relive the experience that we want to study. Only this way we can come in direct contact with what he's doing, thinking, feeling and living in that moment. We can identify usefull stategies behind any behavior. What we're doing always involves a valuable process, even if the situation is different regarding its content (O'Connor, 2010, p. 181). We have to analize all behaviours that we consult for discovering the strategy behind them. Thus, we can discover that behind our weaknesses there are very valuable strategies, when they are used in right circumstance.

4. The importance of modelling in supervison

As we previously mentioned NLP is a personal developement system based on very practical methods, is the systematic and effective use that exist in every person to remember, to forget, to enhance informations and representations, to perceive and to react for succeeding to live their life to the highest level (Bandler, 2008, p. 18). The social work supports the social change, the solving of relation-

ship problems and the people's empowering to enhage their welfare. The practical perspective directs the social worker to specific factors in the social intervention. The supervision may be seen as a collaborative process between two or more improvers that may be part of the same domain or different domains (Cojocaru, 2005, p. 111). This process aims to encourage the developement of professional skills and abilities, of quality customer service by implementing quality standards. These are maintained by the discussions of the situations of a part of clients or by interventions who use elements of reflection (Ponea, 2009, p. 12 cited in The Chartered Society of Physiotheraphy, 2003, p. 3). The supervision is an administrative and educational process used in social work to support the social workers for developping their own skills and providing to customers quality services. The main purpose of supervision is the observation of watching over the interests of the beneficiaries and their welfare. Through their roles the supervisors have to ensure the best sevices to customers regarding quality and quantity and also to be consistent with the policies and procedures of organizations (Ponea, 2009, p. 20 cited in Smith, 2005, p. 8). The supervision is considered an „activity that transfers knowledges, skills and attitudes from an experienced person to one with less experience. (...) Gerald Caplan said that supervision is a long process between a proffesional with a special skill an one or more proffesionals without that special skill" (Lundén, 2007, p. 162). Thus, „the supervision is an activity who can also contribute to the professional developement of improvers, whose importance is recognized by the authorities in the field. This process always helps the practitioners to improve their reflection skills, narrowing the „gap" between theory and practice, and to allow an easier understanding to be a good professional" (Ponea, 2009, p. 11). The supervision is a professional meeting developed in an organized and negociated frame, aimed to increase capacity of the supervised to relate with the beneficiaries, and also the professional developement of the supervised in this process (Muntean, 2007, p. 78).

The supervision hepls to be aware of how to act, it requires the implementation of changes not only in knowledge but also in behaviors, emotions, and attitudes related to each personality. The change causes a certain anxiety. In addition, the relationship with the supervisor may evoke a authority report and so it may pose a threat to his independence and autonomy. The relationship in supervision involves dealing with emotions, intimate attitudes, and sometimes those must be avoided, because the relationship between supervisor and supervised should stay professional, without involving personal attachment. The supervised should want to discover the meaning of his professional activities, to discover his own professional identity, to have an adequate distance from the work's events who influence his personal life. This itself regular sistematic return back is not fruitful only when there is an authentic professional relationship with the supervisor and supervision group members. The supervision is seen in the world as a growing specialization, with a degree of dinamic formalization and institutionalization, with a pronounced

tendency to generalize across all social and human services. The professional supervision is a complex method of professional coaching done by profesional supervisors with a special training (Kessel, 2007, p. 146).

The supervision doesn't mean surveillance, hierarchical control, evaluation, not just a raport and following a work schedule, the supervision means the oportunity to promote a quality services offer too, avoiding as possible a burnout. If an institution of social system would provide the higest quality service, where clients would find the solution of all their problems and the social work objectives would be achieved, then we couldn't talk about supervision. But the social work envisages different categories of beneficiaries, with their specific problems, cultural differences, changing needs and expectations (Cojocaru, 2005, p. 135). Therefore, the supervision in the institutions within the social services system aims to streamline the work and to increase the involment of the social workers. The role of supervisor is different from that of a therapist; the supervisor listens differently, responds differently, has different responsabilities. The supervision work involves the transmision of professionalism to the superviseds. To accomplish the supervisor's objectives, you must have a good training in the field (theoretical) good practical experience in supervision, and finaly to own qualities and abilities for being a good supervisor, a professional one (Ponea, 2009 cited. Smith, 2005, p. 8). Also we can talk about the appreciative inteligence of the supervisors. The appreciative intelligence doesn't mean only to have a positive way of seeing things (Barett, 1995, p. 23). „Knowing yourself, being yourself, realiving to others your personality, are the three vital ingredients that contribute to the effectiveness of leadership" (Goffee, Jones, 2010, p. 65).

Using NLP in supervision may support increasing the capacity of learning, the continuous developement of the new ways of thinking, regardless of changes in the outside world, giving up on old and traditional habits or patterns, which restrict the developement of the professionals. This approach helps to create possible strategies for the future and to assign concrete plans for change, using their talents and potential, working within their system of values and using the basics of their beliefs to design a good future (Thatchenker and Metzker, 2008, p. 108)**.** Using NLP helps the supervisors in shaping quality relations with people, be it a meeting with the others professionals or with the beneficiaries. Also, NLP allows the developement of flexibility, providing more choices and more control in order to solve encountered problems (Knight, 2007, pp. 21-22). Supervisors may implement NLP in a specific personal mode, and even in professional field, which will provide a formula for success in communication, strategic thinking, motivation, negociation, leadership, empowerment, view. Well mastered, NLP is the answer of many encountered problems in the relationship between supervisor and supervised. Overall, the main NLP purpose is generating the future learning. This could not be for many people to understand, especially in the case of those who want quick

answers (Knight, 2007, p. 23). Many traditional changing and influencing methods looked to make a change by manipulating other people and the environment. The truth is we cannot change others, if we can't change ourselves. Our environment is defined by the mental models that we have. For example there are people that see only what is good in others. They don't have a representation of what's evil. In their world, evil doesn't exist. Our thoughts mark our facts, usually unconsciously. These thoughts inform people about their desires and believes. Therefore, the key for influencing answer is the changing of the internal signals. NLP offers the opportunity to manage these representations and internal signals. Doing so, the supervisor or the supervised, who learned to control their own thoughts, would be able to change the way of react to different context (Knight, 2007, p. 37). The main question in NLP is what you really want. The professional may apply any of multiples models, techniques or combinations of models in NLP to be assimilated and implemented in order to change (O'Connor, 2010, p. 20). NLP is related to discover the way which the performers get the best results. This excelent modelling process bring to light their sequence of actions and internal processes. Once we undestand how someone does something we can replicate the strategy and achieve similar results (Szekely, 2003, p. 7). Modelling involves constructing ways to teach others, helps to form some skills, is the process of identifying a set of ideas or behavior patterns that will allow someone to perform a task. Practically, modelling involves three steps: first is observation of the model which will be modeled, second is extracting those elements of individual behavior pattern and the last one is building ways to teach others, to help forming some skills (Dilts, 2007, p. 34). During the code phase, the model is developed in the elegance that it is, using a minimum number necessary and sufficient to demonstrate the effectiveness of talent (Grinder, DeLozier and Bandler, 1977, p. 29). As we all know, a necessary skill for the social workers is persuasion, the capacity to influence the beneficiaries for improving their ability of an independent life. We must learn how to reproduce models, if our work depends on influencing others. We all have strategies for making decisions, buying, motivating ourselves. If we want to influence ourselves or others, we can do this only if we use a relevant strategy (Bandler, 2008, p. 15). Supervisors may implement this method both in the social workers activities, especially in relation to direct or indirect beneficiaries. Modelling is one of the most important ability that a supervisor may hold, offering the posibility to improve learning, to find more solutions, alternatives for encoutered problems to subordinates. More then that primary is thrusting in our own capacity for dealing with constant changes. Even if a professional works for a big organisation, the chances of success don't depend on the offered support, but rather it is aspected that professionals to be confident when they will have to deal with challenges (Knight, 2007, p. 200).

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