RESEARCH PAPER

Neuro-linguistic programming and learning: teacher case studies on the impact of NLP in education

Summary report with CD containing the full report

John Carey, Richard Churches, Geraldine Hutchinson, Jeff Jones and Paul Tosey

Foreword by John West-Burnham

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Contents

Acknowledgements 2

About the authors 4

Abstract 4

Foreword 5

Executive summary 6

1. Purpose and background to this research paper 7

2. The evidence about the use of NLP in education – a review of the literature 9

3. Background to the teacher-led action research case studies 13

4. Methodology 16

5. Teacher evidence in the 24 case studies – a summary 19

6. Wider benefits and impact of the project 26

7. Summary and general conclusions about NLP and current thinking in education 30

8. Recommendations for further research 33

9. Glossary for the areas of NLP that were the focus of the various case studies 35

Additional contents in the full version of this report on the CD-ROM

Appendix 1 – The evidence about the use of NLP in education – a review of the literature (continuation and detailed evidence and discussions) 37

Appendix 2: – The 24 teacher case study write-ups 57

References 97

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This paper was first presented at an Education Show seminar, sponsored by CfBT Education Trust on 6 March 2010. Conference paper versions of the literature review and case study research will be presented at the 2nd International NLP Research Conference at the University of Cardiff in July 2010.

Abstract

This research paper reports on evidence from 24 teacher-led action research case studies and builds on the 2008 CfBT Education Trust published paper by Richard Churches and John West-Burnham *'Leading learning through relationships: the implications of Neuro-linguistic programming for personalisation and the children's agenda in England'*.

The current research focused on two gaps in the research literature:

- The absence of any formal and systematic literature review of evidence in relation to the impact and use of NLP in education
- The lack of any substantive teacher-led and classroom-based action research in this area.

Teachers followed the Teacher Learning Academy framework in designing and implementing their research – a framework that CfBT Education Trust was closely involved in the development of. All of the case studies demonstrate significant impact in relation to teacher development, with many demonstrating positive impacts on pupil learning outcomes. The paper also contains the first systematic and comprehensive literature review of research evidence into the impact of NLP in education and discusses the content of 111 papers and references including quantitative and qualitative research evidence. The majority of published work was found to be supportive of the use of NLP in schools and education although, as the authors point out, this should only be considered as an interim finding because of the wide range of methods used and variations in the quality of some of the research.

To reference this research:

Carey, J., Churches, R., Hutchinson, G., Jones, J. and Tosey, P. (2009) (foreword by John West-Burnham) *Neuro-linguistic programming and learning: teacher case studies on the impact of NLP in education*, Reading: CfBT Education Trust.

Foreword

"…a balance of authoritative thinking about the nature of the learning process combined with compelling and convincing case studies."

After thousands of years of formalised human education we still seem to be no nearer to a degree of consensus as to what might constitute an effective educational process. If we set aside the contextual variables that play such a pivotal role in educational success – factors such as the family, social class and poverty – then we can begin to explore the key school based variables – the curriculum, teaching and learning.

> *. . . among school level variables, the factors that are closest to student learning, such as teacher quality and classroom practices, tend to have the strongest impact on student achievement.*
>
> (Pont *et al*, 2008: 33)

It's probably fair to say that we have explored most permutations of what a curriculum might comprise. In spite of the stubborn focus on subjects and the burden of information we can be reasonably confident that we understand the possibilities of a curriculum.

It might be argued that the interaction between teaching and learning is that of the relationship between art and science. We probably know more about effective teaching than ever before and the artistry of the skilled teacher, mentor or facilitator is a vital element of effective learning. Equally we are growing in confidence about the scientific basis of learning:

> *Education is neither writing on a blank slate nor allowing the child's nobility to come into flower. Rather education is a technology that tries to make up for what the human mind is innately bad at.*
>
> (Pinker, 2002: 222)

Our genetic and evolutionary inheritance means that we have a predisposition to speak; we do not have such a predisposition to write or to read. Education is a process of compensating for gaps in our biological inheritance and adapting natural predispositions 'to master problems for which they were not designed'. (Pinker, 2002: 223)

> *And this offers priorities for educational policy: to provide students with the cognitive tools that are most important for grasping the modern world and that are most unlike the cognitive tools they are born with.*
>
> (Pinker, 2002: 235)

This is an argument for both a better understanding of the impact of our genetic inheritance and recognition that the blank slate and genetic determinism arguments are both wrong. Ridley (2003) argues:

> *Nature versus nurture is dead. Long live nature via nurture.*
>
> (Ridley, 2003: 280)

Our capacity to learn is the result of complex interactions and if we are to respond to the imperative of securing excellence and equity across the education system we need to enhance our understanding of how to maximise effective learning and teaching. That is exactly what this timely and significant report does. For the first time it offers a balance of authoritative thinking about the nature of the learning process combined with compelling and convincing case studies of successful practice. This report provides a comprehensive and detailed survey of how NLP relates to effective learning and teaching and so increases our confidence in continuing to explore and extend our understanding of its potential.

John West-Burnham
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Executive summary

"This research has provided a unique opportunity for teachers to present their first-hand practice evidence…"

The aim of this report is to address two significant gaps in the research literature: the absence of any formal and systematic literature review of evidence in relation to the impact and use of NLP in education, and the lack of any substantive teacher-led and classroom-based action research in this area. NLP is a relatively new field of study, especially in relation to its application within education, and this may well have contributed to this gap in the literature; however, given the general consensus on the importance of interaction and communication in teaching and learning (alongside subject knowledge), the extent of the gap is perhaps hard to explain. The 24 teacher-led action research case studies presented in this report demonstrate that 'teachers' recognise the importance of communication in effective learning and teaching, and more so, understand the potential of the application of NLP to achieve this, particularly in relation to language and learning, rapport, interpersonal skills and flexibility.

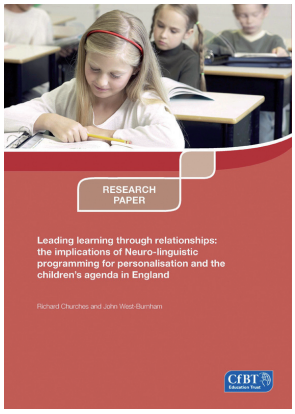
NLP is aligned in the literature to wide-ranging fields of practice, which perhaps normally are considered separate and which have distinctly different stakeholders. However, presence in the academic arena is still sparse – a fact that is noted in the first comprehensive appraisal of NLP that was published this year – *Neuro-Linguistic Programming: a critical appreciation for manager and developer* (Tosey and Mathison, 2009) and in *Neurolinguistic psychotherapy: a postmodern perspective* (Wake, 2008); both of which have sought to reposition NLP as a field ripe for serious academic study.

The systematic review of literature in this publication includes the documentation and analysis of 111 references, including many that contain quantitative and qualitative evidence. Whilst the territory of NLP is sometimes portrayed contentiously (though often in writing that is not based on substantive evidence) the majority of research papers and perspectives contain discussions about the use of NLP in classroom practice that are positive towards it. It was also clear from the literature that contrary to some popular opinion, there have been a number of academic publications on NLP that are supportive of its use in schools and education in general.

The teachers involved in the case study teacher-led action research published here used the General Teaching Council of England (GTCE)'s Teacher Learning Academy (TLA) framework as a structure for recording their learning. This meant that if they wished, they could submit their work to the TLA for professional recognition: so far three teachers have achieved accreditation at Level 1 and a number of others are moving in this direction. The case studies analysed here offer insights into key NLP strategies, tools and practice that can be used in the classroom to create impact on relationships, behaviour, learning and pupil achievement and teaching effectiveness. Increasing young people's access to learning opportunities, improving their achievement and adding value to teacher effectiveness are inextricably bound to the public investment made in teacher training, both initial and continuing. The goal surely is to increase benefits for ever-increasing numbers of learners in cost-effective and efficient ways, starting with teacher classroom practice.

This research has provided a unique opportunity for teachers to present their first-hand practice evidence and for this to be placed in a research context so that there is a firm basis for future discussions and an evidence-led evaluation of NLP applied within teaching. A key driver of this paper was the objective to facilitate teachers' reflective practice, and to share the learning derived from that reflection within and beyond the education community. The connection between development, practice, research and policy that this paper seeks to influence through taking as its starting point teacher evidence of the impact of new practices, materials and capabilities, uncovers the questions that research needs to address. New knowledge and skills development for teachers is a key outcome of these case studies and in an education system where social and economic prosperity are goals the way in which knowledge about educational practice is presented and applied is of major importance.

1. Purpose and background to this research paper



"This resulted in the inclusion of a number of new ideas from psychology and other related disciplines."

In 2008 CfBT Education Trust published a research paper by Richard Churches and John West-Burnham: *Leading learning through relationships: the implications of Neuro-linguistic programming for personalisation and the children's agenda in England* (Churches and West-Burnham, 2008). This paper discussed research and thinking on the importance of interpersonal and intrapersonal effectiveness for teachers, school leaders and school improvement, and explored implications of the use of Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) in relation to personalisation and the children's agenda. It outlined initial research carried out as part of the Fast Track Teaching programme – the UK government accelerated leadership development programme (a contract that CfBT Education Trust held with the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and then the National College for School Leadership (NCSL) for eight years). The paper also included a brief summary of the use of NLP as part of the London Leadership Strategy and made suggestions for further research. Evidence from this paper was presented at the First International NLP Research Conference at the University of Surrey in July 2008 (Churches and West-Burnham, 2009).

The inclusion of NLP in the Fast Track Teaching programme evolved from a recognition of the importance of communication skills in effective teaching as a support to subject knowledge and sound pedagogy; and in relation to effective influencing in school leadership. It was clear from the outset that there was, at the time of the inception the programme, little training and development that could be said to have got to the heart of the challenge of effective communication. CfBT Education Trust consultants audited and attended a wide range of training from within education, as well as from the private sector, in order to identify training that might fill this development gap. This resulted in the inclusion of a number of new ideas from psychology and other related disciplines. All such inclusions, including NLP, were piloted on a trial basis with a view to identifying those that the teachers themselves pointed to as being effective and then researching their impact. In this sense, development by necessity came before research; and the use of NLP on Fast Track parallels some of the processes identified by Andrew Morris, Charles Desforges and others (Morris, 2004; Desforges, Morris and Stanton, 2005; Morris, 2009) as being important for the further evolution of teaching as an evidence-based profession. In particular, in 2004 the National Education Research Forum recommended two strategic priorities:

- the creation of a national evidence system, accessible to all
- the encouragement of programmes that combine development and research (NERF, 2004) (Desforges, Morris and Stanton, 2005: 3)

CfBT Education Trust has embraced both of these concepts, firstly in its support for the development of an online Educational Evidence Portal (eep)[1] and secondly with some of our key national delivery programmes such as Fast Track Teaching and our subsequent ongoing interest in Development and Research in areas such as NLP in education, coaching and the application of ideas from applied psychology to educational leadership. Research papers are currently in preparation across all of these areas.

The first research paper by Churches and West-Burnham (2008) was primarily a perspectives paper and the need to publish research on both the impact of NLP on children and teacher professional development was clearly highlighted by this publication. The

[1] **http://www.eep.ac.uk/**, accessed 17 November 2009.

paper noted the strongly positive way in which NLP had been received by a large number of teachers and identified areas for the application of NLP. It was also clear that no systematic literature review had yet taken place in relation to NLP and education.

The purpose of this research publication is two-fold: firstly, to document the extent and scope of publications on NLP (both research publications and the growing popular literature); and secondly, to fill a key gap in the evidence which emerged from that literature review (namely the lack of teacher-led action research case studies). As well as these aims, this second publication has sought to extend the research evidence beyond participants on the Fast Track Teaching programme and records evidence of impact from teachers without a direct connection to the programme.

2. The evidence about the use of NLP in education – a review of the literature

"The purpose of this review is to scrutinise the published evidence and academic opinion on the effectiveness of NLP to support teaching and learning…"

The review focused on the publication in the English language of academic research, perspectives and articles on the use of Neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) in education. However, we are also aware of a developing literature in other languages, particularly in Europe (see e.g. Hager, 1989; 1990; 1992; Otto; 2006; Özmen, 2009; Schaefer and Schajor, 1999; Zechmeister, 2003).

There have been occasional critical academic commentaries (Marcus and Choi, 1994; Craft, 2001), brief critical comments (Lisle, 2005; Burton, 2007) and at least one negative discussion in the popular press (e.g. Beadle, 2008) on the use of NLP in education. However, none of these has been based on a review of the specific NLP research evidence and literature (as is noted by Tosey and Mathison, 2009). The purpose of this review is to scrutinise the published evidence and academic opinion on the effectiveness of NLP to support teaching and learning, and thereby to put the 24 teacher-led action research case studies contained in this paper into a research context. As such, we believe that this is the first extensive review of the literature on NLP in education to be published.

Methodology and scope of the review

An initial literature search focused on the Australian Education Index (AUEI) – 1979 to date, British Education Index (BREI) – 1975 to date and the Education Resources Information Centre (ERIC) – 1966 to date. This produced 89 unique references and eight duplicate references.[2] Review of these references revealed 30 references that were both education-related (schools, further and higher education, adult learning and/or the use of NLP with children) and published in academic or partially academic publications (what is sometimes known as 'grey literature'), including conference papers and unpublished theses. Alongside this, two online databases that list, respectively, 193 and 311 references to NLP in journal articles, papers and dissertations were analysed and assessed including the database which is hosted by the University of Bielefeld in Germany.[3]

A further cross-check was made with a list of research references hosted by the NLP Research and Recognition Project.[4] These databases contained an additional 33 unique references that fulfilled the search criteria. These data sets are discussed below alongside 39 other references and papers that were recorded within the NLP and Research Project, based at Surrey University.[5] This includes three education papers presented as part of the First International NLP Research Conference (in Tosey, P., 2009). A total of 111 out of 171 references have been included in the formal analysis. In the vast majority of cases we have been able to review the full publication; however, on occasions we have included evidence from author abstracts alone but only where these have provided sufficient evidence for analysis.

In relation to the scope of the review we included a wide range of sources:

- Journal articles (although in many cases it was difficult to ascertain the depth or scope of peer review processes)
- Conference papers

[2] 1 July 2009. Search criteria: all references to *Neurolinguistic programming* OR *Neuro-linguistic programming* OR *Neuro linguistic programming*. Data from the three sources was combined and all repetitions removed.

[3] **http://www.inspiritive.com.au/nlp-research/database.htm**; **http://www.nlp.de/cgi-bin/research/nlp-rdb.cgi**, 14 July 2009.

[4] **http://nlprandr.org/**. Note this list of references is only available on registration with the site, accessed 2 December 2009.

[5] **http://www.nlpresearch.org**, accessed 14 July 2009.

- Articles which had some form of university affiliation and articles whose writers had some form of university affiliation or track record in research
- Papers connected to government programmes and which presented evaluation data
- Postgraduate level research findings (both at Masters and Doctoral level)
- Practitioner findings published in journal articles and papers with some element of university or recognised research organisation affiliation.

These mean that informal research findings and perspectives have been presented alongside more formal methodologies and writings. Our intention, however, was to be comprehensive rather than to provide a detailed critical reading. No doubt, as fields of study develop in the various domains and sub-domains of the topic, some references will slip into obscurity as more robust evidence is documented and emerges. Indeed there is a wide range of quality in relation to the methodologies used in the studies and in the extent to which the findings can be viewed as secure. Where we have serious concerns about the methods used, or the presentation of findings, we have indicated these in our discussions. A widely scoped review like this will, we hope, improve and give more depth to any pre-research review of evidence prior to education research in areas where studies have already taken place.

In terms of the scope of the content we have taken an equally broad view on the definition of 'education'. Thus we have included content that relates to research evidence or perspectives such as informal adult learning as well as more obvious education domains such as classroom practice. In doing so we are aware that the scope of the review might be considered too broad by some readers; however, growing interest in the effectiveness of the adult learning of teachers themselves and its effect on pupil outcomes may mean that some researchers find these sources of interest alongside the publications that relate specifically to children and young people. We did not, however, include areas such as: training in general, counselling, psychotherapy and family therapy.

Opinion pieces from teacher professional magazines were not included even where these were from recognised researchers or respected authorities.

Throughout this summary and in the extended review (see the appendices), references included in the formal analysis are (from this point on) indicated with an asterisk (e.g. Hillin, 1982*).

Summary of findings

It is sometimes implied that there is little or no evidence base for areas of teacher professional practice such as NLP (see e.g. Burton, 2007*) or in relation to NLP in general (Heap, 1988; 2008; Roderique-Davies, 2009). However, as this systematic review demonstrates, there has been a growing and developing education literature which refers to both adults and children right from the time of the publication of the earliest popular books on NLP and teaching and learning (Harper, 1982; Dilts, 1983a; Jacobson, 1983 – see for examples of early research: Hillin, 1982*; Fruchter, 1983*; Knowles, 1983*). Furthermore, criticisms (where they exist) are often made at a theoretical or 'in principle' level rather than from an evidence-based position.

The review highlighted two other issues:

- What NLP research literature there is, is rarely cross-referenced to, or cited within, the NLP informed research, even though some topics have been researched before and the results are accessible.
- Few researchers or commentators have carried out any form of literature review prior to the conducting of research.

This is perhaps the result of the general assumption that there is no evidence or research available or because a significant amount of the available evidence has only emerged in the last few years (22 out of the 92 accessible papers and publications reviewed below are from 2007 onwards). In addition, although much of the recent evidence has a university department origin, only a small amount has as yet been published in easily accessible journals.

Churches and West-Burnham (2008; 2009)* suggest that NLP tools and techniques relevant to teachers and school leaders can be classified in four ways:

- **Outcomes**
  Strategies and approaches for self-motivation and the motivation of others
- **Rapport**
  Approaches for building rapport and influencing others
- **Flexibility**
  Techniques for developing personal flexibility and awareness of others
- **Language**
  Language models from hypnosis and therapy (Churches and West-Burnham, 2008: 7)

Although the number of NLP-related papers (including research publications and dissertations) is relatively small, there was some evidence in relation to each of these areas, particularly in relation to language and learning, rapport and interpersonal skills and flexibility.

There was a mixture of both qualitative and quantitative evidence, with a smaller number of papers that provide perspectives without associated evidence. Most of the papers that contain specific evidence (52 out of a total of 57) contained findings which their authors claim to be confirmatory of some identified elements of the NLP model, or contained positive interpretations of evidence in relation to the effect on children, teachers and/or learners in general. A review of perspectives-type papers and articles (those which offered only opinion or theoretical analysis) (35) shows that 31 are positive in their support for the use of one aspect or another of NLP. This said, the depth, quality and extent of the evidence varied considerably across the literature from single case study evidence to more extended research with larger groups of participants. Alongside this, there was a wide spectrum in relation to what is considered evidence of effectiveness. To illustrate the width of evidence we have included publications that report on apparent evidence of impact as well as formal research studies. A visual map, by category and chronology, of the literature content can be found on pages 14 and 15.

As mentioned above, it was clear from the literature review that contrary to much popular opinion and some academic writing (that has not been based on a substantial literature review) there have been a number of publications on NLP that are supportive of its use in schools and education in general. In contrast, there have been few critical publications (only six of which contain empirical research evidence).

The majority of research papers and perspectives contain discussions about the use of NLP in classroom practice that result in a positive conclusion. Within these, there is a strong emphasis on the use of influential language patterns, awareness of using all sensory modalities in teachings and some discussion on the use of anchoring (see for example: Burton, 2004; Helm, 1991; Raja and Tien, 2009; Stanton, 1998; Tosey and Mathison, 2003; Thalgott, 1986)*. There is also an emerging literature on NLP and emotional, social and behavioural difficulties (Beaver, 1989; Bull, 2007; Esterbrook, 2006; Renwich, 2005; Squirrel, 2009)* and a growing number of publications on language and learning in general (e.g. Eckstein, 2004; Marcello, 2003; Mathison, 2004; Mathison and Tosey, 2008c)*.

Other notable strands of research include the use of NLP in leadership and leadership development (Churches, R. and West-Burnham, 2008; Hutchinson, Churches and Vitae, 2006; 2007; 2008; Young, 1995)*, strong and robust research into metaprogrammes and learning (Brown, 2002; 2003; Brown, 2004; Brown and Graff, 2004)* and perspectives on the use of NLP as a formal research methodology (Mathison and Tosey, 2008a; Mathison and Tosey, 2008b; Steinfield, T.R. and Ben-Avie, 2006)*. Other areas where multiple positive studies have taken place include: creativity and self-expression (Beeden, 2009; Ronne, 1998; Winch, 2005)* and NLP and e-learning (Ghaoui and Janvier, 2009; Sheridan, 2008; Zhang and Ward, 2004)*.

There have been studies that have looked at modelling (Day, 2008)*, the use of NLP with parents (Brandis, 1987; De Mirandi *et al.*, 1999; Hall *et al.*, 2005)*, NLP in higher education (Skinner and Croft, 2009)* and teacher professional identity (Dragovic, 2007)* and

2008 saw the First International NLP Research Conference at Surrey University (see Tosey (ed), 2009). Our literature review also identified original university based research supporting the use of the NLP 'visual' spelling strategy (Loiselle, 1985; Malloy, 1987; Malloy, 1989; Malloy, 1995)*, an area of NLP which is sometimes seen as controversial and which critics occasionally claim that there is no research evidence to support.

Only a small number of papers, from the 1980s, contain formal research evidence that is critical (Bradley, 1986; Cassiere and And, 1987; Fremder, 1986; Schleh, 1987; Semtner, 1986)*. Furthermore, the methodologies used in these are open to dispute – in most cases because of inaccurate application/interpretation of NLP techniques (see the extended literature review in the appendices for a discussion). This said there was also a wide variation in the quality of the methodologies applied in some of the confirmatory studies. However, so far, no critical education papers (since the 1980s) contain research evidence-based criticism that is the result of actual research studies and those critical papers and academic comments that do exist confine themselves to theoretical discussions and perspectives (Burton, 2007; Craft, 2001; Lisle, 2005; Marcus, J. and Choi, 1994)*. Wider criticisms of NLP although not specifically related to education (e.g. Heap, 1988; 2008; Roderique-Davies, 2009) are also discussed in the full review.

Most papers, as well as containing positive perspectives, contain supportive assertions in relation to findings (both qualitative and qualitative). This said the intention of the review (as is noted above) was not to carry out a full critical appraisal of the evidence as such but rather to document for the first time the full scope of the current literature. Looking across the literature several things became clear. Firstly, there is a tendency for NLP research papers to be self-referential, and especially not to reference earlier studies – perhaps because of the assumption that there is little other research. Furthermore, what is considered evidence of impact or a positive finding varies considerably, as does the depth and rigour of the evidence presented.

Again, we did not seek to limit the review to specific traditional domains within education (such as classroom practice). We took the view that, at this early stage in NLP's journey as an area beginning to be critically appraised and researched, it was more important to provide a map of the areas which could be of most interest to education researchers and others interested in this field of study. For this reason, and those discussed in more detail later, this review should only be considered to represent a preliminary set of findings. Despite these limitations we hope that the review will help future researchers to reference extant studies and perspectives, and to extend critical appraisal of these areas.

The full research paper, with Appendices, can be accessed on the CD-ROM.

3. Background to the teacher-led action research case studies

"The approach used was that the teachers should learn NLP by experience."

The origin of the research was an initial project instigated by John Carey (then Senior Inspector for Education in Durham Local Authority). This project, called the Durham Project, developed and delivered an NLP in Education learning programme with John and Kate Benson of META (an NLP training company) (for a report of this project see meta4education, 2006). The training covered some basic NLP approaches and techniques with 30 teachers, teaching assistants and authority advisory staff.

Following this (in 2008) John Carey secured funding from the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA) for a further round of NLP-based professional development. It was from this later project that all but one of the teachers involved in this case study research were drawn, the other teacher having taken part in a separate 'Leading Thinking' Continuing Professional Development offer to schools in Northumberland. All schools that took part in this project had demonstrated previous commitment to developing new and innovative ways of enabling and facilitating thinking for learning.

Each school nominated two teachers who would be willing to work together to build on their current understanding and practice by developing new attitudes, learning some new skills and undertaking a small-scale work-based learning project about the impact of those skills on the children in their care. None of the teachers involved had any prior experience of NLP. Thanks to financial support from the TDA, all participants were able take part at no charge, with a bursary to support supply costs, coaching, co-coaching opportunities, and practitioner research activities.

The four-day programme was arranged as follows:

- On the first two days, staff learned some basic NLP, and designed their research.
- They then undertook some initial research.
- During this time they also had access to a one-to-one coaching session with their course tutor.
- On the first morning of the second two days they reported on their findings, and during the rest of the time learned some more NLP skills.
- Teachers then wrote up their findings and those who wished went on to apply for professional recognition through the General Teaching Council for England (GTCE)'s Teacher Learning Academy.

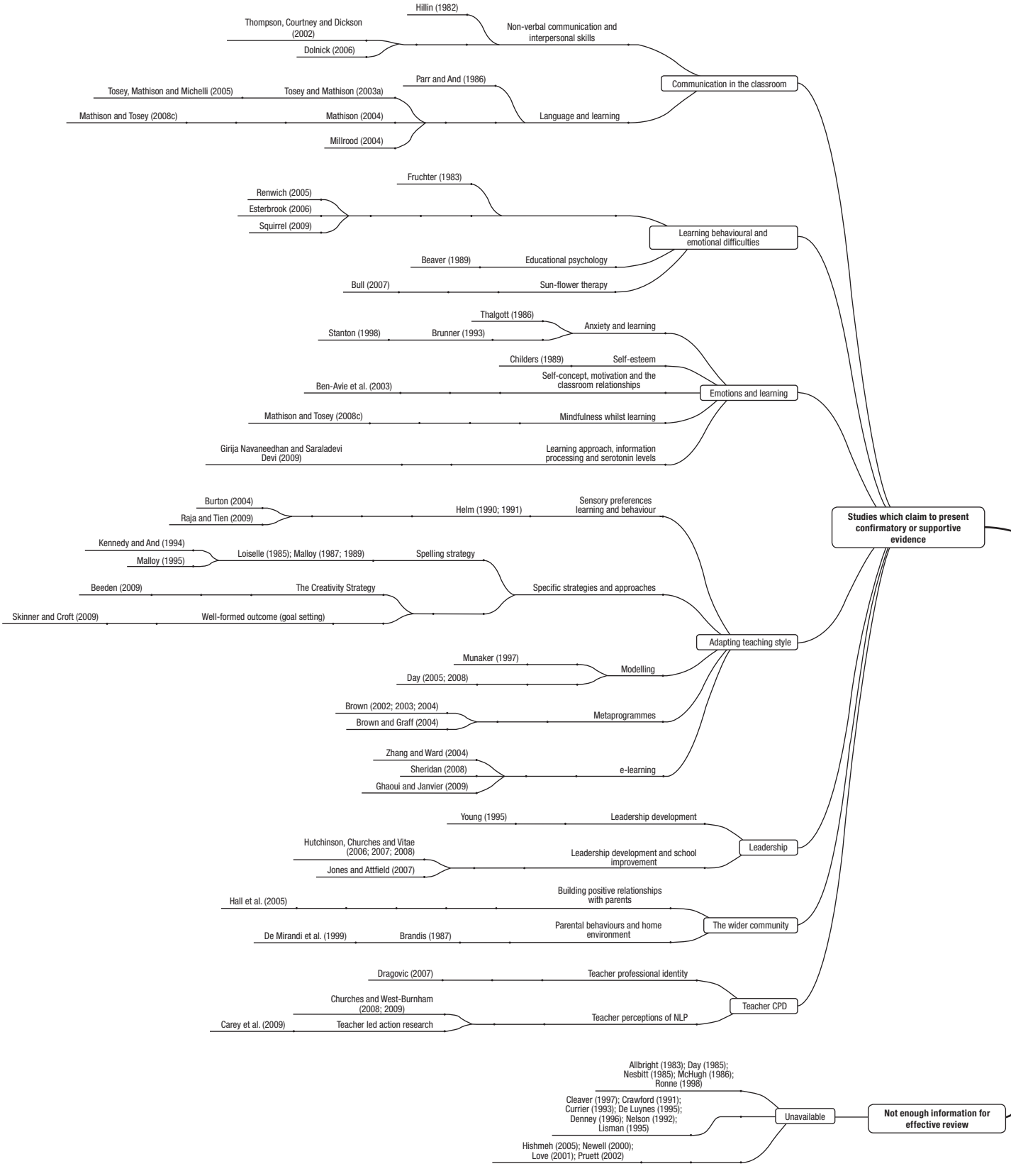
The approach used was that the teachers should learn NLP by experience. Whilst there was some common curriculum content (see below) the emphasis was on participants gaining a personalised experience of NLP in practice. The principal teaching approach was to model NLP practice, and coach each individual participant as they developed their knowledge, understanding and skills. Hence, although the 'curriculum' was the same for each of the three cohorts, the order of the content delivered was different, as was each cohort's learning experience.

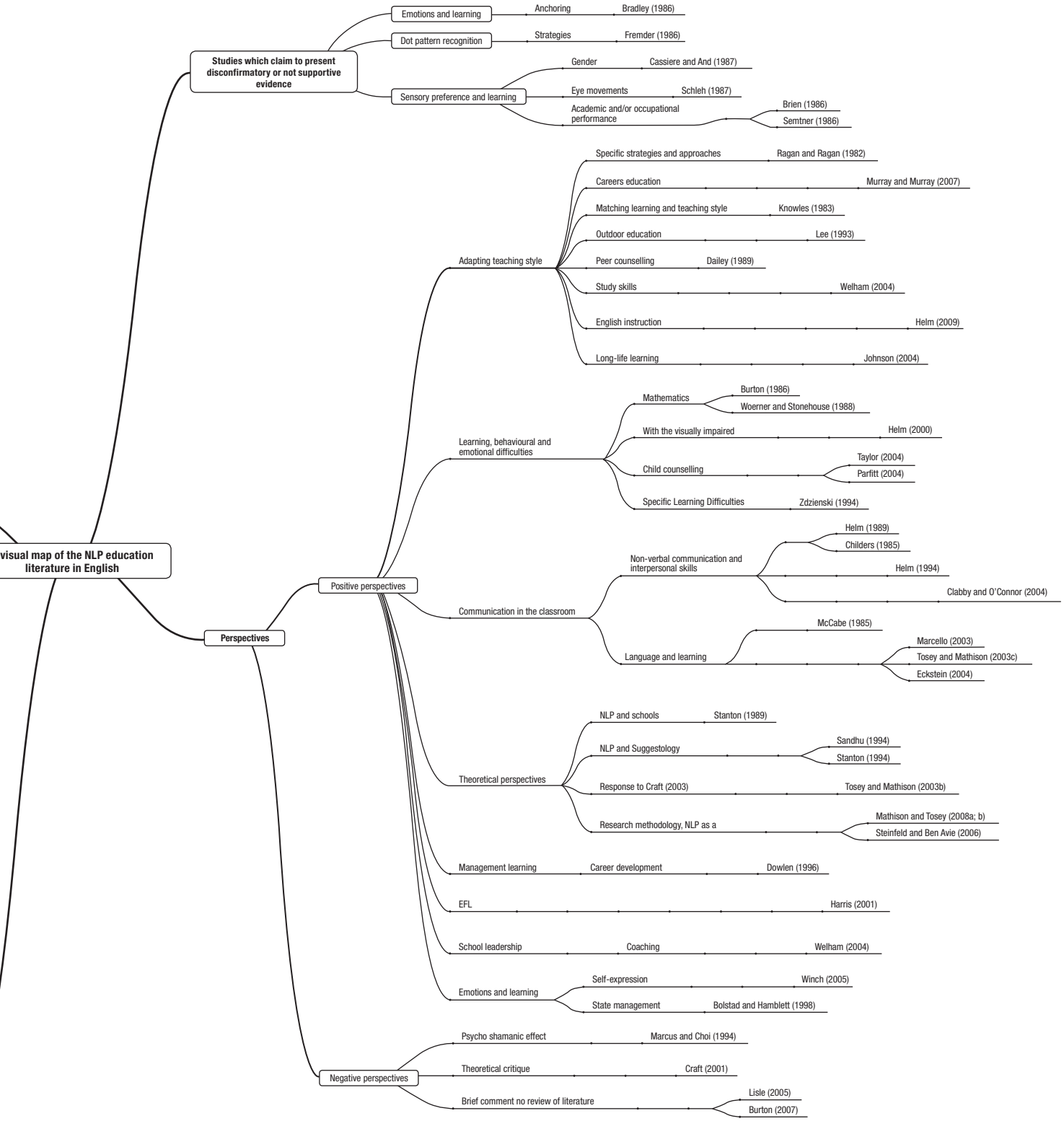
All participants experienced the following aspects of NLP:

- NLP Defined
- NLP Assumptions
- Well formed outcomes
- Eye accessing cues
- Modalities and Submodalities
- Anchoring
- Rapport – particularly through language
- Meta model questioning
- Milton model
- State management of self and others

For a general introduction to NLP in teaching see for example Churches and Terry (2007).

Map of the reviewed literature (Carey *et al.*, 2009) – showing research strands, topics and chronology




visual map of the NLP education literature in English
Perspectives
Positive perspectives
Studies which claim to present disconfirmatory or not supportive evidence
Emotions and learning
Anchoring
Bradley (1986)
Dot pattern recognition
Strategies
Fremder (1986)
Sensory preference and learning
Gender
Cassiere and And (1987)
Eye movements
Schleh (1987)
Academic and/or occupational performance
Brien (1986)
Semtner (1986)
Adapting teaching style
Specific strategies and approaches
Ragan and Ragan (1982)
Careers education
Murray and Murray (2007)
Matching learning and teaching style
Knowles (1983)
Outdoor education
Lee (1993)
Peer counselling
Dailey (1989)
Study skills
Welham (2004)
English instruction
Helm (2009)
Long-life learning
Johnson (2004)
Learning, behavioural and emotional difficulties
Mathematics
Burton (1986)
Woerner and Stonehouse (1988)
With the visually impaired
Helm (2000)
Child counselling
Taylor (2004)
Parfitt (2004)
Specific Learning Difficulties
Zdzienski (1994)
Communication in the classroom
Non-verbal communication and interpersonal skills
Helm (1989)
Childers (1985)
Helm (1994)
Clabby and O'Connor (2004)
Language and learning
McCabe (1985)
Marcello (2003)
Tosey and Mathison (2003c)
Eckstein (2004)
Theoretical perspectives
NLP and schools
Stanton (1989)
NLP and Suggestology
Sandhu (1994)
Stanton (1994)
Response to Craft (2003)
Tosey and Mathison (2003b)
Research methodology, NLP as a
Mathison and Tosey (2008a; b)
Steinfeld and Ben Avie (2006)
Management learning
Career development
Dowlen (1996)
EFL
Harris (2001)
School leadership
Coaching
Welham (2004)
Emotions and learning
Self-expression
Winch (2005)
State management
Bolstad and Hamblett (1998)
Negative perspectives
Psycho shamanic effect
Marcus and Choi (1994)
Theoretical critique
Craft (2001)
Brief comment no review of literature
Lisle (2005)
Burton (2007)

4. Methodology

"The Teacher Learning Academy is an innovative way of helping teachers improve their classroom practice – and gain professional recognition, at a national level, for doing so."

The design of the project was informed by the twin aims of helping teachers who had been involved in Northumberland Local Authority's 'Thinking for Learning' programme a few years ago to see how they might spread these approaches amongst colleagues and schools, and at the same time develop their professional influencing abilities using NLP. Both NLP and the 'Learning for Thinking' programme focus on the ways in which learning happens as a social process. The project encouraged participants to test, particularly, the use of influential language to see if such approaches helped to ensure that the children and young people involved were able to make and understand meaning and, as a result, were motivated to explore and learn more. John Carey and Robert Peers (Northumberland Local Authority) were keen to see if a marriage of NLP and such approaches could create a multiplier effect, stimulating the careers of the teachers and leading to further gains in children's learning.

One of the issues that frequently arises for teachers applying more experiential learning and active learning in the classroom is the greater demand placed on creating positive behaviour and a consistent emotional climate in which children feel safe and able to experiment and learn effectively. Evidence from the literature and the CfBT research by Richard Churches and John West-Burnham (Churches and West-Burnham, 2008)* suggested that NLP has much to offer in providing teachers with practical ways to improve their interpersonal skills as well as their intrapersonal (self and emotional management) capacities. Alongside this, there is evidence that NLP can be effective with individual children, and several of the teachers in this research applied their learning to the social, emotional and learning skills development of individual learners (see e.g. Bull, 2007; Childers, 1989; Renwich, 2005; Squirrel, 2009 for other examples in the literature)*. Finally, the training was targeted at pre-threshold teachers out of a desire to encourage distributed leadership. A first cohort was drawn from schools where this approach to leadership was evident in existing practice. The second cohort was created by open enrolment.

All participants were required to undertake a small-scale action research project, and to write up the outcomes of that project as an account of practice. To ensure a consistent approach, we chose to use the General Teaching Council of England (GTCE)'s Teacher Learning Academy (TLA) framework (GTCE, 2008a; 2008b) as a process structure. This meant that, should the teachers wish, they could submit their write-up to the TLA for professional recognition of their work. So far three teachers have submitted their work and achieved accreditation at Level 1. One teacher has taken this further and is currently engaged in a Masters programme at the University of Newcastle that is focused on the theory and practice of NLP in the primary classroom.

CfBT Education Trust and the Teacher Learning Academy

CfBT Education Trust was closely involved in the development of the TLA framework. More specifically, Dr Jeff Jones, Principal Consultant, CfBT Education Trust, helped develop and deliver the TLA verifier training materials.

The stated aims of the Teacher Learning Academy are as follows:

> *The Teacher Learning Academy is an innovative way of helping teachers improve their classroom practice – and gain professional recognition, at a national level, for doing so. By encouraging teachers to try new techniques or different approaches, it leads to higher standards of teaching and a wealth of new ideas that can be shared across the school, and beyond.*
>
> (GTCE, 2008a: 2)

To participate in the TLA individual teachers select a learning focus for study and research. They then look at research in their chosen subject area and work with a coach to plan a learning journey. This involves writing a proposed subject area focus, how they will research and what they think that they will find. They then apply their research focus and test their hypotheses sharing what they have

learned with their coach and other teachers. At the end of the process, teachers reflect on their practice and submit a TLA project and their findings. TLA verifiers carry out assessment and there are different levels of accreditation – with more advanced projects (Stages 3 or 4) being able to help teachers to achieve a Masters in Education (M.Ed) or the new Masters in Teaching and Learning.

A recent research evaluation of the TLA framework suggested that self-initiated, individualised CPD not only has an impact on individual careers but also has clear benefits for the wider school (Lord *et al.*, 2009).

> *For teachers, improvements or developments in their teaching practice and an enhanced capacity to reflect on practice were cited and evidenced most often. Actual professional or career development, developments in knowledge and understanding, developments in teachers' confidence and access to resources and materials were also frequently evident.*
>
> (Lord *et al.*, 2009: v)

This level of impact was also clear in the teacher case studies detailed below. At Stage 1 of the TLA, the intention is that teachers have an impact on what happens in their own classroom, while at Stage 2 the teachers' work is expected to impact on other colleagues. The expectation at Stages 3 and 4 is that impact will be felt on the school, on other schools, and on the wider professional community.

Limitations of the study

As a group of researchers with experience across a spectrum of qualitative and quantitative methodologies (e.g. from action research through to clinical experimental research into Vitamin D synthesis) we are aware of the limitations of this form of action research, and the criticisms that this type of teacher-led practitioner enquiry can be subjected to. In any research context it is important to avoid the risk of over-generalisation and this is perhaps particularly true in the case of small-scale practitioner-led action research in education (as is noted by Morris, 2009). Furthermore, we accept that this research was carried out over a relatively short time-scale and that in many ways the teachers who carried out the research were acting, in part, as 'interested parties' in that they were able to choose areas of study for themselves based on their personal enthusiasms for a particular area or areas of NLP that they had learned about.

We do, however, believe that the use of the Teacher Learning Academy framework as a starting point for this sort of research, is at least a partial and appropriate response to the criticism that practitioners can sometimes engage in research without sufficient familiarity with research methods (Carr and Kemmis, 1986). Several of the teachers have so far gained TLA accreditation and a number of others are beginning the process. We acknowledge the debates that have existed for many years around action research generally as a process (Lewis, 1987; Winter, 1987) and particularly the criticism that it can lead to a lack of self-critique (Gibson, 1985). We also accept that there are very different theoretical perspectives on what is and what is not action research (e.g. Elliot, 1981; McNiff, 1988; Noffke and Somekh, 2009; Zeichner, 1993) and that we have in many ways taken the simplest and least complex stance on the usefulness of practitioner-enquiry (Mills, 2003), recognising that the range of approaches and styles of research in this area make it difficult to judge the relative quality of findings (as is noted by Whitehead and Lomax, 1987).

In spite of the above we maintain that there is a strong rationale for documenting some small-scale teacher-led studies in the context of CfBT Education Trust's ongoing use of and interest in the area of NLP, particularly as a next step on from the successful pilots and post-event evaluations on the Fast Track teaching programme (Churches and West-Burnham, 2008; 2009)*. Churches and West-Burnham's paper gave a broad perspective on teacher views about how NLP could be useful. This paper therefore sought to take this understanding further by evaluating the benefits as perceived by a group of teachers in their classrooms and over a more extended time period.

In essence therefore this publication claims to show evidence of teachers' perceptions of

the results of applying NLP in practice. It is of interest precisely because we have asked the teachers to tell their stories in a way that other teachers will appreciate and can identify with. It does not in any sense claim to prove that NLP works per se. We also acknowledge that there is no independent validation of the teachers' own findings. However, we believe that there is now sufficient evidence for further study and particularly studies which involve larger groups of children and which more effectively control for a number of potentially confounding and/or undermining variables – so that findings can be more easily and confidently applied to wider contexts.

5. Teacher evidence in the 24 case studies – a summary

"Through our discussions we have observed that NLP enables students to engage and contribute usefully to lessons."

The complete case study write-ups can be found on the accompanying CD-ROM, or if you are accessing the pdf version of this research in the appendices. Those readers who are unfamiliar with some of the personal development and therapeutic techniques taught in NLP training may find it helpful to first read the Glossary at the end of this section which describes the specific areas discussed in the research. Readers who wish to explore NLP terminology in more detail may want to refer to Churches and Terry (2007).

Teachers were given a choice as to which parts of the NLP training they focused on for their case study write-ups. However, as is noted above, all the teachers were trained in a number of areas of NLP and most made use of a wider range of learning than has been included in the actual research. Most teachers focused on whole classroom evidence, others on individual children, and a few of the case studies contain evidence for both. For a summary of the different school contexts and areas of reported beneficial impact see the table below (pages 24–26).

Some case studies targeted an evaluation of a single technique (e.g. Case Study 3 by Rachael Coull which focused on the use of anchoring) whilst others looked at the effect of a wide range of areas – as in the case study by Simon Potter (Case Study 2) which discusses: anchoring, meta model questioning, Milton model language patterns, non-verbal communication, rapport, submodalities and the use of the well formed outcome process.

Teachers were positive in their comments across the full age range from Nursery classes to Year 13 students. There is also a spread of contexts from small rural primary school to large urban secondary school. Although there are some variations in the extent to which teachers found training in NLP useful, all of the case studies below indicate evidence in relation to either the development of interpersonal skills (the ability to communicate with and influence others) or intrapersonal capacity (self-management, personal capacity and the management of emotions).

In many cases teachers have also reported significant change in the behaviour of both individual children and classes. Even where one teacher had been unable to note specific effects on class behaviour (such as in Case Study 8 by Stephanie Kidd) they still nonetheless were able to identify improvements in their own feelings about their capacity to deal with classroom situations. Typical commentary includes things such as the following by Joanna Dobson and Helen Fuhr:

> *Through our discussions we have observed that NLP enables students to engage and contribute usefully to lessons. Students have been able to explain themselves more clearly and are able to problem solve and bring themselves to suitable and workable solutions through guidance and communication with the teacher. There has been a significant improvement in the levels of confidence shown by pupils in the classroom and this has led to increased motivation which has manifested itself both in improved contribution and work rate in class and improved quality of homework.*
>
> Joanna Dobson and Helen Fuhr,
> St Benet Biscop High School

As well as enhancing learning and behaviour in the classroom a number of the teachers reported benefits to their wider professional development, coaching skills and development as leaders. For example, Julie Newton (Case Study 12) writes that:

> *… it has enabled me to extend my knowledge and understanding of leadership, including how to use language to positively influence and motivate people and contribute to their wellbeing. And finally, it has helped me in both my professional and personal life by introducing me to useful strategies to experiment with when faced with situations that I find challenging.*
>
> Julie Newton, Corbridge First School

> *Once a week we have a circle time for 'Star of the Week', when a magic balloon with someone's name is passed around for the children to put all of their good thoughts in.*

Although a small number of the teachers felt that they needed more time to evaluate the impact fully (e.g. Case Study 16) nonetheless they were still able to report initial and immediate benefits. Some like Mark Phillips (Case Study 9) reported significant impact suggesting that he 'can understand the children I teach on a whole new level'. Similarly Janice Woods (Case Study 20) reported that 'the impact of the support received has been phenomenal and life changing'.

Benefits in relation to the use of anchoring (an element of NLP which is described in NLP training as being related to the notion of classical conditioning (Pavlov, 1927)) as a way of giving covert classroom management instructions (e.g. always using the same piece of music to indicate the time to tidy up) are discussed in the case studies by Michell Whall (Case Study 4), Stephanie Kidd (Case Study 8), Tracey Burns (Case Study 14), Louise Lightley (Case Study 18) and Nigel Maddison (Case Study 19). Tracey Burns, in particular, took her use of anchoring further to support creating the right learning environment and writes that:

> *Once a week we have a circle time for 'Star of the Week', when a magic balloon with someone's name is passed around for the children to put all of their good thoughts in. The balloon then gets so full of good thoughts that it bursts and the name of the 'Star' comes out. I choose a piece of music to play so that when the children come in from lunch and hear it they know that they don't sit in their usual place on the carpet but make a circle on it, very quietly, ready to find out who the new star is. This works really well, I don't need to say a thing and it is wonderful to see.*
>
> Tracey Burns, Mowbray First School

Rachael Coull, in another case study on the use of anchoring, discusses the extensive use of a range of spatial anchoring techniques, to enhance teacher presentation skills. Nicola Hurst (Case Study 11) further discusses such approaches and writes that:

> *Spatial anchoring has exceeded my expectations regarding how well it has worked. My classroom is calmer and more settled without the need to raise my voice to get pupils' attention and I no longer get a half-hearted response when I want them to halt their activities.*
>
> Nicola Hurst, Northburn Primary School

As far as we are aware from our literature review, the evidence across these case studies represents the first of its kind in relation to the use of anchoring to manage behaviours in the classroom and in relation to whole class 'conditioning of responses'. Although, the use of signals for attention frequently appears in behaviour management training, NLP appears to offer significant insights into the need to be consistent in relation to the stimulus used, its context and the potential of associating that stimulus with a particular emotional state rather than just behaviour.

Anchoring with individuals to help children manage their feelings and emotions (by, for example, making use of positive past experiences and associating them with a future action) is also discussed in Case Study 12 by Julie Newton and Case Study 21 by Erica Tait. Several specific examples of impact appear in Erica's research, for example she writes that:

> *Anchoring has enabled child A to express her emotions much more at home, and has given her the confidence to tackle new or uncomfortable situations in a positive way as opposed to how she coped before. Child B is now much more aware of his own capabilities and is much more engaged at school.*
>
> Erica Tait, Malvins Close First School

In particular, Case Study 5 (by Joanna Dobson and Helen Fuhr) notes the benefit of using anchoring to support the alleviation of test anxiety – an application of NLP also supported in the literature (see e.g. Stanton, 1998)*.

The impact of paying attention to non-verbal communication (such as voice tone and body language) are discussed in Case Study 4 by Michell Whall. Gillian Hogg (Case Study 10) similarly points to the benefits of such approaches in relation to the enhancement of relationships with other members of staff as well as children, and makes specific reference to the benefits of developing sensory acuity and the observation of eye accessing cues (an area of NLP which is beginning to attract

It has demonstrated to me that the use of simple but effective questioning techniques can dramatically affect the behaviour and attitude of pupils.

more robust research than in the past (see Diamantopoulos, Woolley and Spann, 2009)*.

The use of influential language patterns to support both learning and behaviour is viewed consistently as having had an impact. As in the literature review evidence, the benefits of understanding the structure and use of influential language patterns and suggestion, as derived from studies of hypnosis and therapy (known as the Milton model in NLP), emerged across most of the case studies. Some of the research (such as Case Study 1, by Fiona MacGregor and Robin Charlton) indicates wider benefits as well as usefulness in the classroom.

In relation to learning and teaching there is evidence of positive behaviour change with children in the case studies by Simon Potter (Case Study 2), Joanna Dobson and Helen Fuhr (Case Study 5), Nina Blanchet (Case Study 6), Emma Volpe (Case Study 7), Stephanie Kidd (Case Study 8), Mark Phillips (Case Study 9), Gillian Hogg (Case Study 10) and Emma Loader (Case Study 24). The case study by Laura Holland (Case Study 13), for example, records the impact that she suggests that even very small changes in language can have. Other teachers have noted the effect that using, for example, influential language and other NLP techniques for state management has had on themselves as well as on the children that they teacher. Louise Causer in Case Study 16 writes:

> *… the effect upon my teaching and classroom management is significant and I can now create the way I want to feel using designer states. I am more relaxed and confident in class and as a result the children appear more settled and thus we had a more positive environment.*
>
> Louise Causer, Coulson Park First School

There is evidence of impact in relation to the use of influential language one-to-one with previously challenging students. Jaqueline Lorimer (Case Study 22) integrated both Milton model and meta model questioning work with anchoring, non-verbal communication and visualisation to bring about significant change for one particular student. In her case study she reports that she is:

> *… delighted with the results of my efforts and am fascinated by the power of NLP. Based on the difference I have been able to make to this child's learning, I am certain to use and develop these techniques with many others in the future.*
>
> Jaqueline Lorimer, Broomley First School

NLP language applied in a coaching context to the classroom similarly resulted in examples of impact that are discussed by Gillian Hogg in Case Study 10. As well as having been shown to have a impact in the classroom positive influential language patterns were used by Ian McDuff to support the mentoring of challenging students in a pastoral context (Case Study 15). Ian found that:

> *It has demonstrated to me that the use of simple but effective questioning techniques can dramatically affect the behaviour and attitude of pupils. Seeing the success with an individual pupil over a period of 3 days, I continue the use of positive questioning within the classroom environment. It continues to demonstrate a powerful means of influencing pupil behaviour and attitude.*
>
> Ian McDuff, Astley Community High School

Diane Murphy, in Case Study 23, reports similar findings.

One piece of research sought to apply the concept of eye accessing cues and the notion of visual spelling strategy to the teaching of reading. In doing so Zoe Ryan (Case Study 17) reported benefits in applying this strategy to children who previously had limited flexibility and a largely ineffective phonetic approach to reading, findings which parallel the research evidence into visual spelling and eye accessing cues at De Moncton University in Canada and at the University of Utah (see Loiselle, 1985; Malloy, 1987; 1989; 1995)*. Janice Woods (Case Study 20) reported similar findings, in relation to the NLP Spelling Strategy and writes that:

> *The impact on pupils in terms of their learning and behaviour has been brilliant. The child I used as my research target improved her spelling ability and became more confident.*

"A number of case studies make use of visualisation and/or the well formed outcome process to help improve student motivation and learning."

She began to use the way she recalled her spellings to help her remember other areas of the curriculum and her parents were very pleased with her progress.

Janice Woods, Bedlington West End First School

A number of case studies make use of visualisation and/or the well formed outcome process to help improve student motivation and learning (e.g. Case Study 7 by Emma Volpe, Case Study 9 by Mark Phillips and Case Study 21 by Erica Tait). Joanna Dobson and Helen Fuhr (Case Study 5) describe using an NLP-derived reward strategy to support a gifted and talented student who was not making progress. Joanna Dobson and Helen Fuhr (Case Study 5) used a relaxation visualisation to help with examination and anxiety as well as general class behaviour and one teacher found the use of visualisation activities to support memory useful (see Case Study 9 by Mark Phillips). Extending and enhancing the use of visualisation with several other NLP techniques, Julie Newton (Case Study 12) describes how she successfully combined visualisation, anchoring and storytelling to create an effective classroom climate at the beginning of lessons. As well as the well formed outcome process, Mark Phillips (Case Study 9) made use of submodalities in his research, finding benefits in combining NLP techniques. Gillian Hogg (Case Study 11) also made use of submodalities and in Case Study 10 discusses their use as a way of improving recall (when used in memory visualisations) with Year 13 students. The benefits of submodality work can similarly be found in Erica Tait's study (Case Study 21).

None of the teacher reported negative effects or issues as a result of making use of the NLP approaches that they had been taught.

Table 1: Summary of the teacher-led action research case studies

Case Study	Title	Teacher/s	School	Phase	Areas of NLP which were evaluated and which the teachers described as having had specific positive impact*												Example from teacher's view of impact
					Anchoring	Eye accessing cues	Meta model questioning	Milton model language	Non-verbal communication	Rapport	Relationship rewards	Sensory acuity	Spelling strategy	Storytelling and metaphor	Submodalities	Visualisation	Well formed outcomes	
1	Confidence and Attitudes	Fiona MacGregor/ Robin Charlton	Stobhillgate First School	Primary				●								●	●	*'Both teachers recognised that they have become more observant of other people's behaviour and language, and this has led to more reflection on their own actions and language.'*
2	Improving Attainment	Simon Potter	Tweedmouth Community Middle School	Middle school	●		●	●	●	●					●		●	*'As a result of this sort of training I now feel that I understand the children I teach on a whole new level, and can engage them at their level more effectively.'*
3	Improving Behaviour	Rachael Coull	Northburn Primary School	Primary	●													*'Throughout the project there has been a great positive impact on the staff and children. Routine tasks throughout the session are carried out in a more focused manner…'*
4	Influencing Behaviour	Michell Whall	Astley Community High School	Secondary	●				●									*'My classroom practice has changed considerably since the NLP techniques are easily applied and become natural behaviour very quickly. The impacts were quick, and plain to see.'*
5	It's Good to Talk	Joanna Dobson/ Helen Fuhr	St Benet Biscop High School	Secondary	●		●	●		●	●					●		*'NLP has made us more conscious of the words we use when talking to students … positive reinforcement and positive, encouraging language has been extremely successful…'*
6	Language Patterns at Work	Nina Blanchet	Sele First School	Primary				●										*'I have particularly enjoyed using the 'Teaching Influence' cards and have been amazed at the impact they have had.'*
7	Middle School – Language	Emma Volpe	Allendale Middle School	Middle school				●									●	*'There is no doubt that over the course of a few weeks a more positive learning environment was created as a result of the project.'*
8	More Positive	Stephanie Kidd	Coulson Park First School	Primary	●			●										*'Children seem to be more willing to try if I invoke their curiosity and embed in them the belief that they can achieve – and already have achieved.'*

Table 1: Summary of the teacher-led action research case studies *(continued)*

Case Study	Title	Teacher/s	School	Phase	Areas of NLP which were evaluated and which the teachers described as having had specific positive impact*													Example from teacher's view of impact
					Anchoring	Eye accessing cues	Meta model questioning	Milton model language	Non-verbal communication	Rapport	Relationship rewards	Sensory acuity	Spelling strategy	Storytelling and metaphor	Submodalities	Visualisation	Well formed outcomes	
9	Motivation and Facilitating Access	Mark Phillips	Tweedmouth Community Middle School	Middle school	●		●								●	●	●	*'I have noticed a lot more responses from children who have struggled to address the curriculum, and children with motivation issues. Some children have also accessed some of the NLP skills to develop personally.'*
10	Noticing and Coaching	Gillian Hogg	Duchess's Community High School	Secondary		●		●				●						*'… when I took the time to use language in a more considered and constructive way, the effect on students was at times almost instant…'*
11	Positive Attitude	Nicola Hurst	Northburn Primary School	Primary	●													*'My classroom is calmer and more settled, without the need to raise my voice to get pupils' attention.'*
12	Ready to Learn	Julie Newton	Corbridge First School	Primary	●									●		●		*'Children are much calmer, focused and receptive to learning at the start of whole class sessions…'*
13	Small Change, Big Impact	Laura Holland	Mowbray First School	Primary				●										*'… impacted on all children with regard to their motivation and pride in how they responded and presented their work.'*
14	Sounds Good	Tracey Burns	Mowbray First School	Primary	●													*'This* [anchoring] *works really well, I don't need to say a thing and it is wonderful to see.'*
15	State and Language 1	Ian McDuff	Astley Community High School	Secondary				●										*'On returning to school, pupil X has become a more confident person… He appears to have lost a lot of his negativity with regard to school. His attendance level has also improved.'*
16	State and Language 2	Louise Causer	Coulson Park First School	Primary	●			●										*'… the most significant aspect of my research work was positive talk. This whole area had the most effect both on my own teaching and on the children's learning.'*

Table 1: Summary of the teacher-led action research case studies *(continued)*

Case Study	Title	Teacher/s	School	Phase	Areas of NLP which were evaluated and which the teachers described as having had specific positive impact*													Example from teacher's view of impact
					Anchoring	Eye accessing cues	Meta model questioning	Milton model language	Non-verbal communication	Rapport	Relationship rewards	Sensory acuity	Spelling strategy	Storytelling and metaphor	Submodalities	Visualisation	Well formed outcomes	
17	Teaching Reading	Zoe Ryan	West End First School	Primary		●							●					*'The findings from this research have influenced my approach to teaching reading in that it has shown how important it is to use a variety of techniques to include all learners.'*
18	Thank You for the Music 1	Louise Lightley	Wansbeck First School	Primary	●													*'There is a positive atmosphere within my classroom and I feel that this has helped the children and me to work effectively and happily.'*
19	Thank You for the Music 2	Nigel Maddison	Wansbeck First School	Primary	●													*'Over time the pupils responded to their peers and all reduced the time it took them to be ready and settled.'*
20	The Eyes Have It	Janice Woods	Bedlington West End First School	Primary		●		●					●			●		*'This has been brilliant to use in the classroom as my children have responded very favourably and even parents noticed a change in the way children responded.'*
21	Visualisation and Anchors	Erica Tait	Malvins Close First School	Primary	●										●	●		*'As a teacher I have become a great deal more confident when dealing with difficult children or situations, and I believe this is solely due to the experience I have had using NLP methods.'*
22	Wide Ranging Approach	Jaqueline Lorimer	Broomley First School	Primary	●		●	●	●							●		*'He is now a much more confident boy who takes pride in his work. His alertness in class has greatly improved…'*
23	Words that Work	Diane Murphy	Duchess's Community High School	Secondary				●										*'… the vast majority of students have become much more motivated, attitudes have changes and engagement with the subject has increased.'*
24	Yes, Yes, Yes	Emma Loader	Corbridge First School	Primary				●										*'The class also seemed calmer and more certain of what was expected of them. As a result, I have started using this language pattern in my everyday teaching and am still reaping the benefits today.'*

The full teacher case studies can be found on the CD-ROM (or, if you are reading the PDF version of the research, in the appendices).

6. Wider benefits and impact of the project

"Schools reported wider benefits from using NLP in relation to improving the quality of teaching and learning for students."

A key driver of the research project was the desire to facilitate teachers' reflective practice, and to share the learning derived from that reflection within and beyond their local education community. The design of the programme sought to develop a community of practice and participants were encouraged to co-coach in their school-based pairs, and to maintain contact with other members of the group. We believe that this proved to be a key contributor to the success of the project. In addition teachers were encouraged to use an online forum created specifically for members of the programme although they accessed this with varying degrees of commitment, and coaching and co-coaching face-to-face were generally perceived as being more beneficial.

Schools reported wider benefits from using NLP in relation to improving the quality of teaching and learning for students. This was not just because of the strategies themselves but also because the teachers using them became more effective champions, gaining confidence about their own skill and understanding. A number of participants consistently shared many of the techniques they learned (such as engaging and motivating students, effective communication skills, improved tutoring) with their peers in schools. Work has begun to demonstrate impact in relation to raising standards of achievement as well as on helping schools raise levels of emotional well-being in their staff and pupils.

The evidence in the case studies in combination with the experience of the trainers and coaches clearly suggests that this project had a significant impact for the teachers and the schools involved and in many ways can be said to have led to evidence at the sort of higher levels of teacher CPD that have been argued for by writers such as Guskey (1994; 2000) and others (Goodall, 2005). Specifically, Guskey (2000) suggests that the evaluation of impact can be viewed at five different levels:

1. participant reaction
2. participant learning
3. organisational support and change
4. participant use of new knowledge and skills
5. pupil learning outcomes

Frost and Durrant (2003) similarly argue that the outcomes of CPD should be seen not only in terms of professional development for individuals, but also in the extent to which there is an impact on pupils' learning, on colleagues' learning, and on organisational learning.

An important contribution made by Guskey is in helping to identify how educators can begin to focus on 'the bottom line' and what constitutes pupil outcomes (Level 5). Ideas that are being increased applied to education research (see Table 2, e.g. Earley and Bubb, 2004).

The most significant impacts are present where CPD has had an impact on pupil learning outcomes. Looking across the 24 case studies it is possible to identify elements of Level 4 and 5 impact across nearly all of the case studies with some demonstrating significant benefits in relation to pupil learning outcomes (particularly those which describe an individual student one-to-one case study) – see the table below on pages 28 and 29.

All of the case studies demonstrated levels of impact at one of the three highest levels (Organisational support and change (Level 3); Participant use of new knowledge and skills (Level 4); Pupil learning outcomes (Level 5)) with the vast majority demonstrating impact at Level 4, Level 5 or both of these. It was less common for the studies to show impact at Level 3; however, this may well have been because of the short timescales over which the research project ran. Also the project aimed to build a community of practice between the teachers in the various schools rather than in the schools themselves. This said, a number of the studies talk about the intention to move to engaging in school improvement at this organisational level in the near future.

We believe that this level of impact was the result of two factors:

- the nature of NLP as a set of strategies and techniques

Table 2: 5 Levels of Professional Development Evaluation – adapted from Earley and Bubb (2004)

Level 1: **Participants' reactions**	By evaluating **reactions**, you find out if participants enjoyed the training, if the training environment was suitable and comfortable, and if the trainers were capable and credible i.e. what did participants think and feel about the training?
Level 2: **Participants' learning**	By evaluating **learning**, you determine the extent to which trainers have changed participants' attitudes, and/or improved their knowledge, and/or increased their skills.
Level 3: **Organisation support and change**	By evaluating **organisation support and change**, you determine the success of the school in supporting any CPD efforts.
Level 4: **Participants' use of new knowledge and skills**	By evaluating **participants' use of new knowledge and skills**, you determine if the trainees are using or transferring the newly acquired knowledge, skills and behaviours in the job context i.e. what behaviour changed because people took part in the training?
Level 5: **Pupil learning outcomes**	By evaluating **pupil learning outcomes**, you focus on the 'bottom line'.

COGNITIVE	AFFECTIVE	PSYCHOMOTOR
Performance and achievement	**Attitudes, beliefs and dispositions**	**Skills, behaviours and practices**
• pupil attainment • knowledge and understanding • exam results, grades, test scores	• changes in attitude • improved study habits • better predisposed towards subjects • better attendance • pupils' self-concepts greater • confidence as learners accept responsibility for actions and behaviours	• classroom behaviour • homework completion rates • participation in activities e.g. lunchtime and after-school clubs • retention and drop-out rates • healthier eating habits • reading more outside school • more active in their learning • engaged more in classroom discussion

- the structuring of the research within the TLA framework.

In particular, it is possible to note significant benefit to pupil outcomes in the areas of affective development, although there is some initial evidence in relation to improvements in attainment, knowledge and understanding. Specifically, there is evidence of impact in relation to: positive changes in attitude, better predisposition towards subjects, improved self-concept and better acceptance of responsibility for actions and behaviours. There is also evidence for improved classroom behaviour, pupils being more active in their learning and more engagement in classroom discussion.

Table 3: Levels of impact in each of the case studies and examples from the teacher commentary

Case Study	Title	Evidence of impact at:					Examples of teacher commentary in relation to the highest levels of impact described
		Level 1 – Participant reaction	Level 2 – Participant learning	Level 3 – Organisational support and change	Level 4 – Participant use of new knowledge and skills	Level 5 – Pupil learning outcomes	
1	Confidence and Attitudes	●	●		●	●	*'… this planned approach (before speaking) showed positive and mostly immediate benefits in the attitudes and beliefs of the pupils; additionally the teachers both became more reflective about their own practice.'*
2	Improving Attainment	●	●		●	●	*'The use of submodalities, and meta model questioning in an English lesson led to all pupils producing an excellent piece of creative writing using personification.'*
3	Improving Behaviour	●	●	●	●	●	*'The main benefit of this technique is that the children appear to calm down more quickly after an incident and through structured questioning and discussion, are able to resolve conflict.'*
4	Influencing Behaviour	●	●		●	●	*'The lesson progressed well and the pupils attained all the learning objectives set (unheard of for this class) since I did not have to repeat myself over and over.'*
5	It's Good to Talk	●	●	●	●	●	*'Our focus student has met all the objectives set out in the project. Her work rate and concentration have been consistently excellent and the level of work she has produced both in lessons and at home has been of a consistently high standard.'*
6	Language Patterns at Work	●	●		●		*'I was able to give examples of what I had done in the classroom, which my colleagues enjoyed and were able to relate to.'*
7	Middle School – Language	●	●		●	●	*'They were proud of their achievements and more engaged with the subject. It was particularly pleasing to hear this from male pupils as raising standards and improving motivation amongst boys was one of the key areas of focus…'*
8	More Positive	●	●		●		*'Although there have been no major differences … there have been small yet significant changes. Children seem to be more willing to try if I invoke their curiosity and embed in them the belief that they can achieve – and already have achieved.'*
9	Motivation and Facilitating Access	●	●	●	●		*'… all the learning that has taken place has been really successful, and I know it will continue to be so as my practice develops, and we work towards a whole school approach to the use of NLP.'*
10	Noticing and Coaching	●	●		●	●	*'My main observed impacts on students were that when I took the time to use language in a more considered and constructive way, the effect on students was at times almost instant…'*
11	Positive Attitude	●	●		●	●	*'Spatial anchoring has exceeded my expectations regarding how well it has worked. My classroom is calmer and more settled without the need to raise my voice…'*
12	Ready to Learn	●	●		●	●	*'Children are much calmer, focused and receptive to learning at the start of whole class sessions and a quick wave of the magic wand is a great visual aid to remind the children of what is expected of them.'*

Table 3: Levels of impact in each of the case studies and examples from the teacher commentary *(continued)*

Case Study	Title	Evidence of impact at:					Examples of teacher commentary in relation to the highest levels of impact described
		Level 1 – Participant reaction	Level 2 – Participant learning	Level 3 – Organisational support and change	Level 4 – Participant use of new knowledge and skills	Level 5 – Pupil learning outcomes	
13	Small Change, Big Impact	●	●		●	●	*'I found I had a different child in my class, one who was motivated and eager to produce good work; and a child who took pride in what he did.'*
14	Sounds Good	●	●		●	●	*'… when the children come in from lunch and hear it they know that they don't sit in their usual place on the carpet but make a circle on it, very quietly, ready to find out who the new star is. This works really well, I don't need to say a thing and it is wonderful to see.'*
15	State and Language 1	●	●		●	●	*'Without the NLP training, my mentoring of pupil X would not have been as successful. It has demonstrated to me that the use of simple but effective questioning techniques can dramatically affect the behaviour and attitude of pupils.'*
16	State and Language 2	●	●		●	●	*'From a personal point of view the most significant aspect of my research work was positive talk. This whole area had the most effect both on my own teaching and on the children's learning.'*
17	Teaching Reading	●	●	●	●	●	*'… I have found it can have a significant impact on both my own and my pupils' understanding. I then plan to continue to disseminate my training within school.'*
18	Thank You for the Music 1	●	●	●	●	●	*'I have had the chance to observe the children closely throughout this research time and I believe there has been a significant change in their behaviours around the classroom.'*
19	Thank You for the Music 2	●	●		●	●	*'By using the music at a specific time a definite impact was made as the amount of time wasted at the end of the day was substantially reduced.'*
20	The Eyes Have It	●	●		●	●	*'The child I used as my research target improved her spelling ability and became more confident.'*
21	Visualisation and Anchors	●	●		●	●	*'Anchoring has enabled Child A to express her emotions much more at home, and has given her the confidence to tackle new or uncomfortable situations in a positive way as opposed to how she coped before.'*
22	Wide Ranging Approach	●	●		●	●	*'The meta model made it difficult for him to be defensive about his sleep habits and he was more open to suggestion as a result. He was able to give his own opinion and listen not only to mine but also to those of his peers.'*
23	Words that Work	●	●		●	●	*'The impact on the students has been significant – both on individuals and on classes as a whole. When I have applied the Milton model and Yes sets the vast majority of students have become much more motivated…'*
24	Yes, Yes, Yes	●	●		●	●	*'… the children were far more focused, the volume in the class was lower and the work they produced of a better quality.'*

The full teacher case studies can be found on the CD-ROM (or, if you are reading the PDF version of the research, in the appendices).

7. Summary and general conclusions about NLP and current thinking in education

"Many popular educational programmes claim to be 'brain-based', despite pleas from the neuroscience community that these neuromyths do not have a basis in scientific evidence about the brain."

In relation to NLP being incorporated into teacher thinking and professional practice the genie is now well and truly out of the bottle. This has been particularly evident since over 2,000 training places in courses including NLP have been given to teachers as part of the Fast Track teaching programme (Churches and West-Burnham, 2008; 2009)*. By the end of the programme (July 2009), nearly 1,000 of these involved the completion of an INLPTA (International NLP Trainers Association) accredited 30-hour training programme (approximately 1 in 170[6] of all teachers who were in the their first 9 years of teaching in England). There is now, as well, an emerging strand of peer reviewed education research activity – see for example papers from the *First International Research Conference on NLP* at Surrey University in June 2008 (Beeden, 2009; Churches and West-Burnham, 2009; Squirrel, 2009)*. The conference also included a number of poster sessions on completed or ongoing PhD research. This emergence of interest in research into NLP as a product, philosophy and/or in relation to the effectiveness of its practice is not however unique to education as is noted by Tosey and Mathison in the first critical academic appraisal of NLP (Tosey and Mathison, 2009) and by others (e.g. Wake, 2008).

We believe that the initial research evidence in our literature review and popular book review requires those involved using NLP in education to re-conceptualise what they do. In particular, it is important to avoid the so-called 'neuro-myth' trap that other non-NLP applied thinking about the brain, mind and learning has fallen into in recent years (see the evidence from the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Scientific Research in Learning and Education for a discussion of the challenges (Institute for the Future of the Mind, 2007; TLRP, 2007)). Geake, for example, notes that

> *Many popular educational programmes claim to be 'brain-based', despite pleas from the neuroscience community that these neuromyths do not have a basis in scientific evidence about the brain.*
>
> (Geake, 2008: 123).

Specifically, Geake (2008) is critical of VAK learning styles, left and right-brain thinking, multiple intelligences and the idea that we only use 10% of our brain some of the time.

Such conflicts between the scientific community and practitioner activity arise in teacher pedagogy, in part, because of inaccurate use of terminology in teacher continuing professional development and training, lack of research evidence and poor application. It is essential to ensure, where appropriate, a better alignment with the scientific literature on learning and its language (see e.g. Blakemore and Frith, 2005; Geake and Cooper, 2003; Geake, 2005). Bearing in mind, of course, that new evidence is always emerging, as is demonstrated by the more recent evidence about visual and verbal cognitive style and brain functioning (Kraemer, Rosenberg and Thompson-Schill, 2009) discussed in the extended literature review. For a fuller discussion about VAK and the use of these terms in NLP see the final section of the extended literature review (in the appendices or on the CD-ROM.)

In the case of a number of NLP approaches there appears to be growing evidence to support its impact and/or at least the perception of its effectiveness. Whether the reasons for that effectiveness are described in the right way is perhaps the issue. For example, we believe that the qualitative research evidence suggests that there is much that is useful to schools in relation to understanding the nature of influential language as defined by some NLP writing. Teachers have clearly found this useful to

[6] There were 173,700 serving teachers in Years 0–9 of teaching in March 2005 in England. Source: DfES annual 618G survey and Database of Teacher Records (DfES, 2004).

NLP offers valuable insights in a technical sense on the psychological skills for understanding and influencing people.

influence behaviour and learning in more positive ways whilst preserving the emotional climate in their classrooms. It would be a pity to lose this body of knowledge because of poor theoretical explanations about how this works and what is going on when such approaches are applied. If NLP is to avoid criticism from the same perspectives as those discussed above several things are going to need to happen.

- Firstly, there is a need to seek further research evidence of impact and critical review.
- Secondly, NLP education practice, as it develops, will need to begin to challenge its use of terminology and the way in which it talks about what it is doing and is seeking to achieve – so that it aligned more effectively with the scientific evidence.
- Thirdly, greater conceptual clarity around NLP research and research methodology needs to emerge. In particular, it is clear that research into NLP needs to be appropriately NLP informed and based on a full understanding of the content of NLP and the academic literature.
- Finally, some theoretical elements and explanations of the NLP model may well need to be dropped in the future as research evidence develops.

So is there an argument against NLP being taught to teachers before there is more research evidence? At the end of the day, a balance needs to be struck between evaluation and innovation. Many practices exist in education that would appear to have no evidence base – including, for example, the use of Powerpoint. What is to be encouraged is the use of innovations such as NLP by teachers and learners within a reflective approach to practice.

We believe that NLP, as is illustrated in the case studies in this research, offers a wide range of opportunities for teacher leadership as described by Harris and Muijs (2004). NLP requires ongoing critical reflection and evaluation to be implemented effectively and as a natural 'community of practice', appears to offer opportunities for higher level impact teacher continuing professional development – such as that noted by a number of writers (e.g. Goodall *et al*., 2005; Hargreaves, 1994; Hopkins and Harris, 2001; Guskey, 2000). Such factors suggest, in our view, that NLP has significant potential in relation to the implementation of practices that aim to create a Development and Research culture (Morris, 2004; Desforges, Morris and Stanton, 2005).

In discussions about school leadership and NLP, Churches and West-Burnham (2008; 2009)* suggest that NLP has the potential to support the development of interpersonal behaviours and intrapersonal capacity (West-Burnham, 2004; West-Burnham and Ireson, 2005), personalisation (de Freitas and Yapp, 2005; Leadbeater, 2004; West-Burnham and Coates, 2005) and the importance of maintaining an effective emotional climate. These ideas appear to have been, at least partially, confirmed in the literature survey and in a number of the case studies in this paper. It is perhaps not too strong to suggest that NLP appears to offer a reflective framework in which to take emotional literacy 'seriously' alongside the sort of 'learning to learn' approaches described by writers like MacGilchrist and Buttress (2005). In relation to wider notions of organisational development, NLP has been strongly associated with systems intelligence (Hämäläinen and Saarinen, 2004) and systems thinking at the University of Helsinki. Turunen, for example argues that:

> *NLP offers valuable insights in a technical sense on the psychological skills for understanding and influencing people. Hence… NLP offers tools and practices for anyone to stimulate their SI [system intelligence]*
>
> (Turunen: 257).

As such, some elements of NLP may offer further potential in developing the skills of system leaders as defined by Fullan, Hopkins and others (Hargreaves, Halász and Pont, 2008; Hopkins, 2009; Hopkins and Higham, 2007; Fullan, 2005a; b; O'Leary and Craig, 2007; Pont, Nusche and Hopkins, 2008). Preliminary evidence from its use on the Fast Track teaching programme (Churches, Hutchinson and Jones; Churches and West-Burnham, 2008*; 2009*; Jones and Attfield, 2007*) and as part of the Consultant Leader

Programme (the forerunner to the National Leaders of Education initiative (see Hopkins, 2009)) appears to support this (Hutchinson, Churches and Vitae; 2006; 2007; 2008)*.

Finally, bearing in mind the recent evidence of the relevance of certain aspects of emotional intelligence to attainment (Rodeiro, Bell and Emery, 2009) and the apparent impact on the affective dimensions of learning that are indicated in the case studies, and across much of the literature review, there would appear to be benefit in teaching elements of NLP to teachers and indeed to children. Specifically, teachers in this study reported benefits that may offer ways to support those students who are struggling in the areas of self-motivation and the control of impulsivity (both of which were identified as significant for attainment by Rodeiro, Bell and Emery, 2009).

8. Recommendations for further research

> *"Research consistently shows that what teachers do in the classroom is at the heart of school effectiveness and that classroom practice is the factor that most influences children's progress (Muijs and Reynolds, 2005)."*

In the preceding CfBT research paper, Churches and West-Burnham noted that:

> *Research consistently shows that what teachers do in the classroom is at the heart of school effectiveness and that classroom practice is the factor that most influences children's progress (Muijs and Reynolds, 2005).*
>
> (Churches and West-Burnham, 2008: 5)*.

In particular, they suggested a number of key areas that NLP appears to have the potential to support and which should be explored further in relation to research:

- *the importance of interpersonal and intrapersonal skills, in particular the definition and implementation of agreed models of 'best practice' (West-Burnham, 2004; West-Burnham and Ireson, 2005)*
- *effective behaviour management through the application of contingent praise, (Brophy, 1981), school-wide consistency (Reynolds, 1992) and a continuous 'schedule' of positive reinforcement (Muijs and Reynolds, 2005)*
- *the effect of body language (Rosenthal and Ambady, 1993) and non-verbal warmth (Harris and Rosenthal, 1985) on student expectations and self-concept*
- *the relationship between self-concept, self-esteem and achievement and the issue of the moral and social status of the individual learner (Muijs, 1998; Marsh* et al*. 2002; Guay* et al*., 2003) – fundamental to any attempt to personalise learning*
- *the effect of teacher expectations on the climate of classrooms and school improvement (Reynold and Muijs, 2005; Mortimer* et al*.,1988) and negative beliefs and biases (see e.g. Brophy and Good, 1986)*
- *effective questioning (Rosenshine and Furst, 1973; Brophy and Good, 1986; Gagne* et al*., 1993), 'higher-order' questions (Mortimore* et al*., 1988), frequency of questions and detailed questioning approaches (Muijs and Reynolds, 1999)*
- *the central importance of values, moral purpose and spirituality for effective school improvement. This has been demonstrated time and time again, and there is now a substantial body of work that support this (e.g. Fullan, 2003; 2005[b]; Leithwood* et al*., 2006; West-Burnham 2002; West-Burnham and Huws Jones, 2007)*
- *the suggested link between leaders practising and developing behaviours that go with values associated with moral purpose (Fullan, 2001) and real breakthroughs in development occurring, from not just from doing, but also from 'thinking about the doing' (Fullan, 2007)*
- *the impact on learning of teacher identity, values and beliefs, especially the movement from 'teacher' to facilitator (Korthagen, 2004; Gudmundsdottir, 1990; Atkinson, 2004; Pachler* et al*. 2003; Dragovic, 2007).*

(Churches and West-Burnham, 2008: 20)*

The evidence from the literature and case studies we believe bears out these initial observations and particularly the relevance of NLP to teacher effectiveness, communication skills and the development of emotional and social literacy with children as perceived by teachers. Furthermore, we suggest that there are several routes that future research and academic work should take:

- the development of research which clearly defines which domain of NLP is being researched and adopts an appropriate methodology for that domain (see for example discussions of the 'Six Faces of NLP': Tosey and Mathison, 2009)
- specific methodology – appropriate research into NLP techniques for which there are no specific parallels with other fields and which need to be researched on their own merits (e.g. the application of language from hypnosis)
- research which looks at those areas where there appear to be parallels between the theoretical position adopted in much NLP writing and recent neuroscience (particularly, the field of social cognitive neuroscience)

- research to clarify the field of NLP in relation to education research on teacher effectiveness and also with initial teacher training
- further efforts to re-conceptualise the ways in which NLP training talks about itself and its relationship to the fields of psychology and neuroscience to ensure that, where appropriate, there is a clearer read-across
- larger scale research which controls for confounding or undermining variables and recognises the limitations of small-scale practitioner-led enquiries (as discussed on pages 21 and 22)

Alongside this, we believe that the diversity and eclectic nature of NLP, rather than presenting a research problem in fact presents an opportunity for the exploration of mixed methodology in an education context. Specifically, in relation to those elements of NLP which appear to have parallels with theories and concepts from psychology and neuroscience, the opportunity for quantitative methods to sit more comfortably alongside qualitative ones.

9. Glossary for the areas of NLP that were the focus of the various case studies

"Anchoring involves the deliberate association of a positive feeling or action to a stimulus so that when that stimulus is experienced again the person or group responds by either experiencing those emotions again or by carrying out the action automatically."

Anchoring

Anchoring involves the deliberate association of a positive feeling or action to a stimulus so that when that stimulus is experienced again the person or group responds by either experiencing those emotions again or by carrying out the action automatically. It often described in NLP training as a sort of Pavlovian conditioning for people.

Eye accessing cues

Ideas about eye position (when people are thinking) are included in most NLP training although the explanations of this area of NLP are controversial (see our literature review for a discussion). In relation to eye accessing cues and learning there is, however, some evidence to support eye position and effective memorising of spellings.

Relationship rewards

Much of the underlying philosophy of NLP is derived from the work of Gregory Bateson (the anthropologist). Bateson went beyond the concepts of classical and operant conditioning to identify the need to reward simply to preserve relationships and that in doing so higher-order animals become more motivated to move from what he called Learning I (where behaviour is simply corrected from within a set of alternatives) to Learning II (where learning includes a recognition and awareness of the context and multiple alternatives). Learning II has in recent years been frequently associated with the notion of *Learning to Learn*.

Storytelling and metaphor

Storytelling and metaphor were widely used by Milton Erickson (the hypnotherapist). As well as noting the potential of such techniques to support learning and change, early NLP texts modelled and described the structure of effective storytelling in such contexts.

Meta model questioning

Virginia Satir (the family therapist) was used as a model for looking at the use of questioning and language in therapy. As in their studies of hypnosis, Richard Bandler and John Grinder used ideas from General Semantics (see below) to describe and name the types of language that were being used.

Milton model language

Richard Bandler and John Grinder studied the language of Milton Erickson, the highly respected hypnotherapist. Using concepts and ideas from General Semantics (particularly, Lauri Kartunnen's ideas about presuppostion in language and Chomsky's ideas about the deep and surface structure of language) they described and named the different language patterns that can be used to make suggestions in a therapeutic context. Later NLP writing has applied this way of looking at language to a much wider range of contexts, including: teaching and learning, counselling, management and leadership, and sales.

Non-verbal communication

As well as containing ideas about the structure of language, NLP training usually includes a focus on the effect of body language and other non-verbal communication such as voice tone.

Rapport

It was in studies of the work of Milton Erickson that ideas about rapport came into NLP. Erickson would consciously 'match' the body language, voice tone and types of language that his clients used in order to gain insights into their 'map of the world' and to build relationships and trust as part of the process of hypnotherapy.

Sensory acuity

NLP training frequently includes exercises to develop sensory acuity (the ability to notice small changes in body language, facial expressions, voice tone and posture to enhance awareness of what another person is thinking and feeling).

Submodalities

NLP includes ideas about the role of internal representation (internal imagery, including sounds and feelings). Specifically, the therapeutic aspects of NLP often involve making changes in the elements of internal representation in order to change behaviour (for example, whether a past or future event is remembered or thought of in black and white or in colour; whether it seems distant or near etc.).

Visualisation

Visualisation is what it says. However, in NLP the emphasis is often on the visualisation of positive future goals as if they have already been achieved (including detailed information about what will be seen, heard (internally in terms of self talk and externally in relation to the sounds around) and emotions and bodily sensations.

Well formed outcome

The well formed outcome process is a detailed form of goal setting process that includes a range of areas. It is frequently carried out in a coaching context rather than with eyes closed and involves the person being coached exploring all the areas of their life that they may need to change and develop.

The References section of this research can be found in the full PDF version on the CD-ROM.

On this CD-ROM you will find:

- the full report, including Appendices
- a complete list of references
- Leading learning through relationships: the implications of Neuro-linguistic programming for personalisation and the children's agenda in England, by Richard Churches and John West-Burnham.

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