Consumer behavior and neurolinguistic programming

Mihai Alin, ANGHEL[1],

Abstract

Neurolinguistic Programming is a roughly new science that can understand consumer behavior from a different perspective so that the researcher can follow a different path when presenting new information. When two people are communicating, the message is either presented well or correctly understood, but this happens naturally only if the two participants in the conversation are compatible. When this link between the two people doesn't exist, there is a communication gap that NLP can help fill. Within this research, a new concept called representation system will be investigated to determine if people can have specific communicational patterns and how they can be identified. It is clear that with a new perspective on how people can communicate more efficiently, then a huge gap in perceiving information can disappear.

Keywords:

NLP, patterns, representation system, visual, auditory, kinesthetic, digital

[1] Candidate PhD, Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Doctoral School București, Romania, anghel.a.mihai@gmail.com

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INTRODUCTION

Neurolinguistic Programming (NLP) tracks how people communicate and respond to external factors. While classical research methods follow what people answer, the most important criterion is ignored - contextuality. Therefore, classical research cannot reproduce the natural environment a person may be in when they come into contact with an advertising campaign. Therefore, a person can't state exactly how they would react to a particular campaign. (Craft, 2001).

Also, Neurolinguistic Programming is very often applied in psychological and medical fields through the ability to decode communication and behavioural systems. Around the 1980s, a movement was reported between academia and business. Although it is impossible to talk of a single independent definition for NLP, multiple formulations contain common or identical elements regarding the understanding and intelligent grouping of human emotions. In particular, NLP proposes that people's inner representations have a connection between people's sensory modalities (visual, auditory, kinesthetics, olfactory, and gustatory) and the dominant system of representation that a person has. Through this first conceived and accepted step, NLP concretized the fact that a correctly used representation system subjects the respective person to be very susceptible to the information coming from the external space. (Sturt, et al., 2012).

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The sustainability of the development of human capital is represented by a rich mosaic of possibilities and ways of approaching them. A common factor in this process focuses its attention on the man as an individual in his existential concept. From this point of view, it is necessary to draw attention to the problems of the flexibility of people's thinking in accepting the concept of information processing. (Luban, 2010). Identifying the characteristics of Neurolinguistic Programming is the first step for beginning deciphering the way people think. The main structural component of sustainable development in an economic dimension is the connection of the individual parts of the subsystems of a company that unequivocally presents an economic vision and activity. In this concept of sustainability of human capital development, neurolinguistic programming can be a very important factor related to flexibility in human thinking. NLP is a concept, in essence, which is the analysis of the individual perception of the world to increase the personal success rate of people. (Wiseman, et al., 2012). This concept can be characterized as a paradigm of the relationship between communication, a way of thinking through different techniques to improve communication, and behavioral change in setting and achieving goals. (Kudliskis, 2013).

Neurolinguistic programming is a unique modulation process, in which the thought, behavioral and communication patterns in the conscious and subconscious space work together for the individual to develop and improve his potential. When setting goals, it is easy to

understand that the socio-economic and cultural space in which the person lives is a significant factor in determining how to achieve that goal. (Tosey & Mathison, 2010). The more positive the goals and plans are being set, the more the human brains' programming ability to research and identify opportunities for success increases. "Individuals who use Neurolinguistic Programming can understand emotional and behavioral patterns. Through NLP they can have results that in the past they might have considered impossible, and they can overcome any obstacle"(Tripathi, 2012). Neurolinguistic programming is designed to develop methods to achieve goals and excel in the proposed activities. NLP is one of the most effective methods of personal development and learning and is certainly a concept that more and more global corporations are using to better understand their employees emotionally (Frankovsky, et al., 2019).

2. Theoretical explanations. Representation systems

In the first step of unraveling the way people decode and process information, Neurolinguistic Programming proposes the use of the VAK system (visual, auditory, kinesthetic), also called the representation system. This concept specifies that people are grouped according to the language they use and thus information processing is more difficult or easier. The acronym VAK is designed by the three main areas that make up the system of representation, namely visual, auditory, and kinesthetic.

These characteristics separate people according to the verbs they use in free communication and designate the rational process they have when they receive or provide information. The VAK system has been completed by researchers in the field, Richard Bandler and John Grinder, through the digital system that has filled a gap in this system of neurolinguistic representation. What is important to note is that the representation system is often changeable depending on the context of the situation in which the subject is placed. The purpose of identifying a person's representation system is to be able to establish the first point of view of understanding how that person perceives and processes information, and then to designate the emotional motivational system in which he is placed. The visual system is characteristic of people who often retain visual information very easily. With a high capacity for visual memory, people with this system have a fierce tendency to always reproduce very precisely the characteristic elements of the product or object they have analysed. What is specific to visual people is that they are influenced to choose a product or service that brings them a visible and tactile benefit at the same time, the ability to visually present the defining elements of the product will cause a visual consumer to purchase the product. For people who have an auditory representation system, the situation changes dramatically, if the context is kept the same as in the case of the visual ones. People who have a dominant auditory system are prone to retain the information that is presented to them with great ease. Moreover, the information presented and received is mainly

provided verbally, being considered the method with the highest degree of efficiency. From a kinesthetic point of view, people who present this system of representation are prone to pay increased attention to the emotional involvement they have when they come in contact with a new product or any kind of information that is presented to them. The most effective way for these people to process information correctly is only if they have the opportunity to try the product directly before making the purchase decision. The last variable that completes the VAK representation system is the digital one. People who have a digital system are the ones who are often the last to express their point of view because they are the ones who need the most study time before forming an opinion. For the decision-making process of a purchase to be made, a digital consumer needs a significant amount of information from different sources to be able to form an opinion. The identification of the system of representation of a consumer can be discovered through a test that can be offered to a person or a group of people. To be able to determine with high efficiency, which is the predominant VAK system of a person, it is necessary to establish and adhere to a well-defined plan. The first step is to designate the context of behavioral research. Defining this context is very important because it places study subjects in a similar rational state. The second step is to prepare a list of five questions, all with four predefined answers. Each answer to a question is characteristic of each element of the VAK-D system. Respondents are asked to read the questions and then give grades, from 1-4: where 1 is

the most unimportant value and 4 is the most important value, depending on how applicable that answer is in their daily lives. Each value from 1 to 4 is specific to a system of representation, and at the end of the five questions, the total values offered are realized. Thus, it is possible to determine which is the dominant representation system of a person.

3. Research methodology. Case Study

This research presents a clear example of the representation system for creating the investigation structure. After the context has been given, all the questions answers are predefined and must respect a specific pattern. For the first question, the answers must be sorted in the following order: kinesthetic, auditory, visual, and digital. For the second question, the answers respect the structure of: auditory, visual, digital, and kinesthetic. The third question has the construct of: visual, kinesthetic, digital, and auditory. For the fourth and fifth questions, the answers have the following structure: auditory, digital, kinesthetic, and visual.

Context: Teaching history – middle school

What I appreciate the most about my teacher is that:

    a. He always explains to us what outcomes the respective historical events have in the current era
    b. He tells us many stories about historical events
    c. He shows us many pictures and historical movies
    d. He offers us many materials which we can read to learn more

In a contradictory conversation, what influences me the most is:
   a. The teachers' tone of voice
   b. If I see not the arguments he is presenting
   c. The logic of given arguments
   d. If I feel I am on the same page with the arguments

I can express my best opinions when:
   a. I can show the information I have
   b. I feel that what I say is correct
   c. The words I chose are similar to or the same as other authors who spoke about the same topic
   d. I can speak freely

I find it easiest to retain information when:
   a. I listen to a detailed story about an event
   b. I can read different stories about the same event
   c. I can place myself in the specific story like I was there
   d. I see images from the event, and I can read about what happened

How do you operate the best when you study at home?
   a. The fact that I can practice with a loud voice without being interrupted is a big advantage
   b. I can read uninterrupted various materials to understand the concept
   c. When I can dream about being in a specific event to be able to feel better its importance
   d. When I can read and write the parts I consider to be important

Based on the questions above, a set of fictive results is offered to a single student. Based on the given answers, the student has offered the following grades as values (Table 1.1).

Table 1.1 – Structure of the representation system

Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4	Question5
K – 1	A – 2	V – 2	A – 3	A – 2
A – 2	V – 4	K – 1	D – 2	D – 4

V – 4	D – 3	D – 4	K – 1	K – 1
D – 3	K – 1	A – 3	V – 4	V – 3

To establish the representation system of the student who has offered the respective answers, it is only needed for a sum type of equation for each category. The first two biggest values will determine the two dominant representation patterns of the student (Table 1.2).

Table 1.2 – Student's representation system - Results

Results	V	K	A	D
Question 1	4	1	2	3
Question 2	4	1	2	3
Question 3	2	1	3	4
Question 4	4	1	3	2
Question 5	3	1	2	4
Total	17	5	12	16

As can be observed from the results table, the student has the first dominant visual pattern with 17 points, followed by the digital pattern with 16 points. This means that the student can process and understand information better when he can study by himself in his home or when the teachers show him visually the presented information. The only way through which the student can retain the information is that while having the lesson presented, he can also see pictures or visual graphics.

Conclusions

The representation system is a highly valuable concept when it comes to understanding human communication and consumer behavior. The calculation method for the visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and digital patterns is simple and it can be applied regardless of the context within which the researcher wants to generate communicational pattern results. Neurolinguistic Programming has demonstrated that it brings high value to a neuromarketing type of research when applied correctly, for it brings a psychological missing element from the classical marketing approach. It is recommended that such an approach is to be introduced in various neuroscience experiments for it brings a clear path of approaching different respondents so that the generated results are as correct as possible.

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