

Ontology, Neuro-Linguistic Programming & Neuro-Semantic Programming

by

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As a topic of study, the matters that relate to the living fabric of subjective reality - ONTOLOGY, has been researched by many eminent minds. This article, that we are honoured to have been asked to submit, is about the theoretical milestones by which we have come to understand how this living fabric is braided. Above all it is about the loom upon which it is woven and how it can be directed and managed.

We take our starting point with the work of Étienne Bonnot de Condillac (1715 - 1780). In the form and manner of his language, he proposed the concepts that are completely and semantically isomorphic with our sensory **representational systems**. They were the de Condillac statues of Vision, Audition, Kinaesthetics, Olfaction and Gustation. It was by his genius that de Condillac arrived at the theoretical animate consequences of his statues were that they would utter the predicates of language unique to them. These concepts were to take their critical place in the study of Neuro-Linguistic Programming - **N.L.P.**

The next critical milestone was achieved by Hans Vaihinger. It was he who proposed the concept that Ontology was a function of the sequencing of these de Condillac statues, the representational systems. This concept was in time to take its critical place in the field of NLP. i.e., in the domain of **strategies**. It was his seminal work *The Philosophy of As If* that, in turn, was the midwife of the As If Frame of N.L.P.

Then came the work of Alfred Korzybski, the father of General Semantics. He, by the genius of his perspicacious intuitions and deep insights also indexed the concepts of the de Condillac statues, the representational systems.

It was David Hume (1711 - 1776) who leveled the first serious censures at Cause and Effect. However, it is to Korzybski we shall forever remain indebted to for the first serious incursions at the semantic ill-formedness of Cause and Effect and its contingent illogicalities. It was he who recognized that out of Cause and Effect came its unique language system. In turn, it was he who saw the critical and desperate need for an alternative system to Causality and the language that would go with it. This was his non-el¹ or non-Aristotelian system. In time, we were to discover that this system was in fact the No-Y-ian Frame. In doing so, we were able to flesh it out in its entirety for him. As stated, he also sought an alternative language system to that which was contingent to Cause and Effect. This we then discovered is the No-Y-ian Model of language².

(1. non-el system & 2. The No-Y-ian Model of language

The evidence is for all to read that the general semanticists of today are NOT operating within the non-el system of language that Korzybski proposed. In the articles that they publish in their Bulletin, their writers do so in a way that is resplendent with the linguistic structures of Cause and Effect! How this has come about is something we shall show below. For us this is an exquisitely sad and extremely painful testament to Korzybski and to his life work.)

To Alfred Korzybski we shall remain indebted for indexing the awesome anchoring power of language patterns. As we stated, Cause and Effect has unique language patterns that are imprinted in all of us. What we now know is that if the imprints of these language patterns and structures are not collapsed out, we shall doom our lives in the hurricane of the semantic ill-formedness of Cause Effect. - **and we would not be aware of it!**

We do not realise what tremendous power the structure of an habitual language has. It is not an exaggeration to say that it enslaves us through the mechanism of *s.r.* and that the structure which a language exhibits, is *automatically projected upon the world around us.* This semantic power is indeed so unbelievable that I do not know anyone, even among well-trained scientists, who, after having admitted some argument as correct, does not the next minute deny or disregard (usually unconsciously) practically every word he had admitted, being carried away again by the structural implications of the old language and his *s.r.*

Alfred Korzybski: *Science and Sanity* The International Non-Aristotelian Library Publishing Company 6th Reprint 1980 pages 90 - 91.

(*s.r.*:

This is the Korzybskian abbreviation for semantic reaction. In this quote we now see what Korzybski indexed so long ago about the semantic power of *s.r.* He was talking about the power inherent in anchors. It is by the syntax of the manipulation of this power that is the basis of such processes as the 6-minute phobia cure.)

It is also to Alfred Korzybski that we shall remain indebted for indexing the semantic ill-formedness of the two-valued system represented by the concept of **RIGHT** and **WRONG** and also the linguistic transformation process of **identification**. To him we owe the indexing of the concept of the logical levels and of the importance and value of a reality of **Relativity**. We also owe to him the invention and its conceptual consequences of the phrase **map** versus the **territory**. It was he who indexed the critical aptness and crucial pertinence of isomorphism between the structure of the map and that of the territory. He also indexed the elements that was to become the study of submodalities in the field study of N.L.P.

He incorporated all these and more in his seminal work *Science and Sanity*. It is a work that is over seven hundred and fifty pages long. If you have not read this work we commend you to do so. We warn that it is not an easy work to read. However, whoever said that it is an easy task to go into a mine to dig for gold.

We now cite a clutch of very important names of people who have contributed in unique and critical ways to the development of the field of Neuro-Semantic Programming. They are:

1. Bertrand Russel and Alfred North Whitehead for their structural approaches to the resolution of mathematic paradoxes. In time these approaches were to be incorporated by Paul Watzlawick and his colleagues at the Mental Research Institute

- in Palo Alto in their approach to human semantic ill-formed paradoxes.
2. John R. Searle for the **speech act** - a concept critical in Hypnosis.
 3. John von Neumann for his concepts in Games Theory.
 4. Milton H. Erickson for his linguistic and analogical approaches in manipulating the semantic ill-formed ontologies of his patients in powerful, beneficial and pervasive ways.
 5. Paul Watzlawick and his colleagues at the Mental Health Research Center for the concept of **second order change** and **the metalanguage**. We commend you read their seminal work Change.
 6. Noam Chomsky for the concepts of **the Universal Grammar** and **the Transformational Grammars** of languages.
 7. Richard Bandler and John Grinder and their co-researchers for collating together a substantial part of the preceding material into a field study that has come to be known as N.L.P. To them we owe the first functional metalanguage.
 8. David Gordon for the way to tell stories-in-therapy by his work *Therapeutic Metaphors*.
 9. Werner Heisenberg for the **Uncertainty Principle**.
 10. Albert Einstein for the **Universe of Relativity** and **NOT CAUSALITY**.

To all these that we have cited here - we say, with the deepest of respect of heartfelt feelings, and without ever the hope to repay -
“THANK YOU.”

From the work *The Knife Without Pain* and its accompanying VHS, we now feel that we may conclude that the living fabric of subjective reality is woven, either upon the loom of the Meta Semantic Paradigm of Causal Modeling, i.e. Cause and Effect, or on the Meta Semantic Paradigm of Functional Modeling, i.e. Relativity and Relatedness. The former is the midwife of the Blame Frame. The latter is the midwife of the No-Y-ian Frame. To go from one to the other is the essence of a true Gestalt Switch. Its analogical metaphor is the Question of WHY Seminar.

To pass from one language to another is psychologically parallel to passing from one geometric system of reference to another. The envioning world which is referred to is the same for either language; the world of points is the same in either frame of reference. But the formal method of approach to the expressed item of experience, as to the given point n space, is so different that the resulting feeling of orientation can be the same neither in the two languages nor in the two frames of reference. Entirely distinct or at least measurably distinct, formal adjustments have to be made and these differences have their psychological correlate.

David G. Mandelbaum (Editor): *Selected writings of Edward Sapir in Language, Culture, Personality* University of California Press 1949 page 153.

(This entire matter and the information pertaining to this domain is to be found in the work *Don't Ask WHY?!* and its companion work *Power and Elegance in Communication*.)

In turn, the form and manner of human ontology will be determined by the patterns that determine the operation of the loom. These patterns are in two classes:

1. the unconscious General Semantic Paradigms or the blueprints of Race and Racial History, Religion and Religious History, Culture and Cultural History and so forth.
2. the unconscious Specific Semantic Paradigms or blueprints unique to you. This critically includes the Enriched Meta Programs - EMPs.

(The considerations that appertain to the above are all mapped out in the work *Power and Elegance in Communication*.)

From what has been intimated it follows that second order change is inevitable and unstoppable if:

1. there is a meta paradigm shift. When this occurs then you will have set the conditions of a true Analogical Gestalt Switch
2. there is change in the hierarchy of paradigms
3. there is a deletion or change of a paradigm
4. there is an insertion of a new paradigm.

This is the basis of change of personhood in a very profound and pervasive way. The default assumption here is that the loom and the operations of the loom of human ontology can be manipulated. This, we recognize, can be for good or for ill and for the better or for worse. The instrument of manipulation is the SPOKEN WORD. Language is the most exquisite of human instruments. It is by its use that it is possible to get the transformation of semantic ill-formedness to semantic well-formedness. This is about the art and science of Communication.

However, as Korzybski had implied, there has to be structure for structure. In turn this is about the metalanguage of Watzlawick et alia that they indexed in their work *Change* but recognized at that time that it was then not extant. Now, in the work *Power and Elegance in Communication* we proposed an expansion of the first functional metalanguage, the Meta Model, by the Gathering Information Module. It comprises these elements:

1. The Modified Meta Model
2. The No-Y-ian Model
3. Informal Logic
4. Calibration
5. Adumbration

It is with the Gathering Information Module that you can determine the critical cluster of the

Enriched Meta Programs (EMPs) by which a person scans and sorts the world, his criteria and values, and thus, his beliefs and isomorphisms by which he determines what is important and fitting for him. In this way it is possible to find out what the critical analogical blueprints or semantic paradigms that determine the conditions of semantic ill-formedness in a person's life, in a family situation, in the work place or in a board of directors.

However, in our view, nothing beneficent can be done in a significant and substantive way if the following conditions are not met.

1. It will be forever to their intellectual credit that Bandler and Grinder identified, denounced and reproved the semantic ill-formedness of Cause and Effect. However, it is a testament to the insight to Alfred Korzybski that he indexed the awesome anchoring power of the *s.r.* of language patterns. This semantic power compelled Bandler's and Grinder's tilt (and those of the succeeding generations of NLPers) to use Causal Modeling.

(WHY:

In the work *The Wild Days NLP 1972-1981* by Terrence McClendon, is the evidence that the semantic ill-formedness of "WHY" was appreciated in a singular way by Bandler and Grinder. We also conclude that its connection to the semantic ill-formedness of Cause and Effect was perceived by them:

It was at the Mission Street groups that we first began acquiring our information gathering tools that were later to become the meta model patterns. The foundations of the information gathering tools began with the how, who, and what questions from the Gestalt framework, deleting that unspoken question, why.

We used to get yelled at and sometime bopped on the head for saying why. In a very therapeutic way of course.

Terrence L. McClendon: *The Wild Days NLP 1972 -1981* Meta Publications 1989 page 40.

The semantic power (and shades of Korzybskian warning) of WHY and language patterns of Cause and Effect were to reveal itself to us in a very sad way. We offered the manuscript of *Don't Ask WHY?! to one publisher whom we logically argued could not and would not turn it down. His reply was one of the most acidic we received. Even Random House was kinder. Now Don't Ask WHY?! os published in German and it is coming to its first reprint.*

2. We must understand the terrible semantic ill-formed consequences in that we are trapped in a Lorentzian time frame (refer to *The Knife Without Pain*). It is for this that:

- a. nominalizations are **REAL**
- b. identifications are **REAL**
- c. substitutions are **POSSIBLE** and deemed **REAL!**

(This is but an abbreviation about the above items. The discussion base of these considerations is to be found in the work *The Knife Without Pain* and in our forthcoming book on sphexish human

behaviour)

(Nominalization:

This term refers to the conversion of an actual-to-life process into a thing. It is also known as reification after the Roman word for things - *res*. This means that the nominalization is an artefact, a construct of the mind and has NO basis in actuality. If, however, we credit it as real then we are in the warp of its semantic ill-formedness.

It may appear that this is something that we are not likely to do. However, the evidence is that we, in fact, have a penchant for doing exactly this. Thus, we think that there is such a thing as love, depression and so forth. There are such processes as “being spiritual,” “being well,” “to be well,” “to love,” “loving,” “feeling depressed” and “to be depressed.” Such reifications as “Spirituality,” “Wellness,” “Love” and “Depression” are UNREAL. It is for this you get any number of people who clamour for the rostrum of pretensions as experts on the respective subjects.

In this respect it amuses us that the one thing that is an inevitable semantic implicate of “spirituality” - holiness” is an item that these experts studiously skirt past. What we feel sure is that it is all plausible waffle but in fact there is really NO BEEF!

Identification:

This occurs when we conclude that two unique semantic entities as being one and the same in every respect with each other. Again you may think that this is something that we as sentient human beings will not do. You know that you will not say that “This Toyota IS this Oldsmobile.” Yet you will say, “He IS a bastard” and “She IS a Catholic.” We now know that to do such a manoeuvre is extremely semantically ill-formed.

Substitution:

This is to apply a nominalization to classes of complaints or symptoms and then to cluster them into a set and then apply a meta nominalization for the cluster. When you do this you can have anxiety, depression, paranoia, insomnia, anorexia, mania, hysteria and so forth. You can then mix them in various combinations and apply meta nominalizations as paranoia type, bi-polar schizoid, hebephrenic schizophrenic with an inadequate personality and you can go on and on. there is in fact over hundred pages on this manner of classification or, as we would prefer to say, substituting. Thus, this adds to the unreal and the meta-unreal! Once you do this, you will be compelled to find the drugs to counter these nominalizations.)

It is our conclusion that if we do not escape these neuro-semantic ill-formed structures, we shall live in the conditions in which we shall suffer the results of their warps. The consequences are egregious and terrible. In this respect:

It is a fact that we simply do not grasp what it means to live in a reality that is semantically ill-formed because we unconsciously use neuro-semantic structures that are ill-formed.

We also fail to grasp it because of the neurophysiology of neuronal accommodation that in turn underpins our ability at adapting. We do so even when the reality is a continuing and unabating madness. In only those amazing and extraordinary transient moments, some rare people may suddenly grasp that we indeed live in a mad. mad. mad world. However, once this is realized, they too are sucked back into the black hole of our common neuro-semantic derangements and senselessness.

However, we know that today we do have in place the neuro-linguistic and neuro-semantic means to escape from what Alfred Korzybski had in 1933 indexed “**the tremendous power of an habitual language**” and the whirlwind of semantic ill-formedness in which our lives are “**enslaved.**”

