
ACCEPTABILITY OF NLP METHODS IN BUSINESS COMMUNICATION FROM THE ASPECT OF THE EMPLOYEES

Ana Globočnik Žunac*
University North,
Croatia
agzunac@unin.hr

Petra Ercegovac
University North,
Croatia
peercegovac@unin.hr

Valerija Vidović
University North,
Croatia
valerija.vidovic13@gmail.com

Abstract

Neurolinguistic programming (NLP) is a communication methodology used in a business environment with the goal to improve the potential of employees. The paper presents scientific study which included employees in the Republic of Croatia and their attitudes towards the acceptability of the methods of neurolinguistic programming in business. An online questionnaire was constructed for the purpose of the research. The research had the goal to find answers whether respondents in Croatia find NLP method acceptable for use in business environment and what the differences in their opinion according to their personality, familiarity with the NLP topic, level of education and depending on how long they have been employed. Employees show willingness to adopt new work techniques to improve their work efficiency. Even though the trend analysis of the results indicates there are some possible differences between the respondents based on stated factors, the research involved smaller and uneven group of respondents.

Key Words

NLP; communication tools; business communication; quality business communication system.

INTRODUCTION

The communication system consists of various aspects (exchange and processing of information, transmission of a message, contact with business partners and the like) without which an organization could not function (Jurković, 2012). One of the priorities of a business man is to get empowered to communicate in order to achieve business success. Business communication has in the past been relied to the knowledge, specially of NLP, the method of successful business (Vodopija, 2006). Neurolinguistic programming (acronym NLP) is a communication model that aims to identify and use patterns in the thinking process as the means of improving the quality and effectiveness of communication. It is focused on achieving goals, creating better interpersonal relationships, removing barriers, building self confidence and acting more effectively. It is used in various fields of occupation (business, education, law, medicine and psychotherapy) to identify human patterns and to influence change in responses to stimuli. Neurolinguistic programming can be used in sales, customer service, negotiation, conflict resolution, presentations, teamwork, as well as motivating others (Parvizi, 2015). NLP methods are used to influence work efficiency, success in conflict resolution and communication productivity. They serve to improve negotiation and sales skills. In the United States, NLP is a widespread methodology, with remarkable results in achieving better communication and better interpersonal relationships. Research into the theory of neurolinguistic programming finds a large number of methods that facilitate communication in the business environment, all with the aim of avoiding conflicting stressful situations and achieving better business results. NLP methods are effectively used in various areas of human activity, including team communication, client communication (sales, marketing, public relations), mediation, and facilitating and enhancing communication in conflict resolution at work.

NEUROLINGUISTIC PROGRAMMING IN BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

NLP is a practical discipline that encompasses a range of models, techniques and skills to think and act effectively. It studies how people achieve success in a wide variety of areas (the modelling process) and teaches people these patterns. The patterns, skills and techniques thus obtained are increasingly used in education and business in the pursuit of accelerated learning, personal development and more successful communication (O'Connor and Seymour, 2009). NLP has gained immense popularity over the last 25 years. Trainings were conducted at companies such as Hewlett-Packar, IBM, McDonald's, NASA, the United States Army, the U.S. Olympic Team, and numerous public school systems (Singer and Lalich, 1996 according to Witkowski, 2011). NLP methods are used to influence work efficiency, success in conflict resolution, and communication productivity. In business communication, it is commonly used for negotiation purposes. Recognizing the collaborative representation system of the people

we work with, can be very valuable in achieving positive results when discussing some decisions, building teams or even selling (Dilts and Dilts, 1983). One of the key applications of NLP methods in organizational settings is to effectively set goals and strategies for maximizing results (McDermott and Jago, 2007).

NLP METHODS

One of the methods of NLP is the Dickens Pattern, based on the work of Tony Robbins. It was named because it models Ebenezer Scrooge's experience in the Charles Dickens novel *Christmas Story* from 1843. The form aims to take control over life, changing limiting beliefs (Ellerton, 2013). Bandler (2012) calls this method a belief modification method or a pattern of belief replacement. It helps to change one's beliefs and gain more faith in oneself. Anchoring is a process in which a particular stimulus connects to a specific physiological or emotional state. The stimulus of associating with the desired state is called the anchor. Anchoring was created as a result of research by Russian physiologist Pavlov, a pioneer of behaviorism. Anchoring happens unknowingly, but it can also be developed intentionally (consciously). An anchor can be anything that causes an automatic reaction or causes an emotional state, for example, the sound of a familiar melody can elicit a smile on your face or trigger some strong negative feeling (Mladenović and Vrsaljko, 2009). NLP defines an anchor as a process that connects a sensory stimulus to a particular state of mind (Vodopija, 2006). This method can be used to change internal states, stabilize states, move elements of one experience into another, and change behavior. Using one's own states is one of the most effective ways of changing own behavior, as well as the behavior of others (Mladenovic and Vrsaljko, 2009). John Grinder and Richard Bandler developed the technique of visual-kinesthetic (V-K) dissociation in 1976. It is a method that addresses trauma and helps people cope with the stressful and painful experiences that have the consequences of limiting them in reaching their goals. The goal is to disconnect from feelings and create the experience of being outside your own body. This ability can help a person to distance themselves psychologically from stressful, painful, or traumatic experiences and become able to respond differently in similar situations. This technique can help people who have problems with presenting, running a meeting, communicating with a team (Mladenovic and Vrsaljko, 2009). Walt Disney's strategy is another NLP tool developed by Robert Dilts. It was named after American producer Walt Disney. It is a dream development strategy that enables them to come true. It is based on taking on three different roles involved in the process of turning creative ideas into reality - the dreamer, the realist and the critic. Dilts found that if they take on these roles in turn, people develop their ideas and plans faster and more effectively. Although this method is primarily used in business, it allows for the introduction of creativity into the work of the team (MacDermott and Jago, 2007). Taking a different observation position can

be a very easy way of predicting other people's potential reactions and deciding what to say or do. It is useful for meetings. The essence of this method is to get into all three observation positions (I, the other, the observer) in order to gather as much information from as many points of view as possible (Terry and Churches, 2011). Molden and Hutchinson (2008) call this method a positioning technique for perception, and Mladenovic and Vrsaljko (2009) a technique for changing perceptual positions.

METHODOLOGY

The aim of the research was to determine the attitudes of employees in the Republic of Croatia on the suitability of NLP methods in business communication and to analyze, according to the results obtained, whether the attitude of the respondents to the NLP is correlated to their personality (extrovert/introvert), familiarity with NLP, their level of education and the length of their employment. Accordingly, the hypotheses were stated: ' Respondents in Croatia find NLP method acceptable for use in business environment.'; 'Extroverted respondents are more inclined to accept NLP methods.'; 'Attitude towards the suitability of these methods depend on whether the respondents had previous information about NLP.'; 'Respondents with higher level of education are more inclined to accept NLP methods.' and 'Attitudes towards the suitability of NLP methods depend on how long have the respondents been employed'.

The survey involved 150 persons employed in the Republic of Croatia, 77 women (51.3%) and 73 men (48.7%). There are 111 (74%) of respondents that have completed higher education and 39 (26%) secondary education. There are 72% of respondents working in the public sector and 28% in the private sector. Out of all respondents, 24 (15.4%) have been employed for less than 5 years, 54 (34.6%) have been employed for 5 to 15 years, 43 (27.6%) have been employed for 16 to 25 years, 23 (14.7%) have been employed for 26 to 35 years, while only 6 (3.8%) have been employed for over 36 years. Most respondents, 100 (66.7%), see themselves as extroverted persons, while 50 (33.3%) feel that they are more introverted.

RESULTS

The respondents expressed their views and opinions by selecting one possible answer to the closed-ended questions. Most respondents are not familiar with NLP, 65 of them (43.3%) have never heard of NLP, 40 (26.7%) have heard, but do not know exactly what it is about, 42 (28%) know a little, and 3 (2%) are already using NLP, even though they did not attend NLP training. Of all 150 respondents, none attended NLP training and none of them were NLP trainers.

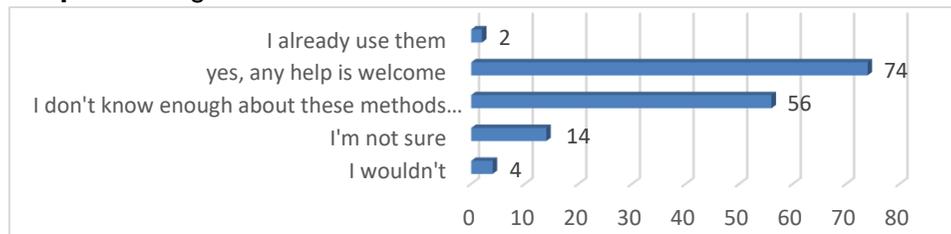
Graph 1: Familiarity with NLP



Source: Own survey.

When asked about possibility of using NLP methods with the aim of achieving more effective communication and better business results, the majority of respondents, 74 (49.3%), think that any help is welcome, 56 (37.3%) did not know enough about these methods to answer, 14 of them (9.3%) were not sure if they would use NLP methods, while 4 (2.7%) would by no means use NLP methods. Only 2 (1.3%) are already using NLP methods.

Graph 2: Usage of NLP methods in business communication

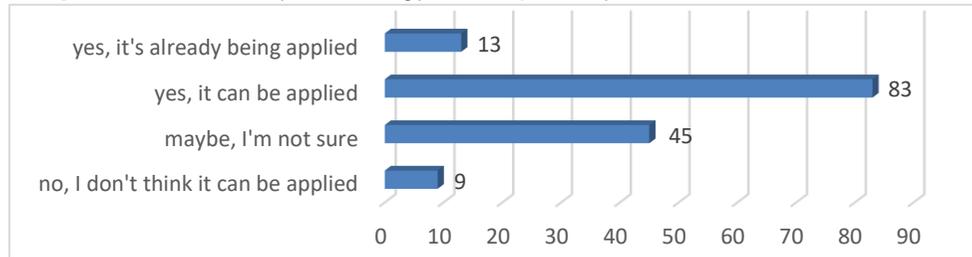


Source: Own survey.

One of the first methods of NLP explained in the survey is the Dickens Patter. When asked if they thought this method would be acceptable for use, 86 respondents (57.3%) said they could use it, 45 respondents (30%) already used it but did not know it was NLP, while 19 (12.7%) felt that this method would not help them. There are 87.3% of respondents who have a positive attitude towards this method thinking that they could use it or already use it, and only 12.7% think that it would not help them, meaning that this method is not acceptable for use.

When asked about acceptability of Walt Disney's strategy used in business to bring creativity to the team which involves taking on three different roles involved in the process of turning creative ideas into reality - dreamer, realist and critic, most respondents, 83 of them (55.3%) think it could be applied, 45 (30%) are not sure and think it might be applicable, 13 (8.7%) say they already apply it, and 9 (6%) think it could not be applied. Most respondents, 64% of them, have a positive attitude towards the acceptability of this method in business communication, 30% are not sure that they can apply it, and only 6% have a negative attitude, i.e. they think that it could not be applied.

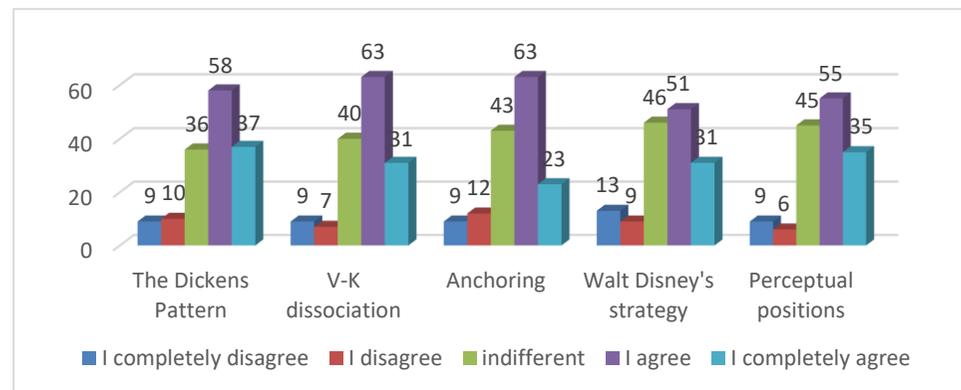
Graph 3: Walt Disney's Strategy - acceptability in business



Source: Own survey.

After being acquainted with the five methods of NLP, the respondents rated their views on their applicability in business communication using a five degree Likert scale, with a value of 1 indicating complete disagreement and a value of 5 fully agreeing with the statement. Respondents gave a mean score of 3.7 (agreement) for the Dickens Pattern, V-K dissociation, and Technique for changing perceptual positions, and 3.5 for Anchoring and Walt Disney's strategy. A total score of 3.62 indicates that respondents considered all five NLP methods to be acceptable.

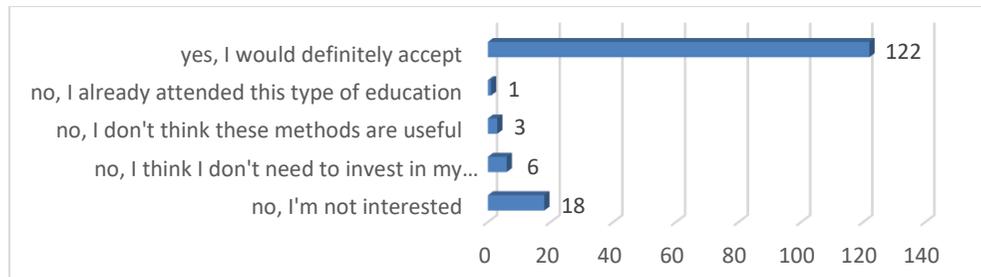
Graph 4: Applicability of NLP methods in business communication



Source: Own survey.

In order to gain insight into the respondents' interest in improving business communication using NLP methods, they were asked about accepting free provided training. Most respondents, 122 (81.3%) would certainly accept education, 18 (12%) are not interested, 6 (4%) do not think they need to invest in their communication skills, 3 (2%) do not believe that these methods are useful, and 1 respondent (0.7%) has already attended such training.

Graph 5: Acceptance of free NLP education



Source: Own survey.

Table 1 shows the relationship between respondents' personality (extrovert/introvert) and their response to the acceptability of using the Dickens Pattern in business. Most respondents, introverts and extroverts, consider this method acceptable for use.

Table 1: Attitude on acceptability of the Dickens Pattern in business

PERSONALITY OF RESPONDENTS	Do you think this method would be something you could use?			Σ
	yes, I think I could use it	Yes, I'm already using this method, but I didn't know it was NLP	No, I don't think it would help	
introvert	29	15	6	50
extrovert	57	30	13	100
Σ	86	45	19	150

Source: Own survey.

The relationship between respondents' personality and answers to the question about the acceptability of Walt Disney's strategy in business is shown in Table 2. Most respondents from both groups considered that this method could be applied in their business.

Table 2: Attitude on acceptability of the Walt Disney strategy in business

PERSONALITY OF RESPONDENTS	Do you think this method could be applied to your business?				Σ
	Yes, it can be applied	Yes, it's already being applied	Maybe, i'm not sure	No, i don't think it can be applied	
introvert	27	5	13	5	50
extrovert	56	8	32	4	100
Σ	83	13	45	9	150

Source: Own survey.

The results in Table 3 indicate that, whether introverted or extroverted, respondents agree that all five NLP methods could be applied in business.

Table 3: Attitude on acceptability of NLP methods

	STATEMENT	THE DICKENS PATTERN	V-K DISSOCIATION	ANCHORING	WALT DISNEY'S STRATEGY	PERCEPTUAL POSITIONS	Σ
INTROVERT	I completely agree	12	11	9	10	10	52
	I agree	26	23	25	17	17	108
	indifferent	10	13	12	16	20	71
	I disagree	0	2	2	3	1	8
	I completely disagree	2	1	2	4	2	11
EXTROVERT	I completely agree	25	20	14	21	25	105
	I agree	32	40	38	34	38	182
	indifferent	26	27	31	30	25	139
	I disagree	10	5	10	6	5	36
	I completely disagree	7	8	7	9	7	38

Source: Own survey.

Table 4 shows the relationship between respondents' self-assessed personality type and answers to the question about accepting a free NLP education. The majority of respondents from both groups would accept free NLP education, while only a few found these methods to be of no use and did not need to invest in their communication skills. There are 10% of extroverted and 6.25% of introverted respondents stating that they are not interested in education.

Table 4: Acceptance of free NLP education

PERSONALITY OF RESPONDENTS	If your employer ensured free NLP education, would you accept it?					Σ
	Yes, I would definitely accept	No, I don't think these methods are useful	No, I'm not interested	No, I think I don't need to invest in my communication skills	No, I already attended this type of education	
introvert	38	1	8	3	0	50
extrovert	84	2	10	3	1	100
Σ	122	3	18	6	1	150

Source: Own survey.

The existence of a correlation between the two variables was checked by chi-square test using the frequencies of occurrence of a single response in relation to the extroverted/introverted respondents. Table 5 shows the values of the calculated chi-square tests based on the data presented in Tables 1 (the Dickens Pattern), 2 (Walt Disney's strategy) and 3 (acceptance of free NLP education). Given that the results of the chi-square test show that all χ^2 are smaller than the readings, the conclusion is that respondents who consider themselves extroverted do not differ significantly from those who consider themselves to be more introverted in their propensity to adopt NLP methods.

Table 5: Correlation of respondents' personalities and attitudes about applicability of NLP methods

FREQUENCY OF ANSWERS	THE DICKENS PATTERN (TABLE 1.)	WALT DISNEY'S STRATEGY (TABLE 2.)	ACCEPTANCE OF NLP EDUCATION (TABLE 3.)
CHI-SQUARE:	0,032	2,578	2,512

DEGREES OF FREEDOM (DF):	2	3	4
SIGNIFICANCE LEVEL P:	0,984	0,461	0,643
LIMIT VALUE:	0,05	2,37	3,36
STATUS:	Ok.	At least 20% of expected frequencies are less than 5.	At least one expected frequency is less than 1.
YATES CORRECTION:	-	1,361	1,423
YATES P:	-	0,715	0,840
HYPOTHESIS:	0,031 < 0,05	1,361 < 2,37	1,423 < 3,36

Source: Own survey.

The relationship between respondents' familiarity with NLP and responses regarding the acceptability of using NLP methods to achieve more effective communication and better business results is shown in Table 6. The majority of respondents, 71.4% of them, who are already familiar with NLP believe that any help is welcome, while 24% think they cannot answer the question because they do not know enough about these methods. Most of those who have heard about NLP but do not know exactly what it is about cannot answer the question about the acceptability of using methods because they do not know enough about these methods. Of those who have never heard of NLP, there are 43.1% who think that any help is welcome and 41.5% cannot respond because they do not know enough about these methods.

Table 6: Attitude on applicability of NLP methods

Familiarity with NLP	Would you use NLP methods if you knew they'd help you in achieving a more efficient communication and better business results?					Σ
	Yes, any help is welcome	I wouldn't	I don't know enough about these methods to answer	I'm not sure	I already use them	
I've heard of NLP and I know something about it	30	1	10	1	-	42
I've heard of NLP, but I don't know what it's about	15	1	19	5	-	40
yes, I use NLP even though I didn't attend NLP classes	1	-	-	-	2	3
I've never heard of it	28	2	27	8	-	65
Σ	74	4	56	14	2	150

Source: Own survey.

Table 7 shows the relationship between the respondents' familiarity with the NLP and the answers regarding the acceptability of using the Dickens Pattern in business. The majority of respondents, 57.3% from all categories of NLP familiarity respondents, believe that any assistance is welcome, while 30% already use this method without knowing that it is NLP. Only 12.7% think that this method would not help them.

Table 7: Attitude on admissibility of the Dickens Pattern in business

Familiarity with NLP	Do you think this method would be something you could use?			Σ
	Yes, I think I could use it	Yes, I'm already using this method, but I didn't know it was NLP	No, I don't think it would help	
I've heard of NLP and I know something about it	22	17	3	42
I've heard of NLP, but I don't know what it's about	25	10	5	40
				0

yes, I use NLP even though I didn't attend NLP classes	3	-	-	3
I've never heard of it	36	18	11	65
Σ	86	45	19	150

Source: Own survey.

The relationship between NLP respondents' familiarity with the answer to the question about the acceptability of Walt Disney's strategy in business is shown in Table 8. Most respondents from all observed groups believe that this method could be applied in their business.

Table 8: Attitude on admissibility of Walt Disney's strategy in business

Do you think this method could be applied to your business?		Yes, it can be applied	Yes, it's already being applied	Maybe, I'm not sure	No, i don't think it can be applied	Σ
Familiarity with NLP						
I've heard of NLP and I know something about it		23	6	11	2	42
I've heard of NLP, but I don't know what it's about		24	2	11	3	40
yes, I use NLP even though I didn't attend NLP classes		1	2	-	-	3
I've never heard of it		35	3	23	4	65
Σ		83	13	45	9	150

Source: Own survey.

The results of the applicability of individual NLP methods in a five-degree Likert scale with respect to familiarity of respondents with NLP are shown in Table 9. The results indicate that, whether or not they are familiar with NLP- The respondents agree that all five NLP methods could be applied in their business.

Table 9. Attitude on applicability of NLP methods

	STATEMENT	THE DICKENS PATTERN	V-K DISSOCIATION	ANCHORING	WALT DISNEY'S STRATEGY	PERCEPTUAL POSITIONS	Σ
I HEARD OF IT	I completely agree	16	12	8	11	12	59
	I agree	13	19	20	15	17	84
	indifferent	8	8	10	11	9	46
	I disagree	3	1	1	1	2	8
	I completely disagree	2	2	3	4	2	13
I HEARD OF IT BUT I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT'S ABOUT	I completely agree	6	7	4	8	8	33
	I agree	22	16	19	12	17	86
	indifferent	7	12	13	12	12	56
	I disagree	3	3	2	5	1	14
	I completely disagree	2	2	2	3	2	11
I USE NLP EVEN THOUGH I DIDN'T ATTEND NLP CLASSES	I completely agree	1	1	1	1	1	5
	I agree	1	1	1	1	1	5
	indifferent	0	0	0	0	0	0
	I disagree	0	0	0	0	0	0
	I completely disagree	1	1	1	1	1	5
I'VE NEVER HEARD OF IT	I completely agree	14	11	10	11	14	60
	I agree	22	27	23	23	20	115
	indifferent	21	20	20	23	24	108
	I disagree	4	3	9	3	3	22
	I completely disagree	4	4	3	5	4	20

Source: Own survey.

Table 10 shows the relationship between NLP respondents' familiarity and answers to the question about the eligibility of NLP education. The majority of respondents, 81.3% of them, from all observed groups would accept free NLP education, while few think that these methods are not useful or do not need to invest in their communication skills or are not interested in education.

Table 10: Acceptance of free NLP education

Familiarity with NLP	If your employer ensured free NLP education, would you accept it?					Σ
	Yes, I would definitely accept	No, I don't think these methods are useful	No, I'm not interested	No, I think I don't need to invest in my communication skills	No, I already attended this type of education	
I've heard of NLP and I know something about it	37	1	3	1	-	42
I've heard of NLP, but I don't know what it's about	32	-	7	-	1	40
yes, I use NLP even though I didn't attend NLP classes	3	-	-	-	-	3
I've never heard of it	50	2	8	5	-	65
Σ	122	3	18	6	1	150

Source: Own survey.

The check of the existence of the correlation between the two variables was performed by chi-square test using the frequencies of occurrence of a single response in relation to the familiarity of the subjects with NLP.

Table 11: Correlation of respondents' familiarity with NLP and their view on applicability of NLP methods

FREQUENCY OF ANSWERS	THE DICKENS PATTERN (TABLE 7.)	WALT DISNEY'S STRATEGY(TABLE 8.)	ACCEPTANCE OF NLP EDUCATION(TABLE 10.)
CHI-SQUARE:	6,569	17,729	10,956
DEGREES OF FREEDOM (DF):	6	9	12
SIGNIFICANCE LEVEL P:	0,363	0,039	0,533
LIMIT VALUE:	5,35	14,68	21,03
STATUS:	At least one expected frequency is less than 1.		
YATES CORRECTION:	3,526	9,421	20,189
YATES P:	0,741	0,399	0,064
HYPOTHESIS:	3,526 < 5,35	9,421 < 14,68	20,189 < 21,03

Source: Own survey.

The values of the calculated chi-square tests are shown in Table 11 based on the data in Table 7 (Dickens form), 8 (Walt Disney strategy) and 10 (NLP education eligibility). Given that the results of the chi-square test show that all χ^2 are less than read, the conclusion is that respondents who are more familiar with NLP do not differ statistically significantly from respondents who know nothing about NLP in their propensity to accept NLP method.

Table 12 shows the relationship between respondents' level of education and how they're perceiving the acceptability of using NLP methods to achieve more effective communication and better business results. Almost half of the respondents who have finished higher education, 49.55% believe that any help is welcome, while 37.84% think they cannot answer the question because they do not know enough about these methods. Similar trend is shown for people with secondary education. Almost half of them,

48.72%, believe any help is welcome, while 35.9% believe they don't know enough about these methods to answer.

Table 12: Attitude on applicability of NLP methods

Level of education	Would you use NLP methods if you knew they'd help you in achieving a more efficient communication and better business results?					Σ
	Yes, any help is welcome	I wouldn't	I don't know enough about these methods to answer	I'm not sure	I already use them	
Higher education	55	2	42	10	2	111
Secondary education	19	2	14	4	-	39
Σ	74	4	56	14	2	150

Source: Own survey.

Table 13 shows the relationship between the respondents' level of education and the answers regarding the acceptability of using the Dickens Pattern in business. Majority of respondents with higher education, 89.19%, are either already using this method or believe they could use it in their workplace. On the other hand, 82.05% of respondents with secondary education have positive attitudes toward admissibility of the Dickens pattern in business.

Table 13: Attitude on admissibility of the Dickens Pattern in business

Level of education	Do you think this method would be something you could use?			Σ
	Yes, I think I could use it	Yes, I'm already using this method, but I didn't know it was NLP	No, I don't think it would help	
Higher education	64	35	12	111
Secondary education	22	10	7	39
Σ	86	45	19	150

Source: Own survey.

The relationship between respondents' level of education with the answer to the question about the acceptability of Walt Disney's strategy in business is shown in Table 14. Majority of respondents with higher level of education, 67.58%, believe this method could be applied to their business. Slightly less percentage of respondents with secondary education, 53.85%, share the same attitude.

Table 14: Attitude on admissibility of the Walt Disney strategy in business

Level of education	Do you think this method could be applied to your business?				Σ
	Yes, it can be applied	Yes, it's already being applied	Maybe, I'm not sure	No, I don't think it can be applied	
Higher education	63	12	28	8	111
Secondary education	20	1	28	8	39
Σ	83	13	46	16	150

Source: Own survey.

The results of the applicability of individual NLP methods in a five-degree Likert scale with respect to respondents' level of education are shown in Table 15. Consistently, greater percentage of respondents with a higher

level of education have a positive view on applicability of different NLP methods as compared to those with secondary level of education.

Table 15: Attitude on applicability of NLP methods

	STATEMENT	THE DICKENS PATTERN	V-K DISSOCIATION	ANCHORING	WALT DISNEY'S STRATEGY	PERCEPTUAL POSITIONS	Σ
HIGHER EDUCATION	I completely agree	30	23	19	25	30	127
	I agree	43	47	49	39	41	219
	indifferent	25	31	31	32	31	150
	I disagree	8	5	7	7	4	31
	I completely disagree	5	5	5	8	5	28
SECONDARY EDUCATION	I completely agree	7	8	4	6	5	30
	I agree	15	16	14	12	14	71
	indifferent	11	9	12	14	14	60
	I disagree	2	2	5	2	2	13
	I completely disagree	4	4	4	5	4	21

Source: Own survey.

Table 16 shows how willing would respondents be to accept a free NLP education based on their level of education. High percentage of respondents' from both groups would be willing to accept a free NLP education – 81.98% of those with higher of education and 79.49% of those with secondary education.

Table 16: Acceptance of free NLP education

If your employer ensured free NLP education, would you accept it?						
Level of education	Yes, I would definitely accept	No, I don't think these methods are useful	No, I'm not interested	No, I think I don't need to invest in my communication skills	No, I already attended this type of education	Σ
Higher education	91	3	13	3	1	111
Secondary education	31	-	5	3	-	39
Σ	122	3	18	6	1	150

Source: Own survey.

The check of the existence of the correlation between the two variables was performed by chi-square test using the frequencies of occurrence of a single response in relation to the respondents' level of education.

Table 17: Correlation of respondent’s familiarity with NLP and their view on applicability of NLP methods

FREQUENCY OF ANSWERS	THE DICKENS PATTERN (TABLE 13.)	WALT DISNEY’S STRATEGY (TABLE 14.)	ACCEPTANCE OF NLP EDUCATION (TABLE 16.)
CHI-SQUARE:	1,502	6,702	3,253
DEGREES OF FREEDOM (DF):	2	3	4
SIGNIFICANCE LEVEL P:	0,472	0,082	0,516
LIMIT VALUE:	1,39	7,81	3,36
STATUS:	Ok.	At least 20% of expected frequencies are less than 5.	At least one expected frequency is less than 1
YATES CORRECTION:	0,833	4,555	1,212
YATES P:	0,659	0,207	0,876
HYPOTHESIS:	0,833 < 1,39	4,555 < 7,81	1,212 < 3,36

Source: Own survey.

The values of the calculated chi-square tests are shown in Table 17 based on the data in Tables 13 (the Dickens Pattern), 14 (Walt Disney’s strategy) and 16 (NLP education eligibility). Given that the results of the chi-square test show that all χ^2 are less than expected values, the conclusion is that respondents with a higher education do not differ significantly from respondents with secondary education in their propensity to accept NLP methods.

Last hypothesis focused on inspecting the relationship between respondent’s length of employment and their propensity to accept NLP methods. Table 18 shows how the majority of respondents, irregardless of their length of employment, would be willing to accept any help to improve their business communication and achieve better results. However, highest percentage of people who have been employed for 5 to 15 years (55.6%) believe any help is welcome.

Table 18: Attitude on applicability of NLP methods

Length of employment	Would you use NLP methods if you knew they’d help you in achieving a more efficient communication and better business results?					Σ
	Yes, any help is welcome	I wouldn’t	I don’t know enough about these methods to answer	I’m not sure	I already use them	
Less than 5 years	9	1	11	3	-	24
5 to 15 years	30	2	20	1	1	54
16 to 25 years	23	-	12	7	1	43
26 to 35 years	10	1	9	3	-	23
36 years or more	2	-	4	-	-	6
Σ	74	4	56	14	2	150

Source: Own survey.

Table 19 shows how the length of employment affects attitudes towards admissibility of the Dickens Pattern in their business. When it comes to the Dickens Pattern, it appeared that the majority of those who have been employed for less than 5 years, 95.83%, have a positive attitude towards the admissibility of this method in their business.

Table 19: Attitude on admissibility of the Dickens pattern in business

Do you think this method would be something you could use?	
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Length of employment	of yes, I think I could use it	yes, I'm already using this method, but I didn't know it was NLP	no, I don't think it would help	Σ
Less than 5 years	16	7	1	24
5 to 15 years	36	13	5	54
16 to 25 years	23	14	6	43
26 to 35 years	9	8	6	23
36 years or more	2	3	1	6
Σ	86	45	19	150

Source: Own survey.

Similar results have been found when it comes to the admissibility of Walt Disney's strategy in business – 75% of those who have been employed for less than 5 years state that this method could be applied or is already being applied in their business. A detailed report about the relationship between the attitudes toward Walt Disney's strategy in business and the length of employment of the respondents' can be found in Table 20.

Table 20: Attitude on admissibility of Walt Disney's strategy in business

Do you think this method could be applied to your business?					
Length of employment	Yes, it can be applied	Yes, it's already being applied	Maybe, i'm not sure	No, i don't think it can be applied	Σ
Less than 5 years	14	4	4	2	24
5 to 15 years	32	1	17	4	54
16 to 25 years	23	5	13	2	43
26 to 35 years	10	3	10	0	23
36 years or more	4	0	1	1	6
Σ	83	13	45	9	150

Source: Own survey.

The results of the applicability of individual NLP methods while considering the respondents' length of employment are shown in Table 21. The results indicate that respondents who have been working for either less than 5 years or more than 36 years have the most positive attitudes towards the applicability of NLP methods. Specifically, those who have been employed for less than 5 years have the most positive attitude towards Anchoring (76.47%) and Technique for changing perceptual positions (88.24%), while those who have been employed for over 36 years have the most positive attitude towards V-K dissociation (75%) and Walt Disney's strategy (75%).

Table 21: Attitude on applicability of NLP methods

	STATEMENT	THE DICKENS PATTERN	V-K DISSOCIATION	ANCHORING	WALT DISNEY'S STRATEGY	PERCEPTUAL POSITIONS	Σ
5 LESS THAN 5 YEARS	I completely agree	6	4	3	2	3	18
	I agree	7	8	10	10	12	47
	indifferent	4	5	4	5	2	20
	I disagree	0	0	0	0	0	0
	I completely disagree	0	0	0	0	0	0
15 TO 35 YEARS	I completely agree	12	7	6	8	10	43
	I agree	17	27	19	16	19	98
5 TO 36 YEARS	indifferent	10	9	16	19	11	65
	I disagree	5	2	5	3	6	21

16 TO 25 YEARS	I completely disagree	4	3	2	2	2	13
	I completely agree	11	9	8	6	9	43
	I agree	14	14	15	13	13	69
	indifferent	5	7	7	10	8	37
	I disagree	1	1	1	2	1	6
	I completely disagree	1	1	1	1	1	5
	I completely agree	1	0	1	1	1	4
	I agree	11	13	10	11	10	55
	indifferent	5	4	6	6	7	28
	I disagree	1	1	1	0	0	3
	I completely disagree	2	2	2	2	2	10
	I completely agree	0	0	0	0	0	0
26 TO 35 YEARS	I agree	3	3	3	3	3	15
	indifferent	1	1	1	1	1	5
	I disagree	0	0	0	0	0	0
	I disagree	0	0	0	0	0	0
	I completely disagree	0	0	0	0	0	0

Source: Own survey.

Table 22 shows the relationship between NLP respondents' length of employment and their willingness to accept a free NLP education. Majority of respondents who have been employed for 16 to 25 years would be willing to accept a free NLP education, 88.37%

Table 22: Acceptance of free NLP education

If your employer ensured free NLP education, would you accept it?						
Length of employment	Yes, I would definitely accept	No, I don't think these methods are useful	No, I'm not interested	No, I think I don't need to invest in my communication skills	No, I already attended this type of education	Σ
Less than 5 years	20	-	2	1	1	24
5 to 15 years	44	1	7	2	-	54
16 to 25 years	38	-	4	1	-	43
26 to 35 years	17	2	3	1	-	23
36 years or more	3	-	2	1	-	6
Σ	122	3	18	6	1	150

Source: Own survey.

The check of the existence of the correlation between the two variables was performed by chi-square test using the frequencies of occurrence of a single response in relation to their length of employment.

Table 23: Correlation of respondents' length of employment and their view on applicability of NLP methods

FREQUENCY OF ANSWERS	THE DICKENS PATTERN (TABLE 19.)	WALT DISNEY'S STRATEGY (TABLE 20.)	ACCEPTANCE OF NLP EDUCATION (TABLE 22.)
CHI-SQUARE:	9,934	13,324	18,622
DEGREES OF FREEDOM (DF):	8	12	16
SIGNIFICANCE LEVEL P:	0,27	0,346	0,289
LIMIT VALUE:	10,2	11,3	19,4
STATUS:	At least one expected frequency is less than 1.		
YATES CORRECTION:	6,308	6,616	13,313
YATES P:	0,613	0,882	0,65
HYPOTHESIS:	6,308 < 10,2	6,616 < 11,3	13,313 < 19,4

Source: Own survey.

The values of the calculated chi-square tests are shown in Table 23 based on the data in Tables 19 (the Dickens Pattern), 20 (Walt Disney's strategy) and 26 (NLP education acceptance). Given that the results of the chi-square

test show that all χ^2 are less than expected values, the conclusion is that respondents with less years of employment do not differ significantly from respondents who have been employed for a longer time in their propensity to accept NLP methods.

DISCUSSION

The majority of respondents (70%) haven't been introduced to NLP methods before, while only 2% used these methods in their work. After getting introduced to the methods, respondents showed a positive attitude towards the acceptability of using NLP methods for achieving a more efficient business communication and, along with that, achieving better work results. This attitude is furthermore confirmed by the results showing the respondents' willingness to accept a free NLP education of which 88,37% are made of respondents who have been employed for 16 to 25 years. The hypothesis that extroverted respondents are more willing to accept presented methods has not been confirmed. Research shows that there is no statistically significant difference between the responses of the two groups. Respondents who were familiar with NLP methods show a positive attitude towards accepting these methods to improve their business communication, while others who were not familiar with them show either an indifferent or negative attitude towards using them. However, regardless of their level of familiarity and their level of education, respondents believe that these methods are applicable in their work environment further confirming this attitude by saying that any help in business is welcome. By taking length of employment as a factor that affects the attitude towards the applicability of NLP methods, research has shown that respondents who have been employed for less than 5 years and those who have been employed for over 36 years, have the most positive attitude towards these methods. This shows their willingness to adopt new work techniques to improve their work efficiency.

Even though the trend analysis of the results indicates there are some possible differences between the respondents based on their personality, level of education, and length of employment in their attitude towards the acceptability of NLP methods in business, all of these hypothesis ended up being statistically insignificant. Given the fact that this research involved smaller and uneven group of respondents, future research should focus on using a more representative sample which could confirm these trends and differences in the attitudes of respondents.

CONCLUSION

This research had the goal of determining the attitudes of employed people in Republic of Croatia about acceptability of NLP methods in business communication. The analysis shows that respondents have a positive

attitude towards presented methods, rating them as an acceptable mean to achieve better business results. The respondents were open to participate in free educations, if they were ensured by their employer, to adopt new techniques of business communication. Even though there were no significant differences based on their personality, level of education and length of employment, results show that the respondents are willing to invest in their communication skills. Furthermore, the results show a small percentage of respondents that are familiar with NLP, but it doesn't affect their attitude towards its influence on effective thinking and action that lead to a more successful business. This research indicates that employed people don't have limited beliefs when it comes to learning new techniques and work self-evaluation methods, and the possibility of investing in them. That type of openness towards learning is a positive sign to the organizations that there's a will and space to improve. Results show the respondents' focus on achieving quality communication, removing obstacles and creating better interpersonal relations which is the key of success to any organization.

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