

- Dixon, N.F. & Henley, S.H.A. (1991). Unconscious perception: possible implications of data from academic research for clinical practice. *Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease*, 179, 243-252.
- Hardaway, R.A. (1990). Subliminally activated symbiotic fantasies: facts and artefacts. *Psychological Bulletin*, 107, 177-195.
- Monhan, M. (1991). Subliminal audiotapes as an adjunct to traditional twelve step oriented treatment for chemical dependency. Pilot project. Livegrin Foundation, Philadelphia, PA.
- Pelka, S., Taylor, F.A. & Fedrigotti, X.M. Application of subliminal therapy to overweight subjects. *Behavioral Medicine* (in press).
- Silverman, L.H. (1976). Psychoanalytic theory: "The reports of my death are greatly exaggerated." *American Psychologist*, 31, 621 - 637.
- Swingle, P.G. (1992). Subliminal treatment procedures: A clinician's guide. Sarasota, FL: Professional Resource Press.
- Urban, M. J. (1993). Auditory subliminal stimulation: a re-examination. *Perceptual and Motor Skills*, 74, 515 - 541.
- von Zerßen, D. (1980). Die Befindlichkeits-Skala. *Münchner Psychiatrisches Informations System*.
- Zuckerman, M. (1960). The effects of subliminal and supraliminal suggestion on verbal productivity. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 60, 404 - 411.

Normal Instruction or Hypnotic Suggestion: What makes the Difference?

Burkhard Peter 1 2

■ *What is the difference between an ordinary instruction and a classical hypnotic suggestion? Several previous and contemporary attempts to answer this question are discussed: the intervening variables "hypnotic state" and "suggestibility" of the hypnotized as well as "credibility" of the hypnotizer, the emphasis put on "context" by some contextualists and system theorists, and finally the position of radical constructivism that does not recognize fundamental differences between suggestions and normal instructions on the level of selfreferential processes. It is emphasized that all these variables are of relevance only within a particular interpersonal relationship that has been called "rapport" for more than two centuries. Unfortunately, rapport has not been investigated extensively in comparison with other variables.*

I believe that the varying and ambiguous use of the word 'suggestion' has created an apparent image of acutely contrasting opposites that, however, does not exist in reality. It is worth taking the trouble to examine what may actually be called 'suggestion'." This statement made by Sigmund Freud (1888-89) in his "Translator's Preface" to Bernheim's (1888/1985) "Die Suggestion und ihre Heilwirkung" (Suggestion and its Healing Effect) has still the same validity today. Do we really know what we mean when we speak of suggestion? It seems to be "a rather generally held view that certain verbal communications [...] are to be and can be *a priori* distinguished from others as being 'suggestions'. Other communications, on the other hand, can be said *a priori* to be 'instructions', 'commands', and 'requests'" (Weitzenhoffer, 1974, p. 258; italics in the original).

Many clients and, as a matter of fact, more than a few trainees, that is, thoroughly professional colleagues, too, seem to have a relatively clear and simple notion of what is to be understood by "suggestion": namely, all those kinds of injunctions, instructions, orders and directives, that one can not resist and are therefore carried out and complied with quasi-automatically. Such notions are still very common today and

eventually do mean nothing less than that there should be certain instructions, named suggestive, that are irresistible, i.e. beyond rationality, free decision-making and will-power of the recipient. They do not at all express absurd ways of thinking as it may appear on first sight; for other respectable and serious authors such as Allport, (1961), Kretschmer, (1963), McDougall, (1908), Stokvis & Pflanz, (1961), or Young, (1931), write quite explicitly "that by suggestion is to be understood primarily the process of excluding, reducing or circumventing the rational parts of thought and judgement that leads to uncritical, involuntary ways of behaving" (quoted from Gheorghiu, 1991).

This way of regarding the suggestion is not only in the tradition of Abbé Faria (1819), and the Nancy school (Bermheim, 1888), with regard to the theoretical conception but is also completely within the full gamut of purely non-professional and even professional notions about the lexical meaning of the word "suggestion" such as it is to be found in dictionaries. Just as a short reminder, I should like to mention that the etymology of this term is very ambivalent already in Latin as well as in German², English⁴ and French⁵: apart from the literal translation of the Latin "subgerere" as "put (or lay) something under (or underneath)", there is also the positive meaning of "to impart, convey, teach, instruct, advise, counsel, recommend," and in addition the negative one of "prompt, whisper something into someone's ear, insinuate," whereby this latter one is definitely meant "in the sense of an illicit influencing" or even "prompting of supernatural forces in the rule of the devil"². Since the 16th century, both in English and in Canadian-French, "to suggest" and "suggerer" respectively have been used also in the sense of "to propose." Just how and why this particular term managed to enter the vocabulary of hypnosis cannot be determined exactly. Braid was already using the term "suggestion" in 1855, Liébeault in 1866 and Bernheim employed it in 1888 in the title of his book, which has meanwhile become famous, and in which he established the suggestion theory of hypnosis. Weitzenhoffer who introduced the term "classical suggestion-effect" gives the following definition which seems evident to nearly everyone of us who is working with hypnosis and suggestions: "Communications labelled 'suggestions' have at least the following two features: (a) they are transformations of the essential, manifest ideational content of the communication into behavior and (b) they have a *nonvoluntary quality*. This type of response will be referred to as the *classical suggestion-effect*" (1974, p. 258; italics in the original).

The following considerations started with me just wondering whether there are indeed two forms of communication or not, one followed by the classical suggestion effect and the other one not, and, if yes, why and under what conditions can we speak of one form or the other.

1. Are there linguistic differences?

Concerning intention, there is a significant difference between "teaching, advising someone" and "prompting someone, insinuating something to someone." Can this difference be determined by linguistic criteria? For "traditional" hypnosis this can be

negated. Here suggestions sound similar or even alike to normal instructions or simple statements, normally accessible to rational thinking and free decision making. "Sleep now!" or "Your symptom X will disappear" are simple examples of classical suggestions, having the same semantic and syntax as ordinary instructions or simple statements.

It is sometimes said that a suggestion could be distinguished from an instruction simply by the mode of wording: an instruction usually is phrased as an active command ("lift your arm"), whereas a suggestion is worded passively ("your arm is lifting"). Indeed, there is research evidence by Spanos and his associates (e.g., Spanos & Katsanis, 1989) that the passive wording of an instruction/suggestion is more likely followed by the experience of involuntariness than the active wording. However, this distinction on seems to me too simple and even incorrect because it doesn't really matter if you *instruct* a person to "go into a trance now" or if you *suggest* "you are going into a trance now"; if then this person is in a "trance" - set aside here the state/non-state dispute - it further doesn't matter if you *instruct* or *suggest* her/him, i.e. if you phrase actively or passively. From these and other considerations not explicitly mentioned here it can be said, that - at least in "traditional" hypnosis - hypnotic suggestions do not basically differ in semantics or in syntax from ordinary instructions or statements.

This does not seem to be true for "Ericksonian" hypnosis: Indirect suggestions⁶ clearly differ syntactically from clear instructions or simple statements. Imbedded commands, for example, are not easily recognizable as suggestions. However, and this seems to be important, they seem to have an effect only when they are marked verbally, meaning when they are emphasized verbally; only then do they become recognizable subliminally (Hoppe, 1984). Such paraverbally marked suggestions however again are comparable in semantics and syntax to normal instructions or simple statements. To this must be added, that also instructions can be formulated indirectly, without their compliance being due to the non-voluntariness criterium of the classical suggestion effect. It is furthermore possible to induce a trance and to "suggest" hypnotic phenomena nonverbally, i.e. without saying a word (see, e.g., the pantomime technique; Erickson, 1964). This is not to say that nonverbal communication is without any semantic and syntax - quite the contrary; it is just impossible to distinguish between an instruction and a suggestion on these grounds.

Fuller details pertinent to the question of identity and non-identity of direct and indirect suggestions will be found in a paper of Lynn, Neufeld & Maré (1993), and in the contribution of Szabó (in this volume, pp 171). I myself feel that in the "Ericksonian" hypnosis, too there are no essential differences between a suggestion and an instruction on the purely linguistic level.

2. Does the state of hypnosis explain the difference?

The idea, that the hypnotic state differs from the normal waking state, is very old. Traditionally this special state was associated with sleep ("artificial somnambulism" by Puységur, 1784/85; "lucid sleep" by Faria, 1819; "hypnotism" by Braid, 1843; "artifi-

cial sleep" by Liébeault, 1866); only much later was it proven that there is no similarity between the two "states" (Evans, 1979).

An explicit theory of suggestion within hypnosis (and, incidentally, also the first explicit psychological theory of hypnosis) was phrased by Bernheim as follows: "The patient is sent to sleep by means of suggestion in that one puts the idea of sleep into his brain; he is now treated with suggestion again in that one thrusts or presses upon his brain the idea of healing" (Bernheim, 1888, p. 190; italics added). How much this statement corresponds with the previously mentioned lexical or also the non-professional collection of usages of the word "suggestion" may be emphasized by the following statement of Bernheim's: "In the normal state every new idea undergoes examination and is taken up by the brain only *sub beneficio inventarii* [...]. In the case of a hypnotized person, on the contrary, the conversion of the idea into action, sensation, movement or sensory image occurs so speedily and with such force that the critical apparatus does not have a say in the matter" (ibid, p. 125; italics in the original).

Here, therefore, a first attempt is being made by Bernheim to differentiate qualitatively between a normal instruction and a suggestive one, and the decisive criterion is assumed to be the specific state in which the person concerned is deemed to be: the normal waking state as opposed to the *hypnotic state*. According to this theory it could be said that a normal instruction becomes a hypnotic suggestion when given to a person who is in the hypnotic state. But Bernheim didn't stop with this explanation, i.e., according to him, the state of hypnosis does not explain the difference between a normal instruction and a *hypnotic suggestion*. Most if not all authors of hypnosis share this view; Erickson for example stated: "Trance is a special state that intensifies the therapeutic relationship and focusses the patient's attention on a few inner realities; *trance does not insure the acceptance of suggestions*" (Erickson & Rossi, 1976).

3. Does suggestibility explain the difference?

Already by 1888 Bernheim's answer was somewhat more differentiated; he relied not only on the hypnotic sleep being the decisive (moderator) variable, but introduced additional variables; he referred, e.g., to (1) *reflex actions of an ideo-active kind*, which might be activated in "an unconscious way, bypassing the workings of will" (p. 125); for him this was merely a psychophysiological mechanism analogously to other reflexes. Further on he referred to (2) a certain changing amount of *credulity*, according to which we believe what someone tells us" (p. 120) and, finally, (3) "a certain amount of *compliance of the brain* that necessitates our obeying orders received" (p. 121). Consequently, we have here no longer variables of state alone, such as that of the hypnotic state but also psychophysiological and so-called trait-variables that must be present within the person addressed for the ordinary, normal instruction to become a suggestive one. As we know, Bernheim later distanced himself completely from the concept of the state variable of hypnotic sleep as being indispensable, for he asserted 1892 at a scientific congress in London and later on, too, that there is no hypnosis but only suggestion

(1917, p. 47; see Weitzenhoffer, 1980, p. 252).

But if now no difference between a normal and a suggestive instruction can be made on the linguistic level, and when even the hypnotic state is not the decisive criterion, then for the time being only what Bernheim presents as being more or less personality characteristics of suggestibility remain to account for how the normal instruction becomes a suggestive one. When expressed in another way and using Bernheim's logic, this means that, in the end, it is the *disposition* of the recipient that "decides" when a normal injunction is a suggestive one or vice versa.⁷

4. Is the trustworthiness of the hypnotherapist the decisive variable?

However, even Bernheim then did not stop at attributing this decisive question of when a suggestion is really a suggestion to the person for whom this suggestion is intended and/or to the person's disposition. For in 1917 he introduced another concept, namely, that of "*crédibilité*."⁸ This he explained with regard to a certain woman patient as follows: "It is the power of the influences she attributes to me, it is her credulity with regard to me which creates her suggestibility. [...]. She is influenced by this belief which reinforces her suggestibility, her ideodynamism with respect to me" (p. 75). Weitzenhoffer (1980b) interprets this "credulity" as opposed to "credulity" to begin with as "the credulous person is one who accepts, believes, anything he is told regardless of situation and informant. Credulity, on the other hand, is based on a *belief in the absolute credibility of one particular individual*. It is credulity in one sense, but a highly specific and circumscribed credulity which [...] comes into being only by virtue of a specific setting of context, and a particular interaction" (p. 257; italics added). This seemingly very modern position and the consequent inferences cannot, however, be found in Bernheim's exposition in an explicit and elaborated form, so that Weitzenhoffer himself has to take over the task of drawing the necessary conclusion: "As a matter of fact, he [Bernheim] appears to have overlooked [...] that credulity is suggestibility" and "variability in responsiveness to suggestion can only be caused by variability in credulity" (p. 258). Unfortunately the terms "credulity" and "credibility" and the 1917 book by Bernheim are not included in either of the two volumes of Weitzenhoffer's standard edition published in 1989. So it was and still is up to others to pick up and pursue this train of thought.

5. Do variables of context and of interaction play a role?

Does Weitzenhoffer (or even Bernheim already) perhaps mean that the setting and the interaction within the setting, i.e. all of the contextual happenings, decide whether an instruction is a normal or a suggestive one? If so, then this would be completely in agreement with a systemic point of view, such as has been described later by, for instance, Fourie (1991; see also in this volume). According to systemic notions, whether an instruction will be taken as being suggestive or not, is decisively determined by

the co-evolutionary process of reciprocal interaction of all persons involved within a given socio-cultural context. "Involuntariness" is thus a question of intersubjective definition and/or attribution of meaning. Of course, the behavior of a "systemically hypnotized" person is perceived as involuntary by the subject, who perhaps may be experienced as "lacking will" by the other persons present. It is, though, the common attribution of meaning that defines this behavior and this situation as such and not some sort of change in the intra-subjective "states."

However, this systemic approach is not as brand-new as it sounds. The non-state adherents among the researchers of hypnosis have long been advancing social-psychological alternative variables such as role enactment (Sarbin, 1950; Sarbin & Coe, 1972) or task motivation (T.X. Barber, 1969) in their attempts to refute the "state theory." A good deal of research has been done to show how the manipulation of, e.g., context, situation and wording influences cognitive sets like expectation and attribution and, as a consequence, the effects of a given suggestion (see, e.g., Spanos, 1991). Instead of being based on a special state or condition hypnotic behavior, i.e. an adequate response to a hypnotic suggestion, "refers to the manner in which the historically rooted conceptions of hypnotic responding [...] express themselves in reciprocal interaction" (Spanos & Coe, 1992, p. 108f). The *socio-cognitive* theorists as well as the *interactive-phenomenological* theorists (Sheehan & McConkey, 1982) conceptualize hypnotic subjects as active cognizers fulfilling the perceived requirements of the hypnotic suggestion.

It is very interesting to see how widely this socio-cognitive approach has been neglected by some of the today's systemic theorists. Quite in contrast to the socio-cognitive approach we could accuse the systemic adherents, or, at least the radical ones, of behaving like the radical behaviorists did a long time ago, i.e. excluding or, at least, neglecting the happenings in the black box, in the brain and/or at the subjective level of meaningfulness of every single one of those who participate in the hypnotic context. And it appears that, similarly to then - as an answer to classical behaviorism - the so-called cognitive theory followed, so today *radical constructivism* (Glaserfeld, 1978) fills the gap left by what the systemic group has omitted.

6. The position of radical constructivism

As early as 1896, in his *Principles of Psychology*, William James asked, "Under what circumstances do we think things real?" (p. 287). Therefore, constructivistic thoughts in psychology are not new and it is exactly the German school of Gestalt Psychology that has made a not inconsiderable contribution towards this (cf. Stadler & Kruse, 1986). The best-known contributors, however, are certainly Korzybski (1933), Bateson (1972) and, of course, Watzlawick, with his works about the *psychology of the "as if"* (e.g., 1992). The positions taken by subscribers to this classical or interactive constructivism - as I shall call it here - coincide with those of the systemic or eco-systemic adherents. A fundamental and mutual point of agreement may be regarded as being their argumentation against every form of objectivism or realism whatever: no objec-

tive reality exists for the individual; what we feel or see as such is actually our joint construction, our common co-creation.⁹ From a systemic-constructivistic point of view it follows that only the meaning constructed within a social context can cause a normal instruction to become a suggestive one; in other words, the mutually constructed and accepted significance given is what creates that quasi-reality of the *as if*, as if a suggestion were something qualitatively different from a normal instruction. Therefore, both followers of interactive constructivism and systemics are concerned with the *inter-subjective* construction of reality. Again, however, this position of the *as if* was not invented by Watzlawick but much earlier by, e.g. Sarbin (1980). Role enactment always implies as if.

Radical constructivism progresses to a step further in that it pays additional attention to the *intra-systemic* processes of the individual subject. Radical constructivism regards cognition as that "locus," where the significance of a certain suggestion within a given context is generated as a process of organization that functions auto-poietically, i.e. self-referentially; i.e. living organisms do not simply react to the "perception" of external stimuli - for this "perception" is, in its turn itself, only an internal construction - but are involved in a continual process of connecting their own internal states. They can therefore, a priori, recognize no truths or falsehoods, cannot differentiate between the "reality" of an empty chair and the person sitting on the chair as the result of a suggested hallucination (Kruse, 1989; Kruse & Gheorghiu, 1989). Starting out from the fact that only a mere fraction of the neurons of our organism is occupied with the perception of the external world whereas most of them are dealing with self-referential inner processes, Maturana and Varela (1987) compare our perception of reality to that of a submarine-crew, using a metaphor that has meanwhile achieved fame. The crew can observe the structure of the seabed or the coast as well as their own position relative to these only via instruments and so they do obtain an admittedly serviceable likeness but by no means perceive the reality, the actual terrain, itself. Therefore, within the frame of constructivism, suggested happenings corresponding to the so-called classical suggestion effect for instance, are viewed as thoroughly normal and customary, even then when they are felt by the participants to be abnormal, extraordinary or unusual.

In short, radical constructivism recognizes at the level of self-referential processes *no difference between a suggestion and a normal instruction*: on the contrary, the effects of hypnosis and suggestion are a necessary consequence of the functional autonomy of the cognitive system (Kruse, 1989).

6.1 Suggestibility as intra-systemic instability

Of interest here, both generally and specifically with reference to our subject, however, are the various aspects of and the conditions for intra-systemic stability or instability. Stability-producing are, for example, all those steps of cognitive and emotional development that Piaget (1975) has delineated and those that have been explored and described by workers in the general psychological and particularly in the psychoanaly-

tic fields of development theory (e.g., Stern, 1985). Remaining with the use of the previous metaphor of the submarine with its instruments that "perceive" the surroundings, this means that the setting, the adjustment, the definition and the image-making capabilities may be compared to what psychology terms "schemata," which are individually and continually being adapted and optimized during the course of life, according to the requirements and needs of the then obtaining stage of development, in a continual process of assimilation and accommodation (Glaserfeld, 1978; Revenstorff, 1991). These stable schemata more or less have to be instabilized so that a person is able to produce hypnotic phenomena. The more someone can tolerate the "suggested" instability of perception, affect and cognition, the more s/he is suggestible. There is some research evidence that suggestibility eventually correlates with intrasystemic instability (Kruse & Gheorghiu, 1991).

6.2 Rapport as a necessary condition to create and tolerate instability

Research into suggestibility has demonstrated how these schemata may vary from rigid to plastic on the continuum of hard reality to imagined construction (J.R. Hilgard, 1979). Moreover, that part of psychoanalysis applied to hypnosis (e.g., Brown & Fromm, 1986; Gill & Brenman, 1961) attempts to find out which archaic object relations (Shor, 1962, 1979) and which patterns of transference (Fromm, 1968; Peter, 1992) become active and influential and thus play a decisive role within that special social context that for the last 200 years has been called "hypnotic rapport" and that undoubtedly co-determines when an instruction becomes suggestive and so "causes" what we then refer to as "the classical suggestion effect." In contrast to the terms "social interaction, context or co-creation," I should like to use the term "hypnotic rapport" to take into consideration the circumstance that, quite definitely, the so-called psycho-dynamic elements play a decisive role within the hypnotic relationship. Diamond (1984, 1987), too, has recently been occupied with this interactional process and the researches of Banyai and her colleagues (Banyai, 1985; Banyai et al., 1985, 1990) are similarly concerned with the rapport between hypnotist and subject, and attempt to quantify the magnitude and influence on the extent and "goodness" of the developing trance using psycho-physiological parameters.

With the few exceptions just mentioned, I agree with Weitzenhoffer (1989, Vol. I, p. 359 ff) that one doesn't hear much about rapport these days. This seems a bit surprising as the concept of rapport indeed goes back to Mesmer's times and some early and highly respected writers again and again viewed it as the key to understanding suggested and hypnotic behavior. Lipps (1897) as well as Jones (1948), e.g., pointed out that rapport is the power of and the basic force behind suggestion.

From the view of radical constructivism, too, rapport holds a place of central significance: Hypnosis and suggestion generate at first a state of intra-systemic instability; the process of hypnotic induction produces a diminishing and disorientation of external perception and progressively orients the cognitive system towards its internal self-refe-

rential processes. The energetic fluctuations of perception become systematically reduced and existing schemata are instabilized. The role of the hypnotist or the hypnotist therapist consists of both initiating and directing this process of losing stability and also actively accompanying and (clinically) checking over the new construction. But this is possible only when between both persons a sufficiently well-suited construction with regard to perception of reality exists and has been developed in the course of hypnosis as a co-evolutionary process. *Thus rapport is the essential precondition and the foundation of every hypnotic suggestion.* It is, however, beyond the scope of this article to pay that tribute to rapport which it definitely deserves.

8. Summary

Let us summarize:

1. Whether an instruction is normal or suggestive cannot be determined a priori on linguistic grounds.
2. The *hypnotic state* as a first (moderator) variable is not sufficient, at least not alone, to convert a normal to a suggestive instruction.
3. For a long period, even far into the present century, *suggestibility*, understood as a personal disposition, has been viewed as a second supplementary variable, decisive for finally determining whether a given person takes an instruction as a suggestion or not. Already in 1917, Bernheim, but also later, in 1980(a), Weitzenhoffer, questioned the validity of this quasi personality variable.
4. In 1917 Bernheim introduced the term "*crédibilité*" and thus intimated that the variables of personality of the person giving the suggestion, i.e. of the suggestor, may also play a significant role; and with this we have the third supplementary variable, which has indeed been enthusiastically exploited by many semi-professional authors - but which, interestingly enough, has received almost no attention or mention within the field of academic literature.
5. At least according to Weitzenhoffer's interpretation, the variables of setting, *context* and *interaction* as being a fourth set of variables obtain considerable significance with this introduction by Bernheim of "*crédibilité*." For both the social-psychological researchers of hypnosis and the contextualist, this set of variables is decisive, and the classical constructivist and the systemicist postulate quite explicitly: Suggestion is a process of inter-subjective co-creation or the product of a mutual attribution of meaning.
6. The radical constructivists go even further and conceive the cognition of an individual as being a system that is open only energetically, but is otherwise functionally closed, i.e. a system that can only refer or relate to itself, and at the level of the generation of meaning this system can interact at first only with itself. For such a *self-referential system* there exists a priori no difference between a hallucinated and a "real" perception. Thus the effects of hypnosis and suggestion are no extraordinary

exception or even the product of some sort of special ability but are only the *necessary consequence of the manner of functioning of an autopoietic system*. With this, the question posed by William James one hundred years ago regains an immediate and relevant significance: "Under what circumstances do we think things real?" (cf. Gheorghiu & Kruse, 1991, 1992; Stadler & Kruse, 1990).

7. Other psychological disciplines have already sought for answers to this crucial question asked by William James. The results from both general and psychoanalytical fields of developmental psychology can be summarized in a very generalized and simplified way as follows: During the development of an individual within his/her given context, more or less stable patterns or *schemata*, respectively do take shape during a process of continuous *assimilation and accommodation*; and these enable the individual to achieve a relatively stable construction of reality that allows the effects of suggestion, in its turn, to appear as something special.

8. But for this special phenomenon, i.e. an irritation of the system to be tolerated as being non-pathological and for it to be accepted as being perhaps even a fascinating and helpful experience that can lead to a new construction of reality, a particular, special human relationship is required. For two hundred years now, hypnotists have been calling this special inter-personal relationship "rapport."

Concluding remarks

One of the many oddities in the history of hypnosis is the fact that this, in my view the underlying fundamental variable, has been accorded so little scientific attention, apart from a few exceptions (Banyai, Diamond and the hypnoanalysts). All the previously mentioned variables enter freely into this rapport; but, taking a small liberty with the old Gestalt principle that the whole is more than the sum of its parts, I am convinced that it is this very hypnotic rapport that enables the particular, qualitatively new and decisive leap that transforms a normal instruction into a suggestive one.

The significance of a suggestion will, therefore, always appear only when all persons participating in this hypnotic rapport have seriously worked together cooperatively in the endeavour to construct such a perception of reality, which can, on the basis of the existing available abilities of the participants and their conscious and unconscious needs within a given socio-cultural context, lead to an improved navigation and a more satisfying course on the sea of life. To accomplish this, much creativity (Bloom, 1990) and also a certain amount of trial and error is required; but, in addition, more is necessary than mere semantically correct or syntactically skilful phrasing, more than the mere presence of a certain degree of trance and, also, more than the amount of suggestibility of the client and certain characteristics of the therapist that make him credible and trustworthy. Many hypnoterapists and hypno-analysts convincingly demonstrated that it is only on the firm foundation of therapeutic competence and clinical experience that all these different variables in their specific strength and

form and in their complex interaction in the individual case can become active and effective and impart to a suggestion that significance generally expected of it: *of being an instruction so obviously right and proper that it doesn't even enter one's head not to obey it*.

References

- Allport, G. W. (1961). Pattern and growth in personality. New York: Holt, Rinehardt & Winston.
- Bányai, É. I. (1985). A social psychophysiological approach to the understanding of hypnosis: The in-teraction between hypnosis and subject. *Hypnos*, 12, 186-211.
- Bányai, É. I., Gösi-Greguss, A. C., Vágó, P., Varga, K. & Horváth, R. (1990). Interactional approach to the understanding of hypnosis. Theoretical background and main findings. In R. Van Dyck, P. Spin-hoven, A. J. W. Van der Does, Y. R. Van Rood, & W. De Moor (Eds.), *Hypnosis: Current theory, research and practice* (pp. 53-69). Amsterdam: 1990.
- Bányai, É. I., Meszaros, I. & Csokay, L. (1985). Interaction between hypnotist and subject: A social psychophysiological approach. In D. Waxman, P. C. Misra, M. Gibson, & M. A. Baker (Hrsg.), *Modern trends in hypnosis* (pp. 97-108). New York: Plenum Press.
- Barber, T. X. (1969). *Hypnosis: A scientific approach*. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold.
- Bateson, G. (1972). Steps to an ecology of mind. New York: Ballantine Books.
- Bernheim, H. (1888/1985). *Die Suggestion und ihre Heilwirkung* (Übers. von Sigmund Freud). Tübingen: Edition Diskord. (Fotomechanischer Nachdruck der Ausgabe Leipzig und Wien, 1985)
- Bernheim, H. (1917). *Automatisme et suggestion*. Paris: Alcan.
- Bloom, P. B. (1990). The creative process in hypnotherapy. In M. L. Fass & D. Brown (Eds.), *Creative mastery in hyp-nosis and hypnoanalysis: A Festschrift for Erika Fromm* (S. 159-168). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Braid, J. (1855/1970). *The physiology and of fascination and the critics criticised*. In M. M. Tin-terow (Ed.), *Foundations of hypnosis: From Mesmer to Freud* (pp. 365-389). Springfield, Ill.: C.C. Thomas. (Original: Manchester: Grant & Co, 1855)
- Braid, J. (1843). *Neurypnology*. London: Churchill
- Brown, D. & Fromm, E. (1986). *Hypnotherapy and hypnoanalysis*. Hillsdale, New York: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Diamond, M. J. (1984). It takes two to tango: Some thoughts on the neglected importance of the hypnotist in an interactive hypnotherapeutic relationship. *American Journal of Clinical Hypnosis*, 27, 3-13.
- Diamond, M. J. (1987). The interactional basis of hypnotic experience: On the relational dimensions of hypnosis. *International Journal of Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis*, 35, 95-115.
- Erickson, M. H. (1964). *Pantomime techniques in hypnosis and the implications*. *American Journal of Clinical Hypnosis*, 7, 64-70.
- Erickson, M. H. & Rossi, E. L. (1976). Two-level communication and the microdynamics of trance and suggestion. *American Journal of Clinical Hypnosis*, 18, 153-171.
- Evans, F. (1979). *Hypnosis and sleep: Techniques for exploring cognitive activity in sleep*. In E. Fromm & R. E. Shore (Eds.), *Hypnosis: Developments in research and new perspectives* (rev. 2nd Ed. pp. 105-135). New York: Aldine.
- Faria, J. C. (1819). *De la cause du sommeil lucide: ou étude sur la nature de l'homme* (ed. by D.G. Dal-gado). Paris: Henri Jouve. (2nd edition 1906)
- Fourier, D. P. (1991). The ecosystemic approach to hypnosis. In S. J. Lynn & Rhue, J. W. (Eds.), *Theories of hypnosis: Current models and perspectives* (pp. 467-481). New York: Guilford.
- Freud, S. (1888-89). *Vorrede des Übersetzers zu H.Bernheim*. *GW Nachtragsband*, 107- 122.
- Fromm, E. (1968). Transference and countertransference in hypnoanalysis. *International Journal of Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis*, 16(2), 77-84.
- Gheorghiu, V. A. (1989b). The difficulty in explaining suggestion. Some conceivable solutions. In V. A. Gheorghiu, P. Netter, H. J. Eysenck, & R. Rosenthal (Eds.), *Suggestion and sugge-*

- stibility. Berlin: Springer.
- Gheorghiu, V. A. (1990). Suggestion, Suggestibilität und Hypnose. In D. Revenstorff (Eds.), *Klinische Hypnose* (S. 65-78). Heidelberg: Springer.
- Gheorghiu, V. A. (1992). Suggestion vs. Rationalität: Eine Wasser-Feuer-Beziehung. In B. Peter & G. Schmidt (Eds.), *Erickson in Europa*. Heidelberg: Carl Auer.
- Gheorghiu, V. A. & Kruse, P. (1991). The psychology of suggestion: An integrative perspective. In J. Schumaker (Eds.), *Human suggestibility*. New York: Routledge.
- Gheorghiu, V. A. & Kruse, P. (1992). Suggestion as a cognitive strategy. In W. Bongartz (Ed.), *Hypnosis: 175 years after Mesmer*. Konstanz: Universitätsverlag.
- Gheorghiu, V. A., Netter, P., Eysenck, H. J. & Rosenthal, R. (Eds.). (1989). *Suggestion and suggestibility: Theory and research*. Berlin: Springer.
- Gill, M. M. & Brenman, M. (1959). Hypnosis and related states: Psychoanalytic studies in regression. New York: International Universities Press.
- Glaserfeld, E. v. (1978). Radical constructivism and Piaget's concept of knowledge. In F. B. Murray (Ed.), *Input of Piagetian Theory*. Baltimore: University Park Press.
- Hilgard, E. R. (1965). *Hypnotic susceptibility*. New York: Harcourt.
- Hilgard, J. R. (1979). *Personality and hypnosis: A study of imaginative involvement* (2nd ed.). Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press.
- Hoppe, F. (1985). Direkte und indirekte Suggestionen in der hypnotischen Beeinflussung chronischer Schmerzen: Empirische Untersuchungen. In B. Peter (Ed.), *Hypnose und Hypnotherapie nach Milton H. Erickson*. München: Pfeiffer.
- James, W. (1896). *The principles of psychology* (Vol. 2). New York: Holt.
- Jones, E. (1948). *Papers on psychoanalysis*. London: Baillière, Tindall and Cox.
- Korzybski, A. (1933). *Science and sanity*. Lakeville, Conn.: Intern. Non-Aristotelian Library.
- Kraiker, C. (1987). Die Geburt der Verhaltenstherapie aus dem Geist der Hypnose. *Hypnose und Kognition*, 4, 1-9.
- Kretschmer, E. (1963). *Medizinische Psychologie*. Stuttgart: Thieme.
- Kruse, P. (1989). Some suggestions about suggestion and hypnosis: A radical constructivist view. In V. A. Gheorghiu, P. Netter, H. J. Eysenck, & R. Rosenthal (Eds.), *Suggestion and suggestibility: Theory and research* (pp. 91-98). Berlin: Springer.
- Kruse, P. & Gheorghiu, V. (1989). Suggestion, Hypnose, die Kategorie des Unbewußten und das Phänomen der Dissoziation: Ordnungsbildung in kognitiven Systemen. *Hypnose und Kognition*, 6, 49-61.
- Kruse, P. & Gheorghiu, V. A. (1991). Self-Organization Theory and Radical Constructivism: A new concept for understanding hypnosis, suggestion, and suggestibility. In W. Bongartz (Ed.), *Hypnosis: 175 years after Mesmer*. Konstanz: Universitätsverlag.
- Liébeault, A. (1866). *Du sommeil et des états analogues, considéré surtout au point de vue de l'action du moral sur le physique*. Paris: Masson.
- Lippes, T. (1897). *Suggestion und Hypnose: Eine psychologische Untersuchung*. Sitzungsbericht der bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaft, 391-522.
- Maturana, H. R. & Varela, F. J. (1987). *Der Baum der Erkenntnis: Wie wir unsere Welt durch unsere Wahrnehmung erschaffen - Die biologischen Wurzeln des menschlichen Erkennens*. Bern: Scherz.
- McDougall, W. (1908). *Introduction to social psychology*. London: Methuen.
- Peter, B. (1992). *Hypnoanalyse: Der Beitrag von Erika Fromm*. Hypnose und Kognition, 9(1/2), 58-84.
- Piaget, J. (1975). *Der Aufbau der Wirklichkeit beim Kinde*. Stuttgart: Klett.
- Puységur, A.M.J. (1784/85). *Memoires pour servir a l'établissement du magnétisme animal*. Paris: Cellot.
- Revenstorff, D. (1991). Hypnose als Kognitive Therapie. In B. Peter, C. Kraiker, & D. Revenstorff (Eds.), *Hypnose und Verhaltenstherapie*. Bern: Huber.
- Sarbin, T. R. (1950). Contributions to role-taking theory: I. Hypnotic behavior. *Psychological Review*, 57, 255-270.
- Sarbin, T. R. & Coe, W. C. (1972). Hypnosis: A social psychological analysis of influence communication. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
- Sheehan, P.W. & McConkey, K. (1982). Hypnosis and experience: The exploration of phenomena and process. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Shor, R. E. (1962). Three dimensions of hypnotic depth. *International Journal of Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis*, 10, 23-38.
- Shor, R. E. (1979). A phenomenological method for the measurement of variables important to an understanding of the nature of hypnosis. In E. Fromm & R. E. Shore (Eds.), *Hypnosis: Developments in research and new perspectives* (rev. 2nd Ed., pp. 105-135). New York: Aldine.
- Stadler, M. & Kruse, P. (1986). *Gestalttheorie und Theorie der Selbstorganisation*. Gestalt Theory, 8, 75-98.
- Stadler, M. & Kruse, P. (1990). The self-organization perspective in cognitive research: Historical remarks and new experimental approaches. In H. Haken & M. Stadler (Eds.), *Synergetics of cognition* (S. 32-52). Berlin: Springer.
- Stadler, M. & Kruse, P. (1991). Synergetik der Kognition: Eine neue interdisziplinäre Perspektive. In D. Frey & G. Köhnken (Eds.), *Bericht über den 37. Kongreß der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Psychologie in Kiel 1990* (pp. 463-469). Göttingen: Hogrefe.
- Stern, D. N. (1985). *The interpersonal world of the infant*. New York: Basic Books.
- Stokvis, B. & Pflanz, M. (1961). *Suggestion*. Stuttgart: Hippokrates.
- Spanos, N. P. (1991). A sociocognitive approach to hypnosis. In S. J. Lynn & J. W. Rhue (Eds.), *Theories of hypnosis: Current models and perspectives* (pp. 324-361). New York: Guilford.
- Spanos, N. P. & Coe, W.C. (1992). A social-psychological approach to hypnosis. In E. Fromm & M. R. Nash (Eds.), *Contemporary hypnosis*. New York: Guilford.
- Spanos, N. P. & Katsanis, J. (1989). Effects of instructional set on attributions of nonviolation during hypnotic and nonhypnotic analgesia. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 56, 182-188.
- Watzlawick, P. (1992). Die Psychologie des "als ob." In B. Peter & G. Schmidt (Eds.), *Erickson in Europa*. Heidelberg: Carl Auer.
- Weitzenhoffer, A. M. (1953). *Hypnotism: An objective study in suggestibility*. New York: Wiley.
- Weitzenhoffer, A. M. (1974). When is an "instruction" an "instruction"? *International Journal of Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis*, 22, 258-269.
- Weitzenhoffer, A. M. (1980a). *Hypnotic susceptibility revisited*. *American Journal of Clinical Hypnosis*, 22, 130-146.
- Weitzenhoffer, A. M. (1980b). What did he (Bernheim) say? A postscript and an addendum. *International Journal of Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis*, 28, 252-260.
- Weitzenhoffer, A. M. (1989). *The practice of hypnotism* (2 Vol.). New York: John Wiley.
- Weitzenhoffer, A. M. (1995). Erickson and the unity of hypnotism. In M. Kleinhaus, B. Peter, S. Livnay, V. Delano, K. Fuchs & A. Iost-Peter (Eds.), *Jerusalem Lectures on Hypnosis and Hypnotherapy* (pp.1-16). Hypnosis International Monographs, 1. Munich: M.E.G.-Stiftung.
- Young, P. C. (1931). *Suggestion as indirection*. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 26, 69-90.

Anmerkungen

- 1 An earlier version of this paper was presented at the 6th European Congress of Hypnosis in Vienna, Austria, August 1993.
- 2 The author is grateful to Peter Kruse, Christoph Kraiker, Erika Fromm, André Weitzenhoffer, and Dirk Revenstorff for their critically reviewing this paper.
- 3 Deutsches Wörterbuch von Jacob und Wilhelm Grimm; Original Leipzig, 1899; wiederaufgelegt in dtv 1984
- 4 The Oxford English Dictionary, Oxford, 1933
- 5 Wartzburg, W.v. (1963). *Französisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch*. Basel: R.G.Zbinden & Co.
- 6 It is obvious that not only "Ericksonians" use "indirect suggestions." Regarding the usefulness and cor-

rectness of the distinction between "traditional" and "Ericksonian" hypnosis see Weitzenhoffer (1995). It is understandable that, when research into hypnosis was taken up again in this century, this assumed personality trait of suggestibility was investigated intensively in order to be able to (pre-)determine the "hypnotizability" of people - at least according to the then existing view (Hilgard, 1965; Weitzenhoffer, 1953). The fact that Weitzenhoffer (1980a) questioned this equating of "hypnotizability" and suggestibility will be only touched upon here; and, similarly, only short mention will be made of the significance of the fact that this enormous research activity occurred in a period when it was generally customary in the field of psychology to explore personality attributes; research into hypnosis was thus only following the general trend.

- 8 an neologism which, according to Weitzenhoffer (1980), he borrowed from Durand de Gros
- 9 To avoid misunderstandings: Constructivists do not deny the existence of an objective reality beyond and independent of human beings. They just deny that man can "perceive" it. That what we think of as reality is, therefore, always our construction of, but not the reality per se.

Csaba Szabó

■ A growing number of clinicians emphasize the importance of hypnotic communication styles. They claim that indirect techniques are more effective than direct approaches. Other data, coming from experimental laboratories, point to the decisive role of the subject's hypnotic susceptibility. Namely, the more susceptible the subject, the more he/she will respond to suggestion, and the deeper the hypnosis will be. They claim that the hypnotic response level is a stable characteristic of the subject's personality (eg. Hilgard, 1986). The effects of the induction style on the hypnotic response level were investigated in a few experiments. Results revealed that indirect hypnosis can be more effective with subjects of low and moderate hypnotic susceptibility; for the highly susceptible group, however, the direct and indirect techniques provide similar altered experiences.

Data which support the idea that the induction style has no effect on the hypnotic response, namely that there are no differences between the effectiveness of direct and indirect suggestion or induction are coming from experimental laboratories (eg. Spinhoven, Baak, Van Dyck & Vermeulen, 1988; Matthews, Bennett, Bean & Gallagher, 1985; Maurer, Santangelo & Claiborn, 1993). Suggestions in these experiments were referring to the overt behaviour of the subjects who could perceive their own hypnotic behaviour. This could have an effect on the perception of their own subjective experiences. Moreover, the subject's hypnotic susceptibility was measured before the experiments, and that was known by the subject and the experimenter which could have an effect on their expectations.

Other data supporting the idea that indirect techniques are more effective, come mainly from clinical practice (eg. Barber, 1977, 1980; Erickson, Rossi & Rossi, 1976; Wester & Smith, 1984). In these therapies the hypnotic susceptibility was not measured before the therapy and sometimes not at all. Usually suggestions did not refer to overt behaviour, because the subject's not reacting properly to a suggestion could have