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NEURO LINGUISTIC PROGRAMMING FOR STAGE ANXIETY: A QUALITATIVE RESEARCH*

SAHNE KAYGISI İÇİN NÖROLİNGUISTİK PROGLAMLAMA: BİR NİTEL ARAŞTIRMA

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ABSTRACT

Stage anxiety may disturb the spiritual health of the individual, especially as it may adversely affect the professional success of the people who perform music professionally. The use of beta-blockers, substances or alcohol at the presence of the musical performance may not be a solution oriented behavior. Within the light of these problems, this study aims to search the usage of Neuro-Linguistic Programming, which is a collection of communication and behaviour change techniques, for relieving and treating stage anxiety. A qualitative design has been used for this research, interviews with the NLP experts and counselees whom had previously gone through with NLP sessions for treating stage anxiety have been held. Findings were reported and suggestions were given.

Keywords: Stage anxiety, music performance, applied music

ÖZET

Sahne kaygısı, özellikle müziği profesyonel olarak icra eden kişilerin mesleki başarısını olumsuz etkileyebileceği gibi, bireyin ruhsal sağlığını da bozabilmektedir. Müzik icrası sırasında beta bloker, madde ya da alkol kullanımı çözüm odaklı bir davranış olmayabilir. Bu sorunlar ışığında bu çalışma, iletişim ve davranış değiştirme tekniklerinin bir derlemesi olan Nöro-Linguistik Programlamanın sahne kaygısının giderilmesi ve tedavisinde kullanımının araştırılmasını amaçlamaktadır. Bu araştırmada nitel bir tasarım kullanılmış, daha önce sahne kaygısını tedavi etmek amacıyla NLP seanslarına katılmış NLP uzmanları ve danışanlarla görüşmeler yapılmıştır. Bulgular raporlanmış ve önerilerde bulunulmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sahne kaygısı, müzik performansı, çalgı eğitimi

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1. INTRODUCTION

Anxiety is a feeling of helplessness, and worry about things that are not clear. It might be stated also a comprehensive feeling that something bad is going to happen. Experienced subjectively and communicated interpersonally, feelings of anxiety is at the same time a necessary survival instinct (Nompo, Praghlapati and Thome, 2021.) Nevertheless, the level of severe anxiety is not in line with life. Anxiety may be expected arise when individuals face new experiences (Videbeck, 2021). Feelings of tension, with negative thoughts, or annoying worries might be a sign for anxiety. Even though some people may avoid anxiety by maintaining coping, anxiety is usually accompanied by physical symptoms such as sweating, trembling, dizziness, and fast heartbeat (American Psychological Association. 2020).

Music performance includes diverse skills such as coordination, attention, memory, aesthetics and interpretation, and motor skills (Salmon and Meyer, 1992). Stage anxiety (Music performance anxiety, MPA); a special type of anxiety which is a fear that a potential problem that may arise during performance and the musician may fear to be negatively assessed by the audience. Physiological and psychological fear is triggered by events like a concert or a performance exam. Many musicians have discouraging experiences that suggest they will not be able to fully use their capacities. High anxiety levels lead a coaction of automatic motor reactions (Allen, 2010). Kenny (2008), who has various research in this regard, has described musical performance anxiety as a persistent, disturbing experience about performance skills to be demonstrated in front of the community, regardless of the level of ability, education or preparation of the individual.

Stage fear may lead to the development of a variety of medical and psychological symptoms, including general anxiety disorder and depression. As a result, individuals who experience MPA may be directed to inappropriate behaviors such as beta blockers, alcohol, and substance abuse. Moreover, according to various research, it was seen that there is a negative relationship between high level musical performance anxiety and healthy lifestyle (Doğan, 2013).

NLP stands for Neuro-Linguistic Programming. Neuro refers to neurology; Linguistic refers to language; programming refers to neural language functions. In other words, learning NLP is like learning the language of the mind. It is a collection of communication and behaviour change techniques NLP (as a tool in psychology) was born in the late 70's from observations by Richard Bandler on the psychotherapy sessions of the excellent therapists, namely Fritz Perls, Virginia Satir, and Milton Erickson, increasing the effects of positive suggestions for clients

(Witkowsky, 2010). Because of its applicability, NLP was then utilised by practitioners in order to assess and treat a variety of clinical symptoms including depression, anxiety, and stress. It has been used in a wide range of fields worldwide including management, business, education, and sports (NLP, 2019). Although there are various medical and psychiatric methods in the solution of psychological problems, Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP) stands out as a nondrug method (Kotera and Van Gordon. 2019). NLP allows the individual to change the neural programming of any situation or emotional perception with various techniques, which is similar to bodymind therapies. (García-Alanís, Toapanta-Yanchapaxi, Vilatobá, 2021).

Within the light of these problems, this study aims to search the usage of NLP for relieving and treating stage anxiety. Within the light of this primary purpose, the opinions of the NLP counsellors and musicians whom participated in NLP sessions have been taken. The interviews are based on the counselees' previous and ongoing experiences about stage and the effect of NLP.

2. METHODOLOGY

A qualitative design has been used for this research, this is a case study. Interviews with 2 NLP experts and 3 counselees whom had previously gone through with NLP sessions for treating stage anxiety have been held. Snowball sampling method has been used for data collection.

3. FINDINGS

In this section, the interviews with the 2 counselor and 3 counselees and the session observation are reported. In the interview report, the counselees are numerated as CE1, CE2 and CE3; counsellors' opinions are listed as CR1 and CR2. The findings show that one of the counselees instrument is violin, one of them plays the flute and one is a piano performer. 2 of the counselee participants had an undergraduate degree of music education, 1 is music education undergraduate programme student. Two of the counselees took their NLP sessions 1-3 years ago, one took NLP session recently. All of the participants benefit from the usage of NLP for stage anxiety. None of them reported a regression in the effects of NLP treatment through time. Also none of them experienced poor performance regarded with stage fear after the NPL session. All of them took one NLP session.

3.1 Counselor Interviews

In this section, data gathered from the counsellor interview form are given.

1. What is your opinion about the effect of NLP in the treatment of stage anxiety?

CR1. NLP aims to reprogram the mind in order to use both consciousness and unconsciousness effectively, so that in eliminating stage anxiety, NLP can minimize or even eliminate the level of intense anxiety that a person would feel when they are on stage.

CR2. With NLP, the musician visualizes the moment of stage which causes them anxiety, as an external observer without internalizing it. They have the chance to observe the symptoms of anxiety occurring in their body and mind, re-evaluate the moment as an internal observer. That way NLP may reset the effects of the symptoms at the end of the session.

It might be stated that both counselors expressed effectiveness of NLP in stage anxiety. Both participants expressed that NLP seems effective in controlling and eliminating the symptoms of anxiety in music performance.

2. Do you offer your counselees an alternative diagnosis or supportive treatment before the session?

CR1. Regular breathing exercises, relaxation movements can be shown. Regular meditation is known to help prevent anxiety.

CR2. It is useful to combine several methods in NLP implementation instead of a single method. Meditation, yoga, learning proper breathing might help.

Both participants stated that additional exercises would help with stage anxiety, meditation-breathing exercises in particular.

3. How many sessions can be sufficient to achieve NLP results in stage anxiety?

CR1. Usually in a single NLP session, a decrease in stage anxiety or even complete disappearance may be observed. If the client experiences stage anxiety after the session, the same technique or a different NLP technique may be applied.

CR2. After one NLP session symptoms are expected to be relieved. Also if decreased or disappeared anxiety reappears in the following weeks, the same technique can be applied again, or with other techniques of NLP.

Both counselors stated that mostly in one session, symptoms of anxiety may decrease. Upcoming sessions are also suitable in recurrence.

4. Do sessions take place individually or with groups?

CR1. and CR2. Sessions are individual.

5. How do the sessions process?

CR1. We ask the client to assume that they are in a cinema or theater. We allow them to make observations. We tell that they are in total control of the film and that it will be whatever they want it to be. It can make variations such as whether the film is black and white or colored, moving or stable. We ask the person to visualize the situation that created the phobia on the cinema screen and to visualize the incident from the beginning to the end of the scene on his mind as if it was a movie. We then take the person from the external observer position in the cinema hall and gradually move him into the internal observer position. In this process, it should carefully be observed whether the counselee is comfortable or not. At the last stage, we show that the person can calmly complete the stage performance without any fear or anxiety. This last stage is repeated several times and in the last stage the situation that causes anxiety is adapted to the future. This way phobia is tested. If the client is calm in the adaptation to the future, the phobia is significantly reduced or completely gone.

CR2. Cinema technique would be the best. The counselee visualizes oneself in a theatre, playing his/her own movie of music performance with absolute control of the script. Then the visions should level up to internal observer position. The sequence is repeated until the musicians' visualizations are ended without anxiety symptoms.

Both participants explained the cinema technique, which is based on internal observation and reprogramming of stage experiences and perception.

6. What should be the characteristics of the session room

CR1. and CR2. It is convenient for the counselee to sit comfortably in a quiet environment.

7. During the session, does the client show symptoms such as mood changes, panic or pain?

CR1. In the applied technique, while the person imagines itself on stage, may show signs of panic. In this case, the counselee is asked to slow down the visualisation of the movie theater. Support may be provided from techniques that would make the counselee feel safer.

CR2. In case of threatening anxiety, the NLP expert should find the counselee's trigger of panic in the visualisation. Musicians' own stage fear symptoms are expected to be seen at the sessions.

Both counselors stated that the trigger of anxiety should be found reprogrammed for relieving symptoms.

8. How long does the session take place?

CR1. and CR2. Approximately half an hour.

9. Before or after the session, are there factors such as nutrition, movement and environment that the client should pay attention to?

CR1. and CR2. Physiological needs such as hunger or thirst should be fulfilled before the session.

10. After the session, how long does it take to see a reduction at anxiety?

CR1. and CR2. Immediate improvement is expected.

11. After the session, when is the right time to participate in a musical performance?

CR1. There is no time limitation, even after 5 minutes is ok.

CR2. At sessions final vision, we expect to that the anxiety symptoms are relived. The effect would be more permanent if the counselee performs at stage within a month.

Both counselors stated that imminent improvement is expected. Counselor 2 pointed to the significance of an upcoming stage performance of the counselee.

12. Does the effect of NLP permanent in most cases?

CR1. It depends on the counselee. It may be permanent or may need a repetition.

CR2. It was permanent for my cases.

Both counselors stated that one session might be permanent. Still in some cases, repeating sessions might be needed.

13. After the session, are there any situations that may cause a regression of the sessions' effect?

CR1. If the person experience stage to trigger phobia, there may be stage anxiety all over again.

CR2. The counseles forthcoming stage experiences would be decisive.

Both participants expressed that upcoming stage experiences play a role in recurrence.

14: Final statements to be referred

CR1. There may be cases where the NLP technique is not successful in any way. It is independent of the person's level of anxiety, personal history, character or external factors. In case of failure, the client should not feel bad. Not all techniques are suitable for every person. In such cases, the NLP practitioner can refer the person to different professionals.

While the Counselor 2. Made no addition, the counselor 1 explained that there might be cases of failure and help from different professions might be sought.

3.2. COUNSELEE INTERVIEWS

In this section, data gathered from the counsellee interview form are given.

1. How have your stage fear emerged?

CE1. Started at high school, I have been on stage before with no anxiety.

CE2. I had a bad stage performance.

CE3. Since I started to play an instrument.

All participants expressed diverse rootcauses of their stage anxiety.

2. Howlong have you been suffering from Stage fear.

CE1. and CE3. More than ten years.

CE2. Two years.

Due to statements of the counselees, it seems that they were suffering stage fear for a long time.

3. Have you had any estimation about the source of your stage fear?

CE1. At high school, my applied music instructor has changed, I was intimidated, the anxiety was there at the courses for years.

CE2. At the student concert in my school, I had a low performance and my parents scolded me at home.

CE3. I have an anxious nature.

Both internal and external factors seem to be root causes of stage fear in those cases. Instructor change, inappropriate reactions even personality might be the case.

4. Before performance, how have you been usually feeling?

CE1. Elevated heart beat, shortness of breath, thoughts of potential failure.

CE2. I could not see the sheetmusic because of panic sensation.

CE3. I have been feeling thirsty and faint. My hands go numb.

It might be stated that both somatic symptoms and sensations of anxiety seems present in participants.

5. During the performance, how were your emotions and thoughts?

CE1. It was impossible to focus on music because of panic sensation.

CE2. Catastrophic thoughts were flowing one by one about the sheetmusic in front of me, my technique, musicality.

CE3. The presence of the audience watching me playing makes it impossible for me to play music.

In these cases, especially panic, catastrophic thoughts and being on stage with audience seems to be an obstacle to focus on the musical aspects of playing.

6. Have you considered a coping strategy before NLP?

CE1. I changed my instructor. I got along much better with The new one. My teacher realised that I was sensitive. I was now relieved in courses but finals were still a problem. So I used beta blockers for a while but after idle time, it also has not worked.

CE2. I saw my family physician whom prescribed beta blockers. It caused low blood pressure.

CE3. I took sedatives before my applied music exam once. It affects cognitive process while playing music.

It might be wise to point out the use of certain medications in hopes of coping with stage anxiety, which does seem to cure anxiety in these cases. CR 1 seems to make an adjustment in environmental factor for coping, which is the instructor. It seems CR 1 experienced some improvement in solo and course performance, but playing for an audience still seemed to be a problem.

7. Have you tried alcohol, sedatives or antidepressants?

CE1. and CE2. People around me usually object the usage of them, no.

CE3. I only tried sedatives and it was not affective so I seeked a non-medicational way to cope.

All participants seemed to believe that alcohol consumption would not do any good to performance. Alcohol might slow down cognitive functioning which is fundamental for playing an instrument. This might be the reason for the participants to seek other ways to cope.

8. When did you seek professional help?

CE1. I saw a psychologist, ended up with beta blockers.

CE2. When my current schools auction was close.

CE3. I wanted to be able to play in front of an audience, I mean even kids can do it.

Seeking professional help seems to be the case in these counselees when they have had an upcoming musical performance or the will to perform decently before an audience.

9. How have you considered NLP?

CE1. A friend of mine told me about it.

CE2. I have read about an NLP session in a novel so I searched if it was convenient in my situation.

CE3. While I was searching anxiety treatment options on the web, I came across NLP.

Counselees stated that they gathered information through social encounters, printed or digital sources.

10. Before the session, what has the counselor told you?

CE1., CE2. and CE3. That the session is going to take mostly 30 minutes, and that I may trust the process, and my stage fear may be surpassed instantly in one session. My opinions were asked about the source of my stage fear.

The dynamics of the session seem to be quite indistinguishable, so that the researcher found appropriate to merge statements of the 3 counselees.

11. How did the session take place?

CE1. We used visualisation. The counselor led visions: "You come to the stage, look at the audience, start playing, bow to the audience and leave the stage." We repeated the ritual in several conditions. Like your parents are the audience your friends this time... When the part "You play, you leave. You play, you leave. You play, you leave..." comes, the specialist leads the visions really fast repeatedly and I feel a bit anxious. When we started the ritual with the vision which my former applied music teacher, I had a panic sensation during the part of "play-leave" so we had to stop the session. After I calmed down, the counselor informed me that we will do this again. At first, the teacher was at the backside of the concert hall, next time the teacher came a bit forward. At the last one, he was watching from the front seat and I was playing calmly. It was gone.

CE2. and CE3. Visualisation technique was used as reported in example of CE1. CE2 was triggered by his parents to be the audience. CE3. was triggered by the concert hall and the

audience itself so the visualisation sequence started again for small groups of audience like a home concert for the family, a classroom concert for friends, and finally the concert hall.

All participants referred to visualization of the musical performance, concert hall and the audience. The trigger of anxiety seems to have some significance. Once the trigger is found counselees thoughts about performance seems to be reprogrammed by the counselor.

12. How did you feel after the session?

CE1. I was exhausted so I went to sleep.

CE2. I was a bit overwhelmed.

CE3. Even though I was feeling sensitive, I was aware that something has changed in me.

Due to participants, NLP sessions seems to cause the counselee to worn out.

13. When did you consider a music performance after the session?

CE1. Within a month. I have never had a concert after highschool because of fear. The anxiety in finals was enough for me. A friend of mine asked me to play a few pieces at her workplace and I was willing to try.

CE2. The schools auction was 2 weeks after the session.

CE3. I gathered my family and a few friends as an audience for a home concert.

All counselees seem to experience reduction in stage anxiety so that they have had planned a performance before audience that felt suitable for them.

12. How was your experience?

CE1. At first I was a bit of anxious but no cathastrophic thoughts this time. At first piece my sheetmusic dropped on the floor. I stoped playing and told the audience that I will take it from the beginning. This time I was even calmer. It felt like I was practising by myself. I was able to focus on the music only and other facts were like not even there. I enjoyed the appreciation afterwards.

CE2. I thought that I was playing inside a sphere which protects me from outer threats. I tried not to look at the audience. After a while, I was able to focus on music and I completed the performance without any incidents.

CE3. I was nervous still, but this time I managed to keep it under control.

All counselees seem to experience a reduction of anxiety after NLP. Specifically somatic symptoms and emotional triggers seem to be more manageable.

4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

To summarize the findings, it might be appropriate to initially state that all counselees seemed to suffer from stage fear for a long period time. Both internal and external factors seem to be root causes of their stage fear. Some prior trigger experiences seems to cause catastrophic thoughts when performing on stage with audience, which seems to be an obstacle to focus on the musical aspects of playing. In order to cope, participants have tried certain medications, which does seem to provide relief. Since the prescribed or professionally advised medication could not work, the participants seemed to seek other ways to cope and were informed about NLP through social encounters, printed or digital sources. All participants referred to visualization of their musical performance, concert hall and the audience in NLP session. The trigger of anxiety seems to have some significance. Once the trigger is found counselees thoughts about performance seems to be reprogrammed by the counselor.

After NLP Session, all counselees have planned a performance before audience that felt suitable for them, such as a home concert for family, or workplace concert. All counselees stated that they experienced a reduction of anxiety after NLP. Specifically managing somatic symptoms and emotional triggers seem to be improved.

It should be noted that despite NLP's wide practical applications, the tool has not been well-accepted in mainstream psychology. One primary criticism of NLP is its underdeveloped scientific evidence of its effectiveness regarded to proper research methodology. The limited quality of research focused on NLP is reported in a number of review articles. (Witkowski, 2010). Thirty-five years of research on neuro-linguistic programming conducted a meta-analysis on over 300 papers reporting the use of NLP in some manner and examined 33 of these in closer detail. He concluded that NLP might be ineffective. Some studies assessed by Witkowski were also conducted by researchers with no apparent training in NLP. It's contravertial that before any such decision is made on the effectiveness (or not) of NLP, studies should be conducted with trained professionals.

Based on these outcomes, it would be suitable to consider an NLP threatment to relieve stage fear. However, it should be noted that as a result of the qualitive design of this study, the outcomes can not be generalized to the universe of individuals who are suffering from stage fear and seeking professional help.

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GENİŞLETİLMİŞ ÖZET

Kaygı, net olmayan şeyler hakkında çaresizlik ve endişe duygusu olarak tanımlanabilir. Kötü bir şeyin olacağına dair kapsamlı bir duygu da denilebilir. Öznel olarak deneyimlenen ve kişilerarası olarak iletilen kaygı aynı zamanda gerekli bir hayatta kalma içgüdüdür. Bununla birlikte, şiddetli kaygının düzeyi yaşamı zorlaştırabilir. Bireyler yeni deneyimlerle karşılaştıklarında kaygının ortaya çıkması beklenebilir. Olumsuz düşünceler veya sinir bozucu endişelerle birlikte gerginlik hissi, kaygı belirtisi olabilir. Bazı insanlar başa çıkmayı sürdürerek kaygıdan kaçınabilse de kaygıya genellikle terleme, titreme, baş dönmesi ve hızlı kalp atışı gibi fiziksel belirtiler eşlik eder

Sahne korkusu, genel anksiyete bozukluğu ve depresyon da dahil olmak üzere çeşitli tıbbi ve psikolojik semptomların gelişmesine yol açabilir. Sonuç olarak sahne kaygısı yaşayan bireyler beta bloker, alkol, madde kullanımı gibi uygunsuz davranışlara yönlendirilebilmektedir.

NLP, Nöro-Linguistik Programlama anlamına gelir. Nöro, nörolojiyi ifade eder; Linguistik ise dili ifade eder; programlama sinir dili fonksiyonlarını ifade eder. Başka bir deyişle NLP öğrenmek zihnin dilini öğrenmek gibidir. NLP (psikolojide bir araç olarak), 70'lerin sonlarında Richard Bandler'in Fritz Perls, Virginia Satir ve Milton Erickson gibi mükemmel terapistlerin psikoterapi seansları üzerine yaptığı gözlemlerden doğmuş, iletişim ve davranış değiştirme tekniklerinden oluşan bir koleksiyondur. NLP daha sonra uygulayıcılar tarafından depresyon, anksiyete ve stres gibi çeşitli klinik semptomları değerlendirmek ve tedavi etmek için kullanılmıştır. Dünya çapında yönetim, işletme, eğitim ve spor dahil çok çeşitli alanlarda kullanılmaktadır. Psikolojik sorunların çözümünde çeşitli tıbbi ve psikiyatrik yöntemler bulunsa da NLP ilaç dışı bir yöntem olarak öne çıkmaktadır. NLP, beden-zihin terapilerine benzer şekilde bireyin herhangi bir durumun veya duygusal algının nöral programlamasını çeşitli tekniklerle değiştirmesine olanak tanır.

Bu çalışma, NLP'nin sahne kaygısını giderme ve tedavi etmede kullanımını araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu temel amaç doğrultusunda NLP seanslarına katılan NLP danışmanlarının ve müzisyenlerin görüşleri alınmıştır. Görüşmeler, danışanların NLP'nin aşaması ve etkisine ilişkin önceki ve devam eden deneyimlerine dayanmaktadır.

Bu araştırmada nitel bir desen kullanılmıştır, bir durum çalışmasıdır. Sahne kaygısını tedavi etmek amacıyla daha önce NLP seanslarına katılmış 2 NLP uzmanı ve 3 danışanla görüşmeler gerçekleştirilmiştir.

Sahne kaygısı için yapılan NLP seansları ile ilgili danışmanlar içerisinde şu ifadeler dikkat çekmiştir:

“NLP ile müzisyen, sahnede kendisine kaygı veren anı içselleştirmeden, dışarıdan bir gözlemci olarak görselleştirir. Bedenlerinde ve zihinlerinde oluşan kaygı belirtilerini gözleme, bir iç gözlemci olarak anı yeniden değerlendirme şansına sahip olurlar. Bu şekilde NLP seans sonunda semptomların etkilerini sıfırlayabilir.”

“Kişinin fobiyi yaratan durumu sinema ekranında canlandırmasını ve olayı sahnenin başından sonuna kadar sanki bir filmmiş gibi zihninde canlandırmasını istiyoruz. Daha sonra kişiyi sinema salonunda dış gözlemci pozisyonundan alıp yavaş yavaş iç gözlemci pozisyonuna getiriyoruz. Bu süreçte danışanın rahat olup olmadığı dikkatle takip edilmelidir. Son aşamada ise kişinin herhangi bir korku, kaygı yaşamadan, sakin bir şekilde sahne performansını tamamlayabildiğini gösteriyoruz. Bu son aşama birkaç kez tekrarlanır ve son aşamada kaygıya neden olan durum geleceğe uyarlanır. Bu şekilde fobi test edilir. Danışan geleceğe uyum konusunda sakınse fobisi önemli ölçüde azalır veya tamamen ortadan kalkar.”

“Uygulanan teknikte kişi kendisini sahnede hayal ederken panik belirtileri gösterebilir. Bu durumda danışandan sinema salonundaki görselleştirmeyi yavaşlatması istenir. Danışanın kendisini daha güvende hissetmesini sağlayacak tekniklerden destek sağlanabilir.”

“NLP tekniğinin hiçbir şekilde başarılı olamadığı durumlar olabilir. Kişinin kaygı düzeyinden, kişisel geçmişinden, karakterinden ya da dış etkenlerden bağımsızdır. Başarısızlık durumunda danışanın kendini kötü hissetmemesi gerekir. Her teknik her kişiye uygun değildir. Böyle durumlarda NLP uygulayıcısı kişiyi farklı profesyonellere yönlendirebilir.”

Sahne kaygısı için yapılan NLP seanslarına katılan danışanlar içerisinde şu ifadeler dikkat çekmiştir:

“Bir kez uygulamalı müzik sınavından önce sakinleştirici almıştım. Müzik çalarken bilişsel süreci etkiliyor ama.”

“Sahnede kendimi susuz ve baygın hissediyordum. Ellerim uyuşuyordu.”

“Önümdeki notalar, tekniğim, müzikalitem hakkında felaket düşünceler bir bir akıyordu.”

“Başa çıkmak için çalgı öğretmenimi değiştirdim. Onunla çok daha iyi anlaştım. Öğretmenim hassas olduğumu fark etti. Artık derslerde rahatlamıştım ama finaller hâlâ sorundu. Bu yüzden bir süre beta blocker kullandım ancak bir süre sonra o da işe yaramadı”.

“Seyirci önünde çalabilmek istedim, yani çocuklar bile bunu yapabiliyor”

“Seansta görselleştirmeyi kullandık. Danışman görülmeye öncülük etti: -Sahneye geliyorsunuz, seyirciye bakıyorsunuz, çalmaya başlıyorsunuz, seyirciye selam veriyorsunuz ve sahneden ayrılıyorsunuz.” Ritüeli çeşitli koşullarda tekrarladık. Anne-babanız seyirci, bu kez arkadaşlarınız... “Çalyorsun, gidiyorsun. Çalyorsun, gidiyorsun. Çalyorsun,

gidiyorsun... diye uzman tekrar tekrar çok hızlı söylüyor ve ben biraz tedirgin oluyorum. Eski çalgı öğretmenimin görüşüyle ritüele başladığımızda “çalıyorsun gidiyorsun” kısmında panik hissettim ve seansı durdurmak zorunda kaldık. Sakinleştikten sonra danışman bana bunu yapacağımızı söyledi. Tekrar. İlk başta öğretmen konser salonunun arka tarafındaydı, sonraki denemede öğretmen biraz öne çıktı. Sonuncusunda o ön koltukta izliyordu, ben de sakince çalışıyordum. Kaygım gitmişti.

“Seanstan sonar ilk konserimde başta biraz endişeliydim ama bu sefer felaketle ilgili düşünceler yoktu. İlk parçada notalarım yere düştü. bıraktım ve seyirciye baştan alacağımı söyledim. Bu sefer daha da sakindim. Sanki tek başıma çalışıyormuşum gibi hissettim. Sadece müziğe odaklanabildim ve diğer gerçekler sanki orada bile değildi. Daha sonra konser bitimi takdir edilmesi hoşuma gitti.”

Bulguları özetlemek gerekirse, öncelikle danışanların tamamının uzun süredir sahne korkusu yaşadığını belirtmek yerinde olacaktır. Sahne korkusunun temel nedenleri hem iç hem de dış faktörler gibi görünmektedir. Daha önceki bazı tetikleyici deneyimler, seyirciyle birlikte sahnede performans sergilerken felaket düşüncelerine neden olabilmekte, bu da çalmanın müzikal yönlerine odaklanmanın önünde bir engel oluşturabilmektedir. Bu durumla başa çıkabilmek için katılımcılar, bazı ilaçları denediklerini ifade etmişlerdir. Reçete edilen veya profesyonelce tavsiye edilen ilaçlar işe yaramadığı için katılımcılar başa çıkmanın başka yollarını aramışlar, NLP hakkında sosyal karşılaşmalar, basılı veya dijital kaynaklar aracılığıyla bilgi sahibi olmuşlardır. Tüm katılımcılar NLP oturumunda müzikal performanslarının, konser salonunun ve izleyicinin imgelemesinden bahsetmiştir. Anksiyeteyi tetikleyen şey imgelemlerde bir kez bulunduğu danışanın performans hakkındaki düşünceleri danışman tarafından yeniden programlanıyor gibi görünmektedir.

Elde edilen veriler ışığında, sahne korkusunu hafifletmek için NLP yönteminin katılımcılarda etkili olduğunu düşünmek uygun olacaktır. Ancak şunu da belirtmek gerekir ki, bu çalışmanın nitel tasarımı sonucunda, sonuçların sahne korkusu yaşayan ve profesyonel yardım arayan bireylerden oluşan evrene genellenemeyeceği anlaşılmalıdır.

NLP'nin geniş pratik uygulamalarına rağmen aracın ana akım psikolojide yeterince kabul görmediğine dikkat edilmelidir. NLP'ye yönelik başlıca eleştirilerden biri, uygun araştırma metodolojisi açısından etkinliğinin az gelişmiş bilimsel kanıtlarıdır. NLP'ye odaklanan araştırmaların kalitesinin sınırlı olduğu bir dizi inceleme makalesinde bildirilmektedir. NLP üzerinde bir takım çalışmalara göre NLP'nin etkisiz olabileceği bildirilmiştir. NLP konusunda belirgin bir eğitimi olmayan araştırmacılar tarafından da yürütülen çalışmalara da

rastlanmıştır. NLP'nin etkililiđi konusunda böyle bir karar verilmeden önce eđitimli profesyonellerle alıřmaların yapılması gerektiđi tartıřılmalıdır.

