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The Ordering Principle of the Meta Model of NLP

Prologue

It started, as many things do, with a simple quest. I wanted to prove what I called ‘the ordering principle’ of the Meta Model (of NLP). I’d always had this hunch that it could be done, but I never had what you might call proof – not the rock-solid kind.

So I started reading and re-reading some of the earliest books on language and NLP, all the old classics from the 60s and 70s, as well as some of the very latest stuff – books on what some call ‘the new linguistics’, and on cognitive psychology, and everything in between. If it had cognition or linguistics or syntax in the title, I shoved it past my eyes.

And I can tell you now, dear reader, my simple quest became a very general one. I found myself trying to answer a much bigger question: what happened to the ‘L’ of NLP? And why did people in the NLP community know so little about it? How come they don’t know of the not one, but two, revolutions that have taken place in linguistics since 1975? Why are they so unaware of what has been going on? Why, for example, are they still trotting out the tired, old Deep Structure/Surface Structure mantra when the conventional linguistic world gave up on that more than twenty years ago?

And why, dear reader – and this is perhaps the biggest of heresies – why has there been not one word on any of this from either of the co-founders of NLP? Could it be that they neither know nor care? Is this why the field that I care about so much and sometimes even love is in danger of becoming a self-referencing backwater in the world of intellectual ideas?

So now, my having set the stage, dear fellow seeker after truth, read on ...