Developing a microanalytic lens: A new teaching model for gaining insight into practice

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TEAM

Peter Sundman

Therapy
Work with trainees
Finnish language
Oral translation

Sara Healing

Microanalysis
Education
Technology
English language

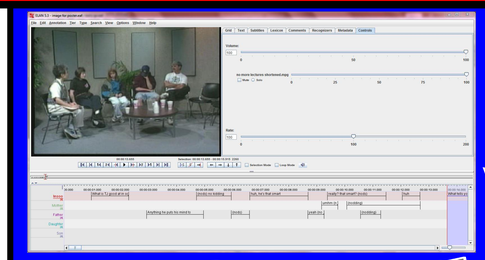
Jennifer Gerwing

Microanalysis
Education
English language

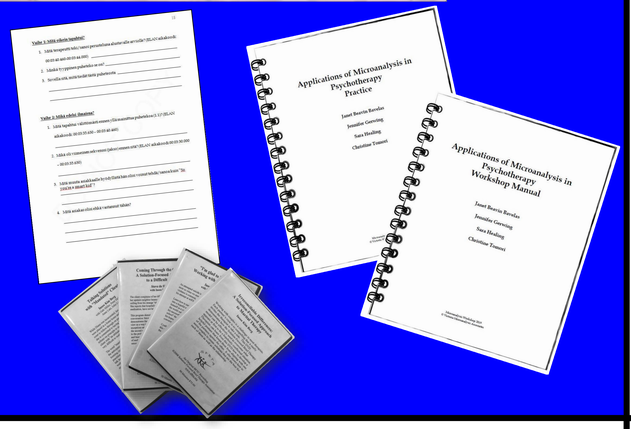
Bärbel Fink

Logistics
Program requirements
Finnish language
Text translation

Preparation Activities: Materials



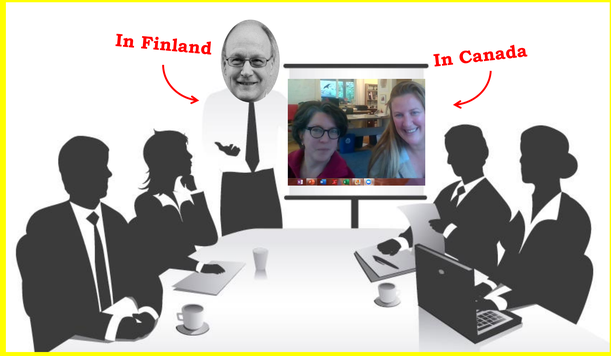
ELAN software



Course Objectives

1. To study their own therapeutic practice using microanalysis
2. To analyse observable behavior and possibilities in specific interactional moments
3. To check and reflect on their own theory-in-practice
4. To report their findings and insights as a case study

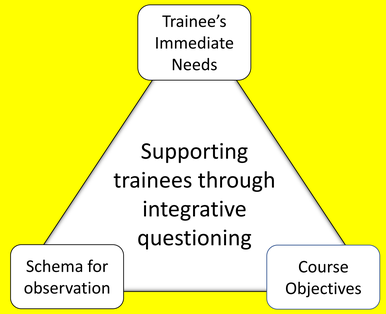
Remote, online tutoring



A Model for Microanalytic Inquiry into Practice

How do trainees benefit from group tutoring?

- support each other and offer solutions
- are exposed to different types of projects, ideas, and approaches
- see how to handle different stages of inquiry



Before January	January (in Finland)		February/March	April	May	June

Preparation Activities

- 21 Trainees record videos and learn ELAN
- Tailor workshop to course requirements
- Prepare materials (see above)
- Translate key materials
- Logistics- travel, facilities, scheduling

Workshop Day 1

- Introduction to microanalysis
- Review of ELAN
- Different Perspectives (see below)
- Approach to Communication (see below)
- Tools of Co-construction

Workshop Day 2

- Looking at your own practice
- Transforming your first impressions
- Steps of Inquiry (see below)
- Reviewing own video
- Possible Projects

Group Tutorial 1

In February, trainees:

- Annotate 2-3 excerpts
- Describe what's interesting
- Explain practice benefit

In March, trainees:

- Prepare research Question
- Collect examples

Group Tutorial 2

In advance, trainees:

- Do analysis of section of interest
- Identify specific behaviors
- Look at the function or effect of behavior
- Collect contrasting examples to help understand the phenomenon of interest

Group Tutorial 3

In advance, trainees:

- Finish and prepare results
- Choose section of video to show at tutorial
- Prepare final questions

Final Report

(See template below)

- Lit Review
- Purpose
- Research Question
- Data
- Analysis
- Results
- Discussion

Research Based Theoretical Foundation

Communication is:

- Sequential, incremental
- Collaborative
- Contextual
- Multimodal

Microanalysis

What is microanalysis of communication?

- "The detailed and reliable examination of observable communication sequences as they proceed, moment by moment, in digitized video of face-to-face dialogue."
- In microanalysis, the analyst always considers the observable behavior within its immediate sequential context.
  - E.g., a therapist's question would be considered within the context of precisely when it occurred and how the client answered it.
- Microanalysis can employ both qualitative and quantitative tools as well as experimental design principles.

A schema for observation

Different professional perspectives

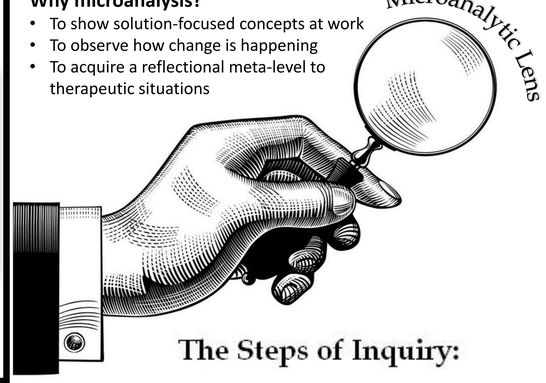
Supposed mental processes What the client (therapist) think and feel	Observed behavior What the client and therapist say and do
General impression A general summary of the case	Specific moments What the client and therapist do at certain moments in certain contexts
The behavior of the individuals How the participants behave	Interaction How the participants act together.
Problems and classifications Client's problem behavior is interpretated and classified (diagnosed)	Possibilities here and now Client's and therapist's hopes and possibilities within their environment (empowerment)

A microanalytic lens

Guiding Principles

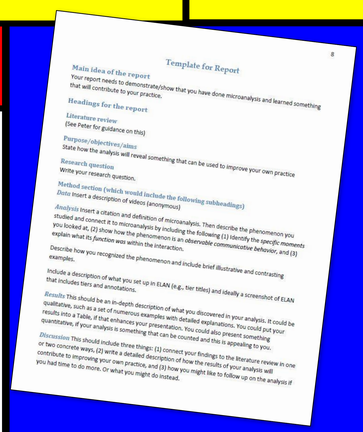
Why microanalysis?

- To show solution-focused concepts at work
- To observe how change is happening
- To acquire a reflectional meta-level to therapeutic situations



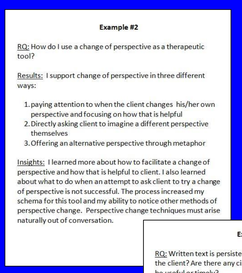
The Steps of Inquiry:

Step 1: What actually happened?
Step 2: What preceded it?
Step 3: What followed it?
Step 4: How did it function?



Examples of topics in trainee projects:

- When and how does the therapist's positive feedback support the client's resilience?
- When do smiles and laughter occur in therapeutic interaction and what is their effect?
- How does SF use of scales affect the therapeutic relationship and the client's willingness to use solution language?
- How does the therapist address the client's responsibility?
- What happens after silent moments in therapy interaction?



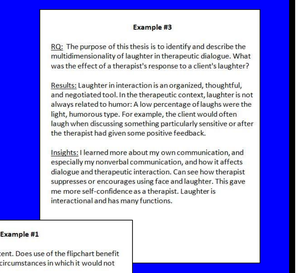
Example #2

RQ: How do I use a change of perspective as a therapeutic tool?

Results: I support change of perspective in three different ways:

1. paying attention to when the client changes his/her own perspective and focusing on how that is helpful
2. Directly asking client to imagine a different perspective themselves
3. Offering an alternative perspective through metaphor

Insights: I learned more about how to facilitate a change of perspective and how that is helpful to client. I also learned about what to do when an attempt to ask client to try a change of perspective is not successful. The process increased my schema for this tool and my ability to notice other methods of perspective change. Perspective change techniques must arise naturally out of conversation.

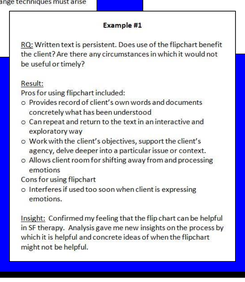


Example #3

RQ: The purpose of this thesis is to identify and describe the multidimensionality of laughter in therapeutic dialogue. What was the effect of a therapist's response to a client's laughter?

Results: Laughter in interaction is an organized, thoughtful, and negotiated tool. In the therapeutic context, laughter is not always related to humor: A low percentage of laughs were the light, humorous type. For example, the client would often laugh when discussing something particularly sensitive or after the therapist had given some positive feedback.

Insights: I learned more about my own communication, and especially my nonverbal communication, and how it affects dialogue and therapeutic interaction. Can see how therapist suppresses or encourages using face and laughter. This gave me more self-confidence as a therapist. Laughter is interactional and has many functions.



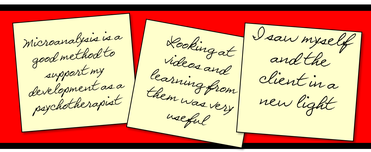
Example #1

RQ: Written text is persistent. Does use of the flipchart benefit the client? Are there any circumstances in which it would not be useful or timely?

Result:
Pros for using flipchart included:
- Provides record of client's own words and documents concretely what has been understood
- Can repeat and return to the text in an interactive and exploratory way
- Work with the client's objectives, support the client's agency, delve deeper into a particular issue or context.
- Allows client room for shifting away from and processing emotions

Cons for using flipchart
- Interferes if used too soon when client is expressing emotions.

Insight: Confirmed my feeling that the flip chart can be helpful in SF therapy. Analysis gave me new insights on the process by which it is helpful and concrete ideas of when the flipchart might not be helpful.

Course Highlights

- Each project rooted in each trainee's *own interest, curiosity, and practice*
- Trainees look at their own work from the outside: *a reflectional meta-level*
- Practice anchored in some form of observable reality
- Detailed, analytical attention focused both on what is being co-constructed for the client and on what the practitioner is doing