

LL in Germany: The formation of a German CCRT-Group

Horst Kächele

in collaboration with Cornelia Albani, Gerd Blaser & Dan Pokorny

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In Germany the systematic development of psychotherapy research started around the early seventies. At first the research activities were quite localized mainly in department of psychosomatic medicine and clinical psychology, the various academic institutions testing out their own ways to develop the field.

One of the first methods to get more widely accepted was Gottschalk & Glesers „Measurement of Psychological States through the Content Analysis of Verbal Behaviour“ (1969). When I began my work at Ulm in october 1970 one of the first readings were the reports on the APA sponsored conferences „Research in Psychotherapy“ of which Strupp and Luborsky had edited one volume (1962).

In my first letter to LL I inquired on matters of his work on P-factor analysis as I had started to embark on single case research. A few years later on your first trip to the USA - together with my colleague Hans-Joachim Grünzig -, we attended a meeting of the local SPR group in Lester's house in 1976. Lester then visited Ulm in 1982 the first time which opened a collaboration mainly in matters of the CCRT.

In 1984 the Ulm group, in preparation for the first PSYCHOANALYTIC PROCESS RESEARCH CONFERENCE, invited M. Gill and L. Luborsky to apply their methods on the initial and final sessions of our specimen case Amalia X. At the 1985 conference in Ulm LL and Paul Crits-Christoph introduced the CCRT methodology to a German audience.

Following this event two doctoral theses using the CCRT were launched:
1988 Dorothee Dengler studied children's play at age 3 years and
Robert Eckert studied a sample of depressive patients.

The further development was paved by the inhouse publication of a
CCRT work book (1989¹) that turned out to be an excellent tool for the
distribution of the CCRT method as it contained the first German coding
instruction.



In 1991 a student from Leipzig, - whom I had met already in 1988 -,
Cornelia Albani, received a stipend from the Breuninger Foundation and
came to Ulm studying the case of "Student", the first tape-recorded short
term treatment that was completely analyzed by CCRT. Her doctoral
dissertation led her to identify relationship pattern supported by Dan
Pokorny's mathematical abilities (Albani et al. 1994)². Cornelia Albani
also was instrumental to improve on the German translation of coding

¹ Luborsky L, Kächele H (Hrsg) (1988) Der zentrale Beziehungskonflikt - ein Arbeitsbuch. PSZ-Verlag, Ulm

² Albani C, Pokorny D, Dahlbender RW, Kächele H (1994) Vom Zentralen Beziehungs-Konflikt-Thema (ZBKT) zu Zentralen Beziehungsmustern (ZBM). Eine methodenkritische Weiterentwicklung der Methode des "Zentralen Beziehungs-Konflikt-Themas". Psychother Psychosom Med Psychol 44: 89-98

manual in 1992³ which by then already had been become quite known. This development had been supported by the German translation of LL primer on psychoanalytic psychotherapy (1984)⁴; HJ Grünzig from the Ulm group did a good-to-read translation⁵ which made LL a well known name among German psychodynamic clinicians so that a second edition was published in 1995⁶. (It is fair to mention that of all the psychodynamic reserach-therapists of the US only Hans H Strupp and LL really become wel-known in Germany as their textbook were widely used).

By this time the CCRT-method has reached many other places; especially the study group in Leipzig to where C. Albani had returned to after her dissertation work in Ulm, was quite active but also groups in Göttingen, Freiburg, Saarbrücken and Cologne had become quite involved in CCRT work. We had regular meetings in these academic localities exchanging our experiences with the CCRT-method.

Dear Lester,

our question (Michael Hoelzer and mine) referred to the the 53 cases from the Penn Project (73-20 = 53), which we did not yet include in our vocabulary study. (the results as to the "emotional vocabulary" will be presented at the next SPR meeting in Vancouver). Up to now, we have only studied transcripts from the ten most improved as well as the ten least improved cases. For a variety of reasons it would be highly interesting to take a close look at the other cases too. Are there transcripts of these 53 cases as well (from hours 3 and 5 as well as 2 hours from a late phase of therapy?) and will it be possible to include them into the Ulmer Textbank System? In addition, are "residual gain" scores and demographic data (as we already have for the 20 cases) for these remaining cases available?

*I really would enjoy the intensification of Penn and Ulm's collaboration in textual studies !!!
yours horst and michael*

³ Luborsky L, Albani C, Eckert R (1992) Manual zur ZBKT-Methode (deutsche Übersetzung mit Ergänzungen der Ulmer ZBKT-Arbeitsgruppe). PPM-P-DiskJournal 5

⁴ Luborsky L (1984) Principles of psychoanalytic psychotherapy. A manual for supportive-expressive treatment. Basic Books, New York

⁵ Luborsky L (1988) Einführung in die analytische Psychotherapie. Springer, Berlin Heidelberg New York Tokyo

⁶ Luborsky L (1995) Einführung in die analytische Psychotherapie. 2. Aufl. Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen

In 1996 a DFG-funded multicenter study was initiated by the Leipzig-Ulm-Göttingen connection. We studied a large sample of neurotically disturbed young female patients (n=266) on the connection between affective evaluation of recollected relationship experiences and the severity of psychic impairment⁷.

Dan Pokorny who more and more became the leading figure of the Ulm CCRT study group brought the CCRT to Lausanne collaborating with M. Stigler on material from day dream therapy (KBT) and Reiner Dahlbender was instrumental to connect to Italian groups where LL also had been visiting a number of times.

The year 1999 assembled an enthusiast group of CCRT researchers at an international meeting in Ulm to honour LL which generated a summary of CCRT work going on in many countries. A „Guide to the CCRT's Methods, Discoveries and Future“ was one of the fruits of this meeting (Luborsky et al. 1999)⁸.

With the turn of the century the Leipzig-Ulm group started to develop a reformulation of the CCRT categories: „The CCRT-LU Category System“ supported by a grant of the DFG (German Research Foundation) that – in our view – led to an improvement in coding⁹. This development was presented at a number of SPR conferences in the following years leading to an international workshop at the Weimar SPR meeting in 2003.

Finally our work with the CCRT allowed us to compose a German

⁷ Albani C, Benninghofen D, Blaser G, Cierpka M, Dahlbender R W, Geyer M, Körner A, Pokorny D, Staats H, Kächele, H (1999) On the connection between affective evaluation of recollected relationship experiences and the severity of psychic impairment *Psychotherapy Research* 9(4): 452-467

⁸ Luborsky L, Diguier L, Kächele H, Dahlbender RW, Waldinger R, Freni S, Krause R, Frevert G, Bucci W, Drouin M, Fischmann T, Seganti A, Wischmann T, Hori S, Azzone P, Pokorny D, Staats H, Zobel H, Grenyer B, Soldz S, Anstadt T, Schauenburg H, Benninghofen D, Stigler M, Tchesnova I (1999) A Guide to the CCRT's Methods, Discoveries and Future. *Ulm Textbank*: <http://sipmedizin.uni-ulm.de>

⁹ Albani C, Pokorny D, Blaser G, Grüninger S, König S, Marschke F, Geißler I, Körner A, Geyer M, Kächele H (2002) Reformulation of the Core Conflict Relationship Theme (CCRT) Categories: The CCRT-LU Category System. *Psychother Res* 12: 319-338

monograph on the CCRT summarizing our results (Albani et al. 2008)¹⁰.

Let me end with a reflection why the CCRT has become so influential in Germany's psychodynamic world. Given the fact that psychodynamic therapy is still quite influential in Germany the notion of anchoring a key clinical concept in research has been appealing to many people, even if not many of these people have been doing CCRT-research themselves. Many years ago LL in 1969 had written that „research cannot yet influence practice“¹¹ it became obvious that the kind of research that LL was following in an incredibly steady way was able to change that situation. Studying clinical concepts – like helping alliance or transference – by the method of guided and well structured trained judgment brought the worlds of practice and research closer. It has been a great honour for us in and around Ulm to have enjoyed the opportunity to collaborate for many years with LL. He left us the message that only deep immersion and steady work in practice and research can change the field for better.

¹⁰ Albani C, Pokorny D, Blaser G, Kächele H (2008) Beziehungsmuster und Beziehungskonflikte. Theorie, Klinik und Forschung. Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen

¹¹ Luborsky L (1969) Critical evaluation of Strupp and Bergin. Research cannot yet influence clinical practice. Int J Psychiatry 7: 135-140

From BELLJ@landru.cpr.upenn.edu Thu Jan 27 21:32:40 1994
To: kaechele@sip.medizin.uni-ulm.de
From: BELLJ@landru.cpr.upenn.edu
Organization: Center for Psychotherapy Research
Date: 27 Jan 94 15:28:50 EST
Subject: Letter from Leste

.....
I just spent the last three days in Washington at a meeting of the collaborative study for psychosocial treatment of cocaine addiction. There is a difference between efficacy and effectiveness, but our study begins with a study of efficacy which I think is good to show first before getting into effectiveness. We are so far getting good results. (We could help the mood of the psychotherapy researchers by giving them more perspective about what they have achieved!)

There are many scientific fashions that go to extremes before the scientist get their perspective again. One of these is the difference between what is called a good clinical trial (with random assignment etc.) and non-random assignment (naturalistic). I think much can be learned by the second and although there are exceptions the results are often consistent between the two. I would point to, for example, the Penn study as a generator of factors influencing outcome which appear both in controlled clinical trials, such as the collaborative study of depression and in many of the "not good" studies, such as the Penn study. Think, for example, of the role of psychiatric severity which appeared in the Penn study and another study I am just completing on chronic depression and dozens of others which can be called "not really good controlled studies."

You asked about controlled studies for psychoanalytic therapies. I do not know of any that qualify for psychoanalysis but I list 13 within our paper on efficacy of dynamic psychotherapy (in the Miller et al. book). (I got Basic Books to send you a copy of the Miller et al. book so you can see the chapter on efficacy of dynamic psychotherapy.) I would like to see the review you referred to contrasting the two books.

About your e-mail: Keeping the lines short does work. Joyce Bell who works with me tells me we are now available to use e-mail

Best wishes,

Lester

P.S. I am really looking forward to hearing from Katja, it was very good of you to try and arrange that.

To: BELLJ@landru.cpr.upenn.edu
Subject: Re: Letter to Lester - friends' talking
Cc:

Dear Lester

.....
How did you ever got involved so close -tis the question to me, but you will know.

Would you apply for a Russian post-doc travel stipend from Ulm - York for Katja Kalmykova, we had some talks about at the executive meeting in York, I thought I was not in a good position

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to do so - give a call to Paul Pilkonis on that matter

What about nominating Erhard Mergenthaler for a junior award
the ULM TEXTBANK has now achieved quite some awareness.
In 1983 we first appeared in Sheffield so it could be cute. You could
submit his contribution to your book.

Though the TEXTBANK has been our joint product I do not need
the award's incentive though Erhard would appreciate it.

yours horst

30.8.1994

Dear Lester,

my fancy title was a mere suggestion: the final title is yours - I was thinking of the famous book by
Lawrence of Arabia "the seven pillars of wisdom" - and I think you might title the presentation as the
four pillars of psychotherapeutic wisdom -
alliance, transference, working through and ????

I have talked to Peter Buchheim on some financial addendum

looking forward to what you see as the four pillars!!!

yours

Horst

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yours horst and michael

Jan 1996

Dear Lester

Dorothee has disappeared thoroughly. Do send a reprint to me and I shall keep it her for until she re-
surfaces By the way I am sure from the speed of my return answers you realize that I really do suffer
from loss of energy, I ll never be the same old vigorous.

It is just a fact of life

yours *horst*

too many typing errors as well