

EWELINA BERDOWICZ

Adam Mickiewicz University

Center for Religious Studies and Comparative Research

e-mail: ewelina.berdowicz@amu.edu.pl

ORCID: 0000-0001-5126-0679

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Psychological distress. The Neo-Pentecostal language as a trigger for personal revival and transformation¹

Abstract. Over the past decades, Neo-Pentecostalism has spread across the nations, mainly because of its strong emphasis on the so-called prosperity gospel and the promotion of supernatural phenomena. John Wimber, the founder of what came to be known as power evangelism, stressed the importance of signs and wonders, whereas Charles Peter Wagner, the father of New Apostolic Reformation (NAR), developed the concept of leadership and strengthened the position of the highly-efficient, entrepreneurial ministers working independently. These two figures contributed enormously to the contemporary religious marketplace; therefore, their ideas have successfully shaped the intra-community reality of various religious groups representing Charismatic Christianity. The principal objective of this study is to investigate the role the Neo-Pentecostal language combined with non-linguistic elements plays in one's personal revival and transformation. The research concerns both Neo-Pentecostals and Pentecostal Catholics from Poland and Italy. The analysis is based on participant observation, in-depth interviews, and surveys.

Keywords: psychological distress, cognitive restructuring, motivational interviewing, Neo-Pentecostals, Pentecostal Catholics, power evangelism, Neo-Pentecostal language

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Introduction

The history of the Pentecostal movement distinguishes between three important periods known as “waves.” The First Wave dates back to the early 1900s and has been usually associated with the Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles and a great emphasis placed on the workings of the Holy Spirit, including spiritual gifts. The Second Wave, also referred to as the Charismatic Renewal, started around the 1960s and concerned the spread of Pentecostal ideas into the mainline churches. It is believed that not only classical Pentecostalism but also both the Healing Revival together with the Latter Rain Revival of the 1940s may have shaped the Charismatic era to a large extent (McClymond, 2014, pp. 32–34). When it comes to the Catholic Church, the emergence of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in 1967 has led to the formation of new communities whose members have been recognized as Pentecostal Catholics ever since (McGuire, 1982, p. 4). In some research works, they have been defined as Neo-Pentecostals, mainly because such nomenclature was accepted when the movement was growing. For the purposes of my study, I will use the terms Pentecostal Catholics or Catholic Charismatics to relate to the Second-Wavers, and the terms Neo-Pentecostals and Neo-Charismatics to refer to the Third-Wavers. As regards the Third Wave, the concept was introduced by Charles Peter Wagner (Wagner, 1988, p. 15) and applied to evangelical Christians who became pentecostalized, including independent churches interested in practicing spiritual gifts (McClymond, 2014, p. 32). Neo-Pentecostalism has reached other nations, mostly through the commitment of John Wimber, the founder of what came to be known as “power evangelism,” and the above-discussed Charles Peter Wagner, the father of the New Apostolic Reformation (NAR). They had successfully cooperated until Wimber expressed his disagreement with the idea of territorial spirits engaged in spiritual warfare (Flory & Christerson, 2017, p. 29). Although Wagner parted ways with Wimber, their legacy has survived. What seems crucial, it has shaped a great number of present-day religious communities, both Catholic and Neo-Pentecostal. Furthermore, certain features of the language used by Wimber and his successors, which in practical terms serve religious persuasion, have led me to identify what I called the Neo-Pentecostal language. It should be explicit that both linguistic and non-linguistic elements contribute equally to the intra-community mechanism and the products that appear in the religious marketplace.

This paper concentrates primarily on the role of the Neo-Pentecostal language and the non-linguistic elements in one’s personal revival, bearing in mind that the revival in question ultimately leads to one’s transformation

and recovery from painful memories. Additionally, this study attempts to explore the ways the followers of Neo-Pentecostalism conceptualize supernatural phenomena, often referred to as miracles. The question is: How does the Neo-Pentecostal language trigger one's personal revival, and how does it affect one's transformation? The study was carried out in Poland and Italy based on participant observation, surveys, and in-depth interviews. The paper has been divided into theoretical and empirical parts. The former includes three sections devoted to (1) power evangelism and apostolic leadership, (2) the main characteristics of the Neo-Pentecostal language, and (3) the problem of inner turmoil and cognitive restructuring, whereas the latter refers to the implemented methods and results of my research.

Power evangelism and apostolic leadership

The present-day religious landscape requires fresh insight in order to comprehend particular events taking place worldwide. Therefore, it seems reasonable to allude to Rodney Stark and Roger Finke's theory of religious economies, which claims that religious organizations and religious entrepreneurs compete for religious customers similarly to commercial economies consisting of a set of firms whose main purpose is to serve the market (Stark & Finke, 1988, p. 42). The Neo-Pentecostal ideas turned out to successfully identify the specific needs of a given market segment and, as a result, to promote ideally adjusted religious products. While carrying out my research, I discovered that Wimber's power evangelism could be interpreted in terms of an effective B2C (business-to-customer) marketing strategy, whereas divine healing might be seen as a high-demand religious product. In Wimber's view, "power evangelism is a spontaneous, Spirit-inspired, empowered presentation of the gospel. Power evangelism is preceded and undergirded by demonstrations of God's presence and frequently results in groups of people being saved [...]. Usually this takes the form of words of knowledge [...], healing, prophecy and deliverance from evil spirits [...]. In power evangelism, we do not add to the gospel [...]. But we do turn to the Holy Spirit [...] and cooperate with His anointing, gifting and leading" (Wimber & Springer, 2009, pp. 77–78). Over the years, Wimber's "signs and wonders" approach has gained many followers across the globe while Wimber himself became an itinerant preacher. The concepts he developed rested on a common denominator, namely, the conflict between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan. Christians, in turn, were presented as those belonging to Christ's army.

Interestingly, Wimber introduced an integrated model of healing which applied to various areas such as healing of the spirit, healing of the effects of past hurts (also referred to as “inner healing”), healing of the demonized and mental illnesses, healing of the body, and healing of the dying and the dead (Wimber & Springer, 1987, pp. 61–63). He provided his successors with the guiding principles for efficient ministry and strengthened the significance of the five-step procedure, including the interview (step one), the diagnostic decision (step two), the prayer selection (step three), the prayer engagement (step four), and post-prayer directions (step five) (Wimber & Springer, 1987, p. 199). Wimber argued that God wants to heal the whole person, not just specific conditions, while the ministry itself should be of corporate nature. In practical terms, he meant comprehensive teamwork and one’s eagerness to learn how to exercise the power of God. The first step of the healing procedure focuses on identifying the affected sphere. Simply speaking, an individual is expected to familiarize the healing minister with the difficulty he or she faces. As far as the second step is concerned, it consists in identifying and clarifying the root of one’s problem. Remarkably, it may turn out that severe back pain is the consequence of the poor relationship an individual has with his or her mother (Wimber & Springer, 1987, p. 200). The third step concentrates on the choice of the appropriate prayer whose relevance is believed to be closely connected with the anointing the minister has received. Here it is necessary to mention the so-called instantism, which stands for taking action at the moment of speaking and has been widely adopted by contemporary Neo-Pentecostals and Pentecostal Catholics. The frequent usage of the word “now” when praying helps to direct one’s attention to divine intervention and, at the same time, gives the impression of having total control over the mundane realm. As for praying in tongues, which is one of the spiritual gifts given to Christians by the Holy Spirit, Wimber compared this practice to putting up a “spiritual antenna” for better receptiveness (Wimber & Springer, 1987, p. 207). His openness to the question of divine communication led him to sense God’s wishes, for example, the wish to speak a word of command directly to evil spirits while praying for the sick. The content of these utterances will be discussed in detail in the subsequent sections. The fourth step of the healing procedure relates to the practice of laying hands on people and their response to the Holy Spirit’s intervention. Precisely speaking, this stage constitutes the essence of power evangelism. According to Wimber, the most common manifestations include falling over, shaking, sobbing, laughing, and screaming out. However, as suggested by Wimber, some of them may emerge in a more subtle form: “Often the Holy Spirit comes on people and they do not recognize it. They might experience slight trembling, fluttering of the eyelids, deep breathing,

or faint perspiring, much like slight nervousness or the result of too much coffee. Sometimes they feel a weight on their chest or a “heaviness” in the air” (Wimber & Springer, 1987, p. 222). The above-mentioned symptoms of God’s presence are of enormous importance for this research since they largely contribute to one’s transformation and the whole process of overcoming inner turmoil. The fifth step applies to the post-prayer directions referring to spiritual discipline. In other words, an individual should be encouraged to pray more, read Scripture, and join a church. Importantly, Wimber clearly stated that one’s divine healing depends on that person’s commitment and responsibility. Hence, it can be assumed that one’s deep involvement in the activities of a particular religious group may strongly affect his or her identity shift. During the investigation I carried out in Poland and Italy, I noted that both Neo-Pentecostal and Pentecostal Catholics have a lot to offer, I am thinking mainly of the emotional realm as well as the techniques employed to overcome past hurts, and the religious products they serve require complete submission to the leader.

In the late 1990s, Charles Peter Wagner, inspired by John Wimber’s engagement, started to explore the idea of apostolic leadership, which turned out to be the exact opposite of the denominational variety. In consequence, he coined the term New Apostolic Reformation (NAR) to emphasize the shift towards independence, dynamism, and creativity. For Wagner, it was a reformation similar to the one initiated by Luther. As for the word “apostolic,” he meant the recognition of the office of apostle, restored in the “new” form that should be different from what other churches using the same name had promoted before (Wagner, 2006, p. 9). According to Wagner (2006, pp. 28–29), Christian leaders, gifted, commissioned, and sent by God, have been expected to perform twelve ministries. Strictly speaking, they (1) receive revelation, (2) cast vision, (3) birth – begin new things, (4) impart – activate their blessings in others, (5) build – carry out projects, (6) govern – set things in order, (7) teach, (8) send – those who are equipped to expand the kingdom of God, (9) finish – the projects they have started, (10) war – in the army of God, leading the church in spiritual battles, (11) align generations – train prospective leaders, (12) equip – individuals interested in fulfilling a particular ministry. When it comes to organizational issues, Wagner distinguished three major categories: vertical apostles, horizontal apostles, and workplace apostles. Vertical apostles are those who offer spiritual covering to individuals, ministries, or the networks of churches. In other words, the selected entities are under the guidance of such an apostle and are also accountable to him or her. Horizontal apostles focus on serving peer-level leaders in order to help them to connect with each other for various purposes instead of managing the aforementioned

groups. Workplace apostles conduct their ministry in what could be compared to the extended family, as opposed to vertical and horizontal apostles, who concentrate only on the nuclear church (Wagner, 2006, pp. 77–84).

As far as the problem of transformation is concerned, Wagner's model of leadership involved the guidelines referring to this realm. They applied mainly to spiritual transformation, economic transformation, educational transformation, family transformation, the transformation of the media and the arts, and governmental transformation. Wagner distinguished a sub-category of the territorial apostles whose primary objective was to take care of a particular area, such as a neighborhood or a city, and to bring changes to these places (Wagner, 2006, p. 120). Accordingly, it seems necessary to relate to territorial spirits, which stand for demonic forces that prevent certain nations from embracing Christianity. Wagner believed that strict adherence to the principles of strategic-level spiritual warfare (SLSW) might accelerate the process of planting churches. Although he developed the theories of social transformation and had a clear view of how to implement them, there was still no official platform to train gifted preachers. Hence, in 1998, the Wagner Leadership Institute was founded (currently Wagner University) and has been the most respected NAR center ever since (Flory & Christerson, 2017, p. 30).

All the Christian communities I met during my fieldwork seemed to have adopted Neo-Pentecostal teachings. First and foremost, their leaders have been involved in many activities outside the group they have been in charge of. In other words, they have been part of a strong network of leaders who tend to cooperate in the country and beyond. Secondly, members of these communities have promoted the idea of “winning” a particular territory for Jesus with the aid of trained apostles. Thirdly, the content presented during worship services and other events always referred to signs and wonders combined with the manifestations of the Holy Spirit, spiritual warfare, prosperity, and transformation in the broad sense.

The Neo-Pentecostal interaction pattern

Human communication has five modes since there are five human senses that serve as channels of information: sound, sight, touch, smell, and taste. Nevertheless, for human beings, they are not of equal value when it comes to the transmission and reception of meaning. Conveying messages among people is possible through the employment of the auditory-vocal mode, which seems crucial to the notion of language, as well as the tactile and visual modes, which function as channels of non-verbal communication (Crystal, 2006, pp. 3–4).

Importantly, I took both of them into consideration when studying The Neo-Pentecostal interaction pattern.

According to Irena Bajerowa (1994), a religious language is one of the varieties of a general language that should be distinguished based on its functions in the social sphere. Urszula Gajewska (2012, p. 81) specifies the following: (1) cognitive function, (2) instrumental function, (3) socialization function, (4) appellative function, (5) evocative function, (6) performative function, (7) expressive function, and (8) anamnestic function. It can therefore be assumed that the Neo-Pentecostal language has originated and then been shaped in the Neo-Pentecostal communities, which have been using it to establish a close relationship with the supernatural, to explore the Christian realm, and to interact with fellow members through the application of a special code. Needless to say, the Neo-Pentecostal language is not confined to one nation only. Conversely, it is universal due to its characteristics which serve religious persuasion.

Before proceeding to the results of my research, I shall briefly discuss the major concepts concerning the ritual speech typical of the Charismatic environment. My theory has been built to some extent upon the ideas put forward by Thomas J. Csordas (1997), who studied the pentecostalized Catholics. The term “pentecostalization” stands for “the exceptionally fast rise in the number of Pentecostal communities, and the gradual transformation of many other Christian churches and congregations into a single, universal type of charismatic Christianity around the globe. The dynamic and worldwide process of pentecostalization is often referred to as *charimatization* of the Christian religion, or the birth of Pentecostal, charismatic or evangelical Christianity” (Kobyliński, 2016, p. 100). Due to the fact that Csordas (1997) completed his investigation in the 1990s, the concepts he proposed have gradually evolved similarly to the interaction pattern I have paid attention to and described.

According to Csordas (1997, p. 157), the repertoire of Charismatic ritual elements encompasses ritual objects (e.g., blessed oil, candles, special clothing, etc.), gestures (e.g., laying on of hands), somatic manifestations (e.g., resting in the Spirit), and language (specific genres and vocabulary). All of them relate directly to the notion of performance, understood as a form of Charismatic interaction among participants, and its transformative effects. As for Charismatic ritual language, Csordas (1997, pp. 169–170) differentiates between the major and minor genres. The former comprises prophecy, teaching, prayer, and sharing, whereas the latter involves maxims, slogans, jokes, and slang. When it comes to prophecy, it is believed to be a type of divine revelation during which the will of God is pronounced to the public, and the human speaker himself or herself is regarded as divinity’s mouthpiece. Nevertheless,

it should be remembered that prophesying has nothing to do with foretelling the future. Conversely, its main purpose is to exhort, encourage, admonish, inspire, and guide. Furthermore, its content may be either directive or non-directive, communicated via glossolalia (hence glossolalic prophecy) or in the vernacular. Additionally, prophecies are expected to undergo a procedure of evaluation, known as discernment, in order to avoid both false prophecies, that is, those inspired by the Devil and the so-called nonprophecies resulting from one's wishes and needs. (Csordas, 1997, p. 170). At this point, I ought to mention an in-depth analysis of the selected prophetic utterances, which I carried out based on the materials gathered during the fieldwork (Berdowicz, 2022). As far as teaching is concerned, its main goal is to pass on spiritual truth to the audience, and what seems particularly significant, its substance should be linked to hearers' everyday lives. With respect to Charismatic prayer, Csordas (1997, p. 175) identifies four types, namely, (1) worship comprising adoration, praise as well as thanksgiving, (2) intercession, that is, prayer for a special purpose, (3) prayer for divine guidance, and (4) prayer of command in the name of Jesus, for instance, while casting out demons. Prayers, similarly to prophecies, may be performed in the vernacular or glossolalia. Based on what has been said above, Wimber's healing procedure included special guidelines about how to pray efficiently. Those guidelines involve, for instance, the practice of speaking to the condition itself, which consequently has become a trademark of what I call the Neo-Pentecostal language: "[...] several years ago I prayed for a young woman with a scoliosis of the spine [...]. I stood behind her and spoke to the spine: *In the name of Jesus, I command you to straighten*" (Wimber & Springer, 1987, p. 229). Sharing, also referred to as witnessing (provided it takes place publicly during a community meeting), deals with a deep spiritual value one's single experience or life story may add to other participants' personal growth. In other words, an individual narrates an incident that he or she regards as a turning point that he or she believes was a consequence of the divine intervention. The individual's certainty as to the deity's involvement results from the practice of reframing. Precisely speaking, leaders tend to reframe the neophyte's statements in such a manner that he or she begins to recognize "the will of God" (Csordas, 1997, p. 177).

Over the course of my fieldwork, I came across a great number of maxims, slogans, and examples of pastoral slang. For instance, I could participate in a WhatsApp conversation between the leaders of a given group and the remaining members, during which I observed how they incorporated those genres on a daily basis. The following one was written by a member of a Roman subsidiary of an Australia-based megachurch and was a response to another's member testimony: "Dio è potente" ("God is powerful"; my own

translation). Interestingly, the minor genres frequently integrate language with different forms of bodily movement, leading to the emergence of liturgical dance, drama, and religious games (Csordas, 1997, p. 170). Last but not least, it is worth mentioning that the Charismatic ritual performance rests on the specialized vocabulary of motives (Csordas, 1997, p. 192), understood as a system of terms (words) implemented in the Christian discourse in order to draw one's attention to a particular problem and, ultimately, influence his or her actions. The common motive of spiritual warfare has frequently been deployed by those who perform deliverance ministry systematically and, at the same time, work as itinerary preachers.

Another important feature of the Neo-Pentecostal language I observed is the frequent use of performatives. Put simply, in certain cases, issuing the utterance is tantamount to performing an action it refers to (Austin, 1962, p. 6). This particular quality seems best portrayed by Wimber's method of interacting with the evil forces: "I break the power of this condition in the name of Jesus" (Wimber & Springer, 1987, p. 208). The minister utters the word "break" and, at the same time, performs an action accompanied by relevant gesticulation. Power evangelism relies on performance, and therefore, it seeks to emphasize its dynamism mostly through words and gestures. According to Radan Martinec (2004), gestures may realize both state processes and action processes. In other words, they may co-occur with speech. Martinec (2004) terms them "indexical gestures" and argues that there is a strong relationship between their forms and the experiential meaning. Action processes tend to be realized by a movement of the forearm, whereas state processes by a hold (Martinec, 2004, p. 200). Action processes encompass active processes which require an effort on the part of their main participant and may be either directed at another individual or non-directed and passive processes which do not require energy. When it comes to state processes, they are processes of being, which means that they allude to one's condition or emotions. They are usually expressed with a forearm being on hold (Martinec, 2004, p. 201). The realization of a given process combines or does not combine with a circumstance of location, which in practical terms, means that the pattern depends on whether or not the main participant is at the center of events. Interestingly, the speakers who play a dominant role in the interaction are believed to gesticulate more (Martinec, 2004, p. 209). Referring back to the Neo-Pentecostal language, it can be observed that apart from the aforementioned characteristics, there are some additional issues worth concentrating on, including the introduction of a system of interpersonal meanings known as appraisal, whose resources have been used for negotiating attitudes and social relationships. With respect to attitudes, they concern the evaluation of things (appreciation), people's

character (judgment), and their feelings (affect). Furthermore, attitudes are linked to their source and may be amplified (Rose & Martin, 2003, p. 28). To illustrate: “Sappiamo che questa Domenica sarà fantastica (We know that this Sunday will be fantastic),” “Un momento incredibile di lode e di preghiera (An incredible moment of worship and prayer),” “[...] le foto sono bellissime, sei una benedizione per la chiesa (the photos are beautiful, you are a blessing for the Church)” (my own translation). All these quotations come from the formerly-discussed WhatsApp group to which I have belonged since April 2022. Importantly, they reveal members’ attitudes towards particular objects, phenomena, and people. The whole conversation is filled with similar examples, and hence, it can be estimated that the quality of appraisal contributes to the theory of the Neo-Pentecostal language.

According to what has been stated above, Csordas’ model relates to the research he began in the 1970s. Therefore, further work, compatible with the contemporary religious marketplace, is required in order to provide as precise an update as possible. Furthermore, it should be remembered that the introduction of new technologies has changed consumer behavior and affected consumer satisfaction. The same is true for “religious customers” interested in particular “religious products” which have been offered by “religious entrepreneurs.”

Psychological distress

The concepts of psychological distress and cognitive restructuring appear to be directly relevant to my research mostly because they represent the consumer segment and a tailored product offered by the Neo-Pentecostal entrepreneurs respectively. Put differently, an individual suffering from past hurts or overcoming trauma joins a religious community based on the Neo-Pentecostal idea of power evangelism. Over the course of time and after long exposure to a series of motivating sermons accompanied by a great deal of moving testimonies, an individual starts to notice a significant shift in his or her conduct. That particular change is often followed by the improvement of one’s mental state and finally results in one’s total recovery. Teamwork is crucial here. I mean one’s service in a chosen team and one’s involvement in the practices offered by other teams resulting from one’s spiritual needs. My study attempts to investigate, first and foremost, the role of the Neo-Pentecostal language in the above-mentioned mechanism, and it also seeks to identify similarities between a professional therapy focused on the technique of cognitive restructuring and the healing prayer session that rests on the procedure suggested by Wimber,

especially in terms of its specific components. According to Catherine Ross and John Mirowsky (2003, p. 23), distress takes two main forms, namely, depression and anxiety. The former stands for “feeling sad, demoralized, lonely, hopeless, or worthless, wishing you were dead, having trouble sleeping, crying, feeling everything is an effort, and being unable to get going,” whereas the latter alludes to “being tense, restless, worried, irritable, and afraid.” Importantly, they can be further divided into mood and malaise, depending on the shape each of them comes in. With respect to mood, it relates to feelings while malaise – to bodily states, as in the case of the listlessness and distraction of depression or the autonomic ailments associated with headaches and stomachaches of anxiety (Ross & Mirowsky, 2003, p. 23). The social patterns of distress distinguished by Ross and Mirowsky have a common denominator, and that is alienation, understood as “any form of detachment or separation from oneself or from others” (Ross & Mirowsky, 2003, p. 171). The authors refer to five types of alienation, of which the sense of powerlessness appears to contribute most to the increase in distress.

Cognitive psychologists argue that concepts including an internal locus of control, self-efficacy, and helplessness are closely linked to the sense of personal control. Individuals with an internal locus of control claim that their choices affect the outcomes, in contrast to those with an external locus of control, who see their powerlessness as the consequence of fate or luck. Self-efficacy concentrates on one’s own confidence in his or her potential to perform an action effectively. Learned helplessness arises from long-term exposure to uncontrollable negative stimuli and leads to being unable to learn successful behaviors (Ross & Mirowsky, 2003, p. 174). Based on what has been stated above, perceived control and perceived powerlessness are two different perspectives and represent two ends of a continuum. In the case of perceived powerlessness, individuals’ confidence in their agency is relatively low, while those with perceived control seem to be aware of their capabilities to achieve the goals they have set up.

From the point of view of cognitive psychology, depression and anxiety have been associated with biased thoughts derived from maladaptive mental representations of reality stored in memory structures known as schemas. The schematic content plays a crucial role in organizing and guiding the selection of information. A depressed person, for instance, demonstrates a great number of negative self-referent schemas, such as those of failure or rejection, and hence it can be stated that his or her cognitive apparatus is targeted at processing schema-congruent information. Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) employs a technique of cognitive restructuring, which has been defined as “structured, goal-directed, and collaborative intervention

strategies that focus on the exploration, evaluation, and substitution of the maladaptive thoughts, appraisals, and beliefs that maintain psychological disturbance” (Clark, 2013, p. 23). In other words, cognitive restructuring aims to change schemas in such a manner that schema-congruent information no longer has priority over schema-incongruent information. Importantly, the schematic change consists of two significant processes: (1) identifying the key maladaptive schemas and reducing their activation threshold, availability, as well as accessibility, (2) learning to replace the maladaptive schemas with the adaptive ones about the self and world (Clark, 2013, p. 26).

As noted by David A. Clark (2013, p. 26), cognitive restructuring involves the following components: collaborative empiricism, verbal intervention, and empirical hypothesis testing. Moreover, each of them features different intervention strategies, which seem particularly important for my research. Collaborative empiricism refers to effective cooperation between a therapist and a client. This specific phase rests on specifying treatment goals and organizational issues. The word “empiricism” relates to the investigative, questioning approach a client is asked to take with reference to his or her long-held beliefs and attitudes. Socratic questioning is one of the strategies implemented at this point. Verbal interventions encompass: evidence gathering, consequential analysis, cognitive bias identification, generating alternatives, normalization, decatastrophizing, problem-solving, imaginal exposure, distancing, reframing, reattribution, and positivity reorientation (Clark, 2013, pp. 28–31). Evidence gathering applies to obtaining information about client’s past and present experiences. The consequential analysis consists in examining the costs and benefits of following the maladaptive thoughts. Cognitive bias identification concentrates on developing the client’s awareness of his or her cognitive biases. Generating alternatives, as its name suggests, stands for providing a client with a more adaptive vision of the self or personal experiences. Normalization encourages a client to view his or her distress as an extreme variety of normal emotions instead of perceiving it as something distinct and remote. Decatastrophizing enables a client to prepare for a worst-case scenario, mostly through discussing its probable effects on the quality of life. Problem-solving requires an in-depth analysis of the pros and cons of a given solution and, consequently, selecting a course of action based on the expected outcomes. Imaginal exposure is connected with a systematical generation of a schema-related thought, image, or emotion with the intention of enhancing the client’s self-efficacy in coping with unwanted emotions. Distancing teaches a client to take the view of an observer so that his or her subjective experiences may be approached in a more neutral manner. Reframing focuses on promoting the idea of living the moment instead of speculating about the past and future.

Reattribution emphasizes the question of blame and guilt and makes a client realize that they do not hold responsibility for certain distressing life events since they may result from external circumstances. Positivity reorientation teaches clients to encode and retrieve positive facts, which in turn may influence the client's capability of coping with uncomfortable feelings. The third component, empirical hypothesis-testing, refers to pre-planned experiential activities undertaken by patients and based on experimentation and observation (Clark, 2013, p. 31).

Referring back to Wimber's integrated model of healing, it can be assumed that the procedure he proposed bears a remarkable resemblance to a therapeutic technique of cognitive restructuring, which, as mentioned above, has been widely implemented by cognitive behavioral therapists. This is particularly evident when taking the genre of inner healing into account. The previously-discussed steps of the healing procedure coincide with those described in the preceding paragraph. For instance, "the diagnostic decision" and "prayer selection" seem to correspond to the component of collaborative empiricism. Moreover, Wimber's questioning style has a lot in common with the Socratic method since it encourages reflection (Wimber & Springer, 1987, p. 226). Therefore, it becomes clear that power evangelism focuses not only on the power of God and its manifestation but also on the importance of empowering people, which ultimately leads to their profound transformation, also referred to as conversion (McGuire, 1982, p. 49). In Wimber's view, the religious group a person in need turns to plays a pivotal role in his or her therapeutic process, and that is why his model aims to target teamwork. (Wimber & Springer, 1987, p. 176). Precisely speaking, a healing ministry does not necessarily have to be an event run only by a leader/healing minister. Csordas (2002, p. 18) highlights that certain exogenous processes and mechanisms, such as persuasion and suggestion, directly affect individual's endogenous processes. Consequently, one's suffering decreases.

Methods and results

This research was carried out among Polish and Italian Neo-Pentecostals as well as Pentecostal Catholics and conducted in the following communities: (1) Sabaoth Church Roma, (2) Hillsong Rome Connect, (3) Comunità Cattolica Shalom (Shalom Catholic Community from Rome), (4) Centrum Chrześcijańskie Winnica, Rybnik (Vineyard Christian Centre from Rybnik; my own translation), and (5) Kościół Filadelfia, Wodzisław Śląski (Philadelphia Church from Wodzisław Śląski). It was based on participant observation (Poland and

Italy) and anonymous semi-structured questionnaires (Italy). The study with the use of a questionnaire involved men (five individuals) and women (fifteen individuals) aged between 18 and 65. The participant observation aimed to identify the qualities of the Neo-Pentecostal language, which serve religious persuasion and, consequently, trigger one's personal revival and transformation, whereas the questionnaires drew attention to the details of the process. Importantly, it should be made clear that the study also focused on the role of divine intervention (divine encounter) in one's spiritual growth. Precisely speaking, the whole research relied on two crucial basic components, namely, (1) the leadership component, that is, leaders who stimulate one's transformation through the chosen techniques, and (2) the audience component, that is, the participants and their conceptualization of the supernatural phenomena. It was assumed that the divine encounter individuals claimed to have experienced results from one's complete integration with the chosen community and one's total submission to their religious practices, such as laying on of hands, praying in tongues, etc. Respondents provided the answers in English and Italian, depending on their preferences. When it comes to sampling techniques, the purposive and referral ones were applied.

The main question to answer was: "How does the Neo-Pentecostal language trigger out one's personal revival and how does it affect one's transformation?" To investigate the Neo-Pentecostal interaction pattern, including the language, several hypotheses were put forward: (H1) power evangelism is typical of both Neo-Pentecostals and Pentecostal Catholics, (H2) Neo-Pentecostal as well as Pentecostal Catholic communities are hierarchically structured with some prominent ministers on top, (H3) cognitive restructuring together with motivational interviewing are dominant techniques used during community meetings whose employment help individuals to cope with psychological distress in a similar way to psychotherapy counseling sessions, (H4) The Neo-Pentecostal language implemented among the audience serves as a catalyst which accelerates one's personal revival and transformation mainly owing to its empowerment-oriented features, (H5) non-linguistic elements largely contribute to the Neo-Pentecostal interaction pattern, and (H6) divine encounter directly affects one's capability to deal with life difficulties.

As far as the questionnaire distributed among the Romans is concerned, it consisted of fifteen open-ended questions referring to one's testimony of faith. The answers provided led me to establish three basic categories, and these were as follows: (1) quality of life prior to transformation, (2) integration into the community, and (3) life after the transformation. When it comes to the first category, the findings demonstrate that the respondents greatly suffered from past hurts and those made them unable to cope with daily challenges.

The quality of life prior to transformation was rather poor. Depression, feelings of anxiety and emptiness, disenchantment with another person, suicidal thoughts, lack of control over one's own life, and insecurity were most frequently indicated reasons for one's sources of dissatisfaction.

As for the second category, it refers to the worship realm based chiefly on the authority of the leader and teamwork. Referring back to Stark and Finke's theory of religious economies, it can be assumed that the religious marketplace responds to the demands of a target customer, in this case a religious customer, by offering him or her a tailored product. The whole process, also termed customer segmentation, consists in enhancing customer experience and building a strong relationship. The answers provided by the respondents reflect what came to be known as product exposure and brand awareness. Precisely speaking, divine healing, put in the framework of Wimber's healing procedure, aims to attract a religious customer who will ultimately express his or her interest in the phenomenon and hence, promote a given brand, that is, a given community together with its leader. Furthermore, it should also be made clear that the product in question is a combination of public and private interviewing, counseling, and equipping. Importantly, the answers appear to confirm the essential role of team members in one's exposition to the product. The respondents indicated close friends and small group leaders as those who helped them to integrate. With respect to the emotional and physical content, the interviewees emphasized a series of unexpected reactions of different nature, and these included: falling on the floor, crying, feeling heavy, feeling confused, feeling motivated, feeling light, having an impression as if the Holy Spirit descended on him or her, sensing some inner conflict, and sensing the presence of a supernatural entity.

The third category, concerning one's life after the transformation, highlights the aftermath of one's intense engagement in Neo-Pentecostal practices. The problems that were tackled addressed the respondents' current perception of reality and their capability to cope with life difficulties. Interestingly enough, the interviewees pointed to a profound shift in the way they interpreted their past and present. It can be concluded that their maladaptive schemas have been substituted with more balanced alternatives powered by spiritual growth. The so-called learned helplessness has been successfully cured, mostly because of one's trust in God, His guidance, and blessing. The given answers contained the following ideas: (1) perseverance and patience, (2) difficulties are there for a reason, (3) positive attitude, (4) utmost confidence and happiness, (5) being closer to God, (6) peace of mind, (7) taking worries to the Lord, and (8) suffering bears fruit. As for the marketplace terminology, it can be said that the product satisfied the demands of a particular market segment.

An in-depth analysis of the Neo-Pentecostal intra-community ritual indicates that members of the selected communities have followed a well-structured interaction pattern which seems to have also been adopted by the contemporary Pentecostal Catholics. Moreover, the investigation reveals that the ideas of Wimber's power evangelism have been widely implemented by the aforementioned groups (H1). The question of the signs and wonders of the Holy Spirit has been the most significant component of every meeting. Importantly, all the sermons that were delivered referred to prosperity, especially in terms of financial blessing and physical and emotional well-being. The keyword used by the leaders within the context of health and wealth was "generosity," as in the case of Philadelphia Church: "Generosity prepares a throne for the atmosphere of heaven. Generosity means worshipping Jesus," "Giving is not the quality of God – it is His DNA. We have been created to be generous" (my own notes; my own translation). The more one donates to the church, the more he or she gets in return, bearing in mind different miracles one may experience from God. In addition, the results of the study confirm the hypothesis of the hierarchical structure with the prominent ministers on top (H2) since the groups I encountered have been managed by some influential figures, either the founders themselves or the appointed leaders also referred to as apostles. Remarkably, I discovered that when it comes to organization, these communities appear to function based on a system similar to the corporate one. Therefore, in my works, I often use specific terminology when speaking of entrepreneurial ministers.

According to what has been discussed in the previous sections, the Neo-Pentecostal interaction pattern involves both linguistic and non-linguistic components. The former applies to the language, whereas the latter mainly to gestures and audiovisual content (H5). During my investigation, I discovered that the Neo-Pentecostal language, the term I coined, serves as a catalyst that accelerates one's personal revival and transformation (H4). What, then, is the Neo-Pentecostal language? Based on my observation, it can be defined as follows: the Neo-Pentecostal language is a form of religious language founded by Neo-Pentecostals back in the 1980s and spoken by their followers around the world until today, including those from mainline churches. It is dynamic and encompasses the empowerment-oriented vocabulary, which refers to specific motives and aims to restructure the maladaptive mental representations of reality stored in memory structures. Consequently, it stimulates the audience and ultimately triggers out one's personal revival and transformation. Furthermore, it is distinguished by the feature of appraisal, whose resources have been used for negotiating attitudes and social relationships. The Neo-Pentecostal language serves as a tool for motivational interviewing and, at the same time,

enables religious persuasion. The Neo-Pentecostal language combined with gestures and audiovisual material contributes to one's identity shift, mainly owing to its highly emotive content. The Neo-Pentecostal series of gestures rests largely on the touch to which a particular meaning is ascribed. The touch is directly connected with the concept of impartation, which stands for transferring divine power from one person to another. Finally, the Neo-Pentecostal language may be defined as a unique type of divine invocation directed at the supernatural in order to receive spiritual gifts and witness miracles right here and right now (instantism).

Conclusions

This research has attempted to investigate the role of the Neo-Pentecostal language in one's personal revival and transformation. Based on what has been discovered, it can be concluded that the Neo-Pentecostal language has been used as a tool for motivational interviewing and cognitive restructuring, which refer to a broader context of religious persuasion. Its contribution has been defined as shown below.

Firstly, I identified three essential stages of one's transformation. I termed the initial part the preparatory stage during which the Neo-Pentecostal language played mostly an edifying and stimulating role. As for its features, I noticed that individuals started to challenge their maladaptive thoughts mostly due to their continuous exposure to a series of evocative utterances serving as strong stimuli. The second phase, which I called the immersion stage, involved intense socializing and goal-orientation in terms of a concrete task an individual was encouraged to perform in cooperation with others. Here, the role of the Neo-Pentecostal language could be described as confirming and enhancing. The third phase, which I refer to as the conversion stage, concerned the actual awakening and its final effects. In this case, the Neo-Pentecostal language played an empowering and rhetorical role since it enabled individuals to take measures and testify. How does the Neo-Pentecostal language trigger one's personal revival, and how does it affect one's transformation? It can therefore be acknowledged that the Neo-Pentecostal language edifies, stimulates, strengthens one's convictions, enhances relationships and empowers. In consequence, an individual becomes able to recognize destructive schemas and replace them with their solution-focused counterparts.

Secondly, what seems most remarkable is that the Neo-Pentecostal intra-community interaction pattern resembles professional cognitive-behavioral therapy counseling sessions in the context of structure and function. Both seek

to examine individual's thoughts by determining what is true for him or her and what is not, both deal with stress management, and both develop alternatives in the way of approaching problems. Besides, what the Neo-Pentecostal interaction pattern and cognitive restructuring have in common is a set of strategies used when interacting with people. These include Socratic questioning, preventing thought errors, and addressing emotional reasoning. When it comes to Neo-Pentecostals, I observed that touching plays a crucial role in the whole mechanism since it is associated with transferring divine power. In other words, one's transformation starts with his or her total submission to intra-community practices. The initial feeling of hopelessness gradually changes into absolute trust and one's eagerness to take important steps.

Thirdly, I also noticed that the ideas characteristic of power evangelism had been incorporated by Pentecostal Catholics, especially when it comes to the ways of interacting with the audience and the emphasis put on signs and wonders. The Neo-Pentecostal interaction pattern involves the use of vocabulary of motives which appears to serve as a special code understood only by those who belong to the group. The same is true for contemporary Pentecostal Catholics, inspired by the Wimberian model. Although these motives were studied by Csordas in the 1990s, they have evolved over the years, bearing in mind that the setting has also changed. Interestingly, the entrepreneurial ministers, both Neo-Pentecostal and Catholic, regularly cooperate with their American fellow preachers. Precisely speaking, they form a strong network of powerful evangelists, often referred to as itinerary preachers due to their active participation in numerous Christian conferences around the world. Finally, this research underlines the importance of the interdisciplinary approach when investigating the present-day religious marketplace.

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