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SITA Learning Model: Integrating NEOS Neuro-Linguistic Programming and Spirituality in Debate Skill Development

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Abstract:

Debate skills are often underdeveloped in formal educational settings due to the lack of structured, holistic teaching models that integrate emotional and ethical dimensions. This study aims to explore the effectiveness of the SITA Learning Model, which applies NEOS (New Era of Optimization Spiritual) Neuro Linguistic Programming to improve students' debate skills. Using a qualitative-descriptive design, this research employs document analysis and participant observation involving students in a debate training class. Findings reveal that the SITA model, comprising the stages of Spiritual Stabilize Emotions, Interpret Opponent's Arguments, Think and Respond Critically, and Assertive Delivery, enhances students' emotional regulation, argument interpretation, critical response, and confident expression. The integration of spiritual values within the NEOS NLP framework significantly supports meaningful and constructive communication in debate. This study contributes a novel pedagogical model that bridges neuro-linguistic techniques and spiritual intelligence, with recommendations for its broader application in communication and character education.

Keywords:

NEOS Neuro Linguistic Programming; debate skills; spirituality-based learning; effective communication; SITA Learning Model.

Abstrak:

Keterampilan debat seringkali kurang berkembang dalam lingkungan pendidikan formal karena belum adanya model pengajaran terstruktur yang secara holistik mengintegrasikan dimensi emosional dan etika. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi efektivitas Model Pembelajaran SITA yang menerapkan NEOS (New Era of Optimization Spiritual) Neuro Linguistic Programming dalam meningkatkan keterampilan debat siswa. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain kualitatif-deskriptif dengan teknik analisis dokumen dan observasi partisipan terhadap mahasiswa dalam kelas pelatihan debat. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa model SITA, yang terdiri dari tahap Spiritual Stabilkan Emosi, Tafsirkan Argumen Lawan, Tanggapi Secara Kritis, dan Asertif dalam Penyampaian, dapat meningkatkan regulasi emosi, pemahaman argumen lawan, respons kritis, dan keberanian dalam menyampaikan pendapat. Integrasi nilai-nilai spiritual dalam kerangka NEOS NLP secara signifikan mendukung komunikasi debat yang bermakna dan konstruktif. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi model pedagogis baru yang menggabungkan teknik neuro-linguistik dan kecerdasan spiritual, serta merekomendasikan penerapannya secara lebih luas dalam pendidikan komunikasi dan pembentukan karakter.

Kata Kunci:

NEOS Neuro Linguistic Programming; keterampilan berdebat; pembelajaran berbasis spiritualitas; komunikasi efektif; Model Pembelajaran SITA.

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INTRODUCTION

Debate skills play a vital role in fostering critical thinking, effective communication, and logical reasoning in educational contexts. However, many students still struggle with emotional regulation, critical response, and meaningful communication in high-pressure debate situations (Yemima, 2025). These challenges suggest that debate instruction often fails to address the emotional and spiritual dimensions of learners in a holistic manner. Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP), introduced by Bandler and Grinder, is a method that focuses on reprogramming thought patterns, language use, and behavior to improve individual responses in various contexts (Grinder & Bandler, 1981:15). NLP has proven effective across diverse fields, including education, particularly in shaping positive and constructive communication behavior (Mhanna, 2024). Recent advancements, such as NEO NLP (New Era of Optimization) and NEOS NLP (New Era of Optimization Spiritual), enrich this approach by incorporating emotional intelligence and spiritual values (Goleman, 2005:84; Sugiyono, 2021:26).

NEOS NLP places spirituality at the core of its framework, emphasizing self-awareness, emotional regulation, and meaningful communication goals (Dahirin, 2024). In the context of debate learning, this approach offers great potential to guide students beyond the goal of winning arguments, toward developing ethical, reflective, and emotionally balanced communicators. In language learning, especially speaking skills, debate skills play an important role as a means of honing critical thinking skills, delivering arguments logically, and defending opinions. Debate skills also develop aspects of interpersonal communication and prepare individuals to communicate confidently in various social and professional situations. This skill is very valuable for students who need public speaking skills. Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP) was originally developed by Richard Bandler and John Grinder as an approach to understanding how the human mind, language, and behavior work to achieve desired results. In the book *Trance-Formations*, Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) is explained as a model that allows someone to understand and change communication and behavior patterns effectively. NLP focuses on the structure of subjective experience, including language patterns, mental representations, and nonverbal behavior, all of which can be used to influence and shape changes in a person's thoughts and behavior. Grinder and Bandler designed NLP based on their observations of the methods used by successful practitioners, such as Milton Erickson, in helping clients achieve significant change through certain techniques (Grinder & Bandler, 1981).

Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP) is an approach that studies human language and behavior patterns and how they affect thoughts and emotions. NLP provides practical guidance for individuals to change the way they think and act more positively through an understanding of communication patterns. In the context of speaking skills, NLP plays an important role in helping someone develop effective communication, increase self-confidence, and influence others positively. NLP allows individuals to use language strategically to create emotional connections with the audience. In the world of education, the application of NLP has also been shown to improve learning outcomes by strengthening aspects of motivation and learning focus (Supriyanto, 2021).

NEO (New Era of Optimization) Neuro Linguistic Programming (NEO NLP) is a further development of classical NLP that emphasizes optimizing self-potential through a modern approach. NEO NLP integrates elements of neuroscience, emotional intelligence, and mindfulness, making it relevant to contemporary challenges. Goleman (2005) highlights the importance of emotional intelligence in communication to build productive and harmonious relationships. With additional insights from neuroplasticity, NEO NLP provides a more adaptive approach to developing speaking skills and building positive influence on others (Santrock, 2010). This approach, as explained by Sugiyono (2021), also increases individual self-awareness about how to utilize mental strengths to overcome barriers in communication.

NEO NLP provides a strong foundation for interpersonal development through modern techniques that prioritize the sustainability of positive behavioral change. By combining mindfulness, individuals are invited to be more present and aware in every communication interaction, which ultimately strengthens the effectiveness of the message delivered. Research conducted by Putri (2024) in the *Journal of Educational Research Innovation Learning* confirms that a mindfulness-based approach to learning improves the quality of verbal and nonverbal communication of students. Therefore, NEO NLP is not only relevant in the context of personal development, but also plays a major role in creating a more dynamic and effective learning environment. NEO NLP emphasizes more on developing self-potential and optimizing mental functions in a more flexible and intuitive way. This approach is often more holistic, including mindfulness techniques, deeper emotional connection, and applications in leadership development and social intelligence (LPKN, 2024).

NEOS (New Era of Optimization Spiritual) Neuro Linguistic Programming (NEOS NLP) is the latest development of classical NLP and NEO NLP that integrates a modern

spiritual-based approach. In this approach, the spiritual aspect plays a key role in building individual awareness to better understand themselves, their life goals, and positive mindsets that support learning achievements. The NLP approach that is oriented towards self-awareness and spirituality is able to produce profound transformations that are not only practical but also touch the emotional and spiritual dimensions of a person (Fatima, 2023). Thus, NEOS NLP provides a holistic foundation to support individuals in achieving their maximum potential.

The integration of spiritual aspects in NEOS NLP provides significant benefits in learning, especially in the development of ongoing awareness and self-control. For example, this approach does not only focus on short-term learning outcomes, but also supports individuals in maintaining that success in the long term. Research by Santrock (2010) shows that spirituality in education helps individuals to better understand the importance of life values, which in turn increases learning motivation and productivity. Through continuous practice, learners not only acquire new skills but also build a commitment to continue developing themselves, as described by Supriyanto (2021) in his journal on spiritual-based learning innovations.

The application of NEOS NLP allows individuals to align personal goals with greater spiritual values, so that every success achieved becomes more meaningful. As stated by Goleman (2005), the aspect of spirituality integrated into learning supports the development of emotional intelligence, which is an important foundation for success in life. In addition, research by Sugiyono (2021) confirms that the application of a spiritual approach in education has a positive impact on the sustainability of changes in student behavior. Therefore, the NEOS NLP approach can be considered as one of the innovative strategies in the world of education that not only focuses on academic results but also supports the formation of character and spiritual values.

In the context of debate, NEOS NLP can help individuals control emotions, optimize spontaneous responses, and increase awareness of the other person. Techniques such as mindfulness help debate participants stay focused and calm in stressful situations. Neuroplasticity can be utilized to hone critical thinking skills and mental flexibility, while emotional intelligence is essential for understanding the reactions of the debate opponent and responding appropriately. Research on the application of NEOS NLP in debate skills needs to be conducted to further explore the effectiveness of this method in improving overall communication skills. Through this research, it is hoped that it can be known to what extent NEOS NLP is able to improve the quality of debate, especially in the context of education and self-development, and

how this technique can be applied to improve more adaptive and resilient communication skills in dealing with various situations.

However, little empirical research has systematically investigated the impact of NEOS NLP on students' debate performance (Putri, 2024). Techniques such as mindfulness, anchoring, and visualization, when combined with spiritual principles, may offer an innovative pedagogical strategy for addressing the multifaceted demands of modern communication. This study aims to examine the implementation and effectiveness of the SITA learning model, which integrates NEOS NLP principles into debate instruction. The model consists of four key stages: Spiritual Stabilize Emotions, Interpret Opponent's Arguments, Think and Respond Critically, and Assertive Delivery. Each stage is designed to enhance learners' emotional awareness, logical reasoning, and expressive confidence during debate. Accordingly, this study is expected to contribute to the development of holistic communication training models that integrate neuro-linguistic and spiritual dimensions into educational practices. Such an approach meets the increasing demand for communication instruction that not only develops technical speaking skills but also cultivates character, empathy, and social awareness (Zohar & Marshall, 2012).

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative case study design to explore the implementation and impact of the SITA learning model, which integrates NEOS Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NEOS NLP) in developing students' debate skills. The case study approach was selected to provide an in-depth examination of learning behaviors and pedagogical interactions in a specific educational context (Sugiyono, 2021:23; Santrock, 2010:88). The data sources in this study consisted of two main components: (1) document analysis of theoretical references, including literature on classical NLP (Grinder & Bandler, 1981:15), emotional intelligence (Goleman, 2005:84), and spiritually based learning (Zohar & Marshall, 2012); and (2) participant observation of 30 undergraduate students enrolled in a "Debate and Argumentation" course at IAIN Madura during the 2024 academic semester. Observation was conducted in four sessions that implemented the SITA learning steps: Spiritual Stabilize Emotions, Interpret Opponent's Arguments, Think and Respond Critically, and Assertive Delivery.

The data collection procedure involved three main stages. First, conceptual understanding was developed through document analysis using selected scholarly sources. Second, structured participant observation was conducted using an

observation sheet aligned with the four stages of the SITA model. Third, supporting data were collected through students' reflective journals and informal interviews to gain insights into their emotional responses and performance. During classroom implementation, field notes were taken to document student behavior, interaction patterns, and emotional expressions.

The data analysis used thematic analysis techniques, involving stages of data reduction, coding, categorization, and interpretation (Lestari & Andini, 2022:100). Codes were derived inductively from field data and reflections, then grouped into themes representing key behavioral and pedagogical outcomes related to the SITA model. To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, this study applied source triangulation by comparing findings from classroom observation, student reflections, and literature-based expectations (Dahirin, 2024). Observer triangulation was also implemented, involving two researchers who independently coded and discussed the data to reach agreement. In addition, member checking was conducted by asking selected students to review and validate the researchers' interpretations of their experiences during the debate sessions (Yemima, 2025).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The spiritual dimension in NEOS NLP provides awareness of a more meaningful life purpose. This element teaches individuals to see communication not only as a tool for conveying messages, but also as a means to create a positive impact on others. Spiritual integration in NEOS NLP provides a strong foundation for sustainable changes in mindset and behavior. Dahiri (2024) states that a spiritual approach increases an individual's awareness of life values, so that they can become more authentic and influential speakers. Spirituality in NEOS NLP functions to strengthen an individual's awareness of a deeper and more meaningful life purpose. This integration of spiritual aspects helps individuals to not only focus on short-term results, but also to create more sustainable changes in mindset, behavior, and social relationships. By prioritizing the spiritual dimension, NEOS NLP encourages individuals to utilize values such as honesty, empathy, and commitment in every communication and interaction process. As stated by Goleman (2005), these values build emotional intelligence which is an important foundation in managing interpersonal relationships harmoniously and productively. In the context of learning, this spiritual function motivates students to see education as part of their spiritual journey, thereby increasing awareness of the importance of continuous learning and self-development.

The spiritual function in NEOS NLP helps individuals to achieve a balance between mental, emotional, and spiritual needs. By using techniques such as mindfulness, positive visualization, and meditation, individuals are invited to realize the role of spiritual power in forming an optimistic and resilient mindset. Sugiyono (2021) shows that a spiritual approach to learning can improve the quality of life of students because it provides them with a strong moral foundation in facing challenges. In the long run, this spiritual function not only helps individuals in achieving learning goals, but also forms better characters, so that they can become agents of positive change in their communities. Thus, spiritual integration in NEOS NLP creates an impact that is not only individual but also social.

NEOS NLP also teaches how to use body language effectively, including hand gestures, posture, and facial expressions, so that messages can be better received and add to the appeal of communication. NEOS NLP also teaches the importance of inner dialogue or positive internal dialogue. When speaking, negative thoughts often arise and hinder performance. By forming an internal dialogue that is supportive and encouraging, speakers can maintain motivation and focus. The application of NEOS NLP in speaking skills involves identifying mental barriers or beliefs that inhibit, such as I am not good at speaking. NLP techniques help to overcome these beliefs and replace them with more productive and constructive beliefs. By applying the principles and techniques of NEOS NLP in speaking skills, one can optimize their communication potential and develop positive self-confidence.

Implementation of the SITA Model in Debate Learning

This SITA learning model is designed to help debate participants hone their speaking skills, maintain composure, think logically, and increase self-confidence in debate situations. The SITA steps are as follows.

S – Spiritual Stabilize Emotions

This step aims to stabilize the emotions of debate participants, so that they can think clearly, calmly, and focus. By emphasizing the spiritual aspect, participants not only manage their emotions, but also strengthen their self-awareness of the deeper meaning and purpose in debate activities. This step includes three main techniques: Mindfulness Breathing, Positive Anchoring, and Success Visualization.

- a. Mindfulness Breathing: Deep breathing exercises are one effective way to calm yourself before speaking. In a spiritual context, mindfulness breathing can also be accompanied by reflection on

gratitude for the opportunity to speak. Participants are invited to take a deep breath while remembering noble values, such as the intention to share knowledge or fight for the truth.

For example, before delivering an argument, participants close their eyes, take a slow breath, and focus on the positive goal of the debate. This process not only calms the mind but also aligns the heart with positive energy. In this way, participants can more easily deal with pressure without losing control of their emotions. This full awareness of breathing, which is in line with spiritual goals, strengthens calmness *batin sekaligus menumbuhkan rasa syukur*.

- b. Positive Anchoring: Anchoring techniques in NEO NLP are used to create anchors in the form of certain movements or words that can trigger feelings of confidence and courage. In a spiritual approach, participants can integrate faith values to strengthen their positive anchors.

For example, participants can choose affirmations such as *I speak for the truth or God is with me*. Whenever they feel nervous, they press the tip of their index finger to their thumb while inhaling and repeating this affirmation silently. In addition to triggering courage, this step reminds them of the belief that debate is a means of conveying goodness. With regular practice, this anchor becomes an effective tool for dealing with heated debate situations without losing control.

- c. Success Visualization: imagining success in the debate and overcoming potential difficulties, thereby increasing courage.

Visualization techniques help participants imagine themselves appearing confident and successful in the debate. In a spiritual approach, this visualization can also be accompanied by prayer and strengthening the intention to carry out the debate as part of worship or a positive contribution to society. A few minutes before the debate begins, participants are invited to close their eyes and imagine how they deliver arguments calmly, answer questions confidently, and receive appreciation from the audience. They also visualize themselves remaining calm even when facing pressure or provocation. By integrating spirituality, participants can visualize this success as part of a moral responsibility empowered by their beliefs. This visualization not only builds courage, but also provides inner peace, making them more mentally and emotionally prepared.

These three techniques not only function as tools for managing emotions, but also strengthen the spiritual awareness of debate participants. By combining

mindfulness, positive anchoring, and visualization, participants learn to stay focused, humble, and grateful. This approach helps them not to be easily provoked by provocation or emotional pressure, making the debate an intellectually and spiritually mature experience. Through spiritual integration, participants have a stronger grip on the challenges of debate. They understand that debate is not just about winning or losing, but also about contributing to meaningful and constructive dialogue. With stable emotions, they are able to deliver arguments wisely, focused, and confidently, creating a memorable and meaningful debate experience.

Interpret the Opponent's Argument

This step focuses on a deep understanding of the opponent's argument. Understanding the opponent's argument with reframing and empathy.

- a. Reframing: Viewing the opposing argument from a different perspective, trying to find positive or alternative sides that can strengthen your own position. When an opponent makes a strong argument, debaters can try to see it from a different perspective. For example, if the opponent argues that technology can threaten privacy, debaters can try to reframe it by viewing technology as a tool that can improve security through better surveillance. In this way, debaters can use the opponent's argument to strengthen their own position, showing the positive side of technology without ignoring the concerns raised.
- b. Empathy Mapping: Train participants to understand the emotions and perspectives of their opponents, so they can respond more appropriately and effectively. Participants train themselves to understand what their opponents might be feeling and thinking when delivering their arguments. They can ask themselves, Why does the opponent think this way? or What are their main concerns? By understanding the perspectives and emotions of their opponents, participants can respond to arguments more wisely and not attack them emotionally. For example, if the opponent expresses concerns about the social impacts of technology, participants can acknowledge these concerns before responding by showing how technology can also have positive social impacts. This step aims to enable participants to formulate appropriate rebuttals or responses without attacking

emotionally.

T - Think and Respond Critically

Here, participants are invited to respond with structured logic. Critical thinking with modeling and thinking frameworks.

- a. Modeling: Emulating the mindset or strategy of an effective speaker to produce a logical argument. Participants observe how an effective speaker constructs an argument, such as a speaker who always prioritizes data or facts to support his/her argument. Before starting a debate, participants can imitate this pattern by first collecting data and creating argument points based on evidence. During the debate, participants also try to speak with a similar structure, namely conveying an initial statement, presenting supporting data, and concluding logically. This modeling helps participants construct more logical and structured arguments, following a style that has been proven effective.
- b. Critical Thinking Framework: Practice using critical thinking frameworks, such as looking at the weaknesses and strengths of the opponent's arguments before responding. This step optimizes critical thinking skills and directs participants to provide strong and relevant arguments. Before responding to the opponent's argument, participants use critical thinking frameworks such as SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) to assess the opponent's argument. For example, if the opponent argues that the online education system is more flexible, participants analyze the weaknesses of the argument, such as the lack of social interaction, and the strengths of the argument, such as time flexibility. By understanding the strengths and weaknesses of the opponent's argument, participants can respond with more appropriate arguments, such as proposing that online and face-to-face education can complement each other rather than conflict.

A - Assertive Delivery

In the final step, participants are directed to deliver arguments with confidence and assertiveness. Delivering arguments with confidence through self-talk. Positive self-

talk is strengthening self-confidence through positive affirmations before delivering arguments. Every time it is their turn to speak, participants repeat in their hearts positive affirmations such as I am ready, I can, or I am confident in my argument. These sentences help strengthen self-confidence and reduce nervousness. This positive self-talk directs participants' minds to stay focused and optimistic, so that when it is time to speak, they can deliver arguments more calmly and confidently. With this step, participants will be able to deliver arguments clearly and convincingly, so that they can attract the attention and support of the audience.

The SITA learning model was implemented over four debate training sessions, structured into four stages: Spiritual Stabilize Emotions, Interpret Opponent's Arguments, Think and Respond Critically, and Assertive Delivery. Each stage was observed through behavioral indicators, and student reflections were collected at the end of each session.

SITA Stage	Observed Behaviors	Evidence from Student Reflections
Spiritual Stabilize Emotions	Reduced nervousness, calmer posture, focused gaze	"I felt less tense after doing breathing techniques."
Interpret Opponent's Arguments	Empathic acknowledgment, less interruption	"I tried to understand before responding."
Think and Respond Critically	Structured rebuttals, data-based arguments	"I followed a format like: claim—reason—example."
Assertive Delivery	Clear articulation, steady voice, eye contact	"I felt more confident after saying my affirmations."

Table 1 Summarizes the Observed Improvements in Students' Debate Performance Across the SITA Stages.

These behavioral shifts suggest that the SITA model provided a scaffold for internal regulation and structured expression, which are often neglected in conventional debate pedagogy.

Emotional Regulation and Inner Readiness through NEOS NLP

The use of NEOS NLP techniques such as mindfulness breathing and anchoring helped students calm themselves before delivering arguments. In classroom observations, most students showed improved control over facial expressions and body tension after practicing short breathing sessions. For example, one student stated, "I felt that doing the finger anchor while saying 'God is with me' made me feel brave." (Student Reflection, Session 2). This shows how spiritual anchoring, when integrated

with neurolinguistic techniques, supports not only self-confidence but also emotional alignment with internal values (Dahirin, 2024). These outcomes affirm previous findings that mindfulness enhances performance in verbal tasks (Lestari, 2023:50).

The spiritual dimension in NEOS NLP plays an important role in ensuring that the changes in mindset and behavior achieved are not only temporary but also have a long-term impact. By integrating spiritual values, individuals are invited to understand more meaningful communication goals, such as building harmonious relationships and having a positive impact on others. Kusuma (2023) emphasized that spiritual awareness helps individuals to be more present and authentic in every communication interaction. In the context of learning, this dimension encourages students to see education as part of a spiritual journey that will enrich their lives (Dahirin, 2024). In the application of NEOS NLP, mindfulness and visualization techniques are one of the main tools for integrating spirituality into the learning process. Mindfulness helps individuals to be more aware of their mindset and emotions, so they can manage stress and pressure in communication (Burgoon, 2000). Meanwhile, positive visualization is used to build self-confidence and increase mental readiness before speaking in public. Research by Lestari (2023) shows that the use of mindfulness in learning significantly increases student engagement, especially in learning situations that require intense verbal interaction.

Mindfulness is another technique in NEOS NLP that focuses on full awareness of the present moment. In public speaking, mindfulness helps speakers not to get caught up in worries about the future or past failures. With full awareness, speakers can regulate their breathing, pay attention to audience responses, and maintain a natural flow of communication. Research by Putri (2024) shows that mindfulness practices in education improve student focus and reduce stress, which is relevant in the context of speaking. Mindfulness also supports speakers to manage their emotions better, so that the message delivered becomes more authentic.

Anchoring is a technique for creating a positive emotional "anchor" that can be accessed at any time. For example, a speaker can create an anchor in the form of a certain hand movement to create a sense of confidence before speaking. This technique allows the speaker to stabilize positive emotions during communication. Schweickart (2021) explains that anchoring is effectively used to move someone from a negative state to a positive state with only certain stimuli. In learning, this technique is often used to increase student motivation by creating positive associations with learning activities.

Critical Thinking and Reframing in Response Strategy

During the “Think and Respond Critically” phase, students were introduced to argument modeling and SWOT analysis. Observation data revealed that students began to recognize weaknesses in the opponent’s statements and offered data-driven alternatives. For instance, when faced with a statement like “Technology isolates people,” one student reframed it by saying, “Technology also enables people with disabilities to connect and work remotely.” This reflects the cognitive flexibility fostered by NEOS NLP, particularly the reframing technique (Knight, 2010:74). Reframing also stimulated students to approach debate as problem-solving, rather than confrontation.

NEOS Neuro Linguistic Programming (NEOS NLP) is the latest development of classical NLP that emphasizes the use of more adaptive techniques and integrates spiritual elements for the development of speaking skills. In this context, NEOS NLP leverages a deep understanding of how the brain, language, and behavior work to help individuals achieve clarity in communication, increase self-confidence, and better regulate emotions (Yemima, 2025). NEOS NLP adds a spiritual dimension as a foundation to ensure that the changes achieved are sustainable and have a long-term impact. In the world of education, this approach has been recognized as one of the effective methods to improve the quality of communication between students and teachers (Lestari, 2023).

The basic foundation of NEOS NLP consists of four main aspects: neuro, linguistic, programming, and spiritual. Neuro focuses on how the nervous system processes information received through the senses, while linguistic reflects the influence of language on thought patterns and behavior (Anwar, 2025). Programming refers to how behavioral patterns can be modified to achieve certain results, and the spiritual element acts as a driver of deeper and more meaningful change. These four aspects contribute to the development of more effective speaking skills, including the ability to convey ideas clearly, build emotional connections with the audience, and maintain focus in communication (Nurhaliza & Wicaksono, 2024).

Assertiveness and Delivery Quality

The final stage, Assertive Delivery, emphasized body language and internal dialogue. Students who initially avoided eye contact began standing upright and projecting their voice clearly by the third session. As one student expressed: “Saying ‘I am ready’ before I spoke helped my voice stay steady.” These changes represent measurable behavioral outcomes of internal programming, confirming that techniques

such as self-talk and positive visualization can impact real-time communication performance (Jones, 2024)

The NEOS NLP technique is also designed to improve critical thinking skills and creativity in communication. In the world of education, this ability is very important to support active and participatory learning. Yemima (2025) noted that students who use this approach are more confident in expressing their opinions and are more open to the views of others. With a focus on developing neuro and linguistic aspects, NEOS NLP helps students to better understand their audience and adjust their communication style according to the situation at hand.

With these advantages, NEOS NLP is a relevant and effective approach to supporting speaking skills in various contexts, both in educational environments, work, and everyday life. The spiritual component integrated into NEOS NLP provides an additional dimension that enriches the learning experience and improves the quality of interpersonal interactions. In the long term, the application of NEOS NLP is expected to create individuals who are not only technically superior but also have a deeper awareness of the impact of their communication on their social environment (Tyagi, 2023).

In NEOS NLP, the neuro aspect focuses on how the brain manages the tension and anxiety of speaking. For example, by using breathing techniques or visualization to calm the mind, a person can improve concentration and reduce nervousness. This is important for maintaining consistency and clarity when speaking in public. Linguistics in NEOS NLP emphasizes choosing the right words and using the right tone of voice so that the message is well received by the listener. For example, someone who uses positive words and a friendly tone is more likely to attract the attention of the listener and make them feel comfortable.

Interpreting the Role of Spiritual Integration

Unlike moral preaching, the integration of spirituality in this model was designed as a self-regulatory mechanism, grounding students in values before engaging in high-pressure discourse. For example, anchoring a spiritual phrase such as “I speak for justice” was not used to preach but to build intentionality and ethical mindfulness. This is aligned with Zohar and Marshall's (2012) view of spirituality as a form of intelligence that supports meaningful decision-making. Spirituality in this case was not abstract moralizing but a practical resource for self-management, bridging the psychological and ethical dimensions of speech.

NEOS NLP develops the traditional NLP approach by adding components of adaptation and flexibility. The techniques used are more suitable for modern communication needs, such as virtual and cross-cultural communication. This allows individuals to adapt more easily to diverse audiences and different communication contexts (Siregar, 2023). With this flexibility, NEOS NLP helps speakers optimize their communication potential for various situations, both formal and informal. In an educational environment, this technique is very relevant to improving interactions between teachers and students in digital-based learning (Prasetya, 2022).

Programming in NEOS NLP includes techniques for reprogramming negative thought patterns related to public speaking. This can be done through affirmations or positive self-talk that aims to replace inhibiting thought patterns. This technique helps the speaker feel more confident and able to control their thoughts. There are several NEOS NLP Techniques that can be used as follows. Visualization is an important technique in NEOS NLP that helps someone imagine success in speaking. By visualizing how the message is delivered clearly and well received, the speaker will be more mentally and emotionally prepared when facing the audience.

Visualization is an important technique in NEOS NLP that helps the speaker imagine their success in speaking. This technique encourages a person to build a detailed mental picture of how the message is delivered clearly and received by the audience. By visualizing success, speakers can instill confidence in their minds, which then translates into real action. Visualization has long been used in the development of communication skills, due to its ability to create strong mental readiness (Knight, 2010). For example, a speaker can imagine themselves appearing confident on stage, receiving a warm welcome from the audience, and delivering the message smoothly.

Reframing is a technique in NEOS NLP to change the way you view a particular situation. For example, public speaking can be seen not as a threat, but as an opportunity to share ideas. With this new perspective, speakers can reduce their fear and increase their confidence. At the same time, pacing and leading techniques are used to create a connection with the audience. Pacing involves adjusting to the rhythm of the audience, while leading aims to lead their attention in a certain direction. Research by Tyagi (2023) found that the combination of these techniques increased audience engagement in the context of interactive learning.

Swish pattern is an NLP technique used to replace negative thought patterns with positive thought patterns. In speaking, this technique helps individuals replace fear with calm and confidence. This technique involves replacing negative mental images

with desired positive images. In addition, building rapport or good relationships with the audience is an important element in NEOS NLP. Rapport helps the speaker create a comfortable atmosphere, so that the message is more easily accepted. Knight (2010) emphasizes the importance of rapport in increasing the effectiveness of interpersonal communication.

Mirror neurons are the part of the brain that allows a person to understand the emotions of others. In NEOS NLP, this technique is used to train empathy through facial expressions, body movements, and tone of voice that are in tune with the audience. Empathy developed through mirror neurons makes the message more emotionally accepted. On the other hand, the meta model is a technique for digging up information with in-depth questions. In speaking, this technique helps the speaker formulate relevant questions that direct the discussion to the desired goal (Siregar, 2023). Meta models also improve critical thinking skills, especially in debate or group discussion situations.

Pacing is a technique for following the audience's movements and body language, while leading is a technique for leading their attention. In the context of NEO NLP, these two techniques are used to create a bond with the audience, making them more interested and involved in the conversation (Mahrus, 2024). Rapport is the ability to create a good relationship with the audience (Suprijandoko, 2024). NEOS NLP uses various techniques to build rapport, such as matching body language or following the listener's speech rhythm, which makes them feel more comfortable and open to the message being conveyed.

Integrating spirituality into NEOS Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP) SITA for learning debate skills is an important step in building students who are not only competent in speaking, but also have emotional maturity and awareness of more meaningful goals. According to Maslow (1943), spirituality is part of self-actualization that helps individuals understand a greater purpose in life. In learning debate skills, spirituality provides an ethical and moral foundation, allowing debate participants to focus not only on winning, but also on fairness and constructive dialogue. This approach fosters a sense of responsibility in delivering honest and valuable arguments.

Measurable Impact on Debate Performance

By the final session, the following improvements were noted:

1. Increased participation: 83% of students voluntarily took the floor without prompting (Session 1: only 42%).

2. Improved argument structure: 70% of students used evidence to support claims by Session 3.
3. Reduced speech anxiety: Based on observation rubric, average anxiety scores decreased from 4.2 to 2.7 (on a scale of 1–5).

These indicators demonstrate that the SITA model—grounded in NEOS NLP—had tangible effects on debate competence, particularly in areas of emotional readiness, critical response, and delivery precision. Integration of spirituality can increase emotional resilience and self-control. Goleman (1995) in *Emotional Intelligence* emphasizes the importance of emotional regulation in challenging situations. Techniques such as mindfulness and visualization, when combined with spirituality, can help learners manage debate stress through deep reflection on positive values such as patience, gratitude, and goodwill. This is reinforced by research by Zohar and Marshall (2012) who introduced the concept of spiritual intelligence as an individual's ability to face life's challenges with a broader vision. In the context of a debate, participants can be calmer and more focused, because they understand that debate is a tool for building meaningful dialogue, not just a competition.

Spirituality in NEOS NLP also encourages learners to build deeper connections with the audience. According to Covey (2020), in *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, a spiritual-based approach allows one to establish better relationships through empathy and honesty. In learning debate skills, spirituality can be realized through rapport building techniques that emphasize the importance of emotional harmony with the audience. A study from the *Journal of Education* shows that a spiritual-based approach to learning increases students' intrinsic motivation to learn (Rahmawati, 2020). Therefore, spirituality not only creates competent speakers but also characters.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the implementation of the SITA learning model, which integrates NEOS Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NEOS NLP) and spiritual intelligence to enhance students' debate skills. The model's four structured stages, Spiritual Stabilize Emotions, Interpret Opponent's Arguments, Think and Respond Critically, and Assertive Delivery, were shown to support emotional regulation, argument interpretation, critical thinking, and confident expression. These findings affirm the initial hypothesis that NEOS NLP, when implemented in a structured and reflective way, can meaningfully improve students' performance in high-pressure communicative settings like debate. The integration of spiritual values into neuro-linguistic learning strategies

distinguishes the SITA model from conventional debate training. Spirituality in this context serves not as a moral directive, but as an internal guide for self-awareness, empathy, and intentional speech. Students who applied spiritual-based techniques such as mindfulness, anchoring, and visualization exhibited increased focus, emotional balance, and a sense of ethical responsibility during debates. These improvements demonstrate the transformative potential of aligning inner awareness with communication strategies.

This model contributes a unique pedagogical approach that can be further developed for broader applications in character education, public speaking, leadership training, and intercultural communication. Future research may explore the implementation of SITA in digital learning environments or across diverse sociocultural settings to test its adaptability and long-term impact. As such, the SITA model not only advances debate instruction but also enriches the field of spiritually informed pedagogy in modern education.

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