

## DEVELOPMENT OF AN NLP-BASED COMMUNICATION MANUAL FOR CLASSROOM GUIDANCE SERVICES IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

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**Abstract:** Effective communication is a key element in the success of school counseling services, particularly in classroom guidance, which is delivered in group settings to students in the classroom. Unfortunately, many school counselors still apply one-way communication patterns that limit active student participation. This study aims to develop an effective Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP)-based communication guide for junior high school counselors to implement classroom guidance services. The research method used is Research and Development (R&D), adapted from the Borg & Gall model (1983) and modified to include only the expert and user validation stages. Data were collected through literature reviews, interviews, and the distribution of validation instruments to experts and prospective users, including school counselors. The result of the development is a guidance manual that includes the basic concepts of NLP, communication strategies, and their application in classroom-based counseling services. Validation results indicate that the developed guide is feasible, useful, and well-targeted. This study offers practical contributions by providing pedagogical tools that support school counselors' communication skills through a systematic, applicable approach. The findings recommend NLP as an innovative approach to foster a more interactive communication climate within classroom guidance sessions.

**Keywords:** classroom guidance; effective communication; guide development; neuro-linguistic programming; school counselor

### INTRODUCTION

In the field of education, communication is not merely a tool for delivering information; it serves as a fundamental foundation for building relationships, facilitating understanding, developing thinking processes, and influencing students' learning behaviors (Thornhill-Miller et al., 2023; Wenning & Vieyra, 2020). Effective communication is a determining factor in the success of interactions between educators and students, including within school counseling services (Feinstein, 2015; Ivey & Daniels, 2016; Yuan et al., 2020). However, in

practice, communication during guidance and counseling services often remains one-directional, instructional, and lacking in student participation. School counselors, who are expected to serve as facilitators of dialogue and reflection, often fall into the role of information transmitters through monotonous and non-contextual lecture-style methods. As a result, a psychological distance arises between counselors and students, leading to a decline in service effectiveness, particularly in preventive and developmental functions (Amadi & Kufre Paul, 2017; Feinstein, 2015; Sdeeq et al., 2021).

On the other hand, Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) has emerged as a communication- and behavior-based approach applied across various fields, including therapy, organizational leadership, and personal development. NLP integrates mental representation systems, language, and behavioral strategies to help individuals construct more constructive subjective experiences (Drigas et al., 2021; Sunitha et al., 2021; Tosey & Mathison, 2010). In a systematic review by Kotera et al. (2019), NLP was found to be effective in improving self-esteem, stress management, work motivation, and reflective behavior in workplace and professional training settings. These findings suggest that NLP principles, which emphasize mindset transformation and reflective communication, hold considerable potential for adaptation in educational and mental health contexts (Keezhatta, 2019; Kotera & Ting, 2021).

Further studies have confirmed that NLP can significantly influence behavioral change, especially in response to stress, trauma, and interpersonal conflict (Carey et al., 2011; Freeth, 2013; Sharif & Aziz, 2015). Through techniques such as anchoring, meta-modeling, and submodality shifting, individuals can identify and reconstruct limiting internal perceptions. These studies show that changes in internal representations of subjective experiences lead to more adaptive behavioral changes. Although these findings are rooted in psychiatric contexts, the effectiveness of NLP in strengthening self-awareness and emotional regulation makes it highly relevant for school counselors in guiding students through mild psychological challenges.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that NLP has also drawn criticism within academic circles. A critical review by Passmore and Rowson concluded that many of NLP's core claims lack robust scientific evidence and are often conceptual, making them difficult to replicate empirically. However, they also acknowledge that NLP retains practical value when applied selectively, reflectively, and within structured contexts such as education and training. In this regard, NLP need not be dismissed outright; rather, it should be adopted judiciously as a strategic communication framework that supports reflective interaction and psychological empowerment—particularly when combined with educational values and empathetic practice (Carey et al., 2011; Zulfikar Amar, 2020).

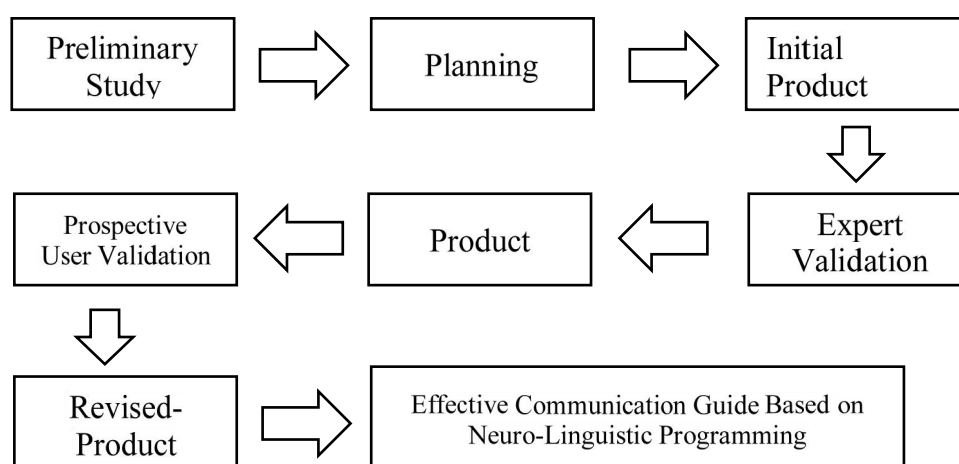
NLP has been widely used in special education (Drigas et al., 2021) and language learning contexts (Rasheed P & Kotta, 2017; Sunitha et al., 2021), particularly to enhance students' concentration, learning motivation, and self-confidence. Techniques such as rapport building, mirroring, and language patterning have proven effective in improving students' communication skills and the quality of classroom interaction (Javadi & Asl, 2020; Rustan, 2017). However, its application in school counseling services - especially within classroom guidance at the secondary level remains very limited. This is despite the fact that NLP aligns well with the core principles of counseling, namely, individual empowerment through reflective and empathetic communication.

In the Indonesian education system, Classroom Guidance (curriculum-based guidance) is one of the core services in school counseling, characterized by its structured format and scheduled implementation. It is designed to deliver essential topics such as developmental tasks, social-emotional issues, life skills, and character education (Yusuf, 2009). Given its systemic and large-group format, classroom guidance serves as a strategic medium for value and knowledge transformation on a preventive basis to all students. The challenge, however, lies in making this service more communicative, participatory, and meaningful. It is within this context that NLP can be adopted to revolutionize how school counselors communicate during classroom guidance sessions—emphasizing empathetic rapport, suggestive messaging, and deep reflective strategies.

Based on this background, the present study aims to develop an NLP-based effective communication guide for classroom guidance. The guide is grounded not only in NLP principles but also in practical strategies that school counselors can directly apply in the classroom. Using a Research and Development (R&D) approach, this study designs, validates, and refines a communication guide suitable for use in junior secondary school settings. The research seeks to answer the following question: How is the process and outcome of developing an NLP-based effective communication guide for classroom guidance among junior high school counselors, as evaluated in terms of accuracy, usefulness, and feasibility?

## METHOD

This study employed a Research and Development (R&D) model adapted from Borg and Gall (1983). Due to practical constraints, including time limitations and institutional access, the model was modified to focus on two initial stages: expert validation and user validation. The exclusion of field testing was a deliberate methodological decision, taken to ensure the feasibility of developing a context-sensitive prototype within the project timeline. While this limits immediate empirical generalizability, it allows for a more iterative development process that prioritizes conceptual soundness and user readiness before implementation trials.



*Figure 1. Stages of Product Development*

The research involved several stages: a preliminary study (literature review and need assessment), planning and formulation of development objectives, initial product development (drafting the guide), expert and user validation, and product revision based on feedback.

*Participants and Informants*

Participants were selected through purposive sampling based on their professional expertise and relevance to the study. Two expert validators were involved: a university lecturer in Educational Psychology and Counseling and a certified NLP practitioner, each with more than 12 years of professional experience. This aligns with Polit & Beck's (2006) recommendation that content validators should possess substantial field expertise to ensure credible, rigorous assessments of accuracy, clarity, and relevance.

Two junior high school counselors also participated as user validators, each with over seven years of experience delivering classroom guidance. Following Patton's (2013) utilization-focused evaluation framework, involving experienced end-users ensures that feedback is contextually grounded and practically oriented.

*Instruments and Data Collection Techniques*

Data collection was conducted in two phases. First, a preliminary study through interviews and literature review to formulate the needs and specifications of the guide. Second, product validation using a Likert-scale questionnaire (4-point scale) designed to evaluate three key aspects: accuracy, usability, and feasibility.

Table 1. Validation Instrument Blueprint

Aspect	Indicator	Example Statement	Score
Accuracy	Relevance of content to classroom guidance	"The content in the guide is aligned with the needs of classroom guidance."	1-4
Usability	Ease of implementation by school counselors	"The guide is easy to apply in classroom guidance sessions."	1-4
Feasibility	Design and structure of the guide	"The format and language are engaging and easy to understand."	1-4

The validation instrument was developed based on instructional material development principles and effective communication theory (Tubbs & Moss, 2008). These foundations emphasize the importance of clarity, relevance, and structural coherence in educational resources, particularly those intended for professional use in dynamic classroom settings. Indicators within the instrument were designed to measure three critical dimensions: content accuracy, practical usability, and overall feasibility.

*Data Analysis Technique*

Quantitative data from the validation process were analyzed using descriptive statistics by calculating the percentage score for each aspect with the following formula:

$$\text{Validation Score} = (\text{Actual Score} / \text{Maximum Score}) \times 100\%$$

The interpretation of the results is aligned with the following criteria:

Table 2. Product Validation Score Interpretation

Percentage score	Interpretation
85–100%	Very feasible
70–84%	Feasible
55–69%	Less Feasible
< 55%	Not Feasible

Descriptive statistics were used to interpret the validation data, which included the calculation of mean scores across three dimensions: accuracy, usability, and feasibility. In addition to average scores, the standard deviation and score ranges were computed to illustrate the degree of agreement among validators. This enriched the quantitative interpretation by highlighting the extent of consensus and identifying potential variations in evaluators' responses. For instance, a low standard deviation indicated a strong convergence of opinion among experts, supporting the robustness of the validation outcomes.

In addition to quantitative analysis, qualitative data, including expert and user suggestions and comments, were thematically analyzed to support product revision. Key aspects examined in the thematic analysis included content clarity, language readability, illustration relevance, and the guide's adaptability for classroom guidance implementation.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### *Needs Analysis*

The initial phase involved a needs analysis using an instrument to assess effective communication skills among 114 junior high school counselors from various regions in Indonesia. The assessment revealed that 39% of school counselors were categorized as less competent in effective communication, 49% as communicative, and only 12% as highly communicative. These findings highlight the urgent need for a preventive-developmental service to improve school counselors' communication effectiveness.

### *Product Development of NLP-Based Communication Guide*

The main product developed in this study is an effective communication guide based on Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP), designed to support school counselors in implementing classroom guidance at the junior high school level. This guide serves as a comprehensive, practical self-training resource to enhance school counselors' communication skills when delivering structured guidance sessions. The guide consists of

several core components, including an introduction, general instructions, and supporting media for each training phase (see Table 3).

Table 3. Structure and Components of the NLP-Based Communication Guide for Classroom Guidance

Section	Content Description	Supporting Media
Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Rationale for guide development</li> <li>✓ Objectives of NLP-based communication training in classroom guidance</li> </ul>	N/A
General Instructions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ How to use the guide for self-directed learning</li> <li>✓ Training flow and communication skill development path</li> </ul>	N/A
Self-Training Procedure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ NLP-based communication training steps</li> <li>✓ Integration of techniques into counseling practice</li> </ul>	N/A
Phase 1: Opening Classroom Guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Techniques for opening sessions</li> <li>✓ Building rapport with students using NLP</li> <li>✓ Initial non-verbal communication</li> </ul>	Video 1: Opening with NLP Video 2: Vocal and non-verbal basics
Phase 2: Main Session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Questioning and information-gathering techniques</li> <li>✓ Calibration and pacing-leading</li> <li>✓ Reframing and positive language patterns</li> </ul>	Video 3: NLP-based core session demonstration
Phase 3: Closing Session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Summarizing techniques and enhancing student understanding</li> <li>✓ Future pacing and commitment reinforcement</li> </ul>	Video 4: Closing techniques using NLP
Self-Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Reflection on communication practices</li> <li>✓ Printable self-evaluation and personal development worksheet for counselors</li> </ul>	Printable evaluation and reflection formats
References & Appendices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ NLP and counseling references</li> <li>✓ Sample classroom guidance lesson plans (RPL)</li> </ul>	QR codes for RPL templates and worksheet formats

The developed guidebook has been tested and validated by experts. Validation results from a specialist in Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP), an academic in guidance and counseling, and junior high school counselors are detailed in the following section.

*Expert Validation: Expert in Neuro Linguistic Programming Practice*

Table 4. NLP Expert Validation Results

Indicator	Mean Score
Language Clarity of NLP Techniques	4.00
Accuracy of NLP Techniques	3.80
Structure of NLP Presentation	4.00

The NLP expert found the linguistic aspects of the techniques appropriate and suitable for junior high school counselors. The language used in the guide was deemed highly effective in supporting the development of communication skills and matched the cognitive level of the intended users. Regarding the accuracy of NLP techniques, the guide was found to be consistent with core NLP principles, including the four pillars of NLP. Descriptions and examples of key techniques such as matching predicates, metaphors, pacing, yes-set conditioning, mind reading, double bind, cause-and-effect, embedded questions, and universal quantifiers were rated highly appropriate. The structure of the guide was also considered well-aligned with the design of classroom guidance sessions.

Based on the NLP expert's overall validation of the techniques' accuracy, the results indicate that the guide meets the criteria for effectively enhancing classroom guidance communication for junior high school counselors.

#### *Expert Validation: Expert in Guidance and Counseling*

The validation focused on three aspects of product quality: usefulness, feasibility, and alignment with the practical needs of classroom guidance implementation in junior high schools.

Table 5. Validation Results from Guidance and Counseling Experts

Indicator	Means		Agreement Category
	Expert 1	Expert 2	
Usefulness	3.86	3.2	Strong
Feasibility	3	3	Strong
Accuracy	3	3	Strong

The resulting agreement coefficient was 1.00, falling within the range of very high agreement (Guilford scale), indicating that the guide is strongly accepted in terms of accuracy, usefulness, and feasibility for classroom guidance.

#### *Prospective User Validation*

The prospective users evaluated the product's usefulness, feasibility, and accuracy, taking into account their needs and available resources as school counselors.

Table 6. Validation Results from Prospective Users

Indicator	Means		Agreement Category
	User 1	User 2	
Usefulness	3.56	3.74	Strong
Feasibility	3.3	3.65	Strong
Accuracy	3.5	3	Strong

The coefficient of agreement from the user validation phase also reached 1.00 (Guilford scale), indicating strong consensus among prospective users regarding the guide's practicality, usability, and relevance.

*Qualitative Feedback and Revisions*

Table 7. Qualitative Feedback from Counseling Experts

Comment/Suggestion	Follow-Up Action
Tables should be colored and numbered	Added visual styling and table numbers
Source for NLP representation image should be cited	Source cited and visual modified
Add exercises or reflections at the end of each stage	Reflection activities integrated into each skill section
Clarify user instructions and learning autonomy in the introduction	Added to introduction, paragraph 7
Italicize foreign terms	All foreign terms italicized
Include self-assessment rubrics for competence mastery	Added rubrics following each communication skill unit

The feedback (see Table 7) primarily emphasized improving the visual presentation, clarifying user instructions, and ensuring consistency in language conventions. For example, both experts recommended enhancing the visual appeal of tables by color-coding and numbering them for easier navigation. Additionally, one expert emphasized the need to cite the source of the NLP representational system diagram, which was subsequently revised and properly referenced.

Other notable suggestions included the inclusion of self-reflection activities at the end of each training stage to reinforce experiential learning and promote metacognitive awareness among school counselors. Furthermore, the inclusion of explanations of learning autonomy and rubric-based assessments of communication competencies reflected a clear demand for user-friendly, pedagogically sound features. These revisions helped align the guide not only with effective communication strategies but also with the principles of adult learning and self-directed professional development.

Table 8. Feedback from NLP Expert

Comment/Suggestion	Follow-Up Action
Add real-life examples for each of the four NLP pillars	Added to General Instructions, Section E
Include material on Milton Model and persuasive language structures	Added to NLP Concepts section
Include additional references for NLP in education and specifically classroom guidance	Expanded references in rationale and General Instructions section

Table 8 outlines the recommendations from the NLP expert, which further refined the content's conceptual and technical rigor. The expert emphasized the need to integrate concrete examples for each of the four core pillars of NLP to improve user understanding and application. These examples were added to the general instruction section to contextualize the techniques in educational settings.

Additionally, suggestions to include content from the Milton Model—particularly its persuasive language patterns—were incorporated to enrich the guide's repertoire of

communication techniques. Finally, the addition of context-specific references on the application of NLP in educational and classroom guidance settings strengthened the product's theoretical foundation.

Together, these expert reviews contributed not only to improving the guide's content and format but also to ensuring its practical relevance and theoretical integrity. The integration of both counseling and NLP perspectives positioned the guide as a pedagogically robust and contextually adaptive tool for school counselors seeking to enhance their communication effectiveness in classroom guidance settings.

The NLP-based communication guide was rated as highly feasible and appropriate by both experts and users across key dimensions: content accuracy, practical usefulness, and design feasibility. These findings reinforce the idea that integrating NLP principles into classroom guidance services can significantly enhance school counselors' communication with students.

Conceptually, this aligns with research suggesting that effective communication depends not only on message content but also on the communicator's ability to build rapport, match representational systems (visual, auditory, kinesthetic), and deliver messages with both structure and flexibility (Grosu et al., 2014; Javadi & Asl, 2020; Kong & Farrell, 2012). These principles serve as the foundation of the developed guide, which has been contextually tailored for junior high school settings.

Although the use of NLP in education is not entirely new, previous studies have primarily focused on teacher training or general instructional use. The application of NLP techniques in education is not entirely new. Previous studies have shown that NLP can help create a more positive learning atmosphere and strengthen relationships between teachers and students (Drigas et al., 2021; Seitova et al., 2016; Tosey & Mathison, 2010). However, this study offers a new contribution by developing a concrete product in the form of a systematic guide that explicitly integrates NLP into the structure of classroom guidance services. This makes the study both distinct and original compared to earlier research, which primarily focused on teacher training or general applications in instructional processes.

In terms of implementation, the validation results indicate that the guide is not only sound in content but also practical and realistic for school counselors to use in classroom settings. This supports Geltner and Clark's (2005) assertion on the importance of practical tools that can enhance school counselors' professionalism in delivering structured preventive and developmental services. Moreover, the results demonstrate that school counselors have a genuine need for tools that help them reach students more personally – something often difficult to achieve through traditional lecture-based approaches.

Methodologically, the use of a modified R&D model limited to the early stages (up to expert and user validation) is considered adequate for the initial development goals. Although the product has not yet undergone direct classroom testing (field testing), the theoretical and practical validation from experts and early users provides a strong foundation for further development.

This study contributes a novel, structured product that explicitly integrates NLP into the formal structure of classroom guidance services, providing both a theoretical framework and a practical tool. This distinguishes the research from earlier works that focused on individual techniques or general teaching enhancements. From a practical perspective, the

developed NLP-based communication guide serves as a structured tool to enhance school counselors' interpersonal communication skills. The guide is not only relevant to the delivery of preventive and developmental services but also provides school counselors with concrete strategies to engage students in more interactive, reflective, and meaningful dialogues. By incorporating NLP techniques such as rapport building, pacing and leading, reframing, and sensory-based language (VAK modalities), school counselors can better match their communication styles to students' individual preferences—thus increasing receptivity and impact.

The guide also offers a scalable resource for counselor training programs. It may be integrated into professional development curricula as a practical module to strengthen counselors' communication competencies, particularly for those working in settings with large student populations and limited opportunities for individualized support. From a theoretical standpoint, this study contributes to the evolving discourse on the applicability of NLP in education. While NLP has often been critiqued in clinical psychology, its value in educational contexts, particularly as a communication strategy, warrants further exploration. The study demonstrates that when NLP is ethically and reflectively adapted, it aligns well with the goals of counseling and guidance services in schools.

## CONCLUSION

This study has developed a practical output in the form of an effective communication guide based on Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP), specifically designed to support classroom guidance services delivered by junior high school counselors. Through a systematic development process and validation by both experts and prospective users, the guide was deemed highly feasible in terms of content accuracy, practical usefulness, and design appropriateness.

While the guide was positively received by experts and users, its practical implementation may present several challenges. One anticipated issue is initial resistance from students accustomed to traditional, lecture-based classroom instruction. Integrating NLP techniques such as pacing, reframing, or metaphorical language may require a pedagogical shift that students—and even some counselors—may find unfamiliar or uncomfortable at first. Additionally, counselors may face institutional constraints such as rigid time allocations and large student-to-counselor ratios, which can hinder the personalized delivery of reflective communication strategies. Therefore, ongoing professional development and gradual integration are recommended to support sustainable adoption.

The NLP principles embedded in the guide—such as rapport building, pacing and leading, reframing, and the use of sensory-based language—can be meaningfully integrated into established counseling frameworks. For example, the technique of establishing rapport aligns closely with Carl Rogers' core conditions in Person-Centered Therapy, particularly the principles of empathy and unconditional positive regard (Rogers, 1957). Reframing techniques, which involve altering the client's perception of a problem, correspond with cognitive restructuring strategies used in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (Beck & Dozois,

2011). These alignments position NLP not as a competing paradigm but as a complementary communication tool that can enhance counselor-client interaction within existing theoretical orientations.

The practical implications of this study highlight the guide's potential as a resource for school counselors to design and deliver more communicative, student-centered classroom guidance sessions. It may also serve as a training tool to enhance counselors' communication competencies, particularly in preventive guidance and counseling services. Further development is recommended through field testing to empirically evaluate the guide's effectiveness in transforming communication dynamics during classroom guidance.

Future studies are encouraged to conduct field testing using a quasi-experimental design with control and experimental groups. This approach would allow researchers to quantitatively assess the impact of the NLP-based communication guide on measurable outcomes such as student engagement, classroom climate, and counselor communication self-efficacy. Moreover, longitudinal research could examine the sustained effects of guide implementation over time, contributing to a deeper understanding of its influence on counselor development and student outcomes across diverse educational settings.

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