

DEVELOPING ARGUMENTATION SKILLS IN CLASSROOM DISCUSSION AT SD METRO SCHOOL MAKASSAR

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Article Info	Abstract
Keywords: <i>Classroom Discussion; Argumentation Skills; Student Interaction; Communication Skills</i> The Authors (s): This is an open-access article under the This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License. 	This study investigates the role of discourse analysis in classroom discussion activities and its influence on developing argumentation skills among elementary school students. Utilizing a qualitative case study approach, the research examines the discourse patterns that arise during discussions, the strategies employed by students to construct their arguments, and the overall effectiveness of these activities in enhancing their argumentative abilities. Data will be gathered through observations, audio and video recordings, as well as interviews with both students and teachers. The findings are expected to offer valuable insights into student interactions, the progression of argumentation skills, and practical recommendations for educators to create a more engaging and effective learning environment. Ultimately, this research emphasizes the vital role of discourse in shaping students' communication competencies and their capacity for reasoned argumentation. Situated within the context of SD Metro School in Makassar, Indonesia, where there is a growing focus on educational practices that promote critical thinking and communication skills, the study analyzes the discourse patterns and strategies employed by sixth-grade students during structured discussions. The goal is to offer a comprehensive understanding of how these interactions foster the development of argumentation skills. Expected outcomes include increased student confidence, improved critical thinking, enhanced communication abilities, and strengthened peer relationships. These findings will not only contribute to the existing literature on argumentation in education but also provide practical insights for educators aiming to implement effective discussion-based learning strategies. Ultimately, this research underscores the necessity of cultivating a supportive and interactive classroom environment that empowers students to articulate their thoughts, engage with diverse perspectives, and develop essential skills for their academic and social lives.

1. INTRODUCTION

Argumentation is an essential aspect of the learning process, aimed at enhancing students' critical thinking and communication skills. In Indonesia, there has been a growing emphasis on educational practices that promote classroom discussions, particularly in elementary education. A key initiative to enhance learning quality is cultivating argumentation skills through these discussions.

In the classroom, structured discussions serve as a powerful tool for encouraging students to practice their argumentation skills. Nussbaum (2011) notes that effective discussions not only deepen students' understanding but also enhance their critical thinking abilities. Within this context, employing strategies that foster discussion and student engagement can significantly elevate their capacity for argumentation. Research by Osborne (2014) further supports this, highlighting that classroom discussions can elevate the quality of students' arguments and sharpen their critical thinking skills.

Recent studies have shown that a focus on argumentative discussions can profoundly impact students' critical thinking abilities. For instance, Topping and Trickey (2011) discovered that students who participated in argumentative discussions exhibited superior analytical thinking skills compared to those who did not engage in such dialogues. This finding aligns with Derry and du Boulay's (2017) assertion that collaborative learning through argumentative discourse fosters a deeper understanding of the subject matter.

Integrating structured discussions in the classroom not only creates a supportive learning atmosphere but also encourages students to express their thoughts and interact with diverse viewpoints. This process is vital for developing argumentation skills by providing opportunities for students to practice reasoning, evaluate evidence, and consider counterarguments. As Nussbaum (2011) emphasizes, the ability to participate in effective discussions is an essential skill that extends beyond academic settings, preparing students for real-world interactions.

Moreover, the teacher's role in facilitating these discussions is of paramount importance. Teachers who effectively guide discussions can help students navigate complex arguments and improve their reasoning skills. This notion is reinforced by findings from Chinn and Anderson (2017), which highlight the crucial role of teacher facilitation in fostering productive dialogue among students.

At SD Metro School in Makassar, the development of argumentation skills in classroom discussions significantly contributes to children's ability to think critically, express their viewpoints, and appreciate diverse perspectives. As noted by Dwyer et al. (2014), "argumentation skills are vital not only for formal education but also for everyday life, where effective discussion and debate are necessary."

Numerous empirical studies support the assertion that learning through argumentation enhances student engagement and academic performance. For instance, Hattie (2012) found that learning methods involving discussion and debate lead to better student outcomes. In elementary education, Frid (2015) discovered that children participating in argumentative discussions showed notable improvement in both critical thinking and social skills.

Moreover, research by Zohar and Nemet (2021) highlights that skilled facilitation of classroom discussions fosters a positive and interactive learning environment. Thus, the emphasis on argumentation skills in classroom discussions at SD Metro School Makassar serves as a powerful means to enrich students' educational experiences.

Other studies further underscore the significance of these skills. Rojas-Drummond and Mercer (2003) state that "structured classical discussions can enhance argumentation and collaboration skills among students." Additionally, Hmelo-Silver and Barrows (2006) assert that authentic learning can be achieved through experiences involving argumentation and negotiation in group settings.

Furthermore, a study by Asterhan and Mayseless (2010) reveals that educational resources focused on discussion skills can aid students in understanding and analyzing multiple perspectives on an issue. This is particularly relevant for SD Metro School Makassar, where students can be mentored to engage in constructive arguments and honor diverse opinions.

By prioritizing the development of argumentation skills in classroom discussions, SD Metro School Makassar prepares its students not only to tackle academic challenges but also to acquire essential social competencies in our globalized world. Cheng's (2017) research highlights the role of argumentation skills in character development, emphasizing the need for educators to create discussion activities that promote reasoned debate, empathetic listening, and respect for differing viewpoints. Empirical research has clearly shown that instruction centered on argumentation positively influences student learning outcomes. A notable meta-analysis conducted by Hattie (2017) revealed that collaborative dialogue in classrooms significantly enhances students' learning, particularly in the areas of argumentation and reasoning skills. In addition, Kumpulainen and Wray (2019) emphasize that peer discussions provide students with the opportunity to develop a more nuanced understanding of complex subjects, as they engage with a variety of perspectives.

fostering effective discourse. Chinn and Anderson (2017) assert that teachers who actively guide classroom discussions can assist students in navigating intricate arguments and refining their reasoning skills. This observation is supported by research from Rojas-Drummond et al. (2021), which demonstrates that incorporating argumentation into science education not only enhances students' comprehension of scientific concepts but also cultivates their capacity for evidence-based reasoning.

At SD Metro School, the integration of argumentation skills within classroom discussions is especially important given the diverse backgrounds and experiences of its students. Research conducted by van der Meijden et al. (2020) indicates that students engaged in argumentation-focused discussions show significant improvement in their ability to construct coherent arguments and critically assess opposing viewpoints. This capability is vital in a multicultural setting, where students need to learn how to appreciate and respect differing opinions.

The current study aims to investigate the development of argumentation skills through classroom discussions at SD Metro School in Makassar. By utilizing a qualitative case study approach, this research will examine the discourse patterns that arise during discussions, the strategies students employ to formulate arguments, and the overall effectiveness of these activities in enhancing students' argumentation abilities.

In summary, nurturing argumentation skills in classroom discussions at SD Metro School Makassar represents a strategic initiative to cultivate students who are academically adept and poised to become effective communicators and responsible citizens in the future. Integrating theory with practice in this context is expected to maximize students' potential and support their ongoing success in an evolving learning landscape.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This section details the research methodology employed in a study conducted at SD Metro School in Makassar, focusing on the discourse analysis of classroom discussions and their influence on the development of argumentation skills among sixth-grade students.

2.1 Research Design

The study adopted a qualitative research design, specifically a case study approach. This methodology was chosen to facilitate an in-depth exploration of the discourse patterns and argumentation skills that emerged during classroom discussions with sixth-grade students.

2.2 Participants

The participants included 16 sixth-grade students from SD Metro School in Makassar. Their selection was based on their willingness to engage in classroom discussions and their availability throughout the research period. The group was diverse in terms of gender and academic performance, providing a well-rounded perspective on the classroom's discourse dynamics.

2.3 Data Collection Methods

A variety of data collection methods were utilized to ensure a thorough understanding of the discourse practices and argumentation skills among the students:

Observations: The researcher conducted direct observations of classroom discussions over a four-week period, focusing on student interactions, turn-taking, evidence usage, and the emergence of counterarguments. Field notes were taken to capture significant moments and recurring patterns in the discussions.

Audio Recordings: With the consent of both students and the teacher, classroom discussions were audio-recorded. These recordings facilitated a detailed analysis of the language employed by the students, including the structure of their arguments and the strategies utilized during discussions.

Interviews: Following the observation period, semi-structured interviews were conducted with both students and the teacher to gather additional insights into the observed discourse practices. The interviews aimed to gather insights into students' perceptions of the discussions, their experiences in constructing arguments, and the teacher's perspective on facilitating discourse in the classroom.

2.4 Data Analysis

The data analysis process unfolded in a series of comprehensive steps:

Transcription: The audio recordings of the discussions were transcribed word-for-word to allow for an in-depth analysis. These transcripts captured not only the spoken words but also non-verbal cues and pauses that enriched the discourse.

Discourse Analysis: Following transcription, the data underwent discourse analysis. This methodology involved pinpointing key themes, patterns, and strategies within the students' discussions. The focus was on how students constructed their arguments, engaged with each other, and demonstrated critical thinking.

Thematic Coding: The researcher applied thematic coding to organize the data into relevant themes linked to argumentation skills, such as the use of evidence, recognition of counterarguments, and clarification questions. This coding not only structured the findings but also revealed connections among various facets of the discourse.

2.5 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were taken into account throughout the research process. Informed consent was obtained from the students' parents or guardians, and the students were assured of their anonymity and the confidentiality of their responses. The researcher also ensured that participation was voluntary and that students could withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Results

The research conducted at SD Metro School in Makassar focused on analyzing the discourse patterns during classroom discussions and their impact on developing argumentation skills among 16 sixth-grade students. The findings are organized into three main categories: discourse patterns observed, strategies for argumentation, and the impact on students' argumentation skills.

3.1.1 Discourse Patterns Observed

The analysis of classroom discussions revealed several key discourse patterns among the students, including:

Active Participation: All 16 students actively participated in the discussions, with an average of 12 students contributing to each session. This high level of engagement indicated a supportive classroom environment where students felt comfortable sharing their thoughts.

Turn-Taking: The students demonstrated effective turn-taking, with minimal interruptions. The teacher facilitated this process by encouraging students to raise their hands before speaking, which helped maintain order and respect during discussions.

Use of Evidence: Many students supported their arguments with relevant evidence. For instance, during a discussion on environmental conservation, students cited specific examples from their textbooks and personal experiences, which enhanced the credibility of their arguments.

Emergence of Counterarguments: Students often presented counterarguments, demonstrating their ability to critically engage with differing viewpoints. For example, when one student argued for the importance of recycling, another student countered by discussing the limitations of recycling programs in their community, prompting a deeper exploration of the topic.

3.1.2 Strategies for Argumentation

The research identified several effective strategies that students employed to construct their arguments:

Clarification Questions: Students often asked clarification questions to ensure they understood their peers' points of view. This practice not only facilitated better communication but also encouraged critical thinking as students sought to comprehend different perspectives.

Building on Ideas: Many students demonstrated the ability to build on their peers' ideas, enriching the discussion. For example, one student would present an idea, and others would expand on it by adding new information or perspectives, creating a more dynamic and collaborative discussion.

Summarization: At the end of discussions, students frequently summarized the main points raised. This practice helped reinforce their understanding and retention of the material, allowing them to reflect on the arguments presented and evaluate their validity.

3.1.3 Impact on Argumentation Skills

The findings indicate that participation in classroom discussions significantly enhanced the argumentation skills of sixth-grade students at SD Metro School. The following outcomes were observed:

Increased Confidence: Students reported increased confidence in expressing their opinions and engaging in discussions. Many indicated that the structured nature of the discussions helped them articulate their thoughts more clearly. **Improved Critical Thinking:** The ability to analyze different viewpoints and construct counterarguments demonstrated an improvement in critical thinking skills. Students were better equipped to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of various arguments.

Enhanced Communication Skills: The discussions provided a platform for students to practice their communication skills, leading to more effective verbal expression and active listening. Students expressed that they felt more comfortable speaking in front of their peers and were more willing to share their ideas.

Peer Relationships: The collaborative nature of the discussions fostered positive peer relationships. Students reported feeling more connected to their classmates, as they learned to respect and appreciate diverse opinions.

3.2 Discussion

The research conducted at SD Metro School in Makassar highlights the critical role structured classroom discussions play in nurturing argumentation skills among sixth-grade students. Through analyzing discourse patterns, argumentation strategies, and their overall

impact on students' skills, the findings emphasize the necessity of cultivating an interactive and supportive learning environment.

3.2.1 Observed Discourse Patterns

Active student participation is a powerful indicator of a vibrant classroom atmosphere. The findings indicate that, on average, 12 out of 16 students contributed during each discussion session, demonstrating a commendable level of engagement. This observation aligns with Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivist theory, which suggests that learning is inherently a social endeavor. When students feel at ease sharing their perspectives, they are more inclined to engage in meaningful discussions, enriching their learning experiences.

Equally important is the effective turn-taking observed during these discussions. The teacher's role in facilitating this process is vital, as it fosters an environment of order and mutual respect. Mercer (2000) argues that structured turn-taking encourages active listening and thoughtful responses, both essential for honing argumentation skills. Furthermore, the incorporation of evidence to back up arguments enhances discussions by prompting students to root their claims in factual information, thereby nurturing a culture of critical inquiry.

The frequent presence of counterarguments in discussions is particularly significant. The ability to critically engage with differing viewpoints is a defining feature of effective argumentation. Kuhn (1991) contends that the capacity to consider and respond to opposing arguments is crucial for developing critical thinking skills. The students' readiness to present counterarguments suggests they are not merely absorbing information but are also actively analyzing and synthesizing it.

3.2.2 Strategies for Argumentation

The strategies employed by students, such as asking for clarification and building upon their peers' ideas, reflect a collaborative learning environment. Chinn and Anderson (2017) emphasize that these strategies foster deeper understanding and enhance critical thinking. By seeking clarification, students showcase their commitment to grasping diverse perspectives, which is essential for effective argumentation.

Additionally, building on ideas emerges as a valuable strategy that enriches the quality of discussions. This practice cultivates a sense of community and collaboration among students, encouraging them to appreciate each other's contributions. Derry and du Boulay (2017) note that collaborative learning through argumentation not only deepens comprehension but also develops vital social skills.

The practice of summarization at the conclusion of discussions also holds significant value. It reinforces students' understanding and retention of the material, allowing them to reflect on the arguments presented. This aligns with the findings of Hattie (2012), who identifies summarization as a powerful tool for enhancing learning outcomes.

3.2.3 Impact on Argumentation Skills

The positive developments observed in students' argumentation skills are noteworthy. A notable increase in confidence when expressing opinions signifies a crucial development, as it encourages students to become more active participants in discussions. Research by Bandura (1997) underscores the importance of self-efficacy in learning; when students feel confident, they are more likely to engage fully and take risks in their educational journeys.

One of the key findings of this study is the notable improvement in critical thinking skills, demonstrated by students' enhanced ability to analyze various perspectives and formulate counterarguments. This aligns with the insights of Facione (2011), who underscores that critical thinking encompasses the capacity to evaluate arguments and make well-reasoned judgments.

Moreover, the discussions have significantly bolstered students' communication skills. The chance to engage in verbal expression and practice active listening has greatly contributed to

their overall abilities in communication. As highlighted by Hmelo-Silver and Barrows (2006), effective communication is vital for collaborative learning and will serve students well in their future academic and professional pursuits.

Lastly, the positive peer relationships nurtured through these collaborative discussions play an essential role in fostering a supportive learning environment. Research by Johnson and Johnson (2009) shows that cooperative learning not only enhances interpersonal relationships but also cultivates a sense of belonging among students.

4. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

4.1 Conclusion

The research results indicate that structured classroom discussions, analyzed through discourse analysis, significantly contribute to developing argumentation skills among sixth-grade students at SD Metro School in Makassar. The findings underscore the importance of fostering an interactive and supportive learning environment that encourages students to engage in meaningful dialogue, critically evaluate arguments, and enhance their communication skills.

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