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Dialogic discussions for enhancing children's argumentation skills in Indonesian reading sessions

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ABSTRACT
Dialogic discussions offer advantages in improving language and literacy skills. However, research in the Indonesian context on this topic is limited. Furthermore, existing studies also tend to overlook the challenges associated with children's interactions. To bridge this research gap, this study investigated the role of dialogic discussions in advancing children's argumentation abilities during Indonesian reading sessions. This study utilized a case study approach, involving sixteen fourth-grade children from a public elementary school. Data were collected through observations, field notes, and audio recordings. The children participated in small group discussions during six reading sessions. These sessions involved exploring both Indonesian fiction and non-fiction texts, centered on significant moral or social questions and dilemmas. The findings revealed an increased use of various argumentation strategies by the children, including presenting reasons, posing challenges, and responding to challenges. Using personally engaging texts proved beneficial for sustaining discussions, as it encouraged children to share their lived experiences and opinions. However, the findings also indicated that children who did not participate seemed distracted during individual tasks. The study provides valuable insights into the dynamics and complexities of small group discussions during Indonesian reading sessions.
Keywords: Argumentation; dialogic discussions; Indonesian; reading sessions

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INTRODUCTION

An increasing body of evidence suggests the advantages of employing dialogic approaches to enhance various learning outcomes. Researchers have demonstrated their positive impact in areas such as reading comprehension (Yüceer et al., 2022), vocabulary enhancement (Hsieh et al., 2021), the completion of written tasks (Al-Adeimi & O'Connor, 2021), mathematical reasoning (Aksu & Zengin, 2022), and social development (García-Carrión et al., 2020). In a dialogic approach, teachers and children collaborate as co-inquirers, thereby expanding classroom discussions and exploring diverse perspectives (Teo, 2019).

In contrast to monologic teaching styles, which offer limited opportunities for student collaboration (Darsih, 2018), dialogic approaches encourage the joint construction of knowledge among participants. As a result, children exhibit increased participation and engage in more reasoned interactions during these discussions (Howe et al., 2019).

Furthermore, these approaches prove valuable in enhancing argumentation skills (Bayat et al., 2022; Latipah & Gunawan, 2021; Shinta & Filia, 2020; Traga Philippakos, 2022). Proficiency in argumentation is essential for children, especially as they encounter contemporary controversies. Today's national and global issues demand that children make critical judgments and support their positions with logical reasoning.

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Discussion Roles in Children's Reasoning Development

The role of discussions in fostering children's cognitive processes aligns with the sociocultural learning perspective. Notably, Vygotsky and Cole (1978) emphasized that individual learning emerges from social interactions. Mercer et al. (2019), from a sociocultural and dialogic standpoint, elucidated the social construction of knowledge during dialogic discussions. Prior research has consistently shown the positive impact of discussions on student achievement, as they enhance their understanding through interactions with peers (Lin et al., 2019; Lin et al., 2022; Reznitskaya et al., 2009; Wilkinson et al., 2023).

Classroom conversations and verbal exchanges among children and their peers enhance their capacity for critical thinking, learning, and problem-solving (Boyd et al., 2019; Kim & Wilkinson, 2019; Reznitskaya & Wilkinson, 2021; Sun et al., 2020). Furthermore, Cook et al. (2022) underscored the essential role of teachers in improving both the quality and quantity of student dialogue during discussions. Similarly, Murphy et al. (2022) advocate for teachers to serve as models and provide support, effectively facilitating the transition from teacher-centered to student-centered instruction. Creating an open environment within discussions is especially critical as children develop their argumentation skills to assess complex issues (Lin et al., 2018).

Argumentation in Indonesian Reading Lesson

In this era of information overload, argumentation has garnered increased attention among language and literacy researchers (Boyd, 2019; Felton & Crowell, 2022; Reznitskaya & Wilkinson, 2019). Developing the ability to argue effectively is essential, given the prevalence of false or biased information in today's world (Bauri, 2022; Bubikova-Moan & Sandvik, 2022; Oyler, 2019). The skill of argumentation encompasses the capacities to consider multiple perspectives, substantiate arguments, and make well-informed decisions (Alderete & Xu, 2023; Arcidiacono et al., 2022; Bova, 2021; Bova & Arcidiacono, 2018; Greco et al., 2018; Iannaccone et al., 2019).

Researchers have investigated argumentation with children on various topics, including moral judgments (Mammen et al., 2018, 2021; Probst et al., 2023), decision-making (Mosteiro et al., 2018), visual narratives (Rooha et al., 2023), and scientific activities (Chen et al., 2019; Convertini, 2021a, 2021b; Kim & Roth, 2018; Kirk et al., 2023). Perret-Clermont et al. (2019) suggested that children could embed their reasoning within a broader social context.

Considering the presence of mental structures in argumentation, Reznitskaya et al. (2007) explained a basic argument schema incorporating counterarguments. According to Reznitskaya and her colleagues, a basic argument schema encompasses reasons, supporting facts, objection, and response. Student learning involves both utilizing and adapting these structures or schemas.

To cultivate the development of argumentation, researchers have employed a dialogic discussion approach known as Collaborative Reasoning (CR) (Anderson et al., 1997). In CR, children engage with personally relevant stories and encounter contentious issues that they then deliberate in small groups (Reznitskaya et al., 2009). A CR facilitator introduces a "big question" addressing social or moral dilemmas, and children can directly respond to their peers in a close circle. The facilitator plays a pivotal role in sustaining dialogic discussions to enhance reasoning skills (Baker et al., 2017; Reznitskaya et al., 2009). Researchers have reported that children engaged in CR discussions exhibited enhancements in academic vocabulary (Lin et al., 2019), creative performance (Ma et al., 2023), decision-making skills (Bayat et al., 2022), and engagement (Sun et al., 2022).

Regrettably, existing literature lacks insights into children who did not participate in small group discussions, as it predominantly focused on the achievements of those who fully participated. Additionally, the majority of empirical studies employed a quasi-experimental design, which is beneficial for identifying the effects of CR intervention, but may not fully capture the intricacies of small-group discussions. Therefore, a qualitative approach proves valuable in providing an in-depth understanding of the process and challenges involved in conducting this approach, enabling teachers to better support children.

Within the Indonesian context, there is limited research delving into dialogic discussions for the development of argumentation skills in elementary school children. Most existing research has centered on middle to higher-education settings (Magda Pane et al., 2021; Moradian et al., 2021; Wahyuningsih et al., 2019). In the elementary school context, few studies have concentrated on mathematics (Abidin et al., 2020; Ardiyani, 2018; Yanto et al., 2019). There is a conspicuous of literature in Bahasa Indonesia (Indonesian) for fourth grade, where instruction transitions from decoding skills to reading for higher-order thinking.

Research Question

Given the limited research on the development of children's argumentation in the Indonesian language, this study aimed to investigate student discourse during these discussions. The overarching objective of this study was to advance research on the enhancement of argumentation through dialogic discussions and to offer teachers evidence-based strategies for classroom instruction. Furthermore,

the study delved into the interactions of participants, encompassing both children who actively engaged in discussions and those who did not. By employing a qualitative approach, the study aimed to gain insights into the intricacies and dynamics of this pedagogical method.

The primary goal of this study was to assess how children's argumentation skills evolve over time through dialogic discussions. Consequently, the study sought to address the following research question: How do dialogic discussions facilitate the advancement of children's argumentation skills in Indonesian reading sessions?

METHODS

Study Design

This study utilized a qualitative approach, specifically a case study, to focus on gaining understanding, insights, and discovering children's practices while examining the dynamics of these practices (Latipah & Gunawan, 2021). Data sources included direct observations, field notes, and recorded audio of dialogic discussions. The study took place in a public elementary school situated in an urban, working-class area of Semarang, the capital city of Central Java Province, Indonesia. The school encompassed an area of 5,872 m^2, and its buildings were government-owned.

Located in a low-to-middle-class area, the school had a student population of 221. The average class size was 37 children, with variation ranging from 33 to 39 children per grade. The parents of these children primarily worked as factory workers (70%), civil servants (5%), or small business entrepreneurs (25%). Most families had incomes below the regional minimum wage. The school employed eight teachers, all of whom were civil servants and received government salaries. Six of these teachers served as classroom instructors, covering all subjects except religious studies and physical education. In this school, one teacher handled religious studies, and another managed physical education. The school's infrastructure included one teacher's office, one headmaster's office, and six classrooms for Grades 1–6. The children attended school six days a week, from Monday to Saturday, with classes running from 7 a.m. to noon.

The selection of this public school was related to the use of Bahasa Indonesia during language lessons, aligning with the study's focus on incorporating Indonesian texts. This study also aims to understand the process of discussion using fiction and non-fiction texts relevant to children's lives, enabling them to contribute their experiences to the discussions. Additionally, the school's typical practice of whole-class instruction for language lessons made it an ideal setting for examining the practice and challenges of the small group CR approach.

The researcher, a native of Semarang and an alumnus of the elementary school, obtained approval from the school principal to conduct the study. This personal connection enabled the researcher to have firsthand insights into the challenges of implementing small-group discussion approaches while also acknowledging the potential for biases. To address this, the researcher included comments throughout the field notes marked as "OB" to distinguish the researcher's reactions from actual occurrences, ensuring transparency and objectivity in data collection, interpretation, and analysis.

Participants

The study involved 16 fourth-grade children who were purposefully selected from a total of 32 fourth-grade children. The selection process considered various factors, such as their linguistic and socio-economic backgrounds, to ensure representation of the broader population. The choice of the fourth-grade level was appropriate for examining the dynamics of dialogic discussions since peers have a significant influence on children's argumentation. Informed consent was obtained from the parents.

All the children were of Javanese ethnicity, which constitutes the largest ethnic group, comprising 40% of the country's population. While they primarily spoke Javanese when communicating with their parents at home, their instruction and interactions with teachers occurred in Indonesian. They had limited access to literacy resources available both at home and at school. At home, they lacked children's books or magazines, and for leisure, 60% preferred watching television while 40% played on their phones. Additionally, the school library was inaccessible due to ongoing renovations, preventing the children from borrowing books. However, for their daily learning, they had access to government-provided textbooks for each subject, loaned out until their entry into the fifth grade.

Materials

The dialogic discussions in this study employed six texts written in Indonesian. Three of these texts were fictional stories titled "Chubby Tong," "Washing Dishes for Boys," and "Fikar, the Little Racer." The other three texts were non-fiction and covered topics such as "14 Negative Consequences of Smartphones," "Foods That Are Safe for You," and "Why Human Skin Color Is Different." Prior to the sessions, the children read these texts, which are detailed in Table 2.

Table 1
List of Participants

No.	Pseudonym	Gender	Grade	Language Use
1	Rendi	Male	4	Indonesian, Javanese
2	Andi	Male	4	Indonesian, Javanese
3	Karen	Female	4	Indonesian, Javanese
4	Doni	Male	4	Indonesian, Javanese
5	Mika	Male	4	Indonesian, Javanese
6	Nita	Female	4	Indonesian, Javanese
7	Marra	Female	4	Indonesian, Javanese
8	Ika	Female	4	Indonesian, Javanese
9	Fahri	Male	4	Indonesian, Javanese
10	Heni	Female	4	Indonesian, Javanese
11	Rara	Female	4	Indonesian, Javanese
12	Indri	Female	4	Indonesian, Javanese
13	Alya	Female	4	Indonesian, Javanese
14	Kiki	Female	4	Indonesian, Javanese
15	Noah	Male	4	Indonesian, Javanese
16	Indra	Male	4	Indonesian, Javanese

Table 2
Assigned Readings for the Dialogic Discussions

No.	Text title	Type	Summary	Big question
1	*Tong Gendut* (Chubby Tong)	Fiction	Tong, who was chubby, often received insults from his friends because of his body.	Should Tong be angry at his friends because they insulted his body?
2	*Kena batunya* (What goes around comes around)	Fiction	Arga, who liked to bully his friends by calling them names, was disliked by everyone. One day, he fell off his bike and his friends saw him.	Should the friends help Arga who had bullied them?
3	*Cuci piring untuk Anak Laki-Laki* (Washing dishes for boys)	Fiction	Tio helped his mother to wash the dishes. At that time, it was uncommon for boys to do such chores. Tio's friends then knew and teased him.	Should Tio continue washing the dishes although his friends teased him?
4	*Makanan aman untukmu* (Foods that are safe for you)	Non-fiction	At school, Indonesian students can buy snacks in the cafeteria or from street vendors. This non-fiction text discusses unhealthy foods offered by street vendors.	Should children be banned from eating foods sold by street vendors?
5	*Fikar si pembalap Cilik* (Fikar, the little racer)	Fiction	Fikar was a child racer who participated in a motocross competition. At first, his friends did not like him because they thought Fikar was showing off his motorcycle. However, when they saw Fikar win second place in the competition, they began to respect him.	Should elementary school children be allowed to ride motorcycles?
6	*Mengapa warna kulit manusia berbeda* (Why human skin color is different)	Non-fiction	This non-fiction text explains why humans have different skin colors. This article prompts a discussion about the popularity of whitening products among Indonesians, including their use by middle school and upper elementary school children.	Should children be allowed to use whitening cream?

Pedagogical Procedure

The study, spanning six weeks, was conducted during the first semester of the school year. Sessions were held once a week on Saturdays, which is typically reserved for extracurricular activities in the elementary school. Each reading session, facilitated over 45 minutes, consisted of three key components: an explanation from the facilitator, a reading session, and small group discussions, with each component lasting approximately 15 minutes. The researcher also acted as the facilitator for all dialogic discussion sessions.

At the beginning of each lesson, the CR facilitator clarified the procedures and demonstrated a model for asking and responding to questions, as well as expressing agreement and disagreement. Copies of the assigned readings were then distributed to the children, with instructions to read silently and attentively. Subsequently, the facilitator selected 5–6 children, ensuring a diverse mix of genders and academic levels. The facilitator posed a significant question related to the readings, prompting the children to engage in discussions centered on that question. These discussions occurred in small circles, enabling participants to

face each other and respond directly to their peers. All CR discussions were audio-recorded. Simultaneously, those not participating in the small group discussions engaged in individual tasks. The facilitator also maintained field notes to record interpersonal dynamics among the children participating in the small group discussions.

Data Analysis

All discussions were recorded using a digital voice recorder, and the data were securely stored on a password-protected personal laptop and computer. The written materials were stored in secured file folders within a locked room to uphold ethical considerations. A research assistant transcribed the discussions using Transana (Woods & Fassnacht, 2009), a software designed to convert audio recordings into Word format. This software enabled precise timestamps for each voice and identified overlapping sounds, facilitating the creation of a verbatim record of the discussions and the contributions of each student. Transcripts were shared with the researcher through a password-protected email. Irrelevant talk and any extraneous noise occurring outside of the discussion were excluded from the data analysis.

Data analysis was conducted through an inductive approach, involving the search for patterns of meaning and the formulation of general statements regarding the phenomena under investigation. The analysis centered on identifying characteristics of student-facilitator and student-student dialogic interactions, as well as their impact on the children's argumentation. Voices in the transcripts were manually coded according to argumentation subcategories, including making a claim, challenging with a reason, responding to a challenge, and providing support with a reason. Additionally, the researcher analyzed field notes in alignment with the research objectives.

To ensure clarity and comprehensiveness in the analysis, the researcher consulted a colleague with expertise in language and literacy to review coding, emerging themes, and field note analysis. Throughout the analysis and reporting of this study, the researcher maintained the confidentiality of the participants by not disclosing their names and identities.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Process of Dialogic Discussions to Promote Children's Argumentation in the Indonesian Language Sessions

Dialogic Discussion 1–2: Adjusting to Small Group Format

The discussion began with the facilitator establishing ground rules that encouraged the children to openly express their opinions, engage in disagreements, and directly interact with their peers. Subsequently, the facilitator instructed them to read a short story and respond to the big question. The children then partook in small group discussions to analyze the text. Excerpts 1–6 in Tables 1–8 represent the discussions.

Table 3

Excerpt 1

[1] [00:14] Facilitator	*Ya ayo siapa yang bilang iya? Kenapa alasannya?* Who said yes? What is your reason?
[2] [00:22] Andi	*Karena jika tidak marah, maka (teman-teman) akan terus terusan mengejek kedepannya.* Because if you are not angry, (the friends) will continue to tease you in the future.
[3] [00:27] Facilitator	*Huum. Terus berarti setuju, Rendi?* Huum. Then do you agree, Rendi?
[4] [00:31] Rendi	*Setuju.* Agree.
[5] [00:34] Facilitator	*Mau menambahi alasannya tidak? Tadi alasannya adalah tentang marah.* Would you like to add on? The previous reason was about being angry.
[6] [00:40] Rendi	*Kalau tidak marah, (teman-teman) akan terus-menerus mengejek.* If not angry, (your friends) will continue to insult (Tong, the main character).

In Excerpt 1 (Table 3), the children explored a fiction text about Tong, who often received insults from his friends because of his body. After introducing a question regarding body shaming, the facilitator endeavored to encourage the children to share their reasons. Employing dialogic techniques, the facilitator prompted them to express their thoughts, to which they responded. This demonstrates the initiation and utilization of dialogic discussions through verbal exchanges between the facilitator and the children, as well as among the children themselves (Kim & Wilkinson, 2019).

Most children presented claims without elaborating on their reasoning, and whenever one reason was given, another student tended to echo a similar reason. Both Andi and Rendi, however, provided reasons in complete sentences. Notably, Rendi initially responded with a brief claim of "Agree." After the facilitator posed another question, Rendi offered a reason mirroring Andi's response. The tendency to mimic responses might be attributed to their familiarity with a teacher-

centered pedagogy, where they were expected to receive instructions, replicate information, or offer concise responses to the facilitator or teacher prompts.

In Excerpt 2 (Table 4), the children discussed a fiction text about Arga who liked to bully his friends but fell off his bike. The facilitator asked the children to discuss whether or not they should help Arga. In their social interactions, the children knew different types of friends, including the ones who liked to bully others. Throughout the discussion, the children conveyed their positions and substantiated them with reasons. Karen agreed with the main question, while Doni dissented and linked his reasons to religious teachings.

In the second session, the children were still adjusting to the small group format. They were accustomed to whole-class instruction, where they raised their hands to ask questions and waited for their teacher to allow them to speak. Therefore, the facilitator reminded the children by saying, "Come on, you all can speak directly." During the small group discussion, the children were encouraged to speak to their peers without raising their hands.

Table 4
Excerpt 2

[1] [02:02] Karen	*Perlu (menolong), karena walaupun Arga nakal tapi kita harus membiasakan menolong teman.* Should (help him), because even though Arga is naughty, we need to build the habit of helping friends.
[2] [02:11] Facilitator	*Oo, menolong teman. Ada yang mau nambahi? Ayo boleh langsung bicara, iya gimana?* Oo, helping friends. Any of you who would like to add on? Come on, you all can speak directly. What is it?
[3] [02:32] Doni	*Tidak perlu (menolongnya), karena itulah akibat dari anak yang suka mengejek teman, pasti ada pembalasannya dari Tuhan.* No need (to help him), because it's the consequence of insulting his friends. That is the punishment from God.
[4] [02:44] Facilitator	*Bagus ini, ada yang bilang perlu, ada yang bilang tidak perlu. Kita mendengar Karen yang berpendapat perlu menolong Arga, Doni yang pendapatnya tidak perlu. Siapa yang belum bicara? Ayo coba apa?* So good, one said yes, we need to help Arga. Others said no need. We have heard from Karen who said that we need to help Arga, and Doni who said no. Who's not yet speaking? What is it?
[5] [03:26] Mika	*Arga perlu minta maaf atas kesalahan dan perbuatannya*. Arga needs to say sorry for his mistakes and behaviors.

Dialogic Discussion 3–4: Responding to Peers

In Excerpt 3 (Table 5), the children discussed a fiction text about Tio who was teased by his friends because he helped his mother wash dishes. The facilitator asked whether Tio should continue washing dishes. The children were familiar with the story because in their personal lives, they observed that their mothers were responsible for the household chores, such as washing dishes or cooking. Girls were often encouraged by their parents to help with chores, whereas the boys were not.

In this session, the children became more familiar with the small group format as they exchanged arguments back and forth. Nita presented her reason, and Marra promptly agreed with her opinion. Additionally, when Ika stated that women should not do the dishes, Fahri immediately challenged that viewpoint, and Ika subsequently provided her reason. This finding aligns with research on CR (Sun et al., 2022), suggesting that the small group format encourages greater participation and engagement among children.

Table 5
Excerpt 3

[1] [13:04] Nita	*(Setuju dengan pertanyaan utama). Jika laki-laki habis makan, masa piringnya sendiri tidak mau dicuci?* (Agree with the big question). If boys finish their meal, why don't they just wash their own dishes?
[2] [13:15] Facilitator	*Maksudnya, habis makan laki-laki cuci piringnya begitu?* Are you saying that boys should wash the dishes?
[3] [13:18] Nita	*Ya, habis makan, masa laki-laki nggak mau cuci piring.* Yes, after eating, why don't the boys wash their own dishes?
[4] [13:20] Marra	*Seharusnya habis makan itu mencuci sendiri.* Should have done their own dishes after eating.
[5] [13:24] Facilitator	*Beberapa tadi berpendapat kalau ini semua tugasnya perempuan. Mereka bilang kalua inilah tugas wanita untuk melahirkan anak dan membersihkan rumah.* *Bagaimana dengan pendapat lainnya?* Some children said that it should be done by girls. They said that it's all women's responsibility to give birth and clean the house. How about others?

[6] [14:00] Ika	*Jika perempuannya sedang hamil lalu mengerjakan pekerjaan yang berat-berat, masa laki-laki tega?* If the women are pregnant, then they do heavy chores, do men have the heart to allow that?
[7] [14:20] Fahri	*Kalau mengeluarkan anak kan butuh uang, seharusnya lelaki itu mencari nafkah biar dapet uang banyak.* But, having children needs money, so men are supposed to work to earn lots of money.
[8] [14:29] Ika	*Iya, tapi kan kalau hamil nggak boleh kerja yang berat-berat.* Yes, but if the women are pregnant, they should not do heavy chores.

In Excerpt 4 (Table 6), the children discussed a non-fiction text about unhealthy foods. At the beginning, the facilitator asked whether children should be banned from eating foods sold by street vendors. Heni supported her reason by quoting information from the text she had read, and Rara added additional points. After that, Indri, Alya, Kiki, Noah, and Indra shared their opinions.

The topic held personal relevance for the children as they frequently purchased snacks from street vendors. By selecting a personally relevant text, they were able to draw on their backgrounds and knowledge and use the text as evidence to support their claims. This aligns with previous research findings (Reznitskaya et al., 2007) indicating that CR can enhance children's ability to substantiate their reasons with evidence derived from the text.

Table 6

Excerpt 4

[1] [00:51] Heni	(Citing text) Although the foods can fulfill the energy requirements, like protein, fats, carbs, and minerals, we have to be careful of street foods. According to WHO, the street foods sold by street vendors or other public places do not follow the food storage management correctly and they don't follow the standards.
[2] [01:20] Facilitator	*Yang mau menambahkan pendapat ini langsung saja.* If you would like to add on, you could share your opinion directly.
[3] [01:25] Rara	*Selain itu, menurut penelitian Badan Pengawas Obat dan Makanan, jajan anak yang dijalanan itu tidak sehat dan banyak mengandung zat berbahaya.* Also, according to the Indonesian Food and Drug Authority, foods sold by street vendors are not healthy and contain hazardous substances.
[4] [02:06] Indri	*Tidak perlu dilarang jajan di kantin, karena jajan di kantin sudah sehat. Kalau jajan di luar itu tidak sehat.* There is no need to ban children from buying food from the school canteen because the food is healthy. If foods from outside are unhealthy.
[5] [02:44] Alya	*Ya, tidak perlu (melarang kantin) karena itu tempat satu-satunya untuk membeli makanan di sekolah.* Yeah, no need (to ban the canteen) because it's the only place to buy food at school.
[6] [03:00] Facilitator	*Siapa yang mau menambahkan pendapat?Kalau jajan di luar, apakah perlu dilarang?* Who would like to add on? If children buy food outside, should they be banned?
[7] [03:14] Kiki	*Perlu, karena jajanan di luar tidak sehat, mengandung pewanget, racun.* Need to ban them, because they are unhealthy, contain preservatives, toxic.
[8] [03:30] Noah	*Mengandung pengawet-pengawet yang digunakan untuk mayat.* Contain preservatives used for corpses.
[9] [03:37] Indra	*Perlu, karena makanan di luar banyak kena asap motor.* Need to ban them because of the pollution from motorcycles.

Dialogic Discussion 5–6: Building on Each Other's Arguments

In Excerpt 5 (Table 7), the children discussed a fiction text about Fikar, a child racer, who won a second place in a motocross competition. The facilitator asked whether elementary school children should be allowed to ride motorcycles. In this context, where it is common for Indonesians to use motorcycles for faster and more affordable transportation options, parents sometimes teach their children how to ride motorcycles as early as the fourth grade. Given the personal engagement with the story, Andy shared his own experience during the discussion. He disagreed with the main question and explained that his parents had asked him to ride motorcycles to help them run errands.

In this session, the children were already familiar with the small group setting, enabling them to promptly build upon each other's arguments. Nita countered Andi's earlier claim by stating the reasons why children should not be allowed to ride motorcycles, emphasizing the potential for road accidents. Marra expanded on Nita's argument by mentioning the risks of not wearing a helmet, which could lead to accidents. Nita further reinforced her arguments by suggesting that children who rode motorcycles were only concerned about themselves. The development of this argument aligns with the fundamental argument schema proposed by Reznitskaya et al. (2007), wherein students presented the initial reason and subsequently supported it with a second reason and additional details.

Table 7
Excerpt 5

[1] [01:44] Dila	*Hmmm, harusnya tetap nggak boleh. Masalahnya selain belum umurnya, juga bisa melanggar tata tertib. Masalahnya kalau biasanya anak kecil naik motor itu kadang nggak pakai helm.* Hmm, shouldn't be allowed (to ride motorcycles). The problem is that not only are they underage but also, they can violate street regulations. The problem is that children usually ride motorcycles without helmets.
[2] [02:20] Andi	*Lho aku malah disuruh orang tuaku.* My parents asked me instead.
[3] [02: 46] Facilitator	*Tapi tadi dibilang nggak boleh karena bahaya, itu gimana?* But your friend said that it is dangerous. How about that?
[4] [03:04] Andi	*Boleh, tidak apa-apa. Resiko tanggung sendiri.* Yes, allowed, it is okay. We bear our own risk.
[5] [03:12] Nita	*Bahaya, karena itu bisa membuat kecelakaan.* It is dangerous because it can cause road accidents.
[6] [03:16] Marra	*(Bahaya) buat dirinya sendiri yang menaiki motor. Kalau nggak pakai helm, mau belok, bisa buat kecelakaan. Iya rawan kecelakaan.* (Dangerous) for children who ride motorcycles. If they don't wear helmets, they want to make a turn, they can cause road accidents. Yes, accident prone.
[7] [03:50] Nita	*Anak-anak juga rawan (kecelakaan), bila anak itu hanya memperhatikan kesenangan dia saat menaiki motor, tidak mementingkan keselamatan lainnya saat naik motor.* Children are prone to road accidents if they only think about their own happiness when they ride motorcycles, not think of others' safety when they ride motorcycles.

In the last session, the children discussed a non-fiction text about different human skin colors. The facilitator asked whether children should be allowed to use whitening cream. In tropical Indonesia, brown skin colors are common, but the mainstream beauty standards value white skin. In their daily lives, the children saw advertisements on their televisions or phones about whitening products. They also observed adults in their lives who used skin whitening products. After reading the text, the children shared their claims and provided their reasons based on the text as well as personal experiences.

As illustrated in Excerpt 6 (Table 8), the children actively expanded upon each other's arguments. Notably, Rara stated, "I agree with what Karla said...," indicating that Rara built upon Karla's arguments concerning the disadvantages of using whitening products. Subsequently, the facilitator invited another student, Rendi, to consider an alternative viewpoint. In response, Rendi presented his reasons, and Kiki further elaborated on Rendi's previous explanation. This showcases the evolution of children's argumentation, as they provided reasons, responded to challenges, and supported their arguments. The children displayed the ability to advance their arguments and offer supporting evidence.

Table 8
Excerpt 6

[1] [08:13] Indra	*Karena anak-anak itu kan dari kecil udah ada yang langsung putih, ada yang coklat, kayaknya gak perlu dipaksa kamu harus putih banget. Soalnya kan masih anak kecil.* Because since they're children, they are born with their skin color, white or brown, so don't force them to become fairer. They are still children.
[2] [08:37] Facilitator	*Noah, apa pendapatmu?* Noah, what do you think?
[3] [08:42] Noah	*Kulit coklat, yang penting ganteng.* Brown skin, more importantly handsome.
[4] [08: 58] Facilitator	*Terus kalau gini, ada yang bilang, anak-anak tidak usah lebih putih kulitnya, karena yang dilihat nggak hanya penampilan, tapi juga dilihat isi hati. Kamu setuju tidak dengan pernyataan itu?* How about people who say that children should not think about having brighter skin because what is inside their hearts is more important than their skin color? Do you agree with that statement?
[5] [09:23] Noah	*Setuju. Ganteng, putih, keren, isi hatinya bagus.* Agree. Handsome, white, awesome, have a good heart.
[6] [09: 35] Facilitator	*Rara, mau menambahkan? Tadi ada yang berpendapat kebanyakan produk pemutih itu untuk orang dewasa, tapi dipakai anak-anak, jadi tidak bagus. Menurut kamu bagaimana?* Rara, do you want to add on? Previously your friend said that whitening products are for adults, but children try them, so it's not good. What do you think?
[7] [10:18] Rara	***Kalau menurutku itu, aku setuju sama pendapat Karla*** *karena biasanya anak-anak itu sekarang sudah pakai bedak orang dewasa, selain bisa membuat kulitnya lebih rusak karena*

	masih anak-anak, udah pakai punya orang dewasa. **In my opinion, I agree with what Karla said**, because usually if children use powder for adults, they can damage the skin because they're still children, but they use products for adults.
[8] [11:54] Facilitator	*Rendi, kamu setuju dengan pendapat Rara?* Rendi, do you agree with Rara's opinion?
[9] [11:58] Rendi	*Namanya juga anak-anak. Anak kecil coba-coba. Coba yang aneh-aneh.* We're kids. We try everything. Try weird stuff.
[10] [12:14] Facilitator	*Jadi ada dua pendapat ini. Satu bilang tidak boleh karena itu bahaya, satu bilang boleh karena cuma coba-coba saja. Kiki, kamu juga coba-coba?* So, there are two views here. One said that whitening products for children are dangerous, while others allowed children because they like to try them. Kiki, do you want to try it too?
[11] [12:52] Kiki	*Anak kecil kan senangnya mencoba-coba. Orang tua harus mengerti untuk mengawasi. Misalnya kalau Ibunya melarang (penggunaan produk pemutih), misalnya pakainya harus di tangan, jangan di muka.* Children like to try. Parents should know, and supervise their children. For example, maybe a mother bans (the use of whitening products), maybe use the products in their hands, don't use them on their face.

Figure 2

Children's Dialogic Discussions in Small Groups during Reading Sessions

Table 9 presents the percentage of argument categories from Discussions 1–6. It reveals that in Discussion 1, children predominantly made claims with limited reasons, challenges, or responses to challenges. However, beginning with Discussion 2, children started to provide reasons and challenge others. They continued to increase their challenges with reasons in Discussion 3. Although there was a slight decrease in Discussion 4, children resumed increasing challenges with reasons in Discussions 5 and 6. Similarly, children demonstrated an increasing number of responses to challenges in Discussion 2, followed by a slight decrease in Discussion 3, and subsequent increases in Discussions 4, 5, and 6. Concerning providing support with reasons, there was a steady increase from Discussion 1 to Discussion 5, with a slight decrease observed in Discussion 6. In Discussions 5 and 6, children displayed high engagement, providing responses and support with reasons due to the topic's relevance to their daily lives, specifically riding motorcycles and using whitening products.

Table 9

The Percentage of Talking Turns Serving Children's Argument Development

Category	Percentage					
	Discussion 1	**Discussion 2**	**Discussion 3**	**Discussion 4**	**Discussion 5**	**Discussion 6**
Make a claim	91%	54%	53%	50%	36%	31%
Challenge with reason	2%	17%	19%	15%	18%	26%
Respond to challenge	3%	13%	10%	15%	25%	23%
Give support with reason	5%	17%	19%	21%	21%	20%

Regarding the children who did not participate in the small group discussions, they read the same text and were instructed to complete a set of reading comprehension questions after reading. Based on the field notes, when two boys did not partake in discussions, they appeared distracted and left the classroom as their fourth-grade peers engaged in other extracurricular activities such as self-defense and soccer outside. Consequently, they often did not complete the reading comprehension tasks. In contrast, female children stayed in the classroom and completed the tasks. Since the primary focus of this study was on the development of their dialogic discussions based on discourse, the analysis did not include the results of the individual tasks that assessed reading comprehension.

Table 10
A Summary of Facilitator's Prompts during Discussions

No.	Purpose	Facilitator's Prompts
1.	Invite children to make a claim	Do you agree (student name)? (Student name), do you agree with your friend's opinion?
2.	Encourage children to elaborate their reasons	What is your reason? (Student name) what do you think? Would you like to add on? The previous reason was about being angry. If you would like to add on, you could share your opinion directly.
3.	Ask children to clarify their reasons	Are you saying that boys should wash the dishes?
4.	Prompt children to explore different perspectives	But your friend said that it is dangerous. How about that? How about people who say that children should not think about having brighter skin because what is inside their hearts is more important than their skin color? Do you agree with that statement?
5.	Invite children who have not yet spoken	Who's not yet speaking? What is it? Some children said that it should be done by girls. They said that it's all women's responsibility to give birth and clean the house. How about others?

As illustrated in Table 10, the facilitator employed various prompts during dialogic discussions. At the beginning, the facilitator invited the children to make a claim and elaborate their reasons by asking questions, such as, "What is your reason?" and "(Student name), what do you think?" Next, to encourage the children to directly share their arguments, the facilitator employed a sentence prompt, "If you would like to add on..." and a question, "Who would like to add on?". These prompts aimed to increase student participation in the dialogic discussion. In response to the question, the children shared their responses. The facilitator's prompts align with the findings of Baker et al. (2017), underscoring the critical role of discussion facilitators, particularly in the initial stages of discussions, where children learn how to explore multiple perspectives.

Furthermore, the facilitator showed a scaffolding technique, by using the phrase, "Are you saying that..." (Reznitskaya et al., 2009). The facilitator refrained from evaluating the correctness of the student's answer but instead encouraged the student to expand on their claim and reason. Additionally, the facilitator summarized the existing arguments and prompted the children to consider alternative perspectives. Consequently, the children engaged in a back-and-forth exchange of arguments

As the dialogic discussions unfolded, the facilitator noticed the development of children's arguments and their social interactions. First, when children were in agreement with each other, the facilitator played devil's advocate by pretending to be in opposition. The facilitator asked questions, such as, "How about people who say that…," as if pretending that other people disagreed with the children's reasons. By doing so, the children were encouraged to present counterarguments in detail. Second, the facilitator realized that a child has not yet spoken during the discussions. Thus, the facilitator asked questions, such as, "Who's not yet speaking?" or "How about others?" The facilitator ensured that all children were included during the dialogic discussions so that they could explore different perspectives.

Limitations

The findings of this research contribute empirical evidence supporting the implementation of dialogic discussions to enhance children's argumentation skills in Indonesian reading sessions. The study demonstrates that children actively participated and developed their argumentation abilities. However, it also has several limitations that should be acknowledged.

Firstly, this study exclusively focused on the Indonesian language, the national language, and the medium of instruction in schools. Therefore, it did not explore the potential impact of multilingual aspects, such as using local dialects as a first language or incorporating Indonesian as a second language or English as a foreign language, on analyzing linguistic moves. Research has shown that dialogic discussions can benefit English language learners in the United States (Zhang et al., 2016). Hence, future studies should consider optimizing dialogic moves within a multilingual context in Indonesia, a multicultural country. Additionally, this study concentrated on dialogic discussions within small group settings. Given that public elementary schools in Indonesia often have large class sizes, conducting a study in a large class setting would provide valuable insights for teachers in Indonesia on implementing discussions in various classroom contexts.

In terms of data collection and analysis, the sample size of this study was limited to one fourth-grade classroom in a public elementary school in Central Java province, Indonesia. Given the population and diversity of Indonesian children, future research should aim to examine dialogic discussions on a larger scale, involving multiple

schools to gather data from a more representative sample. Furthermore, this study primarily focused on a qualitative analysis, excluding a more detailed quantitative analysis of argument trends. Future studies should incorporate a quasi-experimental design to reveal the effects on other language and literacy measures, such as reading comprehension, argumentative writing, or opinion writing. Additionally, given the six-week duration of this current study, future studies could implement dialogic discussions over a longer period to examine enduring effects.

CONCLUSION

This study provides a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics and complexities of small group discussions in Indonesian classrooms. The qualitative analysis highlights the active engagement of children during small group discussions as they directly respond to their peers. Over six dialogic discussions, children progressively presented their reasons, responded to challenges, and built upon each other's arguments. The Indonesian fiction and non-fiction texts were personally engaging, as they related to children's real-life experiences. This study adds insights that by selecting discussion topics relevant to children's lives, such as motorcycle riding and using whitening products, they were able to engage in dialogic discussions actively. Therefore, classroom teachers should select fiction or non-fiction texts that resonate with children's experiences.

Challenges persist in terms of student engagement during the discussion process. Participating children benefitted from direct interactions with their peers in small groups, but those who did not participate in discussions tended to be distracted, even though they had to complete a reading comprehension task. Given that Indonesian public elementary classrooms often have a large number of children, teachers face tangible obstacles when implementing small group discussions. Future research should explore how teachers can adapt to the small group format, particularly during reading and language lessons. Besides that, future research should provide analysis on the relationship between dialogic discussions and literacy skills, including reading comprehension for Indonesian children, in order to provide a more comprehensive insights on this topic.

This study has shown that the facilitator is crucial for sustaining dialogic discussions, indicating the importance of guidelines or training modules for teachers to effectively implement dialogic discussions in diverse classrooms. Teachers should practice various prompts to scaffold children's responses during discussions, including how to encourage children to elaborate their reasons and explore opposing views. Teachers should also invite children who have not yet spoken so that the dialogic discussions will be inclusive for all children.

Additionally, research on professional development programs to enhance dialogic discussion skills will benefit teachers, enabling them to support children with various learning needs. It is advisable for future researchers to conduct coaching for teachers not only at the beginning but also during dialogic discussions to further investigate how to support teachers in navigating the intricacies and dynamics of small group interactions. Future research should also focus on exploring supports, including school and government factors, to effectively conduct small group dialogic discussions across diverse settings and regions.

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