



## A Thematic Review of Argumentation Studies at The K-8 Level

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### Abstract

This research aimed to thematically review the argumentation studies at the K-8 level from 2006 to 2016. Given the criteria 'the K-8 level and a period of 2006-2016' for the argumentation studies, relevant databases yielded a total of 73 articles and 9 theses. These studies were exposed to thematically content analysis via such parameters as *aim, method/design, sample, data collection, data analysis, subject employed for argumentation, type of used argumentation, argumentation model, general knowledge claim and recommendation*. The results indicated that most of the argumentation studies examined the effect of argumentation on student achievement and attitudes towards science. Also, these studies under investigation mostly used experimental research design while generally preferring scales and audio-video records for data collection tools. Moreover, the argumentation activities were mostly developed in 'physics' topics and middle school level. The results of the current study suggest to deploy different methods (e.g. argumentation accompanied with gamification) to improve argumentation skills from primary school level.

### Keywords

Argumentation  
K-8 level  
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### Introduction

Scientific knowledge construction extensively handling a subject as a whole requires strong argumentation and reasoning skills (Topdemir & Unat, 2014, pp. 7). In this process, scientists use scientific arguments to explain their experiments and observations (Bakırcı, Çalık, & Çepni, 2017; Köseoğlu, Tümay, & Budak, 2008). In other words, producing scientific knowledge frequently undergoes argumentation procedure that involves in asking questions, creating claims, and supporting these claims with evidences (Erduran & Jimenez-Alexandre, 2007; Erduran, Simon, & Osborne, 2004; Günel, Kingır, & Geban, 2012). Because "*data-claim-justification*" process in the nature of argumentation overlaps with the ways of scientific knowledge (Toulmin, 1958), a clear interaction between argumentation skills and the nature of science appears (Uluçınar Sağır & Kılıç, 2013). A demand on equipping students with these scientific skills suggests that curriculum should include argumentation activities, (Özkara, 2011). Since argumentation is seen as an important option for teaching scientific concepts in curriculum and socio-scientific issues (Herrenkohl & Cornelius, 2013; Khishfe, 2014), the objectives of any curriculum have been revised or updated. For example; science curricula of developed (USA, New Zealand, Australia) and developing (Turkey) (Hiğde & Aktamış, 2017; Ministry of National

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Education [MEB], 2013) countries emphasize to train individuals with the argumentation skills through inquiry-based learning approach.

This emphasis in science curricula has accelerated the studies integrating argumentation into science education (Berland & Reiser, 2011; Evagorou ve Osborne, 2013; Munford, 2002; Pedretti & Nazır, 2011; Ravenscroft, 2000; Sadler, 2006; Simon, 2008; Uskola, Maguregi, & Jimenez-Aleixandre, 2010; Varelas, 1996) and proposed various argumentation models (Belland, 2008; Clark & Sampson, 2008; Osborne, Erduran, & Simon, 2004; Park & Kim, 2012; Toulmin, 1958). These models are generally underpinned by Toulmin's Argumentation Model firstly illuminating argumentation process and its components. Therefore, the number of the argumentation studies with the Toulmin Argumentation Model is considerably many (Berland & McNeill, 2012; Maloney & Simon, 2006; Song, Karimi, & Kim, 2015).

Toulmin (1958) defined the argumentation process with three main components (data, claim, and justification) and three sub-components (warrant, limitation and refutation). Toulmin (1958) viewed argumentation as the whole of the warranted claims. Therefore, any claim is to base on the data. To strengthen the connection between the claim and data, justification is referenced. 'Warrant' word in 'Warranted claims' statement means 'justification' term. For this reason, any claim should contain a strong justification. On the other hand, each justification has its own warrant and limiting that reveal the quality of the justification. If there is no valid justification for the claim or the justification rejects the claim, the claim is rejected by refutation (Erduran et al., 2004). Given the entire process, the use of proper justification is more important than scientific claim(s) (Aldağ, 2006; Yakmacı Güzel, Erduran, & Ardaç, 2009). For this reason, strong justification results in a better argumentation process. Thus, the argumentation process gives an opportunity for students to gain such skills as argumentation and reasoning whilst constructing scientific knowledge (Erduran & Jimenez-Aleixandre, 2007).

Because the aforementioned processes/skills are consistent with the objectives of science curriculum, an adaptation of argumentation into science education studies have often been preferred. Given the characteristics of argumentation and science education, presenting the historical development of argumentation in science education is crucial to see its overall effect(s). As a matter of fact, Erduran, Özdem, and Park (2015) went over the argumentation studies (between 1998 and 2014) published in three important journals (Science Education, International Journal of Science Education and Journal of Research in Science Education) in order to identify the effectiveness of the argumentation studies and their trends. The articles were categorized according to year of publication, cognitive (find evidence, explain, make reasoning) and linguistic (negotiation, conversation, discussion) aspects of argumentation keywords and the distribution of these keywords over years. However, to determine trends in the argumentation studies necessitates investigating their different aspects (i.e. purpose, methodology, sample, conclusion, recommendation). In this regard, the current study handles different parameters from Erduran et al. (2015)'s study. On the other hand, the fact that Erduran et al. (2015) did not include all argumentation studies (published in other journals and theses) has appeared an unexplored important area in identifying the trends in the argumentation studies, which is of interest in the present study. In other words, a need for an extensively synthesis of the argumentation studies (not only three journals) has resulted in the current study. Therefore, reviewing these studies in regard to *aims, methods, sampling, data collection, data analysis, argumentation topics, argumentation models, results and recommendations* might provide a holistic view of the argumentation. Similarly, this thematic review would provide insights of the results of the argumentation studies over years as well as their effectiveness. Furthermore, a thematic review at the K-8 level would also inform future studies on unexplored areas.

This research aimed to thematically review the argumentation studies at the K-8 level from 2006 to 2016. For this purpose, the following questions guided the current study:

1. What aims of the argumentation studies?
2. What methods did these studies use?
3. Which sample levels did these studies prefer?
4. What data collection tools did these studies exploit?
5. What data analysis methods did these studies use?
6. What topics did these studies focus on?
7. Which type(s) of argumentation did these studies involve?
8. Which argumentation model(s) did these studies exploit?
9. What were the results of these studies?
10. Which recommendations did these studies depict?

### *The Significance of the Study*

Considering the impact(s) of argumentation on learning outcomes, identifying its possible effects and results on science education is quite important for the relevant literature. In particular, because the majority of the argumentation studies were conducted with such samples as high school and university, the researchers critically asked whether argumentation might be effective at the K-8 level. Phrased differently, they inquired whether the K-8 level possessed some problems in creating an appropriate argumentation environment. Furthermore, the idea ‘argumentation involving in such processes as argument and reasoning should be acquired from an early age’ called the current study for thematically reviewing the argumentation studies at the K-8 level. In other words, this thematic review could shed more light on how to effectively implement the argumentation studies at the K-8 level as well as eliciting their deficiencies. Given the foregoing issues, the current study is unique to fill in an important gap in the related literature. Hence, this study would offer an opportunity for researchers, teachers and curriculum developers to follow the trends in the argumentation studies by lessening their workloads.

### *Limitations of the Study*

This research aimed to examine the argumentation studies in science education in that the number of studies in science education is higher than other disciplines (social studies, Turkish, mathematics). Thereby, it was intended to accumulate adequately the argumentation studies to emerge reasonable results. On the other hand, reviewing several disciplines via a thematic review may act as a barrier for an in depth analysis. Overall, the current study is limited to the argumentation studies in science education.

To find a realistic trend with contemporary studies, the current study has paid more attention to the studies published in recent years. For this reason, the researchers decided to take into account the argumentation studies in a period of 2006-2016, which may be seen as another limitation of the current study.

Finally, the idea ‘argumentation process should be acquired from early ages’ has led to only consider the argumentation studies at the K-8 level. For this reason, this may be viewed as another limitation of the current study.

## Method

This study employed the thematic review, which critically synthesizes trends in studies of a field (e.g. science education) by creating themes and templates (Çalık & Sözbilir, 2014; Çalık, Ünal, Coştu, & Karataş, 2008). Hence, the thematic review provides a rich source for researchers, who work in the relevant field and have limited access to all studies (Çalık, Ayas, & Ebenezer, 2005; Ültay & Çalık, 2012). Because this study aimed to examine the argumentation studies at the K-8 level, the thematic review was preferred.

### *Data Collection*

This study searched international and national well-known databases to go over the argumentation studies in the K-8 level. Firstly, to gather related studies in international literature published in a period of 2006--2016, the following well-known databases were looked for respectively; Academic Search Complete, Education Research Complete, ERIC (EBSCO), Springer LINK, Taylor & Francis, Wiley Online Library Full Collection, Science Direct, ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global, Sage Premier 2013, Google Scholar and Scopus (A&I). Then, the subsequent national databases were searched; ULAKBIM National Databases and YOK National Thesis Centre. The keywords were as follows: *argumentation, scientific argumentation, science education, K-8 level, elementary school*. Hence, a total of 88 studies were found. 7 out of the argumentation studies, which were not open-access, were requested from correspondence authors by e-mails. However, only 2 of them returned and sent full-texts of their theses. Moreover, in case any duplication, theses and articles belonging to the same author were matched with each other; and theses were preferred to the articles. As a result, this study thematically handled with a total of 82 studies (9 theses and 73 articles).

### *Data Analysis*

All articles and theses from the related literature were initially transferred to Nvivo 9.2 software. These studies were examined in detail by means of content analysis using the program (Patton, 2002). Afterwards, parameters were determined for the thematic review. These parameters were: *aim, method/design, sample, data collection, data analysis, subject employed for argumentation, type of used argumentation, argumentation model, general knowledge claim and recommendation*. A sample data analysis of these parameters is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.** A Sample Data Analysis of These Parameters

Aim	Methodology-Design <sup>a</sup>	Sample <sup>b</sup>	Data collection <sup>c</sup>	Data analysis <sup>d</sup>	Subject employed for argumentation	Type of used argumentation	Argumentation model	General knowledge claim	Recommendation
To analyze 6th grade students' argumentation process of "heating and isolation" topic	Qualitative Case Study	Middle school	Video records	Descriptive analysis	Heating and isolation	Argumentation activities developing argumentation skills of	Toulmin's model	Students used basic arguments of the 'heating and isolation' topic.	In-class activities improving argumentation skills should be planned

<sup>a,b,c,d</sup> Some of the studies may contain more than a research method, data collection and data analysis. If any study contains several characteristics of one parameter, it can be coded more than once in the same parameter. In this case, frequency of the parameter under investigation may exceed the total number of the study.

Each study was categorized and coded separately in accordance with the parameters (see Table 1). Thus, a total of 50 codes were determined. The aforementioned parameters also constituted the themes determined by the codes in the content analysis. Discussion and results were presented in regard to these themes and codes.

#### *Validity and Reliability of the Study*

The studies under investigation were carefully examined to avoid any missing data. Coding procedure was meticulously carried out given the parameters. To minimize any error, all codes for each study were utterly performed. This process took about a month. Also, after the codes and themes, re-confirmations from the findings to the themes, the codes, the aim of the study and raw data were made. A group of experts (researchers and two post-graduate students, who enrolled to 'Meta-synthesis applications in primary teacher education') independently coded two studies randomly selected for the credibility of the codings. Hence, inter-rater co-efficient formulated by Miles and Huberman (1994) was found to be 0.96. A high value of the inter-rater co-efficient drove the researchers to conduct coding procedure themselves (Çil, 2010). In addition, an expert, who was quite familiar with content analysis and thematic review, looked over this analysis procedure and ensured its suitability and applicability.

## Findings

Frequencies of the argumentation studies via the codes and themes are presented in this section. Frequencies of the *aim* theme and related codes are displayed in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Frequencies of the Aims of the Argumentation Studies

Theme	Codes	f
Aim	The effect of argumentation on related variable (achievement and attitude)	29
	The development of argumentation with intervention (using different methods and techniques)	19
	Diagnosing the existing case(s) of argumentation (level of skill, competence)	13
	The effect of different teaching tools (i.e. laboratory, online software(s), computer games) on argumentation	8
	Design based argumentation (material, evaluation tool, etc.)	6
	The relationship between argumentation and different variable(s) (individual-group discussions, science learning)	4
	Factors affecting argumentation (subject matter of knowledge)	3
Total		82

As seen in Table 2, the 'aim' theme consisted of seven different codes. Of these codes, while the effect of argumentation on related variable denotes such factors as achievement and attitude; intervention means the effect(s) of different methods and techniques on the development of argumentation. Also, different teaching tools comprises of science laboratory, online software(s), computer games etc. Diagnosing the existing case(s) contains to determine levels of argumentation skills and/or competences. The 'Design-based argumentation' code contains devising any teaching material and assessment tool of the argumentation processes as well as testing its effectiveness. Further, the relationship between argumentation and different variables embraces the link(s) between individual/group discussion and students' argumentation skills. The 'Factors affecting argumentation' code addresses the studies on what factors influence the argumentation process and students' skills (i.e. subject matter of knowledge).

As can be seen in Table 2, 29 of the argumentation studies fell into the code 'the effect of argumentation on related variable' whereas the frequency of the studies classified under the code 'The development of argumentation with intervention' was 19. Frequencies of the codes 'Diagnosing the existing case(s) of argumentation', 'The effect of different teaching tools on argumentation', 'Design based argumentation', and 'The relationship between argumentation and different variable(s)' were 13, 8, 6 and 4 respectively.

Frequencies of the *methodology/design* theme in the argumentation studies are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Frequencies of the Methodology/Design Theme in the Argumentation Studies

Theme	Codes	f	
Methodology/Design	Quantitative	Experimental	26
		Other (Quantitative but design is not specified)	2
	Qualitative	Case study	11
		Grounded theory	2
		Action research	2
		Other (Qualitative but design is not specified)	18
	Mixed (Quantitative + Qualitative)	16	
	Design based research	4	
	A systematically review study	1	
Total		82	

As seen in Table 3, 26 of the argumentation studies were carried out with experimental research methodology, whereas 16 of them were conducted with mixed (quantitative + qualitative) methodology. 18 of the argumentation studies were labelled under 'other' code (qualitative but the design is not specified), while 11 of them were implemented with case study methodology. Frequencies of the argumentation studies, which employed action research, systematically review study, grounded theory and design based research were 2, 1, 2 and 4 respectively. Further, two argumentation studies were classified under 'Other' code, which was quantitative with unspecified design.

Frequencies of the '*sample*' theme in the argumentation studies are shown in Table 4.

**Table 4.** Frequencies of the sample theme in the argumentation studies

Theme	Codes	f
Sample	8 <sup>th</sup> grade	30
	7 <sup>th</sup> grade	21
	6 <sup>th</sup> grade	22
	5 <sup>th</sup> grade	18
	4 <sup>th</sup> grade	10
	3 <sup>rd</sup> grade	7
	2 <sup>nd</sup> grade	2
Total		110

As can be seen in Table 4, frequencies of the *sample* theme in the argumentation studies were 30 for 8<sup>th</sup> grade, 21 for 7<sup>th</sup> grade, 22 for 6<sup>th</sup> grade, 18 for 5<sup>th</sup> grade, 10 for 4<sup>th</sup> grade, 7 for 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and 2 for 2<sup>nd</sup> grade.

Frequencies of the *data collection tool* theme in the argumentation studies are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5.** Frequencies of the Data Collection Tool Theme in the Argumentation Studies

Theme	Codes	f
Data Collection Tool	Open-ended questions	40
	Audio-video record	30
	Interview	26
	Alternative tools	16
	Written text	16
	Rubric	14
	Observation	13
	Learning Science Based on Argumentation (LSBA) report form	2
Total		147

As seen in Table 5, 40 of the argumentation studies used open-ended questions, whilst 30 of them exploited audio-video records. 26 of them deployed interviews while 16 of them preferred alternative tools. Frequencies of the argumentation studies, which recruited written texts and observations, were 14 and 13 respectively. Also, two of the argumentation studies collected data with the Learning Science Based on Argument (LSBA) report form involving templates for teachers and students in the argumentation process.

Frequencies of the *data analysis* theme in the argumentation studies are displayed in Table 6.

**Table 6.** Frequencies of the Data Analysis Theme in the Argumentation Studies

Theme	Codes	f	
Data Analysis	T-test	18	
	ANOVA	14	
	ANCOVA	12	
	Quantitative	Mann Whitney U	3
		MANCOVA	2
		Regression	2
	Qualitative	MANOVA	1
		Descriptive analysis	27
		Content analysis	22
		Alternative scoring keys	13
Total		114	

As seen in Table 6, 27 of the argumentation studies used descriptive analysis, whereas 22 of them exploited content analysis. Frequencies of the argumentation studies, which employed t-test, ANOVA and ANCOVA were 18, 14 and 12 respectively. Also, 13 of these studies deployed alternative scoring keys. Further, frequencies of the argumentation studies, which recruited Mann Whitney U test, MANCOVA, Regression analysis and MANOVA, were 3, 2, 2 and 1 respectively.

Frequencies of the *subject employed for argumentation* theme in the argumentation studies are presented in Table 7.

**Table 7.** Frequencies of the Subject Employed for Argumentation Theme in the Argumentation Studies

Theme	Codes	f
Subject Employed for Argumentation	Physics (pressure, force and motion, matter)	22
	Biology (plants, biodiversity, living, photosynthesis)	14
	Socio-scientific issues (Genetically modified products, use of the water)	9
	Environment (ecosystems, climate change)	8
	Science (history of science, nature of science)	6
	Chemistry (solutions, diffusion, reaction)	5
	Others	18
Total		82

As seen in Table 7, 22 of the argumentation studies focused on physics topics whilst 14 of them concentrated on biology topics. Further, 9 of them used 'environment' topics while frequencies of the argumentation studies, which exploited socio-scientific issues and 'science' topics, were 8 and 6 respectively. Also, 6 of them employed chemistry topics for argumentation. Moreover 18 of them (investigating the existing cases and argumentation skills) did not explicitly state the subject employed for argumentation.

Frequencies of the *type of used argumentation* theme in the argumentation studies are shown in Table 8.

**Table 8.** Frequencies of the Type of Used Argumentation Theme in the Argumentation Studies

Theme	Codes	f	
	Activities developing argumentation skills	29	
Type of Used Argumentation	The development of argumentation with different teaching tools	Argumentation with online computer software	8
		Argumentation with alternative methods	8
		Argumentation with computer game	2
		Argumentation with laboratory activities	2
	Argumentation-oriented curriculum	17	
Not applicable		16	
Total		82	

As seen in Table 8, frequency of the argumentation studies categorized under the 'Activities developing argumentation skills' code was 29, while that for the 'Argumentation-oriented curriculum' code was 17. Also, frequencies of the argumentation studies, which used argumentation along with online computer software, alternative methods, computer game and laboratory activities, were 8, 8, 2 and 2 respectively.

Frequencies of the *argumentation model* theme in the argumentation studies are shown in Table 9.

**Table 9.** Frequencies of the Argumentation Model Theme in the Argumentation Studies

Theme	Codes	f
Argumentation Model	Toulmin (1958)	21
	Osborne et al. (2004)	14
	Clark and Sampson (2008)	1
	Belland (2008)	1
	Furtak et al. (2008)	1
	Chen (2011)	1
	Park and Kim (2012)	1
	Venville and Dawson (2010)	1
Not applicable		41
Total		82

As can be seen in Table 9, the *argumentation model* theme consisted of eight different codes. These models were called with authors' names. 21 of the argumentation studies focused on Toulmin Model (1958), whereas 14 of them concentrated on that of Osborne et al. (2004). The rest of the argumentation studies only employed their authors' models. That is, one study was available for the argumentation models of Clark and Sampson (2008), Belland (2008), Furtak et al. (2008), Chen (2011), Park and Kim (2012) and Venville and Dawson (2010).

Frequencies of the *general knowledge claim* theme in the argumentation studies are presented in Table 10.

**Table 10.** Frequencies of the General Knowledge Claim Theme in the Argumentation Studies

Theme	Codes	f	
General Knowledge Claim	Effectiveness of the teaching intervention	Positive effect Neutral effect Negative effect	45 3 2
	Levels of Argumentation		16
	Factors influencing argumentation (prior knowledge, learning motivation, classroom atmosphere)		7
	Effectiveness of technology integrated argumentation		7
	Unclear		2
	Total		82

As seen in Table 10, five different codes appeared in this theme. 50 of the argumentation studies referred to the effectiveness of the teaching intervention with argumentation. Moreover, 45 out of 50 argumentation studies had positive effect, while 3 out of them depicted neutral effect. Also, two studies classified under the code 'Effectiveness of the teaching intervention' reported a negative effect. In addition, 16 of the argumentation studies provided general knowledge claims for levels of argumentation; frequencies of the codes 'Factors influencing argumentation' and 'Effectiveness of technology integrated argumentation' were the same (7 by 7).

Frequencies of the *recommendation* theme in the argumentation studies are presented in Table 11.

**Table 11.** Frequencies of the Recommendation Theme in the Argumentation Studies

Theme	Codes	f
Recommendation	Implications for classroom practices	25
	Implications for future studies	23
	Implications for practitioners or specialists	14
	Implications for design based studies	6
	Not applicable	14
Total		82

As seen in Table 11, 25 of the argumentation studies recommended implications for classroom practices, whilst 23 of them illuminated implications for future studies. Also, while 14 of them made implications for practitioners or specialists, 6 of them suggested design based studies.

## Discussion and Conclusion

Given the results of the argumentation studies, a high number of the code 'The effect of argumentation on related variable' (see Table 2) may come from the idea viewing attitude and achievement as the most important dependent variables (Aymen Peker, Apaydın, & Taş, 2012; Çalık, Ültay, Kolomuç, & Aytar, 2015). Also, the fact that attitude and achievement tests may easily be administered to collect many data may have led researchers to frequently prefer these variables within the aims of the argumentation studies. A high number of the argumentation studies under the codes 'The development of argumentation with intervention' may result from the experimental research design that most of researchers often prefer. In other words, the question 'How does various teaching interventions impact the argumentation process?' may have triggered such a trend in the argumentation studies. A great number of the argumentation studies under the code 'Diagnosing the existing case(s) of argumentation' may stem from a learning demand on students' levels and competences of argumentation process. Furthermore, the number of the argumentation studies under the code 'The effect of different teaching tools on argumentation' was very limited for integrating technologies into argumentation (Squire & Jan, 2007). This may result from complex structure of technology-integrated argumentation. On the other hand, this may come from financial burden in creating such a learning environment. A low number of the argumentation studies accompanied with technological tools seems to have disregarded the use of technology in the teaching process that provides several significant benefits (perception, competency, academic achievement, self-efficacy etc.) (Çalık, 2013). This may stem from inability to exploit technological tools (Kaleli Yılmaz, 2015). In addition, low frequencies of the argumentation studies under the codes 'The relationship between argumentation and different variable(s)' and 'Factors affecting argumentation' reveal a missing point that needs to be elaborated. This may come from complicated frameworks of relationships/factors as compared to the argumentation studies of attitude, achievement, intervention and diagnosis.

The fact that the argumentation studies often used qualitative research methods (see Table 3) may come from the nature of the argumentation process. That is, qualitative research methodologies may be viewed as more appropriate to analyze the argumentation process and/or arguments. Furthermore, a close numerical relationship between quantitative and qualitative research designs may result from their research aims examining the development of argumentation with different interventions. Namely, such a process may have increased the number of experimental research design. Also, a low number of the argumentation studies with mixed method (quantitative + qualitative) may neglect advantages of mixed method. Otherwise, these studies may have not preferred it due to its possible requirements and workload(s). The fact that some of the argumentation studies with the experimental research methodology deployed both quantitative and qualitative methods may stem from a need for an in-depth analysis and data triangulation. Further, this may come from their concerns of validity and reliability of the study. Moreover, the fact that few studies methodologically recruited action research, systematically review and grounded theory, may result from their varied requirements and workloads (common dominant view(s) of quantitative methodologies, a lack of knowledge of these methodologies, time, sampling etc.). On the other hand, a lack of meta-analysis and meta-synthesis on the argumentation studies at the K-8 level shows an unexplored area that needs to be filled. However, these studies require researchers to systematically handle and synthesize the related studies via higher-order skill(s). In other words, especially limited number of the argumentation studies in the K-8 level seems to have resulted in a deficiency of meta-analysis and meta-synthesis.

The fact that majority of the argumentation studies were conducted with 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th grade students (see Table 4) may come from the idea 'an increase in age result in better argumentation

skills'. On the contrary, given the idea 'individuals develop scientific images from early ages' (Güler & Akman, 2006), students at early ages (i.e. primary school) are able to claim original ideas and defend their arguments. Unfortunately, given pivotal role of early ages, minority of the argumentation studies was carried out with 2nd, 3rd and 4th grade students. Hence, how students evolve argumentation skills/competences should be explored. But, limited number of the argumentation studies in the lower grades may stem from difficulties in determining proper science topics.

As seen in Table 5, the argumentation studies mostly exploited open-ended questions and audio-video records. A higher frequency of open-ended questions in the quantitative research methodologies may come from selecting the experimental research methodology. However, these tests were mostly used to go over the effect(s) of argumentation on other independent variables (e.g. academic achievement, attitude) rather than directly examining the argumentation skills. A demand easily describing the level of argumentation in a short time seems to have encouraged researchers to prefer these tests (especially, open-ended questions) (Günay & Aydın, 2015). In addition, the majority of the argumentation studies employing qualitative records seem to have preferred measuring the argumentation skills through long-term observations. This may result from the idea 'levels of argumentation skills should be measured through observations instead of tests'. However, as compared with the foregoing data collection tools, frequencies of the argumentation studies employing interviews and observations were very low. This may stem from concerns of missing data. In fact, audio-video records are germane to observation. However, advantages of audio-video records (i.e. repeated watching if necessary) seem to be more suitable for the qualitative studies. Therefore, the argumentation studies may have preferred using audio-video records to direct/participant observations. The fact that few argumentation studies used the argumentation reports may result from avoiding a single template. Instead, the argumentation studies could have preferred different appropriate templates, surveys or alternative assessments in regard to the frameworks of their research interests.

The fact that frequencies of the argumentation studies using quantitative and qualitative data analysis were almost the same (see Table 6) may stem from their research aims. That is, the argumentation studies seem to have generalized their results with quantitative data analysis as well as deeply making sense of the argumentation processes through qualitative data analysis. The fact that the frequency of qualitative descriptive analysis was slightly higher than that of content analysis may stem from the idea 'descriptive analysis is more appropriate and time-efficient to respond research questions in analyzing audio-video record, interviews, observations and student reports'. A high frequency of t-test in quantitative data analysis may come from the experimental research methodology with pre- and post-test design. Similarly, variance analysis in quantitative analysis may result from the studies examining the effects of argumentation on students' attitudes and achievement levels. In other words, this may come from the studies investigating the effect(s) of data collection tools on descriptively eliciting argumentation levels. Furthermore, the limited frequency of regression analysis may be attributed to few studies focusing on the relationships between argumentation and different variables.

A higher frequency of the argumentation studies dealing with physics topics (see Table 7) may stem from an individual perception 'people frequently encounter physics topics in daily life and maximally link science with life' (Ayaz & Söylemez, 2015). The fact that some of the argumentation studies concentrated on biology, environment topics and socio-scientific issues may come from their scientific properties (e.g. nature, living things, human life, society and ill-structured scientific issues). Moreover, few studies of science and chemistry may arise from their limited ratios of the objectives in the K-8 science curriculum. Thus, researchers seem to have possessed difficulties in preparing argumentation activities for these scientific disciplines.

A high frequency of the argumentation studies classified under 'Activities developing argumentation skills' (see Table 8) may stem from a high frequency of the experimental research methodology. Additionally, the argumentation studies seem to have paid more attention to the development of the argumentation skills. The frequency of the argumentation studies developing the argumentation skills through computer software and computer game pointed out some problems in integrating technological tools into science learning. Furthermore, because there were only two studies employing laboratory activities in the argumentation process, the argumentation studies seem to have neglected to actively stimulate student's curiosity of learning. This may be viewed as an important gap in the argumentation studies. Phrased differently, limited number of the argumentation studies accompanied with technology and laboratory can be interpreted as a crucial deficiency in argumentation-oriented teaching tools into science education.

The argumentation studies under investigation mostly underpinned by the Toulmin Model (1958) and its adapted version by Osborne et al. (2004) (see Table 9). Structures and quality of students' arguments were evaluated given elements of these argumentation models. Although Toulmin (1958) launched his own argumentation model, Osborne et al. (2004) indicated how to practically use argumentation in science classes. For this reason, Osborne et al.'s (2004) argumentation model, which has been popular since early of 2000s, has often been preferred by science educators. The fact that the remaining of argumentation models was seldom used may result from an unclear argumentation process or a lack of explicitly illuminating argumentation process. Further, the fact that the foregoing argumentation models (Osborne et al., 2004; Toulmin, 1958) were dominantly employed in the argumentation process may have overshadowed the others.

Most of the argumentation studies reported positive effects of the interventions on the argumentation process and/arguments (see Table 10). This effect may come from contemporary teaching strategies (i.e. student-centred learning, inquiry based learning) and experimental practices in science classes (that engage students in experimental scientific practices) rather than conventional ways (Aydeniz, Pabuccu, Çetin, & Kaya, 2012; Herrenkohl & Cornelius, 2013; Kabataş Memiş, 2014; McNeill, 2011). Further, neutral effect in the argumentation studies may stem from the preferred intervention, which has already been suggested by science curriculum. Similarly, negative effect may result from improper use of the argumentation. Minority of the argumentation studies referred to general knowledge claims of the developmental levels of students' arguments. The fact that these studies went over the number and quality of the arguments in depth seems to have possessed less attraction as compared with the experimental studies. Also, limited alternative argumentation models, apart from the Toulmin model (1958), seem to have resulted in few studies in determining the level of argument. Nevertheless, the fact that few studies investigated the effectiveness of technology-oriented argumentation and the factors influencing the argumentation may stem from a priority perception. That is, the argumentation studies may have preceded the effectiveness of any intervention and/or the developmental level of argument. Phrased differently, the studies eliciting students' competence levels of the argumentation may have been preferred. Besides, a low frequency of the argumentation studies integrating technological tools into argumentation process seems to have yielded limited general knowledge claims of technology-integrated argumentation.

The argumentation studies recommended several implications for the questions 'How to get students to have a good argumentation?' 'How to create a classroom culture?' and 'How to assess the arguments/argumentation process?' (Belland, Glazevski, & Richardson, 2011; Chin & Osborne, 2010; Yun & Kim, 2015). These recommendations may come from few studies handling these issues that need to be inquired. Besides, the argumentation studies suggested several future researches that examine the relationships between argumentation and different variables (Çinici et al., 2014; Skoumios, 2009). Such an implication for future research may result from a need to identify how different factors (e.g. environment, family) affect students' argumentation skills. Similarly, examining the effects of technology-integrated argumentation was also recommended for future research (Ault, Craig-Hare, Frey, Ellis, & Bulgren, 2015). A rapid integration of technology into science education may have

appeared this implication for future research in the argumentation studies. Finally, an implication for repeating similar research with different samples (Kaya & Kılıç, 2008) may come from a need for generalizing the effectiveness of the preferred intervention(s) or testing its applicability for other samples. However, low frequencies of the argumentation studies studying on practitioners, specialists, and design-based studies seem to have appeared limited implications for them.

### **Recommendations**

Given general knowledge claims of the argumentation studies, the current study addresses the following recommendations:

1. Because few studies determined the factors affecting students' argumentation skills, further studies ought to be undertaken about such factors as topics of argumentation, student readiness, discussion habits, scientific habits of mind. In addition, at which level these factors are related to argumentation skills should be inquired.
2. Few studies under investigation employed mixed methods to examine the argumentation process and the development of argument skills. For this reason, argumentation studies should be methodologically enriched with ethnographic research, action research, etc.
3. Taking into account proverb 'You cannot teach an old dog new tricks', few argumentation studies were available at primary school. Future studies are supposed to deeply examine the argumentation process at the primary school. Further, how to improve these argumentation skills should be inquired throughout intervention/design-based researches.
4. Argumentation studies should focus on chemistry, biology, environment and science rather than physics. Hence, developing appropriate argumentation activities for various disciplines may improve students' attitudes towards these disciplines and shape conceptual framework(s).
5. Given the widespread use of technology and significant investments in technological facilities, technology-integrated argumentation should be increased and tested its possible effect(s) on students' argumentation skills.
6. Considering the importance of the laboratory into science education, different laboratory activities should be designed to improve their argumentation skills. Thus, laboratories may not only engage students in learning scientific discussion process but also support long-term learning via experimental continuum.
7. Given the idea 'different cultures have different perception(s) of the argumentation process', cross-cultural studies should be implemented to probe various conceptual frameworks and assessment criteria.

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## Appendix 1. A List of Studies Reviewed

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