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Bakhtin's Influence: A Dialogic Approach to Teaching of Argumentation

Abstract

According to Bakhtin's theory, an argumentative text encompasses qualities such as heteroglossia, polyphony and dialogism that enable the students' transition from monologic to dialogic cognition of others' ideas. Such a knowledge may conduce to the dialogic formation of argumentative writing and raise the students' awareness on the argumentative genre. Influenced by Bakhtin's theory, the following paper presents an intervention case-study in teaching argumentation conducted in a group of twenty four 12-year old students of a Greek primary school. Data has been gathered from class recordings of role playing games, dialogic interactions as well as from written argumentative texts. Results showed that the aforementioned activities conducted, first, to the introduction of counter-arguments and rebuttals in the students' texts and, second, to the empowerment of their individual persuasive speech.

Keywords: Bakhtin, dialogue, argumentative text, writing, primary school

Introduction

Bakhtin's theory signals a dialogic turn in the teaching and learning of argumentative genre. For modern argumentation scholars, the argumentative text type is created in like manner as other genres contributing to the conceptualization of the world (Andrews, 2010). Arguments take the form of oral / written "individual concrete utterances" (Bakhtin 1986, p. 60) which through their thematic content, style and compositional structure participate to the organization of speech and the facilitation of human communication. Such an acceptance equates both to the rejection of the monologic character of the argumentative genre and the recognition of *dialogicality* as its basic component.

In other words, arguments, as utterances, don't result as products of parthenogenesis. They are situated in a certain social context as historical and cultural links in the linguistic chain of argumentation. Also, they do obey to dialogical rules which are developed between -at least- two real or imaginary arguers involved in the argumentative dialogue affirming their interactive nature as responses to and anticipations of other arguments-utterances.

Indeed, in the argumentative interplay each arguer plans his argumentation according to his addressee, while he / she considers the probable objections that will arise from his / her part, in

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order to achieve his / her communicative intentions. The immediate or subsequent responsive stance of the arguer-listener on the complete argumentative position-utterance of the first arguer may take the form either of an agreement or of a disagreement as well as of an action relative to the prior argumentation. The *responsiveness* of each arguer to the other presupposes the active understanding of the meaning of their arguments (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 280) and gives rise to the conscious external as well as internal *dialogism* of them. An explicit, oral argumentative dialogue with other participants consists of a form of “external dialogism”, while the “internal dialogism” is related to an inner elaboration of the alien points of view which influence the “conceptual system” of the arguers, their “subjective belief system” (Bakhtin 1981, p. 282) and shape the final linguistic form of their argumentation.

On the first glance, *dialogism* seems to be realized through the double-voiced dialogue which is developed between the two arguers and the confrontation of their individual opinions upon a subject-matter. But, a more careful examination could lead us to the conclusion that a seemingly double-voiced argumentative dialogue is rather polyphonic, that is, it encompasses the presence of independent but, at the same time, interrelated socio-cultural voices which expose “the process of linguistic stratification” (ibid, p. 325) interwoven with the notion of *heteroglossia*.

For Bakhtin, *heteroglossia* expresses the “differentiated speech” which describes “the complex stratification of language into genre, register, sociolect, dialect and the mutual interanimation of these forms” (Vice, 1997, p. 18). In the field of argumentation, *heteroglossia* may declare the differentiated arguments of the participants due not only to their different individual convictions in everyday life but, also, to various social interests, roles and intentions according their socio-economic class, profession, age, sex and so forth. As a consequence, an heteroglot argumentative genre may represent the negotiation or the clash between “centripetal” and “centrifugal” argumentative forces which, correspondingly, attempt to maintain a certain ideological *status quo*, to transform it or even to reject it (Bakhtin 1981, p. 272).

Even in the case of a seemingly monologic oral / written argumentative text, *dialogicality* is present in a hidden form. Every text consists of a reflective, explicit or implicit response to a prior argumentative thesis of another writer / speaker, who sealed with his words “all the present and visible words” (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 197) of the new text. The “hidden dialogicality” of an argumentative text has nothing in common with “hidden polemic” in which “the other’s words are treated antagonistically” (op.cit., pp. 195-6). On the contrary, every argumentative text is a sign of ideological becoming of persons that enter into a dialogue not only with other speakers / writers, but even with their own earlier and later beliefs after a conscious and critical dialogism of them.

Bakhtin's influence: A dialogic approach to the teaching of argumentation

Such a dialogic approach to the teaching of argumentation is related to further epistemological and pedagogical changes as it will be shown later in this paper.

The aforementioned dialogic approach extends the two major existing approaches to genre teaching: a) the *text based* approach and b) the *situation oriented* approach. The first one seeks to teach generic structures by describing the organizing principles of the argumentative genre: *thesis*, *argument* and *conclusion* (Derewianka, 1990). The latter examines the genre as a “typified rhetorical action” to a “recurrent situation” (Miller, 1984, p. 151) and attributes the attainment of certain communicative goals (e.g. persuasion, in the case of argumentation) to the knowledge that acquire the users of the genre into a certain socio-cultural context.

For the dialogic approach, the teaching of genre goes one step further. Genres, beyond their verbal and contextual actualization, consist of an on-going struggle of the speakers / writers in order to conceptualize reality and the world “through the eyes of the genre” (Morris, 1994, p.179) in interaction with others within discourse communities. From this perspective, the knowledge of argumentative genre is constructed through the exchange of different opinions of at least two consciousnesses “with different epistemological layers of their culture system” (Clark and Holquist, 1984, p. 227). Probably, the argumentative genre consists of one of the most important generic arenas, where the knowledge of reality is conceptualized or re-conceptualized on the boundary between the personal and the other's ideas.

Such an approach rejects the *acquisition metaphor* of learning in favor of the *participation metaphor* (Sfard, 1998, pp. 4-13). In other words, the learning of argumentation is achieved due to the participation of the arguers to a process of common thinking (Rogoff, 1990, 242pp). Within dialogic pedagogy, argumentation does not consist of an institutional practice which provides the students with a pre-constructed stock of correct, truth or dominant points of view. On the opposite, the teaching process seeks to engage students in an active dialogue with their sociocultural context, the classmates, their teacher as well as with themselves in terms of equity and open-mindedness. In such a way, the students promote their ideological growth through literacy in the classroom as discourse community. The goal of this practice is not any more the persuasion but, mainly, the taking of full responsibility of the proposed, individual arguments as responsive utterances to others in the arena of a continuous testing of ideas. As a consequence, the dialogic approach leads students to the conscious and critical appropriation of existent meanings or the genesis of new personal meanings, that is the development of their *internally persuasive speech*. This notion refers to the formation of a personal beliefs' system “without external pressure” (Matusov, 2009, p. 211) which might stem from any possible authority. It is, exactly, the application of dialogic pedagogy that informs our case study,

since we are seeking to examine its influence to the teaching and learning of the argumentative genre.

Method

Our study is based on an intervention program which aimed at the enrichment of the students written argumentative texts due to the integration of counter-arguments and rebuttals. The intervention program was carried out for one week. First, the students wrote an argumentative text (Text A) on the topic: *Should girls learn Tae Kwo Do*. In the end of the intervention, the students wrote a second text (Text B) on the same topic. Twenty-five 12-year-old students, in the sixth grade of a public elementary school in an urban zone of Athens participated to the experiment. The experimental group shared an homogeneous middle class social back-ground. The intervention was carried out for a total of thirteen hours.

The program aimed at the students' *internalization* of argumentation as a dialogic, polyphonic and heteroglot genre, since "every genre has its methods and means of seeing and conceptualizing reality" (Morris, 1994, p. 178). The notion of *internalization* is important in both Vygotsky's as well as Bakhtin's theory. For Vygotsky (1978), the interactive and social dialogue contributes to the development of children higher order mental, cognitive and verbal skills which are internalized as *inner speech*, that is a sign of the meaning that children attribute to the world and reality through their social experiences. At a second stage, it is noticed the "complex and dynamic" transition from inner to external speech (Vygotsky, 1987, p. 280), which may take the form of an oral or written text.

Following this thread, Bakhtin supports that the human consciousness conceptualizes reality through "inner genres" (Bakhtin and Medvedev, 1978, p. 134), which are formed by the participation to an active and engaged process as dialogue. These inner schemes define or, sometimes, constrain the outer manifestation of the genre in speaking and writing as well as "the relation of consciousness to the world around it and the relation of self to others" (Emerson, 1996, p. 127).

The aforementioned ideas are interwoven with the *theory of social practice* which implements a relational character into the on-going and open-ended learning, thinking and knowing processes (Lave and Wenger, 1996). Consequently, the learning and knowledge of argumentative genre depends from the relations that will be arisen in the social and cultural context of a classroom (in our case) as well as by the interdependencies that take place among the participants and the world through their activities and the generated meanings.

Data Collection

Our corpus of data consisted of: a) transcripts from audiotaped activities and b) students' individual pre-test (Text A) and post-test (Text B) in the form of an argumentative text. A

Bakhtin's influence: A dialogic approach to the teaching of argumentation

combination of qualitative and quantitative analysis of data (triangulation) followed. The qualitative analysis was based on the discourse analysis as proposed by Gee (Gee, 2014). This approach emphasizes that every sign of communication as well as its meaning (oral and written argumentative texts in our case) is co-constructed on the "ground of practice" (op. cit., p. 214) and into the social context in which occurs. Also, this approach highlights the notion of "figured worlds", that is pictures "of a simplified world that captures what is taken to be typical or normal. What is taken to be typical or normal, of course, varies by context and by people's social and cultural group" (ibid, p. 89).

The activities that took place during the intervention program and provided the examined data were:

-Individual writing of an argumentative text (Text A) (1 hour). No further instructions were given by the researcher, since the students had already been taught by their teacher the writing of argumentative genre according to the Greek National Curriculum. The topic was: *"According to your opinion should the girls learn Tae Kwo Do?"*.

-The reading and the analysis of the journalistic text "Female... Bruce Lee" (2 hours). This activity familiarized students with the dialogic character of argumentation. The analysis of this text connected students with the cultural and historical social context and made them understand the multiplicity of voices on a certain topic, since the article concluded testimonies and arguments of various persons (e.g. parents, trainer of Tae Kwo Do, a girl Daphne etc.) on the topic.

-Role-playing (2 hours). Role-playing, as a flexible communicative technique for language learning, puts emphasis on the social character of learning. So, the students were placed to the shoes of other persons in order to convince the father (as authoritative voice) to let his daughter take Tae Kwo Do lessons. So, they had the chance to develop empathy or "otherness" -in Bakhtin's terms- (Holquist, 1990, p. 18) by producing different arguments according to their role.

-Interviews (2 hours). The students took interviews by persons of their familiar context about the topic and presented them in classroom.

-Dialogic interactions (2 hours). Each student was asked about his / her favorite sport. During their talk the researcher or the classmates were asking them various questions.

-Parliamentary Debates (3 hours). Students exchanged arguments for and against the learning of martial arts by girls.

-Individual writing of an argumentative text (Text B) (1 hour). Students wrote a second text stating their arguments on the same topic.

Findings

Qualitative analysis of the oral activities

The aforementioned dialogic activities created a context in which understanding followed a dialogic orientation. The *role-playing activity* provided students with the chance to experience the notion of Bakhtin's social polyphony as "the co-presence of independent but interconnected voices" (Vice 1997, p. 112) and the continuous struggle between heteroglot arguments in society. The students impersonated the role of the authoritative father who is opposed to his daughter wish to learn *Tae Kwo Do* as well as the roles of the daughter, the mother, the brother, the grandmother, the trainer of *Tae Kwo Do* and the owner of a *Tae Kwo Do* gym, who, in their turn, seek to persuade the father to change his opinion. The students became more conscious of the production of different arguments according to the age, the interests, the profession, the sex of each speaker. Through this activity heteroglossia as well as dialogism between the intentions of the speaker and the listener were obtained. For example:

- (Father): My daughter, it is impossible for you to practice this sport. *Tae Kwo Do* is an appropriate sport for boys and, absolutely, not for a sensitive girl like you.
- (Daughter): Dad, I am not so sensitive as you think. By learning *Tae Kwo Do* I will be able to affront many dangers by empowering my self-defense.
- (Mother): My sweetheart, if you let our daughter practice *Tae Kwo Do*, we will feel more secure when she gets out alone.
- (Brother): Dad, I agree with my sister. She has grown up enough to realize which sport she likes. *Tae Kwo Do* is not such a violent activity. It offers physical and mental development as well. Who knows? Maybe, she is a special talent in this sport!
- (Grand-mother): My beloved sun, times have changed. Don't behave in an old-fashion way. Girls have the right to choose the sports they like. In her age I didn't have the chance to do many things because of these stereotypes between girls and boys. Don't repeat this error!!!
- (The trainer): Mr. George, you don't have to be afraid of an accident during the lesson. The students progressively learn techniques of light contact which are not dangerous for the safety of your daughter.
- (The owner of the gym): Mr. Yiannis, you don't have to think about the money. We all suffer from the economic crisis. Our gym is one of the cheapest but of the more disciplined *Tae Kwo Do* gyms in Athens.

The interviews' presentation offered a pleasant note to the process. At the same time, the students had the chance to understand and experience the multiplicity of opinions on the topic and its kaleidoscopic approach.

During the process of dialogic activities, the students shared with their classmates personal experiences and ideas on the topic of choosing and practicing a sport. The students answered to

Bakhtin's influence: A dialogic approach to the teaching of argumentation

questions such as: *What is your favorite sport?, Who has chosen that you practice this sport?, What do you like more in playing basket ball?, Which sport would you prefer?, Would you quit this sport for practicing Tae Kwo Do?, If you had to choose between football and Tae Kwo Do, which one would you choose?, What hits teach to you at the gym?, What means Tae Kwo Do? Why? Is Tae Kwo Do a violent sport?* and so on. Three students who were practicing Tae Kwo Do talked about it and responded to critical questions of their classmates. It is important to notice that during the conversation neither the boys nor the girls of the classroom expressed a special interest on this sport. In the end, a short dialogic debriefing took place among the researcher and the students about their oral interactions:

- (Researcher): Did you like our conversation today?
- (Philip): It was more interesting than yesterday.
- (Researcher): Why?
- (Maria): Because we discovered more things about our classmates and we learned more about the sports.
- (Konstantinos): I came closer to my classmates. I shared the sentiments that everyone feels about the sport he practices.
- (Theodoris): Miss Fotini, you have to love the sport that you are practicing. If you don't love it, you can't do it.
- (Researcher): Why?
- (Magdalini): It isn't funny, if you don't like it.
- (Mirto): Even the boys preferred other sports than Tae Kwo Do...
- (Researcher): Which was the basic criterion of your choice?
- (Christos): It doesn't matter if you are a boy or a girl. Everyone makes his own choices according to his preferences. Me for example, volley-ball, John Tae Kwo Do, Konstantina, dance... etc...
- (Researcher): Why did you say that yesterday the conversation was more dull?
- (Lefteris): The newspaper presented only people who were talking positively about Tae Kwo Do.
- (Georgia): I didn't hear opposite views.
- (Angelos): Today, we heard more views and... I changed my opinion... It is different when you see one thing from various angles...
- (Kostas): It's not only Tae Kwo Do that makes us strong. All the sports empower the physic condition of a person. You have to like Tae Kwo do for choosing it.

Three debates were carried out in the classroom in order to offer students the opportunity to dialogize about the advantages and the disadvantages of practicing Tae Kwo Do. The debates integrated both controversial voices on the topic that were struggling for convincing the audience for the truth of their team and the students, critically, voted for the most persuasive team.

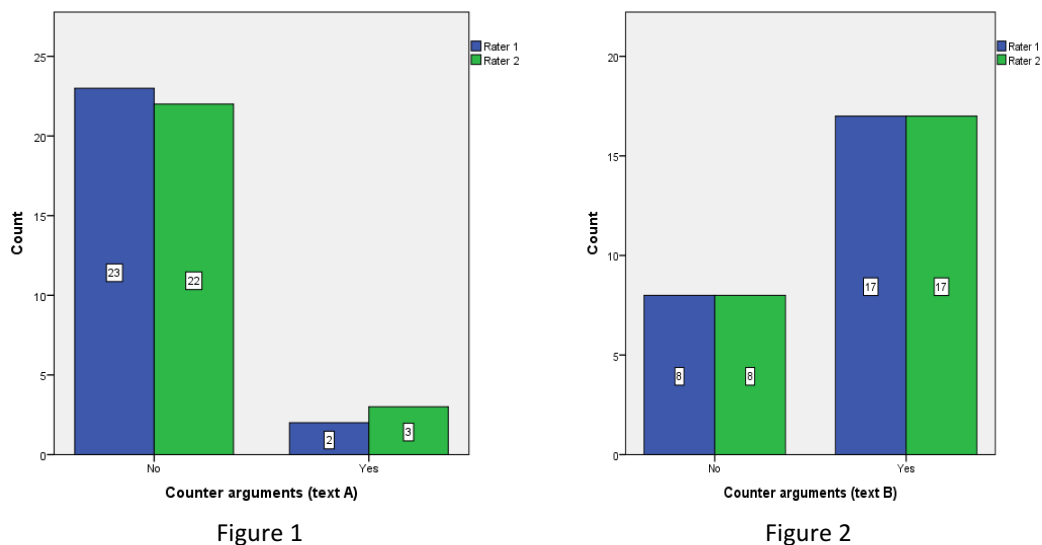
Statistical analysis of the written texts

The quantitative analysis of students’ pre- and post-argumentative tests was carried out using the software programme SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). The basic criteria of analysis were: a) the existence of at least one counter-argument (YES/NO) and b) the existence of at least one rebuttal argument (YES/NO) in the pre- and post-argumentative tests and c) the positive, negative or neutral/independent attitude of the students towards the topic.

The intervention was the independent variable of the research (YES/NO) (Verma, Gazendra and Mallick, 2004, p. 201). The written production of counter-arguments and rebuttals constituted the dependent variables of the research.

The category system of analysis was identified as reliable based on the calculation of Cohen’s Kappa coefficient for two raters (Cohen, 1960). The measured Cohen's Kappa was 0.779 ($p < 0.001$), indicating a strong agreement between the two raters as regards the assessment of the counter arguments on Text A, while it was equal to 1.000 ($p < 0.001$), indicating a perfect agreement between the two raters as regards the assessment of the counter arguments on Text B. Both raters agreed that there were no rebuttals by children to Text A. Thus, we cannot compute the measure of Cohen’s Kappa, while it was equal to 1.000 ($p < 0.001$), indicating a perfect agreement between the two raters as regards the assessment of rebuttals on Text B. Therefore, there was evidence that the observation system used by the researcher was valid.

Fig. 1, 2: Existence of counter-arguments in Text A and Text B.



The McNemar non-parametric test was used for measuring the significance of the percentage of the matched pre / post test results concerning the existence of counter-arguments and rebuttals in the Texts A and B as well as the attitudes of the students toward the question: *Should the girls learn Tae Kwo Do?* Concerning the criterion of the existence of counter-arguments,

Bakhtin's influence: A dialogic approach to the teaching of argumentation

taking into account only the assessment of Rater 1, we noticed that only two (2) students introduced counter arguments in their first text (Text A), while in the Text B, seventeen (17) students introduced counter arguments. The difference on children's skill to introduce counter-arguments in their texts was statistically significant (McNemar $\chi^2(1)=13.067$, $p<0.001$). Similar are the results, if we take into account only the assessment of Rater 2. Despite the little difference from the first rater, it is noticed that in the Text B students were more capable of introducing counter-arguments. The difference of existence of counter-arguments between Text A and Text B was statistically significant (McNemar $\chi^2(1)=12.071$, $p<0.001$). (Figures 1, 2)

As regards the criterion of existence of rebuttals in texts A and B we notice in the figures 3 and 4 that in Text A no rebuttals were observed by both raters. On the contrary, in Text B, both raters assess the existence of at least one rebuttal argument in ten (10) students' texts. So, we conclude that the difference on children's use of rebuttals arguments in Text B was statistically significant (McNemar $\chi^2(1)=8.100$, $p=0.004$).

Fig. 3,4: Existence of rebuttal arguments in Texts A and B.

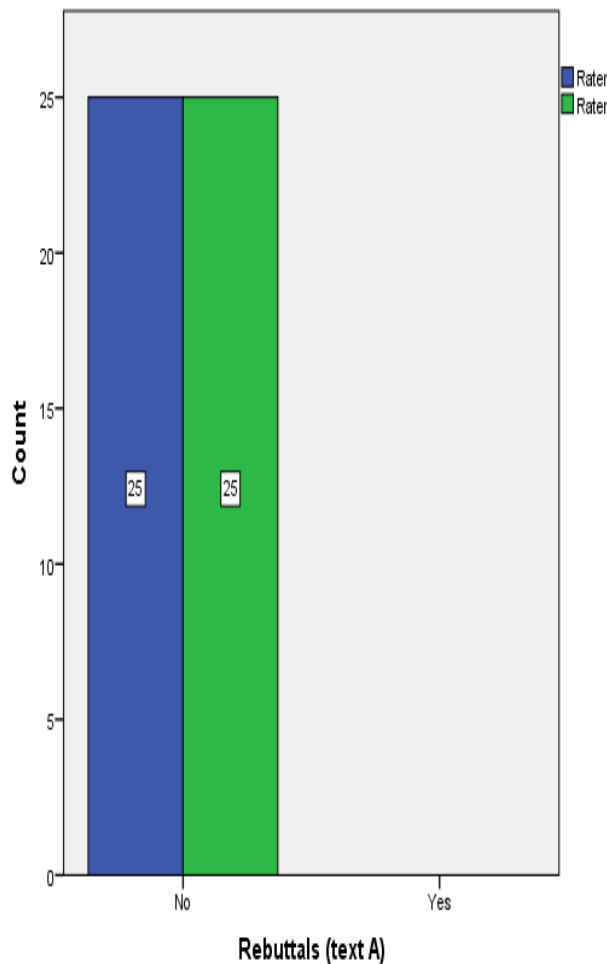


Figure 3

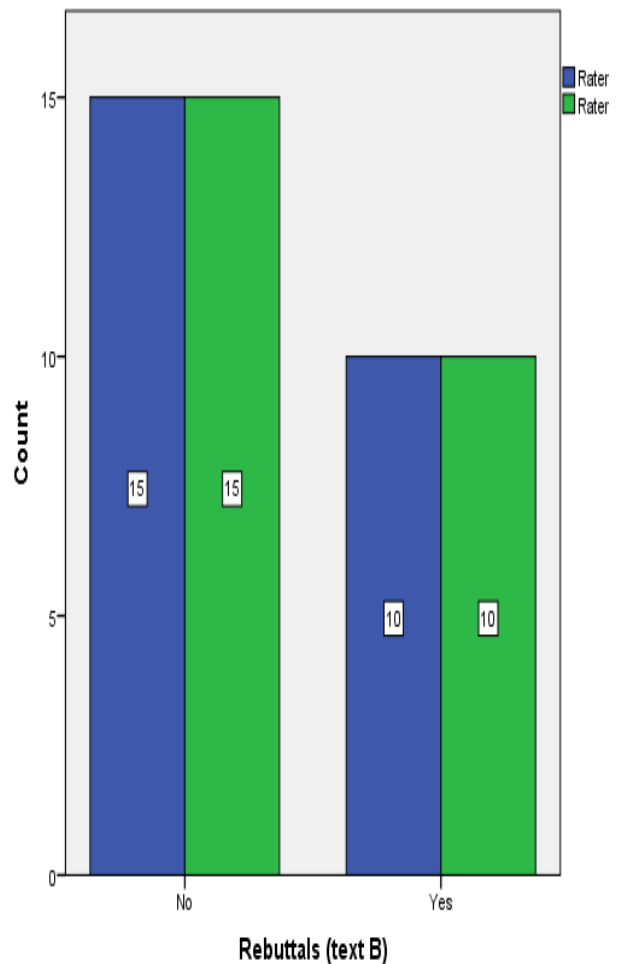
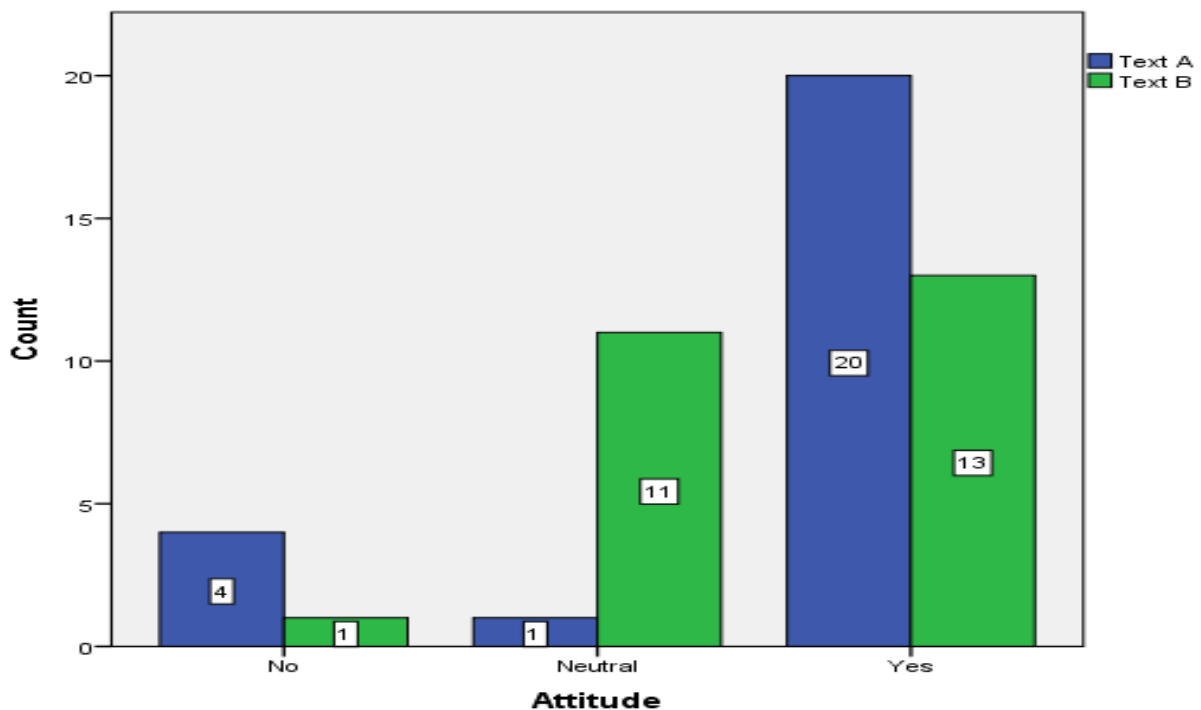


Figure 4

Fig. 5: Attitudes of students (Text A vs. Text B)



As for the criterion of analysis of students' attitudes towards the topic, the Mc Nemar test showed significant changes in the percentage of the students' attitudes. The conclusion is based on the texts written before and after the intervention (Text A vs. Text B) (McNemar $\chi^2(2)=8.444$, $p=0.015$). In the Text A the attitude of four (4) children was negative, one (1) child gave a neutral answer while twenty (20) children kept a positive attitude towards the topic. As far as Text B is concerned, one (1) child gave negative answer, eleven (11) children gave a neutral answer, while thirteen (13) children gave a positive one. Twelve (12) out of twenty-five (25) children were positive towards the topic to both texts. These results reveal that the dialogic activities that took place in classroom influenced significantly the students' way of thinking about the issue either by limiting their negative attitude towards it or by developing a more independent / neutral attitude, that indicated a reconceptualization of the topic as it will be further analyzed in qualitative terms (Figure 5).

Triangulation of data: further analysis of the written texts

The first written argumentative texts (Text A) were too short and reflected a generalized positive attitude of the students towards the practicing of *Tae Kwo Do* by girls. The arguments of twenty (20) students (80%) supported the idea that girls should learn *Tae Kwo Do*, while four (4) students (16%) supported the opposite idea. Only one (1) student (4%) kept an independent / neutral attitude by arguing that every child of her age must feel free to choose the sport that he/she likes independently of its gender (Figure 5).

Bakhtin's influence: A dialogic approach to the teaching of argumentation

But, the qualitative analysis of the texts showed that this positive acceptance was not the result of a critical confrontation of various opinions or *voices*. Twenty three (23) of the pre-texts (96%) included no counter-arguments, which might reflect an opposite idea about the topic, while no rebuttals were noticed. The students seemed to have a monologic knowledge on the topic which was reflected by the production of one-sided argumentation. The students intended to give with their arguments the 'correct' answer, since an almost complete lack of counter-arguments was noticed. The students' argumentation was mainly based, first, on the arguments of equity between the two genders and, second, on the need of empowering female self-defense, which may be received as the repetition of one stereotype that accepts the need of greater protection for the weak women. The opinion of the students had taken a finalized form without a prior confrontation of various voices on the topic. The students seemed to parrot a standard, approved social idea, that is the gender equality. For example:

To my opinion, girls should learn Tae Kwo Do or other martial arts. They are entitled to do so in order to protect themselves from dangerous attacks in daily life. They will acquire more self-confidence and they will become more dynamic. I think that this sport is more useful than volley or basket-ball. That's why I support that girls should learn Tae Kwo Do. (Myrto)

In the same way, the four students who supported the opposite idea, that is that the girls shouldn't practice martial arts, produced, also, one-sided argumentation based on the stereotypic concept that Tae Kwo Do is a very dynamic sport, not appropriate for girls. This argument was equally used by two boys as well as by two girls. For example:

Girls shouldn't learn Tae Kwo Do, because it is a dangerous sport, since many accidents may occur. By practicing this sport, girls lose their femininity. Furthermore, boys are stronger than girls and may hit them. I believe that Tae Kwo Do is a very difficult sport and more appropriate for boys. Other sports as volley-ball or tennis are more appropriate for girls of our age. (Magda)

On the other hand, the dialogic oral activities had a positive impact on the writing of the post-test (Text B). The increased production of counter-arguments and rebuttals and their integration in the Text B offered to the texts a dialogic dimension which was absent in the first text, independently of the final attitude of the writer towards the topic. Also, the new argumentative texts revealed a more complete understanding of the topic as well as a further knowledge of it. For example:

Many old-fashion people say that Tae Kwo Do is dangerous for girls, because they are less strong than boys. But they don't know that Tae Kwo Do depends not only on physical strength but, also, on the sunchronic reaction of the feet, the hand and the mind as the name of the sport defines. Girls have the same capacities as boys to react in such a way. So, I don't understand the reason for which girls shouldn't practice Tae Kwo Do. Personally, I wouldn't choose to practice it because I don't find it interesting enough. I prefer to continue my favorite sport which is swimming. I

believe that we must choose to practice the sport we like more, because otherwise we will get bored of it. (Georgia)

It is worth to notice that in the final texts the students were personally engaged to the writing of their opinions. The extended use of personal testimonies about what they would do in the case that they should have to choose Tae Kwo Do among other sports reflected the reality that was created among students in the classroom during their dialogic activities.

Also, it is very important that in the Text B eleven (11) students converted their attitude towards the topic. By considering the equity of genders as a given fact they made one more step: the gender doesn't define the choices we make in our life. It is our personal preferences and interests that conduce us, as human beings, to choose our sports or hobbies independently of the gender. The personal argumentation responded to heteroglot arguments of other people. For example:

Sometimes even the parents talk to their children about male and female sports and direct their choices. For me, this is not right. There must not be discriminations in athletic, because it depends on our talents. If a boy wants to learn ballet, he must have the freedom to do it. In the same way, if a girl wishes to learn Tae Kwo Do, she must be able to do so. It's like this that special athletes are born. The children must be free as human beings to choose the sport they like. I don't believe that girls who practice Tae Kwo Do become more wild. It is the same thing when they play basket or volley as the boys. For me, Tae Kwo Do is not so exciting. I had an experience two years ago, but then I quit it. I prefer basket ball, because it's more co-operative as a sport. Tae Kwo Do wasn't the appropriate sport for me, but it may be an appropriate sport for other boys as well as for girls. So, I support that who likes it, may choose it. (Philip)

The students seemed to be involved in an individual persuasive discourse. Their ideas, which were tested in the prior dialogue with their classmates, made them explore their insights, change their conceptions and values or even become aware of their personal assumptions. The dialogic activities offered them the chance to increase their knowledge and their arguments on the topic, but, mainly, made the students reflect critically their considerations as well as the considerations of the others. In such a way the writing of the second argumentative text took the form of a multi-coloured canvas of ideas the main tint of which was given by each student, individually, after the dialogue occurred with the others.

Discussion

The statistical results of the research showed that the dialogic activities became a precious tool which influenced significantly the students' argumentative writing as well as their knowledge about argumentation as genre and their mode of thinking about reality. The initial, monophonic argumentative texts (Texts A) which represented only the opinion of the author on the topic as a response to or as a repetition of an 'authoritative voice', were replaced -after the intervention- by

Bakhtin's influence: A dialogic approach to the teaching of argumentation

written polyphonic, heteroglot texts (Texts B). It seemed that the oral dialogue was transferred in the written texts, the voices of the others were transformed in counter-arguments and the internally persuasive speech of each student was expressed by rebuttal arguments that seek to empower, consciously, their personal opinion on the issue.

The augmentation of counter-arguments and rebuttal arguments in Texts B does not reflect only the students' better awareness on the structural exigencies of the genre. Rather, it reveals that argumentation was internalized in students' minds as a wide dialogue between various polyphonic and heteroglot people, who express different opinions and interests that must be critically taken in account. Such a clash of different ideas, arguments and attitudes and the reflection on them extends students' knowledge of the world, deepens their way of thinking and contributes to the formation of their individual persuasive speech as result of the exchange of ideas and arguments.

Furthermore, the results of the study showed that the dialogue had the power to change students' attitudes through a different conceptualization of reality in the ideological environment that the students created. In our study the dialogue between the students became the source of conceptualizing their system of personal beliefs. In a broader socio-cultural context, it may be the dialogic orientation, polyphony and heteroglossia that will bring positive changes in the formation of the complex reality.

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