



Improving Argumentative Text Writing Learning Outcomes through the Use of Puzzle Media Among Grade IX Students at SMP Negeri 13 Pekanbaru

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ABSTRACT

Students' ability to compose argumentative texts remains relatively low, particularly in developing logical arguments supported by facts. This condition indicates the need for the implementation of instructional media that can increase students' engagement in the learning process. This study aimed to improve students' learning outcomes in argumentative text writing through the implementation of text puzzle media among ninth-grade students at SMP Negeri 13 Pekanbaru. The study employed a Classroom Action Research (CAR) method based on the Kemmis and McTaggart model and was conducted in two cycles involving 41 students. Data were collected through assignments and analyzed using descriptive quantitative techniques based on mean scores and the percentage of learning mastery. In Cycle I, learning was conducted through individual assignments in which students were asked to compose argumentative texts based on phenomena developing on social media. In Cycle II, text puzzle media was implemented through group activities involving matching, arranging, and connecting parts of argumentative texts. The results showed that the implementation of text puzzle media improved students' learning outcomes. The mean score increased from 80.85 in Cycle I to 93.17 in Cycle II, while the percentage of learning mastery increased from 48.78% to 92.68%. Therefore, text puzzle media can serve as an alternative instructional medium for Indonesian language learning that supports more active, collaborative, and meaningful argumentative text learning while helping students understand and develop arguments more systematically.

Keywords: argumentative text, writing, learning outcomes, puzzle media

INTRODUCTION

Writing is a language skill that plays a pivotal role in Indonesian language learning. Through writing activities, students are required not only to express ideas but also to organize them, formulate arguments, and communicate their thoughts logically and systematically. One form of writing skill that junior high school students need to master is the writing of argumentative texts. Argumentative texts serve as a medium for conveying opinions supported by relevant reasons, facts, and evidence, thereby persuading the reader of a particular idea. Consequently, mastering argumentative

writing is not merely a matter of language proficiency; it also contributes to the development of critical thinking, logical reasoning, and problem-solving skills—competencies demanded by 21st-century education (Abidin, 2022; Dalman, 2021). The importance of argumentative writing skills has garnered significant attention in educational research. Argumentative writing requires students to develop ideas in a structured manner, link facts with logical reasoning, and construct coherent arguments. The quality of argumentative writing is heavily influenced by a student's ability to develop

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content, organize ideas, and systematically establish connections between those ideas. Research indicates a strong correlation between the quality of an argument and a student's ability to logically and meaningfully construct and develop argumentative components.

Instruction in argumentative texts still faces various challenges. Students often struggle to develop arguments, connect facts with opinions, and produce writing that is coherent and persuasive. As a result, the texts produced tend to be collections of opinions lacking strong supporting reasons and adequate evidence. This situation demonstrates that argumentative writing proficiency requires not only a mastery of the subject matter but also instructional strategies that actively engage students in the processes of knowledge building and argument construction. Similar issues have been observed among ninth-grade students at SMP Negeri 13 Pekanbaru. Based on initial observations, the teacher presented the material on argumentative texts using lectures and direct explanations. Following the lesson, students were assigned the task of writing an argumentative text based on current phenomena on social media. The students' work revealed that the majority still struggled to develop logical arguments and structure their texts effectively. Many students merely stated their opinions without providing adequate reasoning or supporting facts. This situation resulted in poor student learning outcomes regarding argumentative texts.

These low learning outcomes indicate that instruction dominated by the lecture method has not fully succeeded in helping students optimally understand and apply the concepts of argumentative texts. Teacher-centered instruction tends to position students merely as recipients of information, thereby limiting their engagement in constructing understanding. In contrast, effective learning requires active student participation in discovering, processing, and constructing knowledge through meaningful learning experiences (Slavin, 2020; Rahadian & Budiningsih, 2018).

Therefore, there is a need for instructional media that can enhance student engagement while helping them grasp argumentative text concepts in a more concrete manner. One viable alternative is the use of text puzzle media. Puzzle media are designed to engage learners in activities involving the matching, arranging, and connecting of information based on specific relationships. In the context of argumentative text instruction, text puzzles can help students comprehend text content, identify relationships between different parts of an argument, and structure arguments more systematically through collaborative learning activities. Such activities enable students to learn actively through discussion, analysis, and problem-solving, making the learning process more engaging and meaningful.

Theoretically, the use of puzzle media aligns with the principles of active learning, which place the learner at the center of the educational process. Through puzzle-solving activities, students engage in cognitive processes—connecting information and building understanding—via direct learning experiences. These activities can boost student engagement while reinforcing their grasp of the concepts being studied (Lie, 2020; Eggen & Kauchak, 2019). Furthermore, instructional media that align with learners' characteristics have been shown to improve both instructional effectiveness and student learning outcomes (Nurrita, 2018). The effectiveness of puzzle media in enhancing learning outcomes has been demonstrated through various studies. Hayati and Yamin (2023) found that the use of puzzle-based media positively influenced Indonesian language learning outcomes by enhancing student engagement during the learning process. These findings indicate that puzzle media can improve learning outcomes through more interactive and meaningful learning activities. Furthermore, the use of puzzle media has been shown to foster creativity, group collaboration, and active student participation in the learning process (Khairani et al., 2023).



Learning outcomes serve as indicators of the level of competence achieved by students following the instructional process. These outcomes reflect not only the mastery of knowledge but also the students' ability to comprehend, process, and apply learned concepts across various learning contexts (Nurrita, 2018). In the context of learning argumentative texts, learning outcomes are demonstrated by students' ability to understand text content, develop arguments, present logical reasoning, and communicate ideas systematically.

While various studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of puzzle-based media in enhancing learning outcomes, most prior research has focused on the elementary school level and general subject matter. Studies specifically examining the use of text-based puzzle media for teaching argumentative texts at the junior high school level remain relatively limited. Furthermore, previous research has largely positioned puzzles as educational games, whereas their utility in helping students comprehend and construct argumentative texts has not been extensively explored. This situation highlights a research gap that warrants further investigation.

Based on the problem statement, theoretical review, and findings from previous studies, there is a need to develop instructional approaches for argumentative texts that enhance both student engagement and learning outcomes. Text-based puzzle media holds the potential to assist students in understanding, organizing, and developing arguments through active and collaborative learning activities. The novelty of this study lies in the application of text-based puzzle media to argumentative text instruction at the junior high school level—an area that has received limited attention in prior research. Consequently, this study aims to improve learning outcomes regarding argumentative texts by implementing text-based puzzle media with ninth-grade students at SMP Negeri 13 Pekanbaru. The findings are expected to offer a practical contribution by providing an innovative alternative medium for Indonesian language in-

struction and by enriching the body of knowledge regarding the use of puzzle media in teaching argumentative texts.

METHOD

This study employs the Classroom Action Research (CAR) method, aiming to improve learning outcomes regarding argumentative texts through the implementation of text puzzle media among Grade IX students at SMP Negeri 13 Pekanbaru. The research follows the Kemmis and McTaggart model, comprising the stages of planning, action implementation, observation, and reflection (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988).

Data were analyzed using quantitative descriptive analysis techniques. The study was conducted during the even semester of the 2025/2026 academic year, involving 41 Grade IX students at SMP Negeri 13 Pekanbaru as subjects.

The research was carried out in two cycles. In Cycle I, students were assigned the task of individually constructing argumentative texts based on phenomena trending on social media. Reflection on Cycle I indicated that some students still struggled to develop arguments and comprehend the content of argumentative texts. Consequently, Cycle II introduced text puzzle media through group learning activities to assist students in understanding and constructing argumentative texts more systematically.

Data collection was conducted through assignments. The research data consisted of student learning outcome scores obtained from the tasks in each cycle. The research instrument was an assessment sheet for argumentative text learning outcomes, utilizing a score range of 0–100. Students were deemed to have achieved mastery if they obtained a score of ≥ 80 , while those scoring < 80 were considered not to have achieved mastery.

Data were analyzed using quantitative descriptive techniques by calculating the mean score and the percentage of learning mastery for each cycle (Sugiyono, 2022; Razak, 2017; Abubakar, 2021).

RESULTS

1. Cycle I

Learning outcomes regarding argumentative texts in Cycle I were assessed following instruction that involved individual assignments based on phenomena trending on social media. At this stage, students were required to construct and develop arguments based on the material they had studied. Evaluation results indicated that some students still struggled to comprehend the content of argumentative texts, formulate logical reasons, and accurately link facts with opinions. Consequently, learning outcomes did not reach the expected level of mastery.

Table 1
Student Learning Outcomes for Argumentative Texts in Cycle I

Component	Result
Number of students	41
Highest score	95
Lowest score	70
Average score	80.85
Number of students achieving mastery	20
Number of students not achieving mastery	21
Mastery percentage	48.78

Based on Table 1, the average learning outcome score was 80.85. Out of 41 students, 20 (48.78%) achieved mastery, while 21 (51.22%) did not. These results indicate that the majority of students still faced difficulties in learning about argumentative texts, necessitating corrective measures in the subsequent cycle.

2. Cycle II

Based on the reflection from Cycle I, instruction in Cycle II utilized a "text puzzle" medium. Learning activities were conducted in groups, requiring students to match, arrange, and connect segments of argumentative texts that had been cut into pieces. Through these activities, students were encouraged to discuss, exchange

opinions, and gain a deeper understanding of the text content. Evaluation results from Cycle II showed an improvement in learning outcomes compared to the previous cycle. Students appeared more active during the learning process and were able to construct arguments more systematically.

Table 2
Students' Argumentative Text Learning Outcomes in Cycle II

Component	Result
Number of students	41
Highest score	100
Lowest score	70
Average score	93.17
Number of students who met the passing standard	38
Number of students who did not meet the passing standard	3
Pass rate	92.68

Based on Table 2, the average student learning outcome increased to 93.17. A total of 38 students (92.68%) achieved learning mastery, while only 3 students (7.32%) had not yet achieved mastery. These results indicate that the implementation of the text puzzle medium had a positive impact on students' learning outcomes regarding argumentative texts.

A comparison of student learning outcomes between Cycle I and Cycle II shows an increase in both the average score and the percentage of learning mastery. the students' average score increased by 12.32 points, rising from 80.85 in Cycle I to 93.17 in Cycle II. Furthermore, the percentage of learning mastery increased by 43.90%, rising from 48.78% in Cycle I to 92.68% in Cycle II. This improvement demonstrates that the implementation of the text puzzle medium was effective in enhancing argumentative text learning outcomes for Grade IX students at SMP Negeri 13 Pekanbaru.



Table 3
Comparison of Student Learning Outcomes in
Cycle I and Cycle II

Indicator	Cycle I	Cycle II
Average score	80.85	93.17
Number of students achieving mastery	20	38
Mastery percentage	48.78	92.68

DISCUSSION

The improvement in learning outcomes observed in the second cycle can be attributed to the characteristics of the text puzzle medium, which enables students to engage directly in the learning process. Unlike the lecture method, which positions students merely as recipients of information, the text puzzle medium requires them to identify, connect, categorize, and assemble information into a meaningful whole. When studying argumentative texts, students are expected not only to grasp theoretical concepts but also to understand the logical relationships between different parts of the text. Through the puzzle-assembly activity, students indirectly engage in analyzing the text's content. They must determine the connections between sections, understand the function of specific pieces of information, and synthesize various ideas into a coherent argument. This activity encourages students to construct knowledge through concrete learning experiences. These findings align with the constructivist perspective, which emphasizes that knowledge cannot be directly transferred from teacher to student but must be personally constructed through meaningful learning experiences. Nurrita (2018) explains that instructional media serve to bridge the gap between abstract concepts and concrete reality, thereby making it easier for students to comprehend the material. In the context of this study, the text puzzle medium helps students visualize the relationships between ideas in argumentative texts, making concepts that were previously perceived as difficult much easier to understand. Furthermore, the puzzle-assembly

activity involves higher-order thinking processes. Students do more than simply recall information; they analyze, classify, and make decisions regarding the available text segments. Consequently, the observed improvement in learning outcomes reflects not only an enhanced ability to recall material but also a greater capacity to understand and logically organize information. Another factor contributing to the improvement in learning outcomes is the implementation of group-based learning during the second cycle. While assembling the text puzzles, students collaborate in groups to complete the assigned tasks. This setting creates opportunities for students to discuss, exchange ideas, provide justifications, and defend their opinions based on their individual understanding. Collaborative learning is highly relevant to the nature of argumentative texts. Fundamentally, argumentative writing requires the ability to present opinions supported by logical reasoning. Consequently, group discussions serve as an effective means for students to practice their argumentation skills before incorporating them into their assignments. Through social interaction, students have the opportunity to test their understanding and correct any existing misconceptions. Cooperative learning enhances student participation because the learning process unfolds through interaction among learners (Lie, 2020). This view is reinforced by Slavin (2020), who explains that group collaboration enables students to gain a deeper understanding by learning from the experiences and knowledge of their groupmates. In this study, the discussions that emerged during the puzzle-assembly activity allowed students to grasp the relationships between ideas in the argumentative text more comprehensively than when working on the task individually.

The improvement in learning outcomes observed in the second cycle cannot be attributed solely to the use of text puzzle media; it was also influenced by the collaborative activities that took place during the learning process. Thus, the effectiveness of the intervention in this study can

be understood as the result of integrating text puzzle media with mutually supportive group learning, which helped students comprehend argumentative text material.

These results reinforce findings from previous studies indicating that puzzle media has the potential to enhance student learning outcomes. The use of puzzle media can improve Indonesian language learning outcomes by fostering active student engagement during the learning process (Hayati & Yamin, 2023). Research by Khairani et al. (2023) also demonstrates that puzzle media can boost student creativity and participation through collaborative learning activities. Similar findings were reported by Wildayati and Kustiawan (2024), who stated that puzzle media provides a more interactive learning experience, thereby positively impacting learning outcomes. This study differs in character from previous research; most earlier studies were conducted at the elementary school level and focused on general improvements in learning outcomes. In contrast, this study specifically examines the use of text puzzle media in teaching argumentative texts to junior high school students. Consequently, this study offers a new empirical contribution regarding the effectiveness of text puzzle media in helping students understand, organize, and develop arguments more systematically.

The contribution of this study lies in demonstrating that puzzle media functions not merely as an educational game but also as a learning tool that supports higher-order thinking skills. In the context of argumentative text instruction, puzzle media helps students grasp logical connections between ideas, develop reasoning capabilities, and construct more structured arguments. These findings broaden the scope of puzzle media application in Indonesian language instruction, particularly for subject matter that requires analytical skills and the ability to develop ideas.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of text puzzle media in instruction has been proven to improve learning outcomes regarding argumentative texts among Grade IX students at SMP Negeri 13 Pekanbaru. This improvement is evidenced by the rise in the students' average score from 80.85 in Cycle I to 93.17 in Cycle II, while the percentage of students achieving mastery increased from 48.78% to 92.68%. The research results indicate that the use of text puzzle media helps students comprehend argumentative text material through a more active and collaborative learning process. Thus, text puzzle media contributes to enhanced learning outcomes in the study of argumentative texts.

The findings suggest that text puzzle media can serve as an alternative instructional tool for Indonesian language education, particularly for argumentative text material at the junior high school level. Implementing this medium provides a more meaningful learning experience through activities involving the assembly, matching, and discussion of argumentative text segments, thereby helping students understand the material more systematically. These results also reinforce previous research findings regarding the potential of puzzle media to improve learning outcomes through instruction that fosters active student participation. Future research is recommended to examine the application of text puzzle media with different subject matter and at different educational levels, involving a broader range of subjects, to obtain more comprehensive findings.

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