

THE EFFECTS OF PROMPTS-BASED ARGUMENTATION SCAFFOLDS
ON PEER-LED INTERACTIVE ARGUMENTATION

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ABSTRACT

The main focus of this study was to determine whether prompts-based argumentation scaffolds (PAS) would result in improvement of students' argumentation in a peer-led argumentation context. The study also examined the effects of PAS on students' reasoning performance and their feelings of group community.

Thirty-two participants were randomly assigned to one of three conditions: a) no prompts, b) cognitive prompts, and c) socio-cognitive prompts. As designed, the socio-cognitive prompts resulted in a significantly greater amount of socio-emotionally enhanced strategy use. With regard to argument behaviors, students in all three conditions made a considerable number of opposing arguments, which could be attributed to the task design of the study. More important, the socio-cognitive prompts condition resulted in a statistically significant greater number of substantial agreeing arguments. As expected, students in the scaffolded conditions performed better in terms of overall argumentation than students in the control condition. This difference, however, was not statistically significant. Contrary to expectation, students in the socio-cognitive prompts condition did not successfully justify their positions within the framework of others' views in the individual reasoning performance test. Lastly, the socio-cognitive prompts did not result in significantly stronger feelings of group community, although students in this condition reported slightly stronger feelings of group community than their counterparts.