



Research Article

The defense of socrates: argument analysis

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Abstract

Socrates lived in Athens between 469 BC and 399 BC. He was a philosopher who led people to question and attracted attention with his courage. Socrates was accused of corrupting the youth by three people: the poet Meletus, the politician Anitus, and the orator Lycheon. The court used democratic means and decided to execute him with 280 votes against 221 in a jury of 501 people. Socrates was 70 years old when he was forced to drink hemlock poison. The book “The Defense of Socrates” by Plato focuses on how Socrates conducted his defense. It aims to analyze how he defends himself against the majority’s argument with content and argument analysis techniques and to obtain a visual schema. Content analysis is planned to be interpreted in terms of (a) the sub-issues on the table, (b) discourse style, and (c) intra-textual coherence. As an argument analysis, the maneuvers he uses against the discourse of the majority in the face of authority will be examined. Witnessing how honest Socrates was when he used these maneuvers in his trial is admirable. Considered as a method, the premise of an argument analysis is that there must be disagreement in the argument. Based on this assumption, Toulmin Model, Pragma-Dialectics, Political Discourse Analysis, and Argument Sources Model have been established as the contemporary ones. This study plans to use Frans Van Emerman’s pragma-dialectical approach. In this model, argument is defined as defending or rejecting an opinion. It divides the review into four parts: encounter, opening, discussion, and conclusion. Based on this, this study will first (1) reveal the disagreement. In the following, (2) irrelevant topics in the text will be eliminated, (3) implied content will be emphasized, (4) ambiguity will be clarified, and (5) the mess of the text will be rearranged according to logical relationship. The text processed in this way is simplified verbally. The most important feature of this model is that it pays attention to the natural structure of the language. This model was preferred because the discussions can be transferred to the model more easily. It is thought that this study will help our teachers teach thinking education as an elective in primary education and philosophy in high school.

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Introduction

Examining the text of a dying man, philosopher or not, in terms of his defensive techniques may at first appear to be a soulless exercise. However, because of high intelligence and courage, it is, at the same time, a sign of great respect and admiration. As a critical thinking tool, it is one of the best ways to witness authentic persuasion, especially for someone in big trouble or under a severe threat. Socrates lived in Athens between 469 BC and 399 BC. He was a philosopher who led people to question and attracted attention with his courage. Unfortunately, he was accused of corrupting the youth by three people: the poet Meletus, the politician Anitus, and the orator Lycheon. The court used democratic means and

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decided to execute him with 280 votes against 221 in a jury of 501 people. Socrates was 70 years old when he was forced to drink hemlock poison.

His defense was not just for the jury but also for Athenians (Leibowitz, 2010). Thanks to Plato's book *The Defense of Socrates*, his words extended to the people of Athens, now and probably the future of the world. Except for the last part of the book, the speech is included in two parts: one before and after the verdict of the court.

The *Apology* has been known to be composed within a decade after the trial by Platon (Hansen, 1995). Unfortunately, Sokrates cannot be known from his writing but from Plato's texts. He preferred to discuss and make mutual conversations alive (Waterfield, 2009). When we leave behind the question of whether we can trust Plato's writings, according to Plato's dialogues, who is the figure of Socrates is an inquirer like his mother's midwifery gives birth to ideas (Burnyeat, 1977). Generally, he works untiringly for definitions with neat clarity. He usually does not try to produce but evaluates the deficiencies and inaccuracies of others' definitions (De Vogel, 1963). Concepts like virtue, courage, justice, goodness, knowledge, friendship, and fineness are the main concepts (Wolfsdorf, 2003).

Trying to find clarity in definitions, from the Socratic approach, "what is F?" is generally the first question. Here, Socrates's job was to unearth statements, not satisfying F-conditions, interlocutor Wolfsdorf, D. (2003). He states that he does not know anything, but never put thoughts just attacks to the missing points of propositions made by others. Başkalarıyla olan tartışmalarında izlediği yolu, konu kendisine gelince izleyebilmekte midir? Could he follow the same path in discussions with others regarding himself? or did he deviate from it?

Problem of Study

The study's main research question is "How did Socrates conduct his defense?"

Method

Research Model

The current study adopts a qualitative research model to answer the question, "How did Socrates conduct his defense?" Based on this inquiry, contemporary models for analyzing arguments will be considered.

Data Analysis

How this fundamental critical stance should be analyzed plays a crucial importance. While reducing the speech to an argumentation form, the natural tongue of an authentic and unique speech should not be missed in the name of reliability. The speech might include self-defense and sometimes a reaction to the possible verdict. In his speech, Socratic style can be captured for and against himself. This subjectivity might be missed under rigid argument-analyzation techniques. Frans Van Eemeren's pragma-dialectical approach balances the most formal and least formal methods. While pragmatists focus on bringing order, dialectics pursue the observational effect of sayings on others (Van Eemeren, Houtlosser & Henkemans, 2008). Pragma-Dialectics perfectly fits well among contemporary models.

Procedure

Socrates' apology is the main tool for collecting data. The text has been read four times, and each time, a note was taken for the procedure below:

- the main disagreement of the text will be clarified.
- irrelevant issues will be removed,
- the implied content will be emphasized,
- any ambiguity shall be clarified; and
- the clutter of the text will be reordered according to the logical relationship (van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 2004)

All argument-basis sayings were divided into four categories: (1) confrontation, (2) opening, (3) discussion, and (4) finalization. In the phase of confrontation, argument analysis begins by identifying the disagreement.

Results

		Related script
Confrontation	1.1	I don't know* how you, fellow Athenians,* have been affected by my accusers, but for my part I felt myself almost transported by them, so persuasively did they speak. (p. 27)
	1.2	But the most absurd thing of all is that one cannot even get to know their names or say who they were except perhaps one who happens to be a comic playwright.* The ones who have persuaded you by malicious slander, and also some who persuade others because they have been persuaded themselves, are all very hard to deal with: one cannot put any of them on the stand here in court, or cross-examine anybody, but one must literally engage in a sort of shadow-boxing to defend oneself, and cross-examine without any one to answer. (p.28)
Opening	2.1	Let me read out their deposition, if they were my legal accusers: 'Socrates is guilty of being a busybody, in that he inquires into what is beneath the earth and in the sky, turns the weaker argument into the stronger, and teaches others to do the same.' (p.29)
	2.2	Now perhaps one of you will interject: 'Well then, Socrates, what is the difficulty in your case? What is the source of these slanders against you? If you are not engaged in something out of the ordinary, why ever has so much rumour and talk arisen about you? It would surely never have arisen, unless you were up to something different from most people. (p.31)
Discussion	Premise 1	'Here is someone wiser than I am, and yet you said that I was the wisest.' So I interviewed this person-I need not mention his name, but he was someone in public life; and when I examined him, my experience went something like this, fellow Athenians: in conversing with him, formed the opinion that, although the man was thought to be wise by many other people, and especially by himself, yet in reality he was not. So I then tried to show him that he thought himself wise without being so. I thereby earned his dislike, and that of many people present; but still, as I went away, I thought to myself: 'I am wiser than that fellow, anyhow. Because neither of us, I dare say, knows anything of great value; but he thinks he knows a thing when he doesn't; whereas I neither know it in fact, nor think that do. At any rate, it appears that I am wiser than he in just this one small respect: if I do not know something, I do not think that I do.' Next, I went to someone else, among people thought to be even wiser than the previous man, and I came to the same conclusion again; and so I was disliked by that man too, as well as by many others. (p.32)
	Premise 2	In addition, the young people who follow me around of their own accord, t the ones who have plenty of leisure because their parents are wealthiest, enjoy listening to people being cross-examined. Often, too, they copy my example themselves, and so attempt to cross-examine others. (p.34)
	Premise 3	Then when asked just what he is doing or teaching, they have nothing to say, because they have no idea what he does... (p.35)
	Premise 4	... rather than seem at a loss, they resort to the stock charges against all who pursue intellectual inquiry, trotting out 'things in the sky and beneath the earth', 'failing to acknowledge the gods', and 'turning the weaker argument into the stronger'. They would, I imagine, be loath to admit the truth, which is that their pretensions to knowledge have been exposed, and they are totally ignorant. So because these people have reputations to protect , I suppose, and are also both passionate and numerous, and have been speaking about me in a vigorous and persuasive style, they have long been filling your ears with vicious slander. (p.35)
	Premise 5	I believe, God has attached to our city just such a creature-the kind which is constantly alighting everywhere on you, all day long, arousing, cajoling, or reproaching each and everyone of you. You will not easily acquire another such gadfly, gentlemen; rather, if you take my advice, you will spare my life. (p.45)
	Premise 6	because if I do corrupt any of our young people, or have corrupted others in the past, then presumably, when they grew older, should any of them have realized that I had at any time given them bad advice in their youth, they ought now to have appeared here themselves to accuse me

and obtain redress. Or else, if they were unwilling to come in person, members of their families fathers, brothers, or other relations--had their relatives suffered any harm at my hands, ought now to put it on record and obtain redress.

Premise 7 ... perhaps, among your number, there may be someone who will harbour resentment when he recalls a case of his own: he may have faced a less serious trial than this one, yet begged and implored the jury, weeping copiously, and producing his children here, along with many other relatives and loved ones, to gain as much sympathy as possible. By contrast, I shall do none of those things, even though I am running what might be considered the ultimate risk. Perhaps someone with those thoughts will harden his heart against me; and enraged by those same thoughts, he may cast his vote against me in anger. Well, if any of you are so inclined--not that I expect it of you, but if anyone *should* be--I think it fair to answer him as follows: 'I naturally do have relatives, my excellent friend, because--in Homer's own words*--I too was "not born of oak nor of rock", but of human parents; and so I do have relatives--including my sons,* fellow Athenians. There are three of them: one is now a youth, while two are still children. Nevertheless, I shall not produce any of them here, and then entreat you to vote for my acquittal.' And why, you may ask, will I do no such thing? Not out of contempt or disrespect for you, fellow Athenians whether or not I am facing death boldly is a different issue. The point is that with our reputations in mind yours and our whole city's, as well as my own--I believe that any such behaviour would be ignominious, at my age and with the reputation I possess; that reputation may not, in fact, be deserved, but at least it is believed that Socrates stands out in some way from the run of human beings. Well, if those of you who are believed to be pre-eminent in wisdom, courage, or any other form of goodness, are going to behave like that, it would be demeaning. (p.49-50)

Finalization	4.1	For many reasons, fellow Athenians, I am not dismayed by this outcome--your convicting me, I mean--and especially because the outcome has come as no surprise to me. I wonder far more at the number of votes cast on each side, because I did not think the margin would be so narrow. (p.51)
	4.2	For the sake of a slight gain in time, fellow Athenians, you will incur infamy and blame from those who would denigrate our city, for putting Socrates to death--a 'wise man'--because those who wish to malign you will say I am wise, even if I am not; in any case--had you waited only a short time, you would have obtained that outcome automatically. You can see, of course, that I now well advanced in life, and death is not far off. I address that not to all of you, but to those who condemned me to death;* and to those same people I would add something further.
	4.3	let us also reflect upon how good a reason there is to hope that death is a good thing. It is, you see, one or other of two things: either to be dead is to be nonexistent, as it were, and a dead person has no awareness whatever of anything at all; or else, as we are told, the soul undergoes some sort of transformation, or exchanging of this present world for another. Now if there is, in fact, no awareness in death, but it is like sleep--the kind in which the sleeper does not even dream at all*--then death would be a marvellous gain.

On the other hand, if death is like taking a trip from here to another place, and if it is true, as we are told, that all of the dead do indeed exist in that other place, why then, gentlemen of the jury, what could be a greater blessing than that? If upon arriving in Hades, and being rid of these people who profess to be 'jurors', one is going to find those who are truly judges, and who are also said to sit in judgment there*--Minos, Rhadamanthys, Aeacus, Triptolemus, and all other demigods who were righteous in their own lives--would that be a disappointing journey? Or again, what would any of you not give to share the company of Orpheus and Musaeus, of Hesiod and Homer? I say 'you,' since I personally would be willing to die many times over, if those tales are true. (p. 57)

Discussion and Conclusion

Self-examination behavior is the main style of Socrates used for others who want to discuss concepts with him. In this regard, Socrates' confrontation might surprise readers by showing how he uses his method intelligently against himself, although he is on the brink of death. The first sentence clearly dictates that he doubted himself in the face of the accusations, so he almost believed it. By emphasizing that the rumors were quite convincing, later, he will separate what seems on the surface and the reality behind it.

Socrates does not hurry to reveal the truth. At the confrontation stage, he makes a second move. He declares his weak position based on the fact that his accusers are not here. He employs a rich use of language by metaphorically resembling this situation as fighting with shadows (See 1.2). The fact that he prefers that the accusers were there is attributable to truth-seeking behavior, as he cannot cross-examine, but it also indicates that he is giving the first signals that the accusation is unfounded. Therefore, Socrates has already given that they are persuasive but invalid before the opening stage of his defense.

In the opening stage, he firstly describes the accusation (See 2.1.). He continues questioning like an impartial person by asking "if I am are not engaged in something out of ordinary, why ever has so much rumour and talk arisen about me?" (See 2.2.). with this question he starts the discussion part and tell how he is the enemy of society. He explains that he visited people who pretended to be knowledgeable; that he tried to explain to them what they thought they knew but in reality did not know, and that as a result he earned enmity.

Socrates calls this situation as double ignorance. People don't panic when they are asked a question and they know the answer nor they know they don't know the answer. However, they are alarmed when they think they know and then realize they don't. (Farnsworth, 2021). The realization that you know less than you thought is at first a rude awakening, but extremely valuable. It is perceived by the ego as a loss. However, Socratic work helps to make this discovery more welcome. This discovery is the coming of wisdom. Based on this idea, Socrates find himself more knowledgeable than the people he visits who thinks are they are knowledgeable, because at least he was aware that he does not know, but they do not.

As a second premise of the discussion, he constitutes that he is not an enemy of all people but a sage for the youth. In this way, he breaks the general validity by saying that he was not also haunted by the youth but also they questioned others just like himself (See 3.2.). However, the first time that he reveals the accusation's invalidity is in premise 3. He states that if his accusers were asked what Socrates teaches, they would not know (See 3.3.). So what is their motivation for doing this? He explains in his 4th premise that they do not want their pretense of knowing to be exposed, so they gain a favor by slandering (See 3.4).

From now on, Socrates will leave the main statements and attack by using supplementary argumentations. Firstly, in the fifth premise, he supports that the reason for executing should be the reason for keeping him alive, since there will be nobody like him in the world. He advises the court not to deprive them of himself. This is where he compares himself to a horsefly, which clearly shows that he does not reject the fact that he makes people uncomfortable (See 3.5.). Secondly, in the sixth premise, he uses a hypothetical approach: If what the accusers said was true, those young who have grown up today would take revenge by exposing what he has done wrong so far (See 3.6.). Thirdly, in the seventh premise Socrates addresses the audience who wonder why he does not beg the judges enough and become angry. He explains that it is against his honor not to resort to such manipulative means (See 3.7.).

The court sentences him to death. At that point, Socrates makes his final speech. (See 4.1.). Contrary to what is supposed, this section is not sentimental but, again, reasonable. First of all, with 221 votes in favor to 280 against, he says he did not expect the votes to be so evenly matched. Secondly, he warns the court that the execution of a wise man will not be forgotten and remembered as infamy (See 4.2.). Thirdly and lastly, he does something that he does not do in his other texts. In his debates, Socrates usually does not reach conclusions, but he finds the shortcomings of the proposition the other has established. Here, Socrates completes his defense by conceptualizing death. He explains in detail what death means in two ways to him: either derin uyku or tanrılara ulaşmak. In either means there is nothing to be feared, he lastly says.

Claiming that his lectures are paid for is an attack of “you are a sophist, not a philosopher”. Sophists make money by teaching how to strengthen arguments (Sharrock & Ashley, 2013). For Socrates, receiving payment in the face of teaching virtue is embarrassing based on the reasons that (1) teachers should reach everyone, not just people who have Money, and (2) taking pay might decrease the real love of learning but may increase the love of Money. (3) taking pay makes one a whore (Corey, 2002).

Recommendations

Recommendation for further research

In this article, only Socrates' techniques are revealed. In the future, comparisons can be made between Socrates' defense and other texts in the same genre in terms of style and form. Subtle differences between defenses of ideas can be revealed. Draw attention to the nuances between spontaneous and deliberate arguments.

Recommendation for application

The Defense of Socrates should be taught as a subject in schools. It is the main text for understanding how to be oneself under stressful conditions.

Limitation of the Study

This study has a limitation of one personal view which might differ accordingly.

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