Developing English Language Teaching Researchers' Oral Argumentative Skills Through Webinar

تنمية مهارات الجدل الشفهية لدى الباحثين في مجال تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية باستخدام السمينار الشبكي

Dr. Mohammad Abu El-Magd Mohammad Abu El-Magd

Lecturer of TEFL, Ismailia Faculty of Education

ABSTRACT

This research aimed at developing the oral argumentative skills of the ELT researchers at Ismailia Faculty of Education in order to help them present their work in a way that convinces the opposing side and leads to a fruitful discussion. TEFL topics were taken from their M.Ed. and PhD researches for presentation and oral discussion through webinar sessions in order to determine how far webinar was effective on developing their oral argumentation. The subjects were eight ELT researchers from Ismailia Faculty of Education in Suez Canal University (SCU). The research design was a combination between two methods: the quasi-experimental method which was used for statistical testing of the hypothesis as well as the descriptive method that was used to find out how much progress had been achieved through the sequence of the eight webinar sessions. The measurement tool was an analytic rating scale for oral argumentation rubrics developed by the researcher. The findings revealed that webinar had a high positive effect on developing the ELT researchers' oral argumentative skills.

Key Words: Oral argumentation, Argumentative skills, Webinar, ELT researcher.

الملخص

هدفت الدراسة الحالية إلى تنمية مهارات الجدل الشفهية لدى الباحثين في مجال تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية بكلية التربية بالإسماعيلية من أجل مساعدتهم على تقديم موضوعاتهم وأعمالهم البحثية بطريقة مقنعة عبر مناقشات مثمرة. الموضوعات التي قامت العينة بمناقشتها عبر السمينار الشبكى هي موضوعاتهم البحثية للماجستير والدكتوراه. كانت عينة الدراسة ثمانية باحثين في مجال تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية بكلية التربية بالإسماعيلية (جامعة قناة السويس). استخدمت الدراسة المنهج شبه التجريبي (تصميم المجموعة الواحدة) للتحقق من الفرض الاحصائى والمنهج الوصفى للتحقق من مدى التقدم في نمو تلك المهارات من خلال سلسلة من ثماني حلقات نقاش عبر السمينار الشبكى. وكانت أداة المعالجة التجريبية لتحقيق هذا الهدف هي تلك الحلقات. وأداة القياس للتحقق من الفروض وفاعلية السمينار الشبكي هي: مقياس تحليلي لمعايير الجدل الشفهي. وقد تم التحقق من صدق وثبات تلك الأداة. وأسفرت نتائج الدراسة عن الأثر الإيجابي الدال للسمينار الشبكى على تنمية مهارات الجدل الشفهية لدى الباحثين في مجال تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الجدل الشفهي، مهارات الجدل الشفهية، السمينار الشبكي، حلقات نقاش شبكية، باحثين في مجال تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية.

Background and Problem

Our normal life is full of arguments whether consciously or unconsciously. Most of us argue for four main reasons. We argue either to clarify thinking or to explain and defend actions and beliefs or to solve problems and make judgements or to have fun. Argumentative skills are essential cognitive skills especially in the information technology era in the 21st century (Kuhn & Crowell, 2011). The ability to argue well is a valuable skill for students in both formal and informal learning environments (Alagoz, 2013). They are even associated with high-order cognitive skills particularly in the academic contexts (Kuhn, 2010) because they are the key for success in academia (Graff, 2003, p. 36).

Developing argumentation in general and oral argumentative skills in particular is a fundamental feature in Higher Education (Mouraz, Leite, Trindade, Ferreira, Faustino, & Villate, 2014). Therefore, it is undeniable that all researchers need to master the oral argumentative skills since they essentially use them when presenting their research proposals in the seminars till being examined on their MA theses or PhD dissertations. However, during the seminars of Curriculum and Instruction Department at Ismailia Faculty of Education, many English Language Teaching (ELT) researchers showed poor performance of oral argumentation skills when presenting their MA or PhD research proposals in the field of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL). For instance, some researches failed in reasoning, drawing inferences or even persuading the others with their ideas. Consequently, they should possess the oral argumentative skills at least when they take their MA or PhD preparation courses.

Accordingly, webinar as a web-based seminar can help such researchers practice the oral argumentative skills extensively since it encompasses two-way streaming broadcasts that involve mutual interaction between the presenter and the participants for more cohesive collaboration in a time that suits all the participants beyond the busy schedule at work (Zieliński, Jaruga, Hofmann, Marinova, Plewczynski, & Kerler, 2013, p. 4). To sum up, it is fundamental for students to be able to construct sound arguments supported with relevant evidence (Common Core State Standards Initiative, 2010, p. 39). That is why this study aimed at developing the ELT researchers' oral argumentative skills through webinar.

Review of literature and related studies

In light of what this study aimed at, the literature review and related previous studies discussed the following parts:

1. Oral Argumentation:
   a. Definition and Structure.
   b. Principles and Criteria.

     c. **Significance.**

     d. **Skills.**

2. **Webinar:**

     a. **Definition.**

     b. **Elements.**

     c. **Benefits and Features.**

     d. **Planning and Design.**

     e. **Online Argumentation**
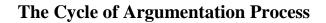
1. **Oral Argumentation:**

a. Definition and Structure

Argumentation is a social process in the form of claims backed by reasons which are supported by evidences, thus it involves four general components: Claim, Reason, Support and Warrant (University of Pittsburgh, 2008). Claims are statements about what it is believed to be true; whereas reasons are statements that support the claim. Support provides evidences by which the audience accept the claim in advance; whereas warrants are inferences that are made to connect the support to the claim.

Amoussy & Koren (2009) refers to the following elements in the argumentative structure: Problem, Theory, Evidence, Objection, Counter-argument and Conclusion. The problem is the question that requires inquiries for giving answers. The theory is the explicit answer to the problem including the speaker's views. The evidences are the factual data and examples that are used for justification. The objections are the facts and examples that are in contradiction with the target theory and negate its possibility. The counter-arguments are the facts and examples that are directed at such objections to demonstrate their insignificance. Finally, the conclusion is the result of argumentation which coincide with the theory in spite of the objections.

Llewellyn and Rajesh (2011, p. 23) refers to argumentation as a process as shown in the figure below:

Figure (1)

The Cycle of Argumentation Process

(Llewellyn & Rajesh, 2011, p. 23)

According to this figure, argumentation commences with an event presented by the teacher in the form of an initiating exploration or demonstration causing the learners to pose questions and give assumptions to investigate by collecting and analyzing data to look for answers. From such analysis, claims are built since they are an assertion or conclusion that attempts to answer the questions. Then, claims are supported by evidence which is extracted from the data and justified via oral presentations where learners provide explanations that account for the claims and the evidence.

S-Team (2010, p. 9-10) and Walton (2013) define the argument by its internal structure as shown in this equation: Premises + Reasoning = Conclusion. Premises are the starting points of an argument such as hypotheses. Reasoning is the transition from premises to conclusion where inferences are drawn. Conclusion is what the speaker attempts to construct or prove logically. Simply, argumentation refers to a reasoned attempt to persuade the others to accept a specific viewpoint about a particular topic (Scott, n.d.).

b. Principles and Criteria

Argumentation should be based on the following principles of efficient communication as referred to by Grácio (1998, p. 56) and Scott (n.d.):

1. Demonstrative communicability:
- Reasoning by linking between claim and *Evidences* which are provided by Scientific Measurement, by the Way Nature Works, by Observation or by Statistics.

2. Potential of discussion:
- Providing clear explanation for what the argumentative discourse proposes rather than imposes.
- Anticipating *Propositions* (contradictory viewpoint).

3. Contextual character:
- *Persuasion* by providing meaning of the discourse within a context or a particular situation.

An efficient communication based argumentation should meet the following criteria for communicative competence:

1. Introduction:
- Starting with a powerful warm-up to attract listeners' attention
- Providing true premises (*soundness*)

2. Delivery:
- Using various techniques of expressing viewpoints, clarifying ideas and asserting facts to convince others (*Validity*).
- Claim support by supplying the most appropriate materials, choosing the relevant data and exploring many kinds of support such as stories, anecdotes and quotations.
- Consistency between claims and the valid evidences (*Rigor*).

3. Logical conclusion:
- Providing short, reasonable and concise closure for the argument.
- Drawing inferences (*formal proof*).

(Willott, 2003; Executive Communications Group, 2004 and S-Team, 2010, p. 8-9)

c. Significance

In general, argumentation is important when attempting to convince someone that your reasons support a different conclusion that the one on the other side currently holds (Willott, 2003). It is a great way to keep the discussion focused and academic in nature since it helps focus on evidence and clear reasoning (McCarty, 2014). That is why argumentation instruction helps

support and promote learners' abilities (Zohar & Nemet, 2002) since learners' engagement in argumentation is more effective than direct instruction (Reznitskaya, Anderson, & Kuo, 2007).

Therefore, many studies were conducted to explore and enhance learners' argumentative skills at different academic grades. At the higher education level, a study was conducted by Acar (2008) for developing the prospective science teachers' argumentation skills (Counter-argument, Reasoning and Rebuttal) (p. 13). It recommended the explicit instruction of teaching argumentation in order to improve the argumentative skills of the learners. Another study was conducted by Andrews, Robinson, See, & Torgerson (2007) to clarify issues regarding argumentation in higher education (p. 5-58). It referred to the high priority that should be given to argumentation in higher education since it should be integrated more fully into learning and assessment to improve the higher education students' argument skills. It also asserted the need for explicit instruction and discussion in a way that fulfill the competency of argumentation.

Argumentation is the process of constructing knowledge that help understand the norms and the language of debate based on expert critical review, making propositions and providing evidences (Dawson & Venville, 2010). It helps learners engage actively in competent oral discussions in a way that fosters learning to explain concepts or support decisions about socio-scientific issues and build understanding (Sadler, 2006). In this respect, a study was conducted by Lin and Mintzes (2010) as an attempt to foster Taiwanese grade 6 learners' argumentative skills through instruction in socio-scientific issues. The findings showed learners' abilities to establish claims & warrants, construct counterarguments, offer supportive arguments and provide evidences. In high schools, a study was conducted by Dawson and Venville (2010) to develop students' argumentative skills in socio-scientific subject matters through teaching strategies such as classroom discussions.

By developing argumentation skills, it is important to strengthen the ability of learners to reason, think critically, understand and present ideas in a logical and coherent way both orally and in writing, allowing them for fully interactive participation in the learning process (Simon, Erduran, & Osborne, 2006). For language learning, Mattunen, Laurinen, Litosseliti, & Lund (2005) proved the necessity for possessing argumentation skills as prerequisites for collaborative learning among English Secondary School students.

Moreover, argumentation helps promote learners' abilities to compare and contrast their earlier knowledge with new information adequately, therefore it should be incorporated into curriculum (Biemans, Deelb, & Simons, 2001). Also, developing argumentation skills helps promote active learning, enhance communication and listening skills, facilitate social interaction, invent new modes of thinking and strengthen democratic decision-making procedures (University of Pittsburgh, 2008). Accordingly, developing researchers' oral argumentation skills is essential to foster their communicative abilities to present their researches or critically discuss the up-to-date TEFL trends involved in their researches.
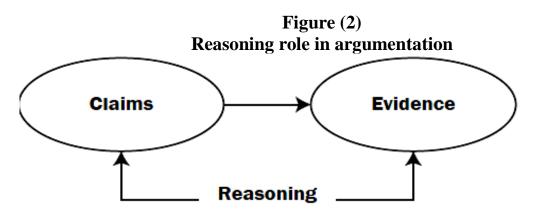
d. Skills

The following are the basic argumentative skills:

1) **Establishing claims and warrants.**
A claim is the core unit and conclusion of the argument. When the learner collects, and analyzes the data to look for a pattern or a relationship among the variables examined, one or more claims are constructed. This claim is supported by facts or data (premises). Such factual data are linked to the claim by a warrant. A warrant refers to a statement that makes the valid inference from the premises to the claim. The Warrants are optional elements of the argument.

2) **Reasoning (Human capacity to establish and verify facts).**
A reason is a claim that supports the position since reasoning links claims to evidence as shown in this figure:

Figure (2)
Reasoning role in argumentation

(Llewellyn & Rajesh, 2011, p. 24)

3) **Constructing counterarguments.**

A counterargument is a claim that refutes another position or gives an opposing reason. It is an argument (point/reason/view/ evidence) that the opponent, holding the contradictory views, can make.

4) **Rebuttal (Offering supportive arguments).**

A rebuttal is a claim that refutes a counterargument by demonstrating that it is invalid, lacks as much force or correctness as the original argument, or rests on a false assumption. In other words, a rebuttal is when one can respond directly to the other side of the argument to explain/show how/why they are wrong. There are many different ways that one can rebut someone's argument. It could be a rebuttal by pointing out the flaws [errors] in the counterargument. It could also be by agreeing with the counterargument but by giving a new point/fact that contradicts the argument or twisting the facts to suit the argument.

5) **Providing evidences.**

An evidence is a separate idea or example that supports reason, counter-argument or rebuttal.

(Kuhn & Udell, 2003; Mason & Scirica, 2006; Sadler & Donnelly, 2006; Walker & Zeidler, 2007; Wu & Tsai, 2007; Lin & Miuntez, 2010; Mercier & Sperber, 2011; Yanklowitz, 2013 and Huse et al., 2015)

Conclusion

In light of the TEFL jurors' reviews for content validity and according to the principles & criteria of an efficient communicative competence based argument as well as the skills of oral argumentation, the following table shows the Oral Argumentation Rubrics used in the Analytic Rating Scale of the present study to assess ELT researchers' performance in the target oral argumentative skills:

Presenter's Oral Argumentative Skills

1. **Warm-Up:**
   - Powerful start that introduces the topic of argument and attracts listeners' attention.
2. **Establishing claims:**
   - Claims are supported by true premises (facts and data).
   - Sound warrants are provided (statements reflecting valid inferences from premises to claims).
3. **Providing evidences:**
   - Evidences are relevant and closely related to the claims.
   - Various use of evidences such as ideas, examples, references, statistics, facts and quotes to express views as well as explain and assert facts.
4. **Reasoning:**
   - Reasonable and supportive links between claims and evidences.
   - Ability to persuade the others by supplying the most appropriate materials, choosing the relevant data and exploring many kinds of support such as stories, anecdotes and quotations.
5. **Logical Conclusion:**
   - Making a brief and accurate conclusion by an informative review for the argument's main points.
   - A formal proof is provided when drawing inferences

Participant's Oral Argumentative Skills

6. **Counter-argument:**
   - Refuting the argument with reasonable and reliable counter-evidences.
   - Counter-argument with powerful defense against the speaker's views. (Strong link between counter-claim and counter-evidence)
   - Direct address to each of the speaker's argument.
   - Thorough and insightful explanation of counter-claims and counter-counter-evidences.
7. **Rebuttal:**
   - Refuting the counter-argument with reasonable and reliable evidences.
   - Rebuttal with powerful defense against the opponent's Counter-argument.
   - Direct address to each of the opponents' counter-arguments.
   - Thorough and insightful explanation of claims and evidences.

2. Webinar

a. Definition

Zieliński et al. (2013) defines webinar as "A web-based seminar with transmission of video and audio content online (over the internet) from one source to a limited audience with the purpose of training" (p. 5). A webinar is a method of web conferencing that enables an individual to conduct virtual seminars by using software tools of video conferencing (Anastasia, 2015). Accordingly, the procedural definition for the webinar is "An online TEFL seminar with mutual and group based live video streaming by using Skype as a web conference software in order to develop the ELT researchers' oral argumentative skills".

b. Elements

There are seven key essential components to a webinar as demonstrated by Colley (2016).   In the welcome, the technical checks regarding sound, video and internet connection are performed (Zieliński et al., 2013, p. 28) as well as a connection with the participants should be established. In the start, the participants should know how they can communicate through the webinar and they exchange their social media sharing such as Twitter and Facebook. In the hook, they should be informed about what they are going to learn in the webinar (Dietrich, n.d.). Therefore, the objectives of the webinar should be defined (Zieliński et al., 2013, p. 29). In the introduction, participants' attention should be attracted. This way, a topic and a headline of great search potential should be chosen (Dietrich, n.d.).   In the core content, the content to be presented should be insightful, brilliant and well-structured. Voice tone and visuals should be varied. Also, participants should be allowed for discussions and questions should be anticipated (Wasielewski, 2016).   In the pitch, the participants should be persuaded through clear and detailed explanation that what is shared will contribute to their success. Finally, in the Q & A, the moderator should summarize the questions and answers that have been exchanged during the webinar session.

c. Benefits and Features

Webinars are a great inexpensive way to reach a large number of people. (Zieliński et al., 2013, p. 8-9) and Anastasia (2015) refer to some benefits that can be gained when using webinars for instruction. A webinar allows the presenter and the participants to choose a location as well as a time slot

according to their own convenience. It facilitates a quick and efficient process of decision-making and it helps to reach participants placed at diverse locations. It also enhances the communication process as feedback is provided on a real-time basis. Above all, training sessions can be imparted to upgrade the skills of the participants as well as they can be recorded by the participants for later review and self-assessment to develop their skills and overcome their weaknesses.

A well-organized webinar should comprise the following features as indicated by Zieliński et al. (2013, p. 7) and Anastasia (2015):

- **Limited duration:** The amount of time spanned by a single webinar session should approximately between 45 minutes and 2 hours.
- **Environment:** It is delivered online since participants must have internet access.
- **Use of software:** It requires specific web-based application to run such as Google+ Hangouts, Webinars OnAir, Skype, MegaMeeting and ReadyTalk.
- **Interaction:** Expanding participation and discussions with the audience.
- **Presentation:** Using visuals to the participants engaged in the presentation.
- **Speaker/ presenter:** Involving the participants in real-time discussions.
- **Participants:** By invitation, they are up to eight for high level of interactivity.
- **Scheduled live event:** Mutual verbal communication through live streaming
- **Giving rights:** The person running the webinar may give different rights to the participants (e.g. make them presenters, screen sharing, file sharing, etc.).

d. **Planning and Design**

When planning a webinar, the following guidelines should be considered as illustrated by Sibley (2014), Wehnert (2014) and Gilbert-Knight (2016), to guarantee its success. First, make sure that the webinar is the right tool for the tutor's needs. In this study, webinar worked as the best medium for the ELT researchers as participants, for the subject matter (the up-to-date trends in TEFL) and for the time needed to cover such topics. Second, recruit speakers and a support team for a well-structured and organized webinar. Moreover, identify the roles and responsibilities of each one in the team (Zieliński et al., 2013, p. 15). In present study's webinar, there were:

- **A moderator:** The University tutor (Facilitator) who is responsible for developing the webinar topic, locating a speaker, controlling the arguments, and communicating with participants before and after the webinar by managing the introduction, and closeout, integrating presenters and summarizing the questions for Q&A.

- **A presenter:** Each of the ELT researchers is a presenter in a single webinar session. The presenter prepares and delivers an engaging presentation as well as starts the argument by establishing claims based on sound premises and generates rebuttals in case of counterarguments.

- **Participants:** The ELT researchers who communicate with the presenter and generate counterarguments.

Third, determine the format of the webinar. There are four main formats for the webinar: One Speaker in which a single presenter speaks, demonstrates, and answers questions from the audience; Interview Style in which an interviewer asks a set of predetermined questions; Moderated Panel Discussion in which multiple people on the line at the same time, with a moderator facilitating the discussion and Interactive Participation in which audience members participate fully via instructor-led exercises and facilitated conversations. The format determined for the current study's webinar was the Moderated Panel Discussion since the tutor plays the role of the moderator administering the introduction and the conclusion, facilitating the oral argumentation based discussion as well as assigning a presenter for each single webinar session among the ELT researchers who participate fully in such argumentation.

Fourth, plan the visuals for the webinar. Accordingly, all the ELT researchers planned their visuals when presenting their topics in the webinar. The visuals were PowerPoint presentation slides, videos and pictures as support for their claims or counterclaims during the oral argumentation. Fifth, pick a webinar tool. The webinar tool used in the study was Skype since it is a webinar ideal service and one of the15 best webinar software products from around the web which is free and allows for group audio and video calls up to 25 people, screen sharing, file sharing as well as contact sending (Weller, 2015 and Worthy, 2016).

Sixth, create an agenda with the order of the speakers and the duration of each segment for the webinar. One week before the 8-oral argumentation based webinar sessions, an agenda was prepared for the questions that ELT researchers were going to answer for each session, their turns for presentation of the TEFL topics included in their M.Ed. and PhD researches so that one session for each presenter as well as the deadline for

preparing the materials and the visuals for presentation. Seventh, schedule an introductory session for the webinar. One week earlier before starting the argument based webinar sessions, there was an introductory session for two hours to:

- Discuss how to use the webinar tool and its features to the presenters.
- Ensure that all of the presenters' operating systems, browsers, headsets, and other equipment are compatible with the web conferencing tool.
- Explain the oral argumentation rubrics in the analytic scale based on which their argumentative skills are assessed.
- Share the oral argumentation rubrics with the invited ELT researchers.
- Review the webinar agenda which were sent to them by email.
- Illustrate how to make a presentation and a discussion through webinar by considering the key elements of an effective webinar.
- Exchange the contact information, e.g. Twitter and Facebook for social media sharing among the ELT researchers before or after the webinar sessions. This was helpful for them in exchanging feedback regarding webinar presentations and participations as well as extra training and peer-assessment for their oral argumentation skills.
- Provide a mini-presentation as a model for an oral argument.

Regarding the design of webinars, eLearning Industry (2014), Anastasia (2015) and Colley (2016) referred to essential tips for creating an effective webinar. The presenter should conduct a thorough research on the topic to be discussed. The graphics and visuals such as charts, graphs and pictures as well as the audio should be creative, interactive and deliver the message accurately with clear outline and structure in order to keep the participants engaged in the topic. The presenter can provide interactivity by talking to the participants regularly and asking questions related to the topic. The content of the Webinar should be short and precise. Collaboration tools like Whiteboards can be utilized within webinars to share documents or images and explain them using annotation tools. Also, writing notes on a whiteboard expands the participation.

e.   Online Argumentation

One of the primary educational mediums for the development of argumentative skills is web-based discussions (Yanklowitz, 2013). In this respect, a study was conducted by Tsai, Jack, Huang, & Yang (2012) to

evaluate the effectiveness of cognitive apprenticeship web-based argumentation system in measuring elementary school learners' progress in learning argumentation. The results showed improvements in the instruction of argumentation skills as well as positive effects on learners' use of argumentation. Alagoz (2013) investigated the quality of argumentation in online synchronous communication through Online Role-Playing. The findings indicated an improvement in the quality of argumentation due to a number of contextual variables including synchronicity, interest, and authenticity.

Lu and Zhang (2013) used a set of online tools to scaffold the argumentation skills of secondary students in reading, writing and evaluating arguments. It was found to be effective in scaffolding students' argumentation skills. Another study was conducted by Siakidou, Papadouris, & Constantinou (2014) to determine the impact of a web-based learning environment on high school students' dialogic argumentation skills. The study concluded that in the context of online learning environments, argumentation is of a highest priority for enhancing learners' engagement in productive negotiation of ideas, reasoning and providing evidence based justifications. Also, Hsu, Dyke, Chen, & Smith (2015) attempted in his study to develop middle school students' argumentative skills through graph-oriented computer-assisted project-based learning environment. It proved the positive effect of online learning environments on the students' collaborative argumentation.

At the higher education level, a quasi-experimental study was conducted by Lin , Hongb, & Lawrenz (2012) to promote and scaffold college students' argumentation and to explore the impact of online asynchronous discussion on the quality and complexity of their arguments. It was found out that students' argumentation skills were slightly better developed through reflective asynchronous online discussions about socio-scientific issues than through paper-pencil practice. Tsai & Tsai (2014) conducted a study to develop college students' skills of online argumentation through the role of scaffolding. In this study, a high priority was given to develop the college students' lower-level argumentation skills (i.e. claims) as well as their higher-level argumentation skills (i.e. warrants and rebuttals).

Such previously mentioned researches claim that through discussion-based online systems whether synchronous or asynchronous, there are a progress in learning argumentation, an improvement in its quality and a scaffolding in the performance of its skills at different academic levels and grades. Providing an online learning environment for discussion helps increase the learners' level of advanced argumentative skills such as counterarguments and rebuttals as well as transfers such development to face-to-face argumentation (Iordanou, 2013). Since webinar is a web-based seminar and seminar is discussion-based, it is possible to use webinar as a primary electronic educational medium for developing the ELT researchers' oral argumentative skills.

Statement of the problem

During the seminars of the Curriculum and Instruction Department at Ismailia Faculty of Education, it has been noticed that many English Language Teaching (ELT) researchers in particular lack the oral argumentative skills when presenting their research proposals or even discussing the latest trends in TEFL included in their researches. Therefore, this research sought to find answers to the following questions:

1. What are the oral argumentative skills mostly needed by ELT researchers?
2. What are the features of the webinar sessions designed for developing their oral argumentative skills?
3. To what extent do these webinar sessions affect the ELT researchers' oral argumentative skills?

Hypotheses

1. There is a statistically significant difference between the study group's mean scores of the pre- and post-administrations of the analytic rating scale for oral argumentation rubrics in favor of the post-administration.
2. While practicing eight webinar sessions, much progress has been observed in the ELT researchers' oral argumentative skills.

Aim

This research aimed at developing the ELT researchers' oral argumentative skills through webinar.

Delimitations

This research was delimited to the following:
1. ELT researchers at Ismailia Faculty of Education in Suez Canal University.

2. **Eight webinar sessions so that each webinar session dealt with one of the following eight topics:**
   - ➢ **Gamification and grammar learning**
   - ➢ **Digital Storytelling for teaching short stories to primary grade pupils**
   - ➢ **Formeaning Response Approach to teaching poetry**
   - ➢ **Blended Learning and Language Performance.**
   - ➢ **The Eclectic Method (Sight-Words, Modeling, Repeated Reading, Goal Setting and Progress Monitoring) for dyslexic leaners' word recognition skills.**
   - ➢ **Differentiation Teaching in a language classroom.**
   - ➢ **Reciprocal Teaching and Reading Skills.**
   - ➢ **Semantic Mapping VS Concept Mapping when teaching vocabulary.**

These topics were selected since they were taken from the subjects' M.Ed. and PhD researches.
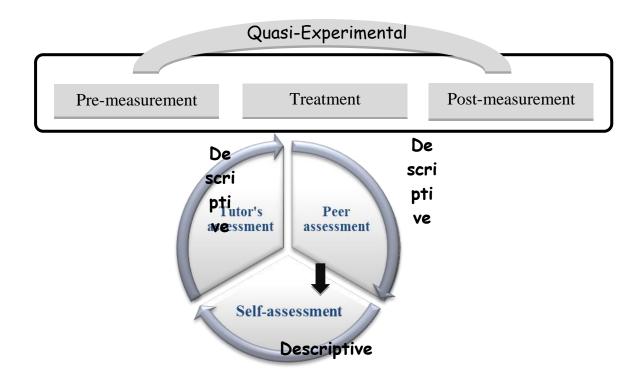
Method

1. **Subjects**

   Eight ELT researchers (Six M.Ed. researchers and two PhD researchers) at Ismailia Faculty of Education in the first semester of the academic year 2016-2017. All the subjects were not re-sitters in the preliminary M.Ed. or PhD courses, they passed those courses. They registered for their degrees and submitted their research proposals. Their ages ranged between 27 and 32 years old.

Note: For the study sample, the word "subjects" was used instead of the word "participants" since there were a presenter (who was arguing) and participants (who were counter-arguing) in the webinar sessions. This is to avoid overlapping between using the word "participants" as an indication to the study sample and using it as a reference to those who were sharing discussions with the presenter in the webinar.

2. Design

Figure (3)

The Research Design

The Figure (3) above shows a combination between two methods in the current research. The quasi-experimental method was used for testing the first hypothesis statistically. However, the descriptive method was used for the second hypothesis to find out how much progress has been achieved through the sequence of the eight webinar sessions. In this case, each online live video streaming webinar session was recorded by the moderator, presenter and participants so that after each webinar session, the analytic rating scale was used for:

- Peer assessment by participants to assess the presenter's oral argumentative skills of giving powerful warm-up, establishing evidences, providing evidences, reasoning, making logical conclusion and rebuttal as well as one another's counterargument skill.
- Self-assessment by the presenter to assess his/her oral argumentative skills of giving powerful warm-up, establishing evidences, providing evidences, reasoning, making logical conclusion and rebuttal as well as the others' counterargument skill.

- Tutor's assessment by the moderator to assess the presenter's oral argumentative skills of giving powerful warm-up, establishing evidences, providing evidences, reasoning, making logical conclusion and rebuttal as well as the participants' counterargument skill.

3.   Instrument

An analytic Rating Scale was designed for evaluating the ELT researchers' performance in the target oral argumentative skills in the pre- and post-measurements and during the webinars for peer, self and tutor assessments. To check the validity of this scale, it was submitted to a Jury Committee in the field of TEFL to provide their viewpoints for the relation between the oral argumentation skills and their inherent behaviors as well as the measurability of the oral argumentation skills and their suitability to the ELT researchers. On the other hand, the scale reliability was tested and established by using the method of "Inter-rater Reliability" in which three observers (Lecturers of TEFL) assessed the ELT researchers' oral argumentative skill.

This analytical rating scale involves rubrics in a three-level scale for the subjects' expected explicit performance in the oral argumentative skills as presenters in the webinar (Warm-up, Establishing claims, Providing evidences, Reasoning and Logical conclusion) and as participants in the webinar (Counter-argument and Rebuttal). This scale is indicated in table (1) as follows:

Table (1)
The Analytical Rating Scale for Presenter's Oral Argumentative Rubrics

Oral argumentative skills	Invalid 0 Point	Ineffective (Needs improvement) 1 Point	Valid and effective 2 Points
Warm-Up	No introduction to the topic of argument.	Introducing the topic of argument.	Powerful start that introduces the topic of argument and attracts listeners' attention.
Establishing claims	Claims are not based on premises (facts and data).	Claims are based on false premises (facts and data).	Claims are supported by true premises (facts and data).
	No warrants are provided.	False warrants are provided (statements reflecting invalid inferences from premises to claims).	Sound warrants are provided (statements reflecting valid inferences from premises to claims).
Providing evidences	No use of evidences	Evidences are weak and do not support the claims.	Evidences are relevant and closely related to the claims.
	No ideas, examples, references, quotes or any other supportive evidences.	Limited use of evidences when expressing views or clarifying ideas.	Various use of evidences such as ideas, examples, references, statistics, facts and quotes to express views as well as explain and assert facts.
Reasoning	No links between claims and evidences.	Some irrelevant links between claims and evidences.	Reasonable and supportive links between claims and evidences.
	No persuasion to the others.	Inability to persuade the others (Using inappropriate materials or irrelevant data).	Ability to persuade the others by supplying the most appropriate materials, choosing the relevant data and exploring many kinds of support such as stories, anecdotes and quotations.
Logical Conclusion	Ending the argument abruptly	Providing reasonable closure but long and unconcise	Making a brief and accurate conclusion by an informative review for the argument's main points.
	No inferences are drawn	Inferences are drawn	A formal proof is provided when drawing inferences

Table (1) Continued The Analytical Rating Scale for "Participant's Oral Argumentative Rubrics"

Oral argumentative skills	Invalid 0 Point		Ineffective (Needs improvement) 1 Point		Valid and effective 2 Points
Counter-argument	Incomprehensible or highly incomplete Counter-argument.	Refuting the argument without counter-evidences.	Counter-argument with lapses in reasoning.	Refuting the argument with illogical or irrelevant counter-evidences.	Counter-argument with consistent reasoning.	Refuting the argument with reasonable and reliable counter-evidences.
		Counter-argument without defense against the speaker's views. (No link with counter-evidences		Counter-argument with weak defense against speaker's views. (Weak link between counter-claim and counter-evidence)		Counter-argument with powerful defense against the speaker's views. (Strong link between counter-claim and counter-evidence)
		No direct address to the speaker's argument.		Direct address to some of the speaker's argument.		Direct address to each of the speaker's argument.
		No explanation for the counter-claims or counter-evidences.		Unprecise or vague explanation for the counter-claims and counter-evidences.		Thorough and insightful explanation of counter-claims and counter-counter-evidences.
Rebuttal	Incomprehensible or highly incomplete rebuttal.	Refuting the counter-argument without evidences.	Rebuttal with lapses in reasoning.	Refuting the counter-argument with illogical or irrelevant evidences.	Rebuttal with consistent reasoning.	Refuting the counter-argument with reasonable and reliable evidences.
		Rebuttal without defense against the opponent's Counter-argument.		Rebuttal with weak defense against the opponent's Counter-argument.		Rebuttal with powerful defense against the opponent's Counter-argument.
		No direct address to the opponents' counter-arguments.		Direct address to some of the opponents' counter-arguments.		Direct address to each of the opponents' counter-arguments.
		No explanation for the claims or evidences.		Unprecise or vague explanation for the claims and evidences.		Thorough and insightful explanation of claims and evidences.

4. Framework

In light of the elements of the webinar as well as the structure, criteria and skills of oral argumentation, the following figure shows the present study's framework for conducting webinar sessions to develop the ELT researchers' oral argumentative skills:

Figure (4)
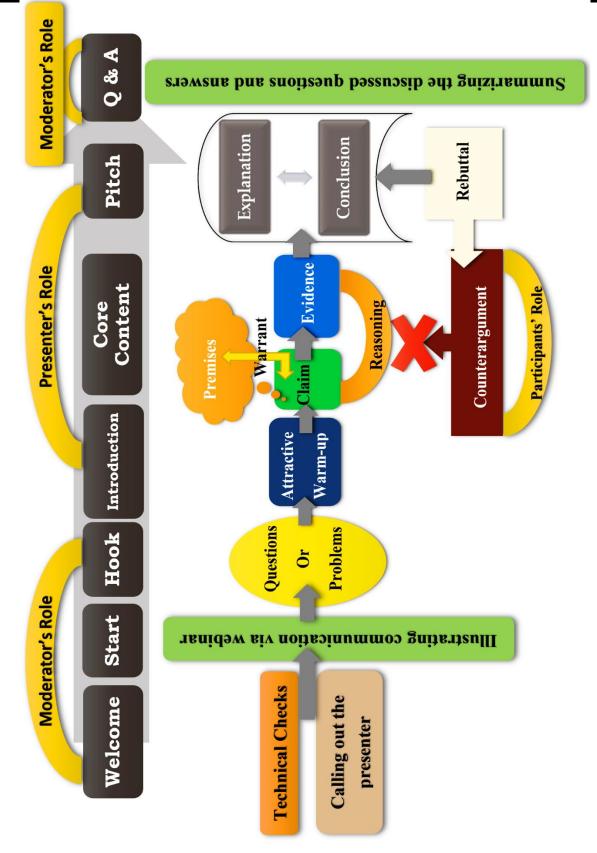Framework of Oral Argumentation based Webinar

As shown in Figure (4), oral argumentation as a process involves the skills of giving powerful warm-up, establishing claims, providing evidences, reasoning, making logical conclusions as well as generating counter-arguments and rebuttals. There are seven stages for a webinar that is oral argumentation based as follows:

1. **Welcome:** In this stage, the moderator:
   - Checks the mic for audio, the webcam for video and the internet connection.
   - Calls out the speaker whose turn is to present in this session.
2. **Start:** In this stage, the moderator shows or reminds the ELT researchers about how to communicate via webinar so that:
   - There is one present for each session and the others are participants who are allowed for discussion in the core content stage where they can construct counterarguments.
   - The presenter has got the opportunity for rebuttals against such counterarguments.
   - In a single webinar session, there is a 15-minute presentation (warm-up, establish claims, provide evidences, reasoning and concluding) and 45-minute discussion (counterarguments and rebuttals).
3. **Hook:** In this stage, the moderator poses problems (controversial issues) or thought-provoking questions to the assigned presenter, about one of the up-to-date trends in TEFL included in the ELT researchers' proposals, M.Ed. theses or PhD dissertations. Such questions should incite webinar presenter and participants (the ELT researchers) to give assumptions and investigate by analyzing data in order to look for answers.
4. **Introduction:** In this stage, the presenter should give a powerful start that introduces the topic in a way that attracts the participants' attention as an attempt to help them concentrate on the answers provided later by him/her to those controversial issues or thought-provoking questions.
5. **Core Content:** The presenter should give a well-structured & brilliant content by:
   - Establishing claims based on true premises to provide sound warrants.
   - Providing various evidences that are relevant to the claims to support them.
   - Linking evidences to claims for reasoning as an attempt to persuade the participants.
6. **Pitch:** In this stage, the presenter attempts to:

- **Do rebuttals in case of counterarguments generated by the webinar participants holding the opposing side of the argumentation as follows:**
  - ➢ **Refuting the counterargument with powerful defense by providing insightful explanation with supportive claims and evidences.**
  - ➢ **Direct address to each of the opponents' arguments.**
- **Make a logical, short, reasonable and concise conclusion by drawing inferences to provide a formal proof to persuade the participants to accept the viewpoint about the topic of the M.Ed. thesis, PhD dissertation or research proposal in TEFL.**
  7. **Q&A: In this stage, the moderator, summarizes the main points, questions and answers provided in the oral argumentation based webinar session through warrants, claims, evidences, reasoning, counterarguments, rebuttals and conclusion.**

The Webinar Agenda

Table (2)
A detailed outline for the eight webinar sessions

Webinar (Up-to-date Trends in TEFL)				
Session's Topic of Argument	**Presenter** **Date & Time**	**The ILOs for each session**	**The Questions or Problems**	**Time Schedule for each session**
1. **Gamification and language competence**	*Subject 1* 3/10/2016 7-8:30 PM	**By the end of this webinar session, the:** 1. **Presenter should provide an effective oral argument on the research topic.** 2. **Participants should construct counter-**	a. **What is the difference between gamification and game-based learning?** b. **How far are the gamified tasks effective on language competence? Support your answer with examples.** c. **Is gamification more suitable for young learners than adults? and Why?**	**Welcome, start and hook by moderator:** **15 minutes** **Presentation:**

			a. Which is more effective for young learners: teacher's oral storytelling or digital story telling?	15 minutes
2. **Digital Storytelling for teaching short stories to primary grade pupils**	*Subject 2*			Participation: 45 minutes
	1010/2016 7-8:30 PM		b. What is the impact of digital stories on primary pupils' language learning? Support you answer with details.	Closure by moderator: 15 minutes
			c. Is digital storytelling beneficial for teaching stories for adults? And Why?	

Table (2) continued

Webinar (Up-to-date Trends in TEFL)				
Session's Topic of Argument	**Presenter** Date & Time	**The ILOs** for each session	**The Questions or Problems**	**Time Schedule** for each session
3. **Formeaning Response Approach to teaching poetry**	*Subject 3*		a. Which is better for learners when teaching poetry: focusing on the form to develop their linguistic abilities or on the meaning to let them understand the material & engage with it? Why?	
	17/10/2016 7-8:30 PM	By the end of this webinar session, the:	b. What is the Formeaning Response Approach and the rationale behind it?	Welcome, start and hook by moderator: 15 minutes
		1. Presenter should provide an effective oral argument on the research topic.	c. How is this approach applicable in classrooms at language	Presentation:

			experimental schools? Support your answer with examples.	15 minutes
		2. Participants should construct counter-arguments.		Participation: 45 minutes
4. Blended Learning and Language Performance.	*Subject 4*		a. Which is better: blended learning or E-social interaction through web-social media such as Twitter and Facebook?	Closure by moderator: 15 minutes
	24/10/2016 7-8:30 PM		b. Is blended learning more effective on language performance than language competence? Provide details. c. How can you blend? Support you answer with examples.	
5. Developing dyslexic leaners' word recognition skills.	*Subject 5*		a. Are word recognition errors common in our schools? b. Which method is the best: Sight words, Modeling, Repeated reading or Goal setting and progress monitoring? and Why? c. How far is your proposed strategy effective on developing the word recognition skills? Support your answer with examples.	
	7/11/2016 7-8:30 PM			

Table (2) continued

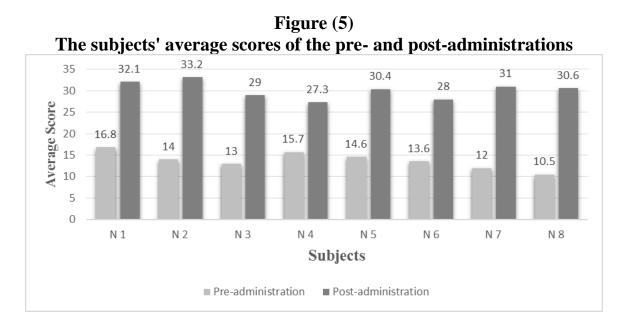| Webinar (Up-to-date Trends in TEFL)				
Session's Topic of Argument	**Presenter** **Date & Time**	**The ILOs for each session**	**The Questions or Problems**	**Time Schedule for each session**
6. Differentiation Teaching in a language classroom.	*Subject 6* 14/11/2016 7-8:30 PM	**By the end of this webinar session, the:** **1. Presenter should provide an effective oral argument on the research topic.** **2. Participants should construct counter-arguments.**	a. **Is differentiation teaching applicable in language classrooms at our schools?** b. **Which is better to differentiate: Content, Methods of teaching, Assignment level or the individual learning preferences? Why?** c. **How far is differentiation teaching effective in a language classroom? Provide details and examples.**	Welcome, start and hook by moderator: 15 minutes Presentation: 15 minutes Participation: 45 minutes
7. Reciprocal Teaching and Reading Skills.	*Subject 7* 21/11/2016 7-8:30 PM		a. **Is there a difference between reciprocal teaching and cooperative teaching?** b. **Which is better for developing learners' reading skills: teaching them reading or teaching them how to read? Why?** c. **How far is**	Closure by moderator: 15 minutes

			reciprocal teaching effective? and for which type of reading text is it more effective: expository text or narrative text? Support your answer with details and examples.	
8. Semantic Mapping VS Concept Mapping for vocabulary learning.	*Subject 8* 28/11/2016 7-8:30 PM		a. Is there a difference between Semantic Mapping and Concept Mapping? How? b. Do they have the same effect on vocabulary leaning in different grade levels? Why? c. Which one is more applicable? why? Provide details and examples.	

As shown in Table (2), there are eight topics (one for a webinar session) and there are two intended learning outcomes (ILOs) for each webinar session. There is one presenter for each webinar session and the others are participants. There are questions or problems for each session to be prepared by the presenter and the participants for oral discussions. It is worth noting that the TEFL topics which were prepared by the ELT researchers for oral argumentation in the pre- and post-administrations, were not those topics in the webinar agenda.

Treatment

Conducting the eight webinars in the first semester of the academic year 2016-2017 so that there is a webinar session per week on Mondays as well as one hour and thirty minutes per a webinar session.

Results and Discussion

Hypothesis I : There is a statistically significant difference between the study group's mean scores of the pre- and post-administrations of the analytic rating scale for oral argumentation rubrics in favor of the post-administration. The T-Test paired was used to test this hypothesis. The following chart demonstrates the subjects' average scores of the pre- and post-administrations of the analytic rating scale of the oral argumentation rubrics:

Figure (5)

The subjects' average scores of the pre- and post-administrations

The score of each participant in the pre- or post-administration was the average scores given by three raters using the analytic rating scale for oral argumentation rubrics. As shown in Figure (5), the subjects' average scores in the post-administration are higher than those in the pre-administration. The following table shows the related findings:

Table (3)

T-Test value of the difference between the mean scores of the Pre & Post-administrations of the analytic rating scale for oral argumentation rubrics

	Number of Subjects	Mean Scores	Standard Deviation	T-Value	Significance
Pre-administration	8	14.0000	2.00000	-15.722	.000
Post-administration		30.0000	2.00000		
The Effect Size level of webinar on ELT researchers' oral argumentative skills					
Independent variable	Dependent variable	T^2 Value	DF	η^2	Effect Size level

| Webinar | Oral argumentative skills | 247.18128 | 7 | 0.97 | Very High |

Table (3) demonstrates that the T-Value is significant at (0.05) level. "Effect Size" (Eta-squared) for this hypothesis was estimated by using Eta-squared. Accordingly, the webinar had a high and positive effect on developing the ELT researchers' oral argumentative skills at Ismailia Faculty of Education. Thus, hypothesis one was verified.

This significance may be due to the combination between oral communication (e.g. Discussion, Debate and Argumentation) and online learning environment (e.g. Web-based Learning, Online Role-Playing, and Online Communication whether Synchronous or Asynchronous). This is consistent with the results of the studies that were conducted by Lin et al. (2012), Tsai et al. (2012), Alagoz (2013), Siakidou et al. (2014) and Hsu et al. (2015). Also, it may be due to the scaffolding provided by the moderator during the online learning environment as referred in the study by Tsai & Tsai (2014) as well as the scaffolding provided by the online software as claimed in the study by Lu and Zhang (2013).

Moreover, it may be owing to abiding by the essential tips for the efficient planning and competent design of the well-structured webinar that helps the speaker argument and present ideas convincingly as explained by Sibley (2014), Wehnert (2014), Anastasia (2015), Colley (2016) and Gilbert-Knight (2016). Above all, It may because of the training involved in the moderator based webinar sessions particularly when they are recorded by the participants for later review, peer-assessment and self-assessment. It may also be because of the extra training webinar sessions held before and after each of the moderator managed webinar sessions. Such training sessions can help develop the participants' skills and overcome their weaknesses as stated by Zieliński et al. (2013) and Anastasia (2015).
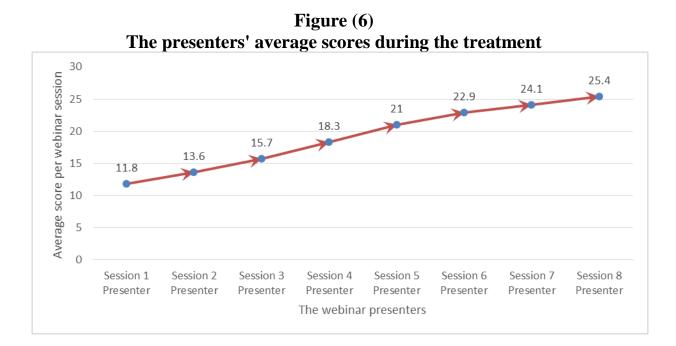
The hypothesis was verified since webinar extended the time for communication among the researchers. Before each webinar session, they could exchange their social contact information where they can share the files for the topics they prepare for argument in the webinar. After each webinar session, they could review their recorded live session for self-assessment and peer-assessment as well as exchange feedbacks accordingly.

Hypothesis II : *While practicing eight webinar sessions, much progress has been observed in the ELT researchers' oral argumentative skills*. Among the eight ELT researchers, one was assigned as a presenter for a webinar session and the other seven were participants so that there was one session as a presenter and seven sessions as a participant for each one. The presenters and participants took turns accordingly in each webinar session.

For each one, all the webinar sessions were video recorded by the moderator, the presenter and the participants. Those recorded webinar sessions were reviewed for self-assessment, peer-assessment and moderator assessment by using the analytic rating scale for the oral argumentation rubrics in both cases of presentation and participation.

Regarding the presentation in each webinar session, there was a presenter whose oral argumentative skills (warm-up, establishing claims, providing evidences, reasoning, logical conclusion and rebuttal) were assessed by his/her peers (n=7), by himself/herself (n=1) and by the moderator/tutor (n=1). So, the presenter's score was the average of the scores given by such assessments. The following chart shows the average score of each presenter in each of the eight webinar sessions:

Figure (6)
The presenters' average scores during the treatment

As shown in Figure (6), there is a gradual increase in the presenters' average scores that indicate much progress after practicing 8 webinar sessions in the oral argumentative skills of giving attractive warm-up, establishing claims, providing evidences, reasoning, making logical conclusion and generating rebuttals. The total score for such skills is out of 26. The following is a full description for the average scores gained by the webinar presenters, involving these dimensions:

a. The presenters' average scores.

b. The interpretation of the average scores according to their performance in the target oral argumentative skills.

c. Oral quotes as examples from the presenters' spoken discourse.

In the first session, the presenter (subject 1) obtained a very low average score (11.8 out of 26) because of the false premises that did not

support the claims. For example, the presenter said, "Oh, well. It is generally recognized that Gamification is a game based-learning". Consequently, the warrant was established but false. The presenter provided evidences such as references and real life examples, but they were not linked well with the claims. The presenter provided a real-life example by saying, "A game should be fun. For example, if a father at home plays a game with his kids and at the end of the game he told them that they were all winners, what would they say?". Here, the presenter should have connected this example with the established claim that a game must have a rule so that there are winners and losers or it will be useless and boring for the leaners. Actually, there were very few rebuttals since it was the first webinar and the participants were not encouraged enough to construct counter-arguments. Moreover, the argument ended abruptly without conclusions. This might justify the low average score mentioned above.

In the second webinar session, a fairly little progress was achieved by the second presenter (subject 2) with an average score of 13.6. This presenter could not give an attractive warm-up; however, the argument was started by establishing claims. The presenter started by saying, "I administered a pilot study in one class of 33 primary pupils at one of the language experimental schools in Ismailia to test their language achievement in short stories". But this presenter achieved a higher score than the previous one since the claims were based on true premises which were the findings of the pilot study. The presenter stated "Um! According to the findings of the pilot study, it was clearly shown that primary pupils' achievement in short stories was low". Also, the conclusion was unconcise since it did not stem from the main points of the argument. Here, the presenter concluded saying, "Well, as we come to the conclusion, I would like to say that teaching short stories in the primary grade was inappropriate and that is why their achievement in short stories was low. Therefore, we all should know that there must be a method or a strategy that helps those pupils learn short stories well. And that is ….. the digital storytelling".

In the third webinar session, the progress increased more by the third presenter (subject 3) who obtained an average score of 15.7. There was an attractive warm-up that introduced the topic in a way that seized the attention of the participants. The presenter started by saying, "Hi! We all know we get confused when teaching poetry. Do we teach it to enrich learners' linguistic abilities or as a literary theme to help them make sense of the poem? Which one is better and why? This study attempts to answer this question and reach a proper method to teaching poetry …." The conclusion was concise since it summarized all the essential points of the

argument. **The presenter concluded by saying, "In this respect, the Formeaning Response Approach is one of the recommended approaches to teaching poetry in an EFL classroom since it combines between the stylistics approach, which focuses on the form in order to develop the linguistic abilities of the learners and on the meaning to help the learners understand the material, and the Reader-Response approach ,which helps the learners engage with and personally respond to the material such as imagining the figures of speech".**

However, the presenter did not vary the evidences that support the claim. Only references were used as evidences. Also, the rebuttals were highly incomprehensible since the counter-arguments were refuted without evidences nor even direct address to the participants' counterarguments. For instance, one of the participants generated counterargument by saying, "We do not have enough time in the class period of 30 minutes with 30 pupils or more to teach poetry as a literary work and to develop learner's linguistic ability". The presenter constructed rebuttal by saying, "No, it is applicable and I tried it myself".

In the fourth webinar session, there was more progress by the presenter of this session (subject 4) with an average score of 18.3. This progress was due to the various use of evidences that were linked with the claims. The presenter used quotes and references by saying "As mentioned in Wikipedia, a free online encyclopedia, 2016. Blended learning is an education program (formal or informal) that combines online digital media with traditional classroom methods". The presenter linked this evidence with a claim that it is a mix between E-learning and classroom learning since E-learning lacks social interaction among the learners as well as between the leaners and the tutor. The presenter also used examples to support the claim of blending is not a random method of combining between classroom teaching strategies and E-learning applications. The presenter said, "There are criteria for selecting the classroom teaching methods as well as the E-learning applications to be combined. First, the objectives of your lesson. For example, if your objective is that learners should perform dependent speaking tasks in which they speak based on what they have heard, then you should select an E-Learning application which is Computer-based Instruction in which leaners do the speaking tasks on the computer by listening to the audio and record their responses. This way, we guarantee that all learners have spoken. Besides, the controlled administration by the computer for the sequence of the task by timing the audio play then providing the question of speaking. As long as computer cannot assess leaners' spoken performance, discussion can be selected as a classroom method to discuss the common mistakes in the recordings with the learners inside the class".

However, the argument ended abruptly and the rebuttals were with lapses in reasoning. When a participant generated a counterargument against the use of blended learning since there is an E-social interaction, the presenter constructed weak rebuttal with illogical or irrelevant evidence and said, "Of course, no because face to face interaction is better than E-Social interactions".

In the fifth webinar session, the average score raised up to 21 by the presenter of this session (subject 5) due to establishing claims with sound warrants that were based on true premises. The presenter formed a valid warrant when saying, "Dyslexic learners are learners who have got oral reading difficulties. Mispronunciation is one of the word recognition skills that dyslexic learners have since it is an oral reading difficulty. We all know that mispronunciation is common among our learners at governmental schools. So, dyslexic learners are also common at our schools". Also, the presenter gave various evidences that were closely related to the claims. Besides, the presenter was able to generate reasonable links between claims and evidences to persuade the participants. In this case, the presenter provided a reference with an example by saying, "Eclectic Method is the best method for learners with dyslexia because it combines all the techniques of Sight words, repeated reading, modeling as well as goal Setting and progress monitoring. This was consistent with the study that was administered by Marsha, 2014. In this study, this method was used to develop dyslexic secondary learners' word recognition skills. For example, you can start with a selection of words that learners find difficulty in retrieving each time (near, dinner, sail, soak) and these are the words they will find in the reading passage of the lesson. Write them on the board. Then, have the learners repeat them. This is the technique of sight words. Then you go on with the reading passage of the lesson and set a goal for reading like five minutes. This is Goal Setting technique. After that, you do a model of reading two or three times. This is Modeling technique. Following the model, you ask the learners to read the passage again on their own several times. This is the technique of Repeated Reading. Finally, check learners' progress whether they met their goal by reading the passage in five minutes or not. If yes, set another goal like reading in three minutes. If no, let them keep practicing".

However, the conclusion was long and unconcise. The presenter did not summarize all the key elements of the argument. The conclusion was just about the dyslexic learners' common word recognition errors at our schools and the effect of eclectic method on overcoming such errors. The main features of the eclectic method and the rationale behind its use were not addressed in the closure. Also, the rebuttals were with lapses in reasoning since the presenter did not address directly all of the participants' counterarguments.

In the sixth webinar session, the presenter (subject 6) had an average score of 22.9 which was higher than that of the previous session's presenter. This was owing to starting with a powerful warm-up by using the following picture and asking the participants to give their comments on how important the differentiation teaching should be used.
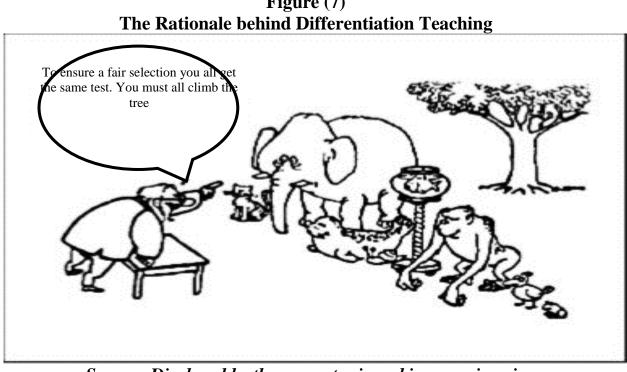
Figure (7)
The Rationale behind Differentiation Teaching

Source: Displayed by the presenter in webinar session six

Also, the presenter made a logical conclusion that was precise, reasonable and short. The presenter here gave a comprehensive and accurate conclusion to the point by using visuals as shown in the following figure:

Figure (8)
Individualized Practices in Differentiation Teaching

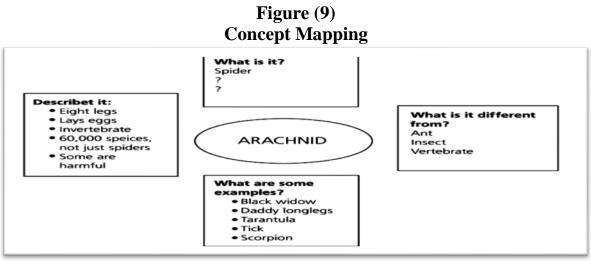*Source: Displayed by the presenter in webinar session six*

S/he commented on this figure and said, "In differentiation teaching, teacher should differ the content by conducting pretests, the process which includes the methods of teaching and learners' interaction, by observing their learning styles or preferences as well as the product, that is the assignment level in light

of learners' learning speed and achievement level. If so, considering the individual differences will be possible". However, there was no formal proof when drawing inferences in the conclusion. Besides, the rebuttals were with lapses in reasoning since the presenter provided unprecise or vague explanation for the claims and evidences.

In the seventh webinar session, a greater average score (24.1) was achieved by the presenter (subject 7). This was because of the presenter's ability to make a logical conclusion with a formal proof when drawing inferences. Here, the presenter said, "To sum up, there are 4 reciprocal teaching strategies for helping the learners how to understand a reading text. First, predicting which is finding clues for what will happen next. It helps activate learners' background knowledge and motivate learners to continue reading the passage to determine if their predictions were correct. Second, clarifying which is the steps followed to restore meaning when there is a breakdown in comprehension. It assures that the passage will make sense to the learner. Third, summarizing which should contain only the most important ideas in learners' own words. It helps improve learners' understanding and memory of what is read. Finally, questioning which is inquiring about important information or details in the text. It allows learners to self-test their understanding of the text and helps them identify what is important in the story". However, the rebuttals were with lapses in reasoning since the presenter refuted the counterargument with weak defenses.

In the eighth webinar session, much higher progress was accomplished by the session's presenter (subject 8) with an average score 25.4 out of 26. The presenter performed all the skills well except rebuttal with the direct address to all the participants' counterarguments since a few counterarguments were ignored. For instance, when the participants counterclaimed the same effect of using both on vocabulary learning in different grade levels, the presenter skipped this counterargument. However, the presenter addressed other counterarguments and constructed rebuttals with powerful defense, reasonable evidences with visual materials as well as thorough and insightful explanation of claims and evidences. When the participants counterclaimed the difference between semantic mapping and concept mapping, the presenter replied, "A concept map should start with a focus conceptual word, according to Novak, 2014 and from this word there are subordinate questions. For example, a key concept like Arachnid, the following questions can be generated for answers as this diagram illustrates:

Figure (9)
Concept Mapping

Source: Displayed by the presenter in webinar

On the other hand, a semantic map starts with a key word or idea to make web-like connections with other related key words or ideas. For example, this picture shows a semantic map starting with the key word Egypt".

Figure (10)
Semantic Mapping

Source: Displayed by the presenter in webinar

In conclusion, after practicing the eight webinar sessions, much progress has been observed in the ELT researchers' oral argumentative skills of giving attractive warm-up, establishing claims, providing evidences, reasoning, making logical conclusion and generating rebuttals.

As for the participation in each webinar session, there were seven participants out of eight subjects. Each participant's oral argumentative skill (counter-argument) was assessed by a peer (n=1), by himself/herself (n=1) and by the moderator/tutor (n=1). So, the participant's score was the average of the scores given by such assessments. The following chart shows the average score of each of the eight subjects who were participants through the sequence of eight webinar sessions:
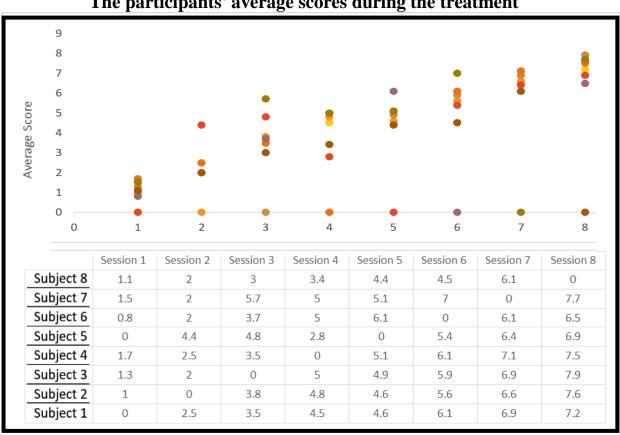
Figure (11)
The participants' average scores during the treatment

	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	Session 5	Session 6	Session 7	Session 8
Subject 8	1.1	2	3	3.4	4.4	4.5	6.1	0
Subject 7	1.5	2	5.7	5	5.1	7	0	7.7
Subject 6	0.8	2	3.7	5	6.1	0	6.1	6.5
Subject 5	0	4.4	4.8	2.8	0	5.4	6.4	6.9
Subject 4	1.7	2.5	3.5	0	5.1	6.1	7.1	7.5
Subject 3	1.3	2	0	5	4.9	5.9	6.9	7.9
Subject 2	1	0	3.8	4.8	4.6	5.6	6.6	7.6
Subject 1	0	2.5	3.5	4.5	4.6	6.1	6.9	7.2

As shown in Figure (11), there is a gradual increase in each participant's average score that indicates much progress by the end of the eight webinar sessions in the oral argumentative skill of generating counterarguments. The total score for such skill is out of eight. It is worth noting that all the subjects who got null score were the presenters of the webinar sessions (e.g. subject one was session one presenter and so on) except subject five in session one since he made no direct address to any of the presenter's argument. The following is a full description for the average scores gained by the webinar participants, including these dimensions:

a. The participants' average scores.

b. The interpretation of the average scores according to their performance in the oral argumentative skill of counterargument.

c. Oral quotes as examples from the participants' spoken discourse.

In session one, subjects two, three, four, six, seven and eight obtained average scores between 0.8 and 1.7 since they refuted the argument but without counter-evidences. For instance, subject three refuted a claim established by the presenter regarding the difference between gamification and game-based learning. S/He opposed without providing any counter-

evidences as s/he said, "Gamification is just another name for game based-learning without changes or even updates".

In session two, subjects one, three, four, six, seven and eight obtained average scores between 2 and 2.5 which were higher than the previous session since they refuted the argument with counter-evidences. However, they refuted the argument with irrelevant counter-evidence. For instance, subject four counterclaimed that digital storytelling cannot improve primary pupils' grammar learning and said, "Digital storytelling has to do with oral communication so it helps develop listening and speaking skills. Well! I see it does not help learn grammar at all". Subject five obtained a much higher average score (4.4) than the previous session since s/he refuted the argument with reasonable counter-evidences as well as addressed each of the presenter's main points of the argument. For instance, s/he opposed that digital storytelling was more effective than teacher's oral storytelling and provided a reasonable counter-evidence by saying, "There must be a combination between digital storytelling and oral storytelling. In teacher's oral storytelling, there can be face to face interaction between the teacher and the learners and this is what digital storytelling lacks. However, in digital storytelling, the story is displayed with different multimedia elements such as sound, text, animation, graphics, video, etc. and this what oral storytelling lacks."

In session three, subjects one, two, four, six, and eight obtained average scores between 3 and 3.8 which were higher than the previous sessions since they refuted the argument with relevant counter-evidence but with inconsistent reasoning or weak defense against the presenter's views. For instance, subject two refuted the claim that Formeaning Reader Response Approach is applicable in Language Experimental Schools. Here, s/he tried to justify and said, "We do not need this approach. We teach poetry for pleasure. We have other language text books for developing leaners' language skills and linguistic abilities". Subjects five and seven obtained higher average scores (4.8 and 5.7) than the other subjects in this session for they addressed the major points of the presenter's argument.

In session four, subject five obtained a lower average score (2.8) since s/he refuted the argument without explanation for the provided counter-evidences. This decrease was not owing to the incompetence of this subject's counterargument. However, it was only due the insufficient time left for him to talk at the end of the session. Subject eight obtained a fairly higher average score (3.4) for addressing the presenter's key topics of the argument. For the others, the counterargument grew stronger. Subjects one, two, three, six and seven obtained higher average scores (ranging

between 4.5 and 5) than the previous session because they refuted the argument with relevant counter-evidence as well as consistent reasoning and powerful defense against the presenter's views. For instance, subject seven refuted a claim established by the presenter for the emergence of blended learning because of the E-leaning's lack of social interaction. This counter argument was generated with a reasonable evidence. She said, "You claimed that blended learning emerged because of the lack of social interaction when depending only on E-learning. So, what about the social interactions nowadays among people online through social media software such as Twitter and Facebook. Why cannot we depend only on E-learning then?".

In session five, subjects one, two, three, four and seven did not obtain higher average scores than the previous session. They did not show a noticeable progress in the skills of counterargument which they performed in the previous session nor even acquire more skills. This was due to their non-participation in the extra training webinar sessions held before this session as indicated in their written comments through social media websites. This, in turn, shows how important the extra training sessions for exchanging s/he feedback by self-assessment, peer assessment and tutor assessment. However, subjects six and eight obtained higher average scores (6.1 and 4.4) than the previous session. Subject six showed an advance in addressing all the presenter's main themes of the argument. Subject eight made a progress while performing the skill of refuting the argument with consistent reasoning. He said, "When we come into real practice, we find that repeated reading and modeling are the commonly used methods when teaching reading in almost all of our governmental and language experimental schools. And dyslexic learners are still common too. Why should we integrate them into the eclectic method then?".

In session six, subjects one, two, three, four, five and seven made much more progress than the previous session, particularly in performing the counterargument skill of providing an explanation for the counter-evidences. However, such explanations were vague and unprecise. For instance, subject seven showed disagreement to the applicability of differentiation teaching in our governmental schools. She provided counter-evidences and attempted to explain. Here, she said, "It is impossible to use differentiation teaching. Classrooms in our schools are overcrowded with learners sometimes exceeding 50 per the class. The time of the class period is no more than 30 or 45 minutes maximum. Differentiation teaching is best used to give better results with a class of less learners and more time". However, almost no more progress was achieved by subject six when compared with the previous session since s/he did not achieve a higher

performance level for the counterargument skills of the previous session nor even acquire more skills. This was also due to his non-participation in the extra training webinar sessions held before this session.

In session seven, all the subjects obtained higher average score ranging between 6.1 and 7.1 since they improved their performance of the counterargument skill of providing thorough and insightful explanations for the counter-evidences. For instance, subject one showed objection to the presenter's view that teaching how to read is better than teaching reading. Here, s/he said, "Of course, no. Here, I disagree. We should teach young children reading because they are dependent learners and immature readers. Jessica Vezina conducted a study in 2003 and explained this in a TEFL journal online. But, I think, unlike children, we should teach adults how to read so they become independent readers. This is the same as the Chinese proverb that says show me how to catch fish rather than give me fish to eat. Adults are mature enough to use the four strategies of reciprocal teaching while reading. They have got a larger number of vocabulary than young learners. Besides, they have got more complex reading skills than young learners. That is why it is going to be easier for adults to use such reciprocal teaching strategies and become independent readers accordingly". In this respect, subject eight disagreed with subject one and said, "On the contrary, I totally disagree with what you claimed. Young learners are able to do what adults do. And if we ignored teaching young learners how to read in earlier stages, they would not later become good adult readers. Here is a more recent study by Dona Dyer in 2014 that refuted the misconception of the children's inability to become independent readers and proved the importance of teaching them how to read by using the strategies of reciprocal teaching". However, they did not provide informative explanations for all of their counter-evidences.

In session eight, all the subjects showed more progress than the previous session with average scores ranging between 6.5 and 7.9 since they provided thorough and insightful explanations for all of their reliable counter-evidences with powerful defense. Their counterarguments were consistent with reasoning. For instance, subject three gave a reasonable opposition and said, "Semantic mapping and concept mapping do not have the same effect on the pupils' vocabulary learning. Semantic mapping provides a thorough explanation for words since it presents the concept and provides answers to the questions generated around it. This way, the learners get deeper understanding for words. This was approved in Gibson's study (2009). But mind mapping just shows relations among words and ideas. This means that learners get superficial understanding of words. This was discussed in Mike's study (2009) which compared between the effects of both of them on vocabulary learning. In his study, semantic mapping was proved more

effective". There were only very few lapses: ignoring to address one major point in the presenter's argument as in cases of subjects two, three, four and seven as well as skipping an explanation for a relevant counter-evidence as in cases of subjects one, five and six.

According to the analytical review of the average scores gained by the subjects for their performance in the oral argumentative skills participants through the webinar sessions, it can be concluded that after practicing the eight webinar sessions, much progress has been observed in the ELT researchers' the oral argumentative skill of counter-argument.

To sum up, the following figure shows the total average score of the eight subjects (presenter and participants) per each webinar session according to their total performance in the target oral argumentative skills:
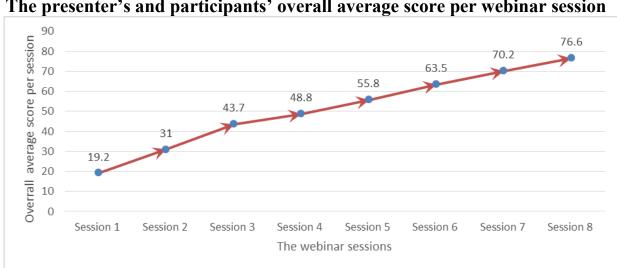
Figure (12)
The presenter's and participants' overall average score per webinar session

Figure (12) above indicates an increasing level of high performance that has been accomplished by the ELT researchers in the target oral argumentative skills as presenters and participants through the sequence of eight webinar sessions. This means that much progress has been observed in the ELT researchers' oral argumentative skills. Thus, the second hypothesis was approved.

Discussion of the subjects' blogs:

While the ELT researchers were contacting, and exchanging information with one another between the webinar sessions, some web blogs were noticed during their communication through social media online software such as Twitter and Facebook. The researchers confirmed how webinars were helpful in training them on oral argumentation. They said that although there was just one presentation for each of them, they managed

successfully to develop their argumentative skills. Some claimed it was due to the webinar that encouraged them to exchange their online contact information through which they could exchange constructive feedback regarding their points of weakness and strength. Others asserted that it was due to the feature in the skype for recording the live webinar sessions so that they could review their recorded oral arguments and exchange feedback accordingly. They also declared that the extra independent training sessions they hold between the moderator dependent webinar sessions were very important for them to review their performance, prepare for the coming session as well as exchange feedback for what happened in the last session. They said that such sessions were either remedial for improvement or enrichment for promotion. This indicated their enthusiasm in holding webinars since they were convinced of their great benefits as well as their keen desire to develop their oral argumentative skills since they believed in their importance for them.

Recommendations and Suggestions

Recommendations:
The following are the recommendations of the current study:
1. Well-structured webinars can provide efficient training and extensive practice for the learners' and researchers' oral argumentation.
2. Departments of TEFL at Faculties of Education can make their own online groups for webinars.
3. Departments of TEFL at Faculties of Education should not ignore developing their ELT researchers' oral argumentative skills.

Suggestions:
Here are some suggestions for possible further researches:
1. The Effect of webinar on students' EFL oral presentation skills at the Faculty of commerce.
2. A webinar-based program for developing EFL public speaking skills for business students.
3. Conducting studies on using webinars to teach poetry, novel or drama for the students at the Faculty of Arts or Faculty of Education.
4. Conducting studies on using webinars to improve grammar and vocabulary learning for the learners in different grade levels.

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