Planned Focus-on-form Instruction in Task-based Language Teaching: The case of EFL learners' oral grammatical accuracy performance

Elham Parvaneh, M.A. in TEFL, Garmsar Branch, Islamic Azad University, Semnan, Iran elham.parvaneh@yahoo.com Reza Barzegar*, Assistant Professor, English Department, Damavand Branch, Islamic Azad University, Damavand, Iran Barzegar72@yahoo.com

Abstract

This study investigated the effects of planned focus-on-form instruction (pFFI) on developing oral grammatical accuracy in Iranian English EFL learners. To this end, 60 lower-intermediate EFL learners studying English in a private English language institute in Tehran, Iran, were randomly assigned to two classes. Both classes received a task-based instruction on grammatical points elicited in oral production of English sentences with the only difference that one class, the experimental group (N=30) had a pFFI instruction (i.e., the target grammatical structures selected in advance), and the other class, the control group (N = 30), had a task-based instruction without any focus on planned grammatical structures. Learners' oral performance was observed in their answers to pictorial cues in the pretest and posttest. The results of the study revealed that although both groups significantly improved in their oral performance in terms of grammatical accuracy, pFFI instruction was more effective on the experimental group since they significantly outperformed the control group.

Keywords: Planned focus-on-form, task-based language teaching, oral grammatical accuracy, (EFL) learners

Introduction

Language teaching methods have been changing from grammar translation method in which lexical and grammatical structures and their translation were the main focus of attention to meaning-based methods in which meaning has the primary role to play. More recently, an alternative option has been offered by English as a second/foreign language (L2) instruction practitioners termed focus-on-form as a reaction to focus-on-forms (Nassaji, 2016). Due to the problems with the traditional methods and also the ones with meaning-based approaches, the challenge is to find the best way to bring form instruction to second language classes (Nassaji, 2016; Nassaji & Cumming, 2000), while the main focus is on meaning.

Focus-on-forms

One of the widely discussed L2 instructional options is the one labeled by Long in the 1990s as focus-on-forms (Nassaji & Fotus, 2007). The focus-on-forms instruction is based on the traditional approach to teaching an L2 wherein the language is broken into discrete items (e.g., grammar, vocabulary and phonological units) only to be presented to the learners out of context so that a gradual and synthesized accumulation of L2 structures is achieved (Ellis, 2016). In this approach, the primary focus of attention is on the form. The proponents of this approach believe that grammar and vocabulary cannot be learned as a byproduct of communication (Sheen, 2003). As for the L2 grammar, they believe that grammar can be taught by a variety of means, such as

formal explanation in deductive manners, written drills, and oral exercises that make L2 learners use grammar in non-communicative activities (Nassaji, 2016).

Focus on meaning (Task-based language teaching)

Focus-on-forms suffers from major problems. A typical response to focus-on-forms has been focus on meaning. The starting point in focus on meaning is the learner and learning process. One of the most widespread communicative methods focusing on the meaning is taskbased language teaching (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). A task-based syllabus refers to task as a unit of curriculum rather than word, structures, topic and situation. It is believed that engaging the learners in task work creates a better context for learning process activation and hence better language learning. The belief is that language learning depends on immersing the learners in task requiring the learners to negotiate meaning in naturalistic and meaningful communication (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

Beglar and Hunt (2002) believe language instructors and curriculum designers face two alternatives. The first is the synthetic syllabus which segments the language into discrete items including grammar, vocabulary and function. The scholars supporting this view argue that learners are able to recombine these discrete pieces to reach a whole to use in communication effectively (White, 1998). The second, which is the analytic syllabus, is to immerse the learners in real-life communication. It provides samples of the language for the learners. In this syllabus, the organization of linguistic materials is based on the purpose of using the language. The idea is that learners can reach a proper conclusion about grammatical and lexical usage (Beglar & Hunt, 2002). According to Long (2015), the key idea is that holistic activities such as tasks create a proper frame within which knowledge and its use can be experienced. The claim is that by engaging the learners in doing task both declarative and procedural knowledge can be developed (DeKeyser, 2015).

One of the scholars who challenged task-based language teaching is Skehan. He argues learners place great emphasis on communicating meaning but they are not concerned about exact form they use (Kress, 1992, cited in Skehan, 1996). He argues where the emphasis is on the conversation, not correctness or its effect on interlanguage system, the learners naturally will use the strategies of communication (Clark, 1977, cited in Skehan, 1996) to communicate and will only depend on partial use of forms to clarify meaning (Skehan, 1996). As Anderson (2017) mentions, communicative strategies can be used to handle communicative pressure and in turn to ease the automatic engagement in communication leading to less pressure on interlanguage system to develop. According to Widdowson (2001) all you can teach in task-based language classes are some aspects of communication not the ability to do so. Another challenge the task-based language teaching has been put forward by Skehan (1996). He mentions translating the task-based theories into reality is not a straightforward matter. According to Swain and Lapkin (1995), what are needed are the studies to demonstrate that learners actually learn the language when they perform the task.

The third problem concerning task-based language teaching is that its proponents argue communication is lexical by nature regarding first language acquisition (DeKeyser, 2015). Then the language system developed in this way becomes lexical. That is, the unit of storage is multi-word (Skehan, 1996) not a single item which is processed as a whole. This lexical storage and processing of language have been underestimated by linguists and psychologists like Bolinger (1975, cited in Skehan, 1996) arguing that this kind of language is not creative at all, since the learners rely on memorized materials.

All the above-mentioned challenges leave us with the question if task-based language instruction works for classroom teachers and learners the same as it does for second language acquisition researchers. Also, afford-said pitfalls suggest that if task-based approach is to be used, methods of focusing on form without losing the priority of meaning should be devised to trigger acquisitioned process.

Focus-on-form

With the advent of communicative language teaching, the grammatical syllabi were superseded by communicative ones and accuracy activities were replaced by fluency activities (Anderson, 2017; Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Since there are pitfalls with this approach, attempts by second language researches have been made to add grammar instruction to communicative language teaching. Therefore, recent studies are considering some degree of focus-on-form (Ellis, 2016) in classes in which primarily focus is on meaning to promote accuracy in second language acquisition (Nassaji, 2016).

Focus-on-form was first defined by Long (2015). He states that focus-on-form means drawing the learners' attention to linguistic forms as they arise incidentally while the main focus is on meaning or communication. Other scholars (e.g., Williams, 2005) have broadened this definition to give some room to planned focus-on-form like Ellis (2016). He believes focus-on-form can include any instructional effort, either planned or incidental, to channel the learners' attention to forms. Ellis (2016) believes planned focus-on-form can be defined as the instruction involving treatment of pre-selected forms while the learners focus on meaning processing mainly, but incidental focus-on-form does not refer to pre-selected form and the attention is drawn to the form incidentally. Ellis (2002) believes that planned focus-on-form could involve the use of focused tasks in which the learners use pre-selected form while performing a task. That is, communicative tasks that have been designed to elicit certain linguistic forms in meaning- based context. The treatment here includes enhancing communicative input in order to draw the learners' attention to certain structures by, for example, making the structure prominent through textual highlighting or input flooding or some other treatments (Nassaji & Fotus, 2007).

The literature on skill acquisition usually defines three stages to acquiring a skill. In Anderson's (2017) terminology, these stages include declarative knowledge (factual knowledge which we can repeat explicitly), Procedural knowledge (implicit knowledge of doing something), and autonomous stage (the skill becomes automatic and rapid). According to DeKeyser (2015), skill development means proceduralization of declarative knowledge. In the case of language, it involves explicit knowledge of grammatical rules that becomes automatic.

Additionally, second language researchers agree that a combination of grammar instruction and providing the learners with the opportunity to receive meaningful input and to produce output is an approach to instruct second language (Ellis, 2002, 2004; Hinkel, 2005; Nassaji and Fotos, 2004, 2007; Swain, 2000; Swain and Lapkin, 1995). The researchers argue that meaningful input alone cannot promote the development of target-like accuracy and the learners should be given the opportunity to use instructed forms. Noticing the forms is seen as precondition for language acquisition and production of the forms is said to promote noticing (Anderson, 2017; Nassaji, 2016). Fotos and Hinkel (2007) suggest that focus-on-form and output help second language learners to write more fluently and accurately. They believe output is important because it has three main functions: It makes previous structures stronger, encourages the learners to notice the forms in input, and eases second language processing.

Adding focus-on-form to meaning-based contexts

Focused task aims to push the learners to process some linguistic features receptively or productively as a result of performing communicative activities. Here the language is used pragmatically and the aim of the activity is non-linguistic. It can be said that focused tasks have two aims: one is to persuade communicative language use and the other is to push to use particular, pre-selected target features (DeKeyser, 2015). Here, DeKeyser adds, proactive planned focus-on-form is integrated into meaning-based context. When the learners perform a focused task; they are not consciously using a form correctly, so it can be used as a technique to elicit implicit knowledge. According to Ellis (2016), focused tasks provide a means of teaching linguistic features communicatively.

Based on the above-mentioned arguments, the present study aimed to channel the learners' attention towards the rules of the language through focus on form in task-based language teaching in order to investigate its effect on developing the learners' oral grammatical accuracy. Thus, the following research question was addressed:

Q. Does planned focus-on-form task-based instruction have any significant impact on the development of grammatical accuracy of Iranian EFL learners' oral performance at lower-intermediate level of language proficiency?

Literature Review

Numerous studies have been conducted to examine the effects of focus-on-form on accuracy in production. The studies done by Lightbown, Spade, and Wallace (1980) and Saito and Lyster (2012) reported the positive effect of focus-on-form on accuracy. Similarly, Gurzynski-Weiss, Long and Solon (2017) have shown that if the learners have access to grammatical structures, they perform more accurately. The same results have been reported by Norris and Ortega (2001). Just the same way, White (1991) has supported focus-on-form and its great effect on accuracy in number of tasks. Generally, there is clear evidence supporting the effect of focus-on-form on accuracy gains (e.g., Saito & Lyster, 2012). Likewise, Gorp and Bogaert (2006) have reported positive effects of the task-embedded focus-on-form. One of the biggest concerns in effectiveness of focus-on-form is its durability (Anderson, 2017). It is possible that even when focus-on-form seems to work, the effects may not necessarily be permanent. As the time passes, the effects may fade away too. According to some researchers (e.g., Ellis, 2008, 2016; Nassaji, 2016), the gains in accuracy may disappear after some time. As stated by DeKeyser, (2015), the learners benefit most from focus-on-form in meaning-based context, but they need to communicate continuously after the instruction stops.

Studies have been conducted to investigate the effect of enriched input. For example, Jourdenais, Ota, Stauffer, Boyson, and Doughty (1995) have shown the positive effects of enhanced text on accuracy in comparing with non-enhanced ones. Also, Leeman, Arteagoitial, Fridman, and Doughty (1995) investigated the effect of the input enhancement on language acquisition. They found out the learners who were exposed to enhanced input outperformed the ones who were not. Moreover, in more recent studies, Saito and Lyster (2012) and Gurzynski-Weiss et al. (2017) observed that form-focused instruction can lead to significant pronunciation accuracies in ESL/EFL learners. In general, on the effect of the enriched input, it can be said that highlighting certain features can cause noticing. However, positive effects may be seen when there is extensive exposure to the target features. On the other hand, the studies done by White (1991) have shown that input enrichment is an effective technique to enable the learners to acquire completely new features.

Rationale of the study

When we produce language, we use processing capacity in two main ways: to manage the content and to plan to connect meaning to forms. In most human communications, shifting the attention to content slows down production and paying attention to the speed of production limits attention to form and to handle the content. Focus-on-form in task can provide an opportunity to pay attention to both as the learners try to communicate both accurately and coherently (Anderson, 2017; Ellis, 2016).

In addition, it seems focus-on-form in task-based language teaching can help the learners to change declarative knowledge to procedural knowledge. The reason is communicative language ability involves the ability to use formal linguistics resources including grammar to express meaning. Therefore, the learners can internalize the relationship between form, meaning and the use of existing patterns in the target to develop the ability to communicate in a real context (Bygate, 2001).

Also, second language development involves developing the learners' capacity to use resources which are already available to them. That is to say, experiencing the language production enables the learners to identify the gap between their own knowledge and to receive new language knowledge (DeKeyser, 2015). In addition, according to Ellis (2016), learners are not sensitive to the forms and as a result, they may not be able to benefit from the input. Also, some features are not salient and escape the learners' attention. Focus-on-form in task-based language teaching may enhance the saliency of the target features and therefore the learners' ability to notice these features.

In general, it can be argued that planned focus-on-form in task-based language teaching can enjoy the advantages of both task-based language teaching and focus-on-form and also reduce the problems with task-based language teaching methods.

Method

Participants

To accomplish the purpose of the present study, two classes including 30 participants each, who had enrolled in EFL lower-intermediate level, participated in this study and the data obtained from 60 learners were analyzed. Participants in these classes were a mixture of graduate and undergraduate university students, with the same linguistic background (i.e. Persian). The learners were randomly assigned to the two classes by the institute registration office. The learners ranged in age from 18 to 30, and included both male and female.

The selection of participants took place in the institute based on a placement test given to them by institute registration office. The sixty learners were divided into two groups randomly to determine the effect of the technique of planned focus-on-form in task-based language teaching.

Instruments

A number of instruments were used to carry out the present study including the pre-test, treatment and post-test. The pre-test items including five sets of pictures were taken from the book, *A Basic English Grammar Exercises* to check the learners' accuracy level in producing the targeted structures orally (see the Appendix). The mini texts in which the targeted structures were underlined for the treatment were taken from the course book *English Results* (see the Appendix). Finally, the post-test items were the same as pre-test ones.

Also, an interview was designed by the researches in this study to evaluate the learners' grammatical accuracy. In other words, it was used to check grammatical accuracy in oral production.

Procedures

The pretest in the present research was carried out through a series of pictorial items. The learners were provided with production question types; that is, they were given five sets of pictures and the verbs needed to produce the sentences. The role of the learners here was to produce sentences orally. These sentences were based on the pictures requiring the learners to use the needed structures. It is worth noting that this test was piloted with another group of learners consisting of 20 participants at the same level in the same institute to check the face validity and content validity of the test.

Then, the designed interview was done. It took approximately 15 to 20 minutes. The interviewees were given a few minutes at the beginning to introduce themselves. They were asked questions in the first part about their origin, family, hometown, and occupation. In the second part of the interview, sets of pictures were shown to the interviewees to produce sentences orally. The recorded interviews were transcribed and rated according to answer keys provided by the book (i.e., *Basic English Grammar Exercises*). Then, the percentages of the error-free clauses were calculated for each participant, and the mean scores were computed for both groups.

Afterwards, both groups were exposed to task-based language teaching. To double quotes, both groups were given mini texts which had been taken from the course book, English Results. It should be mentioned that this course book was selected because it is taught at the institute where the present research was conducted. The texts were the same in both groups. The only difference in control group and experimental group was that in the experimental group, the target structures in the text were selected in advance and underlined to channel the learners' attention to focus on certain forms. To start, the teacher framed the task by organizing the pairs, informing the learners what they were required to do, and establishing the outcome of the task. Next, the teacher asked learners to brainstorm a list of words related to the main task title and also to guess what sort of grammar would be needed to perform the task as pre-task activity. The learners were then asked to read and retell their partners what they read in their own time. It needs be mentioned that learners had access to their text so that they would not forget the content, the words and the structures. In the posttest, like the pretest, the interview was used in order to elicit the required structures from the participants. There were the same sets of pictures in this interview as in the pretest. All the questions were used to measure the learners' ability to produce sentences 200 containing appropriate tenses.

Results

In order to perform parametric inferential statistics, the normality of the distribution of the data needed to be assured. As observed in Table 1, the results of the two tests of normality (i.e., Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk) showed that learners' scores in both groups in the pretest and posttest were all normally distributed (p-value > 0.05 in all instances.

		Kolmogorov-Smirnov(a)			Shapiro-V	Shapiro-Wilk		
Testing sessions/Groups		Statistics	df	<i>p</i> -value	Statistics	df	<i>p</i> -value	
Pre-Test	Control	0.077	30	0.200	0.973	30	0.620	
Pre-Test	Experimental	0.154	30	0.068	0.927	30	0.052	
Post-test	Control	0.152	30	0.075	0.932	30	0.057	
Post-test	Experimental	0.087	30	0.200	0.978	30	0.776	

Table 1. Test of normality for both groups in the pretest and posttest

As it can be seen in Table 1 above, the learners' scores are all normally distributed; hence parametric tests could be run based on the mean and standard deviations of learners' scores to tap into pretest-posttest significant variations. The Figure below depicts the mean score of the control and experimental groups before (i.e., in the pretest) and after (i.e., in the posttest) the treatment.



Figure 1. The mean scores of the two groups in the pretest and posttest

As observed in the Figure above, although the mean scores of the two groups were roughly the same in the pretest (i.e., 15.69 for the control group and 16.23 for the experimental group), the mean scores were considerably different in the posttest (i.e., 15.42 in the control group and 20.61 in the experimental group). To see if the between-group difference was statistically significant, parametric statistical tests of independent-samples *t*-test was used. According to the results of independent-samples *t*-test (Table 2 below), there was not a significant difference between the two groups in pretest (*p*-value > 0.05) whereas there was a significant difference between the two groups in the posttest (*p*-value < 0.05).

Table 2. The results of independent-samples t-test for between-group differences									
Testing sessions	t	df	M difference	<i>p</i> -value					
Pretest	0.143	58	0.273	0.887					
Posttest	2.459	58	4.374	0.01					

Pretest0.143580.2730.887Posttest2.459584.3740.01Finally, to see if the observed mean difference in the pretest and posttest scores of

learners in the experimental group was significantly different, dependent-samples *t*-test was employed. The results of this dependent-samples *t*-test revealed that there was a significant difference between the pretest scores of the learners in the experimental group and their posttest scores (t = 4.856, df = 29, *p*-value = 0.001). Therefore, based on the statistical results, it was concluded that the experimental group significantly improved after receiving the treatment, while the control group experienced no significant improvement.

Discussion

Firstly, the results of the study revealed an improvement for both control and experimental groups from pretest to posttest which is a good support for the effectiveness of taskbased language teaching. In this context, this result is supported by scholars (Anderson, 2017; Ellis, 2016; Shintani, 2012) who believe that task gives the learners the opportunity to experience the knowledge and the use of the language. Also, the first result of the study is supported by Richards and Rodgers (2014) and Ellis (2003) arguing that communicative methods in which the main focus is on information transferring rather than pre-selected forms engage the learners in communication and can develop their communicative competence. Additionally, the results confirm that tasks provide the learners with contextually embedded input which Krashen (1994, cited in Ellis, 2003) believes is valuable in promoting the language acquisition (Input Hypothesis) and also with the opportunity to produce the language which Swain (1985) believes has an important role to play in language acquisition as it develops the learners' awareness of the gap between what they can do and what they are supposed to do. Therefore, the improvement achieved in both groups can be explained relying on both hypotheses.

The results of this study can also be seen from the perspective of Long's Interaction Hypothesis (1985) as he emphasizes that meaning negotiation can contribute to language acquisition. The effectiveness of the present study treatment can be grounded on the point that the participants were given both input and the opportunity to produce the language meaningfully as they were asked to retell their partner what they read (Namaziandost & Nasri, 2019). Meanwhile, the positive effect of retelling the written text is consistent with the results of the study done by Yoshimura (2006, cited in Ellis, 2008). According to some Scholars (Nassaji, 2016; Nassaji & Fotus, 2007; Swain and Lapkin, 1995; Taous, 2013) collaborative tasks which require the learners to reconstruct the target language can develop their accuracy. Also, Ellis (2002) argues that both input and output including target forms can positively affect the learners' acquisition.

Secondly, the overall results of the present study indicate that learners performed better in the experimental group than in the control group in posttest. This result shows the advantage of planned focus-on-form in task-based method over mere task-based language teaching; that is, the experimental group participants could use their grammatical knowledge in meaning-based contexts more successfully than control group participants (Anderson, 2017; Ellis, 2016). Hence, it can be claimed that instruction including focus-on-form is more effective than the instruction focusing only on meaning. This is in line with the results of previous studies which have produced convincing evidence on the positive effects of focus-on-form (e.g., Anderson, 2017; DeKeyser, 2015; Saito & Lyster, 2012; VanPatten, 2004).

Moreover, the findings of this study are in harmony with the current movements to focuson-form in meaning-based context to instruct the learners to focus on grammar implicitly during conversation. This trend is becoming widespread due to the inability of communicative methods alone to promote high level of accuracy (Gurzynski-Weiss et al., 2017). Research on purely meaning-focused communicative language teaching has led the researchers to claim that communicative instruction should involve systematic treatments to draw second language learners` attention to linguistic forms to develop balanced communicative competence (Doughty and Williams, 1998; Gurzynski-Weiss et al., 2017; Long and Robinson, 1998; Skehan, 1996; Swain, 1985). Just the same way, the present study's results can be supported by the studies done by many scholars (e.g., DeKeyser, 2015; Norris and Ortega, 2001; Saito & Lyster, 2012; VanPatten, 2004) reporting positive effects of focus-on-form on accuracy gains. Similar results have been reported by Norris and Ortega (2001) and Nassaji and Fotos (2007). The findings of this study are also supported by DeKeyser (2015) and Anderson (2017) who believe that current interest in focus-on-form is motivated by the findings of naturalistic acquisition studies suggesting that when classroom second language learning is entirely experiential and meaning-focused, some linguistic features do not develop to target like level. Also, Norris and Ortega (2001) believe that there is a need to incorporate form-focused instruction into meaning-oriented communicative language teaching. Similarly, as Ellis (2016) states, research conducted on the effects of input enrichment has shown that highlighting the structures helps noticing and then using the structure. He also states that based on the cognitive theories of language acquisition; there is a need to pay conscious attention to linguistics forms while communicating. According to Doughty and Williams (1998), focus-on-form involves learners to pay attention to form, meaning and use simultaneously. Moreover, the study done by Leeman et al. (1995) have confirmed the effectiveness of highlighting the verb forms in written input.

Likewise, the results of the present study are in accordance with Ellis' support for focuson-form (2016) as he states there is clear evidence showing focus-on-form can result in definite gains in accuracy. He also believes that most second language learners do not achieve full language competence through mere exposure and need help to acquire new grammatical features. Based on the evidence, he mentions that learners make rapid progress when they are exposed to both focus-on-form and communicative activities through enriched input. As Gorp and Bogaert (2006) have stated, task-embedded focus-on-form has positive effects on learners' performances. Also, research carried out by Norris and Ortega (2000) supports the positive effect of focus-onform on learners' accuracy in production. Additionally, the results of the present research can be supported by Smith (1993) as he believes input enhancement contributes to learning and is beneficial to learners. There is ample evidence from experimental research (e.g., Saito & Lyster, 2012; Williams, 1999) and also classroom studies (e.g., White, 1998) showing that enhanced learning condition including textual input enhancement of the targeted forms can positively affect learning in comparing with unenhanced exposure. Furthermore, it is believed that positive effects of the input enhancement are more durable and permanent (Anderson, 2017; DeKeyser, 2015; Ellis, 2016; Gurzynski-Weiss et al., 2017; Norris & Ortega, 2001).

As a final word, the findings of this study are divergent with those of the scholars who believe that meaning-based instruction alone can lead to second language acquisition (e.g., Krashen and Terrell, 1983, cited in Skehan, 1996; Prabhu, 1987). Interestingly, some research studies show that even adults use pauses to give the structural clues to the children to acquire the first language supporting that comprehensible input alone cannot create native-like structures (Morgan, 1986, cited in Skehan, 1996).

Conclusion

Focus-on-form in task-based language teaching can be used as a technique to provide learners with the advantages of communicative methods without having to ignore the grammatical structures. The strong point of this technique is that it lets learners use their grammatical knowledge in context of communication. Integrating grammar instruction into meaning-based context enriches it and makes it more meaningful and experiential for the language learners. Enhanced input makes learners enjoy the advantages of both communicative methods and traditional ones. Furthermore, focus-on-form in task-based language teaching can create the ground on which both psycholinguistics and sociolinguistic reasoning can be based.

As it was mentioned above, the present study investigated the effect of planned focuson-form in task-based language teaching on developing oral grammatical accuracy and the results gained through data analysis show positive effects of the planned focus-on-form on improving accuracy in speaking. As a result, it is possible to conclude that enhanced input can cause learners to notice the structures that have been underlined and use them better in meaningful context.

Admittedly, due to the limitations of the present study, the results cannot show whether the effects of the focus-on-form have been durable as it is one of the main concerns in the related studies. There have been diverse findings from the research done on the durability of the focuson-form technique like the studies done by Lightbown et al. (1980) and White (1991) showing that the effects fade away after some time or the studies done by Saito & Lyster (2012) supporting the durability of the effects. Yet, according to the findings of the present study, the experimental group who were given enhanced input grammatically outperformed the control group who were exposed to mere meaning-based instruction, the idea that is supported by many scholars in their studies.

References

Anderson, J. (2017). A potted history of PPP with the help of ELT Journal. *ELT Journal*, 71(2), 218-227.

Beglar, D., & Hunt, A. (2002). Implementing task-based language teaching. In J. C. Richards & W.A. Renandya (Eds.), *Methodology in language teaching. An anthology of current practice*, (pp. 89-110). Cambridge: Cambridge university press.

Bygate, M. (2001). Effects of task-based task repetition on the structures and control of oral language. In M. Bygate, P. Skehan, & M. Swain (Eds). *Researching pedagogic tasks, second language learning, teaching and testing*, (pp. 245-269). Harlow: Longman.

DeKeyser, R. M. (2015). Skill acquisition theory. In J. Williams & B. VanPatten (Eds.). *Theories in Second Language Acquisition: An introduction* (2nd ed.), (pp. 95-112). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Doughty, C., & Williams, J. (1998b). Pedagogical choices in focus-on-form. In: C. Doughty, & J. Williams (Eds.), *Focus-on-form in classroom second language acquisition* (pp. 197–261). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ellis, R. (2002). Does form-focused instruction affect the acquisition of implicit knowledge? A review of the research. *Studies in second language acquisition*, 24(2), 223-236.

Ellis, R. (2004). *Task-based language learning and teaching*. Oxford: Oxford university press.

Ellis, R. (2008). The study of second language acquisition. Oxford: Oxford university press.

Ellis, R. (2016). Focus-on-form: A critical review. *Language Teaching Research*, 20(1), 1-24.

Fotos, S., & Hinkel, E. (2007). Form-focused instruction and output for second language writing gains. In S. Fotos, & H. Nassaji (Eds.), *Form-focused instruction and teacher education: studies in honor of Rod Ellis* (pp.127-150). Oxford: Oxford university press.

Gorp, K.V., & Bogaert, N. (2006). Developing language tasks for primary and secondary education. In K.V.Branden (Ed.), *Task-based language education*. *From theory to practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge university press.

Gurzynski-Weiss, L., Long, A. Y., & Solon, M. (2017). TBLT and L2 pronunciation: Do the benefits of tasks extend beyond grammar and lexis? *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 45(1), 1-12.

Hinkel, E. (2005). *Handbook of research in second language teaching and learning*. An introductory course, Mahwa, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum associates.

Jourdenais, R., Ota, M., Stauffer, S., Boyson, B., & Doughty, C. (1995). Does textual enhancement promote noticing? A protocol analysis. In R. Schmidt (Ed.), *Attention and awareness in foreign language learning* (pp. 183-216). Oxford: Oxford university press.

Leeman, J., Arteagoitia, I., Fridman, B., & Doughty, C. (1995). Integrating attention to form with meaning: Focus-on-form in content-based Spanish instruction. In R. Schmidt (Ed.), *Attention and awareness in foreign language learning and teaching* (pp. 217-258). Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press

Lightbown, Pl., Spada, N., & Wallace, R. (1980). Some effects of instruction on child and adolescent ESL learners. In R. Scarcella& S. Krashen (Eds.), *Research in second language acquisition* (pp. 162-172). Rowley, Mass: Newbury House.

Long, M. (1985). A role for instruction in second language acquisition: task-based language teaching. In K. Hyltenstam and M. Pienemann (Ed.), *Modelling and Assessing Second Language Acquisition*, (pp. 220-255). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters

Long, M. (2015). Second language acquisition and task-based language teaching. Malden, MA: Wiley Blackwell.

Long, M., & Robinson, P. (1998). Focus-on-form: theory, research, and practice. In C. Doughty & J. Williams (Eds.), *Focus-on-form in classroom second language acquisition*, (pp. 134-167). Cambridge: Cambridge university press.

Namaziandost, E., & Nasri, M. (2019). A Meticulous Look at Long's (1981) Interaction Hypothesis: Does It Have Any Effect on Speaking Skill? *Journal of Applied Linguistics and Language Research*, 6(2), 218-230.

Nassaji, H. (2016). Research timeline: Form-focused instruction and second language acquisition. *Language Teaching Journal*, 49(1), 35-62.

Nassaji, H., & Cumming, A. (2000). What's in a ZPD? A case study of a young ESL student and teacher interacting through dialogue journals. *Language Teaching Research*, 4(2), 95-121.

Nassaji, H., & Fotos, S. (2004). Current developments in research on the teaching of grammar. *Annual review of applied linguistics*, 24(2),126-145.

Nassaji, H., & Fotos, S. (2007). Issues in form-focused instruction and teacher education. In S. Fotos & H. Nassaji (Eds.), *Form-focused instruction and teacher education: studies in honor of Rod Ellis* (pp. 201-234). Oxford: Oxford university press.

Norris, J.M., & Ortega, L. (2001). Effectiveness of L_2 instruction: A research synthesis and quantitative meta-analysis. Language learning, 50(3), 417-528.

Prabhu, N. S. (1987). Second language pedagogy. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. (2014). *Approaches and Methods in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge university press.

Saito, K. & Lyster, R. (2012). Effects of form-focused instruction and corrective feedback on L2 Pronunciation development of /I/ by Japanese learners of English. *Language Learning*, 62(4), 595-633.

Sheen, R. (2003). Focus-on-form: A myth in the making? ELT journal, 57(3), 225-233.

Shintani, N. (2012). Input-based tasks and the acquisition of vocabulary and grammar: A process-product study. *Language Teaching Research*, *16*(2), 253-279.

Skehan, P. (1996). A framework for the implementation of task-based instruction. *Applied Linguistics*, 17(1), 38-61.

Smith, S. (1993). Input enhancement in instructed second language acquisition: theoretical bases. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 15(1), 165-180.

Swain, M. (2000). Communicative competence: Some roles of comprehensible input and comprehensible output in its development. In S. Grass & C. g. Madden (Eds.), *Input in second language acquisition* (pp. 222-256). Rowley, Mass: Newberry House.

Swain, M., & Lapkin, S. (1995). Problems in output and the cognitive process they generate: A step towards second language learning. *Applied Linguistics*, 22(16), 371-391.

Taous, B. (2013). *The Role of Classroom Interaction in Improving the Students' Speaking Skill*. London: Biskra University.

VanPatten, B. (2004). Input Processing and Grammar Instruction in Second Language Acquisition. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

White, J. (1998). Getting the learners attention: a typographical input enhancement study. In C. Doughty & J. Williams (Eds.), *Focus-on-form in classroom second language acquisition* (pp. 111-140). Cambridge: Cambridge university press

Widdowson, H. (2001). Communicative language testing: The art of the possible. In C. Elder et al. (Eds), *Studies in language testing 11: Experimenting with uncertainty-Essays in Honor of Alan Davies* (pp. 301-333). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Williams, J. (1999). Learner-generated attention to form. *Language learning*, 49(4), 583-625.

Williams, J. (2005). Form-focused instruction. In E. Hinkel (Ed.), *Handbook of research in second language teaching and learning* (pp. 50-79). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum associates.

Appendix

Tell the police what you saw.

You saw this robbery take place yesterday evening.

You may use the following words:

Stop, get, have, hold, throw, smash, take, put, happen, stand, watch, jump, drive, run, and call.



A month ago the members of the Parkway Sports and Social Club decided to clean and decorate their club. The club hasn't got much money, so the members have done the work in their spare time. They've just finished now. Say what they have done.

You may use the following words:

Repair the fence, decorate the club room, buy new curtains, polish the cups, service the minibus, lay a new carpet in the bar, clean out the kitchen, and put up some shelves



James Delaney is the most famous sportsman in Britain. He's quite old now, but he's done lots of exciting things in his life. Here are some photos in a magazine article about him. Say what James has done and when he did it.

You may use the following words:

Take part in the Olympic games, climb Everest, make a pop record, walk to south pole, Swim the English Channel, fly an airplane, run a marathon, win rally, and meet the queen.



Mr Pratt has a lot of dreams. He's telling a psychiatrist about them. How does Mr Pratt describe his dreams? Look at the pictures and the psychiatrist's notes.

You may use the following words:

walk across a bridge, meet a tiger, fall in, watch television, climb the stairs, see a ghost, look into the mirror, break, blow, walk, lie on the beach, come out, dig the garden, find dead body.



Bymore's is a big department store. It's quite an old store now. The management of Bymore's have decided to modernize the store. The picture shows what they have decided to do. The manager of the store is explaining what they are going to do and what the result will be. Write down what the manager says.

You may use the following words:

Move around, help the customers, steal things, produce the right atmosphere, have television, inform customers, leave.

It is needed to say since" to be going to" was not included in the course content, it has been excluded from the test questions and has not been taken into account for scoring.

