

The Effect of Different Task Types on Learning Prepositions in Form–Focused and Meaning–Focused Interaction Enhancement-Based Classes

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The current study examines the impact of different task types on learning prepositions in form and meaning- focused interaction enhancement- based classes. The participants were 57 second Year University students enrolled in three intact lab classes at Tabriz Islamic Azad University. The first group was provided with form-focused interaction enhancement, the second with the meaning-focused interaction enhancement, and the third was the control group which received no interaction enhancement. During 12 sessions, the participants practiced using prepositions employing oral picture description and written picture description tasks. Having practiced using prepositions during the term using different tasks, the participants were presented with Oral Picture Description (OPD), and Written Picture Description (WPD) tasks in posttest. The results indicated that there are differences among the participants regarding their use of prepositions in performing oral picture description task in form and meaning– focused interaction enhancement- based classes. It also became clear that the group with meaning focused interaction

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enhancement outperformed the group with form- focused interaction enhancement and the control group. There were also differences among the participants of the three groups regarding their use of prepositions in WPD task in form and meaning -focused interaction enhancement- based classes.

Keywords: Form- Focused Interaction Enhancement, Meaning-Focused Interaction Enhancement. Oral Picture Description Task, Written Picture Description Task

Findings from a wide range of immersion acquisition studies suggest that when second language learning is solely based on communicative success, some linguistic features do not develop to target like accuracy (Harley, 1992). This occurs in spite of years of meaningful, comprehensible input and opportunities for interaction. Recent studies point to the inclusion of some degree of focus on form in classes that are primarily focused on meaning and communication. Long (1996) defined focus on form (henceforth, FonF) as interactional moves directed at raising learners' awareness of form and takes the view that instruction that includes FonF has at least two advantages over purely meaning-focused instruction: (i) it can increase salience of positive evidence and (ii) it can provide essential negative evidence in the form of direct or indirect negative feedback. The support for focus-on-form in communicative language teaching relies on three major assumptions in language learning. First, learners acquire new linguistic structures while attending to such linguistic forms in contexts where the main goal is the message, not the code (Hatch, 1978). Secondly, learners may have difficulty in producing or attending to certain linguistic forms in communication as their capacity of information processing is limited, and thirdly, as a result, language learners take advantage of the opportunities that occur during communicative learning situations to give specific attention to form (Long, 1998; Mackey & Philp, 1998).

A point that is worth mentioning deals with the fact that the meaningful input in which the formal aspects of language is inserted should be comprehensible to language learners. This is called *input hypothesis* by Krashen (1985) which states that

exposure to input that is comprehensible is both necessary and sufficient for second language learning to take place.

Krashen's input hypothesis has been criticized by many researchers for being ambiguous and imprecise and devoid of independently testable definitions given about what comprehensible input consist of. Krashen's main overall weakness, according to Mitchell and Myles (2004), was "the presentation of what were just hypotheses that remained to be tested as a comprehensive model that had empirical validity. The Interaction hypothesis is developed as additional empirical studies to offer solutions to some of the limitations in the Input hypothesis.

Long (1980) believes that the more the input is recycled and paraphrased, the greater its potential usefulness as input, because it should become increasingly well-targeted to the particular developmental needs of the individual learner. Long called this "Interaction hypothesis". Ellis (1991) indicated that the interaction hypothesis advances two main claims about the role of interaction in language acquisition. He believes that comprehensible input is adequate for language acquisition and changes to the interactional structure of conversations occurring during negotiating a communication problem help to make input comprehensible to a language learner.

In another article, Long (1983, cited from Ellis, 1991) suggested that in order to have a successful first or second language learning, it is necessary to have an access to comprehensible input, more quantities of comprehensible input accelerates language acquisition and having no access to comprehensible input will hinder acquisition.

As Ellis (1991) observed, Long (1983) embraced the views about the role of comprehensible input proposed by Krashen (1982). Researchers, who saw comprehensible input as a major point in language acquisition, as Ellis (1994) noticed, are Krashen (1981, 1985, and 1989) and Long (1981, 1983, and 1989). Although comprehensible input plays an important role in Krashen's input hypothesis and Long's interaction hypothesis, there is a difference in the ways these two researchers saw comprehensible input. As Ellis (1994) states, Krashen claimed that

input becomes comprehensible by simplification and with the help of contextual and extralinguistic clues, whereas Long argued that interactive input is more important than non-interactive input.

Regarding interaction hypothesis, Ellis (1991) believes that comprehensible input is an important element for language acquisition, modifications to the interactional structure of conversations happen during negotiating a communication problem help to make input comprehensible to a language learner and tasks where there is a need for the participants to exchange information with each other develop interactional structuring.

A situation where the conversational partners share a symmetrical role relationship offers more opportunities for interactional restructuring. There seems to be a clear shift in Long's (1989) position about the role of comprehensible input in acquisition. Long (1981) clearly stated that input is both necessary and sufficient for SLA; however, in his paper in 1989 he admitted that although comprehensible input is necessary for SLA, it may not be sufficient. Nonetheless, as Ellis (1991) elaborates, Long does not mention when or in what ways comprehensible input is insufficient for acquisition although acknowledging that input may not be sufficient for acquisition. Having reviewed and critically evaluated the interaction hypothesis, Ellis (1991, p.36) went even further by proposing "a revised version of the interactional hypothesis". In his revised version, he has mentioned that comprehensible input accelerates language learning but is neither necessary nor enough and changes to input, especially the ones occurring during negotiating a communication problem make acquisition possible if the learners: (1) comprehend the input, and (2) notice new features in it and compare what is noticed in their output. He also stated that interaction requiring learners to change their initial output facilitates the process of integration.

In the process of negotiating a communication problem, lots of modifications take place to help make the input comprehensible to a language learner. In some cases the teacher employs a communicative instructional technique in which interaction was enhanced by means of the feedback which affects language learning. This is called interaction enhancement. (Muranoi, 2000).

According to Muranio (2000), Interaction Enhancement (IE) is a treatment that guides learners to focus on form by providing interactional modifications and leads learners to produce modified output within a problem-solving task.

According to Muranio (2000) there are two types of interaction enhancement:

1. Interaction Enhancement plus Formal Debriefing (IEF): It is a kind of instruction that provides both implicit negative feedback during a problem solving activity and later explicit grammatical explanation.
2. Interaction Enhancement plus Meaning Focused Debriefing (IEM): It is a kind of instruction that provides implicit negative feedback during a problem solving task without any explicit explanation of grammar.

In the process of interaction, there are different factors that can affect learners' performance including learners' proficiency level, the kind of the task, the difficulty level of the task, etc. (Ellis, 1991). Thus, the current study examines the impact of employing different task types on learning prepositions in form and meaning- focused interaction enhancement- based classes.

It is worth mentioning that for this study the preposition system is chosen because many ESL and EFL learners, even advanced ones, use English prepositions inaccurately (e.g., overuse prepositions in non-obligatory contexts) (Master, 1990). This learning difficulty arises because preposition use depends on a variety of linguistic and pragmatic factors, such as the lack of correspondence between native and foreign language prepositional systems, and lack of salience of prepositional system in communication (Pica, 1985; Master, 1990). Yet, according to Master (1995), paying attention to preposition system is important, for preposition errors, along with article and subject-verb agreement may leave the impression that the user (learner) has inadequate control of language. From the above mentioned statement, it can be inferred that though preposition errors rarely cause miscomprehension, it is still important for ESL and EFL learners to overcome their problems with them. This work,

therefore, tries to see if the kind of task affects learners' mastery of prepositions performance either on IEF or IEM.

Thus, the current study examines the impact of employing different task types on learning prepositions in form and meaning-focused interaction enhancement- based classes.

As far as the researcher knows, there is no directly related empirical research conducted to investigate the effect of employing different task types on learning prepositions in form- focused and meaning- focused interaction enhancement based classes, yet there are some related studies as the following:

Lightbown and Spada (1990), observing communicative ESL courses in Quebec reported positive effects of focus on form. They found that a class in which form-focused instruction was provided within a communicative language teaching framework contributed to high levels of linguistic knowledge and improved command of progressive-ing and adjective-noun order in noun phrases. Long (1991) conceptualized the need to incorporate form focused instruction into meaning-oriented communicative language teaching with the term "focus on form." Focus on form, as Long defined it is a communication, with the learner's attention being drawn to linguistic elements only as they arise incidentally in lessons. This is in sharp contrast with traditional grammar instruction, or "focus-on-forms" instruction, which places a focus on forms themselves in isolation (Long, 1991, p.45-46). The significance of focus-on-form instruction has been recognized by L2 teachers and researchers, and a number of empirical studies aimed at determining the effect of focus on form have been conducted. Applying Vygotskyian sociocultural theory to L2 research, Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994) conducted a study that investigated the effect of negative feedback on L2 learning by ESL adult learners. They reported that negative feedback provided during dialogic negotiation by a tutor who constantly tried to discover the learner's zone of proximal development (the distance between a learner's actual developmental level and the level of potential development) was vital for L2 learning. They claimed that it was important for a tutor to continuously assess the learner's needs and provide appropriate help. Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994,

p.468) made the strong claim that “this process can be accomplished only through the collaborative interaction of the expert and the novice” Kowal and Swain (1994) and Swain (1998) reported data suggesting that immersion students processed L2 syntactically in dictogloss tasks in which they worked in pairs or small groups to reconstruct a text read aloud by a teacher. Kowal and Swain (1994) concluded that collaborative language production tasks promoted L2 learning by (1) making learners aware of gaps in their existing knowledge, which they would subsequently seek to fill; (2) raising their awareness of the links among form, function, and meaning; and (3) providing them with opportunities to obtain feedback.

On the basis of think-aloud data taken from immersion students engaging in a writing task, Swain and Lapkin (1995) argued that in L2 production, learners noticed a linguistic problem through either internal or external feedback, and that noticing triggered mental processes (e.g., the generation and assessment of alternatives) that led to modified output. Swain and Lapkin claimed that what went on mentally between the original output and its reprocessed form was part of the process of L2 learning.

Muranoi (2000) investigated the effect of interaction enhancement (IE) on the learning of English articles by first-year Japanese college students. She used IE as a communicative instructional technique to enhance interaction by means of implicit negative feedback provided by the teacher through recasts during a problem-solving task. Muranoi utilized two experimental groups and one contrast group. He used four kinds of tasks in the groups including oral story description, oral picture description task, written picture description task, and grammaticality judgment task. The result of the study manifested that interaction enhancement had greater effect on learner performance with articles than the contrast treatment in all elicitation tasks (except for IEM treatment in written picture description task but the strength of the effect varied with the type of the task (i.e. the instruction had greater effect on oral tasks than on written tasks).

The Research Questions and Hypotheses

The following questions were addressed in this study:

1. Do the form -focused interaction enhancement- based group, the meaning –focused interaction enhancement- based group and the control group perform differently in their use of prepositions while performing oral picture description tasks? If so, which group performs better?
2. Do the form -focused interaction enhancement- based group, the meaning –focused interaction enhancement- based group and the control group perform differently in their use of prepositions while performing written picture description tasks? If so, which group performs better?

Accordingly the following research hypotheses are formulated:

1. The form -focused interaction enhancement- based group, the meaning –focused interaction enhancement- based group and the control group perform differently in their use of prepositions while performing oral picture description tasks.
2. The form -focused interaction enhancement- based group, the meaning –focused interaction enhancement- based group and the control group perform differently in their use of prepositions while performing written picture description tasks.

Method

Participants

In this quasi-experimental study, the effects of employing different task types on learning prepositions in form- focused and meaning- focused Interaction Enhancement- Based Classes were analyzed quantitatively. The participants were chosen from among

80 students according to their proficiency scores. 57 juniors (3 classes) majoring in English Language Teaching (ELT) from Tabriz Islamic Azad university served as the participants of the study. There were 19 students in every class. These three classes were randomly assigned as two experimental and one control groups.

The students enrolled in a 2- credit course of “Language Lab”. The classes met 2 hours a week for 16 weeks. These participants were predominantly female students whose age range was between 18-25 and with regard to L1 background, most of the students were Azari- Turkish speakers and there were only a few Persian speakers in each class.

The study was performed with intact groups because students were assigned to classes on a self-selection basis. There were 19 students in every class, and their homogeneity was checked by giving a language proficiency test PET.

Instrumentations

The participants were given a general proficiency test (PET) to determine the homogeneity of the groups. Then, they were pretested on their command of English prepositional system using English preposition test which included 50 questions. Besides, the participants were also pretested on their performance regarding oral picture description (OPD), written picture description (WPD) and Grammaticality judgment tasks.

Having practiced using prepositions during the term using different tasks, the participants were presented with, oral picture description (OPD), and Written Picture Description (WPD) tasks in posttest.

In the OPD task, the students were given a picture and asked to describe the situations orally. The picture provided the students with contexts in which they had to use appropriate prepositions. The students had 30 seconds to prepare for the oral description, using several content words assigned next to each picture. All the descriptions elicited in these oral tasks were tape-recorded and analyzed.

The WPD task was used to measure the students' ability to produce English prepositions in the written mode. The students were presented with pictures presenting different activities. The WPD task had the same format as that of the OPD task but the pictures in the WPD task were not the same as those used in the OPD task. Students were directed to describe the situation by writing down sentences on an answer sheet. It is worth mentioning that these kinds of tasks were employed by Muranio (2000), in which she studied the effect of interaction enhancement on learning English definite and indefinite articles.

Procedure

The scenarios used in this study have two goals. One is to guide language learners to use the target language dealing with a communicative task; the other is to present learners obligatory contexts for a particular linguistic form. That is, the scenarios used in this study to lead learners to interact with each other in English and guide them to accurately produce a particular target form.

For this study, the researcher used three sets of scenarios. Of course it should be stated that the idea of using scenarios was first introduced by Muranio (2000). According to her, each scenario had roles A and B and it included rehearsal, performance and debriefing phases, explained in the following part:

The rehearsal phase:

In this phase, the instructor gave each learner a sheet describing a scenario to be performed. Students were directed to form pairs with their neighbors. Learners then worked in pairs for approximately 10 minutes, preparing to perform the assigned role.

Only one role was presented to each pair. The instructor emphasized that this was practice for the use of the target language in a realistic situation, thus hoping to focus the learners' central concern on communication.

The Performance Phase

After the rehearsal phase, the scenarios were performed in class. Roles A and B were all performed by Teacher-Student (T-S) pairs. For each T-S interaction, the instructor randomly

nominated one student representative, who was asked to play a role in interaction with the instructor (e.g., Role A for the instructor and Role B for a student representative).

In each class, a total of 10 different representatives participated in 10 separate strategic interactions over the course of three training sessions.

For Experimental Groups 1 and 2, the instructor enhanced interaction in order to guide the learners to produce output and modify it when it was ill formed.

The Debriefing Phase

After performing the scenarios, the instructor reviewed student performance in class. This was termed the “debriefing phase” by Di Pietro (1987). In this study, debriefing was administered in English. Experimental Group1 (the IEF group) received formal debriefing, whereas Experimental Group 2 (the IEM group) received meaning based debriefing. The formal debriefing that Experimental Group1 received was given based on the accuracy of the target form use.

Experimental Group 2 received meaning based debriefings after the performance phase. Meaning-focused debriefing was based on how successfully the intended communication is carried out. The teacher made comments on the students’ performance in terms of accuracy in communicating messages, not accuracy of the target forms.

There was no interaction enhancement in control group. This group did not receive either formal or meaning based debriefing and they were only corrected in case of any problem while they were talking. Table 1 represents the procedure:

Table 1

The Summary of the Procedures Carried out in This Work

Experimental Group 1	Experimental Group 2	Control Group
Pretest	Pretest	Pretest

Form-focused interaction Enhancement, oral picture description tasks, written picture description tasks	Meaning-focused interaction enhancement, oral picture description tasks, written picture description tasks	No interaction Enhancement, oral picture description tasks, written picture description tasks
Post test	Post test	Posttest

Data Analysis

Before testing the hypotheses of the study, the researcher ran one –way ANOVA to test the homogeneity of the participants according to their proficiency scores the results of the ANOVA test as mentioned in the following Table 2 showed that there was no significant difference among the three groups regarding their general proficiency scores.

Table 2
ANOVA Test of Proficiency Scores

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig
1.860	2	48	0.167

One Way ANOVA

	Sum of the Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between Groups	371.098	2	185.549	1.387	.260
Within Groups	6421.059	48	133.772		
Total	6792.157	50			

Given the nature of the research questions and the variables, ANCOVA was done. ANCOVA evaluates whether population means of a dependent variable (DV) are equal across levels of a categorical independent variable (IV), while statistically controlling for the effects of other continuous variables that are not of primary interest, known covariates (as CV). To this end the

data were collected and inserted into SPSS version. Two major types of analyses were performed on the data: descriptive analyses, and inferential analyses, the results of which are reported below:

Hypothesis One:

1. The form -focused interaction enhancement- based group, the meaning –focused interaction enhancement- based group and the control group perform differently in their use of prepositions while performing oral picture description tasks.

According to descriptive statistics of Table 3, in oral picture description tasks, the M scores in classes with form-based interaction enhancement in pretest and posttest were .98 and 1.53, respectively.

Table 3
Descriptive Statistics of Three Groups in Oral Picture Description Task

Oral Picture Description Tasks	N=19	Mean	Std. Deviation
Form-based interaction enhancement	Pretest	.98	.25
	Posttest	1.53	.47
Meaning Based Interaction Enhancement	Pretest	.99	.29
	Posttest	1.93	.51
Control Group	Pretest	1.28	.43
	Posttest	1.55	.55

The SD score in pretest and posttest were .25 and .47 respectively. In classes with meaning based- interaction enhancement the M scores were .99 and 1.93 respectively. The SD was .29 and .51. In control group the M scores were 1.28 and 1.55 and the SD were .43, .55 respectively.

Before conducting the ANCOVA test, one sample Kolmogorov test was run to test the normality distribution of the

data. The result of this test showed that the pretest scores ($p=.052$) and the posttest scores ($p=.655$) were distributed normally (Table 4).

Table 4

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

Posttest	Pretest	N=57
.733	1.843	Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z
.655	.052	Asymp.Sig. (2-tailed)

By considering the above mentioned points the following covariate analysis is performed.

Table 5

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
PRE	.259	1	.259	.967	.330	.018
GROUP	2.104	2	1.052	3.921	.026	.129
Error	14.221	53	.268			

a R Squared = .132 (Adjusted R Squared = .082)

The result of covariate analysis on the impact of interaction enhancement on learning prepositions in oral picture description task has shown that the effect is significant ($F=3.92$, $P=.026$ is less than .05). As it is manifested in table 5, the Partial Eta Squared is .12. So it can be concluded that .12 of learning prepositions is related to the impact of interaction enhancement shown in oral picture description task.

To determine if there is a significant differences among three groups in dealing with oral picture description tasks, the covariate analysis was performed. Table 7 presents the results:

Table 7

Group Differences

GROUP	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval
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			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
form-based	1.556(a)	.121	1.314	1.798
meaning-based	1.950(a)	.121	1.708	2.192
control	1.512(a)	.126	1.260	1.765

a Covariates appearing in the model are evaluated at the following values: PRE = 1.0863.

According to Table 7, the mean score in group with form focused interaction enhancement is 1.556 while in group with meaning focused interaction enhancement it is 1.950 and in control group, it is 1.512. So it can be concluded that the group with meaning – focused interaction enhancement has outperformed in oral picture description task in comparison with the group provided with form- focused interaction enhancement and the control group. Thus according to data results, it can be inferred that the hypotheses one and two are confirmed.

Hypothesis Two:

1. The form -focused interaction enhancement- based group, the meaning –focused interaction enhancement- based group and the control group perform differently in their use of prepositions while performing written picture description tasks.

According to descriptive statistics, in written picture description tasks, the M scores in classes with form-based interaction enhancement in pretest and posttests are 1.09 and 2.33 respectively. The SD scores in pretest and posttests are .31 and .65 respectively. In classes with meaning based interaction enhancement the M scores are .84 and 1.22 respectively. The SD scores are .27 and .65. In control group the M scores are 1.01 and 1.36 and the SD scores are .26 and .42.

Table 8

Descriptive Statistics of Three Groups in Written Picture Description Tasks

Written Picture Description Tasks	N=19	Mean	Std. Deviation
Form-based interaction	Pretest	1.09	.31

enhancement	Posttest	2.33	.65
Meaning Based Interaction Enhancement	Pretest	.84	.27
	Posttest	1.92	.65
Control Group	Pretest	1.01	.26
	Posttest	1.36	.42

As mentioned earlier, before conducting the ANCOVA test, one sample Kolmogrov test was run to test the normality distribution of the data. The result of this test showed that the pretest scores ($p=.846$) and the posttest scores ($p=.655$) were distributed normally (Table 9).

Table 9
One- Sample Kolmogrov-Smirnov Test

Posttest	Pretest	N=57
.613	1.411	Sample Kolmogrov- Smirnov Z
.846	.057	Asymp.Sig. (2-tailed)

Table 10
Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
PRE	.262	1	.262	.748	.391	.014
GROUP	8.686	2	4.343	12.415	.000	.319
Error	18.540	53	.350			

a R Squared = .332 (Adjusted R Squared = .294)

The result of covariate analysis on the impact of interaction enhancement on learning prepositions in written picture description task has shown that the effect is significant ($F=12.41$, and $P=.00$ is less than $.05$). As it is manifested in Table 10, the Partial Eta Squared is $.31$, So it can be concluded that 31% of learning prepositions is related to the impact of interaction enhancement shown in written picture description task.

To see if there is a difference among the participants in dealing with written picture description tasks, the covariate analysis was carried out. Table 12 indicates the result:

Table 11
Group Difference

GROUP	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
form-based	2.305(a)	.139	2.026	2.584
meaning-based	1.959(a)	.141	1.676	2.243
control	1.358(a)	.136	1.086	1.631

a Covariates appearing in the model are evaluated at the following values: PRE = .9847.

According to Table 11, the mean score in group with form-focused interaction enhancement is 2.305 while in group with meaning focused interaction enhancement it is 1.959 and in control group, it is 1.358. So it can be concluded that the group with form – focused interaction enhancement has outperformed in comparison with the group provided with meaning- focused interaction enhancement and the control group. Thus the third and fourth hypotheses were confirmed as well.

Discussion

This study aimed at examining the effect of different task types in form- focused and meaning – focused interaction enhancement- based classes. The first hypothesis stating that there are differences among the participants regarding their use of prepositions in performing oral picture description task in form – focused and meaning- focused interaction enhancement- based classes were confirmed.

By comparing the groups using oral picture description task in form and meaning focused interaction enhancement task, it became manifested that the group with meaning focused interaction enhancement has outperformed the group with form-focused interaction enhancement and the control group. To justify this, in meaning- focused interaction enhancement based classes,

debriefing was based on how successfully the intended communication is carried out. In this class, the teacher makes comments on the students' performance in terms of accuracy in communicating messages, not accuracy of the target forms. Thus, this kind of debriefing can help students to be more successful and fluent in describing oral picture tasks than other groups. This is in contrast with the findings of Muranoi (2000) who had worked on the effect of form –focused and meaning –focused interaction enhancement on learning English articles. The results of his study had manifested that IEF treatment had greater effects on students' performance in all tasks than the IEM treatment.

The second hypotheses stating that there are differences among the participants regarding their use of prepositions in performing written picture description task in form and meaning – focused interaction enhancement based classes were confirmed and it became clear that in dealing with written picture description tasks, the group with form- focused interaction enhancement outperformed the groups with meaning- focused interaction enhancement and the control group in dealing with written picture tasks. Regarding the better performance of the group with form-focused interaction enhancement in performing written picture description tasks, it can be stated that this finding is in line with lots of other research studies which have stated that communicative instruction should involve systematic treatments to draw language learners' attention to linguistic forms in order to develop well-balanced communicative competence. (Doughty & Williams, 1998; Lightbown & Spada, 1990; Long & Robinson, 1998). This finding is also in line with the findings of Swain and Lapkin (1995) that on the basis of think-aloud data taken from immersion students engaging in a writing task, they argued that in L2 production, learners noticed a linguistic problem through either internal or external feedback, and that noticing triggered mental processes which led to modified output.

Conclusion

The results of this study uncovered the following:

1. There are differences among the participants regarding their

use of prepositions in performing oral picture description task in form - focused and meaning -focused interaction enhancement based classes.

Comparing the groups' performances in dealing with oral picture description task in form and meaning focused interaction enhancement based classes; it became clear that the group with meaning focused interaction enhancement has outperformed the group with form- focused interaction enhancement and the control group.

2. There are differences among the participants regarding their use of prepositions in written picture description task in form – focused and meaning focused interaction enhancement based classes.

By comparing the groups using written picture description task in form and meaning focused interaction enhancement based classes, it became manifested that the group with form focused interaction enhancement were better than the group with meaning-focused interaction enhancement and the control group.

Pedagogical Implications

The results of this study suggest that if explicit grammar instruction is incorporated in an interactive problem solving task, it will develop learners' interlanguage. It also states that helping learners to focus on form within a meaningful instruction based on cognitive theories of language acquisition is completely profitable. Another point that is worth mentioning deals with the fact that, teacher should realize the importance of pair/group work for learners' language learning in general. Pair/group work gives students a strong sense of motivation and accomplishment. Students can help each other to perform the activities which they do not handle by themselves. In this study, participants in both experimental groups were involved in pair/group work and tried to handle their problems in understanding meaning of texts and also their linguistic difficulties with the help of their peers and their teacher.

Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

Like other studies, this study suffers from some limitations. Because of the administrative problems, random sampling was not possible, and the learners of the usual language laboratory classes of Islamic Azad University, Tabriz branch participated in this study.

As the researcher was also the instructor in training sessions, this study may have had such problems as "researcher expectancy" (Beck & Eubank, 1991; Brown, 1988). Though the researcher was very careful and followed the steps required for every group during training sessions to avoid influencing learner performance along the lines of her predictions for the experiment, it is not possible to claim that the expectancy effect had absolutely no impact on the data, because no objective evaluation of the effect was made. The data, therefore, must be interpreted with consideration of the possible influence of "researcher expectancy", which is another limitation of this study.

Furthermore, certain delimitations were imposed on this study. First, the participants were limited to intermediate level students, so generalizations to other levels would not be suitable. The next delimitation deals with the fact that, in this study only three kind of tasks including oral picture description (OPD) and written picture description (WPD) were taken into consideration. The last delimitation concerns the fact that this study was just limited to prepositions and other grammatical aspects are not studied.

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Suggestions for Further Studies.

This research has dealt with the impact of interaction enhancement on learning prepositions, in further studies; researchers can investigate the effect of interaction enhancement on learning other grammatical aspects as well.

In this study, the researcher has selected two kinds of tasks including oral picture description and written picture description ones. Later studies can be conducted to consider and include other kinds of tasks.

Another point that worths mentioning deals with the fact that, this study was conducted with intact groups. Other kinds of related researches might be carried by exerting strict control over the experimental conditions and assigning the participants according to their proficiency level. This would help the researcher to examine the fact of this variable as well.

In this study gender was not taken into consideration. Similar studies can be designed to study the effect of gender and to see the impact of this moderate variable on learning prepositions in interaction enhancement based classes.

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