An Exploration of Focus on Form Instruction on Grammatical Competence of Iranian EFL Learners Utilizing Input Enhancement Technique

Leila Dobakhti[1*], Samin Shams Khorrami[2]

[1*]Associate Professor in TEFL, Tabriz Islamic Art University, Tabriz, Iran.*l.dobakhti@tabriziau.ac.ir*

[2]M.A. in TEFL, University of Tabriz, Tabriz, Iran. *s.shams2009@gmail.com*

Abstract

Upholding the integration of form and meaning, focus on form approach can increase both accuracy and fluency of EFL learners. This paper evaluates the role of focus on form approach, i.e. input enhancement, on the acquisition of passive voice in English. The degree of implicitness or explicitness of instruction is explored to ensure whether it affects learning of a specific form of the language. The pretest-treatment-posttest design was used in this quasi-experimental research with two groups: experimental (n=20) and control (n= 17). A proficiency test and a pretest were administered to guarantee the learners' homogeneity and their passive voice knowledge. The experimental group received the instruction through input enhancement technique. However, the control group was taught through the traditional method (i.e. focus on formS). The superiority of focus on form technique over the focus on formS was revealed through the one-way ANOVA and post-hoc test. The course book writers and teachers can use the findings of this research.

1. Introduction

Different methods and techniques are used by teachers and learners in the acquisition process of a foreign or second language. Considering the history of approaches to learning and teaching grammar, focus on form is an effective approach which is an important issue in SLA research. This innovative method was introduced after the development of communicative language learning and was put forward by Long (1991) and Long and Robinson (1998, as cited in Poole, 2005). The importance of focus on form method lies on some benefits that are proposed by some researchers and instructors. In implementing focus on form approach, a lesson starts with completing a communicative task. And a teacher tries to draw learners' attention to a grammatical point. That is, the teaching syllabus reflects the learners' 'inbuilt syllabus' (Nunan, 1998). Ellis, Basturkmen and Loewen (2001) classified form-focused instructions into two types: Focus-on-Forms and Focus-on-Form. In the first type, the focus is on the form, i.e. the linguistic features are attended to but in the latter one, the attention to form is taken through meaning-centered activities during a communicative task.

Among various techniques introduced for this approach, input enhancement technique was chosen to be investigated in terms of efficiency in raising grammatical knowledge. The effectiveness of this techniques was explored through performing some focused tasks, the focus of which was on English passive voice and was implemented in an academic EFL context. In this study, the output of the aforementioned technique was compared to that of the traditional approach to see if there is any superiority of one over the other in terms of accuracy and thus acquisition of EFL grammar.

2. Literature Reviw

One of the controversial issues in applied linguistics is the degree of attention to grammar instruction in a communicative class (Sheen, 2002). Some researchers believe in less attention to grammar instruction and no interruption in communication. For example, Doughty and Valera (1998) paid limited attention to grammar by using corrective feedback because they believed that communication should not be interfered with grammar instruction. On the other hand, scholars such as DeKeyser (1998) attended to grammar separately through performing communicative tasks. This is equated with the traditional type of teaching grammar, i.e. focus on forms as proposed by Long (1988, as cited in Sheen, 2002) and Doughty and Valera's approach is equated with Long's (1991) 'focus on form' approach. In this approach, the overriding focus is on meaning and communication, in which the learners' attention is drawn to the linguistic features incidentally. Aa Doguhty and Williams (1998) state:

Focus on form refers to how focal attentional resources are allocated. Focus on form often consists of an occasional shift of attention to linguistic code features by the teacher and/or one or more students – triggered by perceived problems with comprehension or production (p. 23).

Various techniques introduced by different SLA researchers and conductors are listed as below:

Dictogloss in which a text is read to the learners and then they are asked to reconstruct it in order to reflect the specific linguistic forms which are focused in that text. This can be done in pairs or groups through interaction because as suggested in some studies more learning is achieved through interaction rather than doing it individually (Swain, 1998).

Negotiation, which is communicating through some questions about how a specific form is taught and learnt (Lightbown, 1998).

Consciousness-raising tasks are similar to those used in input enhancement, the only difference being that they consider the role of mind in learning and promote a stimulus event in conscious awareness in order to have it stored in long-term memory (Harley, 1998).

Task essential language which claims that it is necessary to use specific forms in completing a task (Doughty &Williams, 1998b).

Input flooding, in which natural examples of a specific form are included in a text. It is assumed that very high frequency of occurrence will attract the learners' attention to that specific form (Doughty & Williams, 1998a).

Input enhancement, which tries to attract the learners' attention to a specific form by highlighting, coloring, writing in bold face or even writing with capital letters, etc. (Long & Robinson, 1998).

Output enhancement, which helps the students, produce output that coats the specific linguistic forms (Doughty& Williams, 1998a).

Garden path is a technique that points out the errors made by learners at the moment of generality in order to tell learners about a linguistic regularity accompanied with its exceptions (Doughty & Williams, 1998b).

Input processing tries to incorporate the knowledge into one's interlanguage by interpreting the input (Williams & Evans, 1998).

Interaction enhancement helps the learners see a mismatch between their interlanguage and the target language form by providing interactional modifications in their output (Doughty & Williams, 1998b).

Input flooding is a technique which tries to attract learners' attention to a form through exposure to very high frequency of the structure. It

provides a text, focus of which is on a specific form and contains natural examples of the focusedform. (Williams & Evans, 1998)

The motivation for focus on form is due to the immersion and naturalistic acquisition studies which argue that when classroom second language learning is meaning-focused, some linguistic features cannot be developed as target features (Harley & Swain, 1984 as cited in Doughty & Williams, 1998a). On the basis of such works, it is claimed that focus on form moves the learners toward the target-like language ability. This is a strong claim, but there is also a weaker claim that "even if such a focus may not be absolutely necessary, it may be part of a more efficient language learning experience in that it can speed up natural acquisition processes" (Doughty & Williams, 1998a, p. 2).

2.1. Input Enhancement Technique

Input enhancement is a technique of focus on form approach that tries to attract learners' attention in various ways. Visual input enhancement is one way to do this, for example, by highlighting, color-coding, and font manipulation (Lee & Huang, 2008). The second way is the auditory version of input enhancement that can be manipulated, for example, by intonational focus on learners' errors. These techniques are relatively implicit, since they make the forms salient but do not offer any explicit explanation (Doughty & Williams, 1998a). In this regard, White (1998) suggested that although enhanced input that draws learners' attention to a linguistic feature may increase the acquisition of that feature, implicit focus on form instruction may not be enough in dealing with L1-L2 contrasts. Since this technique may be too implicit to be efficient, we put some negotiation of form and meaning in our study to raise the explicitness of the instruction (Doughty & Williams, 1998b). In other words, in order to raise the explicitness of both techniques used in this study, we combined them with negotiation technique. This is in accordance with what Doughty and Williams (1998b) pointed out about the pedagogical choices on focus on form techniques.

White (1998) studied the relationship between enhanced input and the acquisition of the linguistic features, the acquisition of which is usually problematic for the learners. These specific features were typologically enhanced, i.e. manipulation of italics, bolding, enlargement, and underlining. The target of instruction was the selection of third person singular possessive determiners (PDs). There were three treatment conditions in this study: group E+ (N=27) received extensive reading and listening and also an extra typologically enhanced input flood; Group E (N=30) received a typologically unenhanced input flood and group U (N=29) received a typologically enhanced input flood. The instruction for all the groups took 10 hours but the instructional packages were different. Group E+ and group E received the same instructional materials in which all third person singular pronouns and

PDs were visually enhanced and the participants were required to do some tasks after reading the text. The results suggested the superiority of participants exposed to enhanced input over those who were not in speed of acquisition but it is not sufficient especially when the L1 and L2 differences are not evident to the learner on the basis of positive evidence available in the input.

The effectiveness of two types of form-focused instruction and the development of L2 pragmatic competence were investigated by Nguyen, Pham, and Pham (2012). To do so, form-focused instructions were limited to two types: input enhancement and recast. This study adopted a quasi-experimental, pretest/posttest design with two experimental and one control group. The participants included 36 male and female Vietnamese pre-service EFL teachers studying in a teacher training instruction. The results showed a significant improvement in both treatment groups in posttest over the pretest and also maintained their development in delayed posttest. However, the explicit group performed much better than the implicit group.

In this regard, Swain, (1998) suggested the presentation of explicit rules for the learners to overcome their problems in using a variety of forms. Although they had problem in using those forms correctly, it was clear that they noticed them at some level. She also suggested following the rule presentation by activities that required the learners to use their output. It can help them overcome their problem with their interlanguage inadequacies by using their implicit and explicit knowledge (Doughty & Williams, 1998b).

A high level of linguistic competence may not be achieved through instructions that focus only on meaning as indicated in the case of immersion programs in Canada in which the students failed to achieve linguistic competence (accuracy) although they had linguistic performance (fluency) (Swain, 1995, as cited in Ellis, Basturkmen & Loewen, 2002). If the focus is only on form, then accuracy will be achieved but learners will lack fluency. Humans' attentional capacity is limited and learning grammatical features of English may need attending to them. So while the learners are engaged in communication, grammar instruction may increase learners' ability to pay attention to aspects of English that might otherwise escape their attention (Schmidt, 1990). In many cases, attention to form involves consideration of the meaning which is conveyed by a particular form (Ellis, et al., 2002).

Kian and Gorjian (2018) investigated the effect of two types of attention drawing techniques (i.e. choice and underlining) on the learners' intake of English connectors through a quasi-experimental research. Some sixtynine pre-intermediate participants were assigned to two experimental and a control group in Kalam Language Institute in Shoush. For the two experimental groups, attention-drawing techniques were used and the correct

connectors in the texts were chosen or underlined. The control group, however, was simply exposed to read the text and exercise the drills of grammar in their text. The results revealed that both attention-drawing techniques significantly affected the intake of the targeted forms of connectors and the implications of the study for practical teaching suggest that the attention-drawing techniques may affect teaching grammar to the learners positively.

In a more recent study, three types of input enhancements, i.e. visual input enhancement, semantic input enhancement, and input flooding were investigated in terms of efficiency. The participants were divided into three experimental groups and one control group and a pretest was administered. Then after conducting the treatment, two posttests of comprehension and production of L2 vocabulary were administered. The results indicated that all the three experimental groups outperformed the control group in the posttest. So the efficiency of input enhancement technique in mastering L2 materials was proved (Namaziandost, et al., 2020)

Among various techniques introduced for focus on form approach, input enhancement was chosen to be investigated in terms of its efficiency in raising grammatical knowledge. The effectiveness of this technique was explored through performing some focused tasks, the focus of which was on English passive voice and was implemented in an academic EFL context. In this article, the output of the aforementioned technique will be compared to that of the traditional approach to see if there is a superiority of one over the other in terms of accuracy and acquisition of EFL grammar. Additionally, the attitudes of the learners participating in this study who were university students studying English as a foreign language were also elaborated. The present study was an attempt to answer the following research questions:

1. Does the outcome of form-focused technique of input enhancement with respect to specific constructions (the English passive voice) differ from that of traditional method in an Iranian EFL context?

2. Does any kind of noticing happen when the input enhancement technique is conducted in an EFL learning class?

3. In which episode of input enhancement technique does 'simple noticing' happen?

4. In which episode of the input enhancement technique does 'noticing the gap' happen?

5. In which episode of input enhancement technique does 'noticing a hole' happen?

6.What are university students' attitudes toward the input enhancement technique?

3. Method

3.1. Participants

Two classes comprising 37 male and female students who enrolled in low intermediate level of proficiency in English at University college of Nabi Akram in Tabriz participated in this study. The number of participants was limited due to two reasons. The first was the lack of classes at the proper proficiency level at that university. The second reason was lack of classes with the same teacher in order to minimize the effect of teachers' differences on attracting learners' attention to each type of instruction. Based on their scores on the proficiency test, most of the learners were decided to be at low intermediate level since they received less than 30 (60%), the minimum mark require for *Nelson's Test.* The learners were randomly assigned into two intact classes, one of which was the experimental group and the second one was the control group. The age of the learners ranged from 18 to 30 and they were studying translation studies for B.A. and their background language was Turkish and Persian. Since the participants were studying translation studies, they had the experience of studying general English in the first and second semester. So, it was assumed that they had background knowledge in English. Before conducting the treatments, they were pre-tested in order to see if their knowledge in English passive voice did not differ significantly. Analyzing the results of both proficiency and pretest confirmed the homogeneity of the participants in the experimental and control group.

3.2. Design of the Study

A pretest-treatment-posttest design was used in this quasi-experimental study. The treatment was conducted after administering a proficiency test and a pretest. This test was administered in advance to the posttest in order to guarantee the learners' homogeneity in proficiency level and also their background knowledge in English passive voice. The posttest was then administered after conducting the treatment to measure the effectiveness of the technique of focus on form approach on grammatical competence of the experimental group. The experimental group was compared with a control group (n= 17) who received no treatment. The experimental group received the treatment. They were randomly selected from different classes of one teacher studying the same courses.

The treatment that was the independent variable of this study consisted of the technique of focus on form approach. The experimental group received the instruction through input enhancement technique. The present study was carried out at the University college of Nabi Akram in Tabriz. This college, though private, is authorized by ministry of higher education and the students studying in this college should pass the university entrance exam in order to

get into it. The population of this study involved students studying Translation Studies at this university.

3.3. Materials

A proficiency test was the first instrument used in the present study. Three equivalent tests (300 A, B and C) that covered a wide range of items appropriate for intermediate learners were chosen from *Nelson English Language Tests*. "All items of these tests have been carefully pre-tested" (Flower & Coe, 1976, p. 26). At the second stage of the procedure, a pretest was used to test the participants' background knowledge on the English passive voice. This test was arranged in two formats, half of which was in multiple-choice forms and the other half was supply type tests. The multiple-choice questions were selected from *Objective Tests* (Orleans & Sealy, 1928) and the supply types were selected from two books entitled: *Intermediate Language Practice* by Michael Vince and *Oxford Living Grammar: Pre-intermediate*.

A posttest was also utilized in this study that was used as an instrument to measure the effectiveness of the treatment. The arrangement and sources of the posttest were also the same as the pretest. Another instrument that was utilized in the present study was a focused text that was typologically enhanced. This text was adopted from Willis (as cited in Kuiken & Vedder, 2002). Since the focus of the text was on passive form, all passive forms were boldfaced, enlarged and underlined for the purpose of raising learners' awareness of passive form and eliciting its use in English as the target language. Additionally, the different types of passive voice were also distinguished by the type of underlining in a way that type I passives that were verbal constructions with one auxiliary verb were underlined in dots; type II passives that consisted of two auxiliaries were simply underlined and type III passives that have three auxiliaries were double underlined.

An attitude test and a noticing report were handed to the participants after conducting the treatment. The attitude test was adapted from Shak (2006) to see what the participants' attitudes toward the technique was. To find out the time of occurrence of different types of noticing, we made a noticing report sheet for the learners. In this sheet, we asked the participants to report the episodes in which three types of noticing had happened for them.

3.4. Target of Instruction

The English passive voice, as a syntactic construct, was chosen as the target of instruction. The problem with passive voice may stem from the differences between both the form and its use in learners' L1 and in English as a foreign language (EFL). Most of Iranian EFL learners consider passive structure as rather one of the problematic areas in learning English as a

foreign language. Taking a look at the grammatical categories in the syllabus of the selected classes which was preplanned by the college authorities, the passive voice that was among the categories was chosen as our target of instruction after consulting the teacher. As put by Branden (2007), focus on form techniques can work best for language learning classes but their degree of efficiency may differ according to some variables such as the level of proficiency, age or attitude of the learners. The attitudes of learners toward the technique of focus on form were investigated in this study to explore the relationship between the success of focus on form technique and the learners' attitudes toward it.

3.5. Procedure

The classroom treatment consisted of form-focused instruction and was implemented for about 90 minutes over a period of two sessions. Before the actual treatment phase, a proficiency test and a pretest were administered to guarantee the participants' homogeneity in proficiency level in general and their previous knowledge on English passive voice in particular. The control group, with the same proficiency level at the same university, was taught the same linguistic feature. Additionally, the text used in the study was based on the students' level in terms of vocabulary and grammar. Moreover, in order not to affect the participants' attention and also to remove the effect of the teacher, their own teacher (not the researchers) set up the activity. A voice recorder was imbedded inside the white board before starting the class to record what was going on in the class. The participants were divided into teams of two or three members, for sharing their ideas and knowledge in completing the tasks. The classes were audiotaped and a noticing report and an attitude test were given to both groups at the end of the class.

In this technique, a focused text – the same text used in the dictogloss group – was handed to all the participants. The passive forms used in the text were typologically enhanced, i.e. they were boldfaced, enlarged and underlined in order to attract the learners' attention. The learners first read the text for themselves and then read it along with the teacher. While reading with the teacher, they did negotiation of both meaning and form and their errors were corrected by the teacher. Then, the teacher asked the learners to give some examples about themselves in passive voice. Different episodes of input enhancement technique according to which the reporting sheets were prepared are as below:

- First episode: the learners took a short look at the enhanced text.

- Second episode: the learners read the text individually.

- Third episode: the learners negotiated the meaning of the text with the teacher and other participants.

- Fourth episode: the learners negotiated the forms which were focused in the text with the teacher and other participants.

- Fifth episode: the learners were asked to give some examples on passive form.

In the control group class, the passive voice was taught with the same teacher but with a traditional method. Traditional method here refers to focus on forms approach in which the focus is only on forms and thus the instruction is explicit. The test given to the experimental group was also administered to the control group and the correction and scoring was also the same.

3.6. Data Analysis

At first, we did a descriptive analysis on the scores of all the tests: proficiency test, pretest and posttest. We also used one-way ANOVA and Post-Hoc Tests in order to compare the results of tests between the groups. To answer the first question which asks about the efficiency of form-focused techniques with respect to specific constructions (the English passive voice) compared to the traditional teaching method in an Iranian EFL context, the performances of both groups in posttest was compared to see if there is any significant difference between the groups. This comparison is reasonable only if we could guarantee the homogeneity of groups in their level of proficiency and previous knowledge on English passive voice. The scores of the proficiency test and pretest gained by the participants made it clear that both of the groups were homogenous and their performances in the posttest could be compared. The treatments were then conducted for both groups. Then the posttest was administered to measure the effectiveness of the aforementioned technique of focus on form approach on grammatical competence of our experimental group. The results show the mean score of the proficiency test of the control group (group 1) =19.53 which was almost equal to that of the experimental group (group 2) = 19.94 and also mean score of the pretest of the control group (group 1) =15.12 which was almost equal to mean score of the first experimental group (group 2) = 15.39. The comparison between the actual variation of the group averages was expressed in terms of the F ratio; F (found variation of the group averages) is divided by expected variation of the group averages. To find out the time of occurrence of different types of noticing, we made a noticing report paper for the experimental group. In this paper, we asked the participants to report the episodes in which three types of noticing had happened for them. Then the frequency of occrance in each episode was analyzed.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Results

4.1.1. Resalts of the Proficiency Test

The results of descriptive analysis done by the SPSS revealed that the level of proficiency of the two groups was similar. It can be simply concluded through comparing the mean scores of the proficiency test taken by the two groups: mean score of proficiency test of the control group (group 1) =19.53, mean score of proficiency test of second experimental group (group 2) = 19.94 (Table 1 and Table 2). A multiple comparison was done between the mean scores of proficiency test and the difference between them was calculated. It illustrated no significant difference between the proficiency levels of the groups (Table 3). By means of one-way ANOVA and Post-Hoc Test, a multiple comparison was done between the mean scores of the proficiency test and the difference between them was calculated. It illustrated no significant difference between the proficiency level of the groups: the mean difference of the groups one and two = -0.415≤0 (table 4).

4.1.2. Results of the Pretest

Reviewing the results of analysis showed that the mean scores of the pretest taken by the two groups were similar: the mean score of pretest for the control group is =15.12, and the mean score of pretest of the experimental group is =15.30 (Table 1 and Table 2). Comparing the groups based on their pretest scores indicated no significant difference between the mean scores of the groups. Thus, it can be concluded that the background knowledge of the two groups was somehow the same and it showed the homogeneity of the participants in our study. So their background knowledge could not significantly affect the learners' performance (Table 3). Comparison of the pretest scores of the two groups through one-way ANOVA and Post-Hoc Test indicated no significant difference between the mean scores of the groups: the mean difference of groups one and two = -0. 271≤0 (Table 4). Thus it can be concluded that the background knowledge of both groups was somehow the same and it showed the homogeneity of the participants in our study. So their background knowledge could not significantly affect the learners' performance.

4.1.3. Results of the Posttest

There was a significant difference between the mean scores of the posttests: the mean score of the posttest of control group is 18.65 and the mean score of the posttest of the experimental group is 26.17 (Table 1 & Table 2). The significant differences between the mean scores of the two groups in the posttest showed that the experimental group outperformed the control group and it proved the efficiency of focus on form instruction in teaching English passive voice for Iranian EFL learners. The mean scores of

the groups were compared and again a significant difference could be seen. These differences could again prove the efficiency of our treatments (Table 3 and Figure1).

In Table 4 the mean scores of the groups are illustrated and again a significant difference is seen: the mean difference of groups one and two = $7.520 \geq 0$ (see Table 4).

Table 1

Mean Scores of Groups 1 (Control) and 2 (Input enhancement) for Pretest and Posttest

		Group			
		1		2	
		Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest
Mean		15.12	18.65	15.39	26.17
Std. Deviation		4.526	4.182	6.040	3.552
Valid N (list wise)	Unweighted	17	17	18	18
	Weighted	17.000	17.000	18.000	18.000

Table 2

Mean Scores of Groups 1 (Control) and 2 (Input enhancement) for Proficiency test, Pretest and Posttest

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
proficiency	1	17	19.53	8.202	1.989	15.31	23.75	8	33
	2	18	19.94	6.983	1.646	16.47	23.42	7	32
Posttest	1	17	18.65	4.182	1.014	16.50	20.80	10	27
	2	18	26.17	3.552	.837	24.40	27.93	21	30
Pretest	1	17	15.12	4.526	1.098	12.79	17.44	7	25
	2	18	15.39	6.040	1.424	12.39	18.39	7	26
	Total	55	15.27	5.553	749	13.77	16.77	4	27

Table 3

Summary of Differences and Significance of Mean Scores of Groups 1 (Control) and 2 (Input Enhancement) for Proficiency Test, Pretest and Posttest

Dependent Variable	(I) group	(J) group	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
proficiency	1	2	-.415	2.740	.880	-5.91	5.08
	2	1	.415	2.740	.880	-5.08	5.91
Posttest	1	2	-7.520[*]	1.526	.000	-10.58	-4.46
	2	1	7.520[*]	1.526	.000	4.46	10.58
Pretest	1	2	-.271	1.913	.888	-4.11	3.57
	2	1	.271	1.913	.888	-3.57	4.11

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 4

Summary of Differences and Significance of Mean Scores of Groups 1 (Control) and 2 (Input Enhancement) for Proficiency Test, Pretest and Posttest

Dependent Variable	(I) group	(J) group	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
proficiency	1	2	-.415	2.740	.880	-5.91	5.08
	2	1	.415	2.740	.880	-5.08	5.91
Posttest	1	2	-7.520*	1.526	.000	-10.58	-4.46
	2	1	7.520*	1.526	.000	4.46	10.58
Pretest	1	2	-.271	1.913	.888	-4.11	3.57
	2	1	.271	1.913	.888	-3.57	4.11

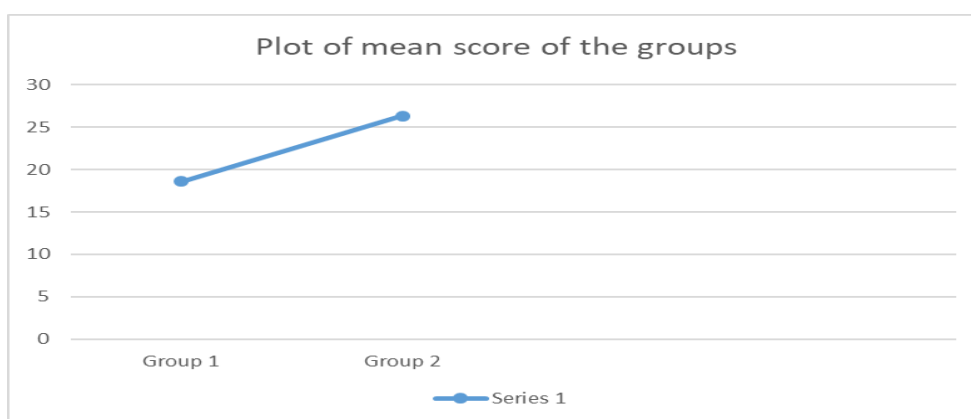*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Figure 1. A Comparison of the Mean Scores of Three Groups for the Effect of Instructions on Their Linguistic Competence

4.1.4. Results of the Different Kinds of Noticing Happening in Different Episodes of Input Enhancement Technique

4.1.4.1. Simple Noticing

Simple noticing in input enhancement technique occurred at the beginning of the instruction. It might be because of the enhanced text given to the students in which all the passive verbs were bold-faced and thus prominent. (Figure 2)

Only one student (5.6 %) out of eighteen chose the forth episode. Two students (11.1%) chose the third episode and five (27.8%) the first one (Table 5).

Table 5

Frequency of Simple noticing Occurring in Different Episodes of Input Enhancement Technique

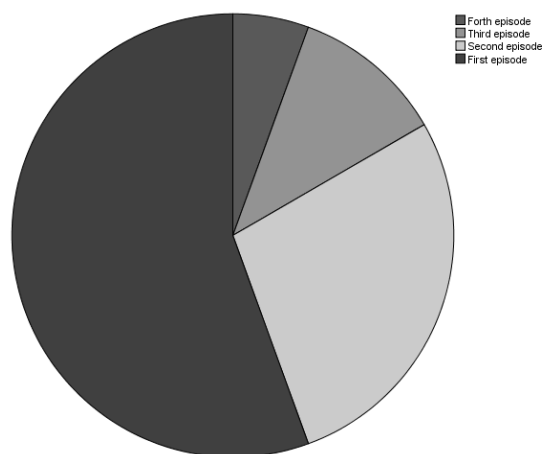|		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Forth episode	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
	Third episode	2	11.1	11.1	16.7
	Second episode	5	27.8	27.8	44.4
	First episode	10	55.6	55.6	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

Figure 2. Frequency of Simple Noticing Occurring in Different Episodes of Input Enhancement Technique

4.1.4.2. Noticing the Gap

The gap between the learners' interlanguage and the target language occurred at the forth episode of the instruction of input enhancement technique. A glance at Figure 3 makes it clear that the majority of learners chose the fourth episode and just a few mentioned the third and first ones (Figure 3.). The interesting point is that no one chose the second and fifth episodes.

In other words, the number of students who chose the third episode (six out of eighteen, i.e. 33.3%) is three times more than those who chose the first one (two out of eighteen, i.e. 11.1%) (Table 6).

Table 6

Frequency of Noticing a Gap Occurring at Different Episodes of Input Enhancement Technique

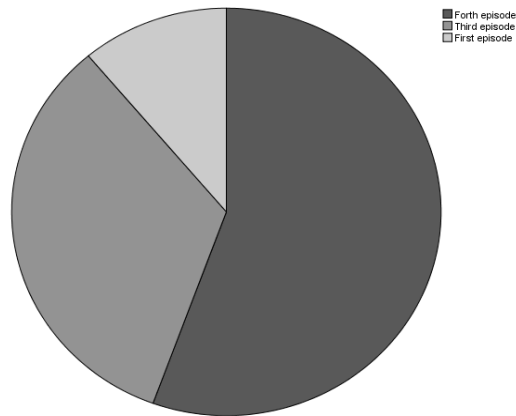|		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Forth episode	10	55.6	55.6	55.6
	Third episode	6	33.3	33.3	88.9
	First episode	2	11.1	11.1	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

Figure 3. Frequency of Noticing the Gap Occurring in Different Episodes of Input Enhancement Technique

4.1.4.3. Noticing a Hole

The frequency of answers to the last question of the reporting paper given to the input enhancement group was rather critical. It was because the frequencies were almost similar and the differences were not much significant to make any claim about it (Figure 4).

The detailed frequencies of each episode are as below: there were three missing answers, i.e. 16.7% of students did not experience this type of noticing in any section of this instruction. Some seven students (38.9%) agreed on the fifth episode, as mentioned above were the majority in this study, five students (27.8%) agreed on the forth and three of them (16.7%) on the third episode (Table 7).

Table 7

Frequency of Noticing a Hole Occurring in Different Episodes of Input Enhancement Technique

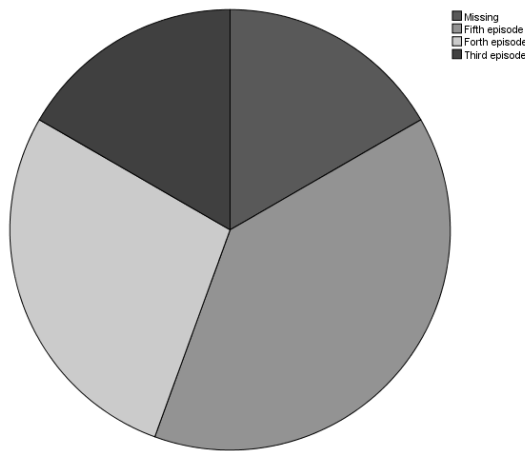|		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Missing	3	16.7	16.7	16.7
	Fifth episode	7	38.9	38.9	55.6
Valid	Forth episode	5	27.8	27.8	83.3
	Third episode	3	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

Figure 4. Frequency of Noticing a Hole Occurring in Different Episodes of Input Enhancement Technique

4.1.5. Learners' Attitudes toward the Two Techniques

4.1.5.1. The First Question of Attitude Test

Question 1: I enjoyed doing this activity.   A lot   so so   not at all

The first question of the attitude test asked the learners if the task was joyful and if yes, how much did they like it. Approximately, ninety-four percent of the replies of the input enhancement group indicated agreement on the joyfulness of the activity. In other words, seventeen out of eighteen students (94.4%) enjoyed the activity "a lot" (Table 8 and figure 5).

Table 8

Frequency of Positive and Negative Answers to the Firs Question of Attitude Test in Input Enhancement Technique

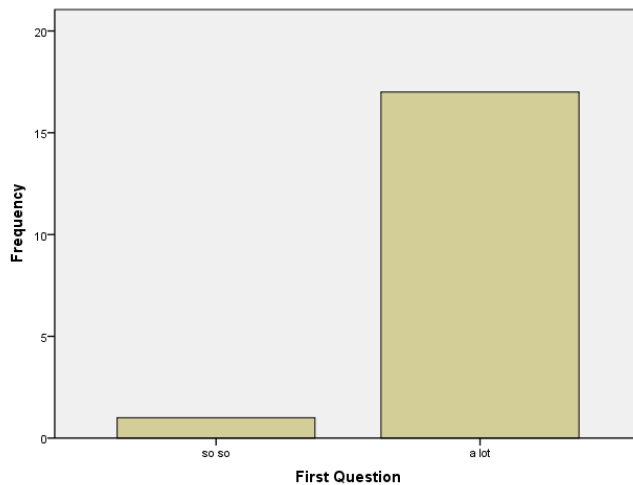|		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	so so	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
	a lot	17	94.4	94.4	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

Figure 5. Frequency of Positive and Negative Answers of Input Enhancement Group to the First Question of Attitude Test

4.1.5.2. The Second Question of Attitude Test

Question 2: I think this activity was easy.   A lot   so so   not at all

This question tried to find out the degree of difficulty of the given tasks. Some twelve out of eighteen students (66.7%) agreed on the second alternative, five students (27.8%) agreed on the first alternative and just one student (5.6%) mentioned the third one. This means that the task had a reasonable level of difficulty (Table 9 and Figure 6).

4.1.5.3. The Third Question of Attitude Test

Question 3: I think I did well in this activity.   A lot   so so   not at all

Doing well in some tasks brings about a positive attitude toward that task. The answer to this question also makes it clear that how much satisfied the learners were while doing the activity. Some eleven out of eighteen learners, which is about sixty percent (61.1 %) participated in the input enhancement group, agreed on the first alternative (a lot). Other students in

this group were also satisfied but not so much. These leaners were seven persons that chose the second alternative "so so". The interesting point is that no one was dissatisfied with the statement (Table 10 and figre 7).

Table 9

Frequency of Positive and Negative Answers to the Second Question of Attitude Test in Input Enhancement Technique

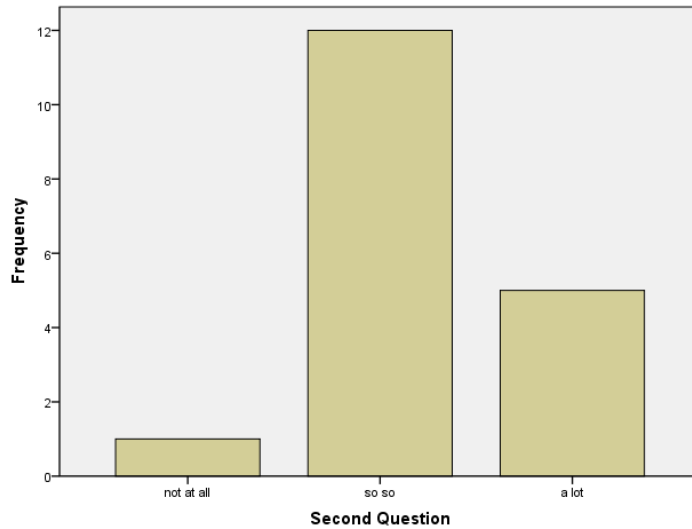|		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	not at all	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
	so so	12	66.7	66.7	72.2
	a lot	5	27.8	27.8	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

Figure 6. Frequency of Positive and Negative Answers of Input Enhancement Group to The Second Question of Attitude Test

Table 10

Frequency of Positive and Negative Answers to the Third Question of Attitude Test in Input Enhancement Technique

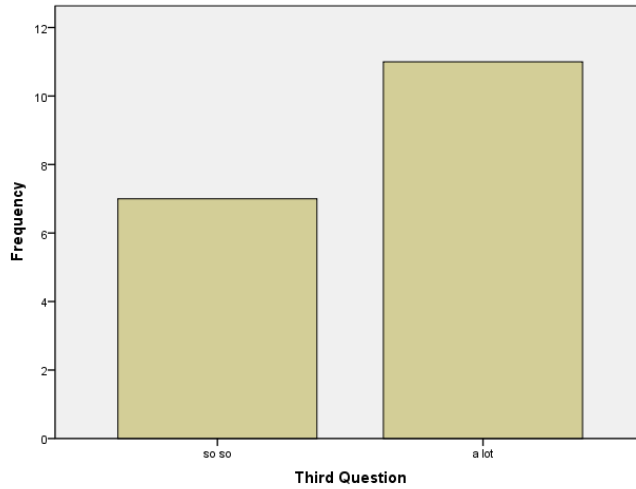|		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	so so	7	38.9	38.9	38.9
	a lot	11	61.1	61.1	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

Figure 7. Frequency of Positive and Negative Answers of Input Enhancement Group to the Third Question of Attitude Test

4.1.5.4. The Forth Question of Attitude Test

Question4: I want to do more activities like this.   A lot   so so   not at all

This question also addressed the learners' eagerness to do the tasks. It asked the learners if they wanted to do such tasks again or not. The bar charts, indicted in Figure 8, show that the participants of input enhancement technique had an avid interest in the task and were so enthusiastic to do such tasks again. Some seventeen out of eighteen (94.4%) replies showed agreement on the first alternative which is "a lot" and only one student (5.6%) has chosen "so so" (Table 11 and Figure 8).

Table 11

Frequency of Positive and Negative Answers to the Forth Question of Attitude Test in Input Enhancement Technique

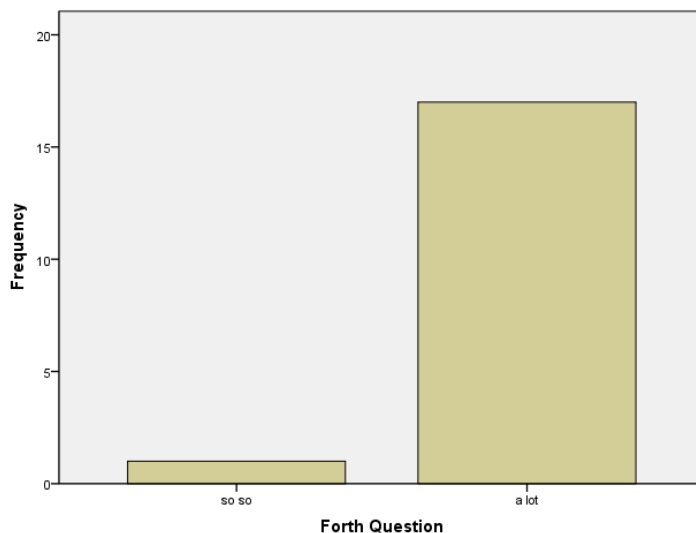|		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	so so	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
	a lot	17	94.4	94.4	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

Figure 7. Frequency of Positive and Negative Answers of Input Enhancement Group to The Fourth Question of Attitude Test

4.1.6. Responding to Research Questions

RQ1: Does the outcome of form-focused technique of input enhancement with respect to specific constructions (the English passive voice) differ from that of traditional method in an Iranian EFL context? Comparing the mean scores of posttest gained by the experimental group with that of the control group revealed a significant difference between them: mean score of posttest of control group (group 1) is 18.65, and the mean score of posttest of the experimental group (group 2) is 26.17 (Table 1 and Table 2).

The results of the multiple comparisons (Table 3) also indicated the significant difference between performances of the groups in the posttest. It is clear that the experimental group excelled the control group and this difference was statistically significant (p =.000) at the 0.05 level of significance (p<α). This superiority in the performance of the experimental group is a reason to reject the null hypothesis and accept the form-focused instruction using input enhancement as more effective than the traditional ones (Figure 1).

RQ2: Does any kind of noticing happen when the input enhancement technique is conducted in an EFL learning class? This is a general question that inquires about the occurrence of any kind of noticing in input enhancement technique. The results make it clear that regardless of their occurrence in different episodes, all the three kinds of noticing happened in this technique. The answer to this question is yes and it is clear that all types of noticing happened in the input enhancement technique.

RQ3: In which episode of input enhancement technique does 'simple noticing' happen? The occurrence of the simple noticing refers to the statement in which the learners simply notice a special form in the target language. Since the focus of this study was on the passive verbs, we asked the learners about the time when they noticed that the verbs used in the text were passive. One out of eighteen students (5.6%) mentioned the fourth episode in which the instructor analyzed the text grammatically. Two students (11.1%) experienced the same in the third episode while the teacher was negating the meaning of the text. Five others (27.8) had the same experience at the second and finally the majority of them (55.6%) were a group of ten at the first episode. It means that the probability of occurrence of this type of noticing at the beginning of the class was more than other episodes for the input enhancement group.

RQ4: In which episode of the input enhancement technique does 'noticing the gap' happen? Based on the results, the frequency of the fourth episode excelled the other two episodes. The interesting point was that the second and fifth episodes were not chosen by anyone. So the probability of the occurrence of noticing the gap in these two episodes was zero in this study. Some ten out of eighteen students (55.6) chose the fourth episode as the one in which they noticed the gap between their own interlanguage and the target language. Some six students (33.3%) chose the third episode and just two of them (11.1%) chose the first one. Although these results led us to reject the null hypothesis, the point was that the probability of the third episode was not that much low. The results may differ in some other contexts or with different participants.

RQ5: In which episode of input enhancement technique does 'noticing a hole' happen? The frequency of replies given to the last question of the reporting paper by the experimental group was critical in that the percentages of different episodes chosen by the participants were similar. Some seven out of eighteen students (38.9%) believed that noticing the hole occurred at the fifth episode of the class when the teacher asked them to provide a passive sentence. These participants claimed that they had problems in transferring what was in their minds to English. Some five out of eighteen learners (27.8%) had the same problem at the fourth episode and three others (16.7%) at the third episode. The interesting point was that three students (16.7%) had no problem in saying what was in their minds in English. These three students answered all the questions in the posttest correctly.

RQ6: What are university students' attitudes toward the input enhancement technique? The items to evaluate the attitudes of learners toward the input enhancement technique were scored on a three point Likert scale with a choice of not at all (1), so so (2), and a lot (3). Considering the

frequencies of replies to all the questions of the attitude test given to the participants made it clear that the learners of input enhancement group had an extremely strong desire to do the task and had positive attitude to the task given to them.

4.2. Discussion

This study aimed to find out if conducting focus on form instruction in teaching and learning English as a foreign language affects Iranian university students' grammatical competence. Our findings revealed that the input enhancement technique may be effective and may improve grammatical competence of the learners. Additionally, students had more positive attitudes toward the input enhancement technique. Another area of our research was on three types of noticing and the time of their occurrence in different episodes of the two techniques.

The focus on form technique practiced by the experimental group excelled the control group by making significant gains on the posttest. Although the learners who participated in the control group improved in the posttest rather than the pretest, their gain was not as much as the experimental group. It is generally agreed that attention plays a crucial role in converting input into intake. There are still debates over the level of attention required for acquisition of L2 and the role of conscious awareness in facilitating the process of converting input into intake (White, 1998). The results of the present study also revealed the efficiency of enhanced input in development of grammatical competence, especially in an academic EFL context. Moreover, the occurrence of all types of noticing in different episodes of the technique was investigated and the results revealed that they all might happen in this technique.

'Simple noticing', which refers to noticing a special form in the text or context presented for the learners, occurred at the first episode of the input enhancement technique. In input enhancement technique, the frequency of occurrence of the 'noticing the gap' was high in the third and fourth episode but the latter was higher. It means that most of the participants of input enhancement technique noticed the gap between their own interlanguage and the target language while negotiating the form. The participants of input enhancement technique noticed a hole between their own interlanguage and the target language at different episodes. This resulted from the frequencies of answers which were similar. Although the highest frequency was dedicated to the fifth episode, the frequencies of other episodes were also close to it and to each other. In the fifth episode, the teacher asked the students to give some examples in passive.

With regard to the scores gained on the posttest, there appeared some noteworthy differences. The quantitative analysis revealed that the

experimental group outdid the control group in the posttest. It is necessary to mention the homogeneity of learners who participated in the two groups in terms of both proficiency level and background knowledge on English passive voice. It resulted from the scores of proficiency and pretest that were administered before conducting the treatment. These findings support the findings of some other researchers that have been done on the efficiency of focus on form instruction. For example, Muranoi (2000) proved the effectiveness of focus on form instruction in ESL context. White (1998), who investigated the effect of enhanced input on the acquisition of linguistic features, also claimed the same about the efficiency of focus on form instruction. One of the main differences between the aforementioned studies and the present study was the context. Unlike the previous studies, we conducted our study in an academic EFL context to see if the same results would be obtained. Furthermore, these findings are in sharp contrast with that of Norris and Ortega (2000) who verified an equal effect for both Focus on FormS and Focus on Form L2 teaching. According to Skehan (2003), easy tasks are associated with higher control. So, the excellence of focus on form group in final performance (posttest) may be partly due to relative easiness of the activities.

The results indicated the occurrence of all types of noticing in this technique. The 'simple noticing' seemed to happen at the first glance at the text in which all the passive forms were typologically enhanced for attracting the learners' attention. Our findings supported this assumption and revealed that simple noticing occurred at the very beginning of the instruction for most of the learners. Analyzing the answers of the participants to the second questions of noticing report revealed some complicated results about the time of occurrence of noticing the gap. The frequency of answers was high in both the third and fourth episodes, and higher in the fourth. This means that this type of noticing is in need of more investigation. Noticing of a hole was more complicated than the previous ones because noticing the gap was expected to occur at two episodes but noticing a hole occurred at the fifth, fourth and third episodes and three students did not experience it at all. This type of noticing should also be studied more specifically in the case of input enhancement technique. Comparing the means and standard deviations of each question in this technique indicated positive attitudes towards the input enhancement task. As put by Branden (2007), focus on form techniques can work best for language learning classes but their degree of efficiency may differ according to some variables such as the level of proficiency, age or the attitude of the learners. In this regard, the present study investigated the relation between the learners' attitudes towards the focus on form technique and their success in development of linguistic competence.

6. Conclusion and Implications

This study aimed to find out if conducting focus on form instruction in teaching and learning English as a foreign language affects Iranian university students' grammatical competence. As mentioned before, the efficiency of focus on form approach was tested and confirmed in different contexts. Our context is an Iranian academic EFL context in which the traditional methods of teaching are preferred and thus used. Our findings revealed that the aforementioned technique may be effective and may improve grammatical competence of the learners of this context. Additionally, the input enhancement technique was more effective than the traditional one and students had more positive attitudes toward that technique. Another area of our research was on three types of noticing and the time of their occurrences in different episodes of the two techniques.

It can be claimed that the findings of this study are important for second and foreign language learning and teaching in that first they indicated the advantage of input enhancement technique of focus on form approach over the traditional one – i.e. focus on formS – in strengthening of grammatical competence in intermediate EFL learners. The limitations of the study have to be considered. First, the number of participants in our study was relatively small. All the participants were studying the same course and were at relatively the same level of proficiency. It may be interesting to see what takes place when the learners have different levels of proficiency or studying different courses. Secondly, we had to conduct each of our treatments in 90 minutes which was the estimated time accepted in all academic contexts. It seems that better results might have been obtained if the learners had had more opportunity to notice the structure and work on it.

The text complexity may also be an effective factor in the research like this. This factor may also affect the learners' noticing and attitudes towards the tasks. In this study, we could work on only one text during the estimated time. We needed to work on more texts with different participants and different levels of complexity because "the process of noticing is affected by factors like genre, difficulty and familiarity with the subject of the text" (Gass, 2002, as cited in Kuiken & Vedder, 2002, p. 352). Another effective factor may be the proficiency level of learners and group dynamics. As suggested by Long (1996), interaction seems to occur when learners with different levels of proficiency asks about each other's linguistic proposals that may be because of an information gap. Less proficient learners can profit from the information gap and are helped by the learners with high level of proficiency. The same investigation could be done on other forms than passive form or in comparison to that. As stated by Williams and Evans (1998), forms may differ in terms of how learners will respond to focus on form.

References

Branden, K. V. (2007). Second language education: Practice in perfect learning conditions? In R. M. DeKeyser (Ed.), *Practice in a second language* (pp. 161-179). New York: Cambridge University Press.

DeKeyser, R. (1998). Beyond focus on form: Cognitive perspectives on learning and practicig second language grammar. In C. Doughty, & J. Williams (Eds.), *Focus on form in classroom second language acquisition* (pp. 42-63). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Doguhty, C., & Williams, J. (1998a). Issues and terminology. In C. Doguhty, & J. Williams (Eds.), *Focus on form in classroom second language acquisition* (pp. 1-11). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Doughty, C. (1991). Second Language instruction does make a difference: Evidence from an empirical study of relativization. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition , 13*(4), 431-469.

Doughty, C., & Valera, E. (1998). Communicative focus on form. In C. Doughty, & J. Williams (Eds.), *Focus on form in classroom second language acquisition* (pp. 114-138). New York: Cambridge University Press.

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

Doughty, C., & Williams, J. (1998a). Issues and terminology. In C. Doughty, & J. Williams (Eds.), *Focus on form in classroom second language acquisition* (pp. 1-11). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Ellis, N. C. (2002). Frequency effects in language processing: A review with implications for theories of implicit and explicit language acquisition. *Studies in Second Language Aquisition, 24*(2), 143–188.

Ellis, N. (1993). Rules and instances in foreign language learning: Interactions of explicit and implicit knowledge. *European Journal of Cognitive Psychology, 5*, 289-318.

Ellis, R. (1993). Second language acquisition and the structural syllabus. *TESOL Quarterly , 27* (1), 91-113.

Ellis, R. (2003a). Sociocultural SLA and tasks. In R. Ellis (Ed.), *Task-bassed language learning and teaching* (pp. 175-203). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Ellis, R. (2003b). Tasks in SLA and language pedagogy. In R. Ellis (Ed.), *Task-based Language Learning and Teaching* (pp. 1-35). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Ellis, R. (2003b). Tasks in SLA and language pedagogy. In R. Ellis (Ed.), *Task-based language learning and teaching* (pp. 1-35). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Ellis, R. (2003c). The methodology of task-based teaching. In R. Ellis (Ed.), *Task-based language learning and teaching* (pp. 243-278). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Ellis, R. (1994). *The study of second language acquisition.* Oxford: Cambridge University Press.

Ellis, R., Basturkmen, H., & Loewen, S. (2002). Doing focus on form. *System , 30*(4), 419-432.

Ellis, R., Basturkmen, H., & Loewen, S. (2001). Learner uptake in communicative ESL lessons. *Language Learning , 51*(2), 281-318.

Ellis.R. (2002). Does form-focused instruction affect the the acquisition of implicit knowledge? A review of the research. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, *24*(2), 223-36.

Flower, W., & Coe, N. (1976). *Nelson English language tests.* Great Britain: Bluter & Tanner Ltd, Frome and London.

Gass, S. (1988). Interlanguage research areas: A framework for second language studies. *Applied Linguistics , 9*(2), 198-217.

Gass, S. (2002). The role of context and SLA. *Plenary lecture presented at form-meaning connections in second language acquisition.* February 21,Chicago.

Harley, B. S. (1984). The interlanguge of immersion students and its implications for second language teaching. In A. Davies, C. Criper, & A. Howatt (Eds.), *Interlanguage* (pp. 291-311). Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Harley, B. (1998). The role of focus-on-form tasks in promoting child L2 acquisition. In C. Doughty, & J. Williams (Eds.), *Focus on form in classroom second language acquisition* (pp. 156-174). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Kian, S. & Gorjian, B. (2018). Effects of input enhancement cues on EFL learners' intake of English grammar: The case of connectors. *Research in English Language Pedagogy, 44,* 39-55.

Krashen, S. (1981). *Second language acquisition and second language learning.* Oxford: Pergamon Press.

Krashen, S. (1982). *Principles and practice in second language acquisition.* Oxford: Pergamon Press.

Kuiken, F., & Vedder, I. (2002). The effect of interaction in acquiring the grammar of a second language. *International Journal of Educational Research, 37*, 343-358.

Lee, S., Huang, H. (2008). Visual input Enhancement and grammar learning: A meta-analytic review. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 30*(3), 307-331.

Lightbown, P., & Spada, N. (1994). An innovative program for primary ESL students in Quebec. *TESOL Quarterly , 28*(3), 563-579.

Long, M. (1991). Focus on form: A design feature in language teaching methodology. In K. De Bot, R. Ginsberg, & C. Kramsch (Eds.), *Foreign language research in cross-cultural Perspectives* (pp. 39-52). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Long, M. H., & Robinson , P. (1998). Focus on form: Theory, research, and practice. In C. Doughty, & J. Williams (Eds.), *Focus on form inclassroom second language acquisition* (pp. 15-41). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Long, M. (1988). Instructed interlanguage development. In L. Beebe (Ed), *Issues in second language acquisition: Multiple perspectives.* New York: Newbury House.

Long, M. (1996). The role of the linguistic environement in second language acquisition. In W. &. (Eds.), *Handbook of second language acquisition* (pp. 413-468). New York: Academic Press.

Muranoi, H. (2000). Focus on form through interaction enhancement. *Language Learning , 50*(4), 617-73.

Namaziandost, E., Rezvani, E. & Polemikou, A. (2020). The impacts of visual input enhancement, semantic input enhancement, and input flooding on L2 vocabulary among Iranian intermediate EFL learners, *Cogent Education*, 7(1), 1-14.

Nassaji, H. (1999). Towards integrating form-focused instruction and communicative interaction in the second language classrom: Some pedagogical possibilities. *Canadian Modern Language Review, 55* (3), 385-402.

Nguyen, T. M., Pham, H. T., & Pham, T. M. (2012). The relative effects of explicit and implicit form-focused instruction on the development of L2 pragmatic competence. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *44*(4), 416-434.

Norris, J., & Ortega, L. (2000). Effectiveness of L2 instruction: A research synthesis and quantitative meta-analysis. *Language Learning, 50*(3), 417-528.

Nunan, D. (1998). *Syllabus design*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Orleans, O. S., & Sealy, G. A. (1928). *Objective tests.* World Book Company.

Poole, A. (2005). Focus on form instruction: Foundations, applications, and criticisms. *The Reading Matrix, 5*(1), 47-56.

Robinson, P. (1997a). Generalizability and automaticity of second language learning under implicit, incidental, enhanced, and instructed conditions. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition , 19*(2), 223-247.

Robinson, P. (1997b). Individual differences and the fundamental similarity of implicit and explicit adlt second language learning. *Language Learning, 47*(1), 45-99.

Schmidt, R. (2001). Attention. In P. Robinson, *Cognition and second language instruction* (pp. 3-32). New york: Cambridge University Press.

Schmidt, R. (1993a). Awareness and second language acquisition. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics, 13*, 206-226.

Schmidt, R. (1995). Consciousness and foreign language learning: A tutorial on the role of attention and awareness in learning. In R. Schmidt (Ed.), *Attention and awareness in foreign language learning* (pp. 1-63). Honolulu, Hawaii: University of Hawaii.

Schmidt, R. (1993). Consciousness, learning and interlanguage pragmatics. In G. K. (Ed.), *Interlanguage pragmatics* (pp. 21-24). New York: Oxford University Press.

Schmidt, R. (1994). Implicit learning and the cognitive unconcious: Of artificial grammars and SLA. . In N. Ellis (Ed.), *Implicit and explicit learning of language* (pp. 165-209). London: Academic Press.

Schmidt, R. (1990). The role of consciousness in second language learning. *Applied linguistics, 11*(2), 17-46.

Schmidt, R., & Frota, S. (1986). Developing basic conversational ability in a second language. In R. Day (Ed.), *Talking to learn* (pp. 237-326). Rowly, MA: Newbury House.

Scmidt, R. (1993b). Conciousness, learning and interlanguage pragmatics. In G. Kasper, & S. Blum-Kulka (Eds.), *Interlanguage pragmatics* (pp. 21-42). New York: Oxford University Press.

Shak, J. (2006). Children using dictogloss to focus on form. *Reflections on English Language Teaching, 5*(2), 47-62.

Sheen , R. (2002). Key concepts in ELT "focus on form" and "focus on forms". *ELT Journal, 56* (3), 303-305.

Skehan, P. (2003). Focus on form, tasks, and technology. *Computer Assisted Language Learning , 16* (5), 391-411.

Spada, N., & Lightbrown, P. (1993). Instruction and the development of questions in L2 classrooms. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 15*(2), 205-224.

Swain , M., & Lapkin , S. (2007). The distributed nature of second language learning: In S. Fotos & H. Nassaji (Eds.), *Form-focused instruction and teacher education* (pp. 73-86). New York: Oxford University Press.

Thornbury, S. (1999). *How to teach grammar.* Spain: Matue Cromo.

Trahey**,** M**. (**1992**).** Comprehensible input and second language acquisition**.** (Unpublished master's thesis)**.** McGill University**,** Montreal.

Trahey, M. (1996). Poditve evidence and preemotion in second language acquisition: Some long-term effects. *Second Language Research, 12*(2), 111-139.

Trahey, M., & White, L. (1993). Positive evidence in the second language classroom. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 15*(2), 181-204.

Vince, M. (1998). *Intermediate language practice.* Bangkok: Thailand: MacMillan Education.

White, L., Spada, N., Lighbrown, P., & Ranta, L. (1991). Input enhancement and L2 acquisition formation. *Applied Linguistics, 12*(4), 416-432.

White, J. (1998). Getting the learners' attention: A typological input enhancement study. In C. Doughty & J. Williams (Eds), *Focus on form in classroom second language acquisition* (pp. 87-113). New York: Cambridge University Press.

White, L. (1991). Adverb placement in second language acquisition: Some positive and negative evidence in the classroom. *Second Language Research, 7*(2), 133-161.

Williams, J. (2001). The effectiveness of spontaneous attention to form. *System, 29*(3), 325-340.

Williams, J., & Evans, J. (1998). What kind of focus and on which forms? In C. Dougty & J. Williams (Eds.), *Focus on form in classroom second language acquisition* (pp. 139-155). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Willis, D. (1991). *Collins cobuild student's grammar*. London: Harper Collins Publishers.

Bibliographic information of this paper for citing:

Dobakhti, L., & Shams Khorrami, S. (2020). An exploration of focus on form instruction on grammatical competence of Iranian EFL learners utilizing input enhancement technique. *Journal of Modern Research in English Language Studies*, *7*(4), 25-53.