Classroom Instruction and Second Language Acquisition: The Effect of Explicit Form-Focused Instruction on L2 Learners' Linguistic Competence

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To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Zafer Seiba entitled " Classroom Instruction and Second Language Acquisition: The Effect of Form-Focused Instruction on L2 Learners" Linguistic Competence." I have examined the final copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommended that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Ph.D., with a major in TESOL.

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Dean of the Graduate School

This dissertation is dedicated to

Rafah, Hani, & Keenan

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ABSTRACT

In an attempt to account for the imbalance between the linguistic and the communicative abilities evident in the performance of L2 learners, this study investigated the effect of Explicit Form-Focused instruction on the linguistic competence of ESL university students in the United States of America. Two groups were included: (i) a Focus on Form instruction group receiving input flood and input enhancement and (ii) an Explicit Form-Focused instruction group receiving the same Focus on Form instruction together with explicit negative evidence/feedback. A set of treatment and testing materials were developed for and adapted to the targeted participants. A pretest, an immediate posttest and a retention test were administered to the two groups in order to compare their performance on two measures of linguistic competence (defined as the ability both to recognize and produce contextually accurate language). Results of the study revealed that the Explicit Form-Focused instruction group performed significantly better than the Focus on Form group as evidenced by their ability to accurately recognize, as well as to accurately use the simple past tense and the present perfect aspect in various contexts. The study argues for the adoption of a particular type of explicit instruction (Explicit Form-Focused)—one which promotes perception (noticing and understanding) of target linguistic features in the input through the provision of explicit negative evidence/feedback in the context of meaning-focused activities.

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List of Abbreviations

EFF	Explicit Form-Focused
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ESL	English as a Second Language
FonF	Focus on Form
L1	First Language (i.e., Native Language)
L2	Second Language
MC	Multiple-Choice
OP	Oral Production
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
TESOL	Teaching English as a Second or Other Language
UG	Universal Grammar

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The disparity between the linguistic (grammatical) knowledge and the communicative ability often observed in the performance of second language (L2) learners with the communicative ability lagging behind the linguistic knowledge in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) settings and with the linguistic knowledge lagging behind the communicative ability in English as a Second Language (ESL) settings has led to a paradigm shift in recent approaches to language teaching. These approaches, influenced by a natural-growth teaching philosophy, focus on the spontaneous use of language that promotes language acquisition, as opposed to language usage that promotes language learning (Breen & Candlin, 1980; Hatch, 1978; Krashen & Terrell, 1983; Prabhu, 1987; Widdowson, 1978). A teaching method based on structural or linguistic criteria alone is, therefore, commonly perceived as either irrelevant or inadequate to promote the acquisition of a L2.

Given that the ultimate goal of teaching language is to enable learners to use the language they learn genuinely outside the classroom, the question remains of devising the best methodology to attain that goal. Widdowson (1998) has captured the difference between grammatical and communicative teaching methodologies with the terms *usage* and *use*. He then points out that a mastery of usage is not the same as the mastery of use, simply because usage is associated with the skills involved in manifesting our knowledge of language in one *medium* or another, and use is associated with language ability involved in realizing our knowledge in one *mode* or another.

The relevance of this distinction between language usage and language use to ESL/EFL classroom instruction is that teaching communicative competence is what counts, *par excellence*. However, involving students in communicative activities may result in some form of pidginized communicative interlanguage (Higs & Clifford, 1982) but not in a mastery of use (see, Celce-Murcia, 1990). It follows that the focus on language use alone is not a sufficient condition for promoting a balanced L2 competence, and that explicit grammar teaching is an essential component for language acquisition to take place. However, in order for explicit grammar teaching to promote L2 acquisition, there are certain conditions and terms that must be met, the least of which is comprehension (i.e., when the focus of instruction is on understanding the

form-meaning relationship rather than on practice) (Ellis, 1993).

This association of language usage with language learning and of language use with language acquisition has emerged in the form of a debate between theorists who emphasize that explicit L2 knowledge can convert to implicit L2 knowledge through practice (Bialystock 1981, 1990; McLaughlin, 1990; Sharwood Smith, 1981), and those who stress that explicit knowledge and implicit knowledge are two separate things and, therefore, explicit knowledge cannot become implicit knowledge unless it is naturally acquired "by understanding messages, by obtaining comprehensible input" (Krashen, 1992, p. 409). It follows that explicit knowledge can but only promote certain levels of language proficiency.

Recently, a shift from a focus on the effectiveness of explicit instruction to the nature of explicit instruction has been fostered by proponents of input-processing theories (Ellis, 1993; VanPatten & Cadierno, 1993). For instance, in one of the articles on the status of the structural syllabus and its role in L2 learning, Ellis (1993) captures the learning/acquisition learnability problem presented above in terms of *interface* and *noninterface* accordingly, and argues for a weaker version, suggesting that explicit L2 knowledge can become implicit declarative knowledge, hence promoting second language acquisition (i) if the focus of instruction is on comprehension rather than on immediate production,

and (ii) when learners are ready to integrate the input into their language system. However, while this line of reasoning seems to be sound in principle, it has remained limited to the development of implicit declarative knowledge (i.e., intake).

Researchers and educators have recently come to realize that adopting a single-sided teaching approach, that is either communicative-based, or grammar-based, is leading us nowhere other than deciding between alternative approaches. This new trend has emerged in what Long (1991) has referred to as *The Interaction Hypothesis* and in what Doughty and Williams (1998) have recently termed as *Focus on Form* instruction (Doughty, 1991; Doughty & Varela, 1998; Lightbown, 1998; Long & Robinson, 1998; Williams & Evans, 1998), which advocates the inclusion of some form of incidental/implicit grammar instruction into the communicative syllabus. However, the Focus on Form instruction is not without problems, the least of which is the level of explicitness of grammar teaching related to the noticing-acquisition interface.

The present study draws on and derives support from researchers concerned with the nature of integrating grammar instruction into communicative language teaching (Doughty, 1991; Doughty & Williams, 1998; Lightbown, 1998; Long 1991; Long & Robinson, 1998). The study aims to (i) counter the minimal role ascribed to the effectiveness of explicit

learning in Krashen's Monitor Model (1982, 1985) in general, (ii) counter the maximal role attributed to noticing in Focus on Form instruction (Doughty & Williams, 1998; Long, 1991) in particular, and (iii) lend empirical support to Explicit Form-Focused instruction, whereby linguistic competence in L2 learning may be developed via perception (i.e., noticing and understanding) of target language structures in the input through the provision of explicit negative evidence/feedback during communication.

Two main reasons underlie the advocacy of this integration of grammar instruction into communicative language teaching in the present study. First, this integration of grammar has important theoretical and pedagogical implications. Theoretically, grammar instruction is directly related to the issue of noticing-acquisition relationship (Schmidt, 1990, 1993, 1994, 1995). Pedagogically, even though noticing has been assumed to play a crucial role in learning a L2, there is no agreement among Second Language Acquisition (SLA) researchers and educators as to which forms to emphasize and which instructional methodologies to adopt in order to promote the acquisition of a L2 (e.g., Doughty, 1991; Ellis, 1995; Loschky & Bley-Vroman, 1993; Robinson, 1996; Schmidt 1995; VanPatten & Cadierno, 1993). Of great interest, therefore, is whether Explicit Form-Focused instruction will determine the degree and type of attention needed for learning to take place, and hence the level of

explicitness of grammar instruction in the context of meaning focused activities.

Another interesting issue is whether Explicit Form-Focused instruction will redress the imbalance between the linguistic knowledge and the communicative ability observed in the performance of L2 learners. This disparity is notoriously reflected in communicative-based classroom teaching methodologies (e.g., ESL) that highlight fluency over accuracy, and in grammar-based teaching methodologies (e.g., EFL) that stress accuracy over fluency.

Statement of the Problem and Research Hypothesis

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of Explicit Form-Focused instruction on L2 learners' linguistic competence. Linguistic competence in this study is defined as the ability both to *recognize* and *produce* contextually accurate language. The following hypothesis was tested in this investigation:

> Students whose teachers use Explicit Form-Focused instruction will show greater gains in accurate use of target language forms than will students whose teachers use Focus on Form instruction.

Definition of Terms

Before going into the literature on the learning problem investigated in this study, I would like to digress for a moment to clarify some terminology that is crucial to the discussion.

Comprehensible Input. This term, originated as part of Krashen's Monitor Model, refers to that part of L2 language that is understandable by learners and which is hypothesized to be essential for language acquisition to occur.

Comprehensible Output. This term, originally developed as part of Swain's Output Hypothesis, refers to the language produced by L2 learners and is hypothesized to promote language acquisition by making learners notice the gap between their interlanguage system and the target language system through hypothesis formulation and testing.

Consciousness Raising. This term was dubbed by Sharwood Smith to refer to instructional activities designed to make learners attend to specific linguistic features in the input by involving them consciously in the learning process.

Detection. This term, introduced by Tomlin and Villa, refers to the

mental processes involved in subconsciously detecting linguistic features in the input and registering them in short-term memory. This portion of attentional mechanisms is hypothesized by Tomlin and Villa to be the starting point of learning.

EFL. This term, an acronym for English as a Foreign Language, refers to an educational setting in which the target language being taught is not the dominant language (e.g., teaching/learning English in Japan).

ESL. This term, an acronym for English as a Second Language, refers to an educational setting where the target language being taught is the dominant language (e.g., teaching/learning English in America).

Explicit Knowledge. This refers to that part of L2 knowledge of which learners are aware and therefore can express. It refers either to ***Explicit Declarative Knowledge*** (i.e., conscious knowledge of L2 rules), or to ***Explicit Procedural Knowledge*** (i.e., the ability to use the linguistic items being taught in communication as a result of excessive practice).

Explicit Learning. This refers to learning that takes place through consciously formulating and testing hypotheses about the target language structure in the course of learning.

Implicit Knowledge. This refers to that part of L2 knowledge of which learners are unaware, either ***Implicit Declarative Knowledge*** (i.e., intuitive knowledge of the L2 system), or ***Implicit Procedural Knowledge*** (i.e., the ability to use language spontaneously without thinking).

Implicit Learning. This refers to learning that takes place without attention.

Incidental Learning. This refers to learning that takes place without intention or when doing something else.

Input. This refers to the language—oral or written—L2 learners are exposed to when learning.

Input Enhancement. This term, coined recently by Sharwood Smith, refers to instructional techniques, such as highlighting, underlining, coloring, etc. of salient linguistic features in the input to make learners attend to them.

Input Flooding. A type of Focus on Form instruction, in which learners are artificially 'flooded' with plentiful positive evidence of the target form in the context of meaning-focused activities.

Intake. This term refers to the mental processes through which part of the language input is stored in short-term memory and may be subsequently assimilated into the learner's interlanguage system.

Integration. This term refers to the mental processes through which intake (or a portion of the input) is stored in long-term memory and becomes part of the learner's internal language system.

Interlanguage. A term first introduced by Selinker to refer to the learner's language system that is independent of the target language, as well as the learner's native language. This system is characterized by being systematic, permeable, transitional, and discrete.

Mental Representation. This term refers to a mental diagram, in which knowledge of structural (i.e., syntactic) and conceptual (i.e., semantic/ pragmatic) relationships are hierarchically organized and stored in memory. This mental diagram can be (i) fully active and permeable when a target language structure has both syntactic and semantic/pragmatic representations, (ii) partially active and permeable when a target language structure has only one representation, or (iii) inactive and, therefore, impermeable when a target language structure has zero representation.

Negative Evidence/Feedback. This refers to that type of evidence that alerts learners to their incorrect interlanguage hypotheses and provides them with the correct information. It may be achieved by providing learners with ***Implicit Negative Evidence*** (e.g., recasting of ungrammatical structures by placing a heavy stress on them, correcting learners' utterances through repetition or a request for clarification, etc.), or ***Explicit Negative Evidence*** (i.e., rule explication). In this study, however, explicit negative evidence is identified with correction via the provision of rule interpretation, as well as via what is not possible (i.e., what is ungrammatical/unacceptable) in the target language.

Noticing. A term coined by Schmidt to refer to the mental processes involved—directly or indirectly—in discovering properties of linguistic features in the input.

Noticing the Gap. This term refers to mental processes, in which learners are consciously involved in discovering the discrepancies between specific linguistic features in the input and their own output.

Positive Evidence. In contrast to negative evidence, positive evidence provides learners with what is grammatical.

Restructuring. A term first introduced by McLaughlin to refer to the

mental activity, in which learners readjust their interlanguage system in accordance with the target language system and gradually replace the native language rules with the target language rules.

Second Language Acquisition (SLA). When not comparing EFL with ESL, the term SLA is used generally to refer to any language that is being learned after the first language is acquired.

Teachability Hypothesis. This hypothesis, which was developed by Pienemann, states that it is not possible for L2 learners to learn a particular grammatical structure unless they are in an appropriate stage of language development. Therefore, it is equally not possible to explicitly teach L2 learners a particular grammatical structure if they are not ready.

Universal Grammar (UG). A term coined by Chomsky to refer to the abstract principles and parameters that constitute a child's innate knowledge of language. UG is hypothesized to guide L1 acquisition. With reference to SLA, there is no consensus among researchers as to whether UG is the driving force for SLA.

Organization of the Dissertation

The dissertation is divided into five chapters. Chapter 1 relates the rationale of this experimental study, including the theoretical orientation to the learning problem investigated in this study, the motivation for the study, and the purpose of this study. Moreover, this chapter includes definitions of key terms used throughout this paper in order to mitigate potential confusion.

Chapter 2 presents a review of the related literature. It begins with a review of the traditional grammar-based syllabus and goes on to point up the subsequent major developments in the field of Second Language Learning and Teaching. It discusses the Communicative-Based Syllabus, the Structural Syllabus, and the Focus on Form syllabus. It concludes with an argument for developing an Explicit Form-Focused syllabus drawing from the insights of Doughty and Williams, Ellis, Krashen, Long and Robinson, Schmidt, Sharwood Smith, VanPatten, and others.

Chapter 3, Methods, describes the research design, the participants in this study, the treatment materials adopted, the testing instruments used, the data collection procedures followed, and the details of the scoring procedures applied.

In chapter 4, the analyses performed to address the research hypothesis stated in chapter 1 are described in detail, and the quantitative results of these analyses are presented.

The last chapter summarizes the findings of the study in terms of the research hypothesis, and discusses the performance of the participants in the light of the results of the analyses presented in the previous chapter. It draws conclusions concerning the relationship between learning and acquisition, and concerning noticing and SLA. This is followed by a brief description of the implications of the present study. Finally, the limitations and suggestions for future research are presented.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Over the past two decades, much of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) research has focused on the effects of grammar instruction on L2 learning. This focus has been captured in terms of interventionist teaching (Bialystock, 1981, 1990; Ellis, 1991; McLaughlin, 1990, Ruthford, 1988, Rutherford & Sharwood Smith, 1985; Sharwood Smith, 1981) which stresses the importance of grammar instruction in promoting the acquisition of a second language (L2), and noninterventionist teaching (Allwright, 1976; Breen & Candlin, 1980; Krashen, 1982, 1985; Krashen & Terrell, 1983; Prabhu, 1987) which downplays the effect of any type of grammar instruction on language acquisition. Recently, a shift from the role of grammar instruction to the nature of grammar instruction has been hotly debated between proponents of 'Input-Processing' instruction, who endorse explicit-structured teaching of grammar, and proponents of 'Focus on Form' instruction, who advocate the inclusion of some form of

implicit-incidental focus on grammar into communicative teaching. While both approaches counter the limited role attributed to the effectiveness of grammar instruction in Krashen's Monitor Model (1985), they differ as to the level of explicitness of grammar instruction and as to the starting point of instruction—grammar first, or meaning first. Still, each approach suffers from certain limitations related to the very nature of grammar instruction under which it operates.

This chapter is divided into two main parts. The first part offers an overview of the theoretical rationales and pedagogical implications of four types of syllabi to the teaching of a foreign or a second language: Traditional Grammar-Based Syllabus, Communicative-Based Syllabus, Structural syllabus, and Focus on Form Syllabus. The second part offers a theoretical and a pedagogical basis for the adoption of Explicit Form-Focused instruction advocated in this study.

Traditional Grammar-Based Syllabus

Much of second or foreign language teaching methodology from the 1950s to the 1960s was influenced by both structural linguistics and behavioral psychology. Structural linguistics was mainly concerned with the description of patterns of structures (sounds, words, sentences) within a given language system. From the perspective of behavioral psychology, SLA was seen as a process of habit formation in which a stimulus

triggered a particular response, which in turn was strengthened by continued reinforcement. The role of the native language (L1), then, took on great significance because it was the major cause for lack of success. From this framework emerged the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis, which was based on the assumption that differences among languages signified difficulty and similarities signified ease (Fries, 1945; Lado, 1957).

Generally speaking, Traditional Grammar-Based Syllabus was based on reactions to the effect of the L1 on language learning. These reactions were concerned with answering questions such as, 'how much of a learner's performance is due to the L1 influence?', and 'which teaching methodologies would make of the L1 a useful tool to improve language learning?'.

In practice, learning a second or a foreign language was seen as a process of gradual accumulation of discrete linguistic items segmented into independent parts for learners during instruction, and that the role of learners was to synthesize these parts into 'whole chunks' during communication. This process of learning is coined in the literature as synthetic teaching:

> Different parts of language are taught separately and step by step so that the acquisition is a process of gradual accumulation of parts until the whole structure of language has been built up… . The learner's task is to synthesize the language that has been broken into a large number of small pieces. (Wilkins, 1976, p. 2)

The implication of this synthetic approach is twofold: First, it was firmly believed that ‘practice makes perfect.’ That is, learning takes place by drilling students ad nauseam. Second, given that the degree of success in learning a L2 was believed to be contingent upon the similarities and/or differences between the L1 and the L2 structures, it was necessary for teachers to fabricate an input that would operate on the assumptions of the behaviorist model, as well as tacitly adapt their teaching practices to fit in this philosophical framework (see, Fries, 1945; Long & Robinson, 1998).

The influence of behaviorist methods as applied to language teaching was manifested in three well-known teaching methods that were concerned with language usage: grammar translation method, the audio-lingual method, and the direct method, in which isolated language patterns were drilled until the learner acquired the new language habits. Although these methods vary from one another, they generally adhere to the same principle: grammar is the foundation upon which language learning/ teaching should be based.

Influenced by the concept of communicative competence (Hymes, 1972), some researchers attempted to abandon the grammar-accuracy orthodoxy in favor of more communicative-oriented syllabi that focused on language use. One such syllabus was termed as the notional-functional.

For example, in one of his articles, Johnson captures the distinction between the synthetic approach and the notional-functional approach as follows:

> In a synthetic approach the teacher isolates and orders the forms of the linguistic system, systematically presents them to the students one by one… In analytic teaching it is the student who does the analysis from data presented to him in the form of 'natural chunks.' Wilkins associates the synthetic approach with structural syllabuses, and the analytic approach with notional specifications. (Johnson, 1979, p. 195)

Although the notional functional syllabus seems to be theoretically communication-oriented, it tends to be, along with situational and topical syllabi, linguistically oriented in practice (Long & Robinson, 1998) as it is based on pre-selected linguistic items (e.g., notions and functions), as well as on carefully planned communicative practice that stresses specific functions of language, such as apologizing, asking for directions, refusing offers, or making introductions. The role of learners, then, is to gather the bits and pieces of notions and functions and synthesize them in communicational contexts. Candlin (1984, p. 39) refers to this pre-selected communicative practice as a "cosmetic adjustment" of the old structural criteria.

The Traditional Grammar-Based Syllabus (TGBS) has been severely criticized on a number of fronts. The first issue concerns the authenticity of the input that TGBS lacks. Widdowson (1989) states that in

classroom interactions, the language forms and functions that are practiced are determined by the teacher or context, not by the people interacting. These interactions which involve students in communicative activities based on notions and functions or on communicative grammar (Widdowson, 1998) will not necessarily transfer to actual language use in real-life situations.

The second issue is related to the presentation-practice nature of instruction. It has been argued that language is too complex to be amenable to conscious learning of bits and pieces of isolated items (Macnamara, 1973), that language is learned by understanding messages and not by 'practicing talking' (Krashen, 1985), and that 'practice does not make perfect' (Lightbown, 1985) in the sense that excessive use of conscious instruction reinforced by practice promotes language learning but not language acquisition. However, practicing grammatical strings and/or functions and notions may result in some sort of consciously proceduralized knowledge (see, Ellis, 1990, 1993, 1994; Krashen, 1981; McLaughlin, 1990).

The third, and perhaps the most important issue, is related to the role of focused input in the acquisition process. The systematic ordering of lexical, grammatical, or notional and functional items and their pre-selected presentation to students—whether inductively or deductively—

has been criticized for largely ignoring the language learning developmental processes through which L2 learners normally pass (Ellis, 1994; Gass & Selinker, 1994; Hatch, 1978, 1983; Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991; Long & Robinson, 1998). Research findings show that L2 learners' performance does not typically show symptoms of sudden acquisition of target language forms. Rather, it exhibits sporadic target and non-target use of target language forms (Andersen, 1984; Long & Robinson, 1998; Meisel, 1987; Sato, 1986, 1990), suggesting that there is a fixed developmental sequence of acquisition that all L2 learners pass through.

Communicative-Based Syllabus

The inability of synthetic language teaching to help L2 learners transfer what they have learned in a focused-input classroom setting to actual use outside the classroom has led teachers, program developers, and theorists in the field of SLA to abandon the grammar-based teaching in favor of communicative-based teaching (also known as Experiential teaching, or Natural-Growth teaching), which focuses on meaning without any form of grammar instruction.

This advocacy of meaning-focused instruction has been greatly influenced by a series of studies on child L2 acquisition called the

morpheme order studies (Dulay & Burt, 1974), and shaped to a great extent by Krashen's (1982,1985) Monitor Model. The emergence of these studies has diminished the precepts of synthetic language teaching, let alone the disconcerting results of teaching for accuracy.

The morpheme order studies were stimulated by Chomsky's (1957, 1959) views on the nature of human language, and inspired by the research conducted on child first language (L1) acquisition (Brown, 1973). Language acquisition is seen as a creative and rule-governed system that is characterized by fixed developmental stages, guided by universal innate principles, and triggered by exposure to the target language (for review, see, Gass & Selinker, 1994; Mitchell & Myles, 1998).

Proponents of communicative-based learning/teaching claim that adult L2 learners, like child L2 learners, are still capable of tapping into their innate universal linguistic knowledge, directly or indirectly, to detect language rules in the input. Assimilation of these rules into L2 learners' interlanguage system then occurs without grammar instruction, providing that these learners are exposed to large quantities of positive input.

Other advocates of communicative-based learning claim that L2 learning process is not dissimilar to L1 acquisition process, in which (i) comprehension precedes production (e.g., Asher's TPR, 1982; Krashen &

Terrell's Natural Approach, 1983,[1]) and (ii) input is made comprehensible by adapting it to the level of learners through task-completion communicational activities (e.g., Prabhu, 1987), or through natural and spontaneous negotiation for meaning devoid of deliberate simplification of linguistic code (Allwright, 1976; Long,1981,1983).

Perhaps the most serious attempt to show the inadequacies and impracticalities of synthetic language teaching and the strengths of communicative teaching comes from Krashen's Monitor Model (1981, 1982, 1985), which can be summarized as follows: First, language acquisition and language learning involve entirely separate processes. Language acquisition is an implicit/subconscious process, which occurs as a result of engaging in natural communication where the focus is on meaning. By contrast, language learning is an explicit/conscious process,

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Of the well-known approaches that focus on meaning are the Natural Approach and the Total Physical Response (TPR), in which learners are flooded with large quantities of input before production. But how much input is necessary to reach a given stage before starting to produce utterances? In response to this question, Asher claims that TPR students are generally ready to start production in the target language after ten hours of TPR input. Diller (1978), on the other hand, gives an answer for the quantity of input necessary for progress to higher levels of competence. He states that according to the United States Foreign Service Institute, an estimate of the amount of class time necessary to achieve a FSI 2+ rating in different foreign languages (2+ is defined 'halfway between minimal professional proficiency and working professional proficiency) for adult speakers differs according to the language in question. For example, European languages such as French and English require approximately 720 hours of class time for the average student to attain the 2+ level, while other languages such as Arabic, Chinese and Korean require 1,950 hours of class time.

which occurs as a result of formal instruction where the primary focus is on grammar and practice. Therefore, Krashen claims, learned or explicit knowledge which results from language learning cannot turn into acquired or implicit knowledge through practice.

Second, language is acquired by understanding 'comprehensible input,' not by demonstration and practice. Comprehensible input does not have to be focused and presented in an easy-to-difficult sequence, simply because it takes care of the natural order of acquisition automatically. That is, when the focus of instruction is on meaning, there is no need for students to grapple with transferring their conscious knowledge of language rules to implicit knowledge during communication, and there is no need for syllabus designers and teachers to guess which structures to present or teach first. This is simply because, he claims, speech production[2] and knowledge of language rules will develop automatically as a result of exposure to comprehensible input as it does in L1 acquisition, suggesting that comprehensible input is a necessary and sufficient condition for language acquisition to occur and that grammar instruction is

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[2] According to the Input Hypothesis (Krashen, 1981), speech production can come from acquired competence, though it is a long process. Speech production can come also from two other different sources: (i) from learned competence (i.e., via memorization and practice), or (ii) from extensive use of the native language structures. According to Krashen and Scarcella (1978), although these two last types lead to faster learning in that learners can produce or automatize the structures they have learned, they are severely limited.

but a superfluous intervention. Krashen refers to this as the noninterface position. However, this noninterface position, as we shall see in the following sections, has been challenged by many researchers on different counts.

From teaching for acquisition standpoint, the tenet of communicative- based teaching is that: (i) learning a L2 is best maintained by experiencing it as a vehicle for communication and not as an object of study—be it inside or outside the classroom (Long & Robinson, 1998; Widdowson, 1998), and (ii) exposing students to large quantities of positive input that is comprehensible and meaningful is sufficient for language acquisition to occur. Grammar is acquired implicitly (i.e., without awareness) (Reber, 1989, 1993), or incidentally (i.e., without intention) through communication (Krashen, 1982, 1985,1994). Furthermore, explicit grammar instruction and error correction may be conducive to learning, not to acquisition. When the goal of teaching is acquisition, explicit grammar instruction should be limited to simple forms. This point will be taken further in the following sections.

A major criticism of communicative-based language teaching lies in its assumption that L2 acquisition is equitable to L1 acquisition. Research findings show that adult L2 learning cannot be equated with L1 acquisition or child L2 acquisition owing to maturational constraints that limit the

capacity of adult learners to achieve a native-like command in the target language from a mere exposure to language use (for review, see, Long, 1990, 1993; Newport, 1990; Schmidt, 1990). Moreover, the focus of communicative teaching on language use, to the exclusion of language usage, may have a ceiling effect on the acquisition of grammar. This effect may lead to some sort of *pidginized interlanguage* (Higs & Clifford, 1982), which is characterized by markedly reduced grammatical structure, lexicon and style variation, but not to a mastery of use. This is mainly because "rules of language use would be useless without rules of grammar" (Canale & Swain, 1980, p. 5). In other words, a pure communicative-based language approach may lead to fossilization of acquisition in that it

> [C]an lead to the development of a broken, ungrammatical, pidginized form of the language beyond which students can never really progress. Such students are said to have *fossilized* in their acquisition of the language. (Celce-Muricia & Hilles, 1988, p. 2)

Supporting evidence for the inadequacies of pure communicative classrooms comes from Swain's (1985) evaluation of the French immersion programs in Canada. Swain demonstrated that although learners in these programs received huge amounts of comprehensible input, their performance showed disparity between their grammatical knowledge and their communicative ability, with the grammatical knowledge lagging behind their communicative ability. She imputed this kind of disparity to the insufficiency of comprehensible input to promote

native-like (i.e., linguistic fluency) norms in the target language, suggesting that in addition to 'comprehensible input' learners need 'comprehensible output'. The importance of comprehensible output, she argues, is that it provides learners with opportunities to notice the gap between their interlanguage system and the target language system through some sort of pushed production practice (Swain, 1995).

Another study that supports the inclusion of some sort of focus on grammar in purely communicative classrooms such as those in the French immersion programs in Canada is reported by Lyster (1994). Drawing on the role of restructuring (McLaughlin, 1987) in L2 learning, Lyster reports in his study on the effect of functional-analytic instruction on the appropriate use of the French markers *tu* and *vous* that analytic instruction can be effective in teaching not only the grammatical aspects of the target language but also its pragmatic and sociolinguistic aspects. He concludes that functional analytic learning/teaching may promote L2 acquisition more readily than anticipated by the noninterface advocates such as Krashen (1982, 1985).

Finally, although Krashen's (1982) claim that formal instruction does not change or alter the route of acquisition (see, Pienemann's Teachability Hypothesis, 1984, 1989) has received partial support from studies conducted on the effect of implicit and explicit instruction on

language development (see, DeKeyser, 1995; Robinson, 1996), it does not of itself exclude the greater effect of formal instruction on the rate of acquisition. For example, Sharwood Smith (1981) argues that when focused input is contrived in such a way that it involves learners consciously in the learning process by raising their awareness to marked features in the input, it may significantly affect the rate of acquisition (for review, see, Ellis, 1990, 1991, 1993, 1994; Sharwood Smith, 1981, 1986).

Structural Syllabus: Traditional Grammar-Based Syllabus Revisited

The inability of communicative-based teaching to promote high levels of accuracy in L2 learners, coupled with the teachers' reactions to the frustration of teaching for communication brought explicit teaching back to life but with a different spirit. The view of language acquisition that began to predominate was on *how* explicit instruction would promote language acquisition, and on explanations for that standpoint. Two pedagogical philosophies concerned with intervening in the process of interlanguage development through input manipulation are: Skill-Building theories and Information-Processing theories.

Skill-Building Theories. Krashen's claim (1981) that *learned* or explicit knowledge cannot convert into *acquired* or implicit knowledge has been challenged by proponents of the structural syllabus on the basis that

when learners are exposed to large amounts of input, they can convert what they have learned into acquired language through practice. For example, Anderson (1980, 1983, 1993) views language learning as other kinds of skill learning. In his *Adaptive Control of Thought Model*, he claims that language learning is a three–staged process that involves a progression from an initial declarative stage to a final autonomous or procedural stage through a mediating associative stage, in which learners transfer what they have learned from the input into actual spoken language through practice.

While Anderson views declarative knowledge as a conscious knowledge of rules, Bialystock (1981, 1990, 1994) views declarative knowledge as consisting of conscious and subconscious parts. In other words, language development is viewed along two independent dimensions: an analyzed dimension and an automatic dimension. On the former dimension, a learner's knowledge representation moves from unanalyzed to analyzed as the learner becomes increasingly aware of the target language structures. On the latter dimension, a learner may range from having automatic to non-automatic access to information.

A different view on how explicit knowledge becomes implicit knowledge is offered by McLaughlin (1990). McLaughlin views language learning as a move from controlled processing that is constrained by

short-term memory (i.e., declarative knowledge) to automatic processing that is stored in long-term memory (i.e., procedural knowledge) through practice. This continuing movement from controlled to automatic processing results in a constant restructuring of the linguistic system of L2 learners.

A rather aspiring undertaking to account for fluency development from a Universal Grammar (UG) perspective[3] has been made by Towell and Hawkins (1994). They claim that Anderson's (1980, 1983, 1993) model cannot account for the acquisition of core grammatical knowledge. Their model attempts to link together linguistic and cognitive approaches to the study of L2 learning by means of integrating aspects of Anderson's skill-building model into their model of language learning by appealing to UG principles.

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[3] It is perhaps noteworthy that while Skill-Building theories view language learning as other kinds of skill learning, UG views language learning in terms of modules. According to Skill-Building theories, language learning occurs as a result of exposure to large quantities of input and constant practice. By contrast, language learning according to UG, occurs as a result of a minimal exposure to input containing the appropriate trigger. White (1989) discusses the role of input from the perspective of UG. She claims that through exposure to input containing the appropriate trigger, UG is activated, enabling learners to instantaneously reset their parameters in accordance with those of the target language (for review, see for example, Braidi, 1999; Gass & Selinker, 1994; Mitchell & Myles, 1998; White, 1989).

Information-Processing Theories. In contrast to skill-building approaches which consider practice as a necessary procedure for the conversion of explicit knowledge to implicit knowledge, information-processing approaches focus on comprehension only and consider practice detrimental when the objective of instruction is geared towards promoting implicit procedural knowledge (i.e., fluency). Advocates of Information-processing claim that when the goal of instruction is developing implicit declarative knowledge (i.e., intake), there is no need to worry about what Pienemann (1984) calls the 'deleterious' effect on interlanguage development. The focus on comprehension, to the exclusion of production practice, will automatically take care of any effects that may impede the intake development (see, Ellis, 1990, 1993, 1994). The result is a structural syllabus with a new orientation: the ability to communicate in a L2 is licensed by the amount of the grammatical knowledge attained in that language. Therefore, tapping into L2 learners' linguistic knowledge by means of raising their consciousness to comprehend L2 marked grammatical forms in the input (Sharwood Smith, 1981, 1986) and giving them opportunities for natural communication through the use of grammar tasks devised to promote communication about grammar helps learners develop both explicit and implicit types of knowledge. (Fotos & Ellis 1991; Ellis, 1993, 1997).

In one of the articles on this new status of the structural syllabus, Ellis (1993) captures this learnability problem that has recently emerged in the form of a debate between proponents of skill-building theories and proponents of communicative-based teaching. He argues for a weaker position, in which explicit knowledge can convert into implicit knowledge if certain conditions and constraints are met. Figure 1 below illustrates Ellis' point of view.

According to the noninterface position, as shown in Figure 1, explicit declarative knowledge can only become explicit procedural knowledge (Krashen, 1981, 1982, 1985). By contrast, according to the extreme interface position, explicit declarative knowledge can directly become implicit procedural knowledge through practice (see, Andersen,

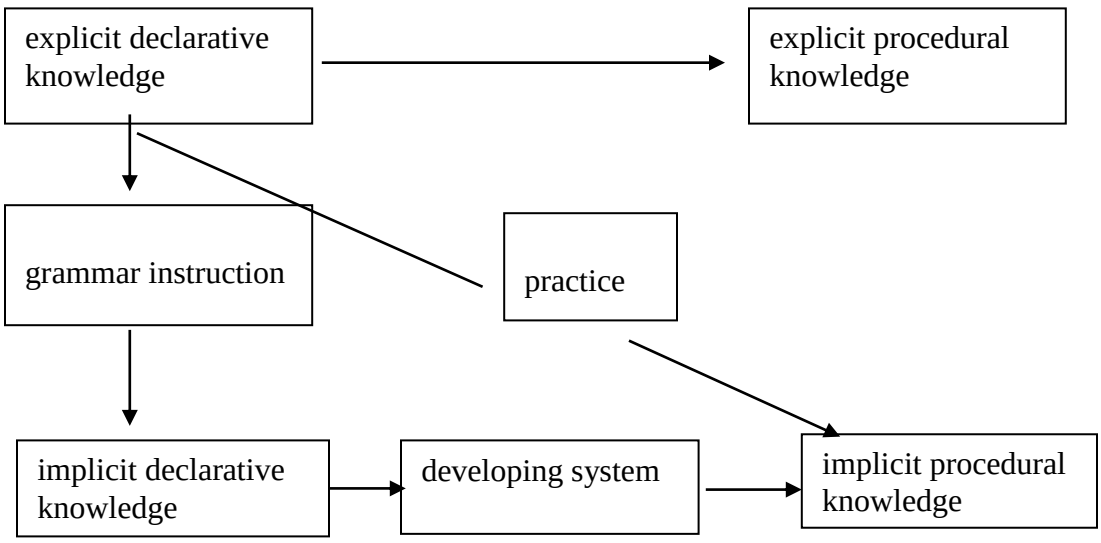

Figure 1. The interface between Explicit Knowledge and Implicit Knowledge

1984, 1990; Anderson, 1980, 1983, 1993; Bialystock, 1981, 1990; McLaughlin, 1990; Sharwood Smith, 1981). Ellis's (1993) position dictates that explicit L2 knowledge can convert into implicit L2 knowledge if (i) the focus of instruction is on comprehension, rather than on immediate production, and (ii) when learners are in a stage of language development where they can process the input and convert it into intake. For L2 learners to be able to use the intuitive knowledge spontaneously, they need to be involved in communicative tasks designed to promote communication about grammar. On this account then, explicit knowledge contributes indirectly to L2 acquisition in that it facilitates and (Ellis, 1993) expedites the process of acquisition.

VanPatten (1989), using a limited processing capacity model, suggests that having learners attend to form and meaning in the input simultaneously overloads their processing abilities to the extent that they fail to notice the form while processing input for meaning and fail to notice the meaning while processing input for form. In his study that compared the effects of learners' ability to comprehend L2 Spanish, he noticed that the comprehension scores of learners who were asked to attend to meaning only were higher than those who where asked to attend to meaning while also noticing the bound morpheme *-n* and the definite article *-la*.

In their article on the nature of *Explicit Instruction and Input-Processing*, VanPatten and Cadierno (1993), claim that most of the studies that have been done on the effect of explicit teaching have been concerned with whether explicit teaching has an effect on the route of acquiring a L2 and with the type of structures that should be taught to learners, but not with the nature of instruction. VanPatten and Cadierno (1993) believe that providing formal instruction, coupled with input-processing practices may help learners restructure their internal language system, hence developing both explicit and implicit types of knowledge.

Reacting to communicative-based language teaching that has attempted to deny the role of traditional explicit instruction on the basis of its behaviorist associations, VanPatten and Cadierno (1993) argue that attending to linguistic features in the input is indispensable for language acquisition to occur (see, Sharwood Smith, 1986). They claim that the main reason traditional grammar instruction has failed to effect a significant change in learner's developing system is because it is based on manipulating the learner's output (e.g., Fig. 2):

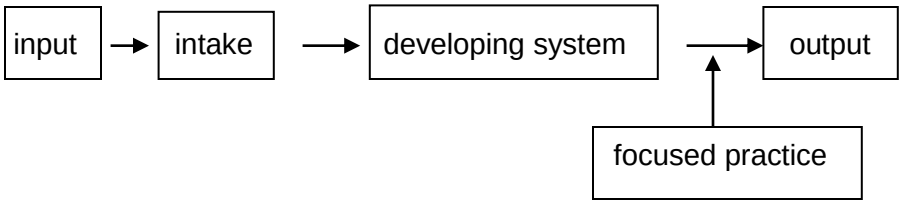

Figure 2. Traditional Grammar Teaching (VanPatten & Cadierno, 1993)

By contrast, focusing on input-practice by means of altering the way the input is perceived and processed by learners, they argue, may effect a change in the learner's internal language system (e.g., Fig. 3):

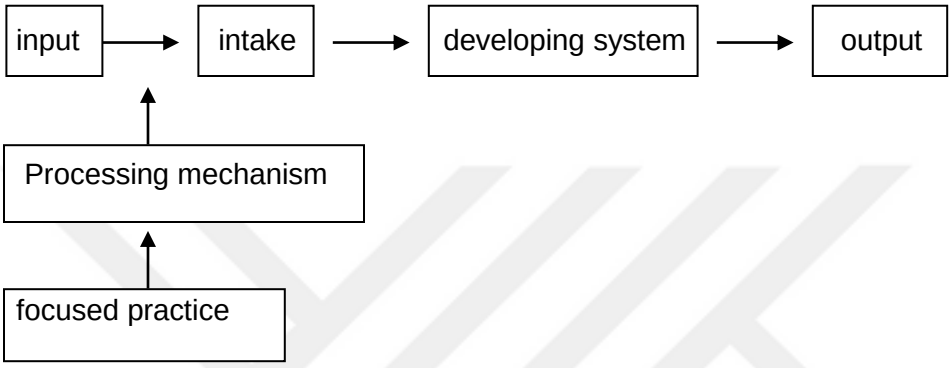

Figure 3. Processing Instruction (VanPatten & Cadierno, 1993)

In order to test their hypothesis on the nature of explicit processing-instruction, VanPatten and Cadierno (1993) conducted a study that compared two groups of university level students in the United States: a control group which received traditional production-practice grammar teaching (see, Fig. 2) and a treatment group which received listening comprehension-processing instruction (see, Fig. 3). Both groups also received explicit instruction in the target structure, the object clitic pronouns in Spanish. Two tests were performed in the study: A discrete-item listening comprehension test and a discrete-item written production test. The results of the study showed that the group which received explicit instruction with input-processing practice outperformed the group which received explicit instruction with production practice on the listening

comprehension test. Moreover, even though learners in the processing–instruction condition did not receive production practice instruction, they performed equally well as those in the production-practice condition on the written production test. This suggests that the superior performance of the treatment group on the listening task was due to the presence of input-processing instruction and not to the production-practice instruction.

Supporting evidence for VanPatten and Cadierno's (1993) study comes from Tanaka's 1996 study (cited in Ellis, 1999, p. 72) on the acquisition of English relative clauses by 123 high school students in Japan. Tanaka reported that explicit focus on grammar followed by processing practices gave more positive and durable results than explicit focus on grammar followed by production practice.

Whether processing instruction was the sole contributor to the success of the treatment groups in VanPatten and Cadierno's (1993) study and Tanaka's (1996) study was questionable on the grounds that students might have utilized their explicit knowledge when answering the written production test items. In order to refute this claim, VanPatten and Oikkenon (1996) conducted an experimental study on high school students that included three conditions: a processing practice condition, an explicit instruction condition, and a combination of both (i.e., explicit instruction and processing practice). Two tests were used in this study, a

picture-cued listening comprehension test and a production test. On the comprehension test, students in the first and third conditions outperformed students in the second condition, with no significant difference between students in the first and the third conditions. On the production test, only students in the first condition performed better than those in the second condition, with no significant difference between students in the first and third conditions. VanPatten and Oikkenon ascribed the improvement of students in the first and third conditions to the presence of processing instruction and not to explicit instruction.

Some studies that compared processing instruction with production practice produced different results. For example, DeKeyser and Sokalski (1996), drawing on skill-building theories, found that explicit instruction followed by production practice worked better than processing instruction in improving learners' production skills. However, processing activities proved to be more effective in promoting learners' comprehension skills.

DeKeyser (1998) considers production practice crucial to the development of fluency. He claims that proponents of information-processing (e.g., Ellis, 1993; VanPatten, 1993), as well as proponents of communicative-based or experiential teaching (e.g., Krashen, 1981; Krashen & Terrell, 1983) have rejected the notion of practice on the grounds that practice does not make perfect. However, advocates of both

teaching philosophies have not thoroughly examined how production processing could promote fluency. Drawing on Paulsto's (1971) differentiation between mechanical drills that focus on syntactic processing, meaningful drills that require meaning processing, and communicative drills that involve students in actual communication, DeKeyser imputes the inability of traditional explicit grammar teaching to promote fluency to its indulgence in the first two types of drills. The third type of drills has been assumed rather than vigorously applied. He suggests that the role of production practice in promoting fluency is not less important than the role of input practice, provided that the right type of practice is furnished.

While information-processing rationale seems to be sound in principle, it suffers from at least two problems. First, even though information-processing has rejected the notion of practice to eschew the teachability/learnability constraints (Pienemann, 1984, 1989[4]) on fluency development, it has fallen into another trap by focusing excessively on

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4 Working on word order rules in German, Pienemann discusses the developmental sequence of SLA and notes that it is not possible to acquire, and therefore, to teach structures beyond the learner's current stage of language development. Pienemann's condition seems to be compatible with Ellis' (1993) condition on the explicit and implicit teachability/learnability issue, as well as with Krashen's (1981, 1982, 1985) Natural Order Hypothesis, the underlying reasons for these conditions may be different notwithstanding.

input processing. This processing, in which a linguistic element is processed separately from its meaning/function, imposes a very serious question as to the nature of the cognitive mechanisms involved in input-processing: do L2 learners conceive of a language structure as consisting of separate components? Put differently, is this kind of dissociation a natural learning process in which acquiring a L2 form differs from acquiring its meaning, or is it a permeable reflection of our flawed teaching practices? It is likely that processing input for meaning at one time and processing input for form at another imposes on learners an external syllabus that overloads them with two separate tasks for dealing with the input: one for transferring the input into intake and another for transferring the intake into production, never mind the restructuring and integration process.

Second, although the structural syllabus seems to be an 'inevitable evil' in L2 teaching, it is still considered incomprehensive because—in spite of its claim that it can account for the explicit/implicit learnability problem on the microcosmic level (i.e., linguistic knowledge)—it appears to be unable to account for the explicit/implicit learnability problem on the macrocosmic level (i.e., linguistic competence or the ability to utilize the linguistic knowledge accurately in different contexts). In other words, although this excessive explicit focus on input-processing may lead to intake development, it can at the same time block pathways to

automaticity. After all, the hypothesis itself is in conflict with the evident fact that the performance of L2 learners does not show obvious symptoms of automaticity. It may be quite possible for L2 learners to produce what they have learned on the level of controlled processing for a short period of time. However, once they try to use language without thinking, they either resort to their conscious knowledge, hence their speech is characterized by being communicatively inefficient, or they fall back on a language system that is available for subconscious production. This system is their native language, thus their performance abounds with errors.

Focus on Form Syllabus

So far, we have reviewed two main approaches to second language learning and teaching. These approaches represent a dichotomy between pedagogical philosophies that emphasize the role of grammar teaching in promoting the acquisition of a L2 (e.g., grammar-based syllabi, including the structural syllabus), and those which stress that grammar teaching is unnecessary for language acquisition to occur (e.g., communicative-based syllabus). Grammar-based approaches dwell on the idea that the starting point of instruction should be grammar. Communicative-based approaches, on the other hand, stress that the starting point of instruction should be meaning as grammar is acquired

incidentally, or implicitly. Recently, researchers have realized that fostering a single-sided teaching approach takes us no further than deciding between alternative approaches. Focusing on form by means of integrating some sort of grammar instruction into communicative language teaching would promote both linguistic and communicative competencies. In order to understand the theoretical orientation of Focus on Form (FonF), it is helpful to trace its recent history.

To begin with, FonF is a recent version of what Long (1981, 1983, 1996) has termed as the 'Interaction Hypothesis'. Underlying the Interaction Hypothesis is a belief that negotiation for meaning between native speakers and nonnative speakers or between more or less fluent speakers in an effort to come to a mutual understanding of the message sets off conversational repairs (e.g., comprehension checks, clarification requests, and repetitions, etc.). The function of these conversational repairs is to "make input comprehensible while still containing unknown linguistic elements, and hence, potential intake for acquisition" (Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991, p. 144). In other words, negotiation for meaning eventuates in an incidental adjustment of the input to the current level of the learner's development. This fine-tuning of the input is similar to what Krashen (1982, 1985) has referred to as i +1 (i.e., comprehensible input) in his Input Hypothesis.

The greater emphasis laid on the analysis of the functional aspects of interaction between native speakers and nonnative speakers has raised many questions as to the effectiveness of interaction in developing grammatical competence. For example, Braidi (1995, 1999), working within a universal Grammar (UG) framework, discusses the role of negotiation for meaning in SLA. She claims that it is uncertain how negotiation for meaning impinges upon the processes involved in grammatical development. Moreover, it is unclear which key structures available in the input are most likely to be used by learners as clues to reset their parameters from the native language setting to the target language setting in the absence of a clear understanding of the mechanism of UG principles and parameters. This view, *per se*, has motivated Long (1996) to reconsider reformulating the Interaction Hypothesis to include explanations on how L2 structures may be acquired through negotiation for meaning and on how this process may contribute to language development:

> It is proposed that environmental contributions to acquisition are mediated by selective attention and the learner's developing L2 processing capacity, and that these resources are brought together…during negotiation for meaning. Negative feedback obtained during negotiation work or elsewhere may be facilitative of language development, …and essential for learning certain specifiable L1-L2 contrasts. (Long, 1996, p. 414)

The implication of this new account of the Interaction Hypothesis is that conversational adjustments that result from negotiation for meaning

are incidentally adapted to the learner's internal system. Featured by implicit negative evidence in the form of recasts, this process of adaptation is assumed to render the input more comprehensible for learners in such a way that they not only comprehend the meaning but also notice the structure. This new rendering of the hypothesis, which places more emphasis on the role of attention and negative evidence in SLA, has constituted the underlying principles upon which FonF operates. Before moving on to discuss the dimensions of attention and negative evidence in FonF instruction, let us dip into the motivation that has inspired researchers to flirt with the role of attention in SLA.

The Role of Attention in SLA. With the recent claims in cognitive psychology about the role of attention in SLA, the continuing debate between proponents of explicit teaching and proponents of communicative-based teaching discussed in the previous sections has been brought back to life in the form of implicit vs. explicit learning. Recall that Krashen (1982, 1985, 1994) claims that exposing students to large quantities of positive input that is comprehensible and meaningful is sufficient for language acquisition to take place. Grammar is acquired incidentally (i.e., without intention) through communication. Furthermore, explicit grammar instruction and error correction may be conducive to learning, not to acquisition. When the goal of teaching is acquisition, explicit grammar instruction should be limited to simple forms. Likewise,

Reber (1989, 1993), working within an artificial grammar framework, claims that implicit learning (i.e., without awareness) is better than explicit learning though, like Krashen, he concedes that explicit rule-search learning is more effective when the target structure is simple. Krashen's and Reber's observations suggest that implicit learning is superior to explicit learning for complex L2 rules.

As illogical as it may seem, the implication of the claims above for language teaching is that complex grammatical structures are acquired without instruction (i.e., without intention, or awareness) and that only simple structures are learned through explicit instruction. The question is, what exactly distinguishes a simple grammatical structure from a difficult one? And what makes complex structures unsusceptible to explicit teaching? Krashen (1982) suggests that the interface between formal and functional aspects of structures is what renders certain grammatical structures easy or hard to learn. For example, the third person *-s* is easy to learn because it is formally simple. Ellis (1993) shares Krashen's view on the distinction between easy and hard rules. He suggests that structures, such as the plural *-s* and the copula *-be* are amenable to instruction because they do not require complex processing of form or form-function interface. Conversely, structures that are resistant to instruction often involve complex processing (e.g., inversion) or opaque syntactic-semantic relationships (e.g., V -ing, articles, etc.). However, in

contrast to Krashen's claim, Ellis considers the third person *-s* as formally complex because it involves a complex processing task that calls for a transfer of the morpheme *-s* from the grammatical subject to the verb (Pienemann, 1984, 1989), and it is often bypassed by learners because it is communicatively insignificant. Moreover, structures that involve complex processing of both form and form-function interface, Ellis speculates, are the hardest to acquire unless the learner is in an appropriate stage of language development.

Needless to say, not all researchers agree on this easy/hard rule distinction. For example, DeKeyser (1998) views functional complexity as a relevant concept. He claims that it is hard to imagine a structure that is formally simple and functionally complex at the same time. Similarly, it is unclear how a structure that is formally complex could be functionally simple. He argues that what makes a structure, such as the third person *-s* easy or hard to learn is not its absence or presence on the surface structure. Rather, it is how complex/simple its form-function relationship on the deep structure is that makes it susceptible or unsusceptible to instruction. Given that different languages treat grammatical and functional markers differently (e.g., infixing, inflectional, agglutinative languages), it is easy to imagine the difficulties facing second language learners in coming to grips with the grammatical/functional system of a target language.

A radically different perspective on which forms are amenable to explicit instruction and which are not comes from Hulstijn and De Graaff (1994). They claim that because simple rules can be easily discovered or worked out from the input, they do not need instruction, suggesting that the focus of instruction should be on difficult rather than on simple structures.

These conflicting views have sparked a number of studies investigating the role of attention in language learning. For example, N. Ellis (1993) reports a study on the acquisition of a complex morphological structure, the soft mutation rules of Welsh, by native speakers of English under three conditions: (i) A random group was exposed to examples during training. This condition was operationalized by Ellis as an implicit learning condition. (ii) A grammar group received explicit training in the form of rule-instruction before being exposed to the same examples as the random group. (iii) A structured group was exposed to the same instances as the other two groups after receiving a structured training in the form of a blend of rules and examples. He found that learners who received structured instruction performed better on the well-formedness test than students who received implicit, or explicit rule instruction.

DeKeyser (1995) studied the effect of implicit-inductive instruction and explicit-deductive instruction on learning an artificial language,

Implexan, an agglutinative SVO language. He used two dialects of Implexan, in which agreement between the NP and the VP is marked for case and number on nouns and number and gender on verbs. In one dialect, this agreement is categorical in that the particle *-on* is the default plural marker on nouns. In the second dialect, there are two possible morphemes that can be used to denote the plural agreement on verbs, *-at* or *-it*. The complexity of this dialect stems from the fact that the choice of the correct plural morpheme is prototypically conditioned by the verb stem. He found that explicit-deductive instruction was more effective than implicit-inductive instruction in learning simple categorical rules, with no advantage for implicit-inductive instruction over explicit-deductive instruction in learning complex L2 rules.

In addition, Robinson (1996) reports a study that compared the acquisition of simple/complex rules under four conditions: an implicit condition, a rule-search condition, an incidental condition, and an instructed condition. The first two conditions combined Reber's distinction between implicit and explicit learning, and the last two conditions combined Krashen's distinction between acquisition and learning. He found that students who were in the explicit instructed condition were more successful in learning simple grammatical rules than students in all other conditions, with no advantage for any condition over another in regards to complex L2 rules. Robinson's conclusion seems to be in line

with DeKeyser's, Krashen's and Reber's that explicit instruction is better than implicit instruction for easy L2 rules. However, both DeKeyser's and Robinson's conclusions disconfirm Krashen's and Reber's claims that implicit instruction is superior to explicit instruction for complex rules.

Attention and FonF. We have seen how researchers have reacted to Reber's (1989, 1993) and Krashen's (1982, 1985, 1994) claims that implicit or incidental learning is more effective than explicit learning for complex L2 rules and that the focus on meaning during communication is a sufficient condition for acquisition to take place. The consensus among researchers nowadays is that although focus on meaning is a necessary condition, it is not a sufficient condition for the acquisition of form (for review, see, Doughty & Williams, 1998; Ellis, 1994; Robinson, 1996). Learners need to pay attention to language form in the input if acquisition is to take place (Long, 1991, 1996, 2001; Long & Robinson, 1998; Schmidt, 1990, 1993, 1994, 1995). It is this view of language learning upon which FonF is based. By definition, FonF is founded on the precept that drawing the learner's attentional mechanisms to linguistic features in the input promotes noticing, and hence intake:

> [A] syllabus with a focus on form … overtly draws students' attention to linguistic elements as they arise incidentally in lessons whose overriding focus is on meaning or communication. (Long, 1991, pp. 45-46)

However, while there is a consensus among researchers that attention is a necessary condition for acquisition, there is disagreement as to the type and degree of attention necessary to satisfy the acquisition requirement. For example, Schmidt distinguishes between two types of attention: noticing and understanding. He refers to noticing as the first level of attention, in which learners, with or without intention, notice the occurrence of a particular stimulus in the input. Conversely, he refers to understanding as the second level of attention, where learners are consciously involved in discovering and recognizing a general code underlying the stimulus in the input. Schmidt comments on the difference between noticing and understanding as follows:

> I use noticing to mean registering the simple occurrence of some event, whereas understanding implies recognition of a general principle, rule, or pattern. For example, a second language learner might simply notice that a native speaker used a particular form of address on a particular occasion, or at a deeper level the learner might understand the significance of such a form. (Schmidt, 1993, p. 26)

Schmidt views both noticing and understanding as conducive to learning. However, he places more emphasis on noticing and considers it as "a necessary and sufficient condition for the conversion of input to intake" (1994, p. 17), though he concedes that "more noticing leads to more learning" (1994, p. 18). With respect to understanding, he claims that even though conscious knowledge of grammar rules attained through what Sharwood Smith terms as 'consciousness raising' (1981) and 'input enhancement' (1993, 1994) has an effect on the learner's developing

system, this effect is short-lived as reported by several studies (e.g., Trahey, 1996, discussed below).

Not all researchers agree with Schmidt's (1993) claim that noticing or consciously registering an occurrence of a particular exemplar in memory is a necessary requirement of attentional processes in acquiring any L2. For instance, quibbling with the minutiae of Schmidt's view of noticing, Tomlin and Villa (1994) argue that L2 learners may detect a particular linguistic feature in the input and register it in memory subconsciously. That is, detection does not necessarily presuppose awareness as claimed by Schmidt (1993), suggesting that learning can take place without awareness.

In an attempt to reconcile these opposing views, Robinson (1996) suggests that the concept of noticing be modified to include detection plus rehearsal in short-term memory. This kind of modification renders noticing a process that has detection as an input to other conscious processes (e.g., hypothesis formation and testing) before entering the long-term memory domain. Thus, according to Robinson, detection alone is not sufficient for input to become intake, suggesting that conscious rehearsal in short-term memory is a fundamental component in SLA.

It is worth noting at this point that while advocates of FonF believe that noticing is a sufficient condition for language acquisition to take place, proponents of explicit instruction argue that what converts input to intake is understanding of linguistic stimulus in the input that results from explicit instruction. The thrust of their argument is that learners must consciously attend to form before they can notice a particular linguistic item (e.g., Sharwood Smith, 1981, 1993; VanPatten, 1989, 1996). In other words, while the outcome of FonF is noticing (Long & Robinson, 1998), the outcome of explicit instruction is understanding.

The implication of this controversy over the type and degree of attention needed for input to become intake is that the starting point or the primary focus of explicit instruction is on grammar—whether followed by production practice or accompanied with input-practice. By contrast, the starting point or the primary focus of FonF instruction is on meaning; grammar is attended to incidentally during communication (Long, 1996; Long & Robinson,1998).

Negative Evidence, Positive Evidence and FonF. Given that the attainment of FonF is associated with and contingent upon noticing, the questions of what kind of evidence promotes noticing and what level of FonF guarantees noticing, and hence the conversion of input into intake are far from settled. Long and Robinson (1998) suggest that FonF may be

achieved in three ways: First, it may be achieved via the provision of implicit negative evidence in the form of recasts during negotiation for meaning. The function of this type of feedback is to implicitly raise learners' awareness to the errors in their speech production without interrupting the flow of information, so that they notice and restructure the new information in accordance with the target language system.

Comparing recasts and other types of feedback, such as clarification requests and metalinguistic feedback, Lyster and Ranta (1997) found that classroom learners were less responsive to self-correction through recasts than other types of feedback. They argue that the inability of recasts to create communicative pressure on students to attend to linguistic features in the input may not lead to noticing and interlanguage restructuring.

Doughty and Varela (1998) argue that the ineffectiveness of recasts reported in Lyster and Ranta's (1997) study may be imputed to unplanned integration of recasting into communicative activities. They report in their study on the acquisition of the simple past tense and the conditional past tense in a content-based classroom that learners who received implicit negative feedback outperformed those who did not. Doughty and Varela attribute the success of students who received implicit negative feedback

to the communicative pressure created through carefully planned integration of recasts into communicative activities.

Another way in which FonF may be achieved is through the provision of incidental explicit negative evidence in the form of overt corrective feedback. Although advocates of FonF do not exclude the potential of explicit negative evidence in promoting intake development, they view its contribution as limited to learning/teaching simple grammatical structures. Indeed, given that the outcome of FonF is noticing (Long & Robinson, 1998) and that the outcome of explicit instruction is understanding, the provision of explicit negative feedback seems to be irrelevant and incompatible with the primary goal of FonF instruction.

However, studies that have investigated the effect of explicit negative evidence on acquisition have produced mixed results. For example, in a two-phase quasi-experimental study, L. White (1991) investigated the effect of explicit instruction and corrective feedback on the acquisition of English WH-question formation by beginners. In the first phase, she compared two groups receiving explicit instruction with three uninstructed groups. She found that explicit instruction had significant positive effects on the performance of instructed learners as evidenced by their posttest scores on a sentence-correction activity. In the second phase, she investigated the long-term effects of explicit instruction on two

measures of grammatical accuracy: two written-production tasks and one oral production task. She found that instructed learners performed better than uninstructed learners on posttests and retention tests five weeks later both in written and oral production tasks.

In a similar vein, Spada and Lightbown (1993), investigating the long-term effects of explicit negative feedback, found that the provision of incidental and explicit instruction together with corrective feedback had long-term effects of instruction on WH-interrogative structures.

Trahey (1996) investigated the long-term effects of explicit negative evidence on the acquisition of English adverbs by L1 French children. She found that although students learned that the order SAV (e.g., 'Helen rarely drinks orange juice') is permitted in English, they failed to demonstrate that SVAO is not permitted in English on the follow-up test. It is because of studies such as these that Schmidt (1993, 1994) downplays the role of explicit instruction. However, it is very important to note here that it is possible that internalization of such structures would have occurred had students been exposed to negative evidence in the form of what is ungrammatical in English (see, Robinson, 1996). This suggests that a slight modification in the learning condition may produce potentially substantial changes in the learning gains.

Williams and Evans (1998), on the other hand, studied the effect of FonF instruction on the acquisition of English participial adjectives and the passive voice under three conditions: (i) a positive flooded input condition (control group), (ii) a positive flooded condition with an artificial increase of the target structures in the input, and (iii) a positive flooded input condition with explicit instruction and corrective feedback. They found that conditions 2 and 3 were more effective than condition 1 in teaching the English participial adjectives (e.g., interesting/interested), but condition 3 was more effective than condition 2. However, condition 3 was not better than condition 2 in teaching the passive voice structures. They conclude that explicit feedback works better only when the target structure is simple and when learners are in an appropriate stage of interlanguage development. This conclusion should be interpreted with great caution, however. These results might have been due to the fact that (i) learners were simply not ready for the passive structure, (ii) learners did not have the chance to engage in comprehension-checking activities outside the basic texts provided in the experiment, (iii) the provision of explicit feedback did not focus on L1-L2 contrasts, or (iv) the amount of explicit feedback provided during communication was not sufficient for learners to perceive (notice and understand) the target structure in the input.

Finally, FonF may be achieved via input-flood together with input-enhancement. That is, ‘flooding’ students with positive exemplars of the

target structure in the context of meaning-focused activities, and typographically enhancing the input (using, for example, underlining, italicizing, bolding, using a different color, etc.) to increase the perceptual saliency of the target structure in the input may promote noticing, and hence intake development. However, the provision of such enhancement of input does not necessarily result in noticing. J. White (1998) reports a study that compared the acquisition of third person singular pronouns and possessive determiners by elementary school francophone learners under three conditions: (i) typographically enhanced input flood coupled with extensive reading and listening; (ii) typographically enhanced input flood; and (iii) typographically unenhanced input flood. She found that conditions 1 and 2 had no significant effect on the learners' acquisition of the target structure. J. White concludes that even though input enhancement may be a valuable technique to draw learners' attention to the target form in the input, it may not be effective when the target structure involves L1-L2 contrasts, suggesting that more explicit negative feedback is needed to make the target structure more salient in the input.

In sum, FonF caters to incidental acquisition by drawing learners' attention to the target structure (e.g., input enhancement, frequency of target form occurrence in the input, and recasting) in the context of meaning-focused activities. Explicit instruction is restricted to simple structures. The degree and level of explicitness of FonF depends on the

complexity/simplicity of the structures in question. The ultimate consequence of FonF is noticing, which is a necessary and sufficient condition for the input to become intake.

It is worth mentioning, strongly formulated though it may be, that the noticing-acquisition equation under which FonF operates does not of itself exclude the possibility of form imperceptibility in the input. Therefore, one might argue that this focus on noticing, to the exclusion of understanding the "general principle, rule, or pattern" (Schmidt, 1993, p. 26) to promote intake may induce different interpretations of the input, thus individualized types of intake. However, if true, the hypothesis itself is in conflict with the evident fact that the performance of L2 learners does not show obvious symptoms of linguistic fluency. In other words, it may be quite possible for L2 learners to notice a particular linguistic feature in the input without explicit instruction. Nonetheless, this noticing may not necessarily result in intake. Furthermore, the conversion of input into intake through noticing does not necessarily wind up in integration of the target structure into the interlanguage system. It follows, when learners are put in communicative situations, they try to utilize what they have noticed in the input. Consequently, their speech is a reflection of their unique perception of the input (cf. Ellis, 1990). Given that the goal of L2 instruction is to promote linguistic automaticity in L2 learners, a balanced syllabus must be developed in which linguistic features in the input can be

noticed and integrated in such a way that focus on form is not so explicit that it blocks pathways to automaticity and not so implicit that it precludes linguistic competence.

Explicit Form-Focused Syllabus

Various pedagogic methods, as we have seen in the previous sections, have been proposed to address the question of how best to draw learners' attention to linguistic features in the input so that they can detect/notice, or understand these linguistic features and assimilate them into their interlanguage system. These include 'consciousness raising' or 'input enhancement' (e.g., Sharwood Smith, 1981, 1993, 1994), 'focus on comprehension' (e.g., Ellis, 1993) or 'input processing' (e.g., VanPatten & Cadierno, 1993), and finally 'focus on form' (e.g., Doughty & Williams, 1998, Long, 1991, 1996).

We have also seen how FonF equates language acquisition with noticing and attempts to utilize several pedagogical methods (i.e., negative evidence/feedback, positive evidence, input-flood, repetition, or input enhancement) to draw learners' attention to linguistic features in the input during meaning-focused or communicational activities. This kind of association between noticing and acquisition invites a series of serious questions related to the nature of this relationship, such as 'what exactly is

the nature of noticing?'; 'How much input is necessary to promote noticing?'; 'How many times and in how many contexts must a particular target structure be highlighted in order for noticing to take place?'; 'what if noticing does not occur?'; 'should we give up on students who fail to notice a particular form in the input?'; and 'If noticing does really occur, what guarantees that learners will actually interpret the input accurately in accordance with the L2 system?'. These queries are very important in the face of the evident fact that the performance of L2 learners is linguistically flawed in spite of the large quantities of comprehensible input to which they are exposed. Therefore, the study proposes that the provision of explicit negative feedback (see, Fig. 4 below) during communication may work as a 'safety valve' for learners who fail to notice the target form in the input while, at the same time, filtering out individualized hypotheses about the L2 form.

The study draws on FonF instruction and approaches the integration of grammar into communicative language teaching from a somewhat different perspective. The study aims to (i) counter the minimal role ascribed to grammar teaching in Krashen's Monitor Model (1982, 1985) in general, (ii) counter the maximal role attributed to noticing in FonF instruction (Doughty & Williams, 1998; Long, 1991; Schmidt, 1993) in particular, and (iii) lend empirical support to Explicit Form-Focused (EFF) instruction, whereby linguistic competence in L2 learning may be

achieved via perception of target language forms in the input through explicit negative evidence/feedback in the context of meaning-focused activities.

First, while FonF caters to incidental acquisition of grammar by drawing learners' attention to the target structure (e.g., input enhancement, recasting, or a flood of positive input) in the context of meaning-focused activities, the present study advocates the inclusion of a more conscious level of grammar instruction into communicative activities. In other words, while the intended outcome of FonF is getting learners to notice the target language structure during communication, the present study's intended outcome is getting learners to perceive (notice and understand) the target structure during communicative activities.

Thus, according to Figure (4) below, the position of FonF dictates that negotiation for meaning promotes noticing of linguistic features in the input and that noticing is a necessary and sufficient condition for input to become intake. The position of the present study, on the other hand, is that negotiation for meaning may be sufficient for noticing some structures sometimes by some learners. However, it may not be sufficient for noticing all structures by all learners; hence noticing is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for the conversion of input into intake. Thus, this study assumes that perception achieved through explicit negative evidence is a

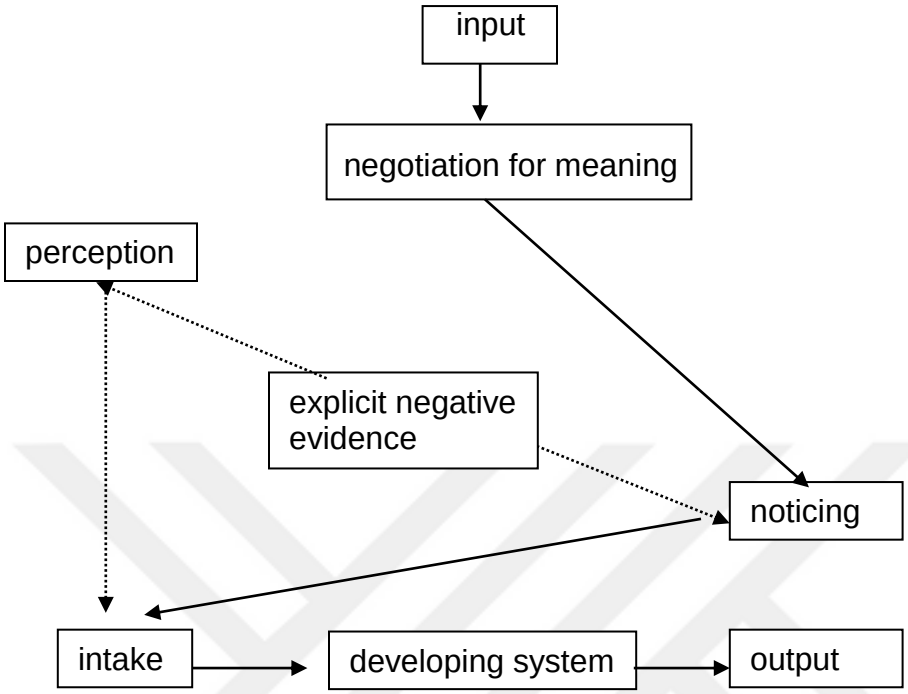

Figure 4. The Positions of EFF Instruction and FonF Instruction.

necessary and sufficient condition for input to become intake, hence the dotted line. Note that the dotted arrow with two opposite heads indicates that the relationship between noticing, explicit negative evidence and perception is not a unidirectional relationship; rather it is cyclic, suggesting that explicit negative evidence may lead to more noticing and that more noticing leads to more perception. That is, noticing may constrain L2 learning, but it may not license it in the absence of perception.

It must be stressed here that the provision of explicit negative feedback to ensure perception does not mean a relapse to traditional grammar instruction. Rather, the function of this intervention of explicit

negative feedback is to ensure comprehension of the target form in case learners should fail to notice it during communicative activities, as well as to prevent individualized interpretations of the target form in the input. Thus, comprehension or understanding here refers to the second component of perception, which results from immediate noticing of form during negotiation for meaning, as well as from explicit negative feedback furnished during communicative and comprehension-checking activities. It does not refer to understanding resulting from traditional explicit grammar instruction discussed earlier in this chapter.

Second, EFF instruction considers explicit negative evidence/feedback an essential condition for acquisition to take place. Research findings show that positive evidence alone is not sufficient to acquire target language items that have no equivalence in the learners' L1, or have parameters set differently from those in the learners' L1 (see, Lyster & Ranata, 1997; Trahey, 1996; White, 1989, 1991). For example, L2 learners whose native language has no equivalence to the English future tense, such as (1b, 2b, 3b) may not be able to notice the distinctive features of this structure through the provision of positive input alone:

(1) a. Sonia will have a baby in May.

b. Sonia is going to have/is having a baby in May.

(2) a. Will you use you car tomorrow? If not, can I borrow it?

b. Will you be using you car tomorrow? If not, can I borrow it?

(3) a. I will be in Oxford for two years by next August.

b. I will have been in Oxford for two years by next August.

Interestingly enough, although sentences produced by L2 learners, such as those in (1a) through (3a) are deviant, they are almost always tolerated and overlooked by native speakers inasmuch as they do not cause communication breakdown, leaving learners unaware of their errors. This is pretty much true in classroom situations. However, in business, political or diplomatic negotiations, the use of one future tense over another may very well affect the course of negotiations and bring down unfavorable results.

By the same token, students who produce sentences, such as ‘Sonia will have a baby in May’, in which the future verb form is used inaccurately in place of ‘Sonia is having/going to have a baby in May’ and receive implicit negative evidence (i.e., recasting) from the teacher or from students, may correct themselves in that particular instance. However, it is odds-on that this type of negative evidence may not help learners utilize this new information in new communicative situations if they are left unaware of the microcosmic and the macrocosmic properties that render

the choice of one form of futuritives more accurate in a particular context. That is, the provision of implicit negative evidence in this case is inconsequential. Therefore, the provision of explicit negative evidence during communication by means of pointing out the source of error and explaining it to students to promote their perception of the target language structures seems to be a crucial component for input to become intake.

My experience as a native speaker of Arabic and a language teacher is that the English perfect aspect is one of the most difficult structures for the Arabic learners to acquire. This is mainly because the tense and aspect interface in Arabic falls under two main categories: Perfect and Imperfect. The former contains past tense and perfective aspect, the latter contains present tense and imperfective aspect (Comrie, 1991). In other words, in contrast to English which treats past tense and the present perfect aspect as separate structures, Arabic uses the simple past for actions that happened in the past and ended in the past, as well as for actions that happened in the past and elapsed before the present moment. This structural contrast between Arabic and English renders the perfect aspect unsusceptible to noticing in the absence of explicit negative evidence.

White (1989, 1991) has identified this learnability problem in terms of grammatical contrasts that tend to be unlearnable from positive input

alone. For example, in contrast to French, adverbials in English (e.g., sincerely, carefully, accidentally) can be used in almost any position in the sentence except between the verb and its complements. For French-speaking learners of English, the non-occurrence of adverbials between verbs and their complements may not be salient in the input, and hence passed unnoticed. White notes that in cases such as this, negative input may be necessary in addition to positive input or explicit instruction. The importance of negative evidence, White argues, stems from the very fact that a sentence, such as 'They drove slowly the car' is likely to be accepted by native speakers because it causes no communication breakdown, suggesting that positive evidence alone may leave learners unaware of the existence of errors. It follows that positive input alone is insufficient to help learners reset their parameters from their L1 to that of the L2. Moreover, the provision of explicit instruction or negative evidence in any teaching syllabus appears to be inevitable, any acquisition sequencing constraints notwithstanding.

Third, and finally, many researchers have tried to set criteria for hard and simple rules in an effort to determine which teaching methodologies work for simple rules and which teaching methodologies work for hard rules. Unfortunately, there is no clear-cut criterion other than the speculative structural built-in configuration discussed above. Therefore, while FonF instruction views the type and level of explicitness

of focus on form in terms of hard/easy rules, the EFF instruction stems from the idea that all language learning requires attention (see, Robinson, 1996). In addition, the type and degree of attention required for noticing to occur may not be conditioned by the difficulty of the structure, per se. Rather, it is subject to the learner's mental representation mapping of the input as to whether it is (i) noticeable/internalized, (ii) noticeable/automatized, and (iii) unnoticeable/unautomatized (cf. Gass & Selinker, 1994; White, 1996). Figure (5) below provides a model representing these situations in three positions:

Position 1. Noticeable/internalized: If the input contains both syntactic and semantic representations that can be related to some existing linguistic and cognitive representation or can be configured easily by the learner's system, then noticing, and hence integration may happen automatically through FonF activities, such as input enhancement, repetition, or recasting. It is assumed that learners, in this position, can readily retrieve the meaning, as well as the linguistic structure in the input for future use.

Position 2. Noticeable/automatized: If the input contains only one representation (syntactic, or semantic) that can be linked to one form of existing representation without the other, then the input may be partially noticed through FonF activities, but not necessarily integrated in the

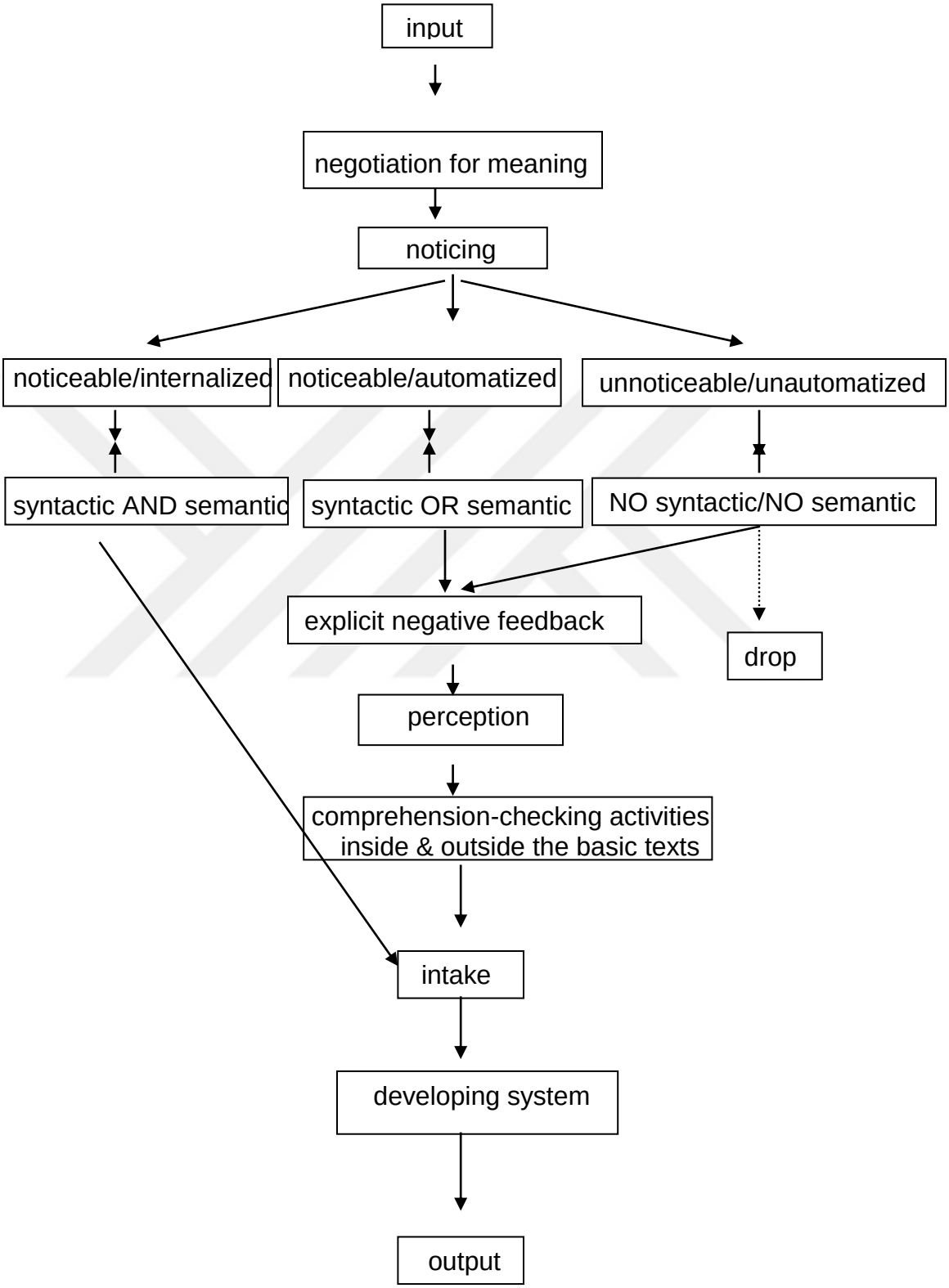

Figure 5. A Model of SLA Representing the Input-Noticing Interface

absence of explicit negative feedback. In other words, when the presence/absence of one representation—be it syntactic, semantic or discoursal—renders a particular L2 structure in the input unnoticeable, the integration of this structure may not be possible without perceiving its form, meaning, and use through explicit negative evidence. For instance, it is possible that a learner understands the meaning or the semantic representation of a sentence, such as 'If I had had enough money, I would have bought a new house', but fails to perceive the syntactic representation markings of the time reference involving the use of the perfect aspect through FonF activities, and hence produces sentences, such as 'If I had enough money, I would buy a new house' (see, Izumi & Bigelow, 2000 for similar observations). Also, it is equally possible that a learner notices that the syntax of the perfect aspect entails using the sequence [HAVE +VERB past participle], but fails to understand the semantic connotations of the time reference involving the use of the perfect aspect in different contexts. When this happens, the input is partially noticed.

Regardless, if noticing in the sense of registering the occurrence of certain linguistic features in the input does really occur, it is very likely that such noticing will induce different interpretations of the input, and hence individualized intakes. That is, exposing a group of L2 learners of the same level of language proficiency and language background to the same

input, for example, does not guarantee that those learners will interpret the input in the same way and arrive at the same conclusions. Thus, different learners copy the input differently in accordance with their preexisting mental representation.

Closely related to position 2 is the macrocosmic representation (i.e., language use or form-discourse relationship,) that may hinder noticing or understanding of target language forms to a considerable extent. This discourse-form interface is assumed to be one of the most difficult tasks L2 learners encounter in the process of learning a second language due to language conventional forms shaping its operation.

Position 3. Unnoticeable/unautomatized: If the input contains neither syntactic nor semantic representation that L2 learners can link to some existing representation, the target structure is almost always impervious to noticing in the absence of explicit negative evidence. This happens, for example, when the L2 structure is non-existent in the learner's native language, or when the input contains L1-L2 contrasts, particularly when these contrasts do not impede comprehension or communication. In this case, the provision of explicit negative evidence is required for input to become intake. However, if learners are not ready for instruction, the target structure may be dropped, hence the dotted line. This learning situation is not incompatible with Ellis' (1993) and

Pienemnn's (1984, 1989) 'readiness' condition (see, sections 2 and 3 above), which associates learning with appropriate language developmental stages.

In sum, those linguistic items that have been noticed in the input can become intake. Those items that have been partially noticed may be converted into intake via the provision of explicit negative feedback. Those items that are impervious to noticing, on the other hand, may be either automatized through careful integration of explicit negative evidence into meaning-focused activities, or dropped completely if learners are not ready (hence the dotted line). The quality and quantity of the input converted to intake may differ from one learner to another, depending on the metacognitive strategies (e.g., directed or selective attention, planning and self-management of production, self-monitoring, and self-evaluation, etc.) utilized by learners in the process of adapting to the L2 system. To ensure full integration of the target structure, learners are involved in comprehension-checking activities within and beyond the basic text.

Given that the type and amount of noticing is subject to the mental representation mapping of the input in terms of positions, and that noticing is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for the conversion of input into intake, it is likely that differences in the proficiency level among L2 learners, and their inability to achieve a balanced command of linguistic

and communicative competencies are the result of their immediate move from the noticing stage to the intake stage without passing through the perception stage (i.e., before fully perceiving, and hence integrating the target language structure into their interlanguage system) (cf. Ellis, 1993). Therefore, the provision of explicit negative evidence during communication to ensure perception (i.e., noticing and understanding) of specific linguistic features in the input is a necessary and sufficient condition for the conversion of input into intake.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

Introduction

This chapter describes the research design, the participants in the study, the treatment materials used, the testing instrument adopted, the data collection procedures followed, and details of the scoring procedures applied.

Design of the Study

In order to test the hypothesis that the integration of Explicit Form-Focused instruction into communicatively oriented classrooms would improve the ability of second language learners to use language accurately in different contexts, a pretest-posttest control group design was conducted in this study. Treatment materials which were developed

specifically for the experiment were implemented by two teachers for an average of eight hours spread over one week. Prior to the treatment, pretests were administered to the experimental group and to the comparison group. Throughout the treatment, the experimental and the comparison groups were observed in an attempt to account for potential differences among classes. After the treatment, immediate posttests, followed by delayed posttests three weeks later, were administered to the two groups. An analysis of covariance was then conducted in order to compare the performance of the comparison group with that of the experimental group on two measures of linguistic competence: an oral production test, and a multiple-choice recognition test.

Participants

The participants in this study were a heterogeneous group of ESL students (N = 30) enrolled in an intermediate Intensive English Program (IEP) at Kent State University, Ohio, the United States of America. Students were placed in this program by means of a departmentally administered placement test. The students came from a variety of L1 backgrounds, including Arabic (1), Chinese (8), German (1), Japanese (6), Korean (5), Russian (4), Spanish (4), and Turkish (1). Each of the 30 students was randomly assigned (by drawing lots containing even and odd numbers) to one of the two groups, the experimental group, which

received communicative instruction with an explicit focus on grammar (i.e., EFF), and the comparison group, which received communicative teaching with an implicit focus on grammar in the context of meaning-focused activities (i.e., FonF).

The participants were enrolled in a program with message oriented techniques (i.e., with a focus on language use) modeled on communicative language teaching, where the primary emphasis is placed on developing communicative skills in the target language. However, specialized modules were constructed explicitly to improve students' listening and writing skills. Grammar instruction is provided explicitly through separate sessions.

Description of Treatment

The target grammatical form chosen as the focus of instruction in this study was a combination of two easily confused structures presented as one grammatical unit, the simple past tense and the present perfect aspect. Generally speaking, to talk about a situation that took place in the past, speakers often have a choice between a simple past tense and a present perfect aspect, for example:

(4) a. Did you see 'Hamlet'? (simple past)

b. Have you seen ‘Hamlet’? (present perfect)

(5) a. Mary taught English in 1990. (simple past)

b. Mary has taught English since 1990. (present perfect)

The choice between using the simple past and the present perfect is not a matter of preferring one grammatical form over another. Rather, it is a matter of how a certain event is viewed by the speaker in terms of the transition in time from the past to the non-past. For example, while the speaker’s intent in (4a) can be construed as ‘Did you see ‘Hamlet’ on TV last night’, the speaker’s intent in (4b) is ‘Have you ever seen ‘Hamlet’?’. Similarly, (5a) entails that ‘We do not know if Mary is still teaching English,’ whereas (5b) means that ‘Mary is still teaching English’ at the time of the utterance (for a comprehensive review of tense and aspect in SLA, see, Bardovi-Harlig, 2000).

One main consideration in choosing the target structure in this study was the necessity that the difficulty of the structure not be judged by the complexity of the structure, per se. Rather, the difficulty of the structure should be judged in relation to the structure’s accessibility, malleability, and compatibility to the learners’ mental representation of the target form, including any effects from UG, or the L1.

By and large, however, the choice of the target form in this study has been based on theoretical and pedagogical assumptions. In terms of learning theory, the target structure (i) convolutes learnability/teachability problems that may be related to the natural order of acquisition (Pienemann, 1989), and (ii) conforms to the syntactic/semantic mental representation interface discussed in chapter two, which seems to correlate with the tense/aspect relationship accordingly. Pedagogically, the target structure is actively used in real-life situations but is often misinterpreted and used inaccurately by L2 learners.

Linguistically speaking, the problem with the simple past tense structure (e.g., 4a, 5a) is tense-oriented. That is, although the semantics of the simple past tense are straightforward, its syntax (VERB past) is problematic in that it requires a change or an inflection in the form of the verb (e.g., go/went, carry/carried) to show tense. Different languages have different numbers of tense and different morphological means of expressing them. It follows that L2 learners whose L1 does not treat tense as a grammatical category that is indicated in verb forms (e.g., Chinese) tend to use the bare form of verbs together with some adverbs of time to express the past tense (e.g., I meet him yesterday, I visit England last year).

Conversely, although the syntax of the present perfect aspect (e.g., 4b, 5b) is not complex (HAVE + VERB past participle), its semantics are

subtle in that it can be viewed as a non-tense form because it is not coded by changes in the form of the verb, and it is not defined in terms of time reference in the past that has:

(i) a continuing relevance to a present time that is true at the time of the utterance (e.g., I have known Susan since 1980/We have always loved the weather in France);

(ii) a result which persists into the present as a direct effect of a past event (e.g., I can't come to the party. I have broken my leg/Finally, we have finished the project); or

(iii) a relevance (i.e., possibility of reoccurrence in the present) to the present (e.g., They have taken a vacation in France/I have read 'Romeo and Juliet').

The problem with this structure lies in its aspectual properties that are language-specific. In other words, speakers of different languages, in which this tense/aspect structure has no equivalence in the learners' L1 or has different concepts of time and time reference/transition (e.g., Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Turkish), fall back on other devices, such as using (i) the present tense with some temporal adverbs to refer to situations or events that require the use of the simple past tense or the present perfect aspect (e.g., She already live in America 20 years), (ii) the simple past tense indistinguishably (e.g., 'she did not arrive' for both 'she

has not arrived' and 'she did not arrive'), or (iii) the simple present tense in place of the simple past tense or the present perfect aspect to describe an event that took place in the past and led to the current state of the subject (e.g., 'he is married' for both 'he was married' and 'he has been married') (for similar observations about tense and aspect, see, Bardovi-Harlig, 1999, 2000; Meisel, 1987; Sato,1986).

The premise upon which the treatment materials were based in this study derived support from researchers concerned with classroom-based investigations into the effects of integrating grammar instruction into L2 learning in communicatively oriented classrooms (e.g., Doughty, 1998; Doughty & Varela, 1998; Lightbown, 1985; Long, 1991, 1996; Long & Robinson, 1998; Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Schmidt, 1993, 1994, 1995; Swain, 1985; White, J., 1998; Widdowson, 1978, 1989, 1998; Williams & Evans, 1998), as well as from researchers concerned with the nature of explicit grammar instruction (e.g., Ellis, 1993; Sharwood Smith, 1986, 1993; VanPatten & Cadierno, 1993).

Two groups were included in this study: a comparison group and an experimental group. The comparison group received Focus on Form (FonF) instruction in the form of enhanced input and positively flooded exemplars of the target structure in the context of meaning-focused activities. No explicit grammar instruction was provided, and no corrective

feedback was given. Students were exposed to several written short topics carefully culled from newspapers, magazines, and short novels, and were asked to pay attention to the target structures in the input. They were divided into groups of two and asked to answer various comprehension questions, in which the grammatical forms were highlighted using underlining. For example, after reading one of the short stories entitled “My Near Death Experience” by Debbie Malec (1978), students were asked to answer questions such as:

(6) What happened to this woman?
(7) What has this woman learned from this experience?

The purpose of including this comparison group in the study was to determine if learners could notice a given target structure through a flood of positive evidence in enriched input (i.e., meaning-focused) activities, and assimilate it into their interlanguage system. If so, we would predict that noticing promotes acquisition. On the other hand, if noticing in itself could trigger full comprehension, restructuring and/or acquisition of a target structure, this provides a basis for dispensing with explicit grammar instruction.

In contrast to the comparison group, the experimental group received the same type of input, but in addition, received Explicit Form-

Focused (EFF) instruction. Students were involved in activities designed to make their attentional mechanisms interact with the input in such a way that they would perceive the form, meaning and use of the target structure.

The treatment component for the target form was aimed at having students perceive (i.e., both notice and understand) both the syntactic and the semantic/ discoursal features of the target structure in the input, and hence restructure their interlanguage system in accordance with the new knowledge. The instructional component began by:

(i) Having students read the same topics that were selected for the comparison group. The teacher asked students to answer comprehension questions related to the readings (e.g., questions 6 & 7 above). Students were divided into groups of two. Each group was asked to answer two different questions and write them down. The questions were carefully formulated in such a way that one question required an answer in the present perfect and another in the simple past. All answers were listed on the board. When some students offered the wrong grammatical string, the teacher explained the grammatical and semantic features of the target structure, and discussed with students the possible reasons for choosing the present perfect over the simple past in certain situations. This comparison/contrast between the present perfect aspect and the simple

past tense was hypothesized to sensitize students to the target structure and help them perceive (i.e., notice and recognize) the form-discourse relationship that governs the use of the present perfect aspect and the simple past tense.

This sub-component of instructional treatment was followed by two types of comprehension-checking activities related to the readings. The first type of activities included some oral multiple-choice questions. For example, after reading Debbie Malec's story (1978), students were asked questions such as:

(8) Since this experience she…….. that her psychic instinct has increased.

a. noticed
b. has noticed
c. notice

The second type of activities had students engage in some sort of self-restructuring activities by relating their personal experience to the readings, for example:

(9) Explain something that happened in your past that has changed your present life—it might be a near death experience, or any other

important event, such as the death of a loved one, a broken heart, a religious experience, falling in love, the loss of your innocence, etc.

While the primary focus of such activities was on meaning, some sort of buffered explicit negative feedback was provided when some students offered the wrong grammatical string.

(ii) Having students test their hypotheses about the target structure by involving them in a series of comprehension-checking activities beyond the basic texts. For example, one activity had students orally respond to the content of an utterance by choosing from column B the situation that would best describe and/or complete the sentence in column A:

Column A	Column B
(10) I washed the car.	a. It is very clean now.
(11) I have washed the car.	b. I don't know if it is clean now.
(12) The teacher didn't arrive.	c. She might still arrive.
(13) The teacher hasn't arrived yet.	d. The class is over, she can't arrive now.

When some students misinterpreted the informational content of the grammatical strings, the instructor explained the source of error, discussed with students the discourse-form relationship that rendered the

use of one grammatical form more contextually accurate than the other in that particular situation, and provided more examples. The intention here was that giving students the opportunity to go beyond the basic texts would help them notice the gap between the target structure and their interlanguage system when applying recently acquired knowledge in new communicative situations.

Another type of activity was a grammaticality-judgment task. Students were shown sentences involving the use of the simple past tense and the present perfect aspect, for example:

(14) I lived in America since 1992.

(15) Susan has a lot of problems since she comes to this country.

(16) She has hit me.

Students were asked to (i) judge whether the target structure (i.e., the use of the simple past tense and the present perfect aspect) was correct by orally responding ‘yes’ or ‘no,’ and (ii) correct the sentences that they judged as ungrammatical/unacceptable[5] by changing the tense and/or aspect of the incorrect verb phrase. When some students misjudged some

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[5] A sentence that is ungrammatical is ill-formed. By contrast, a sentence that is unacceptable is well-formed, but semantically/pragmatically deviant.

sentences, the instructor explained the source of error, provided corrective feedback and alerted students to what is not possible (i.e., what is ungrammatical/unacceptable) in the target language.

Instrument

Two tests were used to assess the participants' knowledge of the target structure: a 15-minute multiple-choice recognition test, and a 5-minute oral production test (excluding instruction). The multiple-choice test consisted of twenty target items. Ten items required the use of the present perfect, and ten the use of the simple past. Questions that required the use of the present perfect served as controls for the simple past items, and questions that required the use of the simple past served as controls for the present perfect items. Each question was followed by one correct choice and two distracters (see, Appendix A for more sample test items). Students were asked to choose the one answer that would best complete the sentence, for example:

Since we ---------- doing this exercise, we ---------- four sentences.

(17) a. start
b. started
c. have started

(18) a. have completed
b. complete
c. completed

Similarly, in the oral-production test, participants were individually shown three different types of slides of people in a variety of situations. They were required to watch the activities, listen to the questions, and provide responses to ten questions in five minutes, 30 seconds for each question. In an attempt to account for potential listening-comprehension problems, the questions were written for students, so that they could simultaneously listen to and read the questions showing on their computer screen. The topics were carefully developed in such a way that the use of the present perfect was required in five situations, and the use of the simple past tense in the other five situations. The simple past tense items served as controls for the present perfect use, and the present perfect items served as controls for the simple past use. For example, one of the present perfect slides showed a picture of a man looking confused (because there were several possibilities for each apparent feeling of the person(s) depicted, the last sequence was accounted for by including the adjective describing the mood of the person(s) in the question). After each activity, participants were asked why they thought the person(s) felt that way (e.g., What has happened to make this man feel confused?). Responses were expected to describe events leading up to a present situation (e.g., He is confused because he has lost his wallet/He has lost his wallet) (see, appendix B -1 for picture-cued sample test items).

An example of the simple past tense slides showed an activity sequence involving a girl (i) going to bed at 9:00 p.m., (ii) still asleep at 7:00 a.m., (iii) getting up at 8:00 a.m., and (iv) having breakfast at 8:30 a.m. Responses were expected to describe events that happened in the past and ended in the past (e.g., 'She woke up/she had breakfast' in response to 'What happened at 8:00 a.m.?/What happened next?') (see, Appendix B -2 for picture-cued sample test items).

The third type of slides included activities that required two responses in the past tense and two in the present perfect. For example, one slide depicted a story of a woman (Sonia) who lived in three different countries. Pictures of three countries with dates of year(s) the person depicted in the slide lived/has lived were shown below each picture. The questions for this type of activity were deliberately formulated in such a way that the present perfect aspect was used in questions that required responses in the past tense (e.g., When has she lived in Paris?), and the simple past tense was used in questions that required responses in the present perfect (e.g., Since when did she live in America?). Responses were expected to show the participants' spontaneous reactions to the events, albeit the questions were being ungrammatical (e.g., She lived in Paris in 1990/she has lived in America since 1998).

The intention for including these questions in the test was twofold: First, students who utilized the presence of the present perfect particle ‘has’ and the ‘VERB+ past participle’ in the question above as cues for a response in the present perfect without full understanding of the tense/aspect interface would not be able to figure out the correct response. Similarly, students who utilized the past tense carrier ‘did’ as a cue for a response in the simple past would miss the correct answer. That is, students who have not integrated the form, meaning, and use of the simple past and the present perfect into their interlanguage system would not be able to automatically produce the correct response (see, Appendix B -3 for picture-cued sample test items).

Second, such questions would give us an idea as to (i) whether students who were exposed to a flood of positive input would be able to detect the ungrammaticality of the questions, and hence provide correct responses, and (ii) whether students who received explicit negative feedback would perform better than those who did not in detecting the ungrammaticality of the questions and providing correct responses.

Procedures

This part of the study comprised the development, piloting and revision of the treatment and testing materials. The first set of tests

included the multiple-choice test. The second set of tests included the oral production test. The adapted versions were first administered to (i) a group of L1 English first-year university students and modified accordingly, and then to (ii) two different groups of ESL university students and modified accordingly.

Prior to the treatment, pretests were administered to all participants. Upon the completion of pretesting, a workshop was held separately for both teachers involved in the project in order to explain and discuss the treatment materials and the timing for all activities on a day-to-day basis. Both groups were taught by two native speakers of American English. The experimental group was taught by a teacher in his fifth year of teaching, using Explicit Form-Focused instruction. The comparison group, on the other hand, was taught by a teacher in her tenth year of teaching, using Focus on Form instruction.

Following the teaching of the treatment materials, posttests were administered immediately to both groups. Three weeks later, delayed posttests were administered to the two groups. All students received the same oral production test and the same form of the multiple-choice test they had completed at the time of pretesting.

Data Analysis

Raw scores for each participant were calculated both for the multiple-choice test and the oral production test. With respect to the multiple-choice test, items were scored as either correct or incorrect. Each correct response to the 20 test items was given a score of 1 point for a possible total of 20. Incorrect responses received a score of 0. By the same token, students' tape-recorded responses on the oral production test were transcribed, analyzed, and tabulated by counting each correct response to the 10 test items. Responses were scored as either correct or incorrect. Each correct response to the 10 test items was given a score of 2 points for a possible total of 20. Incorrect responses received a score of 0.

In order to determine whether the two groups had the same mean level in command of the target structures prior to instruction, a t-test was conducted to compare (i) the mean TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) scores of both groups, and (ii) the mean pretest scores of both groups. An analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was then conducted to compare the mean posttest scores of the experimental and comparison groups. This design feature had the advantage of making it possible to compare posttest means while controlling for any pre-existing differences in command of the target structures. The 0.05 alpha level was selected for this study.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

The purpose of the study was to examine the effect of Explicit Form-Focused instruction on L2 learners' linguistic competence (defined as the ability both to recognize and produce contextually accurate language). The study was guided by the following hypothesis:

> Students whose teachers use Explicit Form-Focused instruction
> Will show greater gains in accurate use of target language forms
> than will students whose teachers use Focus on Form instruction.

A pretest, an immediate posttest, and a delayed posttest (also referred to as retention test) were administered to the experimental group and to the comparison group in order to compare the performance of the two groups on two measures of linguistic competence: a multiple-choice recognition test, and an oral production test.

In this chapter, the analyses performed to address the hypothesis stated above are described, and the results of these analyses are given. First, the total pretest mean scores of both groups are presented. Also presented in this section are the total TOEFL mean scores of both groups. Second, the findings for both measures of linguistic competence combined (multiple-choice and oral production) are presented. A comparison of each group's total pretest results with immediate posttest results, and then with retention test results are displayed. Third, the pretest scores and the findings for each measure of linguistic competence are expanded and presented separately. Fourth, and finally, a summary of the results of the study is presented.

Pretest and TOEFL Scores

To begin with, a preliminary analysis was conducted to determine whether the experimental and the comparison groups were equivalent in their command of the target language structures at the beginning of the experiment. A t-test conducted on the pretest performance of both groups revealed no significant difference in command of the target structures between the two groups ($F < 1$, $p = .709$) at the .05 level of significance. The total mean pretest scores for both groups are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Mean Total Pretest Scores

Group	M	SD	n
Comparison	15.80	5.53	15
Experimental	15.13	4.05	15

Note: t = .377 (df = 28), p = .709

In order to establish an initial similarity of groups at the outset of the experiment, a different test—in addition to the pretest and the random assignment of students into two groups—was conducted on another variable, namely the most recent (i.e., taken within 6 months) TOEFL scores of the participants. A t-test conducted on the students' TOFEL scores alone revealed no significant differences between the experimental group and the comparison group prior to instruction ($F < 1$, $p = .271$). Table 2 displays the results of this statistical analysis.

Table 2. Mean TOEFL scores

Group	M	SD	n
Comparison	486.33	64.38	15
Experimental	462.06	53.44	15

Note: t = 1.123 (df = 28), p = .271

Descriptive Data: MC and OP Results

The maximum possible score on the multiple-choice and the oral production tests combined was 40 points, 20 points each.

Immediate Posttest Results. A univariate analysis of variance conducted on the raw scores of the multiple-choice and the oral production immediate posttests of both groups yielded distinct overall means. The experimental group scored higher than the comparison group (M = 27.20; SD = 5.91 vs. M = 17.40; SD = 5.50 respectively). The mean multiple-choice and oral production scores for the two groups obtained on the pretest and on the immediate posttest are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Mean MC & OP Immediate Posttest Scores Combined

	Pretest		Immediate Posttest		
Group	M	SD	M	SD	n
Comparison	15.80	5.53	17.40	5.50	15
Experimental	15.13	4.05	27.20	5.91	15

An analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was then conducted on the grand means of the multiple-choice and the oral production immediate posttests to examine the difference between the experimental and the

comparison groups' posttest scores while controlling for variation in pretest scores. The experimental group's mean was significantly higher than that of the control group (df = 1, F = 59.102, p = .000). This difference was substantial with an effect size of .69. The results of this statistical analysis are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. ANCOVA: MC & OP Immediate Posttest Scores Combined

Source	Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F-Value	P-Value	Effect Size
Pretest	544.816	1	544.816	39.845	.000	.596
Group	808.131	1	808.131	59.10	.000	.686
Error	369.184	27	13.673			

Retention Test Results. Applying the same statistical procedures on the raw scores of the multiple-choice and the oral production tests to compare the grand mean retention test scores of both groups indicated that both groups virtually maintained their scores. Interestingly, the superior mean score achieved by the experimental group from pretest to immediate posttest was substantially maintained at the time of retention testing three weeks later (pretest, M = 15.13, SD = 4.05; posttest, M = 27.20, SD = 6.97; retention test, M = 26.33; SD = 6.97). The mean multiple-choice and oral production scores for the two groups obtained on

the pretest, immediate posttest, and retention test are presented in Table 5 and displayed graphically in Figure 6.

Table 5. Mean MC & OP Pretest, Immediate Posttest & Retention Test Scores

	Pretest		Immediate Posttest		Retention Test		
Group	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	n
Comparison	15.80	5.53	17.40	5.50	17.13	4.80	15
Experimental	15.13	4.05	27.19	5.91	26.33	6.97	15

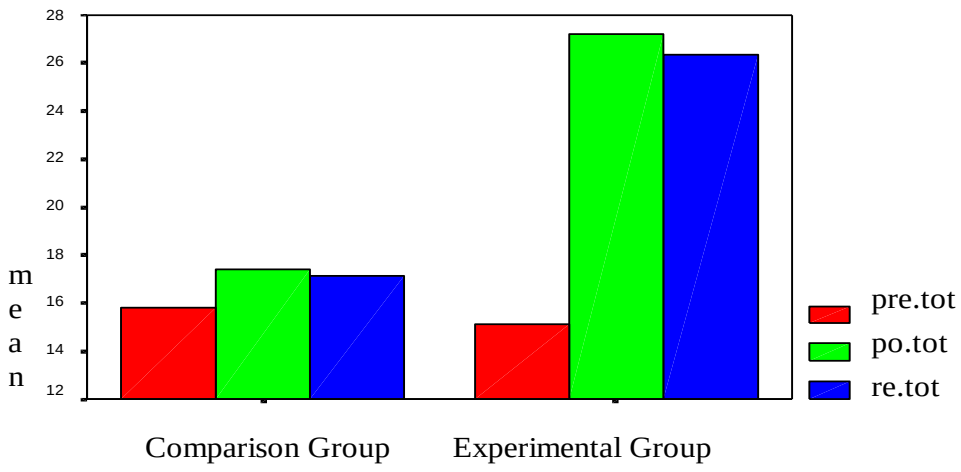

Figure 6. Mean MC & OP Pretest, Immediate Posttest & Retention Test Scores

An analysis of covariance conducted on the mean retention test scores to examine the difference between the comparison and the experimental groups' retention test scores while controlling for variation in

pretest scores revealed a significant difference in mean retention scores between the two groups. The experimental group's final mean was significantly higher than that of the comparison group (df = 1, F = 34.463, p = .000). This difference was considerable with an effect size of .561. The results of this statistical analysis are displayed in Table 6.

Table 6. ANCOVA: MC & OP Retention Test Scores Combined

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-Value	P-Value	Effect Size
Pretest	449.219	1	449.219	21.821	.000	.447
Group	709.490	1	709.490	34.46	.000	.561
Error	555.848	27	20.587			

Multiple-Choice Test

A preliminary analysis comparing the pretest scores of both groups revealed no significant difference between the experimental group and the comparison group before instruction (F < 1, p = .652) at the .05 level of significance. The mean multiple-choice pretest scores for the two groups are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Mean MC Pretest Scores

Group	M	SD	n
Comparison	11.00	2.47	15
Experimental	10.60	2.32	15

Note: t = .456 (df = 28), p = .652

Descriptive Data: Multiple-Choice Test Results

The maximum possible score on the Multiple-choice test was 20 points.

Immediate Posttest Results. A univariate analysis conducted on the raw scores of the multiple-choice test yielded a higher mean score for the experimental group than that of the comparison group (M = 15.06; SD = 2.60 vs. M = 12.06; SD = 2.40 respectively). The mean multiple-choice scores for the two groups obtained on the immediate posttest are presented in Table 8.

Table 8. Mean MC Immediate Posttest Scores

Group	M	SD	n
Comparison	12.06	2.40	15
Experimental	15.06	2.60	15

An analysis of covariance conducted on the mean immediate posttest scores revealed a significant variation between the comparison group's mean and the experimental group's mean. The experimental group's mean was significantly higher than that of the comparison group (df = 1, F = 44.837, p = .000). The significance of this variation was manifested in a substantial effect size of .624. The results of this statistical analysis are displayed in Table 9.

Table 9. ANCOVA: MC Immediate Posttest Scores

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-Value	P-Value	Effect Size
Pretest	125.481	1	125.481	67.241	.000	.714
Group	83.672	1	83.672	44.837	.000	.624
Error	50.385	27	1.866			

Retention Test Results. A univariate analysis of variance conducted on the raw scores of the multiple-choice retention test revealed a variation in the mean retention test scores between the two groups, with the experimental group scoring higher than the comparison group. While both groups maintained their scores, the higher mean score achieved by the experimental group from pretest to posttest was fundamentally maintained at the time of retention testing three weeks later (pretest, M = 10.60, SD = 2.32; posttest, M = 15.06, SD = 2.89; retention test, M = 14.73, SD = 2.65). The mean multiple-choice scores for the two groups obtained on the pretest, immediate posttest, and retention test are given in Table 10 and displayed graphically in Figure 7.

Table 10. Mean MC Pretest, Immediate Posttest, and Retention Test Scores

	Pretest		Immediate Posttest		Retention Test		
Group	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	n
Comparison	11.00	2.47	12.06	2.40	12.06	2.18	15
Experimental	10.60	2.32	15.06	2.89	14.73	2.65	15

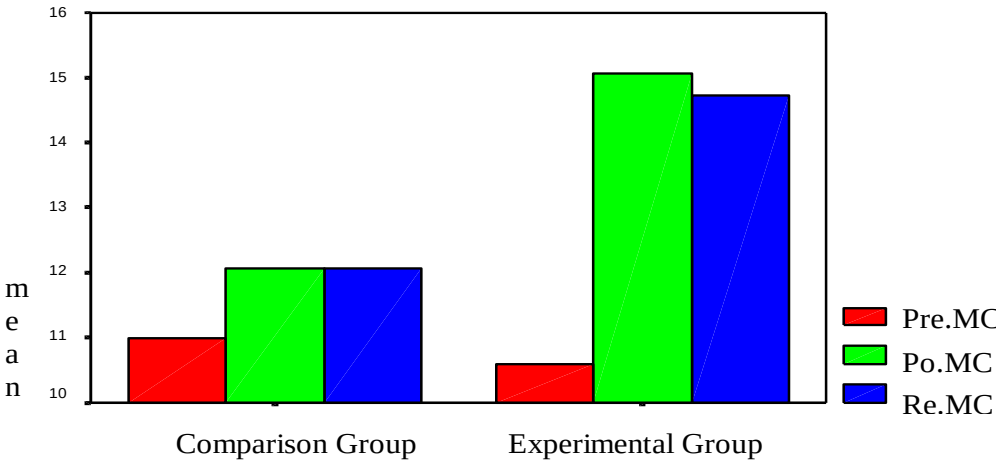

Figure 7. Mean MC Pretest, Immediate Posttest & Retention Test Scores

An analysis of covariance conducted on the mean retention test scores revealed a significant variation in the mean retention test scores between the two groups. The experimental group's mean was significantly higher than that of the comparison group (df = 1, F = 31.404, p = .000). This variation pointed to a substantial effect size of .54. Table 11 displays these results.

Table 11. ANCOVA: MC Retention Test Scores

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-Value	P-Value	Effect Size
Pretest	108.476	1	108.476	51.034	.000	.654
Group	66.75	1	66.752	31.404	.000	.538
Error	57.390	27	2.126			

Oral Production Test

A preliminary analysis comparing the pretest scores of both groups revealed no significant difference between the experimental group and the comparison group before instruction ($F < 1$, $p = .779$) at the .05 level of significance. The mean oral production scores for the two groups are given in Table 12.

Table 12. Mean OP Pretest Scores

Group	M	SD	n
Comparison	4.80	3.09	15
Experimental	4.53	1.92	15

Note: $t = .283$ ($df = 28$), $p = .779$

Descriptive Data: Oral Production Test Results

The maximum possible score on the Oral Production test was 20 points.

Immediate Posttest Results. A univariate analysis conducted on the raw scores of the oral production test yielded a distinct mean score for the experimental group from that of the comparison group, with the former group scoring higher than the latter one ($M = 12.13$; $SD = 3.66$ vs. $M =$

5.33; SD = 3.26 respectively). The mean oral production scores for the two groups obtained on the immediate posttest are presented in Table 13.

Table 13. Mean OP Immediate Posttest: Scores

Group	M	SD	n
Comparison	5.33	3.26	15
Experimental	12.13	3.66	15

An analysis of covariance conducted on the mean immediate posttest scores of the two groups revealed a significant difference between the two groups' mean posttest scores. The experimental group's mean was significantly higher than that of the comparison group (df = 1, F = 49.527, p = .000), rendering a substantial effect size of .65. The results of this statistical analysis are displayed in Table 14.

Table 14. ANCOVA: OP Immediate Posttest Scores

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-Value	P-Value	Effect Size
Pretest	135.708	1	135.708	18.197	.000	.403
Group	369.356	1	369.356	49.527	.000	.647
Error	201.359	27	7.458			

Retention Test Results. A univariate analysis of variance conducted on the raw scores of the oral production test to compare the grand mean retention test scores revealed a difference in the mean retention scores between the two groups. The experimental group scored significantly higher than the comparison group. Again, while both groups virtually maintained their scores, the superior mean scores the experimental group accomplished from pretest to posttest was substantially maintained at the time of retention testing three weeks later (pretest, M = 4.53, SD = 1.92; posttest, M = 12.13, SD = 3.66; retention test, M = 11.60, SD = 4.67). The mean multiple-choice scores for the two groups obtained on the pretest, immediate posttest, and retention test are presented in Table 15 and displayed graphically in Figure 8.

Table 15. Mean OP Pretest, Immediate Posttest, and Retention Test Scores

	Pretest		Immediate Posttest		Retention Test		
Group	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	n
Comparison	4.80	3.09	5.33	3.26	5.06	2.81	15
Experimental	4.53	1.92	12.13	3.66	11.60	4.67	15

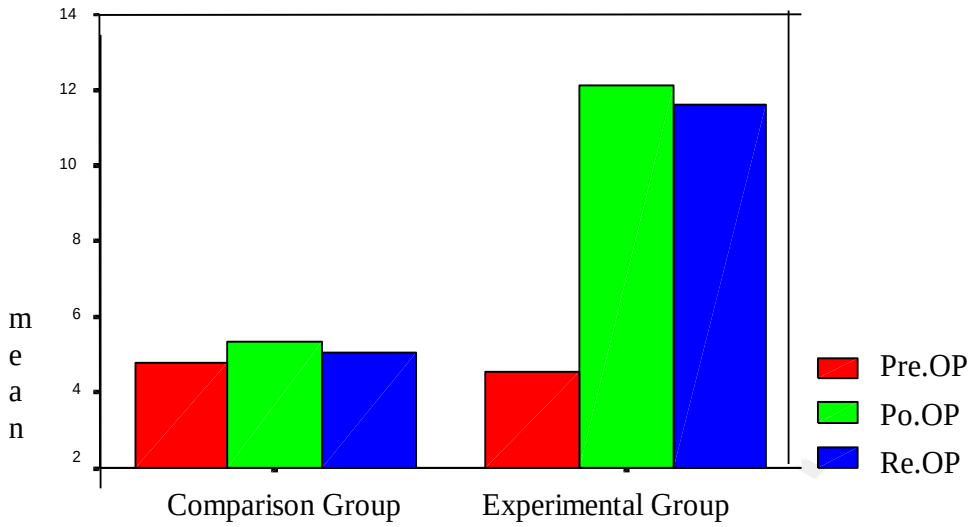

Figure 8. Mean OP Pretest, Immediate Posttest, and Retention Test Scores

An analysis of covariance conducted on the mean retention test scores of both groups revealed a significant difference between the two groups' mean scores. The experimental group's mean was significantly higher than that of the comparison group (df = 1, F = 28.591, p = .000), yielding an interestingly meaningful overall size effect of .514. Table 16 displays these results.

Table 16. ANCOVA: OP Retention Test Scores

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-Value	P-Value	Effect Size
Pretest	97.045	1	97.045	8.201	.008	.233
Group	338.312	1	338.312	28.591	.000	.514
Error	319.488	27	11.833			

Summary

An analysis of the most recent TOEFL scores of participants conducted to compare the proficiency levels of both groups at the outset of the experiment revealed no significant difference between the two groups. Moreover, mean pretest scores of both groups determined that both groups were equivalent in their command of the target language structures.

Quantitative results in this study indicate that the experimental group performed substantially better that the comparison group on two measures of linguistic competence, a multiple-choice recognition test and an oral production test. The experimental group made an overall meaningful progress from pretest to immediate posttest, and maintained this considerable level of achievement at the time of retention testing three weeks later.

On the multiple-choice test, the experimental group made significant progress from pretest ($M = 10.60$, $SD = 2.32$) to immediate posttest ($M = 15.06$, $SD = 2.60$), and maintained this higher level of achievement at the time of retention testing ($M = 14.73$, $SD = 2.65$). This progress signifies a substantial improvement in the participants' ability to recognize contextually accurate language.

Similarly, on the oral production test, the experimental group made significant progress from pretest (M = 4.53, SD = 1.92) to immediate posttest (M = 12.13, SD = 3.66), and maintained this superior level of achievement at a substantial level at the time of retention testing (M = 11.60, SD = 4.67). These results reveal an interestingly meaningful improvement in the ability to produce contextually accurate language.

Consequently, the results in this study indicate that Explicit Form-Focused instruction improved the linguistic competence of participants (i) by considerably enhancing their recognition of the usage and the use of the target structures, and (ii) by considerably increasing their ability in oral production to use the simple past tense and the present perfect aspect accurately in various situations.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

Introduction

In this chapter, the findings of the study are summarized in terms of the research hypothesis presented in chapter 1, and explanations of the performance of participants are proposed and discussed in the light of the results of the analyses presented in the previous chapter. Next, conclusions are drawn concerning the relationship between learning and acquisition, and concerning noticing and SLA. This is followed by a brief description of the implications and the limitations of the present study. Finally, the main findings of the study are summarized.

Discussion

To summarize the findings of this study in terms of the research hypothesis, the results of the study presented in the previous chapter

confirm the hypothesis that students who receive Explicit Form-Focused (EFF) instruction will show greater gains in accurate use of target language forms than will students who receive Focus on Form (FonF) instruction. The MC, OP, and Total mean scores for the pretest, immediate posttest, and retention test of the experimental group and the comparison group are summarized and presented in Table 17.

Table 17. Summary of Participants' MC, OP, and Total Mean Scores for Pretest, Immediate Posttest, & Retention Test

	Comparison Group			Experimental Group		
	Pretest	Posttest	Retention Test	Pretest	Posttest	Retention Test
MC	11.00	12.06	12.06	10.60	15.06	14.73
OP	4.80	5.33	5.06	4.53	12.13	11.60
Total	15.80	17.40	17.13	15.13	27.19	26.33

Translating the mean scores displayed above into percentages may help make the statistical reading easier and more interesting. For the experimental group, from the outset of the experiment, the initial MC mean percent correct was 53%, which increased to 75% on the immediate posttest, and dropped by 1% to 74% on the retention test three weeks later—a net gain in recognition proficiency of 21%. On the OP test, the initial mean percent correct was 24%, which significantly increased to 61% on the immediate posttest, and dropped slightly to 58% on the retention

test after three weeks—a net gain in oral production proficiency of 35%. Thus the total initial mean percent correct was 76%, which increased significantly to 136% on the immediate posttest, and decreased slightly to 132% on the retention test—a net total significant gain in linguistic competence of 56%.

For the comparison group, on the other hand, the initial MC mean percent correct was 55%, which increased to 60%, and remained the same on the retention test after three weeks—a net gain in recognition proficiency of 5%. On the OP test, the initial mean percent correct was 24%, which increased to 27% on the immediate posttest, and dropped to 26% on the retention test three weeks later—a net gain in oral production proficiency of 2%. Thus, the total initial mean percent correct for the control group was 79%, which increased to 87% on the immediate posttest, and dropped to 86% on the retention test—a net total gain in linguistic competence of 7%.

With respect to the teaching/learning conditions, FonF vs. EFF, an interesting finding emerged in the data. The EFF condition resulted in substantially greater improvement than the FonF condition in the accurate use of the simple past tense and the present perfect aspect in multiple-choice recognition test, as well as in the oral production test.

Three possible explanations for the less successful performance of the comparison group are: (i) they were not ready to learn the target structure, so they failed to notice the target structure in the input, (ii) they really noticed the target structure in the input, but failed to integrate it into their interlanguage system because noticing in itself is not a sufficient condition for input to become intake, or (iii) they partially noticed the target structure and assimilated it into their interlanguage system before fully understanding its semantic/discoursal and syntactic features. This partial noticing of one mental representation of a particular structure does not lead to full integration, though it may induce an unselective and flawed intake.

Comparing the comparison group's total initial mean percent correct (79%) to their immediate posttest mean correct percent (87%) virtually excludes (i) as a possible explanation for the poorer performance of this group. This leaves explanations (ii) and (iii) as the most plausible explanations. Perhaps, a closer look at the learners' production data helps throw light on the poor performance of those learners. An examination of the learners' production responses reveals a learning problem related to the complexity of verb tenses and the time reference as has been predicted and discussed in detail throughout the paper. Typical responses showed no syntactic markings of the simple past tense, such as ' She already leave to London'. However, the prevalent presence of temporal

adverbials (e.g., already, yesterday, this morning, etc.) in their speech production indicates that those learners decoded the time reference of the past but failed to encode it in their speech in accordance with the English system.

With respect to the present perfect, it appears that those learners have more difficulty in encoding the past time reference together with the present perfect grammatical markings, producing sentences such as ‘She is sick’ and ‘He already lose/lost his wallet’ as responses to ‘What has happened to make this girl sneeze?’ and ‘What has happened to make this man feel confused?’ respectively. It may be the case that the use of the simple present or the simple past together with a temporal adverb in place of the present perfect in these instances is a reflection of a cognitive process, in which learners implicitly create individualized contextual clues to arrive at the message, hence they concern themselves with the result of the action and not with the time reference grammatical markings which carry the meaning of that action. These findings are in agreement with the ubiquitous observations reported in the literature of SLA (Bardovi-Harlig, 1999, 2000; Izumi & Bigelow, 2000; Meisel, 1987; Sato, 1986). Consequently, it is very likely that positive input-flood together with input enhancement may not induce or activate the learners’ mechanisms of attention to notice the complexity of the time reference of the simple past and the present perfect, simply because leaving out these markings may

not impede comprehension and may not cause communication breakdown. It is possible, therefore, that the proficiency gains of this group would have been higher had students had the chance to perceive the target structures, suggesting that noticing may not license the conversion of input into intake in the absence of explicit negative evidence during communication.

Similarly, there are two possible explanations for the superior performance of the participants in the experimental group: (i) they were able to notice the target structure in the input, and hence assimilate it into their interlanguage system, and (ii) they were able to perceive (notice and understand) the target structure via the provision of explicit negative evidence during communication, and hence restructure their interlanguage system accordingly. However, a closer look at the results of the comparison group receiving FonF instruction automatically rules out the role of noticing as the primary contributor to the greater success of the experimental group. If it had been, however, it would have worked perfectly well for the comparison group. It did not. Thus, it is reasonable to assume that the advancement of the experimental group is primarily due to the presence of explicit negative evidence.

Interestingly enough, comparing the mean MC pretest results of both groups with those of the OP pretest results reveals an initial

significant disparity between their performance on the MC test and their performance on the OP test. This poor performance of both groups on the OP test is probably a persistent residual of the traditional explicit teaching they have received in their home countries, and is an indication of the inability of participants to accurately transfer what they have already learned into actual spoken language, a symptom the study has identified and set forth to address.

A stimulating aspect of the test results is the striking performance of the experimental group on the OP test. As we have seen, students in the comparison group maintained the imbalance between the linguistic knowledge and the linguistic production ability evident in their performance at the time of pretesting. Students in the experimental group, on the other hand, were able to convert the input into intake and realize this intake in oral production tasks. It should be recalled here that the study was based on negotiation for meaning and form during communication and by so doing, it did not aim to set apart the roles of comprehension and production. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that the provision of explicit negative evidence during communication, as well as during comprehension-checking activities inside and outside the basic texts has been sufficient for students to perceive the structure and notice the gap in their performance. That is, not only did EFF instruction improve the participants' linguistic competence but also redressed the imbalance

between the linguistic recognition knowledge and the linguistic production ability evident in their performance at the time of pretesting. Taken together, these findings indicate that improvement is more likely when explicit instruction is supplied during communication.

This conclusion is not entirely surprising in view of the previous studies cited throughout this paper (e.g., DeKeyser, 1995; N. Ellis, 1993; Robinson, 1996; White, 1989, 1991)). However, while these studies suggest that the provision of explicit instruction during communication may lead to substantial short-term learning for simple L2 structures, the present study has explicitly demonstrated a somewhat long-term advantage (3 weeks after the immediate posttesting) for learners receiving EFF instruction in complex structures.

Although this study indicates that learning complex structures via the provision of explicit negative evidence is not out of the question, no claims can be put forth regarding the effectiveness of EFF instruction relative to other types of instruction and to other groups of L2 learners. However, it seems reasonable to expect that providing students with explicit negative evidence in the form of consistent corrective feedback during communication and sensitizing them to semantic/discoursal L1-L2 contrasts, as well as to what is ungrammatical/ unacceptable in the target language during comprehension-checking activities inside and outside the

basic texts has led to more perception of the complexities of the target structure, as well as to more noticing the gap in their performance, and hence to more restructuring and acquisition. This finding suggests that the poorer performance of the comparison group would have been improved if explicit negative evidence had been presented during training. That is, learners who have supposedly noticed the target structures in the input but who have not understood how the syntactic, semantic and discoursal features go together to make a whole would not be able to restructure their interlanguage system in accordance with that of the target language.

While the results of the study indicate that EFF instruction is effective in learning complex L2 structures, it remains hard to establish which aspects of the instruction have contributed to the experimental group's maintenance of their higher level of achievement at the time of retention testing three weeks later. This is particularly significant in light of the conclusions drawn from studies cited throughout this paper that L2 learners exposed to explicit instruction often fail to maintain their learning gains after some time (e.g., Trahey, 1996). The present study makes no claim that the experimental group would have maintained the same level of performance had the retention test been conducted after a longer period of time, but offers the following explanations.

First, given that the difficulty of the target structure lies in its semantic subtleties, it was assumed that flooding students in both groups with positive exemplars of the target structures, enhancing the input by underlining, and having them pay attention to how the simple past tense and the present perfect aspect are expressed in the target language and answer comprehension questions would help them notice the target structures. Indeed, the primary objective of this type of input was to tap into the learner's mental representation of the target structures in an effort to direct their attention to notice how form, meaning and use of the target structures are realized in different situations. The performance of the comparison group indicates that no such effective noticing has occurred as evidenced by their inability to retrieve and accurately use the target structures on the OP test. In other words, noticing seems to be inoperative in the absence of some form of explicit negative evidence/feedback, and answering comprehension questions correctly does not necessarily mean that noticing of form has really occurred and that such form can be retrieved and used in different situations.

Second, the ability of the participants exposed to EFF instruction to maintain their higher achievement at a substantial level at the time of retention testing may be attributed to a significantly reduced rate of language loss. This interpretation may be best understood by the concept of 'restructuring' raised in the second language literature by McLauglin

(1990) and McLeod and McLaughlin (1986), as well as by the concept of ‘integration’ (as opposed to ‘intake’) raised by Gass and Selinker (1994). For example, McLeod and McLaughlin argue that restructuring takes place only when the relationship between form, meaning and use of a given complex grammatical structure becomes transparent. The evidence of integration and restructuring among the experimental subjects is consistent with the observations of these researchers and is reflected in their superior performance. The reason for the experimental subjects’ successful performance may be that perception achieved via explicit negative evidence inhibits the backsliding (Adjemian, 1976; Lightbown, 1985; McLeod & McLaughlin, 1986) or the loss of information by projecting directly on the learners’ mental representation, and thus making the relationships between the components of the simple past tense and the present perfect aspect more transparent for restructuring and integration.

Put differently, the provision of explicit negative evidence in the form of overt corrective feedback during communication, as well as in the form of what is ungrammatical/unacceptable during comprehension checking activities, may lie in its capacity to project into the learners’ semantic mental representation to notice the gap in their performance while, at the same time, creating some sort of structural cyclical diagram in the learners’ interlanguage system to understand the relationship between form, meaning and use. This cyclical movement between noticing and

understanding, it is worth speculating, results in perception, in which the semantic/discoursal and syntactic mental representations are restructured through selective association. To the extent that this kind of restructuring has helped learners maintain their gains at a significant level, it is not unreasonable at all to expect that this very cyclical association of the semantic mental representation with the structural diagrams created via the provision of explicit negative evidence/feedback has helped learners restructure their interlanguage system, and hence integrate and retain the target structure at a significant level.

More important, although EFF instruction has produced substantially positive effects, no claim is put forth regarding the effectiveness of this type of instruction under more spontaneous circumstances. Yet, the ability of virtually all students receiving explicit negative evidence to respond correctly to the wrongly formulated questions (see, p. 79, instrument section for reasons behind including such type of questions, and Appendix B-3 for sample test items) within a computerized reaction time constraint of 30 seconds per question, it is not entirely unreasonable to expect that the participants were indeed appealing to their newly restructured internal language system during this short period of time. This finding is particularly interesting in the face of communicative–based language teaching which downplays the role of explicit teaching on the basis of its automaticity-blocking association, as

well as in the light of FonF which equates language acquisition with noticing, to the exclusion of understanding, on the grounds that noticing is a sufficient condition for language acquisition to take place. Ultimately, the integration of explicit negative evidence into communicative teaching as presented in this study did not aim to impose a synthetic or structural syllabus on the participants' developing system. Rather, it aimed to reinforce the participants' internal mechanisms in such a way that their choice of a contextually accurate structure is not a hit-or-miss chance, but an informed one resulting from integration of the target language structures through perception.

Finally, from the stand point of learning theory, results of the present study generally indicate that: (i) grammar instruction is an essential requirement for adult L2 acquisition to occur, and that explicit learning has greater effects on language acquisition than has been predicted by Krashen's (1982, 1985) Monitor Model, and (ii) if input flood and input enhancement (e.g., underlining) promote noticing and learning as predicted by FonF proponents, one might expect the test results of the comparison group to reflect such learning. Practically, it did not. Moreover, assuming that noticing is a sufficient condition for language acquisition to occur, it may not be triggered by positive evidence and/or input enhancement alone during negotiation for meaning activities. Rather, it may be triggered by negative evidence in addition to positive evidence.

However, results of the study indicate that noticing is not a sufficient condition for input to become intake as predicted by Schmidt (1993, 1994, 1995) and supported by proponents of FonF (e.g., Doughty & Williams, 1998; Long, 1991, 1996; Long & Robinson, 1998), and that perception (noticing and understanding) is an essential prerequisite for the conversion of input into intake. This finding suggests that perception achieved through the provision of explicit negative evidence, in which both meaning and form are negotiated during communication may lead to acquisition of complex L2 rules more readily than predicted by explicit learning rivals.

Implications for L2 Teaching

Despite the caveats touched upon by rivals of explicit learning throughout this paper about the inability of explicit learning/teaching to produce long-term effects for learning complex L2 structures, the theoretical orientation of the approach taken in this study has robust implications for second language teaching. The key features of this approach are: (i) complexity of rules is a matter of degree, not of kind and is, therefore, subject to the learners' mental representation mapping of the input, (ii) noticing is a relative concept and is not a sufficient condition for input to become intake, (iii) perception achieved via the provision of explicit negative evidence/feedback is a necessary condition for

restructuring and integration of form to take place, and (iv) therefore, perception is a necessary and sufficient condition for the conversion of input into intake. The interaction between the learner and the teacher and the learner and the input, never mind the interaction between the learner and the learner, varies to considerable degrees and takes different routes. These routes are shaped by how much of the input is mediated among the key features mentioned above and determined by how much attention, interaction, interest and motivation a learner projects into the input.

The pedagogical implications from these features entail increasing learners' perception of linguistic features in the input through careful integration of explicit negative evidence/feedback into authentic input/task which could be designed pedagogically and could be taught through negotiation for meaning and form activities. This input is negotiated with students and injected with healthy doses of overt corrective feedback in such a way that it promotes perception, and thus restructuring of the learners' mental representations. Negotiation of input is followed by comprehension-checking activities inside and outside the basic text together with explicit negative evidence provided in the form of what is not possible (i.e., with what is ungrammatical/unacceptable) in the target language. No claim is put forth here that this is the only or the best way to integrate such activities into a communicative-based syllabus, or that the

approach adopted in this study is the ‘potion’ or the antidote to the problems involved in learning a second language.

Nonetheless, the results of the present study warrant a wider application of EFF instruction for two main reasons. First, the provision of explicit negative evidence/feedback in the context of meaning focused activities seems to facilitate the acquisition of grammar. Second, it seems to promote the learners’ production ability. To the extent that the definitive goal of second language teaching is to enable learners to use language accurately and fluently in real-life situations, EFF instruction offers a legitimate and practical means for addressing one of the most formidable problems encountering L2 learners, namely the imbalance between their linguistic knowledge and their ability to use this knowledge accurately in various communicative situations.

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

While the overall instructional approach was effective in this study, it is necessary that the findings of the present study be interpreted in the light of its limitations.

A first limitation may be related to the amount of the input to which the participants were exposed. The findings of the present study are

based on cross-sectional investigation, in which exposure to the target structures during treatment is limited. This is particularly important in view of the acquisition-learning issue raised by advocates of the noninterface position (Krashen, 1981, 1982, 1985, 1994; Krashen & Terrell, 1983) that language acquisition, as opposed to language learning, takes longer periods of time to develop and that speech production emerges automatically after prolonged periods of exposure to comprehensible input. Given that FonF instruction caters to incidental learning, it is possible that more noticing, and hence more learning would have occurred had students in the comparison group been exposed to larger amounts of input for longer periods of time. Consequently, a study based on longitudinal research may produce potentially different results in learning effects.

A second limitation, following on the effect of the amount of exposure, has to do with the choice of the target structures and the participants' native languages (NLs). Given that the target structures chosen in this study are semantically opaque in that they are language-specific, and that these structures are non-existent or treated differently in the participants' L1s (for review, see, Bermel, 1997; Comrie, 1991; D'Alquen, 1997; Sohn, 1995; Yoshimoto, 1998), it is possible that different results for FonF learning would be achieved if different structures had been chosen. Therefore, further research is needed to confirm the

generalizability of the findings of the present study to different L2 structures and to larger and more heterogeneous numbers of participants.

A third limitation may be related to the selection of the on-line strategies used to promote noticing. In this study, the comparison group received input flood with an artificial increase of the target structures in the input together with input enhancement using underlining. It is possible that these strategies are of themselves not sufficient to promote noticing. However, it is equally possible that more noticing would occur if different on-line strategies (e.g., input enhancement using different colors or bold print, or implicit negative evidence in the form of recasts) had been utilized.

Finally, the substantial achievement of learners in the EFF condition at the time of retention testing, particularly their significant performance on the oral production measure, must be interpreted considering the time constraints imposed on the design of the present study. Retention testing took place only three weeks after the immediate posttesting. Therefore, it is possible that these results would not be maintained at the same higher level of achievement had the retention testing occurred after longer periods of time. This is particularly important in the face of the short-term learning effects in explicit learning for complex L2 rules discussed throughout this paper (see, for example, DeKeyser,

1995; Doughty & Williams, 1998; Robinson, 1996; Schmidt, 1993, 1994, 1995; Trahey, 1996). Given that the perception-explicit negative evidence learning condition in this study is different from the learning conditions of those studies, further empirical evidence is needed to confirm the duration of learning effects for complex L2 structures under different learning conditions over longer periods of time.

Conclusion

This study has underscored the necessity for L2 pedagogy to give equal weight to language form and function, and has presented the case for the adoption of a particular type of explicit instruction—one which promotes perception of form during communication. In the light of the theoretical framework illustrated in Figures 4 and 5, it has been argued that noticing may not be a sufficient condition for L2 acquisition to take place, and that perception achieved via the provision of explicit negative evidence/feedback during communicative and comprehension-checking activities may contribute to L2 acquisition in at least two ways: (i) by directly contributing to the development of implicit declarative knowledge (i.e., intake and integration) via perception; and (ii) by directly contributing to the development of implicit procedural knowledge (i.e., accurate use) by virtue of being supplied during communicative activities, in which the primary focus of instruction is on meaning. The findings of the present

study lend empirical support to these claims. The study has demonstrated that EFF instruction has helped learners rectify their linguistic competence by significantly improving their linguistic knowledge and by significantly increasing their ability to use this knowledge accurately in a variety of contexts.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Multiple-Choice Sample Test Items

Directions: Questions 1-20 are incomplete sentences. Beneath each sentence you will see three choices, marked (A), (B), and (C). **CIRCLE the ONE choice** that best completes the sentence.

Example:

I ---------- Mary's husband. I ----------him at a party last night.

1. a. meet
   b. met
   (c) have met

2. (a) met
   b. have met
   c. meet

The sentence should read, "I have met Mary's husband. I met him at a party last weekend." Therefore, you should choose '1c' and '2a'.

Now begin work on the questions.

My sister------- to France in 1985. I------ my sister a letter in a long time. I should write her soon.

1. a. move
   b. has moved
   c. moved

2. a. did not write
   b. have not written
   c. do not write

Tom has had four cups of tea this morning. It's the fifth time he--------- tea.

3. a. has drunk
   b. drank
   c. drinks

----------. The class is not over yet. She might still arrive any time soon.

4. a. The teacher did not arrive
   b. The teacher does not arrive
   c. The teacher has not arrived