Research Article

Reactive and Preemptive Focus on Form VS. Focus on Forms Instruction: Iranian EFL Junior High School Learners' Vocabulary Knowledge

Shahla Heidarzade [1], Fatemeh Behjat [2*], Ehsan Hadipourfard [3]

1,3. Department of English Language, Shiraz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Shiraz, Iran
2. Department of English Language, Abadeh Branch, Islamic Azad University, Abadeh, Iran

* Corresponding author: **Fatemeh Behjat,** Email: fb_304@yahoo.com

ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

This study attempts to investigate the impact of focus on form versus focus on forms on the knowledge of vocabulary among EFL Iranian junior high school learners. To this end, 110 students of Shiraz University High School in Iran participated, and 60 students were selected based on their performance on a piloted OPT Test. Moreover, a teacher-made vocabulary test was implemented to examine the participants' vocabulary knowledge as a pre-test. The 60 learners thus were divided into three groups, one control group that was instructed through focus on forms, and each of the experimental groups was taught vocabulary through one of the two forms of focus on form, namely, preemptive and reactive. At the end of the study, the participants in the three groups were given a vocabulary post-test. The design of this study was quantitative. ANOVA and an independent t-test were used to test the null hypothesis. The results of the study revealed the fact that experimental groups significantly outperformed the control group on the vocabulary posttest. The results showed a significant difference between the effect of focus on form in contrast with the focus on forms on the one hand, and with the reactive group outperforming the preemptive group in vocabulary knowledge on the other hand.

Introduction

Vocabulary is considered one of the most important elements of students' understanding and successful communication with other people. No comprehension is possible, either in one's native language or in a foreign language, without understanding vocabulary (Laufer, 1997). Learning vocabulary is very vital in EFL, but knowing vocabulary is not enough; what matters is using it in different situational contexts (Lajooee & Barimani, 2013).

Long (1991) has distinguished two instructional methods, focus on forms and focus on form. Focus

on forms instruction refers to f traditional instruction in which the target L2 forms are taught in isolation without any communicative activity. However, focus on form is defined as "overtly drawing students" attention to linguistic elements as they arise incidentally in lessons whose overriding focus is on meaning or communication" (Long, 1991, pp. 45-46). As mentioned in Park (2004), this definition characterizes two main features specific to F-on-F. The first characteristic is that in this instruction, learners pay attention to linguistic forms while their primary focus is on meaning or communication. The second feature is that attention to form arises incidentally in response to communicative needs. Focus on form instruction can take different forms based on the degree of giving feedback by students or teachers.

Much focus on form literature has studied reactive focus on form, which occurs in response to learner errors. According to Long (1996), reactive F-on-F has been known as error correction, corrective feedback, or negative feedback. Lyster and Ranta (1997) studied various types of reactive F-on-F in French immersion programs. They distinguished different types of feedback, which are named explicit correction, recasts, clarification requests, metalinguistic feedback, elicitation, and repetition. Furthermore, a number of investigations have revealed the effect of corrective feedback on short-term and long-term second language development (Doughty & Williams, 1998a; Lyster, 2004; Radwan, 2005). Ellis et al. (2001b) identified preemptive F-on-F that occurs when either the teacher or a learner initiates attention to form, mostly by raising a question, "even though no actual problem in production has arisen" (p. 414). They discussed that preemptive F-on-F m addresses an actual or perceived gap in the learners' knowledge. In their study, they distinguished between student-initiated F-on-F in which students raised questions about linguistic items, and teacher-initiated F-on-F in which the teacher asked questions or provided unsolicited information about specific linguistic items.

Asadi and Gholami (2014) stated that reactive F-on-F was more frequent than preemptive F-on-F; and preemptive FFEs were mostly vocabulary-oriented, while reactive FFEs were mainly grammar-oriented. Shintani (2015) found that

learners in the planned instruction classroom acquired none of the target grammatical features while children in the incidental classroom showed acquisition of plural -s but not the copula be. Haque (2016) documented the efficacy of planned and incidental F-on-F from the viewpoints of scholars, learners and teachers. He mentioned that the educational context, entailing the teaching and learning culture in the concerned community, is the most important factor in deciding when to choose planned or incidental F-on-F instruction.

It is worth investigating the impact of focus on form and focus on forms on learning vocabulary which is the foundation of junior high school learners' knowledge for taking part in international tests such as IELTS or TOEFL by providing conditions to be involved in various strategies and recent forms of instruction.

Literature Review
Theoretical and practical Backgrounds

Although the term form has been used to refer to grammar, this is not really what is meant by form. Ellis et al. (2001a) stated that focus on form can be directed at phonology, vocabulary, grammar, discourse, and even spelling. Taking this broad definition of form into account, we can now shift our attention to explaining different types of form.

Whereas Rahimi Domakani (2008) underscored the significance of communication and meaning in form-focused instruction and stated that this type of instruction draws EFL students' attention to linguistic forms that might otherwise be overlooked and provides them with attentional resources that are required to acquire the target linguistic features, Mohammadnia and Gholami (2008) demonstrated that the concept of F-on-F instruction arose from the rational belief that it paved the way for EFL students to pay attention to linguistic features in a meaningful context as they take place within a wider framework of meaning.

Soodmand Afshar (2021) studied the impact of task-related F-on-F on vocabulary development of EFL learners. The participants were 130 EFL learners who were divided into three different groups. In the first group, the focus was on meaning and use. The second group did the same as what they did in the first group. They focused on the pronunciation of the target words modelled by the

instructor and followed by the students' repetition. In the third group, other than what was done in group two, the students focused on word parts as another characteristic of word form as well. The participants' vocabulary development was tested by a multiple-choice vocabulary scale. The results of the study showed significant differences between the groups with the third group outperforming the second group, that outperformed the first group. Furthermore, focus on spoken form and word parts were both useful in developing vocabulary knowledge.

The study by Methapisittikul (2023) provided evidence for vocabulary learning and development in a foreign teaching language context. It showed the positive effects of task-related F-on-Fs (i.e., focus on word parts) on Thai EFL 66 students' vocabulary development. The emphasis on written form (i.e., spelling) was explicitly elaborated with example sentences by the instructor and followed by the students' choral reading and individual iterations significantly worked. The results proved that both groups significantly increased their knowledge of word form and word parts. The results suggested that task-related F-on-Fs activities are essential for developing young learners' word knowledge in both receptive and productive aspects. Briefly, the findings indicate that task-related F-on-Fs (i.e., focusing on written word form and word parts) could involve deeper processing, yield higher learning gains, and better retention in English vocabulary learning and development, in the Thai EFL context. In addition, the current study also indicated that students had favorable beliefs about task-related F-on-Fs activities. Furthermore, the F-on-Fs instruction has positive perceptions and draws greater attention to vocabulary learning. Eventually, this study argued that task-related F on Fs conditions help increase vocabulary learning and development in an EFL context.

In their study, Saeidi and SafayMohseni (2011) investigated how frequently different types of F-on-F in general, and preemptive and reactive types in particular, are used by teachers in different student proficiency levels. The results indicated there was no difference in the frequency of L2 teachers' use of F-on-F, including reactive and preemptive, across different proficiency levels of learners.

Marzban and Mokhberi (2012) studied three groups of EFL learners who completed the same task and compared the two types of approaches to focus on form (F-on-F) which is 'reactive F-on-F' and ' preemptive F-on-F'. The results of the study suggested that reactive F-on-F in comparison with preemptive F-on-F furnishes an excellent means for developing the ability to use the grammatical knowledge of the target structure in context. The results showed that the majority of the preemptive FFEs were initiated by the teacher rather than students and dealt with vocabulary whereas the linguistic focus of reactive FFEs was largely on grammar.

The variables involved in the present study generate research questions as follows:

1. Does Focus on Form VS. Focus on Forms instruction play any role in the vocabulary knowledge of Iranian EFL Junior high school learners?
2. Does reactive Focus on Form instruction have any significant impact on the vocabulary knowledge of Iranian EFL Junior high school learners?
3. Does preemptive Focus on Form instruction have any significant impact on the vocabulary knowledge of Iranian EFL Junior high school learners?
4. Is there any significant difference between the two strategies of Focus on Form instruction in Iranian Junior high school EFL learners' vocabulary knowledge?

Research Design and Methodology

The present research was a quantitative study, and two types of variables were involved. The independent variables were F-on-F, reactive and preemptive strategies, and F-on-Fs instruction, and the dependent variables were students' knowledge of vocabulary. The quantitative data was numerical based on the learners' performance in the pre-test and post-test after receiving eight sessions of instruction. It was conducted after the treatment on vocabulary knowledge of F-on-F and F-on-Fs groups.

Participants

The participants of this study were 60 EFL female junior high school students from Shiraz

University High School, which is located in Shiraz, Iran. The sample was chosen non-randomly, based on convenience sampling. They were 14 and 15 years of age. The language learners participating in this study were selected based on their performance on the OPT test. The sample was chosen out of 110 students who were willing to take part in the research by piloting OPT; those scoring within one standard deviation above and below the mean were considered the participants of the study. It is worth noting that the language learners were randomly assigned into three main groups, namely, F-on-F, Reactive group (N=20), F-on-F, Preemptive group (N=20), and F-on-Fs (N=20). Besides, it should be mentioned that the names of the participants are not disclosed in this study to maintain anonymity.

Instruments
Oxford Placement Test (OPT)

First, an OPT test was used to come up with homogeneous groups of participants concerning their English knowledge of vocabulary. It was a sample of OPT for pre-intermediate learners. It was administered to the language learners by the researcher and the students whose scores fell within the range of one standard deviation above and below the mean were selected as the target participants of the study, and the rest whose scores were not in the appropriate range were excluded from the research.

Pre-test and Post-test of the Vocabulary

A pretest of the vocabulary knowledge was developed and administered by the researchers to determine the participants' knowledge of the vocabulary. It should be mentioned that three university professors of Applied Linguistics confirmed the content validity of the pretest. Moreover, the reliability of the pretest was estimated by using Kuder Kuder-Richardson formula. The test was used to check the students' vocabulary knowledge. Its reliability was 0.7981 (KR-21 = 0.7981), which is shown in Table 1. On the pretest, the students in groups were expected to answer 30 items related to vocabulary knowledge. It included multiple-choice questions. It is worth noting that each item had one point with no penalty for wrong answers. The allocated time was 30 minutes.

Table 1.
Reliability of Vocabulary Pre- and Post-Tests

Tests	Reliability Kuder Richardson
pre-test vocabulary	KR-21 = 0.7981
post-test vocabulary	

After eight weeks of instruction on the vocabulary, the same test of the vocabulary was administered to three F-on-F reactive, F-on-F preemptive, and F-on-Fs groups as a posttest. The participants were expected to answer 30 items related to vocabulary knowledge.

Data Collection Procedures

In the present study, the researcher tried to investigate the potentially valuable role of F-on-F strategies, and F-on-Fs instruction and examined two different strategies, that are reactive F-on-F and preemptive F-on-F, to see their effects on vocabulary knowledge of Iranian EFL junior high school Learners. It was first necessary to identify two categories of F-on-F; reactive and preemptive. Reactive strategies were those that arose as a result of an actual or perceived error in something that a student said, and involved corrective feedback using the negotiation of meaning or form. Negotiation of form referred to attempts to establish a correct form interactionally even though no breakdown in communication occurred. Preemptive strategies involved those in which either the teacher or the student drew attention to a linguistic form even though no error in the use of this form occurred.

Three groups were examined in terms of vocabulary knowledge. The first, and the second experimental group and the control group were selected randomly after taking part in the OPT test for the homogeneity of participants. All three groups were pre-tested by a teacher-made test regarding vocabulary before receiving the treatment. The reliability and validity of the test were analyzed. After the learners took the pretest, one session was held to familiarize them with the reactive and preemptive F-on-F task. The differential treatment in this study consisted of F-on-Fs that had three parts of presentation, practice, production and, preemptive and reactive F-on-F on form on vocabulary knowledge. Prior to the

research sessions, the students were informed of different techniques that were implemented by the researcher as the instructor. The participants were instructed for eight sessions, thirty minutes devoted to teaching.

Finally, a posttest was administered in the three groups. The results obtained from the posttest were compared with the pretest results using SPSS to investigate the effectiveness of the different strategies on learners' vocabulary development.

Treatment for Vocabulary Knowledge

In the eight session of treatment, the learners were engaged in an F-on-F strategy. The instructor selected some topics in the form of conversations and stories from the book Super Mind 4 (Puchta et al 2012). The stories were exciting and caught learners' attention. In the preemptive group, the vocabularies were written one by one with their English definitions in front of them. Then the teacher read the stories or conversations twice. The key vocabularies were highlighted by the teacher, for example, to teach the new words the teacher made use of examples, synonyms and antonyms or wrote them on the board and provided explanations regarding their meanings. During the first time, the learners just listened, but in the second reading, they took some notes of the events in the story. Then they worked in groups to reconstruct the story. The head of each group was a facilitator in this task and helped the teacher. When the reconstruction stage was over, the learners were asked to tell their stories to the class and read them based on their abilities. If some students had problems using the new words for telling stories, they would guess the new words from peers who did the pantomime.

In the reactive group, the flow of teaching was the same, but the teacher did not write the vocabulary English definitions on the board in advance; instead, the students received feedback from their peers or teacher after making errors. Whenever it was necessary, the teacher gave recast for more corrections and suggestions for improvement. The correct form of common errors was written on the board after the teacher's instruction.

Control Group

In the control group, vocabulary items were taught using the traditional teaching method of present, practice and production. The teacher wrote a list of new words with their meaning on the board, read them three times, and the learners repeated the words chorally. She used real objects, flashcards, gestures, and drawings. Then, for example, she asked: "Show me the journalist", and the students pointed to the right picture. She made sentences and contextualized the new terms, giving the learners time to memorize and then asked them the meaning and also wanted them to make easy sentences.

Results and Discussion

First, a quantitative approach was taken to analyze the data. The results are tabulated and discussed in terms of statistical calculations in the following parts. It embraces the analysis of data with regard to the purpose of the study to provide direct answers to research questions.

The Normality of Data Distribution

To check the normality of data distribution, the Shapiro-Wilk test was used to check the normality of OPT and vocabulary test. The data is presented in the Table 2, and Table 3.

Table 2.
Tests of Normality of OPT

	Shapiro-Wilk			Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
OPT	.969	60	.138	.444	.309	.743	.608

First, the researcher obtained statistics running in Shapiro-Wilk test. As presented in Table 2, The p-value is higher than 0.05. Pretest scores are normally distributed ($p > .05$).

Table 3.
Tests of Normality of Vocabulary

	Shapiro-Wilk			Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Pre-test	.968	60	.110	-.260	.309	-.712	.608
Post-test	.930	60	.002	-.730	.309	-.183	.608

As presented in Table 3, based on Shapiro-Wilk test the p-value is higher than 0.05. Pretest scores are normally distributed (p > .05). It shows that the vocabulary test is normal.

Homogeneity of Learners

To check the homogeneity of learners, 110 students were selected. They took the OPT test, and 60 learners whose performance was one std. deviation above and below the mean were chosen. One-way ANOVA was run for the certainty to compare the mean scores among the three groups of Experimental 1, Experimental 2, and Control group. The findings are presented in Table 4.

Table 4.
One-Way ANOVA to Check the Three Groups' Homogeneity in Language Proficiency

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
Preemptive	20	19.5000	4.40693	1.037	.361
Reactive	20	18.2500	3.14350		
control	20	17.5000	5.45315		

As revealed in Table 4, the mean of OPT test in Experimental 2 is 19.5±4.40, the mean of OPT test in Experimental 1 is 18.25±3.14, and the mean of the control group equals 17.50±5.45 Based on the findings of variance analysis, there is no significant difference between the mean scores of OPT between three groups. (F=1.037, p-value<0.05).

ANOVA Test to Compare Vocabulary Test Scores of the Three Groups

This section answers Research Question 1: Does Focus-on-Form VS. Focus-on-Forms instruction play any role in the vocabulary knowledge of Iranian EFL Junior high school learners?

Table 5.
Descriptive Statistics on Vocabulary Pre-and Post-test Scores

	group	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pre-test	Preemptive	22.0500	4.92550
	Reactive	21.6500	3.81514
	control	22.1500	4.31978
Post-test	Preemptive	25.4500	3.44085
	Reactive	27.7500	3.64005
	control	22.5500	3.51650

Table 5 shows the mean and std. Deviation of pre-and post-test of vocabulary scores. ANOVA is used to see if the differences are significant or not (Table 6).

Table 6.
ANOVA Test on Three Groups' Pre-and Post-test of Vocabulary

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Post-test	Between Groups	2.800	2	1.400	.073	.930
	Within Groups	1092.050	57	19.159		

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Total	1094.850	59			
Post-test	Between Groups	271.600	2	135.800	10.877	.000
	Within Groups	711.650	57	12.485		
	Total	983.250	59			

ANOVA is conducted to examine the difference in the performance of the three groups in the vocabulary test. The results (Table 6) indicated that in the pretest, there was no significant difference between groups (p>0.05), but in the post-test, there was a significant difference in groups, and within groups' performances (p<0.05).

A Scheffe test (Table 7) was run on multiple comparisons of the groups. In the following table, the groups are compared two by two.

Table 7.
Scheffe Test for Multiple Comparisons of the Three Groups' Vocabulary Tests' Performance

(I) GROUP	(J) GROUP	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Preemptive	Reactive	-2.30	1.117	.130	-5.1085	.5085
	control	2.90*	1.117	.041	.0915	5.7085
Reactive	Preemptive	2.30	1.117	.130	-.5085	5.1085
	control	5.20*	1.117	.000	2.3915	8.0085
control	Preemptive	-2.90*	1.117	.041	-5.7085	-.0915
	Reactive	-5.20*	1.117	.000	-8.0085	-2.3915

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level

As revealed in Table 7, in the post-test, there is a significant difference between the means of vocabulary test scores between the preemptive and control group. (p-value=0.041). In addition, in the post-test, there is a significant difference between the means of vocabulary test scores between the reactive and control group. (p-value=0.000). Based on the findings, it can be concluded that learners in experimental groups gained higher means, as compared to the control group.

Reactive Focus-on-Form Instruction on Vocabulary Knowledge

This section answers Research Question 2: Does reactive Focus on Form instruction have any significant impact on the vocabulary knowledge of Iranian EFL Junior high school learners?

To check the impact of Reactive Focus on Form instruction on the vocabulary knowledge of learners, the comparison of means in the experimental 1 group with the control group is presented. The results of the independent *t*-test for comparing two groups are shown in Table 8.

Table 8.
Independent sample t-test for Comparing Reactive and Control Groups' Vocabulary Test Scores

	GROUP	Mean	Std. Deviation	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means	
				F	Sig.	t	sig
Pre-test	Reactive	21.6500	3.81514	.208	.651	-.388	.700
	control	22.1500	4.31978				
Post-test	Reactive	27.7500	3.64005	.297	.589	4.595	.000
	control	22.5500	3.51650				

Based on the findings of the research, in the pre-test, the mean of the reactive group is 21.65±3.815, and the mean of the control group equals 22.150±4.319. Levene's Test for Equality of Variance reveals that in the pre-test and post-test the variance is the same (p-value<0.05). The findings of

the t-test show that in the pre-test, there is no significant difference between the mean of the two groups (t=0.338, p-value=0.700). In the post-test, the mean of the experimental reactive group is 27/70±3/341, and the mean of the control group is 22.95±3.817. The findings of the *t*-test show that there is a significant difference between the means of the two groups in the post-test of vocabulary score (t=4.595, p-value=0.000).

Table 9.
Paired Samples t-test on the Reactive and Control Groups' vocabulary Pre-and Post-test Scores

		Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Reactive	Pre-test	21.6500	3.81514	-6.961	19	.000
	Post-test	27.7500	3.64005			
Control	Pre-test	22.1500	4.31978	-1.192	19	.248
	Post-test	22.5500	3.51650			

The findings of the *t*-test show that there is a significant difference in the mean of vocabulary score in the pre-test, and post-test in the reactive group (t=6.961, p-value<0.05), the vocabulary score in this group has increased from the pre-test to post-test, whereas in the control group, there is no significant difference in the mean of vocabulary score in the pre-test, and post-test (t=1.192,p>0.05).

Preemptive Focus-on-Form Instruction on Vocabulary Knowledge

This section answers Research Question 3: Does preemptive Focus on Form instruction have any significant impact on the vocabulary knowledge of Iranian EFL Junior high school learners?

To check the impact of preemptive F-on-F instruction on the vocabulary knowledge of learners, the comparison of means in the experimental group with the control group is presented. The results of the independent *t-test* for comparing the two groups are shown in Table 10.

Table 10.
Independent t-Test for Comparing Preemptive and Control Groups' Vocabulary Test Scores

	GROUP	Mean	Std. Deviation	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means	
				F	Sig.	t	sig
Pre-test	Preemptive	22.0500	4.92550	.217	.644	-.068	.946
	control	22.1500	4.31978				
Post-test	Preemptive	25.4500	3.44085	.031	.862	2.636	.012
	control	22.5500	3.51650				

Based on the findings of the research, in the pre-test, the mean of the reactive group is 22.4±05.92, and the mean of the control group equals 22.15±4.319. Levene's Test for Equality of Variance reveals that in the pre-test and post-test, the variance is the same (p-value<0.05). The findings of *the t-test* showed that in the pre-test, there is no significant difference between the mean of the two groups (t=0.068, p>0.05). In the post-test, the mean of the experimental reactive group is 25.45±.344, and the mean of the control group is 22.55±3.51. The findings of the *t*-test show that there is a significant difference between the means of the two groups in the post-test of vocabulary score (t=2.636, p<0.05).

Table 11.
Paired Samples t-test to compare the Preemptive and Control Groups' Vocabulary Pre-and Post-test Scores

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Ex2	Pre-test	22.0500	20	4.92550	-5.071	19	.000
	Post-test	25.4500	20	3.44085			
ctrl	Pre test	22.1500	20	4.31978	-1.192	19	.248

Post-test	22.5500	20	3.51650

The findings of the *t*-test show that there is a significant difference in the mean of vocabulary score in the pre-test, and post-test in the preemptive group (t=5.071, p<0.05), the vocabulary score in this group has increased from pre-test to post-test, whereas in the control group, there is no significant difference in the mean of vocabulary score in the pre-test, and post-test (t=1.192,p>0.05).

Difference between two Strategies of Focus-on-Form Instruction in Vocabulary Knowledge

Table 12.
Independent t-Test for Comparing Reactive and Preemptive on Vocabulary Knowledge

	GROUP	Mean	Std. Deviation	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means	
				F	Sig.	t	sig
Pre-test	Preemptive	22.0500	4.92550	.817	.372	.287	.776
	Reactive	21.6500	3.81514				
Post-test	Preemptive	25.4500	3.44085	.158	.693	-2.054	.047
	Reactive	27.7500	3.64005				

The findings of Levene's Test show that variance is equal (p-value>0.05), and there is a significant difference in the mean of vocabulary score between the preemptive group, and reactive group (t=2.693, p-value=0.010), the vocabulary score in the reactive group has increased from pre-test to post-test in comparison to preemptive group.

Discussion

This part presents a discussion of the hypotheses and questions of the study in light of data analysis and interpretations of the results. To test the null hypotheses of the study, ANOVA tests and independent as well as paired samples *t*-tests were run.

1. Focus on Form VS. Focus on Forms instruction does not play any role in the vocabulary knowledge of Iranian EFL Junior high school learners.

For the first hypothesis in this study, the variance analysis was calculated. As shown in Table 5, in the pre-test, there was not any significant difference between the means of the three groups in grammar test scores (F=0.073, p-value=0.930). It is higher than 0.05 (p>0.05). However, in the post-test, there

This section answers Research Question 4: Is there any significant difference between two strategies of Focus on Form instruction in Iranian Junior high school EFL learners' vocabulary knowledge?

To compare the impact of preemptive F-on-F instruction with reactive F-on-F instruction on grammar acquisition of learners, the means in the experimental 1 group with the experimental 2 group is presented. The results of the independent *t-test* for comparing two groups are shown in Table 12.

was a significant difference between the means of the three groups. (F=10.877, p-value=0.000). It is smaller than 0.05. This means that there was a positive relationship between variables. In light of this result, the first null hypothesis was rejected.

2. Reactive Focus on Form instruction does not have any significant impact on the vocabulary knowledge of Iranian EFL Junior high school learners.

To check the impact of Reactive Focus on Form instruction on the vocabulary knowledge of learners, the comparison of means in the experimental 1 group with the control group is presented. The results of the independent *t-test* for comparing the two groups are shown in Table 8.

Based on the findings of the research, in the pre-test, the mean of the reactive group is 21.65±3.815, and the mean of the control group equals 22.150±4.319. Levene's Test for Equality of Variance reveals that in the pre-test and post-test, the variance is the same (p-value<0.05). The findings of *the t-test* showed that in the pre-test, there was not any significant difference between the mean of the two groups (t=0.338, p-value=0.700). It is bigger than 0.05. In the post-test, the mean of the

experimental reactive group was 27/70±3/341, and the mean of the control group was 22.95±3.817. The findings of the t-test showed that there was a significant difference between the means of the two groups in the post-test of vocabulary score t=4.187, p-value=0.000). It is smaller than 0.05. This means that there was a positive relationship between variables. In light of this result, the second null hypothesis was rejected.

3. Preemptive Focus on Form instruction does not have any significant impact on the vocabulary knowledge of Iranian EFL Junior high school learners.

To check the impact of preemptive Focus on Form instruction on the vocabulary knowledge of learners, the comparison of means in the experimental 1 group with the control group is presented. The results of the independent t-test for comparing the two groups are shown in Table 10.

Based on the findings of the research, in the pre-test, the mean of the reactive group is 22.4±05.92, and the mean of the control group equals 22.15±4.319. Levene's Test for Equality of Variance reveals that in the pre-test and post-test, the variance is the same (p-value<0.05). The findings of the t-test showed that in the pre-test, there was not any significant difference between the mean of the two groups (t=0.068, p-value=0.946). it is higher than 0.05. In the post-test, the mean of the experimental reactive group was 25.45±.344, and the mean of the control group was 22.55±3.51. The findings of t-test showed that there was a significant difference between the means of the two groups in the post-test of vocabulary score t=2.636, p-value=0.012). It is smaller than 0.05. This means that there was a positive relationship between variables. In light of this result, the third null hypothesis was rejected.

4. There is no significant difference between two strategies of Focus on Form instruction in Iranian Junior high school EFL learners' vocabulary knowledge.

To compare the impact of preemptive Focus on Form instruction with reactive Focus on Form instruction on grammar acquisition of learners, the means in experimental 1 group with experimental 2 group is presented. The results of the independent t-test for comparing the two groups are shown in Table 12.

The findings of Levene's Test showed that variance is equal (p-value>0.05), and there was a significant difference in the mean of vocabulary score between the preemptive group, and reactive group (t=2.693, p-value=0.010), the vocabulary score in reactive group has increased from pre-test to post-test in comparison to preemptive group. This means that there was a positive relationship between variables. In light of this result, the fourth null hypothesis was rejected.

Focus on Form or Focus on Forms on Vocabulary Knowledge

To answer the research questions regarding the difference between the three different instructions, this study carried out one-way ANOVAs. Each ANOVA compared the difference of means between the three conditions in case of vocabulary in language ability test, pretest and posttest in experimental and control groups. To ensure the homogeneity of groups at the very beginning of the term, one-way ANOVA was used. The results showed that students who used F-on-F instruction outperformed the other group of participants, receiving F-on-Fs instruction in the control group in the case of vocabulary knowledge.

The present study's findings revealed a deep understanding of the impact of reactive F-on-F, and F-on-Fs instructions on vocabulary knowledge of Iranian junior high school EFL learners in developing their English vocabulary knowledge. Regarding the findings of research questions, it was shown that reactive F-on-F instruction has a significant impact on the vocabulary knowledge of Iranian EFL Junior high school learners.

In contrast to our study, Lyster (2004) found that form-focused instruction was particularly beneficial when the teacher used prompts, as opposed to recasts or no feedback at all. In another study by Laufer (2006), the F-on-Fs condition yielded significantly higher results than F-on-F in case of vocabulary knowledge.

It is important to point out that learners, and in line with Shak and Gardner (2008), seem to give undue significance to reconstructing tasks. They tend to meet recast as feedback of their own mistakes and of the overall difficulty of tasks.

Hence, these findings imply that to improve junior high school students, F-on-F tasks should be implemented in classroom contexts as found here in amusing stories and in pair/group work, to ensure a sense of enthusiasm in learners.

These results are in contrast with the findings of Laufer and Girsai (2008), who found the superiority of various kinds of forms-focused vocabulary instruction, over other 'non-focus-on-form' methods. Secondly, the written form instructions seem to be a more suitable teaching method for junior high school learners as they could gain benefit from communicative tasks of reconstructing stories, and conversations.

The results of this investigation are in line with the study by Shintani (2013), who compared the effectiveness of F-on-Fs and F-on-F by studying both the process features of the instruction and the learning outcomes. Although both types of instruction were effective for the acquisition of nouns, the F-on-F instruction was found to be more effective for the acquisition of adjectives.

From a theoretical standpoint, the present study can be contrasted to some studies (e.g., Afshar, 2020; Hazrat& Read, 2021; Laufer, 2017), that indicated the positive effects of task-related F-on-Fs instruction on vocabulary learning and development. The findings are in contrast with the study by Methapisittikul (2023) that provided evidence for vocabulary learning and development in a foreign teaching language context. It showed the positive effects of task-related F-on-Fs (i.e., focus on word parts) on Thai EFL 66 students' vocabulary development. The emphasis of written form (i.e., spelling) was explicitly elaborated with example sentences by the instructor and followed by the students' choral reading and individual iterations significantly worked. The results proved that both groups significantly increased their knowledge of word form and word parts. The results suggested that task-related F-on-Fs activities are essential for developing young learners' word knowledge in both receptive and productive aspects. Briefly, the findings indicated that task-related F-on-Fs (i.e., focusing on written word form and word parts) could involve deeper processing, yield higher learning gains, and better retention in English vocabulary learning and development, in the Thai EFL context. In addition, the current study also indicated that students had favorable beliefs about task-related F-on-Fs activities. Furthermore, the F-on-Fs instruction has a positive perception. The current findings provide evidence for extending the positive effects of F-on-F instruction in the domain of new words during vocabulary learning. Therefore, the study suggests that the positive impact of F-on-F instruction may rest heavily on the act of improving knowledge of vocabulary.

Preemptive or Reactive on Vocabulary Knowledge

The results revealed the comparative effect of preemptive focus on F-on-F and reactive F-on-F on EFL learners' vocabulary knowledge. The null hypothesis of the study was rejected given the results of the ANOVA. The results showed that the group that received reactive F-on-F improved their vocabulary knowledge significantly more than the preemptive group. In other words, the reactive group demonstrated significant improvement from the vocabulary pretest to posttest.

The results are in line with a few other studies. Many researchers like Williams (1999) studied preemptive F-on-F in collaborative group work. She found that learners did not initiate attention to form very often but that the more proficient learners did so more frequently than the less proficient ones. The most likely context for preemptive F-on-F by learners was requests about vocabulary that were directed at the instructor.

The results of this study are in line with certain studies in the literature (e.g., Doughty & Varela, 1998; Lightbown& Spada, 1990; Muranoi, 2000) which are in support of reactive F-on-F. It can also be concluded that students improved their vocabulary through reactive F-on-F significantly more than preemptive F-on-F. When students were corrected after writing an erroneous structure, they became more careful and sensitive to what they would converse in the future. Nevertheless, the finding of this study strongly supported the idea that reactive F-on-F made the students improve their vocabulary much more than preemptive F-on-F in the context of this research. Therefore, when the intention is to improve EFL learners' vocabulary knowledge, it is more effective to provide them with corrective feedback after the errors appear in their conversations, and stories that they make rather

than acting in advance and giving them feedback before learning vocabulary.

Conclusion

The findings of the study showed vocabulary knowledge of the students is highly influenced by F-on-F instruction. The participants received F-on-F instruction. It played a considerable role in the vocabulary knowledge of Iranian EFL Junior high school learners.

This research showed that there is a relationship between students' vocabulary knowledge in pre-test and post-test. Also, it showed that there is a relationship between students' performance in pre-test and post-test regarding vocabulary knowledge. In the case of vocabulary knowledge, students improved their vocabulary through reactive F-on-F significantly more than preemptive F-on-F. It revealed that students outperformed in learning vocabulary through reactive F-on-F rather than F-on-F instruction.

It is concluded that students improved their vocabulary through reactive F-on-F significantly more than preemptive F-on-F. The mentioned conclusion can be justified by the fact that correction is potentially embedded in reactive F-on-F. When the teacher corrects the learners' mistakes on the board after making errors and gives feedback, or recasts them, the learners pay more attention not to use them in the stories that they will reconstruct.

References

Afshar, H. (2020). Task-related focus-on-forms foreign language vocabulary development: Focus on spoken form and word parts. *System, 96, 1-12.* https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2020.102406.

Asadi, B, and Gholami, J. (2014). Incidental focus on form in an EFL talk-show class. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences* 98: 267–75.

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

Doughty, C., & Williams, J. (1998). Issues and terminology. In C. Doughty & J. Williams (Eds.), *Focus on form in classroom second language acquisition* (pp. 1-12). *Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.*

Haque, Mohammad Mahmudul. (2016). The usefulness of the debate between focus on form and focus on forms. *BRAC University Journal 1* (1): 63–68.

Hazrat, M., & Read, J. (2021). Enhancing the involvement load hypothesis as a tool for classroom vocabulary research. *TESOL Quarterly. 56(1). 387-400.*

Laufer, B. (1997). What's in a word that makes it hard or easy: Intra-lexical factors affecting the difficulty of vocabulary acquisitions. In *Vocabulary description, acquisition and pedagogy*, Norbert Schmitt and Michael M. McCarthy (eds.), 140–155. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

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

Long, M.H. (1991). Focus on form: a design feature in language teaching methodology. In K.de Bot, R. Ginsberg, & C. Kramsch (Eds.), *Foreign language research in cross-cultural perspective (pp.39-52). Amsterdam:JohnBenjamins.*

Long, M. H. (1996). The role of linguistic environment in second language acquisition. In W. C. Ritchie & T. K. Bhatia (Eds.), *Handbook of second language acquisition (pp. 413- 468). San Diego: Academic Press.*

Lyster, R. (2004). Differential effects of prompts and recasts in form-focused instruction. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 26, 399-432.*

Lyster, R., & Ranta, L. (1997). Corrective feedback and learner uptake: Negotiation of form in communicative classrooms. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 19, 37-66.

Marzban, A., Mokhberi, M. (2012). The effect of focus on form instruction on intermediate EFL learners' grammar learning in task-based language teaching. *Science Direct production.* Social and behavioral science.

McCarthy, M. (1998). *Spoken language and applied linguistics.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Methapisittikul, Y. (2023). The effect of task-related focus-on-forms instruction on EFL vocabulary development in Thai primary school students. *Mahasarakham University.*

Mohammadnia, Z., & Gholami, J. (2008). Incidental focus on form: Does proficiency matter? *Teaching English Language, 2(6), 1-26.*

Puchta, H., G. & Luris-Jomes, P. (2012). *Super Mind 4.* Cambridge University Press. Newyork Singapour.

Radwan, A. A. (2005). The effectiveness of explicit attention to form in language learning. *System*, 33, 69-87.

Rahimi Domakani, M. (2008). The efficacy of focus on form on promoting second language learning. *Teaching English Language, 3(1), 1-18.*

Shintani, N. (2015). The incidental grammar acquisition in focus on form and focus on forms instruction for young beginner learners. *TESOL Quarterly, 49*(1), 115-140.

Soodmand Afshar, H. (2021). Task-related focus-on-forms foreign language vocabulary development: Focus on spoken form and word parts. *System, 96(1), 102-406.*

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