The Comparative Effect of Visual vs. Auditory Input Enhancement on Learning Non-Congruent Phrasal Verbs by Iranian EFL Learners

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Abstract

Vocabulary is one of the essential components of language and learning phrasal verbs as part of vocabulary is quite challenging for foreign language learners. The present study aimed at investigating the effects of visual and auditory input enhancement on learning non-congruent phrasal verbs. The participants of the study were 90 intermediate English language learners who were divided into two experimental and one control groups. The first experimental group received visual input enhancement and the second experimental group auditory input enhancement, and the control group no enhanced material. All three groups were tested on their knowledge of non-congruent phrasal verbs before and after the treatment, using a non-congruent phrasal verb test developed by the researcher. The results of the data analyses indicated that both visual and auditory input enhancement were effective in learning non-congruent phrasal verbs by Iranian EFL learners, and that both groups outperformed the control group in their achievement.

Keywords: input enhancement, auditory input enhancement, visual input enhancement, phrasal verbs, non-congruent phrasal verbs

Introduction

As mentioned by Laufer and Eliasson (1993), L2 learners experience many challenges while learning English phrasal verbs during the acquisition of a second language. According to Liao and Fukuya (2004), the extensive occurrence of these verbs, in all semantic complexity and registers are among the main factors leading to this difficulty. Based on the review of the relevant literature (e.g., Laufer & Eliasson, 1993; Liao & Fukuya, 2004), these challenges often push L2 learners to avoid using phrasal verbs. The main factors leading to this avoidance include the effect of language learning context, learners' L1 interference, learners'L2 proficiency, and experiencing challenges related to interpretation of their meanings (Ghabanchi & Goudarzi, 2012). One of the possible techniques which may help EFL learners acquire the phrasal verbs is the modifications made to input, such as input enhancement.

Viewed as a teaching technique, input enhancement is extensively applied in L2 acquisition. It is intended to help second language learners concentrate on various constituents of language including its vocabulary, grammatical morphemes and structures (Smith, 1991). Several models, developed within the domain of L2 language acquisition, support the use of input enhancement. Gass (1997), for example, presents a thorough elaboration of noticing the cognitive-linguistic aspects of L2 input as a benefit to the cumulative process of input. Input noticing plays an important role in turning input into intake, leading to the formation of structure-meaning associations. This results in the final convergence of these associations which contributes to the L2 learner's developmental system. This brings about general acquisition processes. Some studies (e.g., Badri, Ahmadi & Panahandeh, 2016; Birjandi, Alavi, Najafi&Karimi, 2015; Mahdavi, Resketi, &Bagheri, 2014) have recently been conducted on the role input has on the learning of phrasal verbs. None of these studies has, however, dealt with the comparative effect of visual vs auditory input enhancement on the learning of non-congruent phrasal verbs.

For the first time, Smith (1993) put forth the idea of input enhancement (IE) for the purpose of making the instruction methods and techniques more useful and effective. The L2 teachers apply these methods and techniques to clarify the particulars of the L2 acquisition (e.g., accents, pitch, idioms and slang). Some differences can be identified between input enhancement and

other similar concepts related to L2 acquisition (e.g., motherese or teacher talk). As for teacher talk, the main aim is to teach the second language with a focus on native accent. On a close analysis, consistency can be found between input enhancement and the application of traditional techniques used for the instruction of grammar. Smith (1993) distinguishes external input enhancement from internal input enhancement. According to this categorization, external input enhancement essentially involves the employment of techniques in the planned instruction of a second language. The idea of internal input enhancement refers to the emergence ` of more common events or circumstances.

According to Smith (1993), the second language learners can be directed to process input accidently or by design. They can be assisted with producing and understanding the L2 inputs. Along the same lines, Van Patten asserts that input makes essential contribution to the acquisition of L2 as learners apply it to create a mental representation of the grammar being learned. Smith (1991) presented "Input enhancement" as the process through which L2 input is highlighted to the language learner. This process can originate from the purposeful manipulation or it can also appear as the natural consequence of the application of some internal learning strategy.

Smith (1993) emphasizes that authors or teachers can establish such a process by manipulating in or enhancing input. These changes may lead to positive effects on L2 learners' knowledge and their behaviors. Furthermore, he asserts that input enhancement yields no more assumptions concerning the effects of the input on the learner. In fact, what is described by the teacher as salient may not be perceived as salient by the learners. As a result, what is taken as salient by some learners may not be viewed as salient by other learners. Therefore, an interpreting question which can be addressed by empirical studies is "Will the enhanced input make contribution to the creation of the intended mental grammatical representation?" In Smith's point of view, the literature refers to both positive and negative input enhancement. The former leads to rendering specific correct forms more salient in the input. As an example, to a learner with a different mentality of the second language, grammar is presented by the input. Positive evidence serves as an operator to manipulate that grammar, making it consistent with the grammar of native-speaker.

Furthermore, positive evidence clarifies possible and negative evidence along with what is impossible.

Overall, modality makes important contribution to input processing (and hence intake and acquisition). The separate streams hypothesis proposed by Penny (1980) maintains that the learner starts processing visual and audio L2 input separately and independently without any assistance. The studies conducted on L1 acquisition dealing with the differences between reading and listening have shown that listening is more challenging than reading of the same input (Anderson, 1980; Danks, 1980; Rost, 1990). Learners lack the same amount of control over the aural input as they do in the case of written input.

During reading, second language learners can recognize different components of text more easily (e.g., vocabulary, sentences, and paragraphs), re-reading sections of the text (Rost, 1990). However, when it comes to listening, as there is no clear boundaries between different word components, second language learners must make use of prosodic and intonational cues available in the input to work out the sequences of input (Anderson, 1980). Research carried out on second language learning reveals that modality restricts the way in which input is processed. As examples, the investigations carried out by Johnson (1992) and Murphy (1997) showed the lower scores of adult learners on grammaticality judgment practices in the oral mode than in the written mode. Wong (2001) compared the learners' capability to concentrate on both form and meaning in oral and written modes. The findings revealed that the oral mode creates more challenges than the written mode.

In the case of oral enhancement, the investigations conducted on teacher talk have shown the frequent application of speech modifications by L2 teachers. A strand of investigations (e.g., Dahl, 1981; Håkansson, 1986; Henzl, 1979) indicated that second language teachers adjusted their speech rate, making it consistent with L2 learners' proficiency. Another strand of studies (e.g., Chaudron, 1982; Wesche& Ready, 1985) showed the teachers' placement of pauses around specific features of their speech production to make it more comprehensible to the learners. Chaudron (1982) reports on native teachers' tendency to pause on difficult words in order to render them more comprehensible to L2 learners.

Several researchers have explained   the modifications made by L2 teachers in phonological, intonational, or stress features (Chaudron, 1982; Henzl, 1973). Despite the inability to   generalize the findings of these studies due to the lack of a comparable baseline, Chaudron (1988) maintains that seemingly native teachers make some   adjustments to their speech in certain ways in order to make it more comprehensible for the learners. A study carried out by Doughty and Varela (1998) used recasts with a rising intonation to draw the learners' attention to a specific form. Given that this study did not use a baseline recast (with no intonational emphasis), it is not possible to interpret the effect of intonational emphasis on recasts. It appears that such intonational emphasis is welcomed by L2 teachers and researchers as one plausible attention-drawing technique.

In their study, Ahmadi and Panahandeh (2016) sought to examine the effect of input-based and output-based pedagogical methods on the acquisition of English phrasal verbs among Iranian EFL learners. Moreover, the investigation was aimed at examining whether or not male and female EFL learners are different in terms of input-based and output-based language teaching. The sample consisted of seventy-three English learners, with thirty four and thirty nine being males and females, respectively. Of the two intact groups, one   was exposed to input-based approach for the instruction of English phrasal verbs. The other group underwent output-based language instruction for the same phrasal verbs. Both groups took a test of phrasal verbs as the pre- and post-test. The data were analyzed, using three descriptive analysis and independent-samples t-tests. A t-test analysis revealed a significant difference between the both groups in terms of the instruction of phrasal verbs. The participants in output-based teaching group had a better performance than those in the input-based teaching group. That is, the former had a better performance with regards to learning English phrasal verbs. Based on the results of the second independent-samples t-test, there was no significant difference between male and female Iranian EFL learners with respect to the acquisition of phrasal verbs.

Birjandi, Alavi, and Karimi (2015) conducted a study to shed light on the relative efficacy of the following three kinds of input on the acquisition of English phrasal verbs: 1. unenhanced input, 2. typographically enhanced input and 3- lexically elaborated input. The study used a time series quasi-

experimental design. Thirty-five EFL learners took part in this study. They were given six different texts in three different forms, namely, unenhanced, enhanced and elaborated. Having read each version of the input, the participants took a post-test, which included the target phrasal verbs covered in each section of the treatment. The data were analyzed, using Friedman's two-way ANOVA, the results of which indicated that the students' scores on the post-tests were higher following reading the elaborated texts compared to their performance   on the unenhanced and enhanced texts. It was concluded that typographical input enhancement is more helpful for learning phrasal verbs than unenhanced input. Moreover, lexical input elaboration can facilitate the learning of English phrasal verbs better than unenhanced input. The results showed that lexical input elaboration can improve learning phrasal verbs better than input enhancement.

Cho and Reinders (2013) examined the impact of aural input enhancement, which is a kind of input enhancement. Few studies have been conducted in this regard. The students were provided with an audiobook to listen to in situations outside the classroom. These audio books contained   passive structures, which had been manipulated in the following ways: the target items were pronounced with a higher volume and the target items were read more slowly than other ones. The participants in the control group listened to the intact audiobooks in which there was no manipulation of the items. The statistical results indicted no significant impact for the manipulated input on the acquisition of the target form.

It is possible to categorize vocabulary items into various classes and subclasses such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs and also expressions with multiple words (e.g., idioms, fixed expressions and phrasal verbs) (Moon, 1997; Wray, 2002). Vocabulary textbooks as well as grammar programs in the L2 curriculum often incorporate phrasal verbs. A phrasal verb is defined as a type of verb, which included a sequence of vocabulary items combined with a particle. The meaning of these verbs differs from the separate meanings of its constituent components (Koprowski, 2005). Given that the content word (verb) and the function word (particle) constitute these verbs, they can be viewed either in vocabulary as multiword expressions, or in grammar with high level of the   transitivity   and   the   separability.   Consequently,   comprehending   and

memorizing phrasal verbs can pose some challenges because of their nature since their meaning cannot be interpreted, rendering them a special problem (Schmitt, 2000).

The relevant literature reveals that L2 learners usually seek to avoid the application of phrasal verbs. In this respect, an investigation carried out by Ghabanchi and Goudarzi (2012) showed the impact of the type of phrasal verbs, tests format along with the L2 learners' level of proficiency on their tendency to avoid using English phrasal verbs. This study consisted of two groups of intermediate and advanced EFL learners who used 3 types of tests (i.e., MC (multiple Choice test, translation, and remembering tests). These students took a test on two types of phrasal verbs, namely, literal and figurative. The results indicated that avoiding using phrasal verbs had been significantly influenced by the kind of test as well as the type of phrasal verb. However, proficiency level did not influence the results significantly. Consequently, they concluded that structural and semantic complexity of phrasal verbs played an important role in the L2 learners' tendency to avoid using them. Similarly, Khatib et al. (2011) studied the effect of interventionist and noninterventionist approaches on learning phrasal verbs and the reduction of avoiding these structures among the Iranian EFL learners.

Moreover, phrasal verbs have been categorized into congruent and non-congruent phrasal verbs. As stated by Nakata (2006), items which can be translated word by word into the target language and are meaningful and sound natural in that language are called congruent. According to Nesselhauf (2003), non-congruent phrasal verbs are those phrasal verbs which do not have an exact corresponding literal, word by word equivalent in the target language. Some recent studies (e.g., Koprowski, 2005; Nakata, 2006; Nesselhauf, 2003) have dealt with the contribution of first language to EFL learners' acquisition of English collocations. The findings showed that L2 learners take advantage of their first language when they fall short of English word knowledge. Yet, no studies have so far dealt with the effects of visual vs. auditory input enhancement on learning non-congruent phrasal verbs by EFL learners. Therefore, the present study aimed to investigate the comparative effect of visual   vs.   auditory   input   enhancement   on learning non-congruent phrasal verbs by Iranian EFL learners. In order to achieve this aim, the following research question was raised by the researchers:

Is there any significant difference between the effects of visual vs auditory input enhancement on learning non-congruent phrasal verbs by Iranian EFL learners?

Method

Participants

The participants of the study were 90 Iranian EFL learners at intermediate level of language proficiency. These language learners were selected out of 120 language learners who had been initially chosen through convenient sampling. The selection of 90 out of 120 language learners was based on their language proficiency scores. In other words, all the students took the PET and those students whose PET scores were within the range of mean score ±1 SD were selected as the legitimate participants of the study. Both males and females participated in the study and their participation was voluntary. With regard to their age, all of them were young, within the age range of 18 to 25. About half of the sample were university students majoring in various fields and the rest were either high school students or high school graduates. In addition to the main participants, 30 EFL learners with similar characteristics served as the participants of the pilot study for estimating the reliability of the non-congruent phrasal verbs test.

Instruments and Materials

The first instrument used in this study was Preliminary English Test (PET), which is a language proficiency test designed by Cambridge University to assess students' English language competence up to intermediate level of language proficiency. The test contains 4 sections for measuring all the language skills including reading, writing, speaking and listening.

In order to measure the knowledge of non-congruent phrasal verbs before and after visual vs. auditory input enhancement, the second instrument was utilized in the study. It was a test, made by the researchers, using a variety of sources including the English Phrasal Verbs in Use by McCarthy and O'Dell (2006). Initially, a list of 80 non-congruent phrasal verbs was made and a multiple choice test including 80 items was developed. The test was then given to the participants and those items which were not answered by the participants (40 items), were included in the posttest. The learners in the three groups were

considered homogeneous in terms of their knowledge of non-congruent phrasal verbs prior to the administration of the treatment. In order to make sure about the reliability of the posttest, test retest procedure was used by using the obtained data from a pilot sample of 30 EFL learners. Table 1 shows the results of correlation coefficient between the two administrations of the test on the pilot sample as an index of reliability.

Table 1
Correlation Coefficient between the two Administrations of the test of Phrasal Verbs on the Pilot Sample

		Pilot2
Pilot1	Pearson Correlation	.775**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	31
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).		

As indicated in Table 1, the correlation between the two tests of phrasal verbs was found to be 0.77 which is an acceptable index of reliability.

The materials used to teach the non-congruent phrasal verbs were based on the non-congruent phrasal verbs proved difficult to the participants of the study in the pretest. Totally, 40 phrasal verbs were identified as difficult phrasal verbs. The materials were in fact sentences and texts containing the target phrasal verbs gathered from variety of sources such as the exercises from series of English Phrasal Verbs in Use, internet, and dictionaries. It needs to be noted that the synonyms and definitions of target phrasal verbs were also included in the materials.

Procedure

In the first place, an initial number of 120 Iranian EFL learners were selected through convenient sampling. In the next step, they all took the language proficiency test of PET and the mean score and standard deviation of the PET scores were calculated. Based on the mean score and standard deviation, those students whose scores were within the range of ±1 SD were selected to serve as the actual participants of the study. According to this procedure, a sample of 90 EFL learners with homogeneous language proficiency participated in the study. Then, these 90 learners were randomly

assigned to three groups of learners to serve as two experimental groups and one control group, each comprising 30 language learners.

In the next phase of the study, all the three groups sat for the test of non-congruent phrasal verbs as the pretest for homogenizing the participants in terms of knowledge of non-congruent phrasal verbs. Then, 40 phrasal verbs, determined as difficult phrasal verbs, were taught by the researchers through sentences and texts collected from the exercises of English Phrasal Verbs in Use, internet, and dictionaries including the target phrasal verbs. In one group, the students were taught non-congruent phrasal verbs using the visual input enhancement and in the other one through auditory input enhancement. As mentioned by Norris and Ortega (2000),in the visual input enhancement method, the learners received the target materials made salient through underlining, boldfacing, italicization, capitalization, and other strategies such as color coding or using different font sizes or types. In the auditory input enhancement method, the learners received the same materials but not visually enhanced and instead the target phrasal verbs were auditory enhanced by teacher (the researcher) through repeating aloud the phrasal verbs and using a raising intonation and higher pitch when coming across the target phrasal verbs. The whole treatment took 12 sessions and in each session 3 to 4 non-congruent phrasal verbs were taught for 20 minutes. As for the control group no enhancement of any type was provided to the students and they just received the same printed material used for the two experimental groups. In control group students learned the phrasal verbs merely by matching them with their definitions, synonyms or sample sentences and then their possible questions were answered.

Design

The design of the present study was quasi-experimental, pretest posttest design. It consisted of two experimental groups and one control group. The independent variables were two modalities of input-enhancement (visual vs. auditory), and the dependent variable was the learners' knowledge of non-congruent phrasal verbs.

Results

The purpose of the study was to explore the effects of auditory and visual input enhancement on the learning of non-congruent phrasal verbs by Iranian EFL learners. In order to answer the research question of the study, it was decided to choose the participants with equal language proficiency. Therefore, from the initial pool of 120 intermediate language learners 90 learners whose PET scores fell within the range of ±1 SD were extracted to serve as the true participants of the current study. Table 2 shows the PET scores of the initial pool of the students and also the 90 language learners.

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics of Initial Pool of Students and also the 90 Language Learners

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
PET of 120 students	120	36.00	76.00	57.0000	7.10781
PET of 90 students	90	49.00	65.00	57.4333	3.82202
Valid N (listwise)	90				

As seen in Table 2 the initial 120 language learners had a mean score of 57.00 (SD=7.10) while the 90 language learners whose scores were within the range of mean score ±1 SD had a mean score of 57.43 (SD=3.82). It is shown that the mean score of the two groups of language learners were not much different but the standard deviation has dramatically reduced after screening which means that the extracted group with 90 language learners had more homogenized English language proficiency. These 90 students were assigned to three equal groups randomly: one serving as the control group and the other two as the experimental groups for receiving either visual input enhancement or auditory input enhancement.

To find the answer to the research question in the current study, the scores of the three groups on the posttest of non-congruent phrasal verbs were compared. Table 3 displays the posttest scores of the participants of the study in terms of the mean scores and standard deviations.

Table 3
Descriptive Statistics of the three Groups of the Study on Posttest

Posttest

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Visual enhancement	30	20.5000	2.89768	.52904	19.4180	21.5820	15.00	26.00
auditory enhancement	30	20.4000	3.09170	.56446	19.2455	21.5545	14.00	26.00
control	30	14.2333	2.43088	.44382	13.3256	15.1410	10.00	20.00
Total	90	18.3778	4.05739	.42769	17.5280	19.2276	10.00	26.00

As seen in Table 3, the visual enhancement group had a mean score of 20.50 (SD=2.89), the auditory enhancement group had a mean score of 20.40 (SD=3.09) and the control group had a mean score of 14.23 (SD=2.43). To answer the research question, ANOVA was run on the posttest scores of the three groups. Table 4 illustrates the results of Levene's test of variances across the groups as the assumption of ANOVA.

Table 4
Result of Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
1.447	2	87	.241

According to Levene's test of variances, the variances were equal across the groups, F (2, 87) =1.447, P=0.241, and accordingly, ANOVA was run on the scores of the three groups to explore the effects of visual and auditory input enhancement on learning non-congruent phrasal verbs. Therefore, the residuals between the pretest and posttest scores were computed as the first step. Table 5 illustrates the results of ANOVA.

Table 5
Result of ANOVA on the Posttest Scores

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	773.089	2	386.544	48.593	.000
Within Groups	692.067	87	7.955		
Total	1465.156	89			

As indicated in Table 5, the significant value is .00 which is lower than the confidence level (.05). Thus, it can be inferred that three groups were different in terms of their knowledge of non-congruent phrasal verbs in the posttest. To explore where exactly the difference among groups lie, Scheffe test was used to compare the groups two by two. Table 6 demonstrates the results of Scheffe test.

Table 6
Results of Post Hoc Scheffe

Multiple Comparisons						
Dependent Variable: Posttest						
Scheffe						
(I) Groups	(J) Groups	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Visual enhancement	auditory enhancement	.10000	.72823	.991	-1.7137	1.9137
	control	6.26667*	.72823	.000	4.4530	8.0803
auditory enhancement	Visual enhancement	-.10000	.72823	.991	-1.9137	1.7137
	control	6.16667*	.72823	.000	4.3530	7.9803
control	Visual enhancement	-6.26667*	.72823	.000	-8.0803	-4.4530
	auditory enhancement	-6.16667*	.72823	.000	-7.9803	-4.3530
*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.						

The post hoc Scheffe test indicated that the visual input enhancement group and auditory input enhancement group were not significantly different from each other (P=0.991), but the visual input enhancement group was significantly different from the control group (P=0.00). Also, it was found that the auditory

input enhancement group was also significantly different from the control group (P=0.00). Accordingly, the results showed that there was no significant difference between the visual input enhancement and the auditory input enhancement in terms of their effects on learning non-congruent phrasal verbs and both visual and auditory enhancement methods were effective on learning non-congruent phrasal verbs by Iranian EFL learners.

Discussion

The present study aimed at exploring the effect of visual and auditory input enhancement on learning non-congruent phrasal verbs by Iranian EFL learners. The participants of the study were 90 EFL learners who were divided into 3 equal groups. The initial assessment of the participants of the study showed that all the three groups were equal in terms of knowledge of non-congruent phrasal verbs, but after the treatment, that is, after the two experimental groups received either visual input enhancement or auditory input enhancement and one group served as the control group, it was found that the two input enhancement groups scored significantly higher on the posttest of phrasal verbs than the control group. The post hoc Scheffetest indicated that visual input enhancement group and auditory input enhancement group were not significantly different from each other (P=0.991), but visual input enhancement group was significantly different from the control group (P=0.00). Also, it was found that the auditory input enhancement group was also significantly different from the control group (P=0.00). In other words, it was found that both visual input enhancement and auditory input enhancement were effective in learning non-congruent phrasal verbs by Iranians and that no significant differences existed between them.

The findings of the present study points to the effectiveness of input enhancement, regardless of its visual or auditory type, in learning phrasal verbs. Similar studies in the past also came up with similar results to the study, for example, in their study, Jourdenais et al. (1995) indicated that Spanish learners could produce more Spanish preterit and imperfect verbs after being treated with textual enhancement. Similar results were obtained by Alanen (1995) and Leeman et al. (1995) with regard to the effectiveness of input enhancement. However, in the study by Leow (2001) no significant relationship was found

between input enhancement and comprehension of Spanish imperatives. Similarly, Izumi (2002) reported no significant gain in learning   English relativization by adult English as a second language (ESL) learners after output and visual input enhancement. Izumi (2002) argued that due to lack of significant gain in learning after visual input enhancement, it is best to combine visual input enhancement with other forms of assistance like semantic elaboration as in Doughty (1988, 1991), or activating background knowledge as in Shook (1994). Ziegler, Meurers, Rebuschat, Ruiz, Moreno-Vega, Chinkina, Li and Greye (2017) explored the effectiveness of computerized visual input enhancement on the learners' implicit and explicit knowledge of Engilsh articles. The findings showed that computerized visual input enhancement caused significant difference between multiple choice pretest and posttest while no other pretest–posttest contrasts were found significant. The study by Ziegler, Meurers, Rebuschat, Ruiz, Moreno-Vega, Chinkina, Li and Greye (2017) not only pointed to the benefit of input enhancement but also indicated that solely using input enactment might not lead to positive results as was suggested by Izumi (2002).

Regarding the fact that no significant difference existed between visual and auditory input enhancement on learning non-congruent phrasal verbs, one more explanation seems warranted and important. According to Miller (2006), learners with different learning styles may benefit from the instructions in line with their preferred learning styles. For instance, people with visual learning style prefer images, drawings, pictures etc. while those with auditory style prefer listening, talking etc. (Lujan &DiCarlo, 2006). In the current study there was no control on the visual or auditory preferences of the students and it was highly probable that students with both types were present in the groups. Accordingly, they might have benefited from the visual and auditory input enhancement similarly, as those learners with visual preference might have benefited from visual enhancement, and those with auditory preference might have profited by auditory enhancement in each group.

In addition to empirical studies supporting the findings of present study, the results of the present study are justifiable when taking into account the theoretical background of input enhancement. In fact, input enhancement is a way for making target features salient to the learners in various ways and it was carried out in the present study through visual enhancement such as

underlining, bolding etc. and auditory enhancement such as change in intonation and repeating out loudly. Therefore, it can be claimed the results have contributed to the credence and validity of such theories like Noticing Hypothesis andInput Processing Theory. Schmidt (1990) highlighted the role of attention in his Noticing Hypothesis and maintained that target materials need to be noticed and attended for the learning to happen. Van Patten (2004) believes that in the first step language learners focus on meaning and messages during the language learning process and this deviates their attention from linguistic elements of language. Thus, he claims that the target elements need to be made salient to the learners to make the learning of surface structures optimal.

Despite the contribution of the present study to the previous findings and theories concerning the benefits of input enhancement, the results of the present study suggest more attention on the part of language teachers and practitioners to the role of input enhancement in the process of foreign language learning. In ESL context, learners are flooded with language input (Gass, 2011) from variety of sources such as genuine interactions with native speakers, lectures, TV etc. while foreign language learners are deprived of many of these assets (Gass, 2011). The rich language environment for ESL learners may compensate for some of the challenges for learning a second language including learning linguistic elements, but foreign language learners need to be further supported in the learning of linguistic aspects of a second language. Other implications of the current study can be consciousness raising and input enhancement in the materials used in a curriculum. Holding workshops can be thought of one to inform teachers about input enhancement and encourage them to use it.

Although the current study focused on the positive effect of visual and auditory input enhancement on the learning of non-congruent phrasal verbs, the positive use of visual and auditory input enhancement for learning other elements of language can be proposed in further studies. It seems that there are many aspects of language that have similar characteristics to phrasal verbs. For example, English collocations that do not have the meaning of the sum of their parts are non-congruent collocations (Nakata, 2006) which are similar in definition to phrasal verbs (Koprowski, 2005). Therefore, visual and auditory input enhancement have the potentials to be utilized in teaching collocations

too. Like non-congruent phrasal verbs, collocations also may be negatively affected by the language system of the native speakers (Nakata, 2006). This last point can be considered as further area for research in future as more empirical studies would help EFL practitioners to take firmer steps for integrating the input enhancement techniques in language courses. Another area of research can be further studies on practical ways to implement input enhancement and how to train teachers through in-service and pre-service courses for the effective use of input enhancement.

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