

Effect of Input vs. Collaborative Output Tasks on Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners' Grammatical Accuracy and Willingness to Communicate¹

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Abstract

This study explored the effect of input vs. collaborative output tasks on Iranian EFL learners' grammatical accuracy and their willingness to communicate (WTC). In so doing, the study utilized 3 input (i.e., textual enhancement, processing instruction, and discourse) and 3 collaborative output (i.e., dictogloss, reconstruction cloze task, and jigsaw) tasks and compared their effects on 5 English grammatical structures (*used to*, *too*, *enough*, *wish*, and past tense). To this end, 50 Iranian intermediate EFL students in 2 groups (input- and collaborative output-based) participated in this study. To collect the data, a 32-item grammar test and WTC questionnaire were used as the pretests and posttests. Results of the *t* tests and analyses of covariance revealed that the input- and output-based tasks had a significantly positive effect on the participants' grammatical accuracy. Moreover, the output-based instruction enhanced the participants' WTC more than the input-based one. Findings have implications for L2 grammar pedagogy.

Keywords: Input Tasks; Collaborative Output Tasks; Grammar; Willingness to Communicate

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1. Introduction

There have been different instructional approaches to grammar teaching. As Nassaji and Fotos (2011) point out, grammar pedagogy started with intensive focus on grammar. Consequently, early methods such as the grammar translation method (GTM) paid considerable attention to teaching second/foreign language (L2) structures. However, with the advent of communicative teaching approaches in the 1970s, grammar teaching became unfavorable. Even some L2 researchers (e.g., Krashen, 1993) argued that L2 grammar teaching was unnecessary. However, in recent years, many scholars (e.g., Nassaji & Fotos, 2004; Nassaji & Tian, 2010) assert that L2 instruction without focusing on grammar is inadequate. Along the same line, research (e.g., Nassaji, 1999; Samuda & Bygate, 2008) has emphasized the role of grammar within form-focused instruction in meaningful communicative contexts. Hence, focus on form (FonF) instruction, a recent development in grammar pedagogy, has received attention.

FonF is “instructional option which integrates grammar and communication in L2 teaching” (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011, p. 10), that is, it is concerned with “how focal attentional resources are allocated to linguistic forms” (Long & Robinson, 1998, p. 27). Inducing L2 learners to pay attention to linguistic forms can be implemented through different types of tasks including input- and output-based tasks. According to Nassaji and Fotos (2011), input-based options such as textual enhancement tasks focus on grammar mainly through what learners receive from input whereas output-based options, such as jigsaw tasks, basically focus on “grammar through engaging learners in activities in which they produce language collaboratively” (p. 30). Nonetheless, growing controversy exists over the effectiveness of input-based tasks vs. output-based ones, which aptly calls for more empirical evidence about their effectiveness as regards to L2 grammatical accuracy, given that various types of tasks may have differential effects on the development of L2 grammar learning. This issue finds theoretical justification when FonF is assumed to be an approach which makes L2 learners pay attention to linguistic structures in communicative contexts (Long, 2000).

To move further, different types of tasks may have differential effects on language learners’ general tendency to communicate effectively in L2. As MacIntyre and Charos (1996) state, performing various tasks can influence L2 learners’ willingness to speak or remain silent. Thereby, another line of inquiry which is worth consideration is L2 learners’ willingness to communicate (WTC), that is, “readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person, or persons, using [an] L2” (MacIntyre, Clement, Dörnyei, & Noels, 1998, p. 547). As Swain and Lapkin (2002) cogently state, language is learned effectively in interactive and meaningful contexts. It is, thus, very important to find the factors,

such as the kind of tasks, which help L2 learners improve communication. In this light, it is logical to explore whether input-based and output-based tasks engender in L2 learners enough willingness to seek out communication opportunities, along with the grammar accuracy enhancement.

Therefore, the main consideration in this study was to investigate the effect of input-based vs. collaborative output-based tasks on L2 learners' grammatical accuracy and WTC in FonF instruction in the context of Iran. More specifically, this study aimed to compare the effect of these two types of tasks with respect to the grammatical accuracy of five English structures, that is, *used to*, *too*, *enough*, *wish*, and past tense, with which some less proficient Iranian EFL learners at schools have problems. It was assumed that providing ways to foster grammatical accuracy and willingness for effective communication, which is a necessary condition for language development (MacIntyre & Legatto, 2011), has significance for L2 teachers and learners in such a context.

2. Literature Review

The input processing model (VanPatten, 2002, 2009) provides theoretical justifications for the use of input-based tasks. The basic tenet of this model is that language learners process input for meaning before they process it for form; for learners to process form which is not meaningful, they should be able to "process informational or communicative content at no or little cost to attention" (VanPatten, 2009, p. 48). According to this model, exposure to explicit instruction and input-processing activities help language learners create a connection between form and meaning and this leads to the process of learning grammar from meaning (VanPatten, 2002). On the other side, Swain's (1985, 1995) output hypothesis mainly provides theoretical justifications for the use of output-based tasks. According to this hypothesis, L2 learners can increase their L2 proficiency when they are engaged in language production. According to output hypothesis, comprehensible input is essential though it is not adequate for L2 acquisition; it is the output which leads L2 learners to pay attention to syntactic processing involved in production rather than semantic processing in comprehension.

Apart from the theoretical justifications, research has shown differential effects of tasks on L2 outcome. Focusing on grammar, Campillo (2006) investigated the effect of different tasks (dictoglass, text reconstruction, and cloze tasks) on Spanish L2 learners' output production and teacher's feedback with respect to two grammatical items of articles and second conditional sentences. The results showed that the degree of output production reduced during dictoglass (an output-based task), but text reconstruction and cloze tasks facilitated the teacher's feedback. The above results pointed to the conclusion that various tasks could have different effects on grammatical features.

In a similar line of inquiry, Lee (2007), who examined the effect of textual enhancement (an input-based task) on Korean EFL students' reading comprehension and learning of passive forms, found that textual enhancement led to the learning of the target English passive forms, but it did not improve reading comprehension. Moreover, Farahani and Sarkhosh (2012), who examined the effect of different textual input enhancement (underlining, bolding, italicizing, and backgrounding) on the subjunctive mood in a text among 114 EFL Iranian female learners in an English institute in Urmia, reported that underlining was the most effective textual enhancement format as compared with bolding, italicizing, and backgrounding. However, Dalili, Ketabi, Kassaian, and Eslami Rasekh (2011), who investigated the effect of textual enhancement on system learning, that is, extraction of abstract rule underlying linguistic feature, among 64 lower-intermediate Persian native speakers, reported the ineffectiveness of textual enhancement instructional technique.

Another new line of inquiry has looked into the effectiveness of output tasks. For instance, in a study by Nassaji and Tian (2010), the effect of collaborative and individual output tasks on learning English phrasal verb was investigated in two intact low-intermediate adult ESL classrooms in Canada. Two kinds of output tasks (reconstruction cloze tasks and reconstruction editing tasks) were used. The results showed that doing the tasks collaboratively led to greater accuracy of task completion than doing the tasks individually. However, collaborative pair work did not lead to better learning of the target phrasal verbs. Also, in a study by Oruc (2012), dictogloss as a reconstruction output task proved to be effective in noticing grammatical forms in the Turkish language.

All in all, as Dörnyei (2005) states, grammatical competence alone may not result in actual L2 communication. And, the importance of communication willingness should not be downplayed. With that in mind, some recent research has investigated WTC in L2. For instance, Wang (2004), examined the relationship between L2 written performance and WTC among university students learning Chinese in Australia. The results of his study revealed that the more willing students were to communicate in class, the better they did in their L2 written performance. Also, Freiermuth and Jarrell (2006) compared face-to-face spoken language with using online chat in performing problem-solving tasks. The results from a questionnaire and the participants' discourse analysis led to the conclusion that online chat improved the L2 learners' WTC while performing the tasks. Similarly, another study by Wang and Erlam (2011) demonstrated that doing pet shop tasks in a series of five task-based lessons helped the L2 learners to reduce their communication anxiety and increase perceived communication competence.

In summary, the review of the related literature shows the paucity of empirical research on the comparative effect of input and collaborative output tasks

on EFL learners' grammatical accuracy. Much investigation has focused on either input- or output-based tasks per se. Failure of research in comparing their effects on various grammatical structures justifies more research. The present study was, then, intended to investigate the comparative effect of input- and collaborative output-based tasks on Iranian EFL learners' grammatical accuracy with respect to five grammatical structures of *used to*, *too*, *enough*, *wish*, and past tense. These grammatical structures were selected based on proficiency level and developmental stage of the learners in the current stage. As Ellis (2008) states, a researcher must have some knowledge of the learners' stage of development and what is difficult or easy at that particular stage. The idea behind this criterion was that the learners could comprehend and produce the above L2 features through input- and output-based instructions. Apart from learner characteristic, that is, proficiency level and developmental stage, there was one other important factor in selecting them, that is, saliency of these structures, which are used frequently in the input such EFL learners receive. The current study, thus, fills the gap out in the literature given that little research has examined the effectiveness of task-based instruction with respect to these structures which some less proficient Iranian EFL learners find very problematic. Furthermore, more attention is required to put WTC into effect in such a context where little communication in English takes place outside the classroom. Thus, it is worth investigating whether L2 learners' WTC improves as the result of doing input- and output-based collaborative tasks. In light of the above issues, this study sought to address the following research questions:

1. Does doing tasks (both input and collaborative output tasks) significantly improve EFL learners' grammatical accuracy?
2. Are collaborative output-based tasks more effective than input-based tasks in enhancing EFL learners' grammatical accuracy in form-focused instruction?
3. Does doing tasks (both input and collaborative output tasks) significantly improve EFL learners' WTC in form-focused instruction?
4. Are collaborative output-based tasks more effective than input-based tasks in improving EFL learners' WTC in form-focused instruction?

3. Method

3.1 Participants

The participants included 50 EFL female students who were selected based on their scores on a placement test from a large sample of female EFL students. All the participants were native speakers of Persian, and they were learning English as a foreign language in a language institute (Zabansara Institute). They were at the intermediate level, and none had prior experience of being in English-speaking

countries. The participants whose age ranged from 16 to 22 attended their English courses in the language institute for 3 days a week in 2013-2014. They constituted two classes, each with 25 students.

3.2 Instruments

In this study, three instruments were employed: Oxford Placement Test (OPT), a grammar test, and a WTC questionnaire. The OPT test included 100 multiple-choice items, assessing the participants' grammatical knowledge. According to Allen (2004), OPT is highly economical and easy to administer, which leads to consistently meaningful scores from level 1 (beginner) upwards (level 9). Also, OPT has been calibrated against the proficiency levels based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), the Cambridge ESOL Examinations, and other major international examinations (Forouzandeh, 2013). Meanwhile, the reliability of the test as measured by Cronbach's alpha in the current study was found to be 0.85.

A teacher-made grammar test for the intermediate EFL learners was also utilized. It contained 32 multiple-choice items. This test served as the pretest and posttest to assess the learners' grammatical accuracy. To validate the grammar test, this study used evidence from both structural equation modeling (SEM) and content validity. The initial version of the grammar test, which included 39 multiple-choice items, was subjected to factor analysis in a piloting study (with 100 intermediate EFL learners within the age of 16-22), using the Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS) software. AMOS can create more realistic models instead of using standard multivariate statistics or multiple regression models alone (Arbuckle, 2007). After deleting seven items from the initial test, the results revealed that one factor model was fitted to the grammar test instrument (see Figure A1 in Appendix). According to the fit measure results (see Table A in Appendix), the value of root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) used for declaring level of significance was 0.077 ($p \leq .05$). Also, the inspection of chi-squared minimum (Cmin), showing minimum value of the discrepancy between the model and the data, indicated a very good fit.

The content validity of the test was determined through experts' judgments. The test content also corresponded to grammatical structures of *New Interchange, book 2* (Richards, Hull, & Proctor, 2013) used as an instructional textbook for intermediate EFL learners in the abovementioned institute. Besides, the test had content coverage of the grammatical structures covered in the course. This was checked through consultation with the instructor of the course. As to the reliability of the test, Cronbach's alpha was found to be acceptable (0.71).

Also, the WTC questionnaire, developed by MacIntyre, Baker, Clément, and Conrod (2001) and adapted by Vatankhah (2013), was used to gather

information about 60 EFL learners' WTC in the classroom in the four skill areas of language. This questionnaire contained 27 Likert-type items, with the choices ranging from (*almost never willing*) to (*almost always willing*). According to Vatankhah (2013), it has content and construct validity. Moreover, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the WTC questionnaire in the present study was found to be acceptable (0.84).

3.3 Procedure

This study had a quasi-experimental design. Eighty EFL learners who registered for intermediate English courses from Zabansara Institute were selected. At the beginning, the placement test (OPT, 2004) was used in order to select the participants ($N = 50$) at the intermediate level and ensure their homogeneity in terms of L2 grammatical level at the entry level before they received the instructions of the study. Following Allen's (2004) guidelines, the learners who were below and above the intermediate level on OPT (i.e., those who received OPT scores below 65 and above 79) were excluded from further data analysis. The participants were randomly assigned to the input-based ($n = 25$) and collaborative output-based ($n = 25$) task groups. Before instructions were given, the WTC questionnaire and grammar test were administered to both input-based and collaborative output-based groups as the pretests.

In the input-based task group, three input-based tasks of textual enhancement, processing instruction, and discourse tasks were carried out with the focus on *used to*, *too*, *enough*, *wish*, and past tense. Textual enhancement tasks make L2 learners focus on target linguistic structures by making them more salient. That is to say, teachers should make their L2 learners pay attention to target structures by means of bolding, italicizing and underlining (see Appendix B). Processing instruction tasks include the referential or affective activities. In referential activity, L2 learners are asked to do the activities with right/wrong answer choices, but affective activities ask for L2 learners' expression of opinion (see Appendix B). Discourse pedagogy tasks focus on the use of target structures within larger discourse context. For instance, L2 learners are asked to examine the function of *too* or *enough* in a text and analyze the context of its use, making generalization about its occurrence, its meaning, and the circumstances of its use and nonuse.

In the collaborative output-based task group, three collaborative output tasks (i.e., dictogloss, reconstruction cloze, and jigsaw tasks) were carried out. In fact, L2 teachers in such a group should make their learners produce English accurately while collaborating with each other in the classroom. In dictogloss tasks, several stages of preparatory, dictation, reconstruction, analysis, and correction are considered. In the preparatory stage, a warm-up discussion of the topic and explanation of unknown words are given. In the dictation stage, an instructor reads a

text twice: In the first time, L2 learners just listen; and in the second time, they are allowed to take notes of important words. In the reconstruction stage, L2 learners use their notes to reconstruct the text in small groups. At the analysis and correction stage, the constructed texts are corrected by the collaboration of the instructor and learners themselves.

In the reconstruction cloze tasks, two versions of a text (i.e., the original one and a cloze version) are prepared. The original text is read by an instructor at a normal pace. Learners listen and take notes of the related content. Later, they receive the cloze version of the text. Then, they are asked to fill in the blanks with words from the original text; finally, they compare their text with the original one and discuss possible differences between the two texts.

In the jigsaw tasks, two versions of a text are prepared; the content is the same, but the target forms in the original text are different in learners' version. In this task, an instructor reads the original text to learners in the class; they do the task collaboratively in groups, with each pair receiving different versions of the same text (see Appendix B). Learners are also asked to choose the correct order of the sentences, find missing words, exchange their answers, compare the text with the original one, and identify the differences.

The instructions in the input-based and collaborative output-based groups lasted for about 26 sessions, 3 days a week. At the end of the course, the same grammar test and WTC questionnaire were administered to the participants as the posttests.

4. Results

The descriptive statistics of the grammar scores in both input- and collaborative output-based task groups at the pretest and posttest phase are summarized in Table 1:

Table 1. *Descriptive Statistics of Grammar Scores in Input- and Output-Based Groups*

Group	Variable	<i>N</i>	Min	Max	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Input	Pretest Grammar	25	5	23	13.04	5.48
	Posttest Grammar	25	12	29	20.68	4.37
	Pretest Grammar	25	6	19	11.68	3.49
Output	Posttest Grammar	25	6	27	18.04	4.66

As Table 1 demonstrates, the pretest mean scores of grammar in the input and output groups were 13.04 and 11.68, respectively, and the posttest mean scores

in the input and output groups were 20.68 and 18.04, respectively. These data show that both groups had a better performance at the posttest phase of the study.

To address the first research question of the study, which was intended to find out whether doing tasks (both input and collaborative output tasks) could significantly improve EFL learners' grammatical accuracy, a paired-samples *t* test was conducted on the on the pretest ($M = 12.36$, $SD = 4.61$) and posttest ($M = 19.36$, $SD = 4.67$) grammar scores obtained from both groups (see Table 2):

Table 2. Paired-Samples *t* Test Between Pretest and Posttest Grammar Scores

Variable	Paired Differences					<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval				
				Lower	Upper			
Grammar Pre/Posttest	7. 00	5.5 0	.77	5.43	8.56	8.98	49	.000

According to Table 2, the mean score increase between the pretest and posttest scores was large enough (7.00) to observe a significant difference between the pretest and posttest grammar mean scores at .05, $t(49) = -8.99$ ($p < .05$). This result means that doing tasks significantly improved the EFL learners' grammatical accuracy in this study.

The second research question was intended to see whether collaborative output-based tasks were more effective than input-based tasks in improving the EFL learners' grammatical accuracy. To address this research question, a one-way analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was conducted. The pretest grammar scores from the input- and collaborative output-based task groups were considered as a covariate variable, and the posttest grammar scores from these groups were considered as a dependent variable in the analysis. Besides, the type of instruction (input- or collaborative output-based) was considered as the independent variable. Meanwhile, to meet the assumptions of ANCOVA, the normality of grammar scores in both input- and collaborative output-based groups was examined by Kolmogrov-Smirnov test, which confirmed the acceptable normality level of scores for both input ($F = 1.75$, $p = 0.56$) and collaborative output ($F = 1.43$, $p = .200$) groups (see Appendix C, Table C1). In addition, the interaction between the covariate and independent variables, which could confound the results, was checked, $F = 4.18$, $p = .061$ (see Appendix C, Table C2). In other words, there was not a significant interaction between the treatment and the participants' grammar scores in the pretests, giving assurance to conduct ANCOVA for the effect of the treatment, that is, the effect of the type of instruction on the posttest grammar scores. The results of

ANCOVA for the treatment effect on the posttest grammar scores are reported in Table 3:

Table 3. *Analysis of Covariance for Treatment Effect on Grammar Posttest Scores*

Source	Sum of Squares	<i>df</i>	Mean Square	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	157.07	2	78.53	4.04	.024	.147
Intercept	1525.34	1	1525.34	78.57	.000	.626
Grammar Pretest	69.95	1	69.95	3.60	.064	.071
Treatment	63.71	1	63.71	3.28	.076	.065
Error	912.45	47	19.41			
Total	19810	50				
Corrected Total	1069.52	49				

As the results in Table 3 show, the treatment of the study did not have any significantly differential effect on the participants' posttest grammar scores, $F(1, 47) = .328, p = .76$, that is, the type of instruction did not make a significant difference on the learners' grammatical accuracy at the posttest phase.

Furthermore, to describe the main features of the sample in terms of WTC, descriptive statistics of WTC scores were obtained for both input and collaborative output groups. Table 4 reports the descriptive statistics of WTC scores at the pretest and posttest phases:

Table 4. *Descriptive Statistics of WTC Scores in Input- and Output-Based Groups*

Group	Variable	<i>N</i>	Min	Max	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Input	Pretest WTC	25	34	69	56.56	3.96
	Posttest WTC	25	37	77	57.00	4.06
Output	Pretest WTC	25	42	75	56.49	3.44
	Posttest WTC	25	48	79	59.00	4.19

As demonstrated in Table 4, the minimum the WTC scores was observed in the input-based group at the pretest phase (34), but the largest WTC mean score was observed in the output-based group at the posttest phase (79). Also, the greatest mean score was also observed in the output-based group at the posttest phase ($M = 59$), indicating that the participants in the output-based group generally had a better performance at the posttest phase.

The focus of the third research question was to examine the significant improvement of the participants' WTC through doing tasks. To address this question, a paired-samples *t* test was conducted on the pretest and posttest WTC scores. The results of the *t* test on the pretest ($M = 56.52, SD = 3.67$) and posttest ($M = 58.00, SD = 4.30$) WTC scores are reported in Table 5:

Table 5. Paired-Samples *t* Test Between Pretest and Posttest of WTC Scores

Variable	Paired Differences					<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig.
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval				
				Lower	Upper			
WTC Pre/Posttest	1.47	5.20	.73	.003	2.95	2.00	49	.051

According to Table 5, the WTC mean difference (1.47) between the pretest and posttest WTC scores was not large enough to find a significant difference, $t(49) = -2.00$, $p = .051$. This means the effect of the task instruction, in general, was not large.

Nonetheless, to see which type of tasks (the input- or the collaborative output-based tasks) was more effective for the improvement of the participants' WTC and answer the fourth research question of the study, a one-way ANCOVA was conducted after checking the assumptions such as normality of pretest WTC scores in the input- and output-based groups (see Appendix C, Table C3) and nonsignificant interaction between the treatment and covariate, that is, the pretest WTC scores (see Appendix C, Table C4). The results of ANCOVA for the treatment effect (the effect of the type of instruction) on the posttest WTC scores are reported in Table 6:

Table 6. Analysis of Covariance for Treatment Effect on WTC Posttest Scores

Source	Sum of Squares	<i>df</i>	Mean Square	<i>F</i>	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	111.81	2	55.90	3.29	.046	.123
Intercept	488.18	1	488.18	28.78	.000	.380
WTC Pretest	22.81	1	22.81	1.34	.252	.028
Treatment	89.36	1	89.36	5.27	.026	.101
Error	797.06	47	16.95			
Total	44922.54	50				
Corrected Total	908.88	49				

According to Table 6, the *F* value for the treatment effect was significant ($F = 5.26$, $*p < .05$). The collaborative output-based task group with a higher WTC mean score ($M = 59$) performed significantly better than the input-based task group ($M = 56.49$) at the posttest phase, indicating better contribution of the collaborative output-based tasks, compared with the input-based tasks, in improving the participants' WTC. However, the effect size of the treatment effect was not very large (.101), indicating a modest contribution of the collaborative output tasks to the participants' WTC improvement.

5. Discussion

The findings provided some evidence that the types of tasks carried out in the present study could draw the participants' attention to the target structures and improve their grammatical accuracy. The above findings support Long's (1991) claim that FonF is an effective approach to foster L2 grammatical competence. There are some plausible reasons explaining why the tasks in the current study increased the L2 participants' grammatical accuracy in the form-focused instruction.

First, doing various input and collaborative output tasks and repeating them during the course of instruction in both groups increased exposure to form-focused instruction and led to the improvement of the grammar gains; input processing activities and initial exposure to focused instruction possibly helped the L2 participants create form-meaning connections as they learned English target structures through various meaningful tasks. As Swain and Lapkin (2002) maintain, a single task per se may not have an immediate effect; repeated exposure is required to consolidate gains; conducting the tasks in different stages 3 days a week with each session lasting about 45 min proved to be effective. In line with the above argument, the study by Nassaji and Tian (2010) on learning phrasal verbs in English showed that repeated task performance resulted in greater accuracy gains as to the target form than individual task completion.

Second, tasked-based instruction in both groups provided an effective condition for L2 grammar learning. Both classes (groups) in the current study, unlike many traditional teacher-fronted grammar classes, were learner-centered and the participants could learn the target grammar incidentally in the process of doing tasks; finally, task-based FonF instructions in both groups promoted negotiated interaction that resulted in noticing. Both input and collaborative output tasks made the L2 participants receptive to feedback by drawing their attention to form in a meaning-based context. For instance, textual enhancement as the external input task implicitly drew their attention to grammatical structures by making input more salient; the discourse-based pedagogy tasks directed their attention to both meaning and grammatical item usage within the discourse context through repeated authentic examples of grammatical structures; the absence of linguistic input during the jigsaw task performance could push the EFL learners to organize content and process it morphosyntactically, leading them to notice the gaps in their grammatical knowledge. Also, the text reconstruction encouraged the EFL learners to complete the features absent from the original text.

Also, the findings of the current study showed that both types of tasks increased grammatical gains and there was no statistically significant difference in terms of grammar gains at the posttest stage. It can be argued that form-meaning connections in performing the tasks are more important in assisting EFL learners to

enhance grammatical accuracy than the type of attentional strategies used in a particular task type. As Swain and Lapkin (2001) assert, there is no significant difference between attention to form generated by a specific input-based or output-based task. The increase of the grammar scores in both groups can be attributed to the fact that both task types required the EFL participants to pay attention to form while allowing them to solve linguistic problems; like the input-based tasks, the output-based ones provided repetition and pushed the participants to process the target language syntactically and notice the grammatical gaps in the use of English. The above finding can partially challenge DeKeyser, Salaberry, Robinson, and Harrington's (2002) claim that input-based task instruction is more effective for improving comprehension skills, whereas output-based task instruction is more effective for improving production skills or those language components which involve L2 learners' production. In fact, both types of input- and output-based tasks in the present study provided the proper ground for the improvement of the learners' production and comprehension of the target grammar. It can also be argued that paying attention to input does not lead to ignoring output, as both of them are vital for L2 learning. According to Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory, knowledge is socially constructed by interaction, which is, then, internalized. During interaction, L2 learners have the opportunities to develop their linguistic, cognitive, and problem-solving skills. As they perform the tasks, they build knowledge through metalanguage. What facilitates this regulation process is the support learners provide to each other. That is to say, through the process of interaction in the tasks, the participants of the current study could examine their grammatical structures, regulate or restructure their grammatical knowledge, make adjustment, and receive feedback, hence better grammar gains.

Furthermore, the results pertaining to the effect of the tasks on the participants' WTC showed that doing tasks, in general, impacted their willingness for communication, but the improvement was not very noticeable. One reason for the above finding might be the L2 participants' level of proficiency. As McIntyre et al. (1998) point out, the level of proficiency can influence WTC. In the present study, the participants were not very proficient to speak and communicate much in English. Also, some might not have had enough opportunity to use English openly in the class whereas sufficient opportunity to use L2 would be required for enhancing their WTC. Moreover, enough time was not perhaps given to them to enhance their WTC; perhaps, a longer task-based instruction could improve their WTC so effectively. Moreover, some participants were anxious and unconfident enough to communicate in English in the class. As McIntyre et al. (1998) argue, affective factors are important. Attitude and confidence can have an impact on WTC. According to Cetinkaya (2005), a low level of anxiety in communication is

related to the level of WTC in L2. Thus, the learners' level of language competence together with their affective states should not go unnoticed.

However, when their WTC scores in the two groups were compared, the results showed that the WTC increase in the collaborative output-based task group was more than the input-based task group. It can be argued that the collaborative output-based tasks made the participants better active agents to perform the tasks. It was observed that the level of anxiety was lower among the participants in the collaborative output-based task group after a few sessions of doing tasks. They were more confident to actively participate in L2 communication, perhaps because they had more classroom interaction and peer collaboration. Research (e.g., Peng & Woodrow, 2010) also shows that there exists a negative correlation between communication anxiety and communication willingness in L2. Moreover, the collaborative output-based tasks engaged the EFL participants more in the task completion and pushed them to speak more in the classroom. The frequent verbal output production can fulfil WTC requirement of the frequent use of the target language; using collaborative output-based tasks can reinforce their communication behavior, an important variable in WTC conceptualization which would concern with frequent use of L2 in class. However, with the small effect size obtained for the collaborative output-based tasks in the current study, any strong generalization should be avoided. More generalizations about the long-term effect collaborative output tasks on WTC still need further research.

6. Conclusion

The type of L2 grammar instruction may refuse or help L2 students' active engagement in processing target structures in communication. This study was designed to investigate the effects of two types of task instructions, that is, input-based and collaborative output-based, to improve the EFL learners' grammatical accuracy and communication willingness in focused-based instruction with respect to five target structures. The results showed doing the tasks, in general, improved the grammatical accuracy of the target structures of *used to*, *too*, *enough*, *wish*, and past tense. Doing diverse input and collaborative output tasks provided scaffolding for the learners. The participants tried to interact to complete the tasks, reflect on form, make guesses, and use their metalinguistic knowledge. The above results lend support to the notion of combining different task types so as to integrate the different aspects of the tasks which can draw L2 learners' attention to form in meaningful contexts. The findings also point to the conclusion that doing various input- or output-based tasks can provide repetition, instances of scaffolding, and an appropriate context for form-meaning connection during processing target language grammar structures.

The results obtained from the present study imply that doing FonF tasks can be an effective approach for fostering grammatical accuracy in English classes. A rich-exposure regime of these tasks can help L2 learners to attend to target grammatical structures. Given that both types of tasks were a follow-up to the previous explicit rule instruction that the EFL participants of the present study had experienced over a period of several years, the findings bolster a recommendation for some combination of explicit instruction with input and collaborative output tasks in L2 grammar pedagogy.

Furthermore, the effects of tasks, in general, on the participants' WTC was not great. However, the collaborative output-based type of tasks in the present study tuned out to be more communicative than the input-based tasks. The participants in the collaborative output task group engaged more actively in creating the meaning they were trying to convey in collaborating with others in the class. The collaborative output tasks provided these participants with more communication opportunities in the class. The resulting collaboration allowed them to complete the tasks with regard to the target grammatical structures, have a more relaxing atmosphere, and improve their WTC in L2 more. By implication, monitoring students' WTC in L2 and improving it should be seen as one of the well-taken goals of L2 teachers through implementation of collaborative focused tasks in the long run. The current investigation is a step and further research is, indeed, required with a larger sample size, including control groups, and other measurement instruments such as interview and observation to make stronger generalizations.

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Appendix A
Output Data From Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

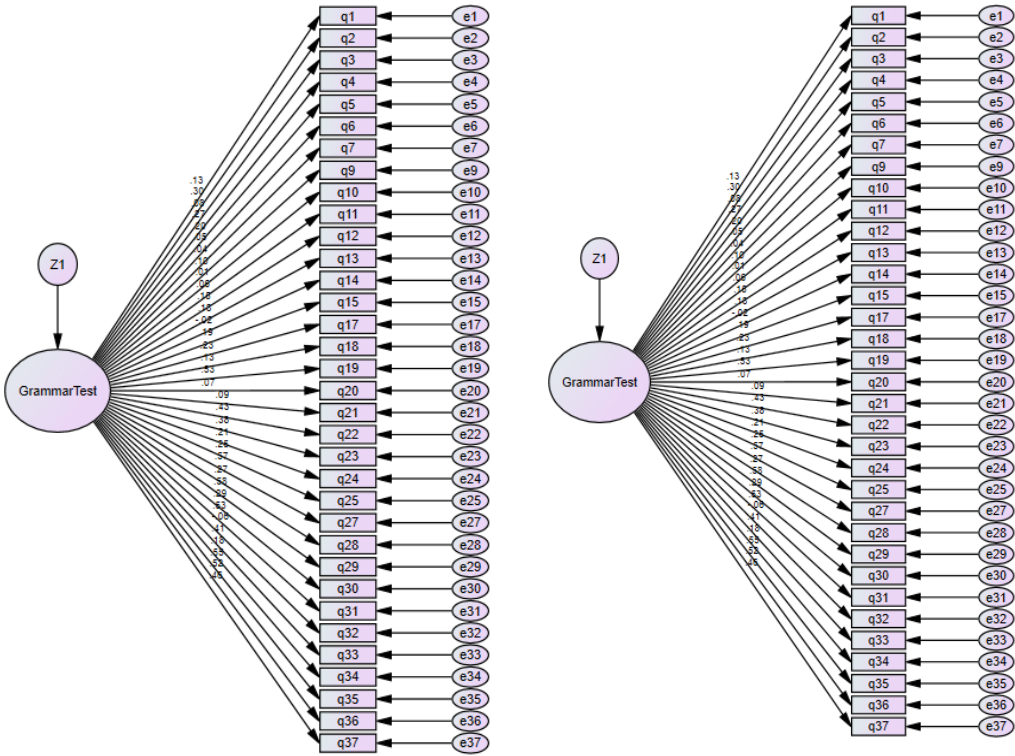


Figure A1. Path diagram of one factor model.

Table A. Fit Measure Indicators in SEM

RMSEA	P	Cmin/df	df	Cmin
.077	.000	1.557	252	392.426

Appendix B
Input-Based Task: Textual Enhancement

Directions: Please read the following text and then answer the questions.

Fashion history

Two thousand years ago Roman man **used to** wear sandals and long piece of clothing called a Toga. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, rich men and women in England and France **used to wear** long wigs. Some of the wigs **used to** have pony tails. In the 1950s, many

American men **used to** wear leather jackets with jeans, before that time, most teenager **did not use to** wear jeans. In 1970s fashion, women **used to** wear miniskirts, bell-bottoms look from the late 1960s. Platform shoes which appeared on the fashion scene in 1971 and often had soles two to four inches thick. Both men and women **used to wear** them

Questions:

What did Roman man use to wear?

What did the wigs have in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries?

Do men wear long wears now?

Did men wear jeans in the eighteenth centuries?

Did most American teenagers use to put on jeans before 1950s?

Who used to wear long wigs?

Input-Based Task: Processing Instruction

Directions: *Listen to the following sentences and decide whether they describe the action that was true in the past but it is not anymore or an action that is done regularly now.*

Sentences	Before	Now
I used to play football.		
I go to restaurant every week.		
I used to visit my parents in the summer.		
My sister makes a large lunch for her family.		
My parents used to cook my favorite snack.		
I did not use to make my own dinner.		

Collaborative Output Task: Reconstruction Cloze

Directions: *Please work in pairs and reconstruct the dialogue based on the one you just heard. Insert all the missing words and phrases needed.*

Terry: So, where are you working now?

John: I am still at the bank; I don't like it though.

Terry: that's too bad, why not?

John: Well it's too boring and it does not pay very well. I **wish** I ... find a better job and ... somewhere else.

Terry: I know, I ... want to work at all anymore. You know, I **wish** I ... a lot of money so I ... retire now.

Terry: I have a full time job but I **wish** I ... more free time. I take classes all day. At home I spend my time studding and doing chores around the house. I wish I ... more time to read and ... out with my friend.

John, Um, I ... I **could** enjoy life more and improved my personality.

Terry: did you rent that apartment?

John: I am saving my money to buy one. I **wish** I

Collaborative Output Task: Jigsaw

Directions: *Please work in pairs; try to choose the correct order of individual sentences, supply any missing words and compare your constructed passage.*

Version Given to Student A

We had an old two-story house and a big yard to play in.

Sentence –

When I was 6 years old, my family moved to Canada.

Sentence –

When I was 8 years old, I used ... play violin and

Sentence –

We ... to have different nicknames too.

Sentence –

My favorable childhood memory was playing football with our friends

Version Given to Student B

When I was 6 years old, my family moved to Canada.

Sentence –

My old brother and I used to play lots of game together.

Sentence –

In the summer, my favorite outdoor game ... to be hide-and-seek.

Sentence –

And my brother used ... play guitar. It was really funny.

Sentence –

When I was 9 years old I used to ... a pet and we called it Jack.

My favorable childhood memory was playing football with our friends

Appendix C

Tables for Checking the Assumptions of ANCOVA

Table C1. *Test of Normality for Grammar Scores*

Group	Variable	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Input	Pretest Grammar	1.75	25	.056
Output	Pretest Grammar	1.43	25	.200

Table C2. *Analysis of Covariance on Grammar Scores for Interaction Effect*

Source	Sum Squares	<i>df</i>	Mean Square	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Corrected Model	161.61	2	80.80	4.18	.021
Intercept	1533.78	1	1533.78	79.40	.000
Group*Grammar Pretest	161.61	2	80.80	4.18	.061
Error	907.91	47	19.317		
Total	19810.00	50			
Corrected Total	1069.52	49			

Table C3. *Test of Normality for WTC Scores*

Group	Variable	<i>F</i>	<i>df2</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Input	Pretest WTC	.139	25	.200
Output	Pretest WTC	1.47	25	.173

Table C4. *Analysis of Covariance on Grammar Scores for Interaction Effect*

Source	Sum Squares	<i>df</i>	Mean Square	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Corrected Model	106.23	2	53.11	3.11	.056
Intercept	480.88	1	480.88	28.15	.000
Group*WRC Pretest	106.23	2	53.11	3.11	.054
Error	802.64	47	17.07		
Total	44922.54	50			
Corrected Total	908.88	49			