Effects of Focus-on-Form(s) Instruction on Iranian Intermediate L2 Learners' Metaphorical Competence Development

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Abstract

Recent developments in cognitive linguistics have highlighted the importance and the ubiquity of metaphors in language. Their effect has been instrumental in making significant headway into the pedagogical practice and design of teaching materials. The current study was carried out to explore the efficacy of focus-on-form (FonF) and focus-on-forms (FonFs) instructions on learning metaphorical language by Iranian intermediate learners of English. First, 60 participants who were homogeneous in terms of language proficiency and metaphorical competence were assigned to 3 groups, 2 being the experimental groups and 1 the control group. One of the experimental groups was exposed to the explicit teaching of metaphors (i.e. FonFs) included in 20 reading passages. The second group was taught the target metaphorical expressions through implicit instruction (i.e. FonF). And, the control group went through the usual classroom instruction; they took the same pretest and posttest as the 2 experimental groups did. To analyze the data, a three-way ANOVA and analysis of covariance were utilized. The findings revealed that the FonFs-taught group gained better results on the posttest. The results seem to indicate a positive correlation between the FonFs and metaphorical competence. It could be claimed that it is possible to enhance L2 learners' metaphorical competence through the FonFs instruction of metaphors.

Keywords: FonFs, FonF, metaphor, metaphoric competence

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1. Introduction

For most people, metaphor is a device of poetic imagination and is viewed as a figure of speech in which one thing is compared with another (Kövecses, 2002). In fact, metaphor was traditionally viewed as "characteristic of language alone" (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 3). However, Lakoff and Johnson challenged the traditional view of metaphor and asserted that "metaphor is not a matter of words rather than thought or action" (p. 3). They also believed that "our ordinary conceptual system is basically metaphorical in nature" (p. 3). For Lakoff and Johnson, metaphor is "understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another" (p. 5); they also put forward that metaphorical expressions "provide ways of comprehending experience; they give order to our lives . . . and are necessary for making sense of what goes on around us" (pp. 185-6). Since the publication of Lakoff and Johnson's work on conceptual metaphors, *Metaphors We Live By* (1980), there has been a great body of research on metaphorical competence (e.g. Baily, 2003; Hashemian & Talebi Nezhad, 2007; Steen, 2004).

Considering metaphor as an indispensable feature of language, cognitive linguists define it as understanding one conceptual domain in terms of another conceptual domain. Kövecses (2002) summarized this view of metaphor as, "conceptual domain (A) is conceptual domain (B), which is called a conceptual metaphor" (p. 4). It is crucial to distinguish conceptual metaphors from metaphorical linguistic expressions (Baily, 2003). Baily contends that "the former are semantic mappings that take two forms of SOURCE DOMAIN and TARGET DOMAIN" (p. 2). The source domain is "the conceptual domain from which we draw metaphorical expressions to understand another conceptual domain, whereas the target domain is the conceptual domain that is understood this way" (Baily, 2003, p. 2). For example, the conceptual metaphor ARGUMENT (target) IS WAR (source) derives some common linguistic metaphors like *He attacked every weak point in my argumen*t. On the other hand, the latter "are words or other linguistic expressions that come from the language or terminology of the more concrete conceptual domain" (i.e. domain B; Kövecses, 2002, p. 4).

A lot of L2 researchers maintain that input is highly critical in learning an L2. (Gass & Madden, 1985; Krashen, 1982, 1985; Sharwood Smith, 1993, 1994; van Pattern, 1995, 1996). Researchers using cognitive models to L2 learning (McLaughlin, 1987; Sharwood Smith, 1993, 1994; Tomasello, 1998) have also underscored the importance of the input that L2 learners are exposed to. Gass (1997), for instance, has suggested that input provides essential positive evidence containing the language data that allow learning to occur.

Closely linked to the discussion of input is the concept of *noticing* in language learning. Schmidt's noticing hypothesis (1990, 1993) is based on

the premise that attention to L1 forms will not suffice unless and until they are noticed by L2 learners. This hypothesis runs counter to Krashen's (1982) claims that second language acquisition (SLA) is largely a subconscious process in which conscious learning serves merely to monitor or edit the subconsciously acquired knowledge. In fact, from the perspective of Schmidt's noticing hypothesis, recurrent noticing and continued awareness of L1 forms are vital in the acquisition process because they seem to raise L2 learners' consciousness of the structures in acquisition and to facilitate restructuring of their unconscious system of linguistic knowledge. In other words, it has been suggested that language input be followed by an element of noticing on the part of L2 learners (Schmidt, 1990).

The fact is that, on the one hand, L2 learners experience overwhelming accounts of sensory and cognitive information. On the other hand, information processing research has indicated that L2 learners are limited as to the amount of information they are capable of processing (McLaughlin, Rossman, & McLeod, 1983). That is, L2 learners tend to ignore some of the information provided in the input. It is the learners' attention system, therefore, that is responsible for reducing and controlling the influx of information. Tomlin and Villa (1994) maintain that attention should be allocated by the learners to sort out and bring order to the input.

Along the same line of research, it has been claimed that instructed SLA makes positive contributions to language learning. The outbreak of studies investigating the role of instruction could perhaps be attributed to the failure of the communicative approach to maintain part of the early premises it had made. For instance, it failed to bring about accuracy in L2 learners' language. An overreliance on fluency at the expense of accuracy seems to have given rise to a great deal of inaccuracy on L2 learners' part.

Several studies have indicated that L2 learners who receive formal instruction show higher levels of L2 proficiency than those who do not (i.e., Long, 1983; Norris & Ortega, 2000). Therefore, it can be concluded that a basic question in SLA is to what extent and in what ways L2 learners' attention should be directed to certain linguistic forms. Outstanding among the various methods of formal instruction which pay particular attention to the concepts of noticing and consciousness-raising is the focus-on-form (FonF) approach advocated by Long (1991).

In FonF instructional approach, L2 learners' attention is directed to linguistic data, which are normally ignored in focus-on-meaning language teaching methods—perhaps as a result of an over emphasis on the role of communication. A distinction is sometimes made in SLA between FonF and focus-on-form (FonFs). FonFs is a concept reminiscent of the old days of the audiolingual method, whereas FonF is a recent phenomenon and is found mainly in a communication-based context to kindle L2 learners' attention in the accuracy-related points of L1.

By examining studies carried out by applied linguists on the effective form of grammar instruction (e.g. Doughty & Williams, 1998; Lightbown, 2000; Norris & Ortega, 2000), one will quickly realize that FonF(s) has been a key theme in many research studies. This innovation was first put forth by Long (1991) and Long and Robinson (1998). Long proposed that grammar instruction may be of two types: FonF and FonFs. The former refers to drawing ". . . students' attention to linguistic elements as they arise incidentally in lessons whose paramount focus is on meaning or communication" (Long, 1991, pp. 45-6). The latter is equated with the traditional form-centered teaching of discrete points of grammar in separate lessons such as the grammar translation method, the audiolingual method, and the presentation, practice, and production model (PPP; Harmer, 2001).

2. Statement of the Problem

Although noticing has been a matter of wide-ranging debate for some years, there is now a general consensus that noticing can certainly contribute to SLA. Schmidt (1994), for instance, contended that noticing L2 forms in the input is a prerequisite for L2 learning. However, the unanswered question centers around how L2 learners' attention can best be drawn to L2 forms in question. In a cognitive perspective on SLA, L2 learners are seen as processors who are limited in capacity. They are, therefore, believed to lack the capability to equally notice all aspects of the incoming information that becomes the object of focused selective attention, whereas the rest receives only peripheral attention (Tomlin & Villa, 1994).

Considering L2 learners' limited capacity in noticing all aspects of L2 input, current theorizing in SLA has underscored the importance of language teaching methods, which are more likely to help L2 learners in noticing the information that might, otherwise, go unnoticed.

As long as metaphorical language is extremely omnipresent in everyday aspect of L1 use of language (Gibbs, 1994; Pollio, Barlow, Fine, & Pollio, 1977) and as some researchers contend (e.g., Danesi 1992; Ellis, 1997), L2 learners need to equip themselves with adequate skills, knowledge, and fitting use and comprehension of metaphorical expressions. Therefore, metaphorical use of language is indispensable indications of L2 learners' fluency that help them integrate into the social communication and the cultural aspects of an L2 because metaphorical expressions can save efforts in processing and act as discoursal time-buyers (Lennon,1998).

Irrespective of the ubiquity of metaphorical use of language, L2 learners are seen to be bereft of enough metaphor repertoires (Hashemian, 2007). However, L2 learners' strong desire to sound natural L2 speakers instills a basic command of L2 metaphorical construction to generate confidence and respect as metaphorical language is viewed as the grease that lubricates the language mills.

However, a great body of research has investigated the role of metaphor and metaphorical language in L2 learning, and emphasizing over the ubiquitous use of which in SLA, little attention has been directed to the way metaphorical language should be instructed, and to what extent the application of formal instruction could affect metaphorical learning. Moreover, recent research (A'lipour & Ketabi, 2010; Kavka & Zybert, 2004; Vahid Dastjerdi, 2010) has explored the effect of formal instruction on the acquisition of idioms, but not on metaphorical language.

Because little attention has been allocated to metaphorical language in L2 curricula, L2 learners run into great difficulty in comprehending and producing metaphorical expressions. One reason for such a shortcoming is that almost no attention has been devoted to the way metaphorical expressions are treated in the L2 classroom context. The problem seems to be much worse in relation to the materials developed for the students in Iran because such materials are particularly designed to reinforce academic reading skills; thus, metaphorical expressions might rarely be of any concern to the developers.

Although several studies (e.g. Roberts & Kreuz, 1994; van Pattern, 1996; Williams, 1999) have been carried out to explore the efficacy of FonF(s) instruction in presenting L2 structures, little has been documented, to the best my knowledge, regarding the efficacy of FonF(s) in the development of metaphorical competence in L2 learners. In line with the above discussion, the following questions were posed to be pursued in this study:

1. Does the FonFs instruction affect/improve Iranian EFL intermediate learners' metaphorical competence significantly?
2. Does the FonF instruction affect/improve Iranian EFL intermediate learners' metaphorical competence significantly?
3. Is there any significant difference between the FonF and FonFs instructions in improving L2 learners' metaphorical competence?

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to investigate the (possible) effects that the two approaches applied in teaching metaphorical expressions—FonF(s)—exert on the development of metaphorical competence in L2 learners. Hopefully, the results of the current study can shed some light on the processes involved in comprehending and producing metaphorical language. Also, it is valuable for and conducive to L2 teaching to realize which teaching instruction (i.e., FonFs or FonF) is more practical.

3. Literature Review

The application of metaphor in SLA is extremely paramount because words often have more metaphoric than denotative meanings. Therefore, L2 learners need to develop their ability to learn, produce, and interpret metaphors in the L2 and metaphorical competence as a necessity for native-like proficiency (Littlemore, 2001). Furthermore, failure to use appropriate

metaphorical expressions is an obvious sign of nonnative speech (Danesi, 1994).

Much of the early SLA research has focused on naturalistic L2 learning, motivated, in part, by claims that L2 learning would normally occur in language classes if teachers stopped interfering in learning process (Ellis, 1991). In fact, it was suggested that L2 learners should be left to learn an L2 in the same way as children acquire their L1 (e.g. Krashen & Terrell, 1983). Over the past decades, however, researchers have turned to studying the effects that instructions of various kinds may have on L2 learning (Ellis, 1997; Kao, 2001; Nassaji & Fotos, 2004, Yarali, 2003). This latter mainstream of research has been motivated, in part, by a desire to address issues of general theoretical interest to SLA research and also by a desire to improve the general efficacy of language teaching. Along the same line of research, formal instruction has enjoyed considerable popularity in SLA.

One of the first researchers who focused on the question of whether formal instruction leads to better L2 learning is Long (1983). Long contended that the difference made by SLA instruction is considerably evident. He claimed that instruction was advantageous: (a) for children as well as adults, (b) for both intermediate and advanced learners, (c) for acquisition irrespective of the means of measurement (integrative vs. discrete-point tests), and (d) in acquisition-rich as well as acquisition-poor environments.

By far, Norris and Ortega (2000) have carried out the most rigorous review of empirical studies, seeking to determine the overall effectiveness of L2 instruction as well as the relative effectiveness of different types of instruction. In a statistical meta-analysis of the literatures published from 1980 to 1998, they concluded that the answer to the overall research question is in affirmative—L2 instruction does make a difference and the difference is significant.

Keeping the above in mind and also by examining studies carried out by applied linguists (e.g. Doughty & Williams, 1998; Jalilifar & Charoosaee, 2002; Long, 1991; Norris & Ortega, 2000) on the effective form of grammar instruction, one will quickly spot some areas of neglect in examining the effects of the so-called concepts on L2 learners' metaphorical competence. Because little attention has been devoted to L2 learners' metaphorical competence, particularly in the Iranian context, this study aimed at assessing the (possible) relationship between the possible effect(s) that FonF(s) may exhibit on the ability to comprehend metaphorical expressions in a text.

4. Methodology

4.1 Participants

First, 30 intermediate L2 learners were selected and partook in the metaphor pretest and posttest with 80 multiple-choice items. Then, in line with the

results of the Oxford Placement Test (OPT), 60 intermediate female L2 learners from among 90 were randomly selected as the main participants of the study. Their age ranged between 17 and 30.

4.2 Materials

The materials were as follows: The first test was an 80 multiple-choice pretest, specifically designed to tap into the participants' metaphorical competence in terms of comprehension. The metaphorical expressions were selected from *Oxford Idioms and Phrasal Verbs* (2011, the intermediate level). Some items of the multiple-choice questions were driven from *Idioms Organiser* (Wright, 1999) and some from the examples given for the entries in *Longman Contemporary Dictionary* (2009). The metaphorical expressions in the posttest were selected from *English Idioms in Use* (2002, the intermediate level).

A set of 20 reading passages selected from the book *English Idioms in Use* (2002, the intermediate level) served the purpose of presenting the participants with the metaphorical expressions which were printed in bold in the original texts.

4.3 Procedure
4.3.1 Phase One

And, the first test was the OPT to assess the proficiency of the participants to make sure that they were all at the intermediate level. The test was a 100 multiple-choice grammar test of two parts.

Prior to the experimental phase, a second test (i.e. the pretest) whose content validity was confirmed by two English university professors and three English teachers was designed. The pretest included 80 multiple-choice items which were divided into two sections: Section One and Section Two. The first section required the participants to read some incomplete sentences from which a word or a phrase in question was missing and to complete the sentence by selecting the correct option. The second section required the participants to select the meaning of some metaphorical statements from the given options. The test was piloted on 30 intermediate L2 learners at Kish Institute of Science and Technology prior to this study, and the reliability of the test was computed to be .88.

And, the third test was a posttest which resembled the pretest in terms of number and form, but different in content. Having piloted the test on the same L2 learners two weeks after the pretest piloting, prior to this study, the reliability of the test was computed to be almost .86. Care was exercised to design the items in the posttest as similar and parallel to the items in the pretest.

4.3.2 Phase two

The main participants who took part in this study were 90 Persian intermediate L2 learners. Prior to launching the study, the participants were

tested for their homogeneity by applying the OPT. Having obtained the OPT results, it was decided to choose those participants whose score range fell one standard deviation above and below the mean (i.e. mean ±1). Therefore, 60 L2 learners were selected to serve as the participants. Then, they were randomly assigned to three groups: two experimental groups and one control group (20 learners each). Also, prior to the treatment phase, the three groups were given a pretest in order to assess their performance on the metaphor-loaded expressions and to evaluate their knowledge of metaphorical expressions.

As for the instruction and treatment of metaphors in this study, the two experimental groups separately received a 20-session instruction. However, two different modes of instructing the metaphorical expressions were employed. The first group received 20 reading passages from which the L2 forms (i.e. metaphorical expressions in this particular form) were selected to be taught through FonFs, that is, the participants were provided with metalinguistic explanation, that is, either a piece of etymological information, as imparted from the teacher, was provided to them or an attempt was made to get the participants to find the Persian equivalents of the expressions in question. Also, the participants were initially given some idea of what conceptual metaphors are, and how it is possible to generate so many metaphors out of such conceptual metaphors. To give some idea of what it could mean for a concept to be metaphorical and for such a concept to structure an everyday activity, the concept of TIME and the conceptual metaphor TIME IS MONEY were given to the participants as examples. This metaphor is reflected in the English language by a wide variety of expressions (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980):

<div align="center">

TIME IS MONEY METAPHOR
You are *wasting* my time.
This gadget will *save* you hours.
I don't *have* the time to *give* you.
You don't *use* your time *profitably*.
I've *invested* a lot of time in her.
You need to *budget* your time.

</div>

The above was an introduction given to the participants prior to exposing them to the conceptual metaphors and the metaphorical expressions of the English language. They seemed to have a better grasp of the metaphorical expressions after they had been exposed to the conceptual metaphors of the English language in this manner.

The second experimental group, on the other hand, received the same text with the same metaphorical expressions, but the FonF instruction was utilized, that is, the participants were not provided with any explanation as to the meaning or form of the metaphorical expressions in question. The

participants' attention was drawn to the holistic meaning of the texts, that is, they were requested to read the texts and discuss what they comprehended from the passages.

The participants in the control group were not provided with any particular kinds of instruction concerning the metaphorical expressions in question. However, they just went through their usual treatment concerning the metaphorical expressions provided to them according to the materials covered in the classroom.

Having completed the treatment phase of the study, the researcher set out to gauge the participants' acquisition of the metaphorical expressions in question. For this purpose, two weeks after the end of the treatment period to make sure that a short time- interval would not jeopardize the interpretations of the results after being analyzed, the posttest was administered to all the three groups.

4.4 Data analysis
4.4.1 Phase one (results of the piloted pretest and posttest)
As depicted in Table 1, the Cronbach's alpha value for the pretest metaphor on 29 cases (because one was excluded) was 0.889, suggesting an acceptable internal-consistency estimate for the test. Also, the internal consistency of the metaphor posttest was estimated to be almost 0.86 on a sample of 30 participants:

Table 1. Reliability statistics for the pretest and posttest

Tests	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
Pretest	.889	.889	80
Posttest	.856	.854	80

4.4.2 Phase two
4.4.2.1 Results of the placement test
Ninety intermediate L2 learners were given the OPT ($M = 50.70$, $SD = 20.526$), whose purpose was to select homogeneous participants and to ensure their proficiency level. The results were subjected to statistical analysis, using Kolmogorov-Smirnov which investigated the normality of the participants in terms of proficiency. The normality of the OPT scores was investigated by the significance value of Kolmogorov-Smirnov. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov values for both scores were not significant at 0.05 level, $p<0.05$. Therefore, the normality of distribution for all the OPT scores was confirmed. The results of the OPT are presented in Table 2:

Table 2. Tests of normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Total = 100	.066	90	.200[*]	.971	90	.045

a. Lillie for significance correction
*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

4.4.2.2 Results of the development of metaphorical competence

In order to see whether the three groups were significantly different in the pretests, a three-way ANOVA was conducted on the metaphor scores obtained from the control and the two experimental groups. It was important to find out that the higher mean score of the FonFs groups, compared with the other two groups, had no effect on the results in the later stages of data analysis. The results of Levene's test of equality of variance and ANOVA are reported in Tables 3 and 4:

Table 3. Tests of equality of variance

Test	F	df1	df2	Sig.
Levene's	.404	2	57	.670

Table 4. Three-way ANOVA for the three groups

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	148.63	2	74.317	1.128	.331
Within Groups	375.55	57	65.88		
Total	3904.18	59			

As Table 4 displays, the F value did not reach statistical significance (Sig. = 0.331). Therefore, the groups were not significantly different before the treatments were carried out, and it was safe to probe the research questions of this study.

Table 5. Analysis of covariance (for the treatment effect on posttest metaphor scores)

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	5058.75[a]	3	1686.251	101.54	.000	.854
Intercept	626.722	1	626.722	37.739	.000	.403
Pretest	2078.119	1	2078.119	125.137	.000	.691
Group	1994.232	2	997.116	60.043	.000	.682
Error	929.981	56	16.607			
Total	20394.000	60				
Corrected Total	5988.733	59				

a. *R* Squared = .845 (Adjusted *R* Squared = .736)

The results in Table 5 reveal that, first, the ANCOVA was significant, F(2, 56) = 101.5 *p < .05, supporting the above results for the appropriate use of ANCOVA. Second, there was a strong linear relationship between the pretest and the posttest scores because the *p* value of the pretest scores in Table 5 was found to be significant, F(2, 58) = 125.13 *p<.05. This is acceptable because ANCOVA assumes that the relationship between the dependent variable and each of covariates is linear. More importantly, the treatments of the study had a significant effect on the participants' posttest metaphor scores F(2, 58) = 37.73, *p<.05. The effect size was found to be .69, which was large. This effect size shows how of the variance in the dependent variable (i.e. the posttest scores) can be explained by independent variable. Thus, the treatments had an effect.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

Several studies have found that formal instruction can demonstrate desired levels of L2 proficiency (Long, 1983; Norris & Ortega, 2000). The basic question in SLA has been to what extent, and in what way, L2 learners' attention should be directed to certain L2 forms. Previous research on formal instruction (Doughty & Williams, 1998; Kao, 2001; Laufer, 2005; Long, 1991) suggests that formal instruction (i.e. FonF and FonFs) improves L2 learners' learning of linguistic forms. Moreover, Long (1983) contended that "there is considerable evidence to indicate that SLA instruction does make a difference" (p. 374).

Also, in the last two decades, an increasing well-established line of work has underscored the concept of metaphor (Black, 1962; Danesi, 1994; Johnson, 1987; Kövecses, 2002; Lakoff, 1987; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Littlemore, 2001). A number of L2 researchers have engrossed in the inquiry in metaphorical language. Mostly accentuating functional communicative competence, Danesi (1992, 1995) and Johnson and Rosano (1993) were the salient researchers claiming that metaphorical expressions should not be

overlooked by L2 curriculum any more. Therefore, nowadays, a budding matter in SLA has underlined L2 learners' capacity to express themselves in an L2 by using appropriate metaphorical language (Danesi, 1994).

The results obtained from the present study support explicit instruction of metaphorical competence and the following conclusions can be drawn, though further studies are needed to substantiate the results from this study: Firstly, the question of whether formal L2 instruction makes a difference was answered in affirmative in this study because the results showed that both forms of instruction were conducive to learning. Such results are consistent with a large body of research aimed at suggesting that formal instruction is advantageous (e.g. Long, 1983; Norris & Ortega, 2000).

In line with the above conclusion is the argument that meaning-focused instruction alone is not sufficient for learning a language (Swain, 2001). An overreliance on the naturalistic and communicative methods of L2 learning can potentially play havoc to the state of affairs in SLA instruction, as it has apparently done. The bitter consequence is to have L2 learners who are extremely fluent, but who fall short of being accurate. The ideal situation is to strike a balance between fluency and accuracy, so that neither of the two is sacrificed at the expense of the other.

The third conclusion is derived from the fact that it is possible to boost L2 learners' metaphorical competence if they are exposed to metaphorical language through formal instruction, especially the FonFs instruction. The main reason why L2 learners suffer from a lack of metaphorical competence is, as Danesi (2003) has stated, that at the present time there seems to be very little in L2 methodology that takes metaphorical competence into account. However, it is inferred that taking metaphorical competence into account and incorporating metaphorical language in L2 teaching make it possible to foster this crucial aspect of language proficiency in L2 learners.

Those in charge of curriculum management in L2 environments should take upon themselves to consider more courses including metaphorical expressions in textbooks for both language schools and academic schedule in general. This way, both L2 teachers and learners as well as materials designers will definitely devote more time to solidify the irreplaceable trace of this stealthy vanishing aspect of the L2.

Correspondingly, L2 materials developers are well advised to take these considerations into account. It would certainly not go amiss if they drew L2 learners' attention to L2 forms through highlighting, underlining, and italicizing. This way, they would provide ground for implicit instruction to come about.

In L2 classes, it is important to put metaphorical language on full alert to abandon assigning a marginal role to them. In L2 learning situations, metaphorical expressions should not be neglected; on the contrary, they should be taught explicitly in texts, and language instruction and research should be oriented toward this goal. Thus, the results of this study point to *www.SID.ir*

the fact that it is conceivable to focus on metaphorical language in L2 classes, and by doing so, to help L2 learners to have a good command of such language, which is characteristic of native speakers of the English language. In other words, the findings help plainly indicate that L2 learners could achieve an acceptable level of language proficiency in an L2 as far as metaphorical language in the L2 is concerned, in terms of comprehension of such language that may lead to production as well.

As a result, the following pedagogical suggestions can be glared for the teaching of metaphors. If L2 instructors and researchers hope to make a substantial contribution into the domain of metaphorical competence, they are urgently requested to cease treating metaphorical expressions as other lexical items which can be learnt by L2 learners on their own. They have to come to the realization that the aim in L2 teaching is not merely to produce fluent and unhesitant speakers. It should be made clear-cut to every teacher in the field that the aim of L2 instruction is threefold: L2 learners are expected to gain mastery of accuracy and complexity in addition to fluency.

In order to compensate for the shortage of an emphasis on accuracy and complexity in SLA, a number of novel concepts have made their way into the SLA literature, among which FonF(s) stand out (Long 1994). Teaching practitioners could conceivably incorporate the formal instruction models into their classrooms so that getting involved in the act of communication does not give rise to losing sight of the other important aspects of L2 teaching and learning.

Hopefully, the findings of the present study will encourage L2 teachers to pay closer and more consummate attention to the concepts of noticing and FonF(s). Considering the beneficial impact drawing L2 learners' attention to certain L2 forms on L2 learning, L2 teachers are expected to invest more in heightening L2 learners' awareness of relevant input. Such awareness can be achieved through both kinds of formal instruction (i.e., FonF and FonFs). However, this study gave us an idea that explicitly drawing L2 learners' attention to the forms (i.e., FonFs) in question can be more effective.

To encapsulate, the results of this study will hopefully help L2 instructors and researchers follow better ways of approaching metaphorical expressions. Also, the findings may bear a part in saving metaphorical language from the danger of extinction in L2 curricula by exploring their comprehension process through the revelation of their relationship with formal instruction models.

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