

## The Effect of Form-Focused Versus Meaning-Focused Instruction on the Development of Adjective-Noun Collocations among Iranian EFL Learners

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**Abstract:** In this paper, the effects of form-focused versus meaning focus instruction on the development of adjective-noun collocations among Iranian EFL learners are investigated. This research took place in the academic year of 2012-2013. Fifty five intermediate learners were divided into two groups, during a four- week treatment; the two groups were provided with two different types of instruction. They were randomly selected with form-focus instruction (Dictogloss task) (N: 26) and the other group with meaning-focused instruction (discussion task) (N: 31). The results of pre-test, post-test and the delayed post-test were analyzed using the paired samples t-test to find out the impact of form- and meaning-focused instruction on the development of adjective+noun collocations on the performance of the subjects. The data were analyzed using SPSS software to compare the means of the groups involved. The results revealed, learners' Collocational knowledge improved as a result of the treatments provided in both groups. As the comparison between the results of the pre-test, post-test and delayed post-test showed, learners in the both groups as FFI and MFI groups significantly improved their Collocational knowledge on post test and delayed post-test. As a conclusion, it can be generalized that both types of instruction can promote the learners awareness of collocation specifically Adjective-Noun ones.

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**Keywords:** Form- focused instruction, meaning-focused instruction, Collocations

### I. Introduction

In the past three decades, researchers have been seeking to design activities which encourage learners to pay attention to formal aspects of language during meaning-focused activities. Such an interest in form-focused instruction was initiated by research findings that exposure to input alone may not guarantee learners' success in second language L2 acquisition specially with regards to the accuracy of certain grammatical features in learners' speech.

Form-focused instruction refers to "any pedagogical effort which is used to draw learners' attention to language form either implicitly or explicitly". Lyster (1988, 1991) proposed focus on form instruction in which linguistic features are integrated into meaningful activities that require learners to communicate, while eliciting their attention to some linguistic features in input. According to Long and Robinson (1998) focus on form "often consists of an occasional shift of attention to linguistic code features—by the teachers and/or one or more students—triggered by perceived problems with comprehension or production". There are different ways of implementing a focus on form instruction. This can range from providing learners with implicit and explicit corrective feedback for their errors during

communication (reactive focus on form) to manipulating preselected linguistic features in input to make them more salient and noticeable to learners (proactive or preplanned focus on form).

In the current study, we are concerned with the effect of form- versus meaning-focused instruction on the development of adjective+noun collocations that are related to corpus-based studies on formulaicity; it has become clear that the use of formulaic language by second language learners needs to be addressed in language instruction. Formulaic language is an area of linguistic study dealing with larger sequences of language, formulae, idioms, proverbs, collocations and other phrases that are memorized and stored as whole units in the mental lexicon.

According to Grim (2002, p.9), a formulaic sequence is 'a sequence, continuous or discontinuous, of words or other elements, which is, or appears to be, prefabricated, that is, stored and retrieved whole from memory at the time of use, rather than being subject to generation or analysis by the language grammar'. It is an oft-cited definition that highlights the most crucial aspects of the phenomenon.

One specific type of formulaic sequence is collocation. Collocations are word partnerships that are defined differently depending on which

perspective the researcher takes. In general, as Barfield and Gyllstad (2009) point out, there are two distinct approaches to collocations: the frequency-based tradition and the phraseological tradition. In the frequency-based tradition, scholars have concentrated on frequency and they have based their findings on statistical analyses of word co-occurrences (e.g. Sinclair, 1991). In the phraseological tradition, on the other hand, Collocational analysis relies on syntactic and semantic investigations of lexical co-occurrence and inspirations for it are drawn mainly from European phraseology (e.g. Howarth, 1998; Nesselhauf, 2005).

As far as second language learners' Collocational competence is concerned, research (e.g. Granger, 1998) indicates that non-native speakers of English tend to overuse specific types of lexical items which help ensure communicative success. Hasselgren (1994) has coined the term 'lexical teddy bears' while referring to such items. Also Bahns and Eldaw (1993) focused on advanced learners' command of lexical patterns (adjective-noun collocations such as 'strong tea'). On the basis of their results from a written translation task and a cloze test, the authors concluded that students' knowledge of collocation did not develop equally with their general vocabulary knowledge.

As emphasized by Schmitt (2010), collocations and other formulaic sequences help develop fluency in language and are processed faster than novel combinations (Sivanova-Chanturia, Conklin & Schmitt, 2011). Naturally it is impossible for second language learners to learn all collocations that native speakers use. Yet, as Boers et al. (2006) have shown, the efficient use of formulaic sequences contributes to proficiency in a second language and therefore the promotion of multi-word units in the language classroom should become an important aspect of formal instruction.

Several researches have explored EFL learners' knowledge of collocations (Bahns & Eldaw, 1993; Shei & Pain, 2000; Koya, 2005; Shehata, 2008). Many of them have reported insufficient collocation knowledge among EFL learners and confirmed that collocations create a challenge to language learners in EFL settings. Learners typically find it difficult to encounter collocations in EFL settings, since they are more accustomed to learning individual words that form collocations, and they are less frequently exposed to those words in the form of collocations (Farghal & Obiedant, 1995). It is obvious that learners need collocation both for language production and comprehension (McIntosh et al. 2009), but their collocation proficiency is limited and they face problem producing and comprehending them (Biskup, 1992; Farghal & Obiedat, 1995; Zareie & Koosha,

2002; Koosha & Jafarpour, 2006; Shokouhi & Mirsalari, 2010).

It seems that it is difficult for EFL learners to cope with collocations effectively if collocations are not focused on and practiced. As EFL teachers, we all frequently observe students collocation errors. Students make errors such as speak a story, eat water, do a mistake (Boonyasaquan, 2006); so as a learner and a teacher of English in an EFL environment (Iran), the researcher has noticed that collocations do not receive much attention from teachers in the classroom.

Sadeghi, K. (2009) suggests that a significant part of Iranian EFL learners' problems with producing the language, especially at lower levels of proficiency, can be traced back to the areas where there is a difference between source- and target-language word partners. Even though having learned and memorized a large vocabulary, Iranian EFL learners encounter difficulties in properly combining words in speech or writing. It is argued that the problem for advanced learners is not so much with encountering vast numbers of new words as with working with already half-known words and exploring their Collocational fields (Hill, 1999). Another common problem among Iranian EFL learners is that they cannot construct a good and natural speech and writing, even though they possess good grammatical competence. They can get high grades in grammar tests, but regrettably their writing is full of wrong combinations of words. Furthermore, quite a few surveys have revealed that advanced EFL learners' English collocation competence is significantly inferior to that of native speakers.

In school text books and student books used in language institutes, in Iran, no special attention is paid to collocation learning. Since collocation learning and teaching are very important and they occupy a noticeable part of language learning and proficiency, this study is conducted to give the opportunity to second language teachers and learners to be able to present and learn collocations better as an important language skill. In this study, the main aim can be stated in this way: to find out whether form- versus meaning-focused instruction have any effect on the development of learners' collocations. The present study is an attempt at answering a question that pertains to institution learners' performance on achievement test of collocation. The objective of the investigation can be expressed in the following research questions:

**1:** Is there any significant difference between form- and meaning-focused instructions on the development of adjective+noun collocations?

2: Is there any significant difference between retention and recall in form-focused instruction on the development of adjective+noun collocations?

3: Is there any significant difference between retention and recall in meaning-focused instruction on the development of adjective+noun collocations?

## II. Method

### A: Participants

The participants in this study were 60 male and female learning English (aged 15-19) at Simin Language Learning Center. They studied Touchstone4 by Michael McCarthy, Jeanne McCarten and Helen Sandiford (just first four chapters) which is suitable for Intermediate level during 14 sessions.

Afterwards, they were divided into two groups of 30, and 30 participants. Two groups were chosen as the experimental groups. Therefore, sixty students were taught under two different materials; each class randomly assigned to one material: the first group got form-focused instruction (N=30), and the second group got the meaning-focused instruction (N= 30).

### B: Instruments

Five different instruments were used in the present study: pre-test, immediate post- test, delayed post-test, structure and vocabulary in the form of multiple choice questions. First, the participants' general proficiency was assessed using Touchstone4 by Michael McCarthy, Jeanne McCarten and Helen Sandiford to ensure the homogeneity of the groups at the very beginning of the course. In all, it was 40 items and the time allotted was 35 minutes.. It consisted of two sections: structure and vocabulary in the form of multiple choice questions. There were, in all, 40items and the time allotted was 40minutes.

Second, self-designed achievement test of collocation was designed by the researcher to measure the gain scores of the learners in collocation as both pre-test and post-test and one week later took a delayed post test. It consisted of 30 multiple choice questions and the time allotted was 30 minutes. The reliability of all tests was estimated by Cranach's Alpha which is ( $r = 0.796$ ). Content validity of test, also, was substantiated. To ensure the content validity of the collocation test, the researcher asked at least ten teachers in order to check the adequacy of this test.

#### B.1. Collocational test

The test is designed to assess Collocational knowledge of non-English learners at Simin Institution in Iran and find out the effectiveness of form- and meaning-focused instruction on the development of adjective+noun collocations. It is accomplished by 60 non English learners at Simin Institution. The test includes 30 Adjective-noun Collocational items that includes multiple choice questions in which students

are required to choose the most appropriate answer from 4 choices given.

### C: Procedure

Over the course of 14 teaching sessions, the learners were exposed to their course materials including Reading comprehension (touchstone 4); the first four chapters of it were studied. After administrating the test from touchstone4 by Michael McCarthy, Jeanne McCarten and Helen Sandiford and teacher-made collocation test (Essential idioms in English), learners were divided into two groups: Two experimental groups: Form-Focused Instruction (Dictogloss), Meaning-Focused Instruction (Discussion).

In FFI group, (N-30), the teacher introduced the topic by asking indirect or direct questions about the text and showing related pictures in order to awaken their background knowledge. Then, students were asked to read a text paragraph by paragraph. The learners had no dictionary for unknown vocabularies. However, when learners wanted to ask the meanings of a word, the researcher would provide the necessary meaning of a word. When reading had been completed, the teacher went over the students and addressed any questions or comments from the learners.

After completing the text, they received form-focused instruction, Dictogloss. Firstly, the teacher modeled the steps of the process with students prior to asking them to co-construct a Dictogloss on their own. In this exercise, teachers read a short text twice and at a normal speed to students. The students listened very carefully and wrote down as much information as they could as they listen. When the reading had been finished, the students divided into small groups of three and were asked to use their notes in order to reconstruct the text as closely as possible to the original version. At last, they were asked to compare and analyze the different versions they had produced.

In the second experimental group, MFI (N-30), the first part of this treatment is similar to the FFI group. Firstly, the teacher talked about the topic in order to awaken learners' background knowledge. Then, the teacher asked students to read a text paragraph by paragraph. Learners stated the main idea of each paragraph, and the teacher answered any questions or comments about words' meaning from the learners. Upon the completion of the text, learners received communicative instruction as pair or group discussion exercise. The teacher gave discussion topics based on the text. First, learners worked in pairs, and discuss the topic. Following pair work, the entire groups discussed the topics in class. On the last session in all two classes, the teacher-made collocation test was administered as the posttest of the learners'

achievement in collocations and after that one week later was administered a delayed post-test.

### III. Results

Because as Aghajani et al. (2013) mention: the t-test is likely the most widely used statistical test for the comparison of two means [2]. The results of pre-test, post-test and the delayed post-test were analyzed using the paired samples t-test to find out the impact of form- and meaning-focused instruction on the development of adjective+noun collocations on the performance of the participants. In order to find out the effect of two kinds of instruction on the test performance of the participants, it used again paired samples t-test for differences between retention and recall in form- and meaning-focused instruction.

The first set of analyses included the frequency analysis of the subjects' test and performance. According to the results of students' scores in proficiency test, mean, minimum, maximum and mode explained in Table 1 in the appendix (Table 1).

In attention to data's of Table 2, scores means of students, mode (frequency of score 20 is more), minimum and maximum are 20.8167, 20, 10 and 35 respectively.

#### *1. Is there any significant difference between form- and meaning-focused instructions on the development of adjective+noun collocations?*

Here researcher must test two variables on each element separately until researcher discovers this subject that is there any difference between two variables in distinct elements or not? For example students in the post-test (contain both variables FFI and MFI) got the same score or not?

For testing this hypothesis, researcher used Paired Samples T-Test that this test compared two variables relate to one society. Reject and claim Hypothesis (Table 2).

**Table 1: frequency of students in proficiency test**

Score	Frequency	Valid Percent
10	2	3.3
12	3	5
13	1	1.7
14	1	1.7
15	7	11.7
16	7	11.7
17	3	5
18	3	5
19	3	5
20	8	13.3
23	1	1.7
25	4	6.7
26	3	5
28	3	5
29	2	3.3
30	3	5
31	4	6.7
35	2	3.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Mean</b>	<b>20.8167</b>	
<b>Mode</b>	<b>20</b>	
<b>Minimum</b>	<b>10</b>	
<b>Maximum</b>	<b>35</b>	

**Table 2: statistical analysis of two variables in pre-test**

Paired Samples Statistics			
	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Per-test in FFI	13.1333	30	3.89282
Per-Test in MFI	13.4000	30	3.28634

In attention to Table 3 and 4, amount of statistics of T is equaled by -0.273 and degree of freedom and Sig are 29 and 0.787 respectively that is higher than 5% of Null hypothesis that is acceptable. In other words, there isn't any significant difference between the mean of FFI group scores and MFI group scores in the fault level of 5%.

**Table 3: statistical analysis of t in pre-test**

Paired Samples Test			
	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Per -test in FFI & MFI	-0.273	29	0.787

**Table 4: statistical analysis of two variables in post-test**

Paired Samples Statistics			
	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Post-test in FFI	17.8000	30	4.19688
Post-Test in MFI	16.3333	30	4.21273

In attention to Table 5 and 6, amount of statistics of T is equaled by 1.256 and degree of freedom and Sig are 29 and 0.219 respectively that is higher than 5% of Null hypothesis that is acceptable. In other words, there isn't any significant difference between the mean of FFI group scores and MFI group scores in the fault level of 5%.

**Table 5: statistical analysis of t in post-test**

Paired Samples Test			
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Post -test in FFI & MFI	1.256	29	0.219

**Table 6: statistical analysis of two variables in delayed post-test**

Paired Samples Statistics			
	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Delayed Post- test in FFI	18.000	30	4.16885
Delayed Post-Test in MFI	16.6000	30	4.38335

In attention to Table 7 and 8, amount of statistics of T is equaled by 1.226 and degree of freedom and Sig are 29 and 0.230 respectively that is higher than 5% of Null hypothesis that is acceptable. In other words, there isn't any significant difference between the mean of FFI group scores and MFI group scores in the fault level of 5%.

**Table 7: statistical analysis of t in delayed post-test**

Paired Samples Test			
	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Delayed Post -test in FFI & MFI	1.226	29	0.230

**Table 8: statistical analysis of two variables in retention test**

Paired Samples Statistics			
	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Retention Post- test in FFI	12.2667	30	2.79079
Retention Post-Test in MFI	12.0667	30	2.30342

In attention to Table 9 and 10, amount of statistics of T is equaled by 0.436 and degree of freedom and Sig are 29 and 0.666 respectively that is higher than 5% of Null hypothesis that is acceptable. In other words, there isn't any significant difference between the mean of FFI group scores and MFI group scores in the fault level of 5%.

**Table 9: statistical analysis of t in in retention test**

Paired Samples T-Test			
	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Retention -test in FFI & MFI	0.436	29	0.666

**Table 10: statistical analysis of two variables in recall test**

Paired Samples Statistics			
	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Recall Post- test in FFI	12.3000	30	2.79079
Recall Post-Test in MFI	11.8333	30	2.30342

In attention to Table 11, amount of statistics of T is equaled by 1.281 and degree of freedom and Sig are 29 and 0.210 respectively that is higher than 5% of Null hypothesis that is acceptable. In other words, there isn't any significant difference between the mean of FFI group scores and MFI group scores in the fault level of 5%.

**Table 11: statistical analysis of t in recall test**

Paired Samples Test			
	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Recall -test in FFI & MFI	1.281	29	0.210

**2: Is there any significant difference between retention and recall in form-focused instruction on the development of adjective+noun collocations?**

Table 12 shows statistical analysis relates to FFI variable in retention and recall test.

**Table 12: statistical analysis of FFI variable in retention and recall test**

Paired Samples Statistics			
	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Retention test in FFI	12.2667	30	2.79079
Recall Test in FFI	12.3000	30	2.30666

In attention to Table 13, amount of statistics of T is equaled by -0.112 and degree of freedom and Sig are 29 and 0.912 respectively that is higher than 5% of Null hypothesis that is acceptable. In other words, there isn't any significant difference between the mean of FFI group scores and MFI group scores in the fault level of 5%.

**Table 13: statistical analysis of t in retention and recall test of FFI variable**

Paired Samples Test			
	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Retention test in FFI & Recall test in FFI	-0.112	29	0.912

**3: Is there any significant difference between retention and recall in meaning-focused instruction on the development of adjective+noun collocations?**

Table 14 shows statistical analysis relates to MFI variable in retention and recall test.

**Table 14: statistical analysis of MFI variable in retention and recall test**

Paired Samples Statistics			
	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Retention test in MFI	12.0667	30	0.42055
Recall Test in MFI	11.8333	30	0.43174

In attention to Table 15 in the Appendix, amount of statistics of T is equaled by -0.596 and degree of freedom and Sig are 29 and 0.556 respectively that is higher than 5% of. In other words, in answering the third question, there isn't any significant difference between the mean of FFI group scores and MFI group scores in the fault level of 5%.

**Table 15: statistical analysis of t in retention and recall test of MFI variable**

Paired Samples Test			
	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Retention test in MFI & Recall test in MFI	-0.112	29	0.912

#### IV. Discussion

The first research question aimed to investigate the development of collocations in two different types of instruction: form-focused instruction and meaning-focused instruction. Findings revealed that learners' Collocational knowledge improved as a result of the treatments provided in both groups. As the comparison between the results of the pre-test, post-test and delayed post-test showed, learners in the both groups as FFI and MFI groups significantly improved their Collocational knowledge on post test and delayed post-test. On the other hand, significantly they improved their Collocational knowledge on Test Two

and Test Three. This would suggest that the treatment enough to improve learners' knowledge of collocations. As mentioned before, vocabulary knowledge is a complex construct that needs to be measured at different levels of mastery. Results of this experiment confirm that this applies to Collocational knowledge as well. The statistical analysis showed that there were significant differences between the results obtained on the tests. This means that there are several aspects of Collocational competence and they need to be carefully operationalized if one wants to capture the complexity of second language learners' vocabulary. In two groups of learners, the scores on

Test One were lower than the scores on Test Two. Yet, even on Test One, which was the most difficult one, learners in the FFI group managed to increase their Collocational knowledge as their overall scores on the post-test were significantly higher than on the pre-test. Interestingly, the results of the MFI group on these tests were also significantly higher than on the pre-test. Nevertheless, the role of incidental learning in general should not be neglected. As Nation (2007) points out in his description of a four-strand vocabulary learning program, incidental learning can lead to substantial gains in knowledge, provided that learners are exposed to large quantities of language input (e.g. through an extensive reading program). More research is needed to establish the most optimal conditions in which form- and meaning-focused instruction will supplement each other in the process of teaching collocations.

With regard to the comparison of the effectiveness of the two types of instruction, findings showed that the Collocational knowledge of learners from the both groups were improved on three tests. These results indicate that there isn't any significant difference between form- and meaning-focused instruction in Collocational knowledge.

In the study described here, participants saw each target collocation at least four times throughout the experiment. It appears that reading texts in which target collocations are embedded without any enhancement does not seem to be sufficient to improve learners' knowledge of collocations. Perhaps the number of occurrences of the target collocations needs to be higher to find positive effects of incidental learning of collocations.

Moreover, since it is known that frequency plays an important role in vocabulary learning (Schmitt 2010), the frequency of collocations as whole combinations may be another factor worth considering. It is likely that the results would have been different with lower-frequency collocations. In addition, the study reported here was focused on adjective-noun collocations that were likely to be known by the participants. Different results could have been obtained for collocations formed out of different word classes that learners were not familiar with (e.g. adjective-adverb collocations). Finally, as far as FFI and MFI are concerned, the study confirms results found in previous research on individual words. For example, Hill and Laufer (2003) found that tasks focused on target vocabulary that followed reading resulted in more vocabulary learning than answering questions which required comprehension of that vocabulary. Also Mondria (2003) showed that post-reading activities targeting vocabulary had a positive impact on learners' lexical competence. The present

experiment indicates that FFI and MFI help acquire not only individual words but also collocations.

## V. Conclusion

This study investigated whether incorporating FFI (Dictogloss) into a discussion (pair/ group work) would make a significance difference in the development of collocations by comparison between reading comprehensions alone. The result revealed that the both groups scored significantly higher in post-test and delayed post-test. Results showed that in the both groups learners significantly improved their Collocational knowledge on the second and third administered tests. In the present study, the target collocations were embedded in reading texts in such a way that each participant saw them four times. Perhaps many more occurrences are needed to show improvement in Collocational knowledge. Because frequency in learning especially learning of vocabulary is effective. however, both groups had the same results nearly. It is clear from this study that background knowledge plays a key role in the reading process, but that this role is not as important as the role of instruction type. Anyway, the findings of the study have some implications for the validity of at least the following notions:

One of the great challenges for foreign language teachers has been the implementation of procedures that help learners process comprehensible input while at the same time giving them opportunities for language awareness. In other words, effective language teaching requires input processing and acquisition, which is combined with focus on form (Bourke, 2008). Language awareness has to do with the raising of learners' awareness of features of the TL. Hence, the teacher's role is no longer "all knowing one", but that of the "facilitator of leaning".

The second point is that the teachers should realize the value of collaborative work for learners' language learning. It gives them a strong sense of motivation and accomplishment. Speakers should engage in problem solving and knowledge building which is called collaborative dialogue (Swain, 2000, cited in Ellis, 2008). Learners can assist each other to perform the instruction which they do not handle by themselves. In other words, students tend to stick with the knowledge they co-constructed collaboratively. Such results strongly suggest that when students reflect consciously on the language they are producing, this may be a source of language learning.

Moreover, recent studies in second language pedagogy support the use of tasks which require learners to produce output collaboratively. Kowal and Swain (1994) and Swain and Lapkin (2001) argued for the use of collaborative tasks that students work in pairs or small groups. They claimed that through talk

in collaborative task, learners notice their linguistic problems. Therefore, learners engage in making meaning clearer by discussing language forms in their dialogue. Thus, Collaborative output tasks promote learners to interact with each other resulting in collaborative dialogue which has been shown to positively affect second language development (cited in Garcia Mayo, 2002). One of the main goals of Dictogloss is to create a situation where students take notice of the gap that exist between the current state of linguistic competence in their output, IL and the TL (Shak, 2006).

Swain (1999, p.145) observed that “Students gain insights into their own linguistic shortcomings and develop strategies for solving them by working through them with a partner.” This process which includes cognitive comparison tends to raise learners’ awareness of certain grammatical structures. In addition; it reformulates their hypotheses of the structures as they modify their output (cited in Shak, 2006).

The third point is that an instruction that elicits meta-talk from one group of learners may not do so from another group; this may be due to the level of learners’ proficiency, the age of the learner and so on. Moreover, Swain (1995) stated that three functions of output are noticing, hypothesis formulation and testing, and meta-talk or meta-linguistic (reflective) in second language learning. Firstly, noticing declares that a form used in input must be consciously noticed in order for it to be acquired. Noticing should be occurred during language production, while attempting to use the TL. Researchers have noted the importance of learners’ noticing the gap in their IL that is noticing the difference between what they want to say and what they are able to say. Therefore, learners are attempting to produce the second language and they consciously notice that there are holes in their knowledge. The second function is hypothesis formulation and testing, learners may use language production as a way of trying out new language forms and structures as they stretch their IL; they may use their output to test what works and what doesn’t.

So, learners try out something and then maintain or modify it on the basis of perceived success and feedback. The last function is Meta-talk, learners use language to reflect on language use. It’s a surfacing of language used in problem-solving; for cognitive purposes. Meta-linguistic (reflective) function involves largely spoken output being used to solve language problems in collaboration with others (cited in Nation, 2007).

Production of Meta-talk in the context of making meaning may deepen the students’ awareness of forms and rules and the relationship of those forms and rules to the meaning they’re trying to express. Common

classroom applications of this idea include the use of activities like the strip story and Dictogloss where learners work together to construct or reconstruct a text. These activities involve a lot of talk about language and this talk can contribute to language learning (Swain & Lapkin, 1998, cited in Nation, 2007).

Finally, familiarity with the task procedures is a key point in the accurate accomplishment of instruction. So, teacher modeling and role-playing of the activity is useful at the first sessions of instruction. Moreover, it is critical to provide students with feedback due to the fact that students tend to remember their incorrect solutions. Therefore, the teacher needs to be available during collaborative activities and attend to the accuracy of the final product. Thus, she/he is a facilitator of learning process. In other words, students tend to stick with the knowledge they had co-constructed collaboratively. Such results strongly suggest that when students reflect consciously on the language they are producing, this may be a source of language learning.

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