

Effects of Form-focused, Meaning-focused, and Forms-focused Instruction on Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners' Development of Collocations

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Abstract

The current study was an attempt to investigate the effect of performing Focus on Form (FoF) which was text reconstruction task, Focus on Meaning (FoM) which was discussion task, and Focus on Forms (FoFs) which was word list collocations task on the development of collocational knowledge among Iranian intermediate EFL learners, and to explore any significant difference on the achievement of the participants' collocational knowledge among three groups. In so doing, 107 female intermediate EFL learners were selected for this research. They all took the Nelson proficiency test and 90 students were randomly selected and divided into three groups of FoF, FoM, and FoFs. Before the treatment they were pretested and the results of the three groups did not have any significant difference, thus all of the learners were at the same level of knowledge. After the treatment, they were posttested and their scores in FoM group were considerably higher than the learner' scores in FoF and FoFs groups but the learners' scores in FoF and FoFs groups did not have any significant difference with each other. The findings of this study offer beneficial implications for EFL teachers, learners, and materials developers which are finally discussed.

Keywords: Focus on Form; Focus on Meaning; Focus on Forms; Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners; Collocation

Introduction

Poole (2005) stated that FoF instruction is a kind of teaching which emphasizes the importance of communicative language teaching like trustworthy communication, and also lays emphasis on irregular and evident study of L2 grammatical structures. Norris and Ortega (2001) argued that the target language instruction that focuses on form brings about substantial gain in the target language. Moreover, according to Spada and Lightbown (1993), FoF instruction within the context of communicative programs is much more effective in developing the target language learning than in the programs which are limited to sole, separate stress on accuracy or fluency.

The term 'form-focused instruction' is used to give an account of both approaches to teaching forms based on simulated syllabi, and also more communicative approaches, where consideration to form appears as a result of activities that are mainly meaning-focused (Long & Robinson, 1998). Loewen (2011) responded that instructed second language acquisition can be separated into FoM instruction and FoF instruction. FoM instructional approach can be greatly found in recent English Language classrooms, in techniques like Krashen and Terrell's Natural Approach, some content-based ESL instruction and immersion planned activities (Ellis, 1994).

Sheen (2002) argued that FoFs instruction "is equated with the traditional teaching of discrete points of grammar in separate lessons" (p.303). According to Ellis, Basturkmen, and Loewen (2002), it is a kind of instruction including a structure where the initial focus is on the

form that is being intended to. Teaching grammar in FoFs instruction is limited to instruction on segregated issues of grammar in privacy, with no clear FoM (Michael H Long, 1991).

Lewis and Conzett (2000) declared that learning words in combination helps L2 learners develop communicative competence much better than learning words in solitude. As a result, EFL teachers should attempt to express new words together with their common co-occurrences or collocates when teaching new vocabulary items (Lewis, 2000). Wray (2002) concluded that collocations are essential elements for learners to achieve a higher rank of competence in the procedure of L2 learning, however, they are correspondingly of some significance for learners with less determined goals, as they increase accuracy and also fluency. Despite the enhancing acknowledgment of collocation knowledge as a vital part of the second language proficiency, research on collocations has pointed out that collocations are an inherent difficulty for second language learners (Bahns & Eldaw, 1993; Howarth, 1998; Nesselhauf, 2003, 2005).

Review of Literature

As Long and Robinson (1998) reported, FoF as opposed to FoFs includes “an occasional shift of attention to linguistic code features- by the teacher and/or one or more learners - triggered by perceived problems with comprehension or production” (cited in Farrokhi, & Talabari, 2011, p. 23). Baleghizadeh (2010) inspected the character of FoF in an EFL communicative classroom in Iran. The research discovered that in 10 hours of FoM education, there were only 41 FoF occurrences (one in every 15 minutes), which decreased in comparison with a similar research presented in the literature. Also, the results of the research showed that there were very few examples of preemptive FoF in the observed educational environment. The research recommended that teacher training courses should have more function in informing apprentice teachers of the educational value of FoF.

The influence of output practice by way of text reconstruction on L2 production in both written and oral manners was checked out by Muranoi (2000). Muranoi recommended a focus-on-form instructional technique by instructed summarizing that concentrated on the function of pushed output in L2 learning. The educational treatment is called Focus on Form through Guided Summarizing (FFGS), in which L2 learners are commanded to recreate the story of a text they have understood through reading. Outcomes showed that (1) in the use of the perfect passive, FFGS increased EFL learner’s accuracy; FFGS carried out in both oral and written types had better influence than that performed in the written way only; and (3) FFGS was impressive only for those who were psycholinguistically prepared to learn the target form.

Song and Suh (2008) attempted to inspect the impacts of two kinds of output tasks (reconstruction tasks vs. picture-cued writing tasks) on discerning and acquiring of a non-output task (reading comprehension) in comparison to a grammatical feature, the English past counterfactual conditional. After a one-month treatment, a posttest, composed of identification and production tasks, was implemented to the students to check for their observing and acquiring of the past counterfactual conditional. In the sense of noticing, it was discovered that output tasks in fact made a difference and were able to assist greater perceiving of the target form compared to non-output tasks. Furthermore, the output groups performed the comparison group on the production task better, but no influence was discovered for output task type.

Brown (2007) argued that among some students, in spite of high rank of language awareness, particular inaccurate attributes could still be observed in their interlanguage. These inaccurate linguistic forms are regarded as fossilized forms which could be corrected, but not very simply. Although it was investigated that this sort of teaching did not work as it was prophesied, and an adequate instruction necessitates considering both communication and syntax,

in other words, both form and meaning is necessitated in an accurate and fluent communication. As a solution to this troublesome matter, FoF allows students to lengthened the amount of time from a FoM and perceive linguistic items in the input, by means of that, overpowering a potential impediment of purely FoM lessons in which linguistic forms may go disregarded (Loewen, 2003).

A group of scholars (e.g., Doughty & Varela, 1998; Ellis, 1994, 2002a, 2002b, 2003; Robinson, 2001) have mentioned that if the purpose of L2 learning is the progression of communicative competence, making learners able to use language for communicative objectives, then grammar and communication must be gathered. In Taiwan, Lu (2005) informed that a word-list group of 31 EFL 12th graders educating bilingual word lists meaningfully performed better than their reading counterparts, 33 high school students, learning the similar target words by reading articles in terms of vocabulary memorization, but both groups carried out similarly in overall reading comprehension. Supporting Lu's findings, Lin (2002) informed that studying word lists produced significantly more positive effects on Taiwanese vocational high school students' vocabulary retention with or without sample sentences. In addition, differences between these two kinds of word lists were non-consequential in the sense of vocabulary memorization and overall scores on a standardized reading proficiency test with and without sample sentences.

Sheen (2002) directed a comparative investigation for the last school year in an elementary school in Quebec. To carry out this research, two sixth grade classes were instructed, one of which was regarded as control group with the usual FoF education. The experimental group was instructed as usual except that the examiner was authorized to supply FoFs instruction for nearly one hour a week. Both groups accomplished very similar outcomes on pretest. After two months, they took a posttest in the form of oral interviews which were extensively the same as the pretest. The consequence of this research revealed that a FoFs approach assisted learners in the experimental group to make considerable development in the two targeted grammar areas, whereas the control group, which was instructed based on a FoF, continued presenting greatly improper forms, therefore permitting fossilization to continue to improve.

Saeidi, Zaferanieh and Shatery (2012) in their research on the influences of FoF, FoM, and FoFs on students' vocabulary acquiring in ESP context utilized three types of tasks, that is to say dictogloss task, word lists, and reading and discussion task. Their discoveries revealed that students in FoF group attained meaningfully higher scores than those in FoM and FoFs. Furthermore, students' scores in FoM group were meaningfully better than FoFs group. The scholars maintained that the very nature of the FoF tasks (dictogloss) which contains depth of processing hypothesis, discovery learning, pushed output, noticing hypothesis, awareness-raising, negotiation, collaboration, and motivation brought about such discoveries.

Hashemian (2013) examined the impressiveness of FoF and FoFs instructions on learning metaphorical language by Iranian intermediate learners of English. For this investigation, 60 participators were apportioned to three groups, two experimental groups and one control group. One of the experimental groups was exposed to clear teaching of metaphors involved in 20 reading passages. The second group was instructed the target metaphorical expressions by way of implicit teaching. Also the control group was experienced in the usual classroom education; they took similar pretest and posttest as both experimental groups did. The outcomes of this research showed that FoFs instructed group obtained better consequences on posttest. The outcomes appeared to demonstrate a positive correlation between FoFs and metaphorical ability. It could be declared that it is possible to improve L2 learners' metaphorical ability by way of FoFs teaching of metaphors.

The current research sought the following purposes. First, there was an attempt to examine the effect of FoF instruction (text reconstruction task) on collocation improvement knowledge of Iranian intermediate EFL learners. Second, the study aimed at determining the effect of FoM instruction (Discussion task) on collocation improvement knowledge of Iranian intermediate EFL learners. Third, this research tried to explore the effect of FoFs instruction (Word list collocations task) on collocation improvement knowledge of Iranian intermediate EFL learners. Finally, there was an effort to determine the difference in the effectiveness of Form-focused, Meaning-focused, and Forms-focused instruction as measured by participants' improvement in collocational knowledge in posttest. Therefore, to achieve the aims of the study, the following research questions were posed:

Q1. Does implementing Form-focused instruction (Text reconstruction task) have any significant effect on development of collocational knowledge among Iranian intermediate EFL learners?

Q2. Does implementing Meaning-focused instruction (Discussion task) lead to development of significantly large number of collocations among Iranian intermediate EFL learners?

Q3. Does performing Forms-focused instruction (Word list collocations task) have any significant effect on collocation improvement knowledge of Iranian intermediate EFL learners?

Q4. Is there any significant difference on the achievement of the participants' collocational knowledge in posttest among Form-focused group, Meaning-focused group, and Forms-focused group?

Methodology

To answer the research questions mentioned above, the following procedures were utilized:

Participants

The participants who took part in this study were 107 intermediate EFL learners of Rooyesh English language institute in Isfahan, Iran. They all shared Persian as their mother tongue. All the participants were female, and they ranged in age from 12 to 18. The study was conducted during the summer English courses of the language institute with the participants who were studying the Four Corners 2 book. Before starting the course, all the participants were informed that they were going to receive some tests concerning a number of collocations incorporated into their regular program and just volunteers took part in this study. In the first step, a proficiency test was conducted to ensure the participants' homogeneity in terms of language proficiency. Based on the results of the proficiency test which was Nelson English Test, 90 intermediate EFL learners were selected. The participants were randomly divided into three different groups with 30 members each and three different instructions were presented to them: FoF Instruction (Text reconstruction task), FoM Instruction (Discussion task), and FoFs Instruction (Word list collocations task). The first two groups were experimental groups, and the last group was control group.

Instrumentation

In this research the instruments which have been used were Nelson English test and the researcher-made pretest and posttest.

Nelson English Test

In this study, the participants' general proficiency was assessed using the standardized Nelson English Tests to ensure the homogeneity of the participants (see Appendix A). The section 200A of Nelson English Language Test with rational measures of validity and reliability was administered to determine the subjects' language proficiency level. The test consisted of 50

items within two sections: 14 cloze tests and 36 grammar points in the form of multiple-choice questions in order to test the grammatical points and knowledge of vocabulary of the participants. Students had to choose the correct answer which best completed the sentence. Participants had to complete the test within the time allotted that was 45 minutes.

Pretest and Posttest

In this research, a researcher-made test of collocations which was approved by experts in the field in order to validity verification, was developed and used as a pretest. It consisted of 30 multiple choice questions and the appropriate collocational phrases were chosen by the participants (see Appendix B). The time for answering the questions was 30 minutes. The posttest was developed with the same multiple choice questions as the pretest. However, the order of the questions and also multiple choice answers were changed (see Appendix C). Like the pretest, it had 30 multiple choice questions with collocational phrases and the time allotted was 30 minutes. To ensure the content validity of these test, the researcher asked three experienced English teachers in order to check the validity of them. All of them had suggestions based on which several items were modified.

Procedure

A pilot study was carried out in order to uncover any problems and inappropriate items were removed and modified before developing the pretest and posttest. In this study 10 students of similar English proficiency who did not participate in the experiment were asked to do the tests and underline any words whose meaning was not familiar. The results of this study revealed that these multiple choice questions could be performed in at least 25 minutes. The content validity of the tests was determined by three experienced English teachers.

This study required homogeneous learners with the same knowledge of English language. At first, the section 200A of Nelson English language test was used to assure that learners were in the same proficiency level. Indeed, 107 same level students participated in this test and 90 participants were randomly selected for this study. They were randomly divided into three groups of FoF (Text reconstruction task), FoM (Discussion task), and FoFs (Word list collocations task). The first two groups were experimental groups, and the last group was control group. Each group had 30 members.

Three days before the treatment, the learners were pretested on their knowledge of the lexical and grammatical collocations by the researcher-made collocation multiple choice test. For the first experimental group, which received the FoF instruction, a story which had been gotten from the stories of Linguapress website and was appropriate for intermediate level was provided by the teacher to be reconstructed (see Appendix 4). After that, the passage was divided into 5 pieces by the teacher. Then the students were paired up into 5 groups with 6 members by the teacher and each group had to work only on their own piece of text and interact with each other during the activity. The students performed the entire task together in 10 minutes. After they had read and understood their part, they summarized it first to their group members and then one of them reported it to the whole class. That volunteer must have used her own words as well as the collocation phrases she had read in the text. The volunteers of each group, one by one, reconstructed the whole text. Then the whole students of the group rewrote it by using the given texts which had collocation phrases and they had 10 minutes to do that, so it returned to its original sequence.

In the second experimental group, FoM, first, the teacher divided the students into 5 groups with 6 members. Then she took 5 pieces of papers and wrote some collocational phrases

on each of them. The collocational phrases on each piece of paper were associated with each other and they were about a particular topic (see Appendix 5). The teacher gave each group a picture related to their topic but the students did not have the topic. They should have guessed the topic and discussed the picture using the given collocational phrases in 5 minutes. With the participants' permission, their discussions were recorded using mobile phone.

In the control group, FoFs, the teacher discussed the topic of the text in order to activate learners' knowledge. Then, the teacher gave the students lists of new words along with their proper collocated words, and asked each of them to memorize the new collocational phrases (see Appendix 6). The students had 10 minutes to memorize them and after that the teacher asked them those collocational phrases one by one orally. With the participants' permission, their answers were recorded using mobile phone.

Finally, one day after the treatment, their knowledge was evaluated with the posttest. The researcher-made collocation multiple choice test was administered as the posttest of the learners' achievement in collocational knowledge.

Data Analysis

The data collected from the Nelson proficiency test were subjected to standard descriptive analysis and normality tests. After the normality tests of Nelson test were done, the pretest scores were analyzed using Kruskal-Wallis test in order to show the equality of the mean scores of Nelson test and also show the same proficiency level of the three groups of FoF, FoM, and FoFs. Then, the data collected from the pretests and posttests of the three groups were subjected to standard descriptive analysis and also the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for tests of normality. After that, the pretest scores were analyzed using Kruskal-Wallis test in order to show the equality of the level of the three groups in pretest. In the next step, the Wilcoxon Signed Ranks test was used in order to know that the mean scores of pretest and posttest are the same in each of the groups. After that, the Kruskal-Wallis test was used to show the equality of the mean scores of the posttests of the FoF, FoM, and FoFs groups. Finally, the Mann-Whitney test was used as a post-hoc test to show the results of comparing groups with each other and which instructional methods were produced significant results.

Results

The researchers analyzed the research questions based on the quantitative analysis of the data obtained through SPSS (version 22). In the quantitative analysis of the data, descriptive statistics and appropriate inferential statistical analyses were conducted to address the research questions and examine whether there was significant difference on the achievement of the participants' collocational knowledge in post-test among FoF group, FoM group, and FoFs group. In addition, how FoF, FoM, and FoFs instructions related to the collocation improvement knowledge of Iranian intermediate EFL learners.

Effect of FoF Instruction on Collocation Improvement Knowledge of the Learners

In this research question we want to know the sameness of the mean scores of pretest and posttest in FoF group. Thus, it is necessary to use Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test section non parametric statistics. The results of this test are represented in Table 1. The null hypothesis states that the mean scores of pretest and posttest are the same in FoF group and the alternative hypothesis states the difference.

Table1. *Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test for Mean Ranks and Statistics of FoF*

	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Negative Ranks	0 ^a	.00	.00
Positive Ranks	30 ^b	15.50	465.00
Ties	0 ^c		
Total	30		
Z	-4.806		
Sig.	.000		

a. Posttest < Pretest

b. Posttest > Pretest

c. Posttest = Pretest

There are 30 participants in FoF group who got the higher scores after the treatment in the posttest. The Z statistic is -4.806 with the Sig. of 0.000 and because it is less than 0.05 the null hypothesis is rejected and the mean scores of pretest and posttest have a considerable difference in FoF group. With due attention to the positive ranks 30, it is clear that the instruction is effective and FoF performance has a positive effect on development of the learners' collocational knowledge.

Figure 1 shows the graphical results of Table 1. The different Latin letters shows the considerable difference.

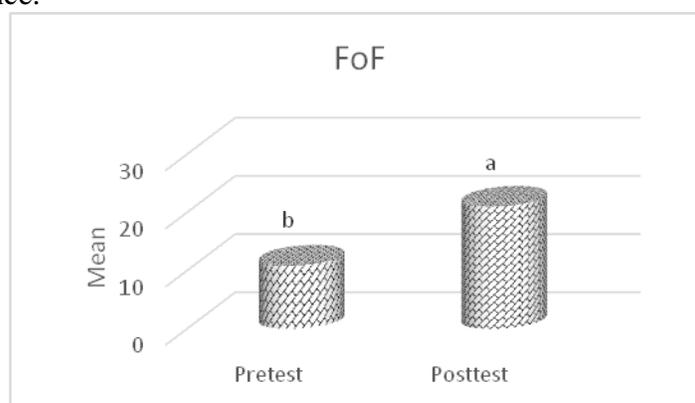


Figure 1. Pretest and Posttest Average of FoF Group

Effect of FoM Instruction on Collocation Improvement Knowledge of the Learners

In this research question we want to know that are the mean scores of pretest and posttest the same in FoM group. Thus, it is necessary to use Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test section non parametric statistics. The results of this test are represented in Table 2. The null hypothesis states that the mean scores of pretest and posttest are the same in FoM group and the alternative hypothesis states the difference.

Table2. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test for Mean Ranks and Statistics of FoM

	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Negative Ranks	0 ^a	.00	.00
Positive Ranks	30 ^b	15.50	465.00
Ties	0 ^c		
Total	30		
Z	-4.844		
Sig.	.000		

- a. Posttest < Pretest
- b. Posttest > Pretest
- c. Posttest = Pretest

There are 30 participants in FoM group who got the higher scores after the treatment in the posttest. The Z statistic is -4.844 with the Sig. of 0.000 and because it is less than 0.05 the null hypothesis is rejected and the mean scores of pretest and posttest have a considerable difference in FoM group. With due attention to the positive ranks 30, it is clear that the instruction is effective and FoM performance has a positive effect on development of the learners' collocational knowledge.

Figure 2 shows the graphical results of Table 2. The different Latin letters shows the considerable difference.

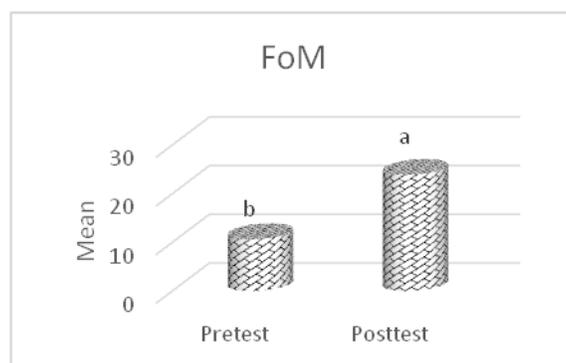


Figure 2. Pretest and Posttest Average of FoM Group

Effect of FoFs on Collocation Improvement Knowledge of the Learners

In this research question we want to know that are the mean scores of pretest and posttest the same in FoFs group. Thus, it is necessary to use Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test section non parametric statistics. The results of this test are represented in Table 3. The null hypothesis states that the mean scores of pretest and posttest are the same in FoFs group and the alternative hypothesis states the difference.

Table 3. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test for Mean Ranks and Statistics of FoFs

	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Negative Ranks	0 ^a	.00	.00
Positive Ranks	30 ^b	15.50	465.00
Ties	0 ^c		
Total	30		
Z	-4.801		
Sig.	.000		

- a. Posttest < Pretest
- b. Posttest > Pretest
- c. Posttest = Pretest

There are 30 participants in FoFs group who got the higher scores after the treatment in the posttest. The Z statistic is -4.801 with the Sig. of 0.000 and because it is less than 0.05 the null hypothesis is rejected and the mean scores of pretest and posttest have a considerable difference in FoFs group. With due attention to the positive ranks 30, it is clear that the

instruction is effective and FoFs performance has a positive effect on development of the learners' collocational knowledge. Figure 3 shows the graphical results of Table 3. The different Latin letters shows the considerable difference.

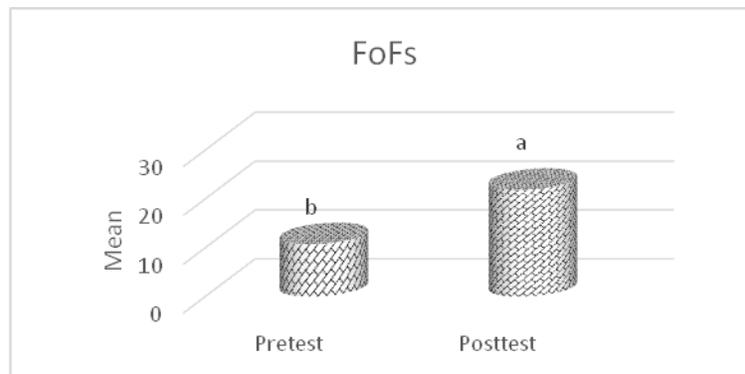


Figure 3. Pretest and Posttest Average of FoFs Group

The difference in the Effectiveness of Form-focused, Meaning-focused, and Forms-focused Instruction as Measured by Participants' Improvement in Collocational Knowledge in Posttest

In this question we consider the mean scores of the posttests of the FoF, FoM, and FoFs by the use of Kruskal-Wallis test section non parametric statistics. The results of this test are showed in Table 4. In this test, the null hypothesis shows the equality of the mean scores of the posttests of the three groups of FoF, FoM, and FoFs and the alternative hypothesis states the minimum difference between the two groups.

Table 4. Kruskal-Wallis Test for Mean Ranks and Statistics of Posttest

Group	N	Mean Rank
FoF	30	29.98
FoM	30	65.53
FoFs	30	40.98
Total	90	
Chi-Square		29.960
df		2
Asymp. Sig.		.000

As the data in Table 4 show, the average rank of the learners in FoF group is 29.98, the average rank of the learners in FoM group is 65.53, and the average rank of the learners in FoFs group is 40.98. The Chi-Square statistic amount is 29.96 with the df of 2 and the Asymp. Sig of 0.000 which is less than .05 and the null hypothesis will be rejected and the mean scores of the posttest in FoF, FoM, and FoFs groups have a considerable difference. In order to have more information the Mann-Whitney Test has used. Table 5 illustrates the results of comparing groups in a two by two way.

Table 5. Mann-Whitney Test for Mean Ranks and Statistics of Posttest

Group	N	Mean Rank	Sum Ranks	of Mean Rank	Sum Ranks	of Mean Rank	Sum Ranks	of
FoF	30	18.98	569.50	26.50	795.00	-	-	
FoM	30	42.02	1260.50	-	-	39.02	1170.50	
FoFs	30	-	-	34.50	1035.00	21.98	659.50	
Mann-Whitney U		104.500		330.000		194.500		
Z		-5.165		-1.814		-3.839		
Asymp. Sig.		.000		.070		.000		

Comparing FoF and FoM

The average rank of the FoF learners is 18.98 and the average rank of the FoM learners is 42.02. The Mann U Whitney statistics amount is 104.5 and the Z statistic is -5.165 with the Asymp. Sig. of 0.000 which is less than 0.05 thus, the posttest mean scores of FoF and FoM have a considerable difference with each other and with regarding the average ranks, FoM posttest average is more than FoF posttest average.

Comparing FoF and FoFs

The average rank of the FoF learners is 26.5 and the average rank of the FoFs learners is 34.5. The Mann U Whitney statistics amount is 330.0 and the Z statistics is -1.814 with the Asymp. Sig. of 0.07 which is more than 0.05 thus, the posttest mean scores of FoF and FoFs do not have a considerable difference with each other.

Comparing FoFs and FoM

The average rank of the FoFs learners is 21.98 and the average rank of the FoM learners is 39.02. The Mann U Whitney statistics amount is 194.5 and the Z statistics is -3.839 with the Asymp. Sig. of 0.000 which is less than 0.05 thus, the posttest mean scores of FoFs and FoM have a considerable difference with each other and with regarding the average ranks, FoM posttest average is more than FoFs posttest average. In conclusion, the posttest mean score of FoM group is more than two other groups.

The graphical results of Table 4 and Table 5 are represented in Figure 4. The different Latin letters explains the considerable difference and the same Latin letters states the absence of considerable difference.

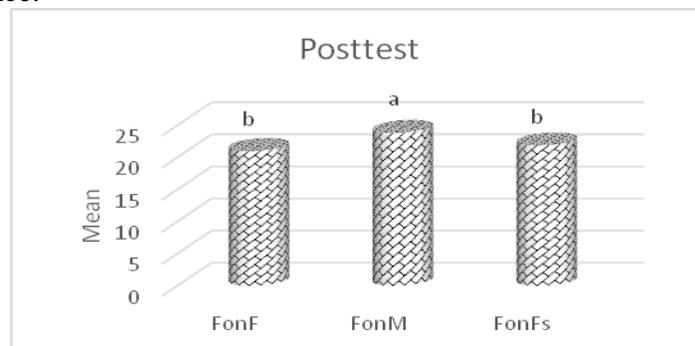


Figure 4. Posttest Average of FoF, FoM, and FoFs Groups

Discussion

The findings of Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test revealed that FoF instruction had a significant effect on collocation improvement knowledge of Iranian intermediate EFL learners. The discoveries of this research are in line with number of studies. For instance, Loewen (2003) declares that FoF enables learners to time-out from FoM to pay attention to linguistic items in the input. Such paying attention is essential for second language learning: remarking linguistic items, remarking the gap between exemplars of the target language and their own language output.

Moreover, Ellis (2003) acknowledges that in text reconstruction task the primary concentration is on meaning. Learners can select their own linguistic resources when recreating a text despite the fact that they can take advantage of their notes they wrote as they listened, and there is an obvious result which is production of the text. The prosperity of this task is determined regarding its propositional rather than linguistic content. “The focus comes from the seeding of the original text” (p. 156).

Besides, as Swain and Lapkin (1998) declare, creation of Meta-talk in the context of making meaning may deepen the students’ knowledge of forms and rules and the closeness of those forms and rules to the meaning they are trying to declare. Usual classroom applications of this impression contain the utilization of activities such as the strip story where learners work together in order to construct or reconstruct a text. These activities entangle a lot of speaking the language and this speaking can help to cause language learning (Swain & Lapkin, 1998).

The findings of the current research are also in line with Webb and Kagimoto s' (2010) research who referred to the matter of acquiring collocations by EFL learners. In their research, Japanese learners were separated into two groups that got a receptive treatment, in three glossed sentences they read verb-noun collocations together with their L1 translations, and a productive treatment in which the same glossed sentences were offered but the learners’ duty was to fill in the blanks with collocations. There was also a control group that accomplished only a pretest and a posttest. Findings revealed that both the productive group and the receptive group acquired considerably more than the control group, but there were no differences in the productivity between the two treatments. In any event, when Webb and Kagimoto separated their participants into two groups based on their proficiency in English, the outcomes became more complicated. At the higher proficiency level, learners who accomplished the productive cloze task performed significantly better than those who did the receptive reading task. From the other point of view, at the lower proficiency level, learners who accomplished the receptive reading task performed significantly better than those who did the productive cloze task. The researchers inferred that both the receptive reading task and the productive cloze task are impressive in the sense of enhancing EFL learners’ understanding of collocations but, simultaneously, they need more research into the impacts of different kinds of tasks on acquiring collocations.

The results of this study are also in line with a number of researches (e.g., Deveci, 2004; Jiang, 2009; Rezvani, 2007; Ying & Hendricks, 2004). All these confirm that EFL learners demonstrated a better accomplishment after getting collaborative and FoF tasks to increase their collocational consciousness. These outcomes are also consistent with Doughty and Varela s' (1998) research who found that using FoF tasks was effective in language learning. In any event, their study was identifying with learning English tense. Based on the results, it can be stated that FoF instruction had a statically considerable impact on collocation development knowledge of Iranian intermediate EFL learners.

The results of Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test disclosed that FoM instruction had a statically considerable impact on collocation development knowledge of Iranian intermediate EFL learners. The results of the present research are also consistent with some other studies. For example, as Fotos and Nassaji (2011) maintain, from a socio-cultural point of view, discussion provides

occasions for scaffolding. On the other hand, supportive conditions produced through social communication. Also, learners have opportunities to find out and self-correct their own errors during discussion. Paradowski (2011) reports that FoM operates as an acquisition facilitator, assisting the learners discern the feature under explanation in subsequent FoM in which can then become intake. Lotfi (2007) responds that some instances of social strategies are collaborative group learning in which learners learn and exercise the meaning of new words in a group and by having interaction with native speakers.

The outcomes of this research are in line with the studies which had been done by Kowal and Swain (1997), and also Swain and Lapkin (2001). They argue for the advantage of cooperative tasks that students practice in pairs or small groups. They assert that by way of talking in cooperative tasks, learners perceive their linguistic difficulties. Hence, learners engage in making meaning more obvious by negotiating language forms in their discussion. Therefore, Cooperative output tasks assist learners to communicate with each other resulting in cooperative discussion which has been demonstrated to positively affect second language progression (cited in Garcia Mayo, 2002).

With reference to the discoveries, it can be announced that FoM instruction had a significant effect on collocation improvement knowledge of Iranian intermediate EFL learners. The discoveries of Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test exposed that FoFs instruction had a statically significant effect on collocation improvement knowledge of Iranian intermediate EFL learners.

One of the first researchers who negotiated FoFs was Long (1991) who differentiated FoF, including a focus on form within meaning-oriented language function, and FoFs, in which linguistic forms are instructed in isolation as discrete points. According to Spada and Lightbown (2008), FoFs is the instruction “in which language features are taught according to a structural syllabus that specifies which features are to be taught and in which sequence” (p.185). Doughty and Williams (1998) contends that “focus on form and focus on forms are not polar opposite in a manner that form and meaning have been regarded. A focus on form entails a focus on the formal elements of the language; whereas focus on forms is limited to such a focus, and focus on meaning exclude it” (p.4). As Ellis et al. (2002) declare, FoFs teaching is investigated in a sequence of “presentation of a grammatical structure, its practice in controlled exercises, and the provision of opportunities for production-PPP” (p. 420).

Also, the findings of the current research confirm Long and Robinson’s (1998) claim that both FoFs and FoM instructions are worthy, and should complete rather than exclude each other. Besides, as Craik and Tulving's (1975) depth of processing hypothesis declares, the more perceptive energy a person spends when influencing a word and thinking about it, the more possibly it is that he/she will be able to utilize it afterwards (Segler, Pain, & Sorace, 2002). Moreover, Swan (2005) maintains persuasively that need of proactive syllabus design and of ‘traditional’ classroom drill, which is related to FoFs, may be incompetent for the systematic instructing of new language, particularly where time is restricted and out-of-class denouncement unavailable.

Based on the findings, it can be declared that FoFs instruction had a significant effect on collocation improvement knowledge of Iranian intermediate EFL learners.

The findings of Kruskal-Wallis Test and Mann-Whitney Test revealed that there were considerable differences on the achievement of the participants' collocational knowledge in posttest among Form-focused, Meaning-focused, and Forms-focused groups. With reference to the findings, it can be stated that FoM instruction has a much more considerable impact on EFL learners' collocational knowledge improvement than FoF and FoFs instruction.

Conclusion

The present study was set to explore the effect of performing FoF, FoM, and FoFs instructions on development of collocational knowledge among Iranian intermediate EFL learners, and to investigate any significant effect on the achievement of the participants' collocational knowledge among Form-focused group, Meaning-focused group, and Forms-focused group. The findings of the study led to the conclusions that there was a statistically significant relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' collocation improvement knowledge and three kinds of instructions that were FoF, FoM, and FoFs. Based on the information obtained from data analyses and results, the following results are attained:

The results of the three groups did not have any significant difference in the pretest and all of the learners were at the same level. After the treatment and instructing the learners, their scores in FoM group were considerably more than the learner' scores in FoF and FoFs groups but the learners' scores in FoF and FoFs groups did not have any significant difference with each other. The learners' scores in the posttest were substantially more than their scores in the pretest. The FoF learners' scores had 48% improvement in comparison with their pretest. This improvement was 55.5% in FoM group and 50.9% in FoFs group. Indeed, the learners' improvement in FoM group was more than FoFs group and then FoF group.

Despite the fact that the learners' scores did not have any significant difference with each other in the posttest in FoF and FoFs groups, the learners' improvement in FoFs group was more than the learners' improvement in FoF group.

Based on the findings of the current research and other related researches, the following recommendations might be taken into account to enhance Iranian intermediate EFL learners' knowledge of collocations.

Clear instruction of collocations has to be an important part of English teaching curriculum in order to enhance learners' knowledge of word combinations. In addition, other materials such as textbooks related to collocations should be made accessible to the learners. Dictionaries of collocation must be utilized. Teachers should draw students' attention to collocation and vocabulary instead of just grammar points. In order to realize the students' weaknesses of using collocations, collocation tests can be useful.

Given the benefits of FoM reported in the present study, the results revealed that making learners discuss a picture by the use of the given collocation phrases raises the speed of collocation learning. Moreover, learners could be given more homework activities that would encourage them to create their own meaningful contexts for the use of collocation phrases. Learners could be asked, for example, to describe in writing their houses, their holidays, and the activities they do during the day.

The first and most advantageous function of teaching collocations by the use of discussion task with pictures is that as the data is illustrating, retention through this method both in short term and long term memory is greater than the other methods. In addition, most of the learners like to describe a picture with their own ideas. Besides, there is no difficulty in learning collocations in this method because it involves stories, picture description and also it keeps learners attentive during the class.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Nelson English Language Tests

Test 200 A

Choose the correct answer. Only one answer is correct.

Last June my brother...1...a car. He had had an old scooter before, but it...2.... several times during the spring. " what you want is a second-hand Mini," I suggested. "If you give me the money, " he said,"3.....one tomorrow." "I can't give you the money," I replied, "but what about Aunt Myra. She must have enough. We.....4..... her since Christmas but she always hints that we.....5..... go and see her more often."

We told our parents where we were going. They weren't very happy about it and asked us not to go. So.....6..... but later that same day something strange....7..... A doctor8..... us that Aunt Myra9.....into hospital for an operation. " ...10....go and see her at the same time," said my mother. " You two go today, but don't mention the money."

When we...11....Aunt Myra....12...."I'm not seriously ill," she said, "but the doctor insists that.....13.....to drive my car. You can have it if you promise...14.....me to the seaside now and again." We agreed, and now we quite enjoy our monthly trips to the coast with Aunt Myra.

1.
 - a) Wanted to buy
 - b) Wanted buying
 - c) Liked to buy
 - d) Liked buying
2.
 - a) Was breaking down
 - b) Was breaking up
 - c) Had broken down
 - d) Had broken up
3.
 - a) I get
 - b) I'm getting
 - c) I'm going to get
 - d) I'll get
4.
 - a) Are not seeing
 - b) Haven't see
 - c) Didn't see
 - d) Don't see
5.
 - a) Should
 - b) Shall
 - c) Would
 - d) Will

6.
a) That we haven't
b) That we didn't
c) We haven't
d) We didn't
7.
a) Occurred
b) Took the place
c) Passed
d) Was there
8.
a) Rang for telling
b) Rang to tell
c) Rung for telling
d) Rung to tell
9.
a) Had gone
b) Had been
c) Has gone
d) Has been
10.
a) We may not all
b) We can't all
c) All we can't
d) All we may not
11.
a) Have come there
b) Were arriving
c) Got there
d) Came to there
12.
a) Was seeming quite happily
b) Was seeming quite happy
c) Seemed quite happily
d) Seemed quite happy
13.
a) I'm getting so old
b) I'm getting too old
c) I get so old
d) I get too old
14.
a) Taking
b) Bringing
c) To take
d) To bring
- Choose the correct answer. Only one answer is correct.
15. Can this camera.....good photos?

- a) Make
 - b) To make
 - c) Take
 - d) To take
16. Who was the first person.....today?
- a) Spoke to you
 - b) You spoke to
 - c) You spoke
 - d) Whom you spoke
17. I can't find the book.....
- a) Nowhere
 - b) Everywhere
 - c) Anywhere
 - d) Somewhere
18. There was a house at.....
- a) The mountain foot
 - b) The foot of the mountain
 - c) The feet of the mountain
 - d) The mountain's foot
19. A person who talks tois not necessarily mad.
- a) Himself
 - b) Oneself
 - c) Yourself
 - d) Itself
20. I'll be 13 tomorrow, ...?
- a) Am I
 - b) Aren't I
 - c) Won't I
 - d) Will I
21. Did you hear.....Julie said?
- a) What
 - b) That
 - c) That what
 - d) Which
22. Spanish people usually speak..... Than English people.
- a) Quicklier
 - b) More quicklier
 - c) More quickly
 - d) More quicker
23. That old lady can't stop me..... the tennis match on my radio.
- a) To listen
 - b) Listening
 - c) Listen to
 - d) Listening to
24. I haven't got a chair.....
- a) To sit
 - b) For to sit on

- c) To sit on
- d) For sitting
- 25.at the moment, I'll go to the shops.
 - a) For it doesn't rain
 - b) As it doesn't rain
 - c) For it isn't raining
 - d) As it isn't raining
- 26. Bill drinks.....whisky.
 - a) Any
 - b) None
 - c) Too many
 - d) So much
- 27. are very intelligent.
 - a) Both of them
 - b) Both them
 - c) Both they
 - d) The both
- 28. In a shop.....customers.
 - a) It is important pleasing
 - b) It is important to please
 - c) There is important pleasing
 - d) There is important to please
- 29. Don't leave your shoes on the table.
 - a) Put off them
 - b) Take them off
 - c) Pick them off
 - d) Pick up them
- 30.in my class likes the teacher.
 - a) All persons
 - b) All pupils
 - c) Everyone
 - d) All people
- 31. We expected about 20 girls but there were.....people there.
 - a) Another
 - b) Others
 - c) Some
 - d) More
- 32. Your bicycle shouldn't be in the house!
 - a) Take it out
 - b) Get out it
 - c) Put it off
 - d) Take away it
- 33. What time does the bus.....Bradford?
 - a) Go away to
 - b) Go away for
 - c) Leave to
 - d) Leave for

34. She.....be Canadian because she's got a British passport.

- a) Can't
- b) Isn't able to
- c) Mustn't
- d) Doesn't need

35. "Our daughter.....", they said.

- a) Was born since three years
- b) Is born for three years ago
- c) Was born three years ago
- d) Has been born since three years ago

36. When..... English?

- a) Has he begun to study
- b) Has he begun study
- c) Did he begin to study
- d) Did he begin study

37. Do you want some cheese? No,.....

- a) I've some still
- b) I still have much
- c) I don't want
- d) I've still got some

38. Brenda likes going to the theatre and.....

- a) So do I
- b) So go I
- c) So I like
- d) So I am

39.from London to Edinburgh!

- a) How long there is
- b) What a long way it is
- c) What distance is there
- d) How long is

40. He's a good guitarist, but he plays the piano.....

- a) Quite well
- b) Too hardly
- c) Very good
- d) Much better

41. When you go to the shops, bring me.....

- a) A fruit tin
- b) A fruits tin
- c) A tin of fruit
- d) A tin of fruits

42. Molly doesn't eat fish.

- a) So doesn't John
- b) Neither does John
- c) John doesn't too
- d) John doesn't either

43. The airport is five miles.....

- a) Away from here

- b) From here away
 c) Far from here
 d) Far away from here
44. Please ask..... and see me.
 a) To Bill to come
 b) Bill to come
 c) To Bill come
 d) Bill come
45. She always buys.....my birthday.
 a) Anything nice to
 b) Anything nice for
 c) Something awful to
 d) Something awful for
46. Aren't they friends.....?
 a) Of yours
 b) Of you
 c) To yours
 d) To you
47. She hardly ever eats.....potatoes.
 a) Or bread or
 b) Bread or
 c) Neither bread or
 d) Neither bread nor
48. This is the record we.....
 a) Like so much
 b) Are liking so much
 c) Like it much
 d) Are liking it much
49. She's going to buy.....new trousers.
 a) Some pair of
 b) Some
 c) A couple of
 d) This
50. Is she going to school? No,....
 a) She doesn't
 b) She's cycling
 c)
 d) To the shops

She gets by bus

Appendix 2: Pretest

1. The conference took almost 4 hours so it was difficult to.....attention all the time.
 a) Do
 b) Make
 c) Pay
 d) Keep
2. Rose's problem is so difficult to.....under control.
 a) Keep

- b) Make
c) Do
d) Hold
3. He can't.....a decision about getting that job.
a) Do
b) Make
c) Take
d) Create
4. Fortunately, only 5% of my students who.....the exam failed.
a) Wrote
b) Took
c) Had
d) Made
5. Could you please.....my father a favor and take him to the airport?
a) Give
b) Bring
c) Get
d) Do
6. My favorite teacher will come to Billy's party. I would never.....the chance to meet her again.
a) Make
b) Fail
c) Lose
d) Miss
7. My father has started to.....plans for traveling on Norooz vacation.
a) Prepare
b) Create
c) Make
d) Do
8. I and my students.....a good relationship with each other.
a) Feel
b) Have
c) Find
d) Hold
9. Mr. Smith wants to.....a situation for his son's problem.
a) Find
b) Bring
c) Create
d) Make
10. I know that it's a golden....., I will be regretful if I miss it.
a) Offer
b) Opportunity
c) Chance
d) Suggestion
11. At the last moment that I wanted to buy that ticket, I changed my.....
a) Suggestion
b) Offer

- c) Thought
d) Mind
12. Alex was a/an.....husband who really loved his wife more than anyone else.
a) Lovely
b) Devoted
c) Intelligent
d) Sincere
13. My final exam results.....much better than I expected.
a) Made
b) Took out
c) Showed
d) Turned out
14. I was involved in acar accident last month.
a) Wide spread
b) Ready
c) Wholehearted
d) Dreadful
15. She only had to deal with.....matters because she didn't have
a.....job.
a) Every day- easy
b) Dangerous- easy
c) Every day- challenging
d) Outside- challenging
16. I have a different perspective of the world. I see things from an uncommon.....
a) Angle
b) Ambition
c) Anger
d) Amount
17. My grandfather had lung cancer so I.....deeply.....
a) Became- angry
b) Made- upset
c) Made- sad
d) Became- upset
18. Imy husband's cake for his birthday.
a) Put off
b) Put on
c) Put out
d) Put in
19. The roof is leaking. I should..... the snow.
a) Shovel
b) Clean
c) Shoot
d) Take down
20. We.....later that we had been at the same office.
a) Got
b) Found out
c) Thought

- d) Agreed
21. She had.....the gifts with colored papers for her mom's birthday.
a) Made
b) Wrapped
c) Used
d) Colored
22. David and Rose are.....married on Saturday.
a) Becoming
b) Making
c) Getting
d) Having
23. I can.....delicious birthday cakes.
a) Make
b) Bake
c) Have
d) Supply
24. She.....blind after that terrible accident.
a) Became
b) Went
c) Changed
d) Did
25. You have school tomorrow morning. I don't want you.....late.
a) Stay up
b) Stay
c) Awake
d) To awake
26. John Travolta is aactor. Everybody knows him.
a) Nice
b) Rich
c) Strange
d) Well-known
27. Her mother had.....before she arrived, so she couldn't see her alive again.
a) Gone
b) Left
c) Passed away
d) Illness
28. Sara could..... her IELTS exam. She got the best score.
a) Gave
b) Took
c) Fail
d) Pass
29. A clown is always trying to.....people laugh.
a) Turn
b) Get
c) Make
d) Have
30.Carols is a tradition when Christmas comes.

- a) Singing
- b) Using
- c) Speaking
- d) Reading

Appendix3: Posttest

1. I can.....delicious birthday cakes.

- a) Have
- b) Bake
- c) Make
- d) Supply

2. David and Rose are.....married on Saturday.

- a) Getting
- b) Making
- c) Becoming
- d) Having

3. We.....later that we had been at the same office.

- a) Got
- b) Agreed
- c) Thought
- d) Found out

4. The roof is leaking. I should..... the snow.

- a) Take down
- b) Clean
- c) Shoot
- d) Shovel

5. Imy husband's cake for his birthday.

- a) Put off
- b) Put on
- c) Put in
- d) Put out

6. My grandfather had lung cancer so I.....deeply.....

- a) Became- upset
- b) Made- upset
- c) Made- sad
- d) Became- angry

7. I have a different perspective of the world. I see things from an uncommon.....

- a) Amount
- b) Ambition
- c) Anger
- d) Angle

8. She only had to deal with.....matters because she didn't have a.....job.

- a) Every day- easy
- b) Dangerous- easy
- c) Outside- challenging
- d) Every day- challenging

9. She had.....the gifts with colored papers for her mom's birthday.
- Made
 - Used
 - Wrapped
 - Colored
10. I was involved in acar accident last month.
- Wide spread
 - Dreadful
 - Wholehearted
 - Ready
11.Carols is a tradition when Christmas comes.
- Reading
 - Using
 - Speaking
 - Singing
12. You have school tomorrow morning. I don't want you.....late.
- Stay
 - Stay up
 - Awake
 - To awake
13. She.....blind after that terrible accident.
- Became
 - Did
 - Changed
 - Went
14. My final exam results.....much better than I expected.
- Made
 - Turned out
 - Showed
 - Took out
15. Sara could..... her IELTS exam. She got the best score.
- Gave
 - Pass
 - Fail
 - Took
16. Her mother had.....before she arrived, so she couldn't see her alive again.
- Passed away
 - Left
 - Gone
 - Illness
17. John Travolta is aactor. Everybody knows him.
- Nice
 - Well-known
 - Strange
 - Rich
18. The conference took almost 4 hours so it was difficult to.....attention all the time.

- a) Do
 - b) Make
 - c) Keep
 - d) Pay
19. Alex was a/an.....husband who really loved his wife more than anyone else.
- a) Lovely
 - b) Sincere
 - c) Intelligent
 - d) Devoted
20. At the last moment that I wanted to buy that ticket, I changed my.....
- a) Suggestion
 - b) Mind
 - c) Thought
 - d) Offer
21. I know that it's a golden....., I will be regretful if I miss it.
- a) Offer
 - b) Chance
 - c) Opportunity
 - d) Suggestion
22. Rose's problem is so difficult to.....under control.
- a) Make
 - b) Keep
 - c) Do
 - d) Hold
23. Fortunately, only 5% of my students who.....the exam failed.
- a) Wrote
 - b) Made
 - c) Had
 - d) Took
24. Mr. Smith wants to.....a situation for his son's problem.
- a) Create
 - b) Bring
 - c) Find
 - d) Make
25. I and my students.....a good relationship with each other.
- a) Have
 - b) Feel
 - c) Find
 - d) Hold
26. He can't.....a decision about getting that job.
- a) Do
 - b) Create
 - c) Take
 - d) Make
27. A clown is always trying to.....people laugh.
- a) Make
 - b) Get

- c) Turn
d) Have
28. My father has started to.....plans for traveling on Norouz vacation.
- a) Prepare
b) Create
c) Do
d) Make
29. My favorite teacher will come to Billy's party. I would never.....the chance to meet her again.
- a) Make
b) Miss
c) Lose
d) Fail
30. Could you please.....my father a favor and take him to the airport?
- a) Do
b) Bring
c) Get
d) Give

Appendix4: Story of Text Reconstruction Task

Once upon a time a kind family lived in a little house in a small village. They had a nice girl whose name was Alice. She paid attention to her fathers' advice to do every body favors when she could. Also, she was very intelligent; she saw things from different angles and kept the problems under control so she found the best solution when there was a trouble. Every time that she took an exam, she passed it with the best scores at the school. Her old father was well-known in the village. He had a good relationship with his family and all people in the village. He was a devoted husband for his wife too. He had to deal with everyday affairs because he was a farmer and he didn't have a challenging job. One day when he was on the way of Chicago, he had a dreadful accident and passed away. Two months after this bad event, Alice and her mom and sister found out that he was died. They became deeply upset and Alice's sister went blind because of two much crying. Two weeks later, it was Christmas time. Although they were disappointed, Alice remembered her father's advice and started to make her family laugh. She shoveled the snow on the roof, put out cookies, baked a cake and wrapped gifts in colored papers for her family. At the Christmas night they stayed up all night, prayed for their father and sang Carols. Six years later, Alice became a teacher and got engaged to a doctor who worked in their village. It was a golden opportunity for him and he didn't want to miss the chance to be her husband. One month later they made a decision to get married and also made plans to go to New York for their honeymoon but they changed their mind and bought a house with their money. Their life turned out to be very successful and they were happy with each other.

Appendix5: Collocations of Discussion Task

Group1: A picture of Christmas

Bake a cake

Make happy

Put out

Shovel the snow

Wrap gifts

Stay up
Sing carols

Group2: A picture of a patient in the hospital

Dreadful accident
Pass away
Find out
Deeply upset
Everyday affair
Challenging job
Go blind

Group3: A picture of Albert Einstein

Pay attention
Keep under control
Find solution
Turn out
Well-known
Take/ pass exam

Group4: A picture of a young couple

Golden opportunity
Get engaged
Change mind
Make decision
Make plan

Group5: A picture of a grandmother

Do favor
Make happy
Keep under control
Find solution
Have good relationship
Devoted wife

Appendix6: Collocations of Word List Collocations Task

Do favor
Have good relationship
Devoted wife
Golden opportunity
Get engaged
Change mind
Make decision
Make plan
Pay attention
Keep under control
Find a solution
Turn out

Well-known
Take/ pass exam
Dreadful accident
Pass away
Find out
Deeply upset
Everyday affair
Challenging job
Go blind
Bake a cake
Make happy
Put out
Shovel the snow
Wrap gifts
Stay up
Sing carols