An Investigation of the Effect of Incorporating Input Enhancement in Dictogloss Tasks to Teach English Grammar on the Development of ESL Female Learners’ Grammatical Awareness

By
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This non-thesis paper entitled:

Incorporating Input Enhancement into the Dictogloss to Teach Grammar to EFL Female Learners

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Abstract

The study aimed to measure the effectiveness of incorporating input enhancement in dictogloss tasks to teach English grammar on the development of ESL female learners’ grammatical awareness. It was applied on 46 students enrolled in a Grammar -1- course at the College of Languages and Translation at Princess Nora Bint Abdul Rahman University; the experimental group (n=23) underwent audio-visually-enhanced dictogloss tasks while the controlled group (n=23) used traditional textbook exercises and activities. Both groups conducted pretest and post-test grammaticality judgment assessment to evaluate the study’s effectiveness. The results showed significant improvement in the experimental group’s grammatical awareness levels. Furthermore, a survey that measured the students’ attitudes toward the enhanced tasks was distributed. The students showed greater tendency concerning such practice as they expressed their interest towards it because it resulted in them noticing their own improvement. Finally, a number of recommendations and suggestions are presented based on the results of the current research.

Keywords: Input Enhancement; Dictogloss; Grammatical Awareness.
ملخص الرسالة

هدفت الدراسة إلى قياس فاعلية دمج تحسين المدخلات في مهام الإملاء الإنشائية لتعليم قواعد اللغة الإنجليزية على تطور الوعي النحوي للطالبات. أجريت الدراسة على 42 طالبة ملتحقات بمادة اللغة الإنجليزية، وكلامات اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة ثانية. خضعت المجموعة التجريبية (32 طالبة) لتطبيق تحسين الصوت - بصري لمهام الإملاء الإنشائية، بينما الطالبات في المجموعة الضابطة (32 طالبة) اجريت دراستها الأنشطة والتمارين المدرجة في المقرر الدراسي. تم توزيع النتائج الفاعلة في مستوى النحو لدى طالبات المجموعة التجريبية. كما تم توزيع استبانة لقياس استجابات طالبات تجاه المهام المحسنة. وقد أبدت الطالبات إيجابية في إمكانية هذه الممارسة، وعندن عن اهتمامهن بها إذ خذلبت انتباههن لملاحظة تحسينهم. أخيراً، تم تقديم عدد من التوصيات والمقترحات بناءً على النتائج المقدمة في البحث.

الكلمات المفتاحية: تحسين المدخلات؛ مهام الإملاء الإنشائية؛ الوعي النحوي.
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Chapter One

Introduction

Background of the Study

The language learning process received academic attention within various aspects. Learning the first language is a complicated process that many still try to decipher to mimic in acquiring other languages. Research in the field of second language acquisition places significant importance on learners’ input (Sharwood, 1991; Alanen, 1995; Jourdenais et al., 1995; Leeman et al., 1995; White, 1998; Takimoto, 2009; Shintani, 2011; Bahrani & Sim, 2012; Li, 2012; Rassaei, 2012; Shintani, 2012). To date, researchers attempt to figure out the most suitable quality, quantity, and type of input. Krashen and Terrell (1983) concluded that an attempt to use language without care to language structure promotes communicative fluency while it fails for the accuracy of forms. Thus, Tunmer et al. (1987) remarked, it is important to establish grammatical (syntactic) awareness through obtaining the ability to reflect upon, and manipulate, the internal grammatical structure of sentences. According to Schmidt (1990, 1993, 1994, 1995, 2010), paying attention to the received input combined with going through a brief subjective experience of noticing facilitates the learning process. He further explains that what learners pay attention to, accompanied by what they understand of the significance of the noticed input, determine second language acquisition (Schmidt, 2001).

Sharwood Smith (1991) introduced input enhancement as a process used to enrich language input. In it, teachers deliberately manipulate input with hopes of making it more salient for learners to notice. He further explains that there are two predicted results of input enhancement: positive and negative. “Positive input enhancement would simply make more salient certain correct forms in the input” (Sharwood Smith, 1993, p. 177). As in a case where a
“learner has a different perception of the L2 grammar than is evidenced by the input, then positive evidence may serve as a trigger to change that grammar and bring it in line with the native-speaker grammar” (Sharwood Smith, 1991, p. 122–123). On the other hand, “negative input enhancement would flag given forms as incorrect, thus signaling to the learner that they have violated the target norms” (Sharwood Smith, 1993, p. 177).

A few researchers explored the effectiveness of input enhancement in regards to different areas of second language acquisition (Alanen, 1995; Jourdenais et al., 1995; Leeman et al., 1995; White, 1996; Galaczi, 2002; Francis 2003). Others explored the effectiveness of dictogloss tasks (LaPierre, 1994; Kowal & Swain, 1994; Nabei, 1996; Fortune & Valley, 1999; Lynch, 2001; Shelton, 2002; Swain & Lapkin, 2002; Al-Sibai, 2008). Yet, few attempts investigated the effect of incorporating it in task-based instruction on the development of grammatical (syntactic) awareness acquisition (Aghajani & Rahimy, 2013; Izumi, 2002; Abadikhah & Shahriyarpour, 2012). Therefore, further exploration is necessary.

**Statement of the Problem**

Learners of foreign languages often face difficulties in learning that language. Input flood alone does not guarantee a full understanding of the acquired language. Furthermore, most Saudi learners of English study grammar as sets of rules to follow as is, whereas actual practicing is limited. The outcome of such practice is a learner with a weak understanding and usage of the English language.

**Aim of the Study**

This research aims to investigate the effect of incorporating input-enhancement techniques in task-based instruction to acquire English Grammar by 18–20-year-old female Saudi students, and establish whether this effect is helpful or not.
Question of the Study

Does incorporating input enhancement in dictogloss tasks to teach English grammar affect the development of ESL female learners’ grammatical awareness?

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study stems from its attempt to investigate the potential effect of using audio-visual input enhancement in dictogloss tasks to teach English grammar on the development of ESL female learners’ grammatical awareness. If the effect proves positive, such practice enables teachers to involve students simultaneously in listening, speaking, and writing skills with an attention to form.

Limitations of the Study

The researcher is aware of some important limitations of the current study. First, the sample consisted of female participants due to difficulty of reaching male participants. Second, the population of the study does not reflect all females as it was implemented only in Princess Nora University, and the scope of it was confined to level 1 students enrolled in a Grammar 1 course at the College of Languages & Translation. Third, students were taught by two different instructors, so the researcher observed all sessions to ensure applying the same classroom conditions to both groups. Finally, the experiment was limited to one English verb tense only—the present simple.

Definition of Terms

The terms defined in this section include (1) Input Enhancement, (2) Dictogloss task, and (3) Grammatical Awareness.

(1) Input Enhancement: a pedagogic manipulation of the saliency of input with a view toward increasing the chance for encountered input to be efficiently rehearsed in a learners’ working
memory and thus to be ultimately integrated into the existing L2 systems (Sharwood Smith, 1981; 1991; 1993).

(2) Dictogloss task: It is a pushed output, focus-on-form technique in which students are instructed to listen very carefully and to write down as much information as they can as the teacher reads a short text twice and at a normal speed. When the teacher finishes reading, the students attempt to reconstruct the text as closely as possible to the original version read by the teacher (Nassaji, 2000). “The goal is not to reproduce the original, but to ‘gloss’ it using their combined linguistic resources” (Wajnryb, 1990, p. 12).

(3) Grammatical Awareness: (also mentioned as syntactic awareness or morphosyntactic awareness) it is “the ability to reason consciously about the syntactic aspects of language, and to exercise intentional control over the application of grammatical rules” (Gombert, 1992, p. 39).
Chapter Two

Literature Review

In attempt to understand and develop language learning and acquisition, some research in second/foreign language acquisition investigated instrumental techniques to make input more salient with the purpose of promoting learners’ noticing. Consequently, a number of instructional techniques have been developed with that aim of making the input more salient to promote learners’ noticing by frequency and/or enhancement (Sharwood, 1991; Alanen, 1995; Jourdenais et al., 1995; Leeman et al., 1995; White, 1998). Consciousness-raising, according to Nagata and Swisher (1995), is thought of as increasing the salience of underlying grammatical features.

Input Enhancement

Sharwood Smith (1993) explained that consciousness-raising implies a deliberate focus on the formal properties of language with an aim of facilitating the development of L2 knowledge initiated by either the teacher or the learner during initial exposure or during practice. The term “consciousness-raising” was later replaced by Sharwood Smith with “input enhancement” to clarify the difference in what each term assumes concerning the input/intake dichotomy, as input represents the language that a learner is exposed to, and intake is that part of input that has been processed by the learner. Consciousness-raising, however, denotes that “the learner’s mental state is altered by the input; hence, all input is intake. Input enhancement implies only that we can manipulate aspects of the input but makes no further assumptions about the consequences” (Sharwood Smith, 1993, p. 176).

Fotos (1993) assumed that while L2 learners often fail to perceive structures in naturalistic input, drawing their attention explicitly to certain formal properties provides a “more salient kind of positive evidence, which may help to sensitize the learner to aspects of the L2
which would otherwise pass unnoticed” (p. 417). Tomlin and Villa (1994) confirmed this assumption stating, “it is clear that achieving such salience, whether by explicit actions of the teacher, or by some internal mechanism of the learner is critical to acquisition” (p. 186).

Looking at learners’ language acquisition, Schmidt (1995) introduced noticing and understanding as the two types of language awareness. Noticing entails conscious registration of targeted language where conscious attention changes input to intake. Understanding, on the other hand, entails recognition of general principles. However, it is considered as a facilitating factor that is not regarded as necessary for L2 acquisition.

It is possible to benefit from input enhancement in a variety of ways including processing instruction, metalinguistic feedback, input flooding, and textual enhancement via typographical manipulation of the text, as in color-coding. Auditory enhancement, the oral equivalent of typographical enhancement, includes alterations of stress, intonation, volume, emphasis, pitch, or a combination of all of these.

Input enhancement, resulting in input flood, helps learners notice important features in the input in which learners are flooded by an increased number of the target form while maintaining a communicative focus. It serves to increase the learners’ noticing of the target forms, hence, the awareness of such forms, thereby promoting the acquisition of those forms. In addition, Han (2002) stated that enhancement, in combination with explicit instruction, can have a positive effect on language development and acquisition.

**Dictogloss**

The dictogloss is a focus-on-form (FonF) pushed output task that encourages students to reflect on their own output (Wajnryb, 1990). In this task, short pieces of language are read out at a normal speed to students who are supposed to write down the key words and structures, and
then attempt to reconstruct the passage from their general understanding of the text and from their own notes (Lynch, 2001). This task offers students an indirect help and a communicative focus on form through both peer and teacher feedback, by which it reflects the implementation of FonF.

The task output process, also known as “pushed output,” presented in dictogloss, promotes the production of language-related episodes (LRE), in which collaborative output plays a role in L2 development (Fortune & Thorp, 2001). Fortune (2005) further explained that by examining transcripts of learners’ interactions, students discussed choices on form at least once in LREs, and revised them at least once.

According to Chapelle (1997), L2 learners reflect on L2 forms when carrying out collaborative activities. Leeser (2004) agreed stating that collaborative dialogue encourages LREs. Language learners, Bahrani and Sim (2012) further explained, are presented the opportunity to negotiate solutions when they face communicative problems, and so they are able to acquire new language.

Research on dictogloss has indicated that it offers several pedagogical benefits (LaPierre, 1994; Kowal & Swain, 1994; Nabei, 1996; Fortune & Valley, 1999; Lynch, 2001; Swain & Lapkin, 2002; Malmqvist, 2005; VanPatten et al., 2009; Gallego, 2010; Pawlak, 2012; Uludag & VanPatten, 2012) as it serves as a powerful teaching tool in the following:

- It serves as a learner-centered approach that allows students to produce and receive peer evaluation. The class works in pairs or groups; thus, it encourages purposeful interaction and cooperation.
- As a collaborative task, it promotes language accuracy and precision as it encourages learners to focus on form in their output in a comparatively natural context. In
addition, reconstruction tasks entail students’ conscious focus on their knowledge of the relationship between form and meaning.

- Dictogloss encourages practical real-world strategies and skills. It is an important scaffold to understanding and controlling content vocabulary and language structures with confidence and accuracy as students listen, write, read, and speak to achieve their larger purposes.

- It offers students opportunities to control their own learning as learners listen to each other, and suggest areas for improvement. It focuses on encouraging learner autonomy as learners learn to confront their own strengths and weaknesses through active learner involvement, as students.

In order to deliver a dictogloss task that is successful and effective, it is important to choose a text that is short and relatively simple. In addition, the topic of the text must be familiar to the learners. If not, it is necessary for the teacher to build prior knowledge before beginning the task. Furthermore, form needs to be given through using practical feedback techniques to ensure helping students acquire the target grammar form, and that they learn from their mistakes (Shelton, 2002). In addition, the teacher needs to prepare for the dictogloss task keeping in mind the most important language features of the text to focus on them with the students (Jacobs, 2005).

Tedick (2001) provided instructional steps to ensure the best practice possible of dictogloss. Her initial point was that teachers need to model the steps of the process with students first. The short passage used should embed a particular grammatical form to be emphasized. The target form should be one that students know well but often produced inaccurately. Teachers should try to incorporate a majority of vocabulary that students know, and
review difficult or possibly unknown vocabulary that appears in the passage. Teachers would provide a short review lesson on the grammatical form being emphasized that would be three to five minutes long. Teachers will read the dictogloss through once at a normal speed, asking students to listen carefully, followed by a second time where they encourage students to take notes. After the second reading, students will work together in pairs, or groups, for approximately 20 to 25 minutes to reconstruct the text. The teacher should remind students that they should try to reconstruct the text so that it will be as close to the original as possible in both grammar and content.

Teachers should tell their students that the original sense of each sentence needed to be present and the reconstructed sentences had to be as grammatically accurate as the students could manage, but the words and phrases did not have to be identical to the ones in the original passage. During this time, students are presented the opportunity to form hypotheses and test them, using available resources such as dictionaries and verb reference books. The activity should also encourage noticing and, ideally, metatalk. Finally, she advises to hold a whole-class feedback by selecting one example and use it to engage in whole-class discussion with particular focus on the grammatical form emphasized. The students’ co-constructed texts should be compared with the original dictogloss.

**Previous Studies on Incorporating Input Enhancement in Text-reconstruction Tasks**

Alanen (1995) conducted a study on the effectiveness of input enhancement in teaching two target grammar forms. The subjects were 36 students who were divided into three groups: one control group and two experimental groups. The treatment consisted of two short descriptive texts with a picture glossary serving as visual enhancement. The first experimental group (the Rule and Enhanced group) received both the rules and the enhanced version of the texts; the
second experimental group (the Rule group) received unenhanced input but the learners were given a one-page explanation of the target forms before they read the texts; and the control group received unenhanced texts and did not receive explicit instruction of the target forms. Findings showed that students in the first experimental group (the Rule and Enhanced group) achieved the highest scores.

Jourdenais et al. (1995) showed similar results when they conducted a typographical and visual input enhancement study on 14 students who were randomly assigned to form a control group and an experimental group. The experimental group received narrative texts in which the verb past forms were highlighted; the control group received the same texts with no textual modification. Both groups of students had received explicit instruction of the target structures during the six weeks before the study began. After receiving the texts, the study participants performed think-aloud protocols as they wrote a picture-based narrative similar to the narratives in the texts they had received as treatment materials. The written narratives also revealed a significant difference between the groups; the experimental group used the target past verb forms more often in their writing than did the control group. The researchers concluded that the textual enhancement plus explicit instruction serve to increase the learners’ awareness and understanding of the target forms, thereby promoting the acquisition of those forms.

Izumi (2002) investigated the effects of internal and external attention-drawing devices of output and visual input enhancement on the acquisition of English relativization by ESL learners. Izumi examined whether output promotes noticing of formal elements in target language input and if it affects subsequent learning of the form, and to compare the effect to that of visual input enhancement. The researcher found no support for the hypothesis of the effects of input enhancement.
Abadikhah and Shahriyarpour (2012) examined the effect of three FonF techniques on the acquisition of passive forms in 44 Iranian learners of English. Students were divided into four groups, three experimental and one control. The first group was assigned input enhancement (IE) (n=11), the second input enhancement and individual text-editing task (IE+TE) (n=11), the third input enhancement and collaborative text-editing task (IE+TE+CO) (n=12), and the fourth was the control group (CG) (n=10). The researcher administered a pretest and a post-test using multiple choice and fill-in-the blank test in context. Groups that underwent a combination of input enhancement and text editing (IE+TE and IE+TE+CO) outperformed other groups in the post-test.

Aghajani and Rahimy (2013) investigated the effect of visual/textual input-based treatment on the acquisition of English tenses by Iranian intermediate ESL learner. The study was administered on 60 students in four groups of 15 students in each group, divided into two male and two female, one of each gender is experimental and the other control. Both experimental groups of both genders attended eight sessions where computerized programs introducing English tenses were used serving as visually and typographically enhanced input. The researcher held a pretest and a post-test to measure the learners’ acquisition of English tenses, which revealed the effectiveness of visually and typographically enhanced input.

To conclude, the present study aims to investigate the impact of incorporating input-enhancement techniques in the pushed output task of dictogloss on the development of learners’ grammatical awareness. Several studies took place on the use of the dictogloss task and its effect on learners’ language acquisition; other studies examined the effect of using input enhancement on language acquisition; nevertheless, there was little focus on incorporating both FonF techniques in developing grammatical awareness. The reviewed literature offered a framework
through which the researched was able to conduct the study. Al-Sibai (2008) revealed the success of using dictogloss within Saudi context helping this study to go a little further to combine it with enhanced input. However, no evident focus was given to this topic within Saudi Arabia. This study aimed at investigating the effect of incorporating input-enhancement techniques in the pushed output task of dictogloss on the development of ESL learners’ grammatical awareness.
Chapter Three
Method and Procedure

Participants

The study involved 46 ESL university level students enrolled in a Grammar 1 English course as a requirement to complete a bachelor’s degree in English Language Translation. Students were taught by two instructors and divided into two groups, one experimental and one control. The study was applied across six weeks during October and November of the first academic semester of 2013-2014.

Instrument of the Study

The present study made use of three instruments, audio-visually enhanced dictogloss tasks, a grammar pre-post test, and a students’ perception questionnaire.

The grammar pre-post test was used to measure students’ performance in the target grammar forms. It is a grammaticality judgment task consisting of 15 items. The students were asked to judge whether the given statements were grammatical or ungrammatical and whether they were well-formed in a related context based on their grammatical knowledge. The test served as a treatment measure to compare the results of pretests and post-tests between the two groups, and within the experimental group, to provide evidence of grammatical awareness development, if any. The pretest was conducted before the experimental treatment on both groups to detect lack of knowledge of targeted form (Leow, 2001), and was compared later to the post-test. The post-test was conducted at the end of the research period. Post-test results stood as a measurement to show the differences in results, if any.

The students’ perception questionnaire was administered at the end of the experiment to depict the experimental group’s students’ attitudes towards such an activity. The scale used in
the questionnaire was based on the Likert scale as students were asked to express their attitude towards given statements by selecting whether they strongly agree, agree, are neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree.

**Procedures**

1. Taking the university’s permission to authorize the researcher to apply the study in their classes. Permission from teachers and students was acquired as well.

2. This study was conducted in two ESL course classes throughout the period of 6 weeks.

3. A pretest was given to the students in both groups at the beginning of the research period to record their level in the target form.

4. The researcher clearly explained the task to the students, and provided a model.

5. The researcher read the task twice at normal speed, while students took down notes in the second reading.

6. The researcher showed slides containing content-related pictures as she was reading the text.

7. Students were divided into pairs, and started to reconstruct the text with the help of their notes.

8. The researcher collected the students’ reconstructed texts at the end of each session. One reconstructed text is chosen to carry out a whole-class feedback.

9. A post-test was given to students of both groups at the end of the research period to record their level in the target form.

10. A questionnaire was given to the students of the experimental group at the end of the research period to record their views regarding such a practice.
Research Design

The researcher employed a quasi-experimental design called the pretest/post-test non-equivalent group design. This design is identical to the pre-post test control group/experimental group design in all aspects except that intact groups rather than randomly assigned ones are used, creating a control problem in terms of selection bias, which makes the use of a pretest necessary for this particular design. Two intact classes were randomly selected; one class is taught through the FonF strategy using the techniques of input enhancement and dictogloss tasks to represent the experimental group and the other receiving standard grammar instruction with traditional textbook exercises to represent the control group. A grammar pretest and post-test were given to the two groups before and after the treatment. The experiment lasted six consecutive weeks according to the following schedule:

Table 1.
Timetable of the Study.

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Task 1</td>
<td>(No Assessment)</td>
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<td>Week 3</td>
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<td>Week 4</td>
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<td>(No Assessment)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Task 4</td>
<td>(No Assessment)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>(No Treatment)</td>
<td>1- Grammaticality Judgment Task (Post-test)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2- Students’ Perception Questionnaire</td>
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Data Collection and Analysis

Pre-post tests served as a treatment measure to show statistically the effect of incorporating input-enhancement techniques in pushed output dictogloss tasks on grammatical awareness development of ESL female learners. Tests were analyzed and compared statistically
using a Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) program. In addition, the experimental groups’ learners’ responses towards the experiment were explored through the use of a close-ended questionnaire with a Likert scale measured as strongly agree, agree, are neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree.

**Research Variables**

The independent variable of the research is incorporating audio-visual input enhancement in dictogloss tasks to teach English grammar, while the dependent variable is the development of ESL female learners’ grammatical awareness.

**Validity and Reliability**

The research instruments were presented to a jury to be evaluated, tested, and approved to establish their validity. Reliability was achieved by holding a pretest and a post-test to check for stability.
Chapter Four

Results

The results of this study are represented through figures and tables below. The study was applied on 46 level 1 female students in the College of Languages and Translation at Princess Nora Bint Abdul Rahman University. The two groups—control and experimental—were from two Grammar 1 classes, each of which included 23 students taught by non-English-native instructors.

Both groups were taught the same grammar course. However, the experimental group integrated an audio-Visually enhanced dictogloss tasks while the control one did not. Both groups had a pretest to measure their level and a post-test to observe the effect of the experiment. The researcher distributed a questionnaire concerning students’ attitudes toward audio-visually enhanced dictogloss tasks.

The researcher employed SPSS. The statistical analyses were divided into the following two parts:

Part One: Analysis of Pretest and Post-test Scores

The researcher applied this study on 46 level 1 students from the Collage of Languages and Translation. The experiment was applied to two groups—control and experimental—each of which consisted of 23 students. The control group focused on grammar learning with traditional book exercises whereas the experimental went through audio-visually enhanced dictogloss tasks. Both groups were asked to conduct a pretest and a post-test to evaluate the students’ average level in the discussed grammatical tense. The test consisted of 15 items to check for students’ grammatical judgment, and was scored out of 15.
Control Group Results

Prior to the first session, students in both groups conducted a pretest to evaluate their levels in the present simple tense. The researcher analyzed the test papers and discovered that the control group students’ levels varied, as shown in Figure 1:

![Figure 1. Distribution of the Students’ Level of the Control Group in the Pretest](image)

It is clear from Figure 1 above that the highest score of the control group students’ level on the pretest was 14, which three students achieved, and the lowest degree was 5, which four students achieved. Three students achieved 13, one student received 12, five students achieved 11, two students achieved 9, one student achieved 8, other three received 7, and one student received 6. In general, the average level of the class was at 9.61 out of 15.

At week 6, the students of the control group were asked to do a post-test. The analysis of the students’ answers showed their levels as the following figure reflects:

![Figure 2. Distribution of the Students’ Level of the Control Group in the Post-test](image)
Figure 2 above shows that the highest score of the control group students after the period of the study was 15, which two students achieved. One student achieved the lowest degree at 5. Three students achieved 14, three students achieved 13, four students received 12, three students achieved 11, three students achieved 9, one student achieved 8, another two received 7, and one student received 6. In general, the average level of the class was at 10.96 out of 15.

By examining the average students’ scores, it is clear that students’ grammatical awareness level concerning the past simple tense had increased through standard teaching and traditional grammar activities, as the following figure suggests:

![Figure 3](image.png)

*Figure 3. Comparison of the Average Scores of the Control Group Students in the Pretest and the Post-test*

Figure 3 illustrates the average level of control group scores in the pretest and post-test. It is clear from the figure that post-test scores of the control group students’ mean is 10.96, which is greater than the pretest scores of the control group students’ mean, which is 9.61.

**Experimental Group Results**

Prior to the first session, students in both groups conducted a pretest to evaluate their levels in the present simple tense. The researcher analyzed the test papers and discovered that the experimental group students’ levels varied, as shown in Figure 4:
It is clear from Figure 4 above that the highest percentage of the experimental group students’ level on the post-test was 15, which three students achieved, and the lowest degree was 4, which one student achieved. One student received 14, one student achieved 13, two students received 12, three students achieved 11, four students achieved 10, two students achieved 9, two students achieved 8, two received 7, and two students received 5. In general, the average level of the class before applying the experiment was above 10.04 out of 15.

By the end of week 5, the researcher had applied four dictogloss tasks accompanied by audio-visual input enhancement. Students of the experimental group underwent a post-test that involved the targeted form of the simple present tense that they have studied during the period of four class sessions.

The analysis of the students’ answers showed their levels as the following figure reflects:
Figure 5 above shows that the highest percentage of the experimental group students after the period of the study was 15, which seven students achieved. Two students achieved the lowest score at 8. Four students achieved 14, two students achieved 13, one student received 12, two students achieved 11, three students achieved 10, and two students achieved 9. In general, the average level of the class was above 12.39 out of 15.

By examining the average students’ scores, it is clear that students’ grammatical awareness level concerning the past simple tense had increased through standard teaching and traditional grammar activities, as the following figure suggests:

*Figure 6. Comparison of the Average Scores of the Experimental Group in the Pretest and the Post-test*

Figure 6 above reveals the average level of experimental group scores in the pretest and post-test. It is evident from the figure that post-test scores of the experimental group students’ mean is 12.39, which is greater than 10.04, the pretest scores of the experimental group students’ mean. To show whether this indicated difference is statistically accepted or not, the researcher conducted a paired t-test in the table below:

**Table 2**

*T-test of the Differences between the Pretest and the Post-test Scores of the Experimental Group Students*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pretest – Post-test</td>
<td>−2.35</td>
<td>−4.08*</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of the Experimental</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Students</td>
<td>(2.76)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. * = p ≤ 0.05.
According to Table 2 above, the 23 participants had an average difference from pre-test to post-test grammaticality judgment scores of -2.35 (SD = 2.76). Compared to the critical t value set at p=0.05 (t (22)= 2.074), the statistical t value is greater than the critical t value indicating significant difference between students’ grammatical awareness of the target form (figure 07). Hence, statistical differences exist between the experimental group scores before and after applying the experiment, which shows the improvement of the students’ levels after the experiment.

**Comparison between Control and Experimental Groups**

To prove the success of the experiment, the researcher had to make some statistical analyses between the two groups: control and experimental. The researcher statistically analyzed the pretest and post-test before and after the experiment and compared the results.

**Statistical Analysis of Pretest of Both Groups**

![Figure 8. Comparison between the Control and the Experimental Groups’ Mean Scores before the Experiment](image)
Figure 8 demonstrates the mean scores of pretests in both control and experimental groups out of 15. The mean score of the control group is 9.61, while that of the experimental group is 10.04.

Table 3

*The Independent Samples T-test of the Differences between the Pretest of Both Groups*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pretest of Both Groups</td>
<td>-0.43 (0.95)</td>
<td>-0.46*</td>
<td>44.0</td>
<td>0.65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. * = p ≤ 0.05.

According to table 3, the 46 participants had a pre-test average of -0.43 (SD = 0.95), with a calculated t value of -0.46. Compared to the critical t value set at p=0.05 (t (44)= 2.015), the statistical t value is smaller than the critical t value indicating no significant difference between students’ grammatical awareness of the target form (figure 9). Therefore, there is no statistical difference between both groups prior to the experiment.
Statistical Analysis of Post-test of Both Groups

![Figure 10](image)

Figure 10. Comparison between the Control and the Experimental Groups’ Mean Scores after the Experiment

Figure 10 above demonstrates the mean scores of post-test in both control and experimental groups out of 15. The mean score of the control group is 10.96, while that of the experimental group is 12.39.

Table 4

The Independent Samples T-test of the Differences between the Post-test of Both Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pretest of Both Groups</td>
<td>-1.87</td>
<td>-2.26*</td>
<td>44.0</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. * = p ≤ 0.05.

![Figure 11](image)

Figure 11. t Distribution of the Differences between the Post-test of Both Groups

According to table 4, the 46 participants had a post-test average of -1.87 (SD = 0.83), with a calculated t value of -2.26. Compared to the critical t value set at p=0.05 (t (44)= 2.015),
the statistical t value is greater than the critical t value indicating significant difference between students’ grammatical awareness of the target form (figure 10). Therefore, there is a statistical difference between both groups after applying the experiment.

**Part Two: Analysis of Students’ Perception Trends towards the Experiment**

At the end of the experiment period, and after the post-test, the researcher distributed a questionnaire to measure students’ perceptions and attitudes towards incorporating audio-visual input enhancement in dictogloss tasks. The questionnaire employed a five-level Likert scale divided into strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree. The researcher used SPSS to show student trends towards each statement by measuring the responses of the sample members. Each statement’s responses’ mean was statistically calculated according to the statistical formula \( \frac{(n-1)}{n} \), where n is the number of levels. A mean between 1 and 1.80 showed the trends toward strongly disagree. A mean between 1.81 and 2.60 showed the trends toward disagree. A mean between 2.61 and 3.40 showed the trends toward neutral. A mean between 3.41 and 4.20 showed the trends toward agree. A mean between 4.20 and 5 showed the trends toward strongly agree.
Table 5

*The Experimental Group Students’ Responses to the Students’ Perception Questionnaire*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.T</th>
<th>Trends</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I enjoyed doing this activity.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4.39</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I think I did well in this activity.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I wish we had done this activity for all the grammar forms.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I feel that this activity has improved my learning process.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4.43</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Doing another activity like this one in other courses will be helpful for my language learning.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4.48</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. While doing this activity, my group and I talked in English most of the time.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I found out some grammatical forms I still did not know well.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Audio-visual enhancement attracted my attention to some grammatical forms.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4.22</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Audio-visual enhancement helped my group and I complete the task.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4.22</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. The length of time that we were given to complete the task was enough.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>0.96</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
According to Table 5, students’ responses fall into two trends groups, the first contains six statements classified with a trend towards strongly agree, and the second contains four statements classified with a trend towards agree.

a. Statements Classified with a Trend towards Strongly Agree

There are six statements that received a trend towards strongly agree, with means of 4.48, 4.43, 4.39, 4.35, and 4.22.

The statement receiving the highest mean was “Doing another activity like this one in other courses will be helpful for my language learning” (Figure 12). There were 15 students who strongly agreed with this statement, and 5 who agreed. The mean was 4.35.

Following in mean measurement comes the statement: “I feel that this activity has improved my learning process” (Figure 13) with 10 students strongly agreeing, and 13 agreeing with this statement; the mean of their responses was 4.43, which shows a “strongly agree” trend of the sample members.
The statement “I enjoyed doing this activity” (Figure 14) comes in third place as 13 students expressed their strong agreement with this statement. The mean was 4.39.

![Figure 14. I enjoyed doing this activity.](image)

The statement “I think I did well in this activity” (Figure 15) has a mean of 4.35 with 12 students strongly agreeing, and 8 agreeing with this statement.

![Figure 15. I think I did well in this activity.](image)

The fifth mean expressed in the strongly agree trend is 4.22 with two statements holding the same mean. Both statements were about the incorporation of audio-visual input enhancement in dictogloss tasks to learn grammatical forms. The first statement discussed the practice on a personal noticing level as it states, “Audio-visual enhancement attracted my attention to some grammatical forms” (Figure 16); it received strongly agree from 11 students, and agree from 8 students. The second statement discussed collaborative work progress as it states, “Audio-visual enhancement helped my group and I complete the task” (Figure 17). There were 9 students who strongly agreed with this statement and 10 agreed.
Figure 16. Audio-visual enhancement attracted my attention to some grammatical forms.

Figure 17. Audio-visual enhancement helped my group and I complete the task.

Regarding the homogeneousness of the sample member responses towards this group of responses, table 5 shows the standard deviations between 1.37 and 0.94, which indicates variation between group members regarding this group of statements.

b. Statements Classified with a Trend towards Agree

There are four statements that received a trend towards agree, with means of 4.13, 4.04, and 3.65.

The first statement in this group was “I wish we had done this activity for all the grammar forms” (Figure 18). There were 8 students who strongly agreed with this statement, and 11 who agreed. The mean is 4.13, which indicates an “agree” trend.

Figure 18. I wish we had done this activity for all the grammar forms.
The second mean in this category is 4.04, shared by two statements. The first, “I found out some grammatical forms I still did not know well” (Figure 19), received 12 agreements, and 7 strong agreements. The second statement, “The length of time that we were given to complete the task was enough” (Figure 20), received 11 agreements, and 6 strong agreements.

**Figure 19.** I found out some grammatical forms I still did not know well.

**Figure 20.** The length of time that we were given to complete the task was enough.

The statement “While doing this activity, my group and I talked in English most of the time” (Figure 21) received a mean of 3.65. There were nine students who expressed a neutral tendency, and seven who agreed with the statement.

**Figure 21.** While doing this activity, my group and I talked in English most of the time.

The sample members’ trends towards this group of statements were homogeneous, because there were not big variations in their answers, and the standard deviations were between 0.96 and 0.59 (see Table 5).
To sum up, the analysis of the collected data from the pretest and the post test of the two groups in lights of the research question showed a significant difference between the experimental and the control group indicating a positive effect of incorporating input enhancement in dictogloss tasks to teach English grammar on the development of ESL female learners’ grammatical awareness.
Chapter Five

Discussion and Recommendations

This study focused on the development of the grammatical awareness of 46 level 1 female students at the Collage of Languages and Translation, Princess Nora Bint Abdul Rahman University. Two classes carried out two different types of activities: traditional textbook activities, and audio-visually enhanced dictogloss tasks. The study revealed a number of interesting findings.

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of integrating audio-visual enhancement with pushed output dictogloss tasks on the level of grammatical awareness, the researcher had two main objective assessments: a pretest and a post-test to be compared along with a survey (Appendix A) to measure the students’ attitudes toward the activity.

As for the first objective assessment, the researcher observed the pretest and the post-test of two groups, comparing the results of the post-test of the control group with those of the experimental group, and comparing the results of the pretest and the post-test within the experimental group before and after the experiment.

Mean ratings of the posttest of the experimental group were higher than those of the control group. The posttest results indicated a difference between audio-visually enhanced dictogloss tasks and traditional textbook tasks (Figure 8). This improvement was observed between both groups in addition to the experimental group pretest and post-test, where the students performed much better after the experiment (Figure 6).

Students’ performance in the reconstructed texts illustrates their attention to the grammatical target form tackled. Their recorded notes displayed noticing towards the objective of the task at hand.
Example of students’ notes and reconstructed texts are included in Appendix E and Appendix F.

This proves that the experimental group students performed better with integrating audio-visually enhanced dictogloss tasks, thus deeming the first objective to be successful. This finding is consistent with the results of previous studies (Jourdenais et al., 1995; Abadikhah & Shahriyarpour, 2012; Aghajani & Rahimy, 2013), which proved an increase in grammatical awareness through the use of such an activity.

The second objective of the researcher, which is to measure the students’ attitudes toward using audio-visually enhanced dictogloss tasks, was also deemed successful. All of the students felt that this activity has improved their learning process, and 81% felt that doing another similar activity in other courses would be helpful for their language learning.

Based on the success of the two objectives and the positive attitudes of the students toward audio-visually enhanced dictogloss tasks, this study is deemed successful.

**Recommendations**

The success of incorporating audio-visual enhancement with Focus on Form dictogloss tasks proven in this study should be shared with other instructors and universities, encouraging them to implement it to develop grammatical awareness. Such practice helps to engage learners in practical real world strategies and skills in addition to the fact that it does it while simultaneously allowing teachers to maximum benefit of class time. Language courses must be given the needed space and time to implement enhanced Focus on Form tasks for the maximum benefit.

Future studies are recommended to replicate the present study with different groups of Saudi EFL/ESL learners in different parts of the country. Testing the effect of enhancing Focus
on Form tasks on different age groups and language levels might help in creating a better understanding.

A prolonged version of the current study including additional grammatical forms would enrich existing literature on such practice, in addition to supplementary analysis of the extent up to which its effect sustains.

Furthermore, carrying out a similar study for other language components in different courses could paint a clearer picture on the scope of incorporating input enhancement in Focus on Form tasks.
References


Appendix A

Dictogloss Tasks

Text 1: World English

Millions of people around the world speak English. Some use it as their first language. Others use it as their second or third language. It is the world language for diplomacy, commerce, pop music, aviation, and sport. What is your reason for learning it?

Text 2: Book Covers

People vary greatly in the way they look and in their personality. We often think we can tell someone's personality from the way they look. For example, we may expect a thin person to be quiet or shy while we may expect a fat person to be jolly and friendly. We should remember, however, that we can't judge a book by its cover, and we can't judge a person by their appearance.

Text 3: Naturally Healthy

People usually go to the doctor or chemist when they feel sick. However, you can often help yourself with natural medicines and herbs. For example, if you drink warm milk with honey, you will sleep well. If you feel nervous or tense, a cup of chamomile tea will relax you. For thousands of years, nature has helped people to help themselves.

Text 4: The Enemy, Man

Man is an enemy to many animals. Baby seals are clubbed to death for their skins. Crocodiles are tracked down and their skins are used for handbags and shoes. Elephants are destroyed for their ivory which is used for jewelry. Whales are hunted for their oil. Whole species are being endangered for fashion!
Appendix B

Visual Enhancement Tool

Text 1: World English

Text 2: Book Covers
Text 3: Naturally Healthy

Text 4: The Enemy, Man
Appendix C

Grammaticality Judgment Task (Pre-Post test)

Please decide whether the following statements are grammatical or ungrammatical:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Grammatical</th>
<th>Ungrammatical</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Many People speaks English.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Sarah walks to school.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. We like reading.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. My teacher discusses main topics.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Danah and Raghad studies English for their midterm exam.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. The newspaper’s article seems interesting.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. The clever boy create nice websites.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. The new kitchen product helps the cook.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. The sun rise from the east.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. The baby smiles.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. I goes to school every day.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. My mother decorates the living room in white.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Ghadah plays with her phone all the time.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D

Students’ Perception Questionnaire*

Please rate each statement by marking the box below the number according to the following scale:  **SD** = Strongly Disagree,  **D** = Disagree,  **N** = Neutral,  **A** = Agree,  **SA** = Strongly Agree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>SA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I enjoyed doing this activity.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I think I did well in this activity.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I wish we had done this activity for all the grammar forms.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I feel that this activity has improved my learning process.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Doing another activity like this one in other courses will be helpful for my language learning.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. While doing this activity, my group and I talked in English most of the time.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I found out some grammatical forms I still did not know well.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Audio-visual enhancement attracted my attention to some grammatical forms.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Audio-visual enhancement helped my group and I complete the task.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. The length of time that we were given to complete the task was enough.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Mostly adapted from Al-Sibai (2008).
Appendix E

Sample of a Reconstructed Text

Text title: Naturally Healthy

Notes:
- go to doctor and chemist
- feel sick
- help yourself
- nature and herbs
- a warm milk with honey
- sleep well
- a chamomile tea
- tea

Reconstructed text:
Naturally Healthy...many of people go to doctor and chemist when they feel sick. However, you can often help yourself with nature and herbs. If you drink a warm milk with honey, it will help you sleep well. If you feel wretched, you can drink a couple of chamomile tea will make you feel really awesome. A thousand years has helped people to help themselves.
Appendix F

Sample of a Reconstructed Text

Text title: What kind of English

Notes:

- millions speak English
- use it as first language
- the world language for
- what is your reason?

Reconstructed text:

Millions of people around the world speak English.
Some use it as their first language and others use it as
their second or third language. It is the world language for
diplomacy, commerce, political existence, and sport. What
is your reason for learning it?